



**SNN**

NORTHERN NETHERLANDS  
ALLIANCE

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# S3 impact on innovation ecosystems: Case of the Northern Netherlands

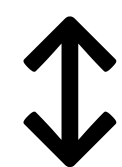


# S3 in the N-NLs

*‘Story of the N-NLs = discrepancy between operational & strategic level’*

## **Operational level:**

- S3 managed to activate large group stakeholders
- reflected in various collaborative initiatives, improving functioning of the innovation ecosystem



## **Strategic level / governance:**

- Innovation Board (Q4 Helix)
- ... but didn't take / gain full responsibility for governance RIS3

## HESS Case study findings:

**+:**

- **appetite amongst regional companies to be more innovative**
- **culture of openness and interaction at operational level**  
*“The number of these large scale collaborative infrastructures is genuinely impressive at a European comparative dimension” (HESS Fieldwork Report)*
- **absence of a lot of ex officio involvement in regional innovation discussions**
- **a number of “institutional entrepreneurs” emerged, who understood way that funding instruments worked, who understood political and policy context and who understood their own institutions**

**- :**

- **need to create a body that exerts genuine regional leadership**

# Induced changes in innovation ecosystems

**Main impact of S3 so far:**

**RIS3 enabled region to capture / nurture/ channel collaborative spirit:**

- creating openness
- fostering links between areas, clusters, players
- stimulating HEI's to play an active role,
- creating a culture of change (renewal), searching for new opportunities

**This growing commitment has gone 'hand in hand' with growing knowledge about 'S3'**

**Knowledge institutes (HEI's) have been key factor: 1<sup>st</sup> to 'adopt and embrace'**

# Induced changes in innovation ecosystems

## *HESS case study :*

**Impact on innovation ecosystem related to a Knowledge Economy “ink blot” model:**

- gradually spreading out
- several lead companies and universities develop a “research & innovation club”; smaller businesses are able to participate once it is operating successfully
- Success = extension of ink blot to cover more innovative firms who could perform better if they could develop more structural connections with regional networks and HEIs

# Induced changes in innovation ecosystems

**A range of promising activities where RIS3 has contributed to “Ink Blot”:**

- **Effective use of informal networks**
  - In particular alumni networks which connect regional businesses to HEI’s
- **HEIs successful in creating ‘low barrier-to-entry activities’ for sme’s**
  - Projects using students to build up connections between firms and HEIs (e.g. ‘Innovation Workplaces’)
- **Successful in initiating & supporting follow-up trajectories**
  - Several initiatives that allowed innovating SMEs, that had had useful low-intensity interaction with HEIs, to undertake follow-up activity
- **Shared research agendas**
  - Successful in initiating activities which allowed individual company issues to be developed and combined into collective problems, which were then sufficiently substantive to represent a meaningful knowledge request for universities
- **Sustained research directions**
  - Effective use of (ERDF-)funding for infrastructure to support knowledge collaborations (e.g. living laboratories)

# Induced changes in innovation ecosystems

→ RIS3 instrumental in creating these positive changes

Challenges : fragmentation, segmentation & rigidities in the system

*“The Northern Netherlands has the potential to function as a knowledge economy more efficiently at the level of the North than as three separate provincial knowledge economies. Groningen is the primary core and with the correct infrastructures the whole North can benefit from its urban strengths. But this is undermined by policies which seem to reflect a deep seated belief that each province has its own sectoral strengths, and all the activities in the north in that sector should be clustered in that province.” (HESS Fieldwork report)*



Want to know more?

# Thank you



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