

Letter from the conference chair

Whereas this is already the second time that the University of Groningen is leading in the organisation of the Multinational Energy and Value Issues conference, it is actually the first time that the conference is held in Groningen, the “capital” of the Dutch “Energy Valley”.

The city of Groningen is well-known for being a Hanze trading society member, which is still reflected in some canals, squares, churches and houses. The city thus has a long-standing link with other Dutch trading cities, scattered over the like-wise named province and way beyond, but it has also always found itself linked with Germany and Scandinavia.

It is thus not a coincidence that Groningen houses *the* gas trading company of The Netherlands, GasTerra, but this has of course also got to do with one of the Groningen specifics: the province had the largest gas field of the world at the time it was discovered (1959). If you travel around in the province, you cannot avoid the gas flames in the plain fields.

But there is more. Groningen is also the province that is currently being reshaped as *the* powerhouse of the Netherlands and beyond. While one may question the desirability of this, it is a thrilling fact and it enables its former rather empty Eemshaven to grow out of its original borders. The Eemshaven is also the place where the boats to Borkum take off.

Borkum, while actually being German, is one of the two holiday islands of the local people. (The other is Schiermonnikoog, which actually belongs to the province of Friesland.) The island is special in many respects, but this also counts for the City (say simply: Stad) and its surroundings (“Ommeland”). Discover the hidden treasures of the Top of Holland!

If you go to the highest floor of the Duisenberg Building, our conference sessions venue, you have a marvelous view. But do also walk around in the brand new Plaza where our session room is located and stroll around over the Zernike Campus. If you have time, you can walk to the nearby river Reitdiep and watch it wind to the sea. However

The big thing about the conference is not the location of the sessions venue, but it is rather the sessions themselves. I am happy that we have a nice group of paper presenters, a fine keynote speaker (Bert Scholtens) and diverse practitioner presentations. And last but not least: the first CEVI book will be presented by the Springer editor herself (Barbara Fess).

Welcome in Groningen!

Wim Westerman (conference chair)