



Gelderland:

The EMT epicenter of the Netherlands

Over a decade ago, several large industrial companies left the industrial zone Industriepark Kleefse Waard on the edge of the city of Arnhem. What remained was a mainly empty and obsolete business area. With the objective of reviving the area, the plan was launched to focus the redevelopment on Energy and Environmental Technology (in Dutch: Energie- en Milieutechnologie, EMT), and this plan received a great deal of public support. But that is not the only result: nowadays, the province of Gelderland has become the epicenter in the field of EMT, partly thanks to the efforts of stichting (foundation) kiEMT.

// Stichting kiEMT, which stands for ‘knowledge and innovation in Energie- en Milieutechnologie, was conceived ten years ago when a number of companies, governmental and educational institutions decided to jointly develop new business at the industrial area Industriepark Kleefse Waard. “The foundation’s goal is to link companies that want to develop products, educa-

CONGRESS OR EVENT

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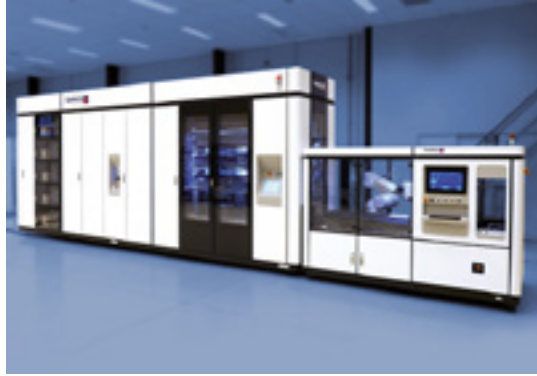
tional institutions that offer courses on energy, and governments that have an energy policy, in order to create new activity aimed to boost the competitive force, economy and employment in the eastern part of the Netherlands”, board director Harry Webers explains.

NEW ACTIVITY

These days, stichting kiEMT has grown into a network of 230 (major) participants located in the provinces of Gelderland and Overijssel, with the ambition to grow even



Harry Webers



further in the directions of the Dutch provinces of Brabant, Limburg, as well as the German province of Nordrhein-Westfalen. The foundation receives funds from the (major) participants and subsidies from governments like the province of Gelderland. In the past three years the foundation kiEMT executed, assigned by the province of Gelderland, the Topsector development program Green Tech Alliances, which was recently extended by four years. This program focuses on the themes cleantech and biobased economy. Webers: "This program comprises ten themes that should stimulate the creation of new business, from Human Capital, knowledge development and its practical application, to clustering, financing and internationalisation. Apart from stimulating projects within the program, we also organize activities like support and the annual Green Tech Week."

RESULT

In the past ten years, stichting kiEMT and its (major) participants have achieved remarkably good results. "In Gelderland, 175 new EMT companies were established, which brings the total to 1,400. Apart from international companies, this also includes Dutch enterprises like Gazelle and many start-ups. Moreover, in 10 years' time 2,000 new jobs were created, on a total of 30,000

WHY IS GELDERLAND SO SUCCESSFUL?

According to Harry Webers, the success of Gelderland as EMT region can be attributed to three factors. Firstly, traditionally, Gelderland had many companies active in the production industry, like Gazelle in Dieren and Remeha in Apeldoorn. Originally, this often are family businesses, aimed at continuity and sustainable growth, and because of this, also at sustainable production processes and products. Apart from that, Gelderland has a strong agro and food industry, thanks to the many agricultural companies and the presence of the renowned educational institutions Wageningen University & Research, Hogeschool Van Hall Larenstein in Velp, HAN and the Radboud Universiteit in Nijmegen. Finally, the city of Arnhem, with its tramline company, is the Dutch electricity city par excellence, with enterprises like DNV-GL (formerly KEMA), Tennet and Alliander. "The combination of a strong production industry, the focus on continuity and sustainability, and a strong agro/food sector and energy sector ensures that you have all the means, parties as well as the right mindset to make the transition to a circular economy", says Webers.

EMT jobs. And the economic spinoff from the developments in the field of EMT amounts to no less than 2.2 billion Euros."

INSPIRATION

Partly thanks to the efforts of stichting kiEMT and the actual business, the province of Gelderland has every right to call itself the EMT epicenter of the Netherlands. Webers: "We can give many fine examples of companies that have made the transition to a sustainable production process,

as well as unique start-ups that develop sustainable, energy-saving products like a battery that works on sea salt. But the good example is also given by knowledge and education institutions (advanced education level, higher education level and academic level) and large enterprises that perform groundbreaking EMT research, as well as municipalities that are really progressive in the field of sustainability. Here, more than enough inspiration can be found." www.kiemt.nl