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**Special issue:**



**Groningen  
Catalyst for the North West European oil  
and gas industry**

**Congress Groningen 40 years  
31 May – 1 June 1999**

**Edited by  
H. Dronkert & E. Dijkhuis**

**In 1999 the Groningen gas field will turn forty**

On a human time scale forty years gone probably means another forty years to go. This is a good or celebration and for taking stock; to think about how the first forty years were used, what could have been done better, where we are now and the best way to spend the next forty years. The discovery of the giant Groningen gas field was the most significant event to take place in the European petroleum industry in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Groningen gas field stimulated the building of an extensive European natural gas distribution network. Through this network, gas from the North Sea, onshore NW Europe, Eastern Europe, North Africa and gas imported as LNG now flows. The finding of gas in Groningen was the catalyst for the discovery of the major North Sea oil and gas province.

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