

# Turning the page: restoring trust in the aftermath of gas extraction in Groningen

RQ: What is the state of trust and relationships in Groningen and to what extent can the transitional justice literature address it?

## LITERATURE: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

“Processes & mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large scale past abuses in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation” (UN, 2004, p. 4)<sup>1</sup>

This is mostly applied after (civil) war, dictatorships and humanitarian crises.<sup>2</sup>

But how can transitional justice address neoliberal fiascos?

- That are ongoing?
- That are slow onset disasters?
- Where there are many parties involved?
- Where the parties’ role is diffuse?
- Where industry plays a role?<sup>3</sup>
- Where billions of Euros are on the line?<sup>4</sup>
- Where there is a strong political element?

Associated concepts

- Trust
- Forgiveness
- Slow onset disasters

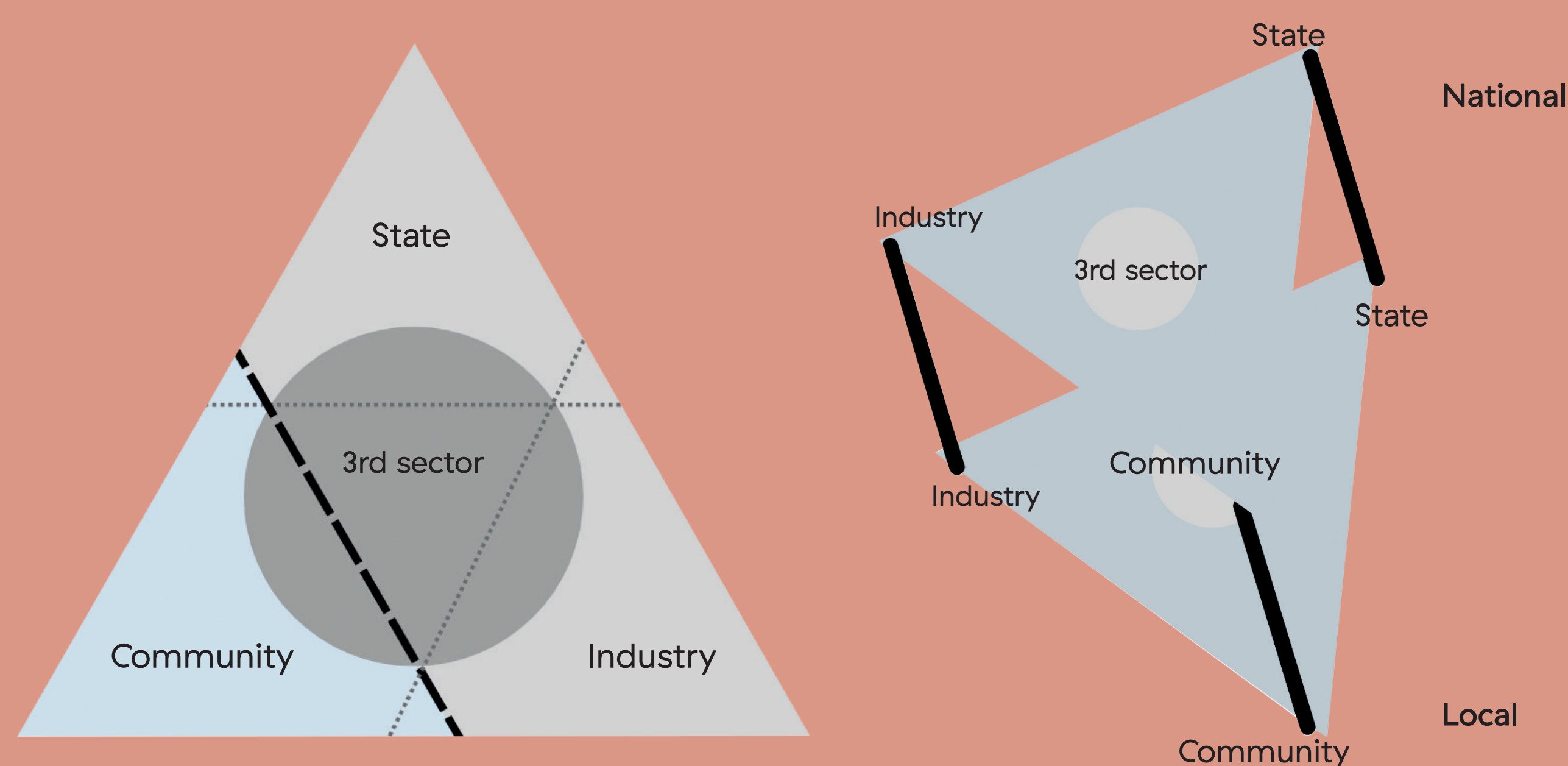
## CONTEXT: GAS EXTRACTION IN GRONINGEN

- Biggest gas field in Europe
- Extraction begins in ‘63, (measured) seismicity in ‘91
- Damage to property, loss of value, emotional & psychological damage<sup>6</sup>
- Government taking responsibility for industrial failure<sup>7</sup>
- Erratic and partial policy responses that keep on changing<sup>8</sup>
- Decades of pent up frustration<sup>6</sup>
- Regional history

## METHODOLOGY

- Literature review
  - Exploratory interviews with experts in the field representing each relevant stakeholder
- Interview questions to stakeholders:
- Who are the relevant stakeholders?
  - What is the state of relationships?
  - What can the stakeholders do about it both collectively as individually?

## THE STAKEHOLDERS



## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Consensus:

- Relationships are severely damaged
- Need for a political vision
- **Science can't solve this**

No consensus:

- On what the problem is
- On who the victim is
- On who the perpetrator is
- On what is true
- On what actions to take

## DILEMMA

- Our positionality within the case study

## NEXT STEPS FOR THE PROJECT

- Inventarisation of group needs & wants
- Concrete actions for reconciliation
- Research of current developments:
  - Parliamentary Enquiry
  - Participation and co-production initiatives



## REFERENCES

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- <sup>7</sup>Onderzoeksraad voor Veiligheid. (2015). Aardbevingsrisico's in Groningen, Onderzoek naar de rol van veiligheid van burgers in de besluitvorming over de gaswinning (1959–2014) (p. 140). Onderzoeksraad voor Veiligheid.
- <sup>8</sup>Nationale Ombudsman. (2021). Verscheurd vertrouwen—Reconstructie aanbevelingen en onderzoek schadeproblematiek Noord-Nederland. Nationale Ombudsman.

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