



Local Scenarios of Demographic Change: Policies and Strategies for Sustainable Development, Skills and Employment

**Summary of the Groningen-Drenthe Region Seminar,
4-5 November 2012**

Groningen, 3 December 2012

Acknowledgements

This summary note has been prepared by Arjen Edzes, Jouke van Dijk (University of Groningen), Tanja Kleine Sextro and Mirjam Punter (Groningen and Drenthe Regional Provinces). Aldert de Vries, Roxana Chandali (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations) and Silas Olsson (Health Access) revised the note and provide useful comments for its final format. The note has been edited by Cristina Martinez-Fernandez (OECD LEED Programme), Tamara Weyman (OECD project consultant) and Melissa Telford (OECD consultant editor). Our gratitude to the workshop participants for their inputs and suggestions during the focus groups.

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Pre-workshop discussion and study visit

The workshop was organised by the Provinces of Groningen and Drenthe and co-organised by the OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme and the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations as part of the '*Local scenarios of Demographic Change*' project.

To introduce the OECD experts to the specific situation and development problems experienced by the Northern Netherlands, the pre-workshop started with a quick overview of the background note presented by the local experts. This presentation was followed by a short discussion on the following issues:

- Socio-economic characteristics of the region;
- Demographic trends;
- Older workers and silver economy development;
- Skills and training ecosystem in a region;
- Social problems and changes; and
- Regional/local policies and initiatives.

The field trip that was then undertaken illustrated some of the discussed problems. The OECD experts visited the Seaports of Xperience Centre at Farmsum, which is a non-profit organisation promoting occupational and educational opportunities for school-leavers, students and youngsters in the 12-18 age range, in industry areas such as chemicals, transport and logistics, shipping, construction and energy in the Ems Delta-region. Companies and employers are working together to promote educational opportunities rather than competing with each other for personnel. The field trip also included a visit to Homecare Oosterlengte, a foundation in East-Groningen that is dedicated to providing care for the elderly. Homecare Oosterlengte has a deliberate targeted strategy of being an attractive employer, which it is progressing by creating an internal qualification unit that aims to stimulate on-the-job learning, offering young people contracts, and providing them with the opportunity to pursue an education. In this way, recruitment for jobs in the caring sector is stimulated in an area in which there is an increasing demand for services due to an ageing sub-region.

Groningen-Drenthe Workshop

More than 60 participants discussed the impact of demographic change on the present and future regional development at the Groningen-Drenthe Workshop on 5th November 2012. The participants included both the OECD and local experts, as well as participants representing different social and professional groups from the region. The workshop consisted of plenary and thematic group discussions. The meeting was opened by the chairman of the Socio-Economic Counsel Northern Netherlands (SER), who emphasised the importance of the OECD LEED Programme for regional policy development, particularly for the preparation of a regional development strategy. Dr Cristina Martinez-Fernandez provided the introduction to the project and local expert, Professor Jouke van Dijk, presented the background note on demographic change in the Groningen-Drenthe region. Professor van Dijk's presentation highlighted several aspects of the regional economy and the labour market in relation to demographic transitions. Four parallel focus groups on specific themes followed the opening session.

Focus group 1. Opportunities for cross-border labour markets: Policy responses and 'regional capacity'

Chairperson: *Karel Groen*, Ems Dollard Regio

There was widespread acknowledgement that it is important for border regions to stimulate cross-border commuting and migration as much as possible and to promote the advantages of cross-border labour markets and diversity of skills. The more open neighbouring regions on both sides of the border become, the more attractive the regions will be for people seeking employment and wanting to take advantage of the different institutional, environmental and cultural circumstances. There is already a shrinking population in the Northern Netherlands, but this is not yet the case in the German border area. While unemployment levels are rising in the Netherlands, unemployment rates have been more or less stable on the German side. In 2009, unemployment was 3.4% in the Netherlands and 7.7% in the German border area.

However, the UWV Werkbedrijf (*public employment agency*) recently organised an international job fair resulting in 87 job vacancies, but due to several unforeseen obstacles arising, only 3 of the 87 vacancies were filled. Some cross-border issues and obstacles to be faced include:

- Germany needs skilled workers and the degrees they require do not match the Dutch degrees;
- Wages in Germany are slightly lower;
- Child benefits and other benefits are organised differently;
- German organisations are more hierarchical in structure than Dutch organisations; and
- Working abroad entails complicated rules and legislation and much paperwork.

To summary:

- The Netherlands has a higher number of unskilled or lower-skilled workers while Germany desires highly skilled workers, which is a mismatch.
- Cross-border work is a more natural fit for highly qualified workers and students as they have fewer problems adapting. However, one-third of the currently unemployed workforce is not adaptable; for them, cross-border work is not an option.
- Workers with lower and secondary vocational (MBO) qualifications are a potential target group for cross-border exchanges.
- Project ideas: determine the top three jobs on both sides of the border and recognise qualifications for those positions between the Netherlands and Germany and vice versa; exchange staff with specific skill sets.
- Initiate partnerships between UWV Werkbedrijf (Public Employment Agency), Ems-Achse, Ems Dollard Region, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, University of Groningen et al and build structures for co-operation (through grant funding).
- Initiate a cross-border vacancy site. A first iteration has been online since 28 November 2012.

Focus group 2. Intergenerational challenges for demographic transitions in labour markets: unemployment now but shortages soon?

Chairperson: *Jan Dirk Gardenier*, CAB Groningen

The focus group on intergenerational challenges discussed the significant dilemma regarding how to increase productivity, which is the main engine of economic growth, with the larger numbers of older people and less productive people (eg. those with physical or mental disabilities) that are to be found in declining regions. This raises the question of how to invest in future employment growth while at the same time offering options for older and vulnerable groups within the regional labour market, now and in the near future.

The workshop participants were asked to try and develop some original solutions by thinking 'outside the box'. Their ideas were divided into the following four categories:

1. *Regional solutions*

- Focus on specific regional solutions by making national laws and regulations more flexible.
- Realising the issues are about social inclusion (wellbeing) as well as income.
- Temporary change to retirement age i.e. lowering retirement age, in specific regions.
- Regional collective labour agreements (CAOs) instead of a nationwide industrial labour agreement.
- Suspend CAOs/statutory minimum wages for five years in areas with high unemployment, on the condition that more jobs are created.
- Everyone has the right to work at the social assistance benefit level, whether young or old.

2. *Solutions that link people at the start or end of their working lives*

- Young plus old: co-worker or master-apprentice relationships.
- Stimulate entrepreneurship among young people by providing support from older entrepreneurs.
- Targeted training combined with an employment contract (apprenticeship).
- Combine starter jobs with possible job extensions.

3. *Ambassadors*

- Activities to raise awareness.
- Appoint 500 young people from the region as ambassadors for their region.
- Mobility offensive.
- Culture shift in education; start with primary schools and modify education selectively.
- Government and business sectors to provide jobs in specific areas, with the labour market dictating where these are based.
- Comment: this problem will not be solved through a gentle approach.

4. *Others; including job creation and employment opportunities*

- Attractive business climate + tax benefits for the production industry.
- Active promotion of working across the border.
- Stimulate voluntary work/social activities for older people.

Focus group 3. Accelerating skill development in industry clusters: what skill ecosystems?

Chairperson: *Dr. Arjen Edzes*, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

The focus group discussed questions such as: How to make education correspond with the demand for labour; How to tackle the shortage of skills; How to prevent skills becoming out of date; and How to ensure that young people choose courses that will qualify them to fill gaps in the labour market? The following conclusions were drawn from these discussions.

- Do not simply focus on young people, but also on older people. For the latter group, it is important that they have sufficient skills to remain in the labour market or, if they become unemployed, can regain employment.
- There was consensus on the importance of certain key skills or key competencies that are important in all jobs: problem-based working; communication skills; motivation; discipline; and attitude. Education should focus more on these key competencies because occupational skills can be learned on the work floor.
- Promote the fact that jobs are no longer for life. This is a change in the cultural paradigm that should in turn promote changes in people's attitude towards life-long learning.
- Provide detailed and relevant information and communication: tell young people exactly what a course entails, and specifics of a particular job and job prospects. Tell older workers about the benefits of life-long learning.
- Younger people learn differently than older people. This acknowledgement implies the need for differentiation of learning methods and educational services.
- Influence educational choices through information, but also through provision of various options.
- The region must communicate clearly with the government on regional specific solutions.
- Job carving; adapt demand to fit supply.
- Allow the market to operate as its own driver.

Focus group 4: New Sources of Economic Growth

Chairperson: *Prof. Paul Elhorst*, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

The focus group discussed how to curb the outflow of people from the region, by encouraging new sources of economic growth that increase employment opportunities in the area. The following issues were discussed during the session.

When considering the current top sectors in the Northern Netherlands, one thinks of Energy Valley, Healthy Ageing, and Agri-business. The possibilities for investing in the Bio-based Economy (BBE) were also discussed, because in the Ems Delta, all the requisite ingredients exist to successfully undertake a BBE, for example, the presence of:

- The harbour;
- The chemical industry;
- The agricultural hinterland;
- The energy power-plants; and
- The knowledge centres: Hanze University of Applied Sciences, University of Groningen.

Compared to the other shrinking regions (particularly Limburg), in this respect the Ems Delta has considerable advantages. However, the problem then arises of how to get young people enthusiastic enough to choose technical studies?

- The Xperience Centre is a good initiative that is designed to motivate younger people towards these types of jobs. In the Xperience Centre, companies and employers are working together to promote educational opportunities instead of competing with each other for personnel. Educational organisations and interest groups are also involved. The Xperience Centre builds bridges between demand and supply within the labour market and all the actors involved.
- Young people as well as their parents need to be more informed about the job opportunities that exist via a technical education.

Participants emphasised that the main engine for growth in the regions is increased productivity. To this end, it is important to stimulate entrepreneurship. In order to facilitate entrepreneurship or self-employment in the region, business coaching should be started at an earlier age, possibly even in primary school. Also, specific classes could be given on entrepreneurship. A good example is found in Scotland where, as a result of providing specific classes for entrepreneurship at an earlier phase of the school career, the number of new starters doubled when compared to the previous period.

As a means of stimulating young people to make something out of their life and to become entrepreneurs, one of the participants suggested an exchange programme for students to study abroad. By experiencing another country and culture, students will come into contact with new ideas, and will use this creativity when they return to the Netherlands. While this idea has merit, there are currently too many unresolved questions associated with putting it into practice to pursue it at this stage. As a means of supporting innovation, the Northern Netherlands has the ambition of being the best in certain areas. This ambition must be kept front of mind in order to drive future decisions.

Concluding remarks

The closing plenary session began with brief reports being provided by the four focus group reporters as summarised above. Key points from each focus group discussion were presented, and the OECD experts then asked questions about the findings and interpreted the issues raised by the focus groups on the basis of their international experience. The following points are extracted from commentary notes made by the Round Table: Conclusions and Policy Actions International Panel¹:

- The substantial decline in population numbers generally, but increase in the ratio of older people within the population were highlighted in the workshop. Are there strategies in place to keep older workers at work for longer, or transfer knowledge to younger workers? Perhaps flexible working hours and more part-time arrangements could be considered? Healthy ageing should also be a high priority and should be treated as a regional and national strategic policy for the Netherlands.
- The city of Groningen is a major university location, however, a substantial number of students leave the region upon graduation due to lack of employment opportunities. There is an opportunity to create an overall innovation approach within the region, with the universities playing a

¹ [Michael Förschner](#), ZSI, Austria; [Dr. Jasper van Loo](#), CEDEFOP; [Graeme Henderson](#), IPPR, UK; [Silas Olsson](#), Health Access, Sweden.

substantial role. This would rely upon support from the local authorities, enterprises and the general population for new ideas. Innovation should be seen as a holistic process, whereby techniques, economic and social issues, and ecology all have to be viewed with respect to their inter-relatedness.

- Bio-industries (notable wind-energy) is a promising strategy for regional specialisation. More emphasis should be placed, not only on selling green energy abroad, but also on its use within the region itself. Given the province's natural resources and the necessity to substantially change current energy systems, the region could become a forerunner for a green economy, from which point it could then start creating new development paths based on local knowledge and understanding.
- There is some evidence that the border to Germany is still experienced as a threshold. Several potential barriers to cross-border mobility exist, among which problems with recognising qualifications across borders; taxes, social security and pension problems; and lack of infrastructure that limits or discourages mobility. Many of these problems could be addressed at the national level by appropriate legislation, or at the international level through bilateral agreements between countries or treaties. However, regions too play a role in assisting citizens and businesses when they encounter problems, which is particularly relevant during periods when demographic developments cause labour market inefficiencies. When bordering regions have different economic structures, better matching and co-ordination of vacancies with people looking for a job may contribute to smaller regional unemployment differentials. In this respect, the provinces of Drenthe and Groningen would both benefit from closer linkages with German companies. Especially, increased transparency is expected to be an important step in supporting labour market mobility and flexibility.
- Labour market bottlenecks will be a problem in the future, and innovative solutions are therefore needed to deal with this, as there will be a limited supply of younger people entering the labour market. There is a need to ensure that jobs become tailored to career phases, and in this context, job carving is a new and interesting concept that can help. This system could open up possibilities for lower-skilled people and also assist young people in entering areas of work for which there are shortages in the labour market.
- Much of the focus of the workshops centred on what the national government could do to help the region. While the input of the national government is important, there must also be more ambition and leadership from local actors to drive economic change in their own area.

Annex 1 – Workshop agenda



provincie Drenthe



OECD Workshop
SCENARIOS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN DRENTHE / GRONINGEN
Assen – Netherlands
5th November 2012

Agenda & List of Participants

Organised by

*OECD LEED Programme, the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations and
the Provinces of Groningen and Drenthe*

Hosted in Assen

Background

The workshop is one of the activities of the 'Local Scenarios of Demographic Change' project conducted by the *Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme*.

Demographic change is affecting all OECD member countries and developing economies. Fertility rates are lowering, the population age is increasing, youth unemployment is increasing and the complexity of urban-rural shrinkage is posing numerous challenges to job creation and sustainable development agendas. Strategic solutions cannot be based on addressing one of these factors alone, but need to take into account the interplay of these elements within a particular local area of development (urban or rural).

This project aims to provide strategic guidelines for governments and organisations involved in the implementation of employment and skills development programmes at the local level on how better confront demographic changes. The project will seek to outline future local development scenarios in order to facilitate adoption of appropriate guidelines on the following topics: sustainable local development models and shrinkage scenarios; employment and skills development in new areas of growth; services to the elderly and social inclusion; developing the silver economy and entrepreneurs; and fertility rate policies and implications for the labour market.

*The project in the Netherlands will focus analysis on the regions of **Limburg, Drenthe/Groningen and Zeeland**. The project will identify innovative approaches to labour market issues in the regions facing demographic shrinkage. These approaches should address the particular problems generated by demographic transition (shrinkage, ageing), which means that a wider understanding of causal relations between demographic transition, economic development and the labour market is needed and should be applied to the particular context of the participating regions.*

Regions facing demographic shrinkage are the breeding ground of future labour market problems for the whole country. The growing demand for replacement staff and the ageing of the labour force are huge challenges for economic development and labour market transition. At this time, population decline is noticeable and visible in three regions: Noordoost-Groningen/Eemdelta, Oost-Groningen and the municipality of De Marne. However, within the next 20 years, more regions in Groningen and Drenthe face the effects of ageing and population decline. The workshop will contribute to identifying the main issues, leading to proposals for policy development, including initiatives designed to address labour market challenges. Local activities, initiatives and strategies are of particular importance for the development of policy proposals within the province itself, but are equally important with regard to national developments, challenges and solutions.

For more information on the project visit <http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/demographicchange.htm>

Project WEB 2.0 platform <https://community.oecd.org/community/demographicchange>

Venue: The House of the Province of Drenthe, Assen, Netherlands

5th November facilitated by Prof. Dr. J. van Dijk

12:30 – 13:00 Arrivals & Registration

13:00 – 14:30 OPENING SESSION: THE OECD PROJECT AND THE REGION OF GRONINGEN/DRENTHE

Welcome – *Geert Sanders*, Chairman, SER Noord-Nederland

The region of Drenthe – *Ard van der Tuuk*, Deputy Education and Employment, Province of Drenthe

Introduction to the project – *Dr Cristina Martinez-Fernandez*, OECD/CFE/ LEED

Background note on demographic change in Drenthe & Groningen – *Prof J. van Dijk*, Rijksuniversiteit of Groningen

Q&A

14:00 – 14:15 Coffee break

14:15 – 15:45 THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS: 4 PARALLEL FOCUS GROUPS

1:30 hours
(includes preparing key points to be transmitted to plenary)

| FOCUS GROUP 1: | FOCUS GROUP 2: | FOCUS GROUP 3: | FOCUS GROUP 4: |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Opportunities for cross-border labour markets: policy responses and 'regional capacity' | Intergenerational challenges of demographic transitions in labour markets: unemployment now but shortages soon? | Accelerating skill development in industry clusters: what skill ecosystem? | New sources of economic growth |

FOCUS GROUP 1: Opportunities for cross-border labour markets: policy responses and 'regional capacity'

A vital region should have a dynamic labour market, strong job creation and be an attractive place in which to live. However, due to the peripheral situation of border regions it is often more convenient for people to move to central regions, where one can choose from a large supply and variety of jobs in order to progress professionally while living closer to other parts of the country. Therefore, it is important for border regions to stimulate cross-border commuting and migration as much as possible and to promote the advantages of cross-border labour markets and diversity of skills. The more open neighbouring regions on both sides of the border become, the more attractive these areas are for people seeking employment and desiring to profit from the different institutional, environmental and cultural circumstances.

Questions for discussion:

1. How can cross-border commuting and migration be stimulated?
2. How can border regions profit more from each other's variety of employment, schools, cultural facilities, and skill development programmes?
3. To what extent can national governments be induced to create special arrangements for border regions, e.g. with regard to tax exemptions, subsidising industrial areas, transparency/harmonisation of certificates, and skill development initiatives?
4. Is there a need to stimulate European migration for specific sectors or industry clusters? Should migration be temporary?

Participants (6-8): older workers, employers, trade unions, chambers of commerce, regional authorities

Facilitator: *Karel Groen*, Ems Dollard Regio

Reporter: *to be nominated by the group*

Experts participating: *Michael Förschner*, ZSI and *Leo van Wissen*, NIDI

FOCUS GROUP 2: Intergenerational challenges of demographic transitions in labour markets: unemployment now but shortages soon?

Today, demographic change is one of the key challenges for labour markets. Although the potential for further employment growth beyond the pre-crisis levels is uncertain, shortages are expected in the near future due to a declining labour force. Declining regions face a major dilemma. On the one hand, productivity will become the main engine of economic growth. On the other hand declining regions have large percentages of older people and less productive people, such as those with physical and mental disabilities. This raises the question of how to invest in future employment growth. At the same time, prospects must be offered to older and vulnerable groups in the regional labour market, now and in the near future.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the challenges faced by the labour market due to demographic change for current and future generations? What are the implications for young people today and tomorrow?
2. What are the causes and consequences of early losses from the labour market? How can we prevent having a lost generation arise?
3. What are the most effective methods and tools by which to maintain older people, local youth and other vulnerable people in the labour market in relation to the expected demographic change?

Are there best practices available from companies (e.g. HR counselling services) or public support services (national, regional, and local) that have a specific approach in order to counter the impact of demographic change? What are the practices that are not considered to be good incentives, and prevent actors from maintaining older people in the labour market?

Facilitator: *Jan Dirk Gardenier*, CAB Groningen

Reporter: *to be nominated by the group*

Experts participating: *Prof. Phillip Talyor*, Monash University and *Aldert de Vries*, BZK

FOCUS GROUP 3: Accelerating skill development in industry clusters: what skill ecosystem?

Regional specialisation may require a better match of skills for the regional labour force on one side, and the skills required by employers on the other side. Skill mismatch may have different causes: lower-skilled people without relevant competencies for the labour market; young people may not choose fields of study that are needed; the competencies of older workers may not be up-to-date or their skills may decline if they lose their job. Therefore, employers are inclined to recruit migrants, attract graduates from other regions, or move to central parts of the country where the potential labour supply is larger and more diverse. At the same time, it is difficult for educational institutions to meet all the needs of employers, or there is a lack of connectivity between the educational supply and demand for skills.

Questions for discussion:

1. How can we make sure that young people choose study fields that are in demand? What is the role of regional educational institutions and employers in this case? How can cluster competitiveness be addressed?
2. How can we raise the employability of lower-skilled people? What is the role of training and skill development?
3. How do we prevent skill obsolescence? What is the role of the employers?

Participants (6-8): city council, regional authorities, local development agencies

Facilitator: *Dr Arjen Edzes*, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

Reporter: *to be nominated by the group*

Experts participating: *Dr Jasper van Loo*, CEDEFOP; *Roxana Chandali*, BZK; and *Jennyfer Imperator*, the Netherlands Delegate to the OECD

FOCUS GROUP 4: New sources of economic growth

Apart from the overall decline of population growth in the Netherlands, the regions with shrinking populations also face issues of population ageing, and migration of younger people from their region to the Randstad (urban agglomeration). This migration is related to the stagnation of economic growth in the region. To curb this potentially self-replicating process, public policy can help to curb the outflow of people by encouraging new sources of economic growth, which in turn increase employment opportunities. These new sources of economic growth could: (1) encourage entrepreneurship and self-employment; (2) attract emerging industry sectors to the region; (3) develop a silver, white or green economy; (4) increase offshoots of high-tech firms from universities at newly built campuses; (5) increase employment in higher education areas by attracting foreign students to the region; or (6) create new cross-sector alliances/businesses.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the opportunities for new sources of economic growth in the region?
2. Which initiatives and strategies could facilitate entrepreneurship or self-employment in the region?
3. Which social/cross-sector innovations can strengthen the competitiveness of the region? How can we support the opportunities offered by an aging population?

Facilitator: *Prof. Paul Elhorst*, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen

Reporter: *to be nominated by the group*

Experts participating: *Silas Olsson*, Health Access; *Graeme Henderson*, IPPR; *Femek Verwest*, PBL; and *Dr Cristina Martinez-Fernandez*, OECD/CFE/LEED

15:45 – 16:00 *Coffee break*

16:00 – 17:00 ROUND TABLE: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY ACTIONS

4 Reporters provide key points from focus groups

International Panel discuss results:

- *Michael Förschner*, ZSI, Austria
- *Prof. Phillip Talyor*, Monash University, Australia
- *Dr. Jasper van Loo*, CEDEFOP
- *Graeme Henderson*, IPPR, UK
- *Silas Olsson*, Health Access, Sweden

Chaired by *Geert Sanders*, SER Noord-Nederland

17:00 – 17:15 CLOSING

Dr Cristina Martinez-Fernandez, OECD/CFE/LEED

Aldert de Vries, BZK

17:15 NETWORKING RECEPTION

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| Province Drenthe and Province Groningen, Netherlands | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Name | Surname | Organization | Position |
| Engel | Antonides | Alfa-college | Voorzitter College van Bestuur |
| Jan | Batelaan | Gemeente Menterwolde | Wethouder |
| Stieneke | Boerma | Noorderpoort | Projectmanager |
| Jacob | Bruintjes | Gemeente Borger-Odoorn | Wethouder |
| Roxana | Chandali | Ministerie van BZK | Beleidscoördinator |
| Irma | De Jeer | Provincie Groningen | Beleidsmedewerker |
| Aldert | De Vries | Ministerie van BZK | Wonen, Bouwen en Integratie |
| Catrien | de Vries | Provincie Friesland | programmamanager ruimtelijke kwaliteit |
| Annet | Dijkema | Seaport Xperience Center | Projectdirecteur |
| Bas | Dijkema | Provincie Drenthe | Beleidsmedewerker Krimp |
| Arjen | Edzes | Rijksuniversiteit Groningen | Researcher |
| Paul | Elhorst | Rijksuniversiteit Groningen | Researcher |
| Roos | Galjaard | Provincie Groningen | Projectleider bevolkingskrimp a.i. |
| Jan Dirk | Gardenier | CAB Groningen | Directeur |
| Fleur | Gräper-vanKoolwijk | SER Noord-Nederland | Algemeen secretaris |
| Gerhard | Kadijk | Kamer van Koophandel | Adviseur Regionale Economie |
| Bonnie | Kiers | Provincie Drenthe | Beleidsmedewerker |
| Harry | Kroeze | Gemeente Emmen | Beleidsadviseur Arbeidsmarkt |
| Hinrich | Kuper | EDR | EURES-adviseur |
| Adri | Mertens | Alfa-College | Projectontwikkelaar |
| T | Mulder | CMO Groningen | Directeur |
| Rein | Munniksma | Provincie Drenthe | Gedeputeerde |
| Jan | Nap | Provincie Drenthe | Projectleider Techniek |
| Ellen | Offers | ZorgpleinNoord | Hoofd Arbeidsmarkt en Onderwijs |
| Mirjam | Punter | Provincie Groningen | Beleidsmedewerker |

Summary of the Groningen-Drenthe Region Seminar, 4-5 November 2012

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------------|---|--|----------|
| Gerhard | Rakhorst | HANN Northern Netherlands | Programmableider Technologie | Medische |
| Rika | Schuiling | UWV Werkbedrijf Groningen | Regiomanager Groningen | |
| Geert | Sanders | SER Noord-Nederland | Voorzitter | |
| Rob | Schuur | Noorderpoort | Voorzitter College van Bestuur | |
| Tanja | Sextro | Provincie Drenthe | Beleidsmedewerker Arbeidsmark | |
| Tamara | Sloothaak | Adviesteam Kenniscentra | Regionaal Adviseur | |
| Jeltje | Talen | Hanzehogeschool Groningen | Kenniscentrum Arbeid | |
| Yvonne | Turenhout | STAMM | Directeur-bestuurder | |
| Ard | van der Tuuk | Provincie Drenthe | Gedeputeerde | |
| Gerrit | Van der Veen | UWV Werkbedrijf Drenthe0 | Regiomanager Drenthe | |
| Jouke | van Dijk | Rijksuniversiteit Groningen | Researcher | |
| Jolanda | Warners | Provincie Groningen | Beleidsmedewerker Health Ageing | |
| Bert | Wassink | Gemeente Aa en Hunze | Wethouder | |
| Karel | Groen | Dollard Regio (EDR) | | |
| Philippe | Hondelink | Koninklijke Metaalunie, district Noord | | |
| Jur | Wiersum | Gemeente Aa en Hunze | Wethouder | |
| C.G. | Zijderveld | SB-Eemsdelta | Voorzitter | |
| | | | | |
| Cristina | Martinez-Fernandez | OECD/CFE/LEED | Senior Policy Analyst, Project team leader | |
| Michael | Förschner, | ZSI Austria | | |
| Phillip | Taylor | Monash University | Chief investigator on grants | |
| Jasper | van Loo | Cedefop | Senior expert | |
| Femke | Verwest | PBL | Researcher | |
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| Graeme | Henderson | IPPR | Research Fellow | |