



DART

Declining,
Ageing and Regional
Transformation



Final Report

DART

**Declining, Ageing and
Regional Transformation**



European Union
European Regional Development Fund

Preface

Declining, ageing, regional transformation, demographic and socio-economic change is a big challenge for about 30% of EU regions and this is expected to increase up to 50% in 2030. Responding to the European-wide importance of demographic change some European regions analysed demographic change for their own country and communicated new ideas how to deal with declining, ageing and regional transformation. Brandenburg organised its 1st European partnership through a workshop with the Committee of the Regions in 2005. A joint conference followed in 2007. Brandenburg's Representative at the European Commission became the rapporteur of „The Demographic Future of Europe - From Challenge to Opportunity“. Some of the DART regions took part in the consultation of the Green Paper „Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations“. In 2006 the „Demographic Change Regions Network“ started to discuss policy solutions to demographic challenge. The network intended to share specific knowledge and approaches with the Committee of the Regions and the EU Parliament. Some regions of the network signed a „Joint Declaration of European Regions: Facing demographic change as a regional challenge“ and submitted this position paper to Commissioner Vladimir Spidla (the EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities) at the 1st Demographic Forum in October 2006.

It soon proved insufficient to discuss problems and solutions without the involvement of experts and regional authorities. In order to secure appropriate future cooperation in the network, representatives of all partner regions decided to exchange experience “in order to identify good practice and develop new tools and approaches for implementation” within the new INTERREG programme, focusing on the specific issues concerning the partner regions: „Declining, Ageing and Regional Transformation (DART)“. The project idea was presented at the „EU Interregional Cooperation Forum“ in Lisbon in Sept 2007. Many of the EU regions showed interest. Partner meetings were held in Brussels, Potsdam and Berlin. These were followed by an intensive mailing of all details of this project, enabling them to be jointly developed and discussed. The final version of the DART application was worked out at a partner meeting in January 2009.

Sincere thanks to all of the Project Partners involved in DART, for their cooperation and assistance in every matter of the word throughout the duration of the DART project. Special thanks in particular to those who had more ownership and responsibility with regards to particular areas of the project. There was involvement of some external experts also worthy of thanks. The good working relationship formed during DART opened up a new network of demographic-minded people and new emerging friendships.

The **DART** Team
September 2012, Europe.



Abstract

The goal of this work was to explore the challenges presented from Declining, Ageing and Regional Transformation (DART) in specific study areas within Europe. The areas chosen had a common thread running through them, in that they are affected by declining and ageing. The objective of the study was to attain co-operation among the participating countries to benchmark, identify and transfer appropriate solutions for dealing with demographic change. The motivation for this work is given by a previous research as set out in the preface above. This work examined and defined common indicators for measuring demographic decline and other symptoms of demographic change in European regions. These indicators allow for a comparison of data to be made between different regions. This study focused on the identification of good practices which strengthen the economy and in turn concern educational as well as health care and social services in each region. The aim was that the best of these practices can be transferred to other regions not only among partner regions but also wider in Europe. The main results of DART are focused around recommendations aimed towards regional and European stakeholders, which could be used to raise public and political awareness with regard to declining and ageing regions, thus contributing in the future to help policymakers target areas prone to demographic change and its associated issues.

Acknowledgements from the Lead Partner

With intensive exchange and lively discussions among the partners, the DART project showed how crucial it is to foster exchange between European regions to get new ideas from good practices. Therefore DART proved to be an excellent example of active European integration.

The Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg (ILB) has to be aware of demographic issues in our assessments of projects for funding and financing. As the intermediate body for the European structural funds we are responsible to ensure that the European money is put into projects that consider demographic change as a part of the sustainability. The ILB is as well the regional development bank for Brandenburg. In this role we offer long term financing for infrastructure, housing and enterprises. Demographic issues are of increasing importance to our investment decisions.

DART was on one hand of relevant practical importance for the bank, but even more so it was a pleasure and privilege for us to support the partners of DART in their exchange as the lead partner of the project.

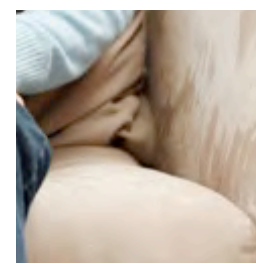
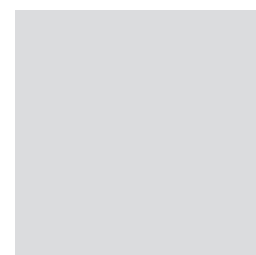
We would like to thank all the partners for the cooperation and assistance in the daily management of DART. We also thank the INTERREG IVC programme and the European Union for the funding of the project as well as the secretariat in Lille and Katowice for their support in the implementation.

Tillmann Stenger
Member of the Board of the
Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg

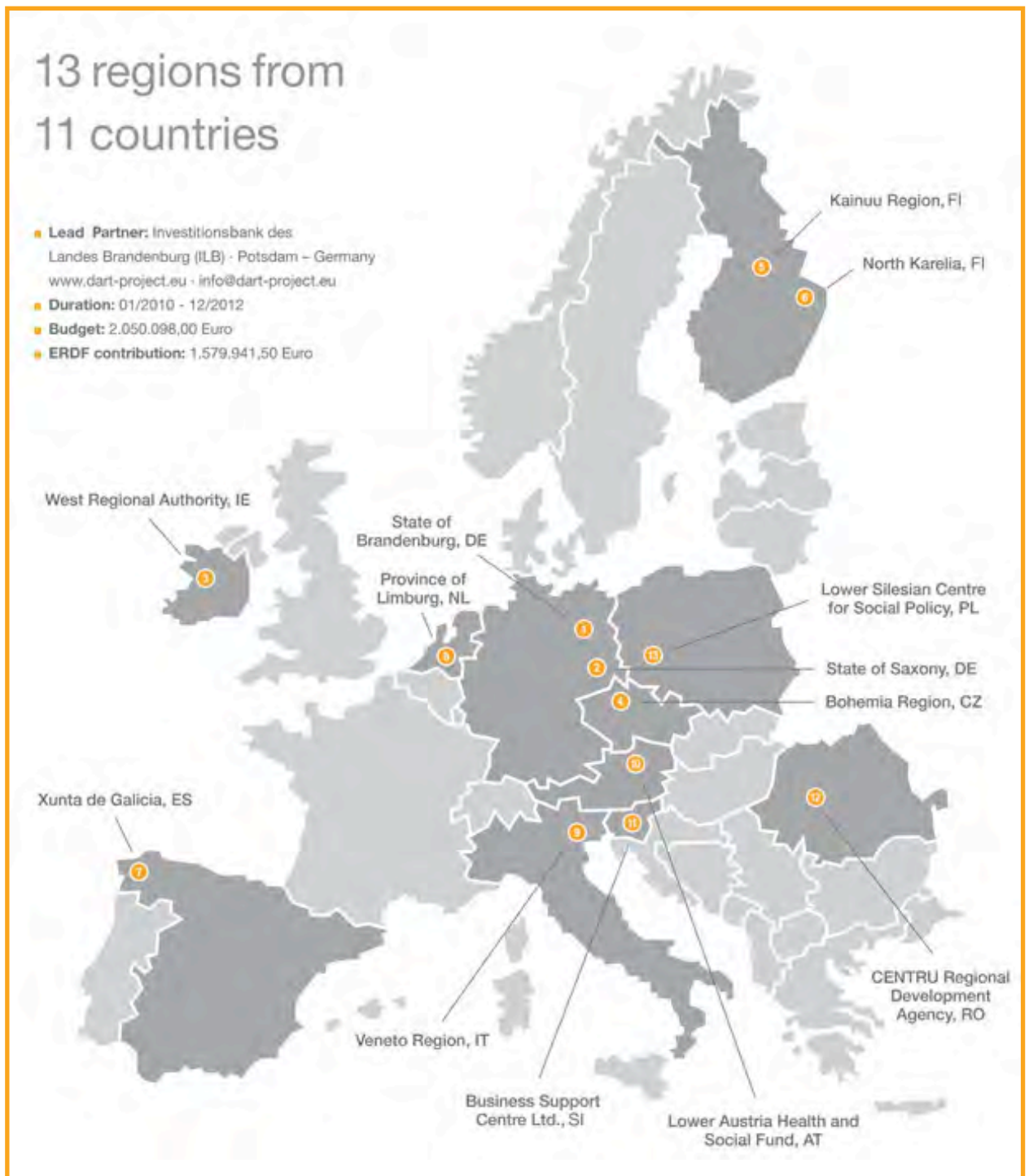
Pertti Hermannek
Project Director
on behalf of ILB

Table of Contents

Map of Europe highlighting the Project Partners	6
Executive summary	7
Section 1: Demographic change	8
Section 1.1: Academic discussion of demographic change	8
Section 1.2: A Short Demographic Portrait of Europe	10
Section 1.3: Political discussion of demographic change in Europe	11
Section 2: DART project: genesis, targets, methods	14
Section 3: Demographic change in the partner regions	15
Section 4: Exchange of experience	20
Section 5: Indicators and Standards	22
Section 5.1: Indicators of demographic change	22
Section 5.2: Standards of public services of general interest	23
Section 6: Common concerns and recommendations	24
Section 6.1: Health care	24
Section 6.2: Social services	25
Section 6.3: Education, life-long-learning and job market	27
Section 6.4: Traditional and innovative economy	28
Section 6.5: Other topics	30
Section 7: Conclusions	31
Section 7.1: The aim – Life cycle proof neighbourhood	31
Section 7.2: Instruments for an integrated strategy for demographic change	32
Section 7.3: Toolbox for regions: strategies, methods, measures	33
Section 7.4: Success in declining regions	35
List of project partners and contact details	36
Glossary	37



Map of Europe highlighting the Project Partners



Executive summary

Demographic change constitutes a challenge for many European regions, as a result of low fertility rates and migration; by 2030 every third person in the EU will be over 60. This situation has created obstacles in providing adequate public services, while shrinking regional demands and the need for a sufficiently large qualified workforce are a big challenge to avoid endangering the economic basis of the regions. There are many strategies and reports underlining the impending challenges in connection with declining and ageing regions. The „vulnerability index report“ identifies the influence of demographic trends as one of the biggest challenges facing Europe. Meeting the demographic challenge through the consolidation of human capital and the maintenance of public services are key factors in regional policies, as outlined in the EU initiative “Regions for economic change”, the „Lisbon Strategy“ and its successor „Europe 2020“. There are examples showing how to boost shrinking regions. Accordingly DART outlined these experiences, underpinning them with adapted standards and indicators, working out innovative and integrated solutions to maintain quality of life and social inclusion.

Two components were set out (Exchange of Experience; and Standards & Indicators to benchmark regions) both applied at the same time in order to achieve solutions to these challenges. Both components together constitute the Political Recommendations. The exchange of experience came through interregional meetings, study visits and workshops. In order to benchmark the regions a set of indicators were decided, to assess and compare regional development. DART brought awareness of the importance of an integrated strategy, thus targeted information regarding demographic change and project results were given to multipliers and decision-makers. DART aimed to identify new products and services to maintain the quality of life in regions with a declining and ageing population, especially in new business fields for SMEs, education, life-long learning, health care and social services (good practices were highlighted). Sustainable jobs must be preserved and created, using the chances offered by the silver economy. Young people and employees need good education and lifelong learning to maintain or obtain a job. Older people need good health care to stay in their jobs until retirement, to live at home and they need social services and social inclusion to participate in the community.

Political recommendations focusing on “Life-cycle-proof neighbourhood and social inclusion – instruments for an integrated strategy for regional transformation in demographic change” were formulated. Showing how regions can organise themselves and adapt public and private services to demographic changes so as to exploit chances for new jobs and innovation. The Declining, Ageing and Regional Transformation (DART) project looked at challenges arising from demographic change. Thirteen regions, most of them affected by declining and all affected by ageing co-operated to identify and transfer appropriate solutions to deal with demographic change. The project defined common indicators for measuring decline and other symptoms of demographic change, thus enabling the comparison of data to be made between different regions. DART identified good practices, which strengthen the economy, concentrating on education and life-long learning, health care and social services. The best of these practices have been transferred to other regions. Political recommendations were decided in order to raise public and political awareness with regard to declining and ageing regions and the associated challenges linked to demographic change.



Section 1: Demographic change

Section 1.1: Academic discussion of demographic change

For about 10 years, it is clear that Europe's demographic change as a „megatrend“ of the 21st century is not a „normal“ structural change, but includes all spheres of life of the affected societies and this will change in an as yet to be experienced way.

The decline in birth rates first began in European countries a hundred years ago, which then led through several stages, starting in the 1970's, when levels fell below the required reproduction level. This process is accompanied and increasingly reinforced by the continuing increase in life expectancy in almost all European countries. This increase in life expectancy continues unabated. In the 20th century alone, this amounted in Europe between 25 and 40 years, and present trends in the improvement of the life expectancy for the elderly point to the conclusion of this development being 'the society of the centenarian'.

The complex process of demographic change covers mainly four areas:

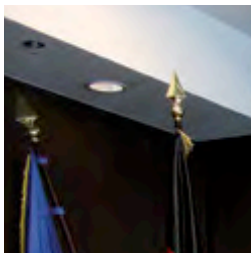
- ▶ 1. the quantitative change of the total population, i.e. altogether territorially differentiated contraction of the population particularly in the area with embedded urban growth islands;
- ▶ 2. the change of the age structure of the population and shift of the proportions between the age groups, i.e. above all ageing of the population, increase of the average age, sinking of the youth quotient and growth of the elderly quotient;
- ▶ 3. the change of the social structure, above all the family, and household structures, i.e. also the growing 'separation' and importance of the economic and political meaning of the older population age groups;
- ▶ 4. the change of the territorial distribution of the population by migration movements, i.e. in particular drift from rural areas and immigration into growth centres;

Panel discussion at the
DART conference –
Solutions for the economy,
Dresden 14.4.11
(from left to right)
Jens Gerhardt (BMW),
Julius Op de Beke
(European Commission),

Dr. Willy Buschak (Confederati-
on of German Trade Unions),
Dr. Harald Michel (IFAD Institute)

The countries that have for a longer time been engaged in this process of a contracting and ageing society have permanently superseded countries with expanding populations in Europe. An important distinction about the phases of growth is first of all to see that adjustments in the population declining and ageing phases require whatever adjustments and reductions in public services, and this is steeped in conflict, rather than establishing new services.

The irreversible ageing of the population and the increasing territorial disparities are at the core of this process of change, and will lead to major changes in society, politics and business.



Therefore, with high probability, the number of inhabitants in Europe will be reduced significantly in the next decades. The slight rise in fertility numbers at present, in no way leads to a stabilisation or a growth in the population of Europe internally. This 'rise' is too small because today's average value of 1.5 children per woman would have to rise on a long-term basis to over 2, in order to reach the required reproduction level in the long term. In addition, it comes that due to the inertia of the demographic processes even such a very improbable increase would change almost nothing in the developments of the next 20-30 years (i.e. that the birth rates continue to remain low and the ageing of the population continues). Theoretically, a stabilisation would at least be possible by the numbers of immigrants coming in, as has been experienced in recent years in Europe. However, it is increasingly questionable from which source potential immigrants would come from as the traditional areas, especially in Eastern Europe, are now also affected by an extreme shrinking process. The demographically induced change of European societies is in full swing and will continue with increasing speed and lead to a similarly far-reaching change in social systems and organizational structures of life. As it's essentially hard to change the demographic core processes of this change (birth rate) or the desired development (increase in life expectancy), a differentiated approach in dealing with the ageing and shrinking process and their impact in the form of dynamic adjustment is necessary and also promising.

The current and future demographic developments are local, and in particular regional. The main effects of the demographic change are declining and as well as an increasing concentration and internationalization. These developments don't along political or administrative borders. We are seeing a juxtaposition of the growth and contraction processes.

As a rough overview, a demographically conditioned division in two parts of Europe exists regarding this development. Apart from prosperous centres of dense development, which exercise an increasing attraction, distant parts of Europe experience themselves, particularly in the rural peripheries, the change as a contraction with increasingly emptying areas due to depopulation and a rapid increase in the ratio of the older population.

From this, the most varied problem configurations result. The decrease in population leads to the undermining of the sustainability of the general infrastructure. The maintenance of functional regional labour and supply markets is reflected in this. The strong increase in the proportion of elderly people, in particular in the surrounding countryside of the cities and in the rural regions, makes high demands on the local infrastructures. The migration processes lead to demographic and social disproportions in the age and gender structure. The proportion of men in an ageing population increases disproportionately. These transformations work for their part as a catalyst in accelerating the demographic change process. That is why flexible adaptation strategies are necessary, both on a national level, and also in view of the particularly affected regions.

As a rough overview, a demographically conditioned division in two parts of Europe exists regarding this demographic change. Apart from prosperous centres of dense development, which exercise an increasing attraction, distant parts of Europe (these areas account for approximately 75% of the regions) experience themselves, particularly in the rural peripheries, the change as a contraction with increasingly emptying areas due to depopulation and a rapid increase in the ratio of the older population. Through selective migration processes, the impact of change in these source areas still strengthens and in the target areas are at least occasionally moderated. At present, especially densely populated areas, profit from migration gains at the expense of rural sources. This polarization of the regions in Europe as a whole, but especially in the individual countries, will intensify further in the competition for human and financial resources. Thus, in the near future, some regions of Europe, will be hardly impacted upon by the demographic change (ageing and contraction), whilst in other areas the impact will be faster and more profound.



Section 1.2: A Short Demographic Portrait of Europe

According to the Eurostat reports, the population growth in Europe will slow down in the next 4 decades, with a low increase predicted between 2010 and 2030 (from the current figure of 500 million people to 520 million) and a slight decrease afterwards (reaching 505 million in 2050). If the 11 countries involved in the DART Project are analyzed, considerable variations across these countries can be observed. Significant increases in the total population will be recorded in Ireland and Spain (in the latter case, the population growth is due mainly to immigration, located in the capital and the Mediterranean strip), while the largest decreases will be recorded in Romania, Poland and Germany. The eastern regions of Germany (former Eastern Germany) which has already experienced a severe demographic decline will continue to decrease further. According to the most recent demographic reports every one in four Europeans will be over 65 years by 2030. This ageing process will have a visible impact on almost every aspect of our lives and will affect almost every European country or region. It will be a rapid process in some countries, while a slow-paced one in others: The ageing process seems unstoppable. Territorial variability depends on a mixture of factors such as varying fertility rates, migration flows, life expectancy, health status, demographic patterns of ethnic groups. A significant number of European regions will experience population decline in the next 20 years. Regions from Romania, Poland, Germany and Slovenia are among the worst affected DART regions. Some of these regions are characterized by low levels of income, low participation rates and a high proportion of labour force employed in the primary sector of the economy (regions in Romania & Poland). The negative natural growth between 2008 and 2030 (around 5.5 mil people) will be fully compensated for by the consistent migration flow expected in the next 20 years (net migration will count about 30 mil. pers.). The largest net migration will be recorded in particular areas of Spain, Italy and Germany. By 2030, Romania and Poland will record negligible figures for cumulative net migration.

In 2010, the birth rate at the European level increased to 10.7 ‰. Five countries involved in DART recorded birth rates below the European average, while the remaining 6 recorded higher rates. The lowest birth rate among all DART countries was recorded in Germany (8.3 ‰) and relatively low birth rates were calculated in Austria, Italy and Romania. At the other end of the spectrum, in Ireland the birth rate reached 16.5 ‰ and relatively high rates were recorded in countries such Finland, Netherlands and the Czech Republic. Over the next 2 decades, the fertility rate is expected to show a slight recovery, from the current level of 1.59 to 1.64 children. Ireland, Finland and the Netherlands will maintain relatively high fertility rates.

Due to better living conditions, life expectancy at birth will continue to increase in all European countries. In some countries such as Spain, Austria, Italy, Finland and Germany, the projected figures for this indicator are very high: over 85 years for women and over 80 years for men. The share of the older population will continue to increase in all countries in the next 20 years and will reach 23.6% of the total population. The highest values will be recorded in Germany and Italy while the lowest will be recorded in Ireland. Rising life expectancy combined with low rates of birth will lead to a further rise of the median age in Europe which already reached 40.9 years in 2010. In Germany, Italy and Finland the median age of the overall population showed a fast increase between 2002 and 2010 and were at the top of the countries list, with the highest values of this indicator.

Over the next 20 years, the ageing process in Europe will speed up considerably. The proportion of the young population of the total population will go down from the current figure of 21.3% to 14% in 2030. The share of the old population in the overall population will increase over the same period, from 17.4% to 23.6%. Germany and Italy will be the worst affected countries by demographic change while Ireland will again be a notable exception. As a consequence of demographic shifts, the old age dependency ratio will go up from 25.9% to 38%. At national level, this indicator will record the highest values in countries such as Germany, Finland and Italy and the lowest figure in Ireland.

Section 1.3: Political Discussion of demographic change in Europe

European Commission

Demographic change has been on the political agenda of the European Union for some time now. The European Commission's contribution to tackling the challenges related to demographic change and an ageing population encompass the following: the integration of structural reform into overall policy co-ordination; improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of social spending; restore the functioning of financial markets, and; promote the efficiency of higher education. This should ensure a less expensive demographic transition for Europe. These demographic changes bring with them a number of challenges, particularly in terms of policy, as they must be transposed into various policies. In order to address these challenges, the European Commission released a Green Paper (2005)¹ entitled 'Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations'. This paper states that if the European fertility rate remains as it is at present, the rate is too low to replace the population, which will result in population decline. Therefore, immigration will play a vital role in sustaining demography in many European regions. Again, this proves the need for additional policies in relation to the integration of immigrants into the various regions and the provision of equal opportunities to those involved. The creation of a 'sustainable work life cycle' can be achieved through the successful integration of young people, now a vital 'resource', into the workforce and there is a need to formulate policy to address this. At the other end of the scale, the older proportion of the work force requires policy to alleviate any chances of discrimination. This proportion of the population which is actively ageing (in-line with increasing life expectancy rates), are in better health than in previous decades and are more active in general. However, it also brings the issue of the need for care-provision down the road, drawing on family (where applicable) and the social services / community care programmes.

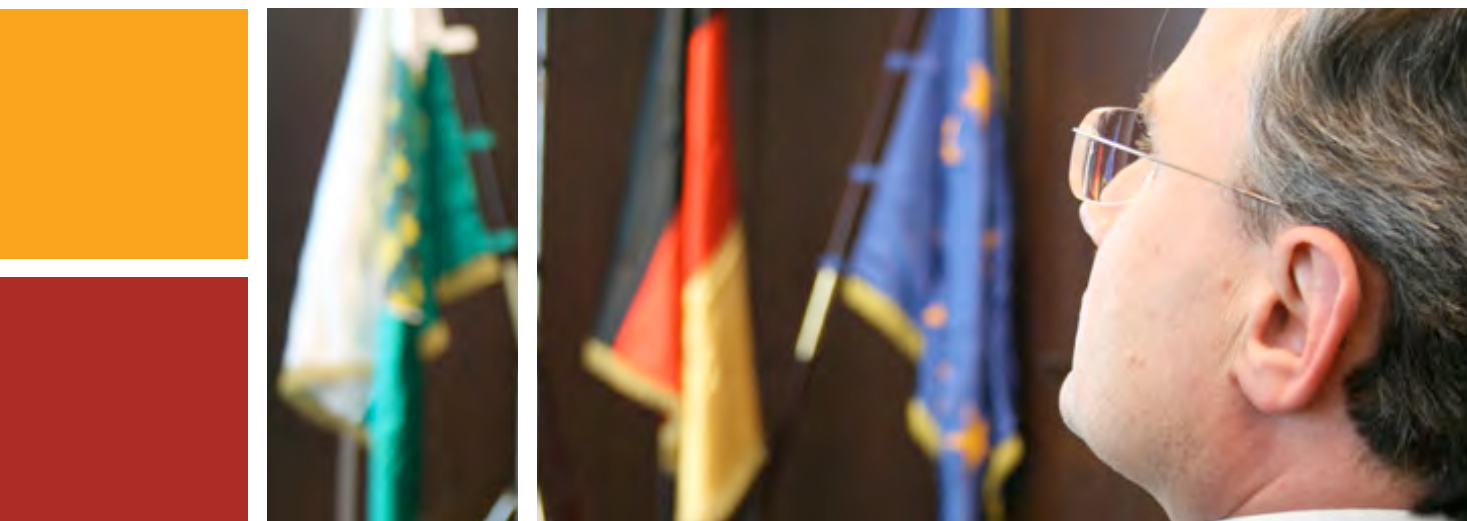


Panel discussion at the DART Midterm Conference Brussels, 29.11.11
(from left to right)
Pertti Hermannek (Moderator),
Constanze Krehl (MEP),
Dr. Michael Schneider (CoR),
Pertti Malinen (Kainuu Region)

¹ European Commission Green Paper (2005), "Confronting Demographic Change: A New Solidarity between the Generations".

The Cohesion Policy of the European Union has a central role in supporting the efforts of European regions to adapt to demographic change and in helping to overcome the effects of a shrinking workforce. Cohesion Policy is the policy behind the hundreds of thousands of projects all over Europe that receive funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) – the two ‘Structural Funds’ – and the Cohesion Fund. As the changing demographic trends vary across different areas, there is a challenge in that no one policy response will “fit” each area, but rather there is a need for varying levels of policy to deal with diverse levels of demographic change. The EU’s Cohesion Policy covers the challenges of demographic change because it encourages the design and implementation of policies, thus enabling regions to respond to population change through policies tailored to suit them. Structural Funds are the financial instrument of the EU Cohesion Policy. Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion Policy have been agreed by the European Parliament and the Council, which have been designed to help Member States. These funds provide financial support for a wide variety of policy areas.

In the next funding period 2014-2020 demographic change will be a cross-cutting topic through all the priorities the EU-Commission proposed in the draft of the structural funds regulations. So it is up to the regions how they use the structural funds to fund projects dealing with demographic change.



European Parliament

In October 2011 the European Parliament (EP) brought out a report on demographic change². The EP believes that the public are often aware only of the dangers and not of the opportunities inherent to demographic change. If demographic change is shaped and answers found at European, national and regional levels, it will not be a threat but an opportunity for Europe. The report states that structural funds play an important role in addressing demographic change and calls on the Commission to include demographic change as a horizontal objective in the future cohesion policy. The EP believes that joint solutions and synergies can be found by implementing EU policies related to demographic change and encourages the member states and regions to pay greater heed to the topic and to make use of the structural funds to help address demographic change. The report proposes that demographic developments in the regions should be statistically measured and local, regional and national databases on demographic development should be established, so that data can be evaluated at European level and be made comparable. The exchanges of best practices between Member States, regions and localities should be fostered.

2 European Parliament (2011) “Report on Demographic Change and its Consequences for the future of Cohesion Policy of the EU”

European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the political assembly that provides the regional and local levels with a voice in EU policy development and EU legislation. The treaties oblige the Commission, Parliament and Council to consult the Committee of the Regions whenever new proposals are made in areas that affect the regional or local level. The CoR has 344 members from the 27 EU countries, and its work is organised in 6 different commissions. They examine proposals, debate and discuss in order to write official opinions on key issues³. The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is a consultative body of the European Union. It is made up of different working bodies, such as the Presidency, Groups and other Sections. The EESC has a number of Members and deals with many documents, policy areas (themes) and events. One of their themes is Social Affairs, which deals with demographic issues, the elderly and youth⁴. One of the issues dealt with by the CoR and the EESC in the EU, which is of direct relevance to the DART Project, is demographic change. The following is an overview of the political discussion of demographic change at the level of the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee. Set out below are the key Opinions (based on publications of note – guides, manuals etc.) from the CoR and EESC on demographic change, ageing etc. Following this, where available, are the recommendations/key points, all of which are set out in reverse chronological order over the last 4 years.



Demographic Change Regions Network (DCRN)

Demographic change and its impacts on social, economic, healthcare and educational matters have become one of the main strategic challenges for European politics. Demographic Change Regions Network (DCRN), founded in 2006 in Brussels is an open informal network that joins together Brussels based regional offices interested in challenges of demographic change – ageing, declining and migration of population. The network is a group of some 40 regions, which see that the demographic trends in Europe are an important factor to consider and discuss in all levels from local to European. Demographic challenges are and continue to be a great challenge for the economic and social cohesion of Europe, therefore awareness-raising on the topic is essential.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012

Active ageing is defined by the World Health Organization as the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age (Active Ageing - A Policy Framework, 2002, p. 12). It allows people to realize their potential for wellbeing throughout their lives and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capabilities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need assistance. While this definition includes the notion of continuing activity in the labour force, it also encompasses continuing participation of older people in society. To mark the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Plan on Ageing and respond to the demographic challenges facing Europe, the European Union decided to declare 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EY2012). The EY2012 serves as a framework for raising awareness, identifying and disseminating good practices and, more importantly, encouraging policymakers and stakeholders at all levels to promote active ageing and to support greater cooperation and solidarity between the generations. The European Commission has launched a special website for the EY2012 (<http://europa.eu/ey2012/>).



3 CoR Website (general) <http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/PresentationTemplate>.

4 EESC Website (general) <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.themes>

Section 2: DART-Project: genesis, targets, methods

The methodological approach to DART was centred upon a main focus on the adaptation of regional policies to include the challenges of demographic change, drawing on existing identified good practice examples. Some of the regions have a long tradition offering services of public interest in sparsely populated regions. In other regions public services and – even new – infrastructure must be adapted. In identifying policy solutions, which have proved successful in other regions, this exchange of experience included the identification of existing standards regarding the availability of social and technical infrastructure and factors relating to success and failure. During the life-span of the DART project, there were 4 workshops and 6 conferences held on the main topics of the DART-project. In each of the conferences 2 crosscutting themes were discussed: (1) Life cycle proof Neighbourhood / Social Inclusion, and; (2) Standards and Indicators for Benchmarking. As set out in the EU Operational Programme 2008, the demographic challenges “will call for ambitious, but differentiated policy solutions, according to the individual regional contexts. As demographic factors interfere with many other issues, more integrated policy approaches will be necessary”. So the cross over adaptation and integration of activities under the overall objective of the project, to improve the effectiveness of regional development policies was the most important part of the project.



The monitoring process was steered by the lead partner in cooperation with the component coordinators. The partners checked the achievement quality of the objectives, the evaluation reports of the conferences and the time-plan to ensure interlocking of the content. The Steering Group discussed the monitoring results throughout the timeframe of the project. The project initiated an internal open self-evaluation process, in that after each project conference an evaluation workshop took place which assessed the conferences, filtered the good practices presented and prepared the relevant guidelines. In the beginning a questionnaire was developed to measure the quality of the conferences. The transfer of knowledge, project dissemination and the development of the new methodology were evaluated and used to improve and strengthen the project work and relevance of the results. While evaluation of Component 3 was process-orientated, evaluation of Component 2 and Component 4 were more result-orientated. There were a number of expected outputs throughout the various components of the project. All results have been disseminated in various forms of public relations. In terms of outcomes, at the end of the project, the following are available:

- ▶ Instruments for an integrated strategy for a lifecycle proof region;
- ▶ Indicators to analyse and compare regional development in declining regions;
- ▶ Best practices which are transferable to other regions even after project-end.

Section 3: Demographic change in the DART partner Regions

All DART partners chose a region from their countries or regions of the country where, according to their demographic processes of ageing of the population and the population decline, are particularly concise. On the basis of 13 of the most important indicators of demographic change, these processes in the DART study areas were represented and allowed for comparison. In detail, these are: population density, population change to clusters, population forecast, age structure, old age quotient, youth quotient, average age of a mother giving birth to her first child, birth/fertility, population change by gender, life expectancy, household size, marital status, migration. The most significant demographic changes in the study areas can be summarised as follows on the basis of these indicators:

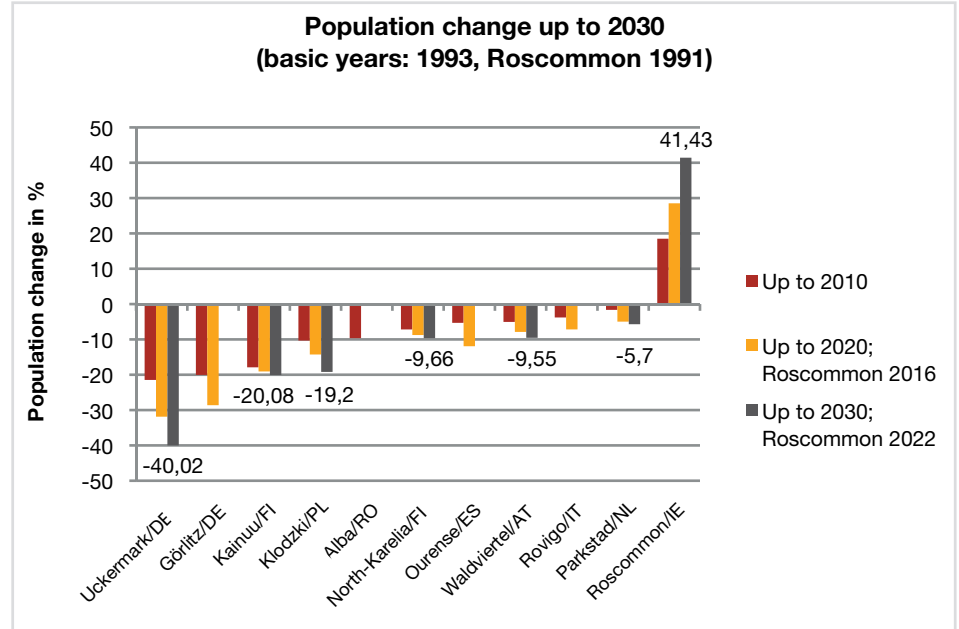
The surveyed DART study areas differ considerably in their population. The Dutch region of Parkstad is extremely densely populated in comparison with the two Finnish regions who have a very low population density. All other regions have a comparable population. It is clearly visible that almost everywhere there is a decline in the population in the last few years. Only the Czech region of Kutna Hora has a minimal increase.

The population change in the study areas can be divided into five clusters. The survey regions saw an increase in the population in Kutna Hora, Gorenjska and Roscommon in the period under review. The remaining study areas have to counter all the problems of a decline in population. The two German study areas, with a population decline of about 20 per cent, are particularly affected.

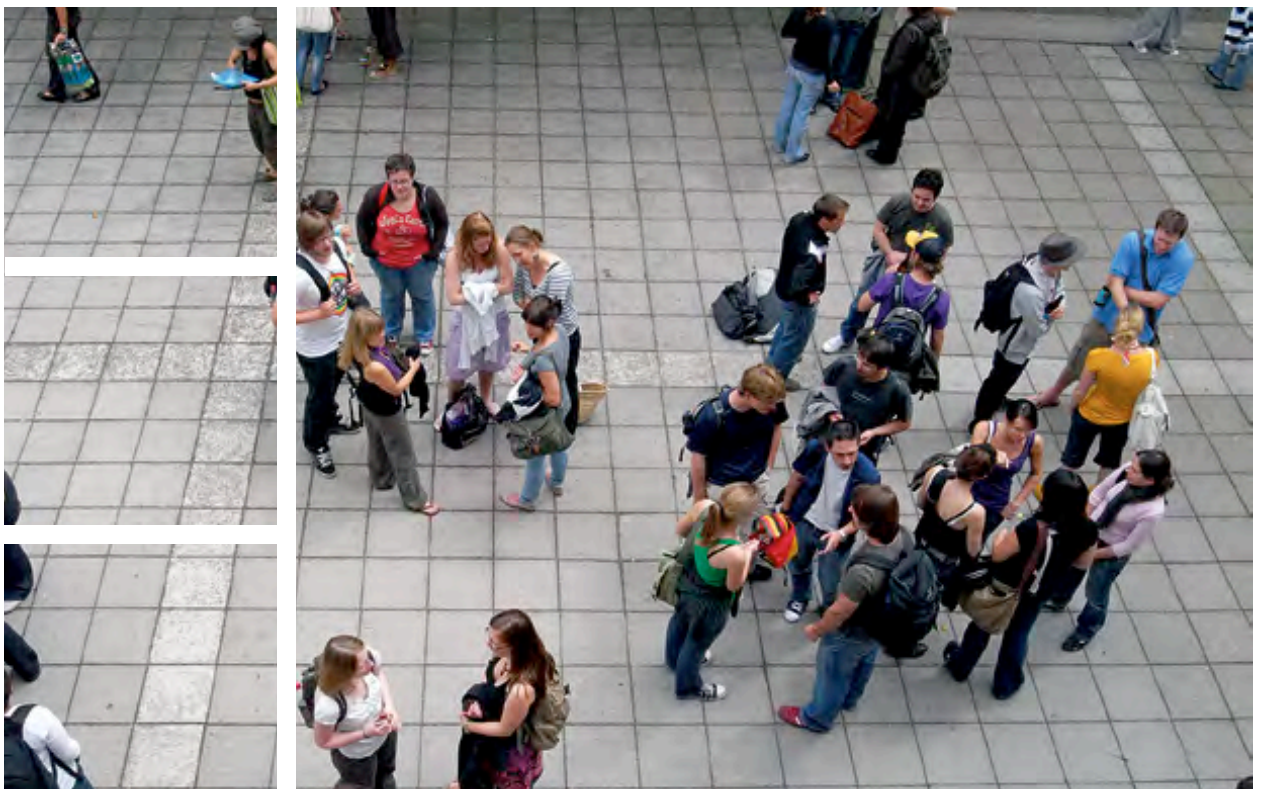
State/Region/Study-Area	Population change in % between 1993 and 2008/2009	
Germany/Brandenburg/Uckermark	-19,9	Cluster I (very intense decrease)
Germany/Saxony/Görlitz	-19,2	
Finland/Kainuu	-14,2	
Poland/Lower Silesia/Klodzki	-10,4	
Romania/Centru/Alba	-9,4	Cluster II (intense decrease)
Finland/North Karelia	-6,8	
Austria/Lower Austria/Waldviertel	-4,7	Cluster III (Decrease)
Spain/Galicia/Ourense	-2,5	
Netherlands/Limburg/Parkstad	-1,5	
Italy/Veneto/Rovigo	-0,3	Cluster IV (Stagnation)
Czech Rep/Central Bohemia/Kutna Hora	0,2	Cluster V (Growth)
Slovenia/Kranj/Gorenjska	4,3	
Ireland/WRA/Roscommon	13,2	

Population projection

It is evident that in the surveyed regions the population will fall heavily. The decline in the population shows up particularly clearly in the two East German regions. They will be confronted soonest with the problems of demographic change and can therefore assume a certain model role. It is also evident that all other surveyed regions in the future can expect increasingly lower population numbers, and with that comes the resulting associated problems of an ageing society.

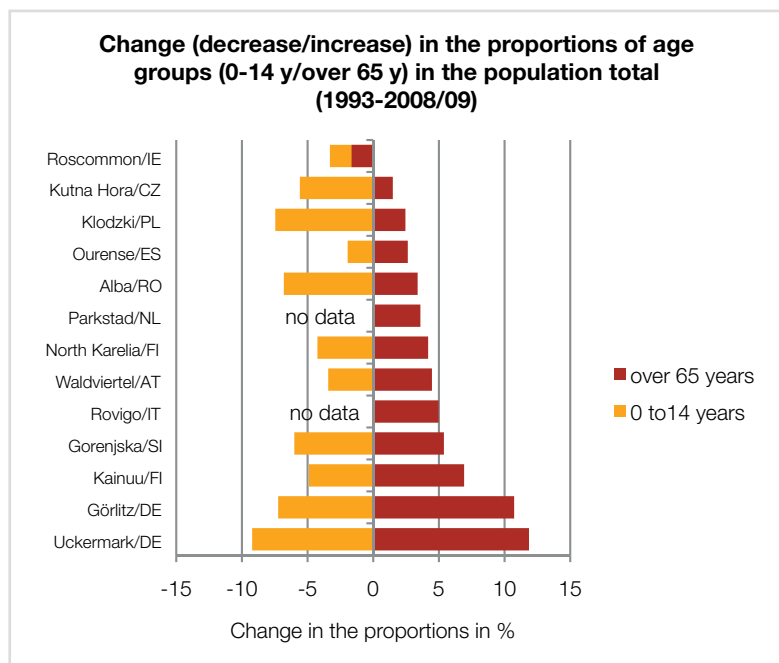


Only the region of Roscommon can expect a further increase in its population. By 2010, the population will grow by a further five per cent. Kutna Hora and Gorenjska fall outside the analysis, because there was not sufficient existing data.



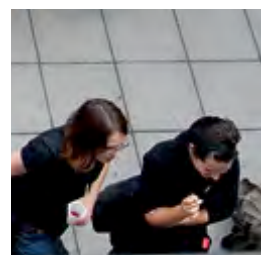
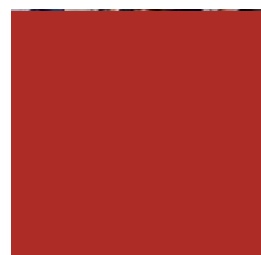
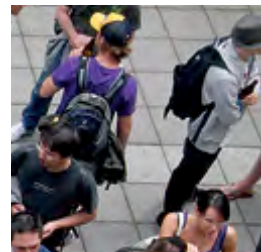
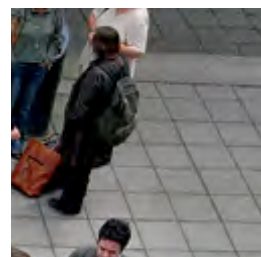
Age structure

A clear decrease in the younger generation becomes visible in all surveyed regions. Most noticeably the declining birth rates can be seen in the regions of Uckermark, Klodzki, Görlitz and Alba. It is evident that the regions of cluster I are again most strongly affected by the decrease in population also in this age group. The proportion of the age groups (0 to 14 years) in the population fell here in the years from 1993 to 2008/09 by more than seven per cent. Parallel to this, an increase in the population of over 65 year old people is clear in the course of time.



This change in population structure is particularly visible, in turn, in the two German Regions. It is only in the region of Roscommon that the number of over 65 year olds in slight decline.

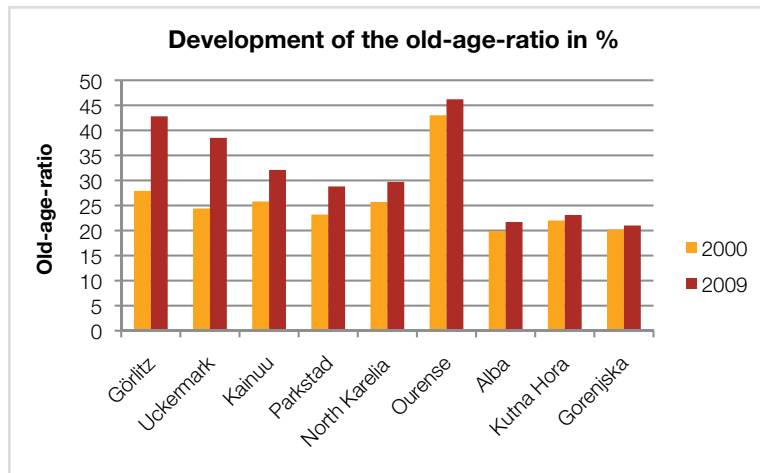
Region	Population		Change (decrease/increase) in the population total and the proportions of age groups (0-14 y/over 65 y) in the population (1993-2008/09)		
	Total 1993	Total 2008/09	in %	0-14 y	Over 65 y
Uckermark/DE	163.719	132.837	-19,9	-9,22	11,86
Görlitz/DE	347.707	281.076	-19,2	-7,24	10,73
Kainuu/FI	96.298	83.160	-14,2	-4,90	6,92
Klodzki/PL	182.667	164.434	-10,4	-7,46	2,45
Alba/RO	412.038	374.535	-9,4	-6,81	3,38
North Karelia/FI	178.076	166.129	-6,8	-4,25	4,18
Waldviertel/AT	148.633	142.042	-4,7	-3,43	4,47
Ourense/ES	344.170	336.099	-2,5	-1,95	2,63
Parkstad/NL	244.387	241.792	-1,5	no date	3,59
Rovigo/IT	248.004	246.255	-0,3	no date	4,98
Kutna Hora/CZ	74.774	74.850	0,2	-5,59	1,49
Gorenjska/SI	194.472	202.485	4,3	-6,01	5,38
Roscommon/IE	51.975	58.768	13,2	-3,30	-1,65



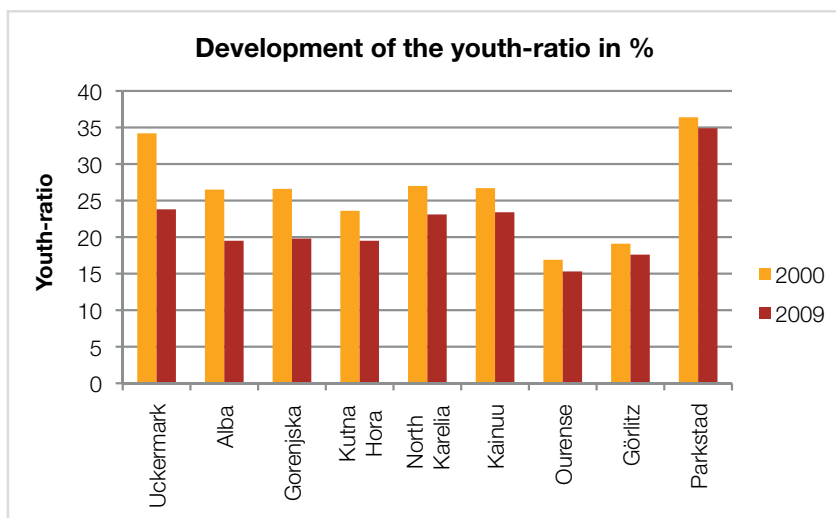


Old Age Ratio / Youth Ratio

A clear reduction in the younger generation (typically 0-15 years) is visible in all study areas. Parallel to this, an increase in the population of over 65 year olds is clear in the course of time. This change in population structure is particularly visible, in turn, in the two German study areas. In connection with this, a decline in the youth quotient in all surveyed regions is identified, as a result of the demographic change of an increasing old age quotient.



As a result of demographic changes the old-age-ratio rises and the youth-ratio steadily falls. All surveyed regions of the DART project have to deal accordingly with these problems.



An increase in the average age of a mother giving birth to her first child, and thus a time shift of the first-born to a higher age, is happening in almost all study areas. Only in the North Karelia study area does the average age of a mother giving birth to her first child decline slightly. All together, the average age of a mother giving birth to her first child in all the study areas moved towards the age of 30.

Even if the data on life expectancy in the study areas doesn't allow a representation over time, it does show very clearly that in all study areas that the average life expectancy for women is significantly above that of men. This longer life expectancy for females can be regarded therefore as another fundamental demographic trend in different European regions.

It can be seen, that increasingly one-person households are being established, that the household structure changes, and that the average household size is decreasing.

The „classic“ ideal of families is subject to structural changes. The large households (4 people and more) are particularly widespread still in the Eastern European areas (Romania, Slovenia, Czech Republic). But significant changes are also visible. With declining population, a stable trend (over the period of 15 years) towards the single household is shown in most of the study areas.

It is clear that in all DART regions the migration of foreign people and the increase in the proportion of the foreign population was characterised by demographic change. This seems important also in respect of the composition of the population and the consequences for regional labour markets and national social security systems, as this trend is stable and takes place in the light of the population shrinkage and ageing. Migration is a fundamental demographic trend. This refers to some significant population loss through migration and is characterized as a spatial component in addition to the natural loss of population and basic demographic changes in the various European areas.

Summary: DART regions are in a radical process of demographic change. This can be proved by small scale (below the Eurostat NUTS III level) population and social statistics with the tested indicators (see section 5).

It turns out that this process of change is irreversible and long-term. Regionally differentiated changes can be demonstrated, reproduced, and continue to be predicted, if the data bases exist. The demographic conversion and change processes show especially in the following:

- ▶ Continuous population decline (contraction apart from Cluster V, in perspective negative demographic projections in all study areas);
- ▶ Continuous ageing of the population (shrinkage of the youth, particularly under 20 year olds, growth in the elderly, in particular those requiring constant nursing care – all clusters);
- ▶ Declining of the population density (except Cluster V);
- ▶ Increase in the share of the foreign population;
- ▶ Increase in the age of a mother giving birth to her first child;
- ▶ Increase in life expectancy;
- ▶ Negative balance in the natural population growth (births/deaths);
- ▶ Negative balance in spatial population movement (immigration/migration);
- ▶ Change in the composition of households (increase in 1-person households);
- ▶ Decrease in the number of pupils and the number of trainees;
- ▶ Structural changes in the labour force – increase in older workers and employment of women, strengthening of long-term unemployment;
- ▶ Structural changes between the sectors of the economy – decrease in employees in agriculture and industry, growth in the service sector.



Section 4: Exchange of experience



INTERREG IVC Programme has a clear focus on the exchange of experience and in particular on the identification and analysis of good practices. Therefore, component 3 of the Regional Initiative Projects deals with the core element of the cooperation which is the “Exchange of experiences dedicated to the identification and analysis of good practices”.

General requirements of the component 3 are stated in the INTERREG IVC Programme Manual. According them it is under this component that the good practices developed by the partners in the domain tackled by the project have to be identified and exchanged.

The DART project has carried out several activities to facilitate the exchange of experiences amongst the partners in three thematic fields, namely Health and social services, Education, lifelong learning and job market, and Innovative and traditional economy. During the project duration the DART partnership organised a number of transnational events related to the exchange of experience. Four preparation meetings with study visits were organised linked to the other DART events as well as six joint workshops with study visits in different partner regions: Kranj (Slovenia), Wroclaw (Poland), St. Pölten (Austria), Santiago de Compostela (Spain), Galway (Ireland) and Alba Iulia (Romania). Four of those workshops were dedicated to the presentation and evaluation of good practices in different thematic fields of the project and two workshops dealt with the results and documentation of the results, including the preparation of final report and elaboration of draft political recommendations. Furthermore, in total three international thematic DART conferences took place in Dresden, Germany (Economy), in Prague, Czech Republic (Education), and in Kajaani, Kainuu Region, Finland (Health and Social Services). In Prague and Kajaani also study visits were organised by the hosting partner. After each conference results of all events and activities in the thematic field in question were summarised and discussed during the evaluation workshop.



As regards other activities related to the exchange of experience the DART project published a poster collection of good practices, where all 89 identified and described good practices were presented. Also the political recommendations created by the partners on the basis of lessons learned over the exchange period were published in the final conference of the project. The recommendations covering all thematic fields of the project were addressed to the EU, Member States and regions.



At the beginning of the project all partner regions were asked to confirm their interest and commitment to the thematic fields. Five partner regions - Brandenburg (Germany), Free State of Saxony (Germany), West Region (Ireland), North Karelia (Finland), and CENTRU (Romania) – contributed to all thematic fields. There is a table in the web-based long version of the Final Report showing the contribution of all partners to the separate thematic fields as well the final results of the selection process. The number of selected good practices has been indicated region by region, too.



DART GP posters: Each good practice was introduced and promoted by way of a poster, which was produced for the thematic workshops as well as reviewed for the conferences. The posters were produced in aim to introduce both project partners (in the workshops) and wider audience (in the conferences and on the DART website) to the all described good practices.

Thematic workshops: Before the thematic workshops the identification and description process of good practices were finalised. During the workshop days, the following activities were implemented: presentation of good practices, group work and open discussions, assessment of proposed good practices, and selection of good practices for the conference. In the workshop short presentations were made mainly by the representatives from the partner regions. Sometimes partners invited also experts from the so called GP owners to present their good practices and to share their knowledge and expertise with partners.

Selection of best practices: After all partners had sent their proposals for good practices to the component leader, they received a summary of all proposals before each thematic workshop. In that way the participants of workshops were offered an opportunity to get information about proposals in advance. During the session with short presentations on each proposal (approx. 10 minutes) participants had chance to give assessment for each good practice. After presentations all participants were given six votes. Those votes they could give freely to those good practices which they consider to be the best ones and which they would like to hear more about in the conferences. There were no limitations given, how those votes could be used. For example, it was possible to give all one's votes to one good practice or one vote for six different good practices or any other division of votes between those two. Naturally, the basic principle was obeyed - you were not allowed to vote for proposals from your own region.

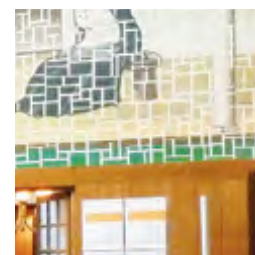
Evaluation of good practices: At the several stages of the process the different types of evaluation were used. Already in the good practice template it was asked to give assessment related information, for example,

- ▶ Information that has been collected from practice (evaluation of experts, scientists, peers, users, evaluators or others and how the information has been collected)
- ▶ Description of results, what the collected information demonstrated (beneficiaries, enhancements, lessons learnt and success factors, difficulties/problems/obstacles encountered and solutions found).

In each thematic workshop in the course of presentations on good practices the participants were expected to fill in the assessment form, which focused on two criteria, namely 1) functionality and usability as well as 2) transferability of each good practice. The assessment scale was excellent-good-fair-poor. Also the participants were asked to write into the form, if similar practices exist in their home region. After each thematic conference an evaluation meeting was organised to assess and discuss the results of the thematic field in question and to hash out draft political recommendations, which were prepared in the partner regions before thematic conferences.

Finally, after each thematic conference the partners were asked to assess the good practices from their region's point of view and to send the ranking lists based on regional evaluations. Those evaluations were to be used as a tool to facilitate the transfers from one region to another.

Study visits: The organisation of study visits linked to all transnational events served at least three aims of the project. Firstly, they offered the participating representatives from partner regions an excellent opportunity to familiarize themselves to the working environment of the hosting partner and to good practices in the hosting region. Secondly, they were also a good chance for GP owners in the regions to make so called internationalization at home. Thirdly, information materials prepared for these study visits combined with the earlier prepared GP template and GP posters the project produced and offered the GP owners additional promotional materials in English for future use.



Section 5: Indicators and Standards

Section 5.1: Indicators of demographic change

A prerequisite for analysis and evaluation of demographic change is first the supply of regionally differentiated information and data, for which regional benchmarking can be used (see section 6.5). At this time the data and forecasts refer to the demographic change predominantly on higher levels, large regions or the countries as a whole. Informed political decisions, especially locally made ones, require the inspection and monitoring of small-scale municipal units (such as districts, cities, city area regions, and so on), because here demographic change with its effects and consequences for a citizen-based municipal and infrastructure policy show most directly.

These above-mentioned changes don't concern all regions at the same time and to the same extent. In particular (selective) migration processes have created areas that today are very well advanced in demographic change and play a „pioneering role“ (laboratory for strategies) in the confrontation of these changes.

In the DART project an indicator set and a regional observation monitor (demographic „early warning system“ DART monitor) were developed and these were tested by the equipment with suitable demographic and social data from the various sub-region. So it is possible for it to illustrate basic demographic changes in European regions in the time course, to measure, to extrapolate and to compare regions and demographic change processes with each other. The processed data was primary data from the sub-regions which existed and could be evaluated for the first time in a European demography project. In this sense underlying demographic and social counter set to demographic change, in its form and compactness of composition as well as the data-driven regional viewing monitor, represents a novel approach to the analysis of demographic change in European regions and their comparison.

Only with the small-scale, comprehensive complex and specific time intervals (panel surveys) application and evaluation following highly condensed indicators (see the long version of the DART end report to detail), can both the demographic ageing of population decline (and selected indicators of social participation and quality of life) guarantee a largely accurate description of demographic change in a certain European analysis and lead to practical and effective local politics measures in dealing with the consequences of change or forward-looking political planning.

The following indicators give a good overview for a small-scale description of basic demographic processes. All indicators are well-known by the experts of statistically as well as usability for non-specialists.

- ▶ Indicators to measure demographic change are total population by gender; population density, proportion of foreign citizens in the population, gender age structure of the population and migration.
- ▶ Indicators to predict the demographic change are population projections, fertility rate, mortality rate, net balance of natural population movement and life expectancy.
- ▶ Indicators for the classification of the regions in demographic change are quantitative data – decrease or increase of the total population at specific time intervals (annually, etc.) and cluster.
- ▶ Indicators to measure social participation and quality of life are structure of households/size of households, marital status of persons in private households, education/educational structure by age group, number of students or trainees, proportion of employees/workforce per sector of the economy, participation (economically active population), employment rate of old and young people, development of unemployment, number of deaths by gender or causes of death and human resources development in the health and care sector .

Section 5.2: Standards of public services of general interest

Europe's population will decline further in the coming decades and at the same time get older, as shown by the indicators of demographic change. This has multiple social and economic effects on the respective society. Accordingly spatial disparities (declining and growth regions) must be demarcated as such, causes and consequences at all planning levels evaluated, and standards (guidelines, rules, standards, laws) of social and municipal services of general interest in the sense of ensuring and safeguarding basic living conditions for the population of each must be checked and, where appropriate, new sets introduced and enforced.

The following problem is on the agenda: How can the public's general interest and the preservation of the quality of life be guaranteed under the conditions of the population shrinkage and population ageing with restricted or decreasing funding by the local authority districts for a structurally changing population in each respective European sub-region and be adapted to the demographic change?

There can no longer be uniform standards in view of the descriptive different developments. But in declining rural areas, minimum standards need to be defined for the defined region by the regional stakeholders, and also the development of territorially graded areas for social services and benefits. The complexity of demographic changes therefore demand comprehensive and intelligent adaptation strategies, which take into account all fields of activity in the context of a cross section policy.

The slide features a header with logos for DART (Declining Areas and Regional Transformation), INTERREG IVC (Initiative of European Regional Development Fund), the European Union flag, and the European Regional Development Fund. The main content is centered in a green box with the following text:

DART - Monitor
Collection and updating modules
to the description of the demographic change in European
regions

Main module: Demography indicators
Sub modules: Indicators for job market, education and health

Subregion: ...

At the bottom right of the slide, there is a small green button with the number '23'.



Section 6: Common concerns and recommendations

Section 6.1: Health Care

The DART project set out with the aim to identify new products and services to maintain the quality of life in regions with a declining and ageing population, especially in the field of health care and social services. Population decline in the regions requires specific policy measures ranging from the traditional subvention of economic development to the maintenance of public infrastructure, thus enhancing accessibility of these regions enabling commuter-flow which in turn may entice people to remain in the area. The younger generation maintain and care for less and less of the elderly population. Institutions and all social collective „security systems“ which are based on a generation-dependent redistribution of money or services are required to make appropriate adjustments. This affects the education system, medical care and especially the systems of pension and health insurance, as well as the regional organisation of care and maintenance of old people, who are in need of assistance. The increasing life expectancy, the superannuation of the population and the decreasing birth rate poses a challenge for health care systems. This makes it important to learn about innovative ways of how regions can deal with the problems of a declining, older and less mobile population.

Common Concerns in relation to health care

- ▶ Support dynamic health systems and new technologies: Safe, high quality, equal and efficient health services, as well as e-health solutions
- ▶ Modernisation of health infrastructures
- ▶ Foster good health in an ageing Europe
- ▶ Protect citizens from health threats
- ▶ Promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- ▶ Creation of mental health prevention programmes to acquire the skills of care and to reduce morbidity of mental diseases

Recommendations at EU level

- ▶ Promotion of integrated health planning: previously separately organized and financed intramural and extramural health care should be developed towards a more comprehensive, integrated, planned, managed, financed and quality assured health system
- ▶ Support of cost efficient models in health care



- ▶ Harmonisation of information systems and support of new ICT- innovations in the health sector
- ▶ Invest in primary care and preventative health care and prevention of exclusion
- ▶ Support new ICT- innovations, technology and service based innovation in the health sector
- ▶ Develop new housing solutions for the elderly and promotion of systems to manage housing provision
- ▶ Improve the follow-up, as well as evaluation of effectiveness and the related research and development, in the well-being sector
- ▶ Create conditions for the development of wellness travel
- ▶ Improve cooperation and networking among wellness companies and eco-tourism services
- ▶ Evaluation of effectiveness and the related research and development, in the well-being sector

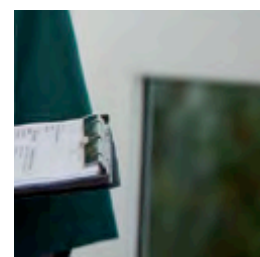
Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Local)

- ▶ Supporting dynamic health systems and new technologies
- ▶ Fostering good health in an ageing Europe
- ▶ Promoting a healthy lifestyle from the youngest living years
- ▶ Developing new housing solutions for elderly

Section 6.2: Social Services

In the EU regions, social services systems are shaped in different ways and dimensions; depending on the constitutional and legal framework, financial flows and capacities, as well as the institutional culture and structure within the different countries. Social Services play a crucial role throughout Europe in improving the quality of life and providing social protection. They may include: social security, employment and training services, social housing, child care, long-term care, community based services and social inclusion programs.

Public authorities are entrusted to provide basic social services to the population, especially to the most vulnerable groups, regardless their place of residence. Demographic decline dramatically impacts the the main target groups for social services. Ageing populations grow in number and new needs emerge; immigration increases; fertility rate recovery is no longer a real possibility without extensive and intense child care and work-life balance facilities; feasibility of local services is constantly queried.



Common Concerns in relation to social services

- ▶ Isolation among the elderly, social inclusion and maintenance of links with the local community;
- ▶ Territorial-exclusion: Quality of life for young families, youngsters and elderly in declining/isolated areas;
- ▶ Mobility of workers, new social needs and positive integration of immigrants;
- ▶ Isolation and discrimination of young first time job seekers and long term unemployed young people;
- ▶ Computer literacy for all, especially for the elderly;
- ▶ New challenges for planning and delivery: service integration in impulse nucleuses, private-public partnership, services mobility, quality standards, efficiency.

Recommendations at EU level

- ▶ To support new ICT and technology research within the social care sector and to promote the incorporation of IT's and new technology within social service provision, mainly those related to a demand of information, distance-care, mobility & accessibility⁵;
- ▶ To finance mutual learning and new approaches for service delivery in sparsely populated areas, including citizens' mobility and the development of mobile tailor-made services for remote areas;
- ▶ To combine support of the free movement of workers with the protection of their social rights and available information and integration services;
- ▶ To promote and lead better planning of social services by the regions and/or countries, combining efficiency and availability, feasibility and response to peoples real needs;
- ▶ To strength participation opportunities, through new approaches, for young people who have become marginalised in their declining communities.

Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Local)

- ▶ To provide for customer-oriented, flexibly responsive and economically sustainable social services throughout shrinking and ageing regions.
- ▶ To plan facilities and services accordingly to people's needs and choices,
- ▶ To plan immigration – and social inclusion - to shrinking and/or sparsely populated areas
- ▶ To fight negative stereotypes related to declining rural areas
- ▶ To promote employment of young and innovative companies in shrinking areas
- ▶ To build up partnership and networking cooperation schemes, fostering the self-supporting capacity, citizen's participation and the solidarity of the community



⁵ Through the use of new robotics and electronic appliances, personal autonomy and independent life can be substantially improved, allowing people to remain living at home alongside maintaining a decent quality of life.

Section 6.3: Education, life-long learning and job market

Politicians at the European level have recognised that education, life-long learning and training are essential to the development of today's knowledge society and economy. The EU's strategy emphasises countries working together and learning from each other.

The long-term strategic objectives of EU education and training policies are:

- ▶ Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- ▶ Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- ▶ Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- ▶ Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

The DART partners see it important to raise awareness of current demographic situation and of forecasts for future trends in ageing and declining regions in all EU policies and actions of the EU Commission by means of long-term awareness raising programmes and measures, to encourage networking between regions and to create more standing structures and processes of exchange of experience and sharing of good practices between regions heavily affected by the ageing of its population, and to promote lifelong learning projects in particular in the regions dealing with demographic change.

Common concerns in relation to education, life-long learning and job market

- ▶ Education policy, education and training systems; insufficient capacity of educational facilities;
- ▶ The need to re-plan education facilities, within a context of uneven demographic development;
- ▶ The access to quality education in shrinking areas: Pre-school (early) and general education; vocational education and training; adult education and training; polytechnic and university education; liberal adult education;
- ▶ Promote a better lifecycle approach to work life balance (course of work life);
- ▶ The need for a more inclusive job market;
- ▶ The innovation and adaptation of the educational methods, including e-learning;
- ▶ Support the youth in building attitudes, a value system and their choice of the way the future educational and professional career;
- ▶ Balancing opportunities (equalization of discrepancies) for young people from high-risk environments (facing the threat of social exclusion of young in-migrants);
- ▶ Strengthening of the family policy through improvement of parental skills and their competency;

Recommendations at EU level

- ▶ To initiate new structures, processes and models to bridge the European labour market with education, through improved training thus better matching the supply and demand;
- ▶ To harmonise educational systems;
- ▶ To increase the effectiveness of post-graduate and continuing education as well as of adult education in general;
- ▶ To allocate more efforts and resources to investigate the not yet discovered potential and to concretise diverse forms and opportunities of life-long learning and, especially, by utilising ICT and e-learning;
- ▶ To facilitate and support internationalisation and mobility of students and labour force;
- ▶ To support lifelong learning with social fund finances;
- ▶ To ensure that programmes such as Rural Development Funds and Urban Improvement Funds should have a strong emphasis on people supports to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship;



Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Local)

- ▶ To implement realistic, flexible and efficient life-long learning schemes, adapted to the demographic changes and their impact on the job market.
- ▶ To ensure good quality of education in shrinking areas
- ▶ Better linkage of education with training and in turn the labour market
- ▶ To promote an inclusive job market
- ▶ To intensify networking and mutual learning in education throughout the areas affected by demographic decline
- ▶ Adjustment of education to local/regional needs
- ▶ To improve family policy, parental and citizen skills
- ▶ Developing regional early-warning and forecasting systems to improve matching of skills and supply

Section 6.4: Traditional and innovative economy

In our economy constitution, the states and public bodies are responsible to set a regulatory framework for entrepreneurial activities to support economic development. Thus, there is mainly an indirect influence on concrete entrepreneurial policies or activities. So the single enterprise plays an important and responsible role in dealing with demographic change. Basically, they have to react on the social transformation with products and processes. Nevertheless, the role of public bodies is to support especially SMEs with targeted subsidies or as agents of awareness and ideas. Some of the following recommendations are concerning already existing approaches on the different policy and administration levels. But measures should be enhanced and be considered more under the conditions of demographic change.

Common Concerns in relation to traditional and innovative economy

- ▶ Labour market: lack of skilled labour force due to shrinking and ageing population, prolongation of careers;
- ▶ Ageing staff: need for age and health management in enterprises, life cycle proof management; stereotypes are to be changed;
- ▶ Very little possibilities for the young to enter the labour market in positions equal to their competences;
- ▶ Entrepreneurship and business opportunities: ownership succession, new business models and tools for both ageing and young people, development of products and services for elderly people ("silver economy");
- ▶ Policy and strategy development: involvement of regional authorities, influencing funding resources, project initiatives and project generation, facilitation of new opportunities.

Recommendations at EU level

In the overall policies and strategies

- ▶ Awareness of the demographic change situation should be raised in all EU policies and actions of EU Commission by means of long-term awareness raising programmes and measures;
- ▶ Valid indicators are necessary to measure economic development under the conditions of the demographic change. One helpful indicator could be the „share of the working age population“. It is able to describe the demographic change in the economic sphere and could be a basic indicator for structural policy;
- ▶ The future EU cohesion policy should pay more attention to demographic change considering the population density as well as declining and ageing populations at the regional level. The possibility to increase co-financing rates should be at least of 10 % for these regions

In the field of entrepreneurship and business opportunities

- ▶ Rural development measures should be integrated into elements of the Common Agricultural Policy and innovative, manufacturing, tourism and diversified enterprises based on local products should be promoted;
- ▶ More efforts and resources should be allocated to investigate undiscovered potential and to concretise opportunities of the silver economy⁶;
- ▶ Networking between regions should be encouraged and more standing structures and processes of exchange of experiences and sharing of good practices should be created between regions heavily affected by ageing;
- ▶ More emphasis should be given to “innovative labs” where companies can build on new entrepreneurial opportunities.

Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Local)

In the field of overall policies

- ▶ Valid indicators are necessary to measure economic development under the conditions of the demographic change. One helpful indicator can be the „share of the working age population“. This is able to describe the demographic change and to be a basic indicator for structural policy.

To tackle the lack of (skilled) labour force

- ▶ Conditions for job learning as well as training on the job should be promoted in national and regional policies;
- ▶ Internationalisation of SMEs and mobility/migration of labour force should be facilitated;
- ▶ The provision of infrastructure – especially broadband, child care facilities and schools – should have high quality as they are locational factors for entrepreneurial investment or for the decision of young people to stay in a region.

Concerning ageing staff and life cycle proof management

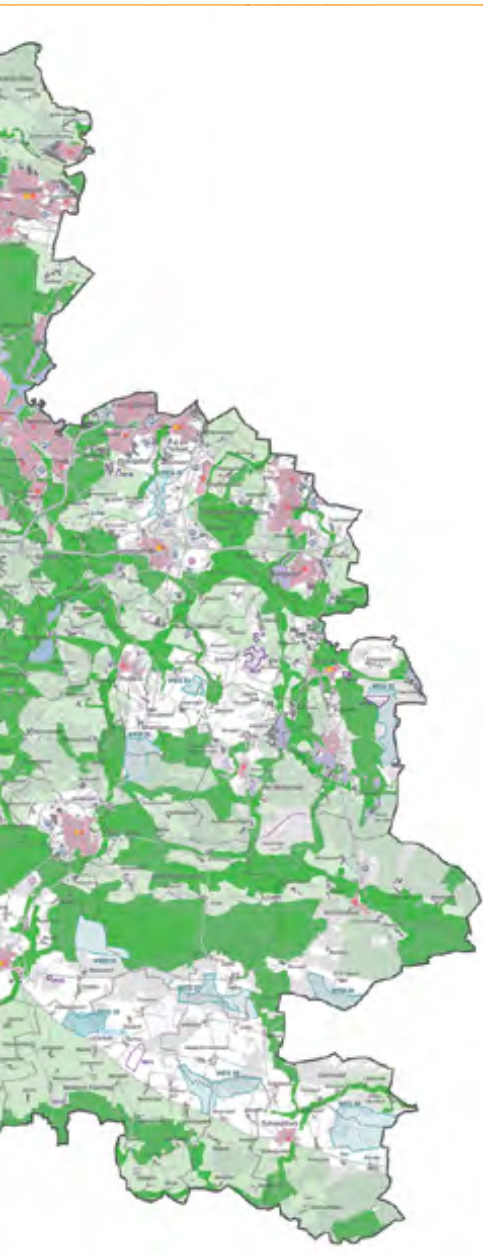
- ▶ Special attention should be paid to the promotion of well-being of all generations in the duration of their work life with active age and health management in enterprises;
- ▶ Legislation should make flexible working⁷ easier. That means to enable employees to combine their work and family life better.

In the field of entrepreneurship and business opportunities

- ▶ Special measures should support ownership succession and transfer of knowledge especially for SMEs;
- ▶ Entrepreneurship should be encouraged and supported, especially entrepreneurship among the young / starting entrepreneurs, senior entrepreneurs, women, immigrants and academics and in the form of cooperatives in rural areas;
- ▶ Targeted tax breaks could support employment generating enterprises in areas of population decline;
- ▶ In depopulated areas, landscape, natural attractiveness, conservation and management should be viewed as opportunities, providing potential for those areas.

6 SEN@ER Silver Economy Network of European Regions

7 In Dutch “nieuwe werken” refers to working regardless of location (mostly related to working at home or in flexible workplaces).



Section 6.5: Common concerns and recommendations: spatial and cross sectoral planning

For the purposes of the DART project the focus was kept on health care, social services, education and economy. The following are seen as more of a solution to the issues arising as a result in fluctuating demography. This contributes to improving the effectiveness of regional development policies in all European regions. Demographic issues were identified in the DART project which impact directly on regional development, therefore the identification of appropriate actions, recommendations and tools to tackle such issues were necessary. Regional planning guidelines throughout all the partner regions should prioritise the issue of demographic change and its associated challenges. Aside from the sectors already addressed, Spatial Planning along with Social and Health Planning or other sectoral planning is an area which is also important in terms of recommendations.

Recommendations at EU level

- ▶ To set a focus point on demographic change
- ▶ To adapt European regional policy
- ▶ To define demographic change as a cross sectoral topic
- ▶ To establish a mainstream demographic change

Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Lokal)

- ▶ To set a focus point on demographic change
- ▶ To adapt national spatial planning
- ▶ To adapt regional and urban planning
- ▶ To define demographic change as a cross sectoral topic
- ▶ To establish a mainstream demographic change

Common concerns and recommendations: data availability, indicators, standards

For comprehensive policy of demographic change it is important that the policy response to demographic changes (national, regional and local politics) is a regionally differentiated approach to the complex processes of ageing and declining, showing that their impact on demographic change is absolutely necessary. The basis of information available presently in the EU statistics and databases are barely sufficient to do justice to the regional level specific processes and requirements of the demographic change or to illustrate this.

Recommendations at EU level

- ▶ To strive for a comparable data basis it would be good reporting the essential processes of the population on the basis of a standardised demographic indicator, which opens up the possibility of territories, areas (such as parts of the country, counties, local units),
- ▶ To implement a permanent exchange of experience between European regions concerning good and best practice to deal with demographic change
- ▶ Definition of indicators measuring demographic change
- ▶ Consulting service for European regions how to establish a monitoring system for demographic change

Recommendations at Member State level (Central, Regional or Lokal)

- ▶ Development and maintenance of small-scale demographic databases
- ▶ To implement a permanent exchange of experience (good and best practice) on national and regional level concerning demographic change





Section 7: Conclusions

On a whole, Europe's demographic situation is determined by low fertility, an increasing life expectancy, and thus a shrinking of the indigenous population into the future. The DART project gives samples from a number of European regions, all facing similar demographic challenges and the need for policy reform in order to address these issues and set out a path for the changing future of the population of these regions. Some existing policy is explored, in terms of demographic change and what has or can be done to deal with emerging challenges. A cross section of policy and relevant organisations across Europe have been looked at, with regards to actions and policy responses in place, with particular emphasis on the elderly generation and associated demographic changes which have occurred in recent decades.

Population is in a constant state of flux, however in conclusion it may be said that the indigenous population in most of the regions studied will continue to decline, taking observations from recent trends which are highly likely to continue into the foreseeable future. In-migration in many cases is the tool which will continue to keep population levels at a particular level, although this brings with it another array of issues and challenges for these regions in terms of a changing demographic profile, with pressure on the indigenous population and a strong need for proper social inclusion and measures to be put in place to allow for smooth integration of various ethnic groups.

It is necessary to have a new regional approach: dynamic adjustments of the public services provision systems to anticipate the effects of the population trends and territorial imbalance and thus counteract the future risks as well as to exploit the opportunities. Those strategies must be flexible and tailored for each region as the process features are diverse in timing, speed, intensity and effects.

Section 7.1: The aim - Life cycle proof neighbourhood

The concept of a life cycle proof neighbourhood involves a neighbourhood in which people live (or want to live) from cradle to grave. These will become the 'neighbourhoods of tomorrow', in that they are good for all generations, offer good accessibility and mobility, have an array of services on offer and are eco-sustainable; thus the type of area people choose to live in. Dwellings are built in a way that can be easily adapted to the changing needs which arise through the turning of different generations, therefore providing a systematic approach in planning for decline. New techniques allow for a house or building to be adapted relatively easily to change with such needs of the users. This style of neighbourhood builds upon a centre / impulse / needs of the people, based on a high quality of living and high-end liveability.

Section 7.2: Instrument for an integrated strategy for demographic change

To develop instruments for an integrated strategy maintaining the quality of life in declining and ageing areas was the overall objective of the DART project:

- ▶ to achieve social inclusion for all generations;
- ▶ to strengthen social cohesion between regions, and;
- ▶ to ensure that the good practices identified within interregional cooperation projects are made available to other regional and local stakeholders and are transferred into regional policies, particularly EU Structural Funds mainstream programmes.

Therefore the following issues were addressed by DART:

- ▶ How can home-care, ambulant medical and social services of the elderly and sick, especially persons who are alone be organised to ensure independent living for as long as possible?
- ▶ Which educational innovations are needed to encourage people to practice lifelong learning?
- ▶ Which educational innovations are needed to meet the “needs of companies”?
- ▶ How to encourage SME's to implement an internal age management structure?
- ▶ How can SME's be helped in dealing with demographic related changes, changes in innovative products and services?
- ▶ How to include older people in local society?
- ▶ How to include young people in local society and provide for intergeneration cooperation?
- ▶ How to avoid the generation gap?
- ▶ How to organise the shape of demographic change together with citizen participation?
- ▶ Which are suitable standards for infrastructure in rural areas and valid indicators to benchmark demographic change and to measure success in declining regions?

The aim of DART was to develop an integrated approach for policy recommendations to adapt regional policies and public services. In this way the project raised awareness of demographic change, increased knowledge and assessed the critical role of public services in measuring success in declining and ageing regions. Demographic issues were identified in the DART project which impact directly on regional development, therefore the identification of appropriate actions, recommendations and tools to tackle such issues were necessary. There is no one integrated strategy out there at present to deal with demographic change. Regional planning guidelines throughout all the partner regions should prioritise the issue of demographic change and its associated challenges.

As an active instruction to work out an integrated strategy all can use:

- ▶ 1. DART-Monitor to analyse their own individual situation and the main topics they have to focus on
- ▶ 2. Use the Tool box to analyse the own regional strengths and weaknesses
- ▶ 3. Select some of the 89 good practices for a turnaround or to facilitate the own energy



Section 7.3: Tool box for regions: strategies, methods, measures

Regional Strategies

Demographic change will have multiple and visible consequences at the regional and local level. Shortfalls in the labour market could occur in certain regions and economic sectors. A more flexible educational system should constitute the basis for a well prepared workforce. The integration of migrants or socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. Roma people) could also contribute significantly to the mitigation of the effects generated by population ageing. The ongoing ageing process is expected to lead to significant increases in public spending, mainly on pensions, healthcare and long-term care. The social and health infrastructure should be recalibrated in accordance with the projected needs. Therefore, every region must take action to prevent the negative impact of demographic change. Demographic aspects should not be limited to a strategy dealing strictly with demographic change. All sector strategies and notably the regional development strategy should take into consideration the future demographic developments in the region. A regional strategy addressing the effects generated by the declining and ageing process should be established with an overall objective: to prevent and mitigate the negative effects of the ageing process and maintain high standards of living. The regional strategy dealing with the impact of the ageing process should cover at a minimum, the following areas of intervention: (a) Health Care, with an overall objective of Improving general health conditions in the region; (b) Social services, with an overall objective of increasing social cohesion in the region; (c) Education. Labour market, with an overall objective of increasing the employment rate, improving the quality of education, and; (d) Economy, with an overall objective of increasing the economic competitiveness through more innovation and technology transfer



Measures

Though it represents a European challenge, demographic change should be regarded in a very specific and sensitive way, according to the problems and needs of each member state, region or town/village. What we have discovered in the DART regions is that some regions have difficulties in managing immigrant-inflows, some have a very aged population; some lack the possibility to maintain youth and well qualified persons in their home regions and some regions struggle to keep their rural areas alive. So how can we make a “one size fits all” strategy? Maybe a different approach should be considered! Taking into consideration the definition of a Strategy –“a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim” and the usual association of this term with the existing political documents, two categories were drawn on of strategic documents used by the DART regions in dealing with Demographic change:

- ▶ Specific strategies – elaborated and implemented as stand-alone political documents, thus emphasising the importance and relevance of demographic change for the future of the regions;
- ▶ Sections of more general strategies – included in national or regional development strategies and plans. These kind of political steps prove the acknowledgement of the fact that demographic change is becoming more and more a local/regional/national problem.

For the first category we can mention as an example the “Demography Action Plan” elaborated and passed in 2010 by the Government of the Free State of Saxony. This strategy includes nine benchmarks or goals to be fulfilled by 2030. The Action Plan also contains eight programmatic topics for governmental activities on several fields related to the demographic change. Most of the Regional Strategies identified and presented by the DART partners fall into the second category. For example ageing and demographic change is an important element in “The Regional Strategic Program 2030” of North Karelia, which is an expression of joint will, regarding the future development of the province. Another DART example is the “2020 Development Strategy of Lower Silesia Voivodship” which includes sections directly targeting ageing problems. Dropping down one level toward the more concrete steps taken by the regions in preventing and adapting to demographic decline, some of the programmes and measures designed and implemented by the DART regions are presented, as part of their general or specific strategies.

Panel discussion at the DART
Midterm Conference Brussels,
29.11.11
Maja Rocak, (Limburg),
Dr. Hans-Ulrich Oel,
Stefan Gran
(Confederation of Trade Unions),
Elisabeth Schroedter (MEP),
Andreas Thaler
(Best Agers Project),
Suzanna Lantz (Creator Project),
Daniel Lopez (Galicia),
Julian Oliver
(Fondation EurActiv, Moderator)



Section 7.4: Success in declining regions

Success in the political debate is equalized with growth: economic growth, more jobs, more roads, more hospital beds, more places in kindergartens and other child care services etc.. Quality – beyond the numbers – seems in the summary view and the assessment of political decisions to be less taken into account. But more jobs are not a success if they cannot be filled because there are not „enough“ people alive of working age. A lack of experts endangers companies in their own competitiveness. More places in nursery day care centers are not a success if there are too few children to use them. Regional decisions must consider these aspects for sustainable investments and use of public money.

Declining regions can and should generate no growth. Instead, stabilization and sometimes deconstruction with the goal of sustainable development are needed. This can, however, neither be measured with the figures of official statistics nor assessed by the existing indicators systems. Descriptive statistics is therefore an inappropriate instrument to evaluate success in declining regions, and the current indicator systems are exclusively focused on growth and therefore useless for the evaluation of declining.

Declining regions must first analyse what kind of development is possible for them and what they are looking for. They have to:

- ▶ define individual goals,
- ▶ in which way jobs and value creation in the region for the local population can be sufficiently ensured,
- ▶ how the supply can be maintained with infrastructure (including the use of new technologies and combinations of infrastructure),
- ▶ how to ensure participation and inclusion in society both at extremely low population density and an aging society,
- ▶ how the identification of residents with their community can be obtained,
- ▶ how social cohesion, e. g. mutual aid can be maintained and strengthened,
- ▶ how contentment and happiness can be maintained,
- ▶ summarized: how life-cycle-proof-designed neighborhood should be shaped.
- ▶ quantify the importance of goals, setting priorities,
- ▶ improve involvement of stakeholders to planning and development processes
- ▶ develop strategies concerted,
- ▶ adopt measures and
- ▶ implement a joint task in terms of a civil community support.

Success will only occur if

- ▶ the objectives will be developed, adopted and implemented together with all stakeholders – politicians, administrators, citizens, associations and organizations and the economy,
- ▶ the strategy is to place and is communicated well and
- ▶ the measures will be supported and implemented by all parties.

If the self-set goals are achieved, the development of the region by those affected will be evaluated as a success and „it is a success“. For all regions affected by declining is therefore important that the success of regional policy and development cannot be measured quantitatively but only qualitatively. The social inclusion, participation of citizens in the life of „their“ community is the yardstick for success.

Also declining regions can thus be successful if they succeed,

- ▶ to obtain a sufficient number of qualified jobs for local residents or to develop or to create new ones,
- ▶ create value in the region that is sufficient to provide the necessary technical and social infrastructure and stabilize the purchasing power of residents,
- ▶ social cohesion, inter alia to get through a busy social life and community care,
- ▶ the social inclusion of people of all ages and to ensure life in all – even in precarious – situations ,
- ▶ short: if it is possible to create a livable environment for a social community so that declining regions are successful regions.



List of DART project partners and contact details

PP	Country	Contacts	Email(s)	Ph No
1. Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg	Potsdam, Germany	Harald Fuchs Pertti Hermannek Martin Müller Christoph Pilarek* Holger Zeiser*	harald.fuchs@ilb.de pertti.hermannek@ilb.de martin.mueller@ilb.de christoph.pilarek@ilb.de zeiser_h.zeiser@t-online.de	+493316601200 +491773095992
*providing support with administrative and financial project management to the lead partners				
2. State of Brandenburg (Represented by the State Chancellery)	Potsdam, Germany	Angelika Stuke Kathrin Rahn	angelika.stuke@stk.brandenburg.de kathrin.rahn@stk.brandenburg.de	+493318661384 +493318661043
3. Free State of Saxony (Represented by the State Chancellery)	Dresden, Germany	Burkhard Beyer Dorit Müller	burkhard.beyer@sk.sachsen.de dorit.mueller@sk.sachsen.de	+493515641285
4. West Regional Authority (WRA)	Galway, Ireland	Mary Molloy Mark O'Donnell	mmolloy@galwaycoco.ie modonnell@galwaycoco.ie	+35391563842
5. Central Bohemia Region	Prague, Czech Rep	–	linkoval@kr-s.cz	+420257280351 +420602669589
6. Regional Council of North Karelia	Joensuu, Finland	Dr. Erja Lehtikainen Risto Poutiainen	erja.lehtikainen@pohjois-karjala.fi risto.poutiainen@pohjois-karjala.fi	+358504086600 +358405469649
7. Joint Authority of Kainuu Region	Kainuu, Finland	Matti Nissinen Pentti Malinen	matti.nissinen@kainuu.fi pentti.malinen@kainuu.fi	+358445514558 +358447970197
8. Xunta de Galicia	Santiago de Compostella, Galicia, Spain	Daniel Lopez Munoz Leticia S. Rodriguez	daniel.lopez@xunta.es leticia.suarez.rodriguez@xunta.es	+34981544895
9. Province of Limburg	Maastricht, Limburg, Netherlands	Laury van den Ham (Laury going on maternity leave at the end of Mar '12) Maja Rocak	lmj.van.den.ham@prvlimburg.nl maja.rocak@zuyd.nl m.rocak@hszuyd.nl	+31621836061
10. Veneto Region	Venezia, Veneto, Italy	Massimo Mirandola Filippo Lagrasta Sandra Rainero	Massimo.mirandola@regione.veneto.it filippo.lagrasta@regione.veneto.it sandra.rainero@venetolavoro.it	+390412793881 +390412919371
11. Lower Austria Health and Social Fund (NÖGUS)	St. Pölten, Austria	Judith Willert	judith.willert@noegus.at	+436648170891
12. BSC – Business and Support Centre Ltd	Kranj, Slovenia	Helena Cvenkel Blanka Odlazek	Helena.cvenkel@bsc-kranj.si blanka.odlazek@bsc-kranj.si	+38642817230
13. Lower Silesian Centre for Social Policy	Wroclaw, Poland	Dr. Agnieszka Pierzchalska Karolina Samborska-Zaleska	a.pierzchalska@dops.wroc.pl k.samborska@dops.wroc.pl	+48717704233
14. "Centru" Regional Development Agency	Centru, Alba Iulia Romania	Marius Duca David Laurentiu	marius.duca@adrcentru.ro office@adrcentru.ro laurentiu.david@adrcentru.ro	
Responsible for analysis of standards and indicators	Germany	Dr. Michel/ Dr. Schulz	ifad@ifad.b.shuttle.de	+03028599625
Scientific coordinator of DART project	Germany	Dr. Hans-Ulrich Oel	uli.oel@googlegmail.com	+493045030057 (m)+491792049051
Responsible for drafting the final report and final editing	Ireland	Christina Heneghan	christina.heneghan@gmail.com	+3539868961 (m)+353863565700

Glossary

Birth balance Difference between the numbers of live-births to the number of deceased during a certain period. A positive birth balance is called birth surplus, a negative one deficit of births or decrease surplus.

Childbearing age age of women while they are potentially able to give birth. EUROSTAT usually takes the age from 15 up to 44.

Deceased (syn. deceases) Natural persons who died after birth. Therefore stillbirths are not counted as deceased.

Fertility rate (syn. birth rate) Indicator to measure fertility. Basis of calculation is the number of live-births during a certain period (usually calendar year). Distinctions to be made are:

- ▶ (1) Total fertility rate, TFR (syn. general birth rate, general fertility rate) is the number of live-births during a certain period (usually calendar year) related to the average population of women of → childbearing age multiplied with 1000. It reveals the number of live-births per 1000 women of childbearing age of median population.
- ▶ (2) Age specific fertility rate is given as the relation of live-births, born by women in between x and x+1 during a certain period (usually calendar year) to the average stock of women of this age during the same period. The result is usually multiplied with 1000.

Live-births EUROSTAT records children who had a heartbeat, a pulsing umbilical cord or started to breathe naturally after being parted from their mother's body (international standard phrase).

Migration (syn. spatial movement of people) – demographic process of regional mobility, the associated demographic events are called cases of migration or also migration.

Migration balance balance of relocations. A positive balance is called migration surplus, a negative balance is called migration loss or net migration loss.

Mortality (syn. moribundity)

- ▶ (1) Being mortal, mortality of natural persons.
- ▶ (2) Demographic process of diminution of a population by cases of death.

Mortality rate (syn. death rate, probability of dying) rate to measure mortality of people. Basis is the number of deceased (syn. deceases) during a specific period (usually calendar year). Distinctions to be made are:

- ▶ (1) Total mortality rate (syn. general mortality, general probability of dying) is given as the relation of deceases within this period to the average stock of population. The result is usually multiplied with 1000.
- ▶ (2) Sex specific mortality rate (syn. sex specific probability of dying) Mortality of men and women is more or less different. To record this differences, sex specific mortalities are calculated by relating the number of women (or men) who deceased during a specific period of time to the average population of women (or men) within the same period. The result is usually multiplied with 1000.
- ▶ (3) Age specific mortality rate (syn. age specific death rate) is given as the proportion of a population of specific age dying within a specific period of time to the population of the same age living during the same period. The result is usually multiplied with 1000.

Old-age dependency ratio comparable percentage of people who reached retirement age (women from 60, men from 65) to 1000 persons of working age at a certain date. Persons of working age at a certain date are all women from 16 to less than 60 and all men from 16 to less than 65.

Youth quotient – comparable percentage of children and juveniles under 16 to 1000 persons of working age at a certain date. Persons of working age at a certain date are all women from 16 to less than 60 and all men from 16 to less than 65.

Imprint

Lead Partner

Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg
Steinstraße 104–106
D-14480 Potsdam

Phone: +49 (0) 331 - 6 60 16 05

E-Mail: info@dart-project.eu



Layout

Mumbeck – Agentur für Werbung GmbH
Schlieffenstraße 60
42329 Wuppertal

Druck

DRUCK + SATZ
Gewerbestraße 17
01983 Großräschen

September 2012

Printed on FSC certified paper.

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DART is cofinanced by the European Regional Development Fund and made possible by the INTERREG IVC programme.
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