

**Demographic
change**



**Why reinvent the wheel?
Capitalising on regional
policy achievements
in dealing with
demographic change**



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About the author

Roos Galjaard studied human geography at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands after living abroad for several years. Roos has worked as researcher, consultant and project manager at Bureau PAU since 2007. She has more than ten years of experience with INTERREG projects. In 2007 she was introduced to the issues of demographic change in Europe through the INTERREG IVB NSR project DC NOISE (Demographic Change: New Opportunities in Shrinking Europe). In 2011 she initiated the INTERREG IVB NSR project iAge: e-inclusion in ageing Europe as a follow up to DC NOISE. In addition Roos has conducted research on the consequences of demographic change in the province of Groningen and on policy responses to population decline in Scotland, France and Germany for the Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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Why reinvent the wheel? Capitalising on regional policy achievements in dealing with demographic change

Demographic change presents many new challenges but also opportunities for regional policymakers. In this context, the interregional cooperation programme, INTERREG IVC, has recently published the results of an important policy analysis, one in a series of 12, each focusing on a different policy theme. This brochure offers just a brief preview of what you can find in the report on 'Demographic change', which details a raft of tried-and-tested good practices and offers evidence-based policy recommendations.

Demographic change: why it matters

In the European context, demographic change results from changing birth, mortality and migration rates. It is influenced both by sociocultural developments, such as the individualisation of family structures, and by specific economic developments, such as labour migration by young people which is leading to local depopulation in many parts of Europe.

It is important, moreover, to understand the cross-sectoral character of demographic change; it matters for social policies, spatial planning, health care, child care and elderly care, but it also relates to legal issues and to economic development. It matters for educational policies and even for territorial marketing.

The effects of demographic change only become visible after a long period of time and are therefore not easy to pinpoint. That is why it is important to raise stakeholders' awareness and monitor the consequences of demographic developments.

The Europe 2020 Strategy stresses the fact that Europe is facing ageing and depopulation challenges in several regions, including rural and peripheral ones, and the European Commission is convinced that demographic change deserves to be taken fully into account in the design of economic strategies.





Demographic change: challenges at regional level

How do you want to live when you are over 70? Can you think of a way to innovate health care and keep it affordable at the same time? The nine INTERREG IVC projects that address the consequences of demographic change seek to find answers to such questions, centring on four common themes:

- Education, lifelong learning and the labour market;
- Economic diversification;
- Social and healthcare services;
- Independent living.

The figure below shows the themes addressed by each INTERREG IVC project.

Education, Lifelong Learning and the Labour Market

Maintaining a high-quality education system is a double challenge: to ensure the educational innovation needed for lifelong and long distance e-learning, and to resolve the mismatch between supply and demand in the labour market.

In the context of an ageing population and a reduction in the number of younger workers, it is increasingly important to enable older workers to go on working. This is not only an economic necessity, but also a physiological one, as continuing to work can improve older people's social, mental and physical well-being.

Economic Diversification

The ageing population represents a challenge, but one that also creates new opportunities for economic development. The years lived after retirement now make up a quarter of life expectancy. Today's seniors are healthier and wealthier than ever: they are also consumers. Leisure activities for the over 50s for example create a new market for entrepreneurs. Similarly, innovations in technology, ICT, housing and public-private partnerships in the area of senior care all create business opportunities.

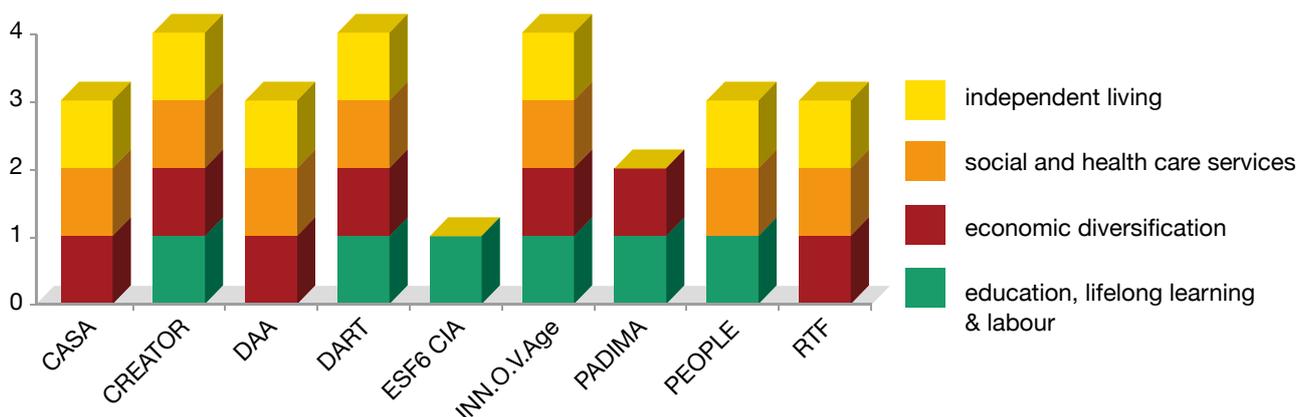
Social and Health Care Services

In recent decades, rural, mountainous, and peripheral areas have seen a decreasing access to services. Services are also under pressure in regions with a large and growing ageing population. Policy initiatives with regard to 'eldercare services' are increasingly on the agenda at the European level.

Independent Living

In 2020, the share of the over 65s will have risen to 28%. This will necessitate new forms of housing being developed as most older people want to live as independently as possible, even if they require assistance or care. Many local authorities are already investigating the use of telecare systems designed to help people to continue living independently at home.

Figure 1: Themes addressed by INTERREG IVC projects





Meeting the challenges: good practices from INTERREG IVC

The following section briefly summarises some of the answers to the key challenges in the form of selected good practices from the nine INTERREG IVC projects analysed.

Education, Lifelong Learning and the Labour Market

In the DART project, Slovenia and Limburg developed *centres for lifelong learning*. In the transition from a region with labour-intensive industries towards a knowledge economy, it is essential to have an infrastructure for lifelong learning. In the Gorenjska region (Slovenia), the aim was to give people a chance to gain or update knowledge in an informal way. The centres offer short programmes that are free for participants and adapted to different levels of education. In Limburg (the Netherlands), an e-portfolio and criteria for effective active career/job management were developed and tested.

In addition, in Limburg (DART), the *Care Academy Parkstad* was designed to solve regional labour market problems in health care. It is a unique cooperative initiative between education and health care institutions in the fields of innovation in care, in education for health care workers and in strategic employment policy. Its objectives included: providing tailor-made educational programmes; boosting innovation in the care industry and educational programmes; knowledge sharing between systems used in education and between companies and education, and a research programme.

Economic Diversification

A good example of economic diversification comes from the *Agrischool for Infancy* from the PADIMA project. The main objective was to develop the agricultural sector by focusing on new services in health and care services. The Province of Torino (Italy), supported child care farms called 'Agrischool for Infancy'. The farms offer day-care for children aged up to 6 years old in less favoured areas where essential services are absent. The initiative also increased economic competitiveness and improved farmers' incomes. Three farms have been set up, and others are being developed.

The Active 50+ Fair organised in Poznań, Poland (CREATOR project) promotes products, services and projects for people over 50. The Fair presents companies that focus on the elderly, especially as consumers. It includes products and services in the fields of health, work and education, travel, sports, beauty and lifestyle, etc. The Active 50+ Fair also provides a venue for local and regional NGOs and public bodies supporting seniors and the over 50's across a range of fields (home care, education, physical activity, voluntary work, etc.).



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Social and Health Care Services

An example in the field of social services is the good practice *Citizen buses and future trends* from Brandenburg, Germany (DART). The main objective is to maintain mobility in sparsely populated areas with the help of volunteers. It covers a range of transport services, (such as citizen buses) that can be used for passenger transport, post and parcel services, shopping, banking, etc. The citizen buses operate along the official local public transport network.

The South East Health Technologies Alliance (SEHTA), partner in the INN.O.V.Age project, has launched a *UK Healthcare Innovation Hub*, where high-tech entrepreneurs, academics, researchers and policymakers can meet, network and develop new and innovative health care concepts. The UK Innovation Hub is one of 14 'InnoHubs' being launched across Europe as part of INN.O.V.Age. Its primary aim is to assist with the development of new and innovative products and services that will enable elderly people to benefit from living in smarter homes.

Independent Living

Many local authorities are investigating the use of telecare systems to help people to continue to live independently at home. The exchange of experience conducted within the RTF project identified 20 examples of good practices and transferred them to participating regions, thereby helping them to develop *new telemedicine services*.



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Discover more about current demographic change policy

The full report demonstrates how understanding demographic change should be the starting point for all EU policies. In the report, you will find:

- The most important aspects of demographic change the INTERREG IVC projects have been working on;
- Common challenges and interesting or innovative practices or policies;
- The usefulness of certain projects for other regions and projects in Europe.

The lessons learnt, key policy messages and detailed recommendations derived from the nine analysed INTERREG IVC projects are structured around the four themes, the four big challenges: Education, Lifelong Learning and the Labour Market; Economic Diversification; Social and Health Care Services; and Independent Living.

The European Demography Report that is published every two years and current EU policy initiatives concerned with demographic change and active ageing offer a useful starting point for the design of policies addressing the challenges related to population decline and ageing. The INTERREG IVC capitalisation report is an invaluable and timely addition to the knowledge base and will assist policymakers working in the many fields for which demography matters.

Download the full report from: www.interreg4c.eu/capitalisation

INTERREG IVC Thematic Capitalisation



Innovation systems



Innovation capacity of SMEs



Eco-innovation



Creative industries



Entrepreneurship



E-government services



Demographic change



Rural development



Climate change



Energy efficiency



Renewable energy



Sustainable transport

Over the last seven years the INTERREG IVC programme has been enabling public institutions all over Europe – over 2000 in total – to ‘learn through cooperation’ across 204 different interregional projects aimed at improving regional policies.

In June 2012, the programme commissioned a team of thematic experts to analyse, benchmark, and capitalise on the wealth of knowledge generated by projects working on similar regional development issues. Altogether, 12 policy themes, ranging from innovation to the environment, have been covered. 12 reports are now available detailing the insights and lessons from this capitalisation process for the benefit of all regions across Europe.

In their presentation of the wide range of innovative good practices and policies improved by the projects, the reports offer a timely inventory of up-to-date evidence and experience to help regional authorities and interested stakeholders introduce or develop their regional policies. Policymakers and practitioners at all levels – regional, national and European – will find theme-specific recommendations tailored to them.

This brochure is a preview of the full-length report in the field of demographic change.

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention. EUR 302 million was granted for project funding but, more than that, a wealth of knowledge and potential solutions are also on hand for regional policy makers.



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