



university of
 groningen

faculty of spatial sciences

Programme URSI Autumn Conference 2015



Photo: Jelmer Jeurig

The clock has been set one hour backwards (or was it forwards?), the leaves are falling from the trees, the 'peppernuts' are already in the shops and the first people started talking about the 'Elfstedentocht' ...

Yes, autumn has arrived! And what else could you wish more than getting the opportunity to present your work in the warm and comfortable environment of your colleagues during the URSI Autumn Conference 2015?!

A short word from the organizers...

In the short time in which we had to organize this conference, we wanted to change the structure a little bit. We wanted to make it more interactive and give the opportunity to also present work that is still under development. Therefore, in this URSI conference presenters can do a PPP (Plenary Paper Presentation) or a CCC (Collaborative Colleague Consult) session. A PPP is an ordinary presentation where we invite researchers to present work that is in a more mature stage, but still can use some critical and valuable comments to improve it even further. After the presentation, an appointed discussant who has read the paper carefully will give some comments and also the rest of the audience can ask questions and give feedback. The other option is a CCC and during this option the situation gets more interactive. In smaller groups the researcher can shortly present a research proposal, work in progress or even just an idea for a next paper. After that, the group can discuss the work with the researcher and give suggestions for further steps and improvement. The new structure is an experiment and we hope it will be a success.

Enjoy the conference,

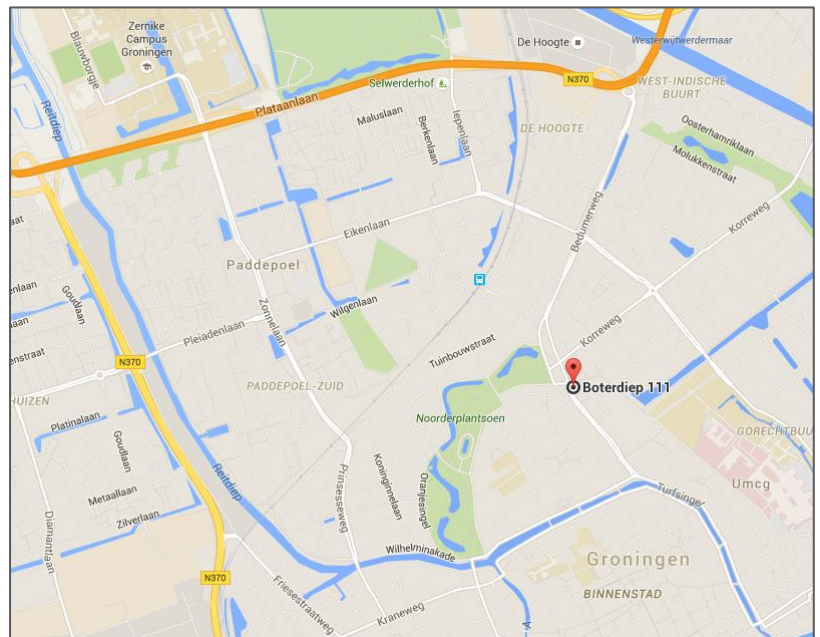
Melanie and Jasper

Location

Address:

'Het Paleis'
Boterdiep 111
9712 LM Groningen

The conference will be held in the 'Erlenmeyer' hall and there will be signs at the Paleis which direct you to this place.



Overview of the programme

13.00	Walk in and time for coffee and tea	
13.30	Welcome	Jasper en Melanie
13.35	News from the Graduate School	Oscar Couwenberg
13.45	PPP:	
13.45	<i>Facilitating climate change action at a household level.</i>	Liliana González (discussant: Steven Forest)
14.10	<i>Join the club: convergence in population ageing across European NUTS 2 regions.</i>	Ilya Kashnitskiy (discussant: Gintare Morkute)
14.35	<i>The environmental affordances of an urban park: The relationships between design and older adults' use of green spaces.</i>	Yang Zhang (discussant: Paul Plazier)
15.00	<i>Promoting regional growth and innovation: the relevance of related variety.</i>	Gloria Cicerone (discussant: Richard Rijnks)
15.25	Break	
15.50	CCC round 1:	
	<i>Access to Jobs and the School-to-Work Transition: A Decomposition Approach</i>	Marten Middeldorp
	<i>The Determinants of Settlement Intentions of Multi-Ethnic Migrants in Northwest China</i>	Bo Zhang
	<i>Valuation in combined infrastructure and regional development: "Pushing the envelope"</i>	Anne-Marel Hilbers
16.15	Short break	
16.20	CCC round 2:	
	<i>Rural Depopulating Territories in Mexico</i>	Liliana Castillo-Rivero
	<i>Rural village bonding in the era of mobilities. A quantitative approach to clarify the varieties and intensities of rural village bonding</i>	Joost Gieling
	<i>Residents' satisfaction with participation in the Southern Ringroad Highway project-A participatory session..!</i>	Marije Hamersma
	<i>The role of alcohol in explaining convergence in mortality across European countries</i>	Sergi Trias-Llimós
16.45	Closing comments	Oscar Couwenberg
17.00	Drinks	

Abstracts

Plenary Paper presentations (PPP):

Liliana González

Facilitating climate change action at a household level

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change and climate change effects are expected to result in more frequent and intense extreme weather events, along with gradual long-term changes that may increase pressure on already vulnerable systems. Case studies suggest that practices that build climate change resilience will be successful depending on the extent to which the community is involved and their necessities, experiences, and expertise are acknowledged. Additionally, studies demonstrate that vulnerability to climate change varies amongst regions, communities and social groups. Research has indicated the overall importance of micro-scale action in the context of a changing climate is high, that is if households decide to take action to minimize the negative effects of climate change and take advantage of its opportunities, it can lead to building up community resilience. This demonstrates the need to emphasize on lower scales such as local communities and households.

Being a crucial unit of social foundation and linked to other actors at larger or smaller geographical scales, a household or 'home' is an important scale for understanding activities that connect individual behaviors and societal attitudes and a scale to observe vulnerability and resilience. However, the relative low priority given to understanding the potential and limitations of households' contribution to build community climate change resilience may be associated with the gap of knowledge and data concerning households. There is limited understanding on such basic issues as beliefs and capacities that households have in respect to climate change. Many policy approaches do not take into account household complexities such as their decision making process, which is affected by a range of factors such as livelihood concerns, like housing and job security, as well as cultural and social values and priorities. Failure to address these challenges can delay actions that may reduce options for climate resilient communities and sustainable development in the future.

The study aims to propose ways to facilitate household level action to increase resilience against current and future variations of environmental conditions attributed to climate change. This will be done by conducting research in the state of Nuevo León, México, where there is a lack of information on perception, knowledge, and factors that influence climate change resilience practices at a household level. The project is approached through qualitative data from surveys targeted at households and analyzes how climate processes are carried out from a household perspective. It also examines demographic differences, if any, in the perception of climate change and its effects. This will assist in identifying who is most concerned and prepared to deal with the possible effects of climate change. By assessing the household scale, we can improve the development and implementation of climate policies at such level that lead to building climate change resilient communities.

Ilya Kashnitsky

Join the club: convergence in population ageing across European NUTS 2 regions

BACKGROUND

The Cohesion Policy of European Union is reported to be successful, especially, when the disparities in

economic output between East-European regions and the regions of older EU states are considered. Even though economic convergence took place, the role of Cohesion Policy may be overestimated. Different developments in population ageing could have largely contributed to economic cohesion.

OBJECTIVE

The paper investigates whether differences in population ageing across European NUTS 2 regions became smaller during 2003-2012. We examine whether differences in the ratio of the working to non-working age population became smaller across regions.

METHODS

We use both sigma- and beta-convergence to uncover regularities in regional ageing dynamics. Beta-convergence examines whether regions with a high share of working age population tend to lose their advantage. Conditional modeling is used to test if groups of regions converge to different levels, i.e. if there is club convergence. We examine to what extent convergence is caused by migration, mortality, and cohort turnover.

RESULTS

Even though regions of Europe saw an increase in ageing disparities, e.g. no sigma-convergence, beta-convergence analysis indicates that convergence in ageing took place only in recent years; the prior lack of convergence is mainly explained by the demographic development of East-European regions. Conditional modeling confirmed the existence of club convergence.

CONCLUSIONS

Divergent development of ageing in East-European regions contributed to faster economic convergence. Yet, since cohesion was not reached during the time of favorable population dynamics, it would be even harder to reach in the coming decades of accelerating ageing.

Yang Zhang

The environmental affordances of an urban park: The relationships between design and older adults' use of green spaces

Parks are important urban green space facilities which help older adults keep a healthy and active aging life by promoting their physical activities and social interactions. However, such spaces may not be utilized and may not contribute to wellbeing, if they fail to meet the needs of older adults. To investigate the relationships between design and older adults' use of green spaces, we look at the concept of environmental affordance, i.e. the properties of the environment taken with reference to an individual. This study draws on a combination of 23 interviews and behavior mapping of three sites in an urban park in Xi'an, China. The interviews were interpreted to explore the interconnection between park affordance and green space design. Interview data were supplemented by behavior mapping data which focused on the common patterns of behavior that appear to be correlated with particular green space design. By developing a functional taxonomy of older visitors' park environment, we identify the design features of the park which are facilitating or constraining park use. Finally, recommendations and guidelines are provided for green space planners and designers to create more livable green spaces for older residents in dense urban green areas.

Gloria Cicerone

Promoting regional growth and innovation: the relevance of related variety

This paper contributes to the empirical literature that aims at identifying the forces promoting innovation and affecting the growth potential of different geographical areas. My main purpose is to investigate the role that the sectoral composition of a regional economy plays in enhancing the rate of innovation and growth. In particular, the analysis aims to demonstrate that regions specializing in complementary sectors will

experience higher rates of innovation and growth than regions specializing in sectors that do not complement each other. Such complementarities are captured by the notion of related variety.

First, following the methodological approach of Hidalgo et al., I draw the network of relatedness between products, or 'product space', of the Italian provinces. I use the export data by Italian province (NUTS 3) and sector (three-digit) to calculate the products' proximity index, and the software Gephi to build the network map. I also calculate how dense is the product space around the areas where each Italian province has specialized, that is the measure of related variety.

Secondly, I test empirically whether related variety, among other factors, matters for the innovative output in 103 Italian provinces covering the period 2006-2012. The results show that related variety might be crucial. That is, Italian provinces with a range of industries that are technologically related tend to show higher innovation rates, once I control for the usual suspects. Moreover, I find evidence that related variety positively influences regional growth more than variety per se.

Collaborative Colleague Consult (CCC) Round 1

Marten Middeldorp

Access to Jobs and the School-to-Work Transition: A Decomposition Approach

The successfulness of the transition from school into working life is closely related to further career success. Periods of unemployment, labour market inactivity and suboptimal employment increase the chance of being unemployed or earning lower wages later in life. Access to jobs at the start of the career has proved an important determinant of early career success. School-leavers with good access to jobs earn higher wages and have lower chances of being unemployed. Although the school-to-work transition is becoming longer and less standardised, most research has adopted a simple definition of career entry success (e.g. being employed or not five years after graduating). In this paper, we study the effect of job accessibility on the school-to-work transitions of recent higher education graduates. We use a GIS to calculate a job accessibility index based on driving time that controls for commuting tolerance and competition from other workers. In a second step, we use sequence analysis to calculate labour market entry trajectories. We subsequently relate job accessibility and labour market entry trajectories to chance of employment, wage height and wage growth. Finally, we adopt a decomposition approach to determine whether, depending on the level of job access, trajectories and individual characteristics have different effects on early career success.

Bo Zhang

The Determinants of Settlement Intentions of Multi-Ethnic Migrants in Northwest China

Against the background of rapid urbanization and Western Development Campaign, a large-scale population shift is taking place within Northwest China. Many migrants within NWC are from different ethnic backgrounds compared to East and Central regions because NWC is not only the homeland to the majority Han but also to many ethnic minorities, mainly Muslims and Tibetans. Three questions are proposed as followed: 1. What determinants influence migrants' settlement intention in Northwest China? 2. How does migrants' ethnic background influence their settlement intention? 3. How does the social contexts of receiving society influence migrants' settlement intention? This article investigates the determinants of migrants' settlement intention by using the survey data conducted in three city/prefectures in Northwest China in 2013. Four strategies are presented: settling in the city, returning home, moving to other cities and undecided. We analyse migrants' settlement intention through a multi-nominal logit approach, together with

some in-depth interviews and participant observation. The results indicates that the preference of the city life, the length of contracts and the neighbourhood relation have negative impact on returning home. Comparing with couple and family migrants, the individual migrants tend to be rather settling down than returning home. Additionally, we focus on the strategy “moving to other cities” because many migrants only assume the current city as a transfer hub and tend to move to other cities especially to some East cities. We also focus on the “undecided” option because the significance of undecided choice in the determinants of city/prefectures indicates migrants’ hesitation and uncertainty about their future. The estimation implies the significance of migrants ethnic identity and social contexts of different city/prefectures. Han migrants seem less undecided about their settlement intention than the minority migrants. Migrants in Lanzhou and Linxia show more undecided rather than settling down. Policy implications are presented in the discussion to facilitate the minority migrants’ settlement.

Anne Marel Hilbers

Valuation in combined infrastructure and regional development: "Pushing the envelope"

How can we explicate concrete tools and institutional designs that are aimed at reaching consensus on the data basis for valuation; a valuation which serves to underpin the alternative choice? Because a wide range of values at different spatial levels is relevant in a participatory planning environment, it is important to specify the degree and nature of consensus in more detail.

The data basis for valuation needs to be 'consensus based': those involved in the evaluation must agree that the effect does matter and therefore must be measured, and the participants need to find the way of measuring intelligible (Sijtsma, 2006).

The suggested (SCBA) information to decision-makers strongly loses strength when on any of these matters is no consensus. There does not expressly need to be consensus on the final weight of the various value elements related to each other; this requires political debate and public discussion.

This means that a shared understanding is needed before talking about prioritization, as scientists and decision-makers. So, what knowledge/value brings new insights for decision-makers and stakeholders?

Collaborative Colleague Consult (CCC) Round 2

Liliana Castillo-Rivero

Rural Depopulating Territories in Mexico

During the period 2000-2010 around 40% of Mexican rural municipalities were in a depopulation process. Those municipalities are scattered throughout the highly diverse country, from the northern deserts to the southern tropical environments, with heterogeneous paths of development, human settlements, industrialization and urbanization.

From mid last century, rural depopulation has been a reality as a consequence of rural exodus towards developing urban territories or towards abroad of the national frontiers. Nevertheless; the phenomenon was recently considered as a new one due its geographic extent and its intensity of manifestation (Canales, 2010, Ochoa, 2008). Despite this, the knowledge on the main characteristics and the differences between depopulated territories has not been fully assessed yet. Although there are valuable efforts investigating Mexican territories experimenting high rates of outmigration (Aguilar et al. 2011; Galvan, 2008; García-Barrios, et al. 2009; Klooster, 2003; López, et al., 2005), they do not focus explicitly, on the depopulated ones, given that territories with high rates of outmigration are not necessarily in a depopulation process. Moreover, many of them are performed in territories exhibiting an opposite situation from depopulation, such as those in which, facing adversity, the strategies of rural inhabitants, do not include abandoning, but rather, a diversification of livelihood strategies, giving as a consequence the stability of rural population. Some

of those studies tend to generalize those features, even asserting that the Mexican rurality is not being abandoned.

This paper aims to classify different Mexican rural areas in depopulation process as to their main characteristics, similarities and differences among them in order to identify the spatial systems in which they are embedded, and the role they play within them. The discussion will be supported by the presentation of a series of maps elaborated by using GIS techniques, and based on Census data.

Joost Gieling

Rural village bonding in the era of mobilities. A quantitative approach to clarify the varieties and intensities of rural village bonding

As suggested in a number of recent papers, rural studies need to incorporate a mobilities framework in order to better grasp contemporary rural population dynamics. In West-European rural areas, the village as a 'residential village' became popular among former urban dwellers, but also other diverse groups of people migrated to the rural, attracted by its quietness and the nice preserved natural environment. Hence, villages have become more diversely populated in terms of lifestyles, mindsets, daily practices. The increased frequency and diversity of rural mobilities enables contemporary rural residents to perform different kinds of activities in the village as well as far beyond the village's borders. As a result, an individual's level of village bonding has changed dramatically in recent years. The close-knit village community with deeply rooted village bonds turned into a 'community light', where residents have different levels of 'local consciousness'. However, this does not mean that rural residents are not tied to their residential environment anymore. Rather, the 'traditional intense village bond' seems to have been replaced by more selective forms of bonding with certain parts of village life. This suggests that 'place' still plays an integral role in the foundation of feelings of belonging.

This paper aims to investigate how contemporary rural residents are bonded to their villages in terms of form and intensity. The study employs a latent class analysis to classify people with different levels of village bonding into different types of rural residents. We will propose a classification of rural residents first by identifying several forms of village bonding (social, functional, cultural and environmental), and second by showing that these forms create different patterns of village bonding in each group. As a result, it will be more clear how different patterns of village bonding are related to a more or less mobile lifestyle and for each group we can identify how they value their lives in the countryside in the 'era of mobilities'.

Marije Hamersma

Residents' satisfaction with participation in the Southern Ringroad Highway project-A participatory session..!

Highway projects are often controversial to a residential area; whereas they are initiated to increase accessibility, changes in the local residential environment cannot be avoided. There is much research stressing the importance of public participation in enhancing acceptance of governmental projects in residential areas. Also in Dutch highway infrastructure planning the participation of different stakeholders, such as residents, by both more passive (informing) and active participation strategies, increasingly gets attention. Research of Hamersma et al (2015, forthcoming) among residents living in the vicinity of two highway adjustment projects in the Netherlands however showed that the majority of residents were not actively participating nor satisfied with participation in the planning process of those projects. This raises the question how participation satisfaction among residents is formed.

My idea is to shed more light on the forming of residents' satisfaction with project team's participation efforts, by analyzing motivations of residents in the planning process of the Southern Ring Road highway adjustment project in Groningen, the Netherlands. These motivations of residents could be grasped from interviews I recently held with 36 residents living in the vicinity of this project. At this moment I am analyzing the interview data and thinking about how to structure a potential paper.

Some questions I would like to discuss with you during the session:

- Is the idea clear and relevant to you?
- Do you have suggestions with regard to (participation) theory to frame or conceptualize the topic?
- Do you recognize some of my (first) findings? Do you miss some things?
- How to present the results?
- What could (not) be concluded based on the results?

Sergi Trias-Llimós

The role of alcohol in explaining convergence in mortality across European countries

Background

European countries have a higher alcohol-attributable mortality than many other countries worldwide. However, important differences across countries, but also between sexes and over time exist. That is, alcohol-attributable mortality rates tend to be higher in Eastern European countries, and always greater for men than for women. For this reason, alcohol is postulated as a crucial factor to explain mortality differences between sexes, across countries and over time. Convergence in mortality across European countries is crucial information for equity policies. It has been widely assessed, mainly from an historical perspective. However, the potential contribution of different factors remains unknown.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to assess the role of alcohol in the extent of convergence (divergence) in mortality between European countries.

Methodology

We will apply formal economic approaches to assess convergence: sigma- and beta-convergence. We will compare convergence in all-cause mortality and in all-cause mortality excluding alcohol-related deaths to assess the role of alcohol in mortality convergence across countries. To estimate the contribution of alcohol in mortality, associated single-decrement life tables will be applied.

Relevance

This research will contribute in the explanation of mortality variations across countries by means of quantifying to what extent alcohol is contributing to convergence in mortality in Europe.

I will present the topic focusing on methodological aspects to assess convergence in mortality or cross-country variations over time.