



Networked regions and cities in times of fragmentation: Developing smart, sustainable and inclusive places

**Sunday 13th – Wednesday 16th May 2012:
Delft University Technology, Delft, Netherlands**
(Excursion, walking tour and evening drinks reception Sunday 13th May)

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Economic development paths within demographic shrinking regions 01

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The ongoing process of demographic change poses several challenges for regional economies – both in the public and in the private sector. Whereas the impacts of shrinking on settlement structures and public infrastructure have been dealt with rather intensively, the impacts on private enterprises and their reactions have not gained similar attention. Thus, the special session will focus on the business perspective of demographic shrinkage. Enterprises within demographic shrinking regions face various changes, e.g. shrinking regional markets, changing structure of demand, shortage of (qualified) labour force and human capital, or changes within the regional supplier and service-network. In contrast to export oriented firms, enterprises - mainly SME's - with a more regional market focus are not able to easily compensate these changes within the regional market. The scope of the session will be on the specific impacts of demographic shrinkage on private businesses in different sectors, their perception and the strategic consequences as well as the firm's networks, the institutional setting and possible policy options that may encourage the strategic reaction of firms. The session is open for theoretical as well as empirical contributions.

Anyone interested in participating in the session should register for the conference before 10th February 2012 by visiting <http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk/events/2012/May-Delft/> and follow the link.