

**Fifth Indicator analysis Vital Rural Area
April 2013 - May 2015**

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1 Introduction

In this paper we present the fifth and final evaluation report of the project Vital Rural Area. Results, competences and activities are reported of the total project and its partners during the period April 2013-May 2015. Vital Rural Area is a European co-operation in the framework of the INTERREGG IVB North Sea Programme. The project tries to identify transnational strategies that can potentially strengthen the prospects of rural areas. The project addresses three inter-related work packages strongly connected with regional development:

1. the empowerment of SMEs, towards new economic prospects and innovations
2. the branding of the region, towards a professional exposure of regions
3. optimizing services, towards more and better accessible services and amenities

Vital Rural Area consists of 13 project partners from six participating countries: The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Norway and the United Kingdom. Leadpartner is NOFA, the inter-municipal co-operation between the Dutch Municipalities of Achtkarspelen, Dantumadiel, Dongeradeel and Kollumerland. The other partners are: Norfolk County Council (United Kingdom, chair WP1), Streekplatform Meetjesland (Belgium, chair WP2), Province of Fryslân (The Netherlands, chair WP3), City of Langenhagen (Germany), Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein (Germany), Vejen Kommune (Denmark), Municipality of Sluis (The Netherlands), Rogaland Fylkeskommune (Norway), Finnøy Kommune (Norway), Friese Poort Bedrijfsopleidingen (The Netherlands), Intercommunale Leiedal (Belgium) and Province of West Flanders (Belgium).

Results are presented from 11 project partners. Results from Intercommunale Leiedal (Belgium) and Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein (Germany) are not included.

To gather information about roles, tasks and competences of Vital Rural Area a yearly analysis of indicators has been done. The data is based on information given by the project management and the 13 project partners. Similar to the previous evaluation reports, three types of indicators are described. Chapter 2 describes the compulsory indicators, chapters 3 gives insight in the generic indicators and chapter 4 shows information about the priority indicators.

2 Compulsory indicators

The compulsory indicators are divided in 3 sections. The first section describes indicators that refer to raising awareness. The second section gives information on indicators that gather information about the strengthening of transnational co-operation. The third section describes the indicators that focus on territorial coverage.

2.1 Raising awareness

2.1.1 Transnational disseminations outputs

This paragraph describes indicators reflecting the raising awareness of the project Vital Rural Area. Table 1 gives a summary of the raising awareness compulsory indicators. In this table we include all five evaluation periods. More extended tables including information of the activities of the different partners (i.e. presentations, press performances, local exhibitions and other project activities) is given in Appendix A.

Table 1: Raising awareness compulsory indicators

Raising awareness indicators	Target	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th evaluation	total
1. number of international partner meetings	4	6	2	2	2	2	14
2. number of political forums	-	1	1	1	-	1	4
3. communication plan for total project, WP1, WP2 and WP3	4	2	-	-	1	-	2
4. external interactive website created and running	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
5. number of digital newsletters	10	-	1	2	1	5	9
6. manual for the project activities	1	-	-	1	-	-	1
7. documentary web video	1	-	-	-	Concept version		-
8. publication scientific articles	4	-	-	-	3	3	3
9. presentations of project results at national seminars, conferences etc.	-	8	11	10	9	10	48
10. presentations of project results at international seminars, conferences etc.	12	7	13	10	3	10	43
11. number of newspaper activities	50	48	75	74	71	22	290
12. number of television performances	-	7	12	9*	30	6	64
13. number of radio performances	-	9	8	8*	21	3	49
14. number of local exhibitions	-	17	15	17	15	8	72
15. number of other local events	-	12	27	14	18	22	93

International partner meetings

In total 14 international partner meetings and four policy forums were organized during the project period. Two meetings in the last evaluation period: September 2013, 30 participants and June 2014, 35 participants. During the latter also 15 external experts joined the last day in an extra meeting.

In the first and second evaluation period 6 partner meetings were hold. In relation to the 2 political forums, pre-meetings with the partners were held in both Norfolk and Billund. Another international partner meeting was organised in Sluis (the Netherlands, February 2011) in which 34 people participated.

In the third evaluation period, two partner meetings were organised: a pre-meeting of the policy forum (May 2011) and Badhoevedorp, the Netherlands (November 2011).

In the fourth evaluation period (2012-2013) 2 partner meetings were organised: Rogaland and Finnoy (Norway) in May/June 2012 with 45 participants and Badhoevedorp (the Netherlands) in November 2012 with 26 participants. Furthermore, several meetings between Scientific Group and Project Management were organized: 2 meetings in March-May 2012; 3 meetings in September 2012 – March 2013 as well as several individual ad hoc meetings.

Policy forums

During the total project, four political forums were organised. The first in Norwich in September 2009 (102 participants), the second in Billund (Denmark, 108 participants) in October 2010, the third in Rinsumagaest (Netherlands, 156 participants) in May 2011 and the last in Sint Laureins (Belgium) in September 2013 (232 participants).

Communication and website

For the total project a communication plan was produced, as was for work package 1. The communication plans for work packages 2 and 3 will be included in the overall communication strategy (which will be elaborated and discussed end of May, beginning of June 2013).

Since June 2009 the project website is running (www.vitalruralarea.eu).

- Between the 1st of April 2010 and 1st of April 2011 the website had 1.925 visitors, 4.145 visits and 13.083 page displays.
- The second evaluation period showed that the website had 1.337 visitors and 2.768 visits between 20th of June and 31st of March 2010.
- The third evaluation period showed a number of 2.847 visits, 6.065 unique visitors, and 14.986 page displays between the 1st of April 2011 and the 1st of April 2012.
- The fourth evaluation period showed a number of 2.520 visits and a number of 1.523 unique visitors. The number of page displays between the 1st of April 2012 and the 1st of April 2013 was 6.571. Especially a decrease in the number of visits of the policy forum websites has been found. Leading up to and shortly after the policy forums there will always be larger amount of visitors, now this expires slowly.
- The fifth evaluation period showed 6.176 visitors, with 9.290 sessions and 49.156 page displays. In total the website attracted 33,8% returning visitors and 66,2% new visitors. (Google Analytics).

Newsletters

In total 9 newsletters were published by the project thus far which can be found at the website <http://www.vitalruralarea.eu/newsletters>. The last and 10th newsletter will be a summary of the final report.

Table 2: Vital Rural Area newsletters

1	February 2011	Introduction to the Vital projects and focus points
2	June 2011	Developing a regional brand
3	November 2011	International Policy Forum 2011
4	February 2013	Partner meeting 2012
5	September 2013 1	The Rural Power Pack
6	September 2013 2	Welfare, lifestyle and rural development
7	September 2013 3	Empowering SMEs
8	December 2013	Final Policy Forum 2013
9	September 2014	Vital Rural Area – Dissemination of results

Presentation and publication

Project results were presented on both national and international conferences and seminars. In the period of April 2013 - May 2015 10 presentations in a national ambience were given and

another 10 at international seminars and conferences. Over the whole project period 48 national presentations and 43 international presentations were presented.

The press coverage includes the number of articles written in newspapers/websites and the performances on radio and television. Last year 22 newspaper articles were published about the project and pilot activities. Three radio performance and eight television performances were given by the partners. Further, 8 local exhibitions were arranged as were 22 other local events.

Three scientific articles are submitted to peer-reviewed journals by members of the scientific team:

- Rural service provision in the digital age: concepts and evidence from Vital Rural Area, submitted to Journal of Rural Studies;
- Re-inventing policy measures from SME empowerment: lessons from Vital Rural Area, submitted to Journal of Rural Studies;
- Branding rural areas: motives, measures and management, submitted to Sociologia Ruralis.

2.1.2 Individuals reached by local awareness meetings and other activities of the project

Local and regional awareness meetings are meetings organised to inform other persons, such as politicians, policy makers, citizens, entrepreneurs and civil servants about the projects within Vital Rural Area. The tables 3 and 4 give the number of participants that joined local awareness meetings and other project activities. All partners find it difficult to quantify the exact amount of participants of the meetings as they constantly inform people and are involved in all kinds of meetings. Therefore not all partners are included.

Table 3: number of politicians, policymakers, entrepreneurs and civil servants that joined the local awareness meetings and other activities

Region	Total number of participants*
Friese Poort	32
Finnøy	140
Langenhagen	300
NOFA	400
Meetjesland	+500
West-Flanders	250 (Trefpunt: 150 / Congress 10 years regional branding: 100)
Zeeland Flanders	35

*The numbers are estimated numbers

Table 4: number of inhabitants that joined local awareness meetings and other activities

Region	Total number of participants*
Friese Poort	250
Langenhagen	4500
NOFA	500
Meetjesland	+5000
Zeeland Flanders	150

*The numbers are estimated numbers

* Rogaland: Very difficult to quantify. We are working constantly with information and involving in all kinds of meeting. About the issue of public health, most of the participants at meetings and participants of the lifestyle courses are women, approximately 70 – 80 %.

2.2 Strengthening transnational co-operation

The transnational co-operation indicators give information on the involvement of organisations, the involvement of individuals and project administration outputs (table 5). In total 39 educational institutes contributed to project activities, concerning the development of educational material, participation in activities and doing research in the 5th evaluation period. In comparison: 15 educational institutes were involved during the first evaluation period. This was much higher in in the second (51) and third evaluation period (46). Zeven knowledge institutes and six innovation centres were involved, mainly by giving advice and sharing knowledge. Appendix B shows detailed information.

Table 5: Transnational co-operation compulsory indicators

Transnational co-operation indicators	Target	1 st	2 nd	3 nd	4 th	5 th	total
Involvement of organisations:							
involvement educational institutes	3	15	51	46	33	39	-
involvement knowledge institutes	3	10	16	12	9	7	-
involvement innovation centres	3	9	10	10	7	6	-
Involvement of individuals:							
involvement local politicians	-	277	183	464	253	631	-
involvement regional politicians	-	82	117	255	300	451	-
involvement national politicians	-	13	7	9	39	10	-
involvement European politicians	-	0	0	4	0	3	-
Project administrations outputs:							
number of international project partner meetings	4	6	2	2	2	2	14
number of expert meetings	15	14	14	12	16	4	60

The project partners were further asked about the involvement of individuals within and outside the official core partnership. Especially local and regional politicians are connected to the project activities, respectively a number of 631 local politicians and 451 regional politicians. Their contributions consist for example of membership of boards, developing ideas, attending workshops, supporting the project financially etc. Furthermore, 10 national politicians were informed about the project and no European politicians were involved (see appendix B for detailed information).

During the fourth evaluation period two international project partner meetings were organised and 4 expert meetings (see also appendix B). That gives a total of 14 project partner meetings and 60 expert meetings during the Vital Rural Area project thus far.

2.3 Territorial coverage

In Vital Rural Area 13 project partners participate from six North-sea countries: The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Norway and the United Kingdom. Table 6 gives the partners project activities of last year and the regions, municipalities, cities and villages where the activities took place.

Table 6: description of project activities including the place where the activities took place

region	Project activity	Name of region, municipality and/or city/village
Vejen	All Pilot activities	Vejen Kommune and parts of Region South Denmark
Friese Poort	Developing digital renewable energy course sun heating	Dantumadeel, Dongeradeel, Achtkarspelen, Kollumerland, Tietjerksteradeel.
Finnøy	Local food	Finnøy and the region Ryfylke
Finnøy	Branding	Finnøy
Langenhagen	FahrKulTour	City of Langenhagen
Langenhagen	Hegermarkt	Village of Engelbostel, Langenhagen
NOFA	All project activities on WP1 (sme's)	North East Fryslân, 4 NOFA municipalities + 2 municipalities Ferwerderadiel and Tytsjerksteradiel
NOFA	All project activities on WP2 (branding)	North East Fryslân, 4 NOFA municipalities + 2 municipalities Ferwerderadiel and Tytsjerksteradiel
NOFA	All project activities on WP3 (services)	North East Fryslân, 4 NOFA municipalities +
NOFA	Klasseglas project, investigating innovative programs, ICT-solutions for primary schools in NOF, promote the building of broadband networks	Achtkarspelen, North East Fryslân + 2 municipalities Ferwerderadiel and Tytsjerksteradiel
NOFA	Project Maintaining public facilities by regional coordination (WP3)	North East Fryslân, 4 NOFA municipalities + 2 municipalities Ferwerderadiel and Tytsjerksteradiel
Rogaland	WP 3, optimize wellbeing and service, i.e. what we have come to know as the "Lifestyle pilot"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Throughout the municipality of Finnøy. 2. In addition, 7 municipalities in a different part of the country has "adopted" /copied the framework of the Lifestyle pilot. This was done after a presentation at a national conference in an earlier part of the project period.
Province of Fryslân	Pilot project Smart Rural Network Society (Digital Platform Burum)	Netherlands, province of Fryslân (region Northeast Fryslân), Municipality of Kollumerland, village of Burum
Meetjesland	*	14 municipalities of the Meetjesland
West-Flanders	Regional branding of West Flanders	The Province of West Flanders with its 64 municipalities, divided in 5 regions
Zeeland Flanders	Promotion activities they all take place in Zeeland Flanders	Sluis, Hulst and Terneuzen
Zeeland Flanders	Educational in Zeeland and Flanders	UCR in Middelburg and University of Ghent
Zeeland Flanders	Emigration exhibit	National level in Houten

***MEETJESLAND**

A. Strategy for Network Organization (The Cooperative Agreement Approach):

Re-organisation of the regional cooperation into a new model.

The process on re-organizing the regional structures continues.

The Streekplatform+ gives substantive and technical support of the official 'Consultative Organ': Political viewpoints were translated step by step into a practical plan.

In April this Consultative Organ of Mayors (13 Mayors) decided to transform the existing 'Streekplatform+ Meetjesland' into a new organization called 'Network Meetjesland'. The focus will lie on intermunicipal cooperation, which will lead to more efficiency and decisiveness. Regional development will be the second main task. The project convinced a 14th municipality Wachtebeke in becoming a member of Network Meetjesland

The local governments (14 municipalities) will be the founding members, together with representatives from society and sector organizations.

Following this final decision, the activities of the Official 'Consultative Organ' (*see Flemish decree on Intermunicipality Cooperation*) were wrapped up, and a Final Report was made. The report and the plan was afterwards officially approved by 11 City Councils. Starting date of 'Network Meetjesland' is scheduled in November 2014.

B. Internal Branding: Implementation of the Meetjesland Brand:

The communication strategy of the regional brand is in full execution. These actions with the intent to spread the regional brand took place:

-**Advisory Commission:** the commission that judges and advises new applications from potential brand users, comes together on a regular basis.

-**Preparation of the 3th 'Annual Meetjesland Day':** 21th June is 'National Meetjesland Day': many initiatives around the region and its brand. Call to local governments, societies, organizations ... to do something special: a picnic, a small present to all workers in a company, a drink, a happy hour, ...

-**Meetjesland Midsummer Event on June 21st:** yearly internal network event, for all people who are involved in regional development (personal invitation of about 800 people of our network). The Vital 'Rural Power Pack' was presented. The Meetjesland Brand is a 'binding element'.

-**Social Media:** we took initiative to share social media initiatives, together with other organisations (Tourism and Culture Meetjesland)

- Preparation of the **Meetjesland New Year Event:** Yearly network event for all people involved in the regional development, the municipalities and SME's.

C. Preparation Strategic Vision Meetjesland

The region is preparing itself to formulate a new strategic vision. The process on documenting and analyzing important themes has started. The selection of three main topics is scheduled end of October 2014. Network Meetjesland is representing the 14 municipalities in this process. Finally four main topics were selected:

- Coordination and facilitation of the intermunicipal cooperation, increase administrative effectiveness municipalities
- Establish a coordinated regional policy
- Initiate and realise leverage projects for the region and address regional challenges for the future
- Maintain a positive and strong brand of the region, both internally and externally.

D. Young Talents for Attractive Companies

The preparation of a project proposal: we will approach the companies and schools who are interested to be involved in the project. So far these partners are invited: Network Meetjesland, VOKA Chamber of Commerce, 50 SME's, 10 secondary schools, 2 college/high schools.

3 Generic indicators

The generic indicators give information on (1) core activities, (2) raising awareness and (3) strengthening of transnational co-operation.

3.1 Core activities

The core activities indicators are divided in training and staff exchange programmes, demonstration projects and knowledge and know-how exchange platforms (table 7).

Table 7: core activities generic indicators

Core activities indicators	Target	1 st	2 nd	3 nd	4 th	5 th
Training and staff exchange programmes:	8					
1. ICT based courses		-	-	-	2	1
2. energy saving and renewable energy based courses		2	1	1	2	3
3. exchange programmes for teaching staff and employees		2	1	-	3	1
4. exchange programmes for teaching students		-	-	-	2	2
Transnational demonstration projects, pilot schemes, feasibility studies:						
5. demo case/working method SMEs (WP1)	2	1	2	1	4	4
6. demo case/working method regional branding (WP2)	2	2	1	2	5	6
7. demo case/working method welfare and well-being (WP3)	2	3	4	-	3	5
Transnational knowledge bases, technology transfer centres/schemes, know-how exchange platforms:						
8. Rural Power Pack (RPP)	1	-	-	-	-	1
9. dissemination of marketing strategies to Europe27	1	-	-	-	-	-
10. establishment mobile implementation team	1	-	-	-	-	-
11. establishment scientific group	1	1	-	-	-	-

During the VRA project several training and staff exchange programmes were developed. Last period, Friese Poort developed ICT based course on how to save energy in 3 languages (www.educationer.eu) and ca. 32.000 people visited the website. Other examples: Rogaland (Norway) developed a course to increase the use of internet which is expected to reduce the need to commute by boat and car (120 participants). Also Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein (WAK, Germany) is developing some courses; these courses are close to be finalized. Cooperation between Vejen, Friese poort and Leiedal will lead to a transnational workshop on fibre broadband development in rural regions.

Six demo cases or working methods are expected to be developed during the project, two for each work package.

- In total 4 demo cases were developed around the establishment of new SMEs and the empowerment of existing SMEs (WP1) by: Norfolk (UK), NOFA (NL), Friese Poort (NL) and Vejen (DK). The demo cases from Vejen and NOFA will be available in English as part of the Rural Power Pack.
- Six partners have developed demo cases focusing on regional branding (WP2): Meetjesland (available for publication), Zeeland-Flanders (www.uw.nieuwetoekomst.nl), NOFA-Municipalities (available soon, as part of the Rural Power pack), West-Flanders

(not available for publication) and Leiedal (available for publication). Langenhagen has a trailer of the region available that is open for publication.

- In total 5 regions build a demo case based on the optimisation of the level and quality of social services developed (WP3): Finnøy (available for publication), Rogaland (www.livsstil.finnoy.no, www.finnoy.no), NOFA (available soon as part of the Rural Power pack), Vejen (available soon as part of the Rural Power pack), and Leiedal (available for publication).

The dissemination of marketing strategies to Europe27 and the establishment of a mobile implementation team will be included in the overall communication strategy (shall be elaborated and discussed the next coming weeks).

Rural Power Pack

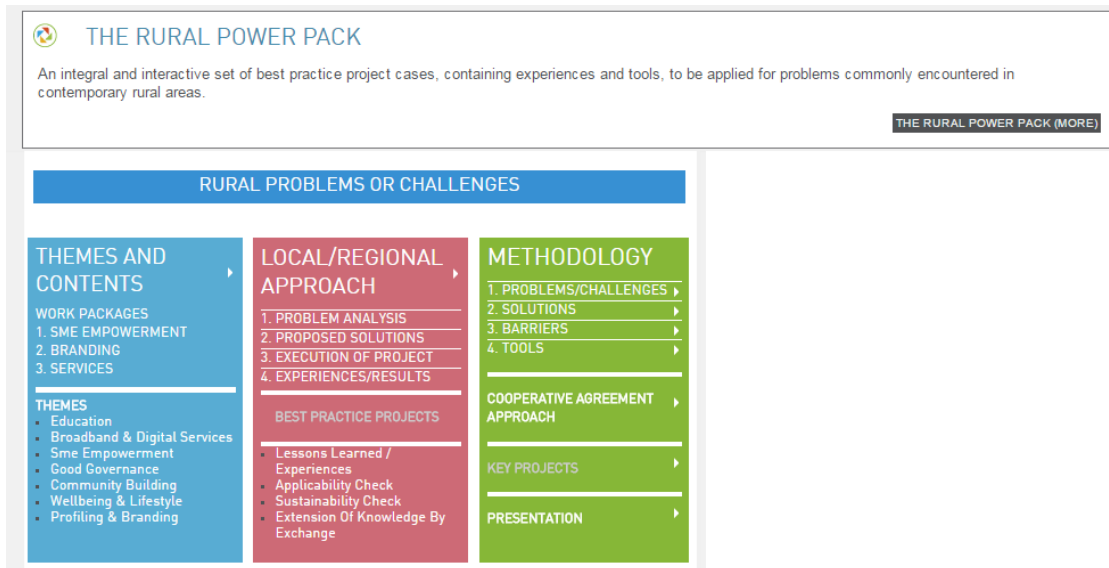
The development of the Rural Power Pack (RPP), or the general working method for regional projects on rural development, has been finalised last year (<http://www.vitalruralarea.eu/the-rural-power-pack>).

Some characteristics of the RPP are:

- Specific. The RPP contains best practice cases developed by the partners in the project and other actors.
- Inspiring. The RPP is a reference tool for those actors that are looking for inspiration.
- Inviting. The RPP invites actors to supply and respond to the resources available and to deliver their own contributions.
- Interactive. The RPP provides helpful tools for professionals working within the field of rural development.
- Progressive. The RPP is a functional, flexible and sustainable framework that can be continuously used and further developed.

The Rural Power Pack was developed on the basis of:

1. Literature review of scientific literature and European policy documents regarding rural and regional development.
2. Results and experiences of former and current related INTERREGG Northsea region projects on rural development and citizens participation
3. Results and experiences of Vital Rural Area's project partners through interviews with representatives of project partners and attending project partner meetings and international policy forums on regional development.
4. The CAA: co-operative agreement approach.



3.2 Raising awareness / dissemination

The first generic raising awareness indicator refers to the awareness of project outputs by individuals within and outside the North Sea region. This is measured by (1) the number of politicians, policy makers and civil servants that are aware of project outputs and (2) number of inhabitants that are aware of project outputs. Table 9 shows estimated numbers as well as all partners. For the fifth evaluation period at least 3.000 politicians and 1.000.000 inhabitants became aware of the Vital Rural Area project. Appendix C gives detailed information on regional projects.

Table 8: Raising awareness generic indicators

Raising awareness indicators	Target	1 st	2 nd	3 nd	4 th	5 th
Awareness by individuals within and outside the North Sea region:						
number of politicians, policy makers and civil servants that are aware of project outputs	-	4.085	4.550	1.085	1.527	3.008
number of inhabitants that are aware of project outputs	-	125.475	518.950	106.600	151.000	1.090.000
What is organised to create a greater awareness of project outputs within and outside the North Sea region	20					
informing national authorities		10	5	15	12	Not countable
informing trade and industry organisations		Not countable	Not countable	Not countable	Not countable	Not countable
informing other relevant stakeholder organisations		Not countable	Not countable	Not countable	Not countable	Not countable

*The numbers are estimated numbers

What was organised to create a greater awareness of project outputs within and outside the North Sea region? The target number of this indicator has been set on 20 and can be divided by informing national authorities, trade and industry organisations and other relevant stakeholders. Table 9 shows that during the first evaluation period 10 national authorities were informed. In the second evaluation period this were 5 national authorities, during the third evaluation period 15 national authorities, and during the fourth period 12 national authorities were informed. The national authorities informed in the last evaluation period are not countable, mainly due the big network conference organised by West-Flanders. All members of Flemish, National and European Parliament were invited

The trade and industry organisations and other relevant organisations are not countable as the partners inform all entrepreneurs and regional organisations. Appendix C gives as much detailed regional information as possible. Main information streams are achieved by newsletters, project magazines, personal contacts, meetings and presentations.

4 Priority indicators

The priority indicators gather information around two priorities, (1) building on our capacity for innovation and (2) promoting sustainable and competitive communities.

4.1 Building on our capacity for innovation

This indicator handles on new or improved networks, alliances, collaborations, discussions etc., or in other words the existence of a Vital Rural Area Network. The earlier evaluation periods 7 project partners mentioned a local or regional Vital Rural Area network. This evaluation period network information was also given by 7 partners:

- Vejen: The Local Action Group, LAG-Vejen, and parts of our internal organisation in Vejen Kommune have been involved during the project period.
- Friese Poort: via website vital rural area (for example country page)
- NOFA:
 - Exchange of knowledge, experience & best practices by skype meetings (Vejen - Achtkarspelen connection on Klasseglas)
 - Regional Masterplan/ANNO involving local & regional government and various stakeholders
 - Golden Triangle Network
 - De werkplaats Network
 - Innovation House Lauwersdelta.
- Rogaland: Common meetings, discussions, mobilisation and involvement, administration and planning group and decision group
- Meetjesland: This occurs within the governing bodies of Network Meetjesland (105 members in the General Assembly
- Zeeland Flanders: They are involved in all our activities and form the board and provide our budget

4.2 Promoting sustainable and competitive communities

The second priority indicator relates to development, testing and implementation of the three work packages.

4.2.1 Work package 1, or the empowerment of SMEs

Development:

- Friese Poort: Designed the digital course sun heating. The learning module is designed for SMEs that specialize in installation and for people already working in the engineering sector. The students learn how this works and how solar water heaters should be designed and installed. They will thus have added value for SMEs, allowing them to increase their jobs opportunities in renewable way.
- Finnøy: We have built up a regional local-food center
- NOFA: (Further) developed the following projects in own partner region:
 - De Werkplaats
 - Steenmeel project
 - Regional Masterplan / ANNO
 - Golden triangle
 - Net Nix
 - Innovation House Lauwersdelta
 - Placekeeping

Testing:

- Friese Poort: There has been a test with 19 entrepreneurs. Also the material has been tested by students and teachers. In both ways they gave us feedback. After this feedback we have made changes in the material and on the moment the final version is available on the website educationer.eu
- Finnøy: We are in the end of the work and have not tested it yet
- NOFA: (Further) tested the following projects in own partner region

Implementation:

- Friese Poort: The website www.educationer.eu is available in three languages: English, German and Dutch. The purpose of the digital learning module Solar water heaters is broadening knowledge concerning the design and installation requirements of solar water heaters and translating technical specifications into customer benefits. There are two courses available, namely:
 - Design and selection system (office)
 - Installation and maintenance (mechanics)For both the modules is developed a testcase (2D and 3D practicum)
- Finnøy: We have implemented the centre of local food in our strategy (2015-2017)
- NOFA: (Further) implemented the following projects in own partnerregion. Results will be incorporated in the overall project deliverable Rural Power Pack that will be available during project lifetime for Vital's partnership and for other dissemination activities.

4.2.2 Work package 2, regional branding

Development:

- Finnøy: Meetings, work-shops, conference, cooperating with the local newspaper, expert-group: we have been following the steps in the manual "7 steps of regional branding"
- Langenhagen: We implemented the steps of branding to Langenhagen and now know what to follow in future. Some steps are fully realized, others are lacking something. The

branding must find implementation to a certain organizational form which is lacking at the moment but the new mayor wants to install a marketing organization in the administration of Langenhagen. The events are going to be carried on. At the moment it is not clear what kind of new and further ideas are to be developed and what will be put into realization.

- NOFA: Website with information about routes and campaign with social media and various other branding activities involving tourism & entrepreneurship
- Meetjesland: Cf. <http://www.vitalruralarea.eu/profiling-branding/28-profiling-and-branding/137-19ambassadors-for-regional-branding>
- Zeeland Flanders: We learned from all of the partners. Used best practices and implemented the regional branding model we developed together.

Testing:

- Finnøy: We are in the start-up phase for testing out
- Langenhagen: We have installed the label PFERDEstärken, but the new mayor doesn't want to go on with it. Therefore according to the ideas of the manual a big part of the branding will get lost and has to be reworked with a new label. The steps to go through are working well.
- NOFA: Examples of Meetjesland for ambassadeursnetwerk used for Noordoost Fryslan
- Meetjesland: The regional branding of the Meetjesland is a very big success. This is due mainly to the VRA-project. Since the start of the project the brand 'Meetjesland' has grown stronger and is used by the 14 municipalities, 20 organizations and more than 60 companies.
- Zeeland-Flanders: only during the project we developed together the model. I gave those examples to others. But we did not test

Implementation:

- Finnøy: We have made a strategy for marketing and branding in Finnøy (2014-2026)
- Langenhagen: see ppt presentation
- NOFA: Campaign is "up and running"
- Meetjesland: The Meetjesland brand is quite commonly used in our region by governments, businesses and citizens.
- West-Flanders: we send out specific mailings in cooperation with our Department of External Relations. The province of West Flanders was responsible for the content web management of the country page Belgium
- Zeeland-Flanders: We still work on it so it is 100 % implemented future development takes place.

4.2.3 Work package 3, services on well-being and welfare

Development:

- NOFA: (Further) developed the following projects in own partnerregion:
 - Klasseglas
 - Virtual Service desk
 - Smart Rural Network Society
 - Started new project: Maintaining public facilities by regional coordination
- Rogaland: From the desk and field research and true public meetings and SWOT analyses

Testing:

- NOFA: (Further) tested the following projects in own partnerregion:
 - Klasseglas
 - Virtual Service desk
 - Smart Rural Network Society
- Rogaland: We have invited the inhabitants to start on ICT based lifestyle course at the moment Please note: These figures have been reported earlier: 151 persons have ended the 12 weeks course and about 4 persons participate at the moment. Among them there are 111 women and 50 men.

Implementation:

- NOFA: (Further) tested the following projects in own partnerregion:
 - Klasseglas
 - Virtual Service desk
 - Started effect measurement Tinke net Drinke (Think, don't Drink)
 - Smart Rural Network Society
 - Results will be incorporated in the overall project deliverable Rural Power Pack that will be available during project lifetime for Vital's partnership and for other dissemination activities.
- Rogaland:
 - In different strategy plans(regional and local)
 - True political decisions
 - In the budget both regional and local
 - In the long term budget for the municipality and how they can continue after the end of the project period
 - "Export" to at least 7 other municipalities in different parts of the country

Appendices

Appendix A: detailed information raising awareness compulsory indicators

Table A1: presentations of project results at national seminars.

region	date	place	Subject
Vejen	17-04-2013	Christiansborg, Copenhagen (Danish Parliament)	Presentation and debate about broadband in rural districts at a hearing arranged by Folketinget's 'Committee for Rural Districts and Islands' directly transmitted by the Parliament's national TV-channel
Friese Poort	16-10-2013	Damwoude	Seminar dissemination Gem. Dantumadiel
Friese Poort	18-11-2013	Leeuwarden	Seminar Knowledgecentre Sustainable
Friese Poort	25-11-2013	Leeuwarden	Seminar Business Club region of Dokkum
Friese Poort	17-12-2013	Nijmegen	Visit Solesta Solar Water Heaters
Friese Poort	15-05-2014	Westergeest	Seminar Masterclass European subsidies
Finnøy	17-09-2014	Sola, Rogaland	About VRA-project and rural power pack
Finnøy	22-08-2014	Finnøy	Presentation WP 2 by Wim Bernaert
Norfolk	8-11-2013	County Hall, Norwich	The presentation was to the Europe and International Forum – it set out the concepts of VRA to partners from across the region, discussed the purposes and objectives of the project and then had a focus on the Norfolk Knowledge element of the project. We presented the achievements of Norfolk Knowledge, what they had contributed to the VRA outputs and the sustainable model of financing the programme that has allowed the project to continue beyond the period of VRA funding.
West-Flanders	20-11-2013	Oostende	Congress 10 years regional branding

Table A2: presentations of project results at international seminars.

region	date	place	Subject
Vejen	14 th -16 th April 2013	Cambridge, UK	Vital Rural Area, Partner Meeting
Vejen	7 th June 2013	Buitenpost, NL	Meeting and dialogue at 'Innovatiehuis Lauwersdelta', and meetings with other Dutch persons
Vejen	24 th -27 th September 2013	Sint Laurens, Be	Vital Rural Area, Policy Forum, Exhibition, panel debate, workshop about broadband in rural areas in Denmark
Friese Poort	26-11-2013	St.Laureins Belgium	Exhibitionstand Policy Forum
Friese Poort	05-06-2014	Dokkum/Harkema	Presentation result Solar Water Heater
NOFA	April 2013	Cambridge UK	Partnermeeting
NOFA	June 2014	Dokkum NL	Partnermeeting
NOFA	June 2014	Aberdeen UK	Annual Conference Interreg IVB
Rogaland	01-07-14	Finnøy, Rogaland, Norway	International Workshop, (part of the dissemination programme)
Meetjesland	10-12-2013	Dokkum (NL)	Regional Branding & Regional Ambassadors

Table A3: publication of project results in newspaper articles

region	name	Publication date	Subject article
Vejen	Erhvervsavisen Syd	29 th October 2013	Interview about outcome from the FTTH project in South Jutland and Vejen Kommune
Vejen	NetværksINFO 34	11 th March 2014	Piece about Vital Rural Area incl. link to website in a newsletter published by Danish 'Ministry for Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs'
Friese Poort	Newslettre ROC Friese Poort Bedrijfsopleidingen	21 march 2014	Nearly 19.000 visitors website educationer.eu
Friese Poort	Newslettre ROC Friese Poort Centrum Duurzaam	23-05-2014	Sustainable energy
Finnøy	Nationen (national newspaper)	July 2014	Life style project/ branding
Rogaland	Nationen (national newspaper)	11-August-2014	About the Vital Rural Area Project, focus on the "Lifestyle" pilot (WP3)
West-Flanders	Krant van WVL		Tour of West Flanders profiling the provincial government as a knowledge partner for the West-Flemish municipalities (8 pages newspaper Enclosure)
West-Flanders		September '13	The Leiestreek
West-Flanders		December '13	Bruges & the North of West Flanders
West-Flanders		March '14	Central West Flanders
West-Flanders		June '14	The Westhoek Region
West-Flanders		September '14	The Coast
West-Flanders	Het Laatste Nieuws	22-11-2013	Article on 10 years regional branding
West-Flanders	Krant van WVL	24-05-2014	Article on the 6 West-Flemish 'ambassador'-municipalities ('proud of West Flanders')
Zeeland Flanders	Intermediair	23-08-13	Emigreren naar Zeeuws-Vlaanderen
Zeeland Flanders	PZC	27-08-13	Zeeuw-Vlaamse studenten presenteren zich in Gent
Zeeland Flanders	Vertrek.nl	Nov 2013	Een toekomst kan ook in eigen land
Zeeland Flanders	Zeeland magazine	Nr 03	Emigreer naar Zeeuws-Vlaanderen
Zeeland Flanders	Zeeland Magazine	Nr 5	200 jaar Zeeuws-Vlaanderen reden voor groot feest
Zeeland Flanders	Gazet van Antwerpen	07-feb 2014	Zeeuws-Vlaanderen elfde Vlaamse provincie
Zeeland Flanders	Volkskrant	06-aug 2014	artikel over Zeeuws-Vlaanderen
Zeeland Flanders	Trouw	19-sep 2014	niet Zeeuws, niet Vlaams wel 200 jaar

Table A4: performances of project and/or project results on television

region	name	date	Subject article
Meetjesland	AVS-Regional TV	27-09-2013	News item – International Policy Forum VRA in Meetjesland
West-Flanders	Focus-wtv	20-11-2013	Newsitem about 10 years of regional branding in West Flanders
West-Flanders	Focus-wtv	21-11-2013	Newsitem about 10 years of regional branding in West Flanders
West-Flanders	Focus-wtv		Newsitem about 6 West-Flemish ‘ambassador’-municipalities (‘proud of West Flanders’)
Zeeland Flanders	Omroep Zeeland radio en tv	07-11-13	Item over havo-piste
Zeeland Flanders	Omroep Zeeland	13-02-14	Zeeuws-Vlaanderen op Emigratiebeurs

Table A5: performances of project and/or project results on radio

region	name	date	Subject article
Finnøy	NRK Rogaland	22-08-2014	About practical works and branding
Zeeland Flanders	Omroep Zeeland radio en tv	07-11-13	Item over havo-piste
Zeeland Flanders	Omroep Zeeland	12-jun 2014	radio interview over Zeeuws-Vlaamse speld

Table A6: number of local exhibitions organised

region	Date	place	Number of visitors	subject
NOFA	11-03-2013	Kollumeroord	30	Brainstorm about campaign with ambassadeurs, tourist entrepreneurs and the municipalities.
NOFA	September 2013	Burgum NL Streekhuis	150	Politicians meeting on regional development (SEM / ANNO)
NOFA	September 2014	Burgum NL Streekhuis	150	Politicians meeting on regional development (SEM / ANNO)
Meetjesland	16/1/2014	St-Laureins	459	VRA exposition during the NY-reception
Meetjesland	13/1/2015	St-Laureins	560	VRA exposition during the NY-reception
Meetjesland	21/06/2014	Waarschoot	270	VRA exposition during the Mid Summer Event Meetjesland
Zeeland Flanders	April 2014	Terneuzen	100	Branding the region
Zeeland Flanders	June 2014	Terneuzen	75	Ecopolicy game results of all schools to the politicians

Table A7: number of other local events organised

region	Date	place	Number of visitors	subject
Friese Poort	19-03-2013	Leeuwarden	60 (SMEs, students, teachers)	Solar Energy
Friese Poort	12-11-2013	Leeuwarden	73 (SMEs, students)	Presentation Solar Water heating

			nts, teachers)	
Friese Poort	18-03-2014	Leeuwarden	46 (SMEs, students, teachers)	Self-sufficient home (energy-neutral)
Friese Poort	18-11-2014	Leeuwarden	53 (SMEs, students, teachers)	Presentation training and education a.o. Solar Water heaters
Langenhagen	15-9-2013	Langenhagen	800	FahrKulTour
Langenhagen	22-9-2013	Langenhagen	4000	Hegermarkt
NOFA	12-03-2013	Kollum	50	Inspirationssession teachers Lauwerscollege
NOFA	05-11-2012	Burgum	200	Raden en statenbijeenkost (presentations vital en Dwaande)
NOFA	13-4-2014	Birdaard (NL)	50	Kick off masterclass socio-economic development
NOFA	17-4-2014	Wâlterswâld (NL)	60	Social inclusiveness / wellbeing / ecopolicy
NOFA	15-5-2014	Westergeast (NL)	50	Energy / sustainability / green mobility / water
NOFA	28-5-2014	Buitenpost (NL)	40	Innovation / SME's / education / agribusiness / biobased economy
NOFA	2-6-2014	Burgum (NL)	10	Wrap up masterclasses
NOFA	11-3-2014	Burgum	25	Tourist networks
Rogaland	01-07-14	Finnøy	30	Intenational Work shop. Vital Rural Area project and the Lifestyle pilot. Part of the dissemination process. Please see dissemination report
Rogaland	28-08-14	Stavanger	12	Practical seminar on reporting and finalizing the project. (Also included in the dissemination report)
Meetjesland	21/06/2014	14 municipalities	+ 1.000	More than 100 activities in one day (see www.meetjeslandsefeestdag.be)
West-Flanders	11/05/2014	Ostend	± 95	European Day with presentation of VITAL results
West-Flanders	08/05/2014	Bruges	± 350	Trefpunt West Vlaanderen (big annual network event by the Province) : introducing 6 West-Flemish 'ambassador'- municipalities who are proud of West Flanders
Zeeland Flanders	4 feb 2014	Middelburg	35	Guest college at Roosevelt academy
Zeeland Flanders	23 april 2014	Zeeland Flanders	25	Bustour for UCR students
Zeeland Flanders	6 may 2014	Middelburg	50	Final presentations results research

Appendix B: detailed information on transnational co-operation compulsory indicators

Table B1: number of educational institutes involved in project activities

region	Name institute	Type of contribution
Friese Poort	WAK (Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig Holstein)	Partner in developing module of Heat pumps
Finnøy	Høgskulen for landbruk og bygdeutvikling	Have given competence to different activities of branding.
NOFA	Tarissing, KBS de Bernebrêge PCBS, De Claercamp CBS Hoekstien PCBS, De Lichtbron Christelijke Basisschool, De Looijenga Christelijke Basisschool, Joh Merlettes PCBS, De Oanrin PCBS, De Reinbôge Protestantse Christelijke Basisschool, Saad PCBS, De Stile PCBS, De Vereniging PCBO Achtkarspelen Wynroas Christelijke Basisschool, De Balkwar Openbare Basisschool, De Holdersnêst, It Jan van Zuilenskoalle OBS Lytse Wiman Openbare Basisschool Maskelyn Openbare Basisschool Mienskip Openb, De De Tjelke Skriuwoerd Openbare School, It Twaspan Openbare Basisschool, It Fontein, GBS De Oranje Nassauschool, GBS	Participating in creating fiber glass network. This should lead to innovation in education, more cooperation and knowledge sharing, sharing of facilities.
NOFA	2 secondary schools: Dockinga college & Lauwers college	Participation, labour hours (Net Nix films)
NOFA	1 college for vocational education: Friese Poort	Participation, labour hours (Golden Triangle)
NOFA	3 university schools: Van Hall & NHL, WUR Wageningen	Participation, labour hours (Werkplaats)
NOFA	Nordwin College (agricultural education)	Participation, labour hours (Werkplaats)
Meetjesland	Artevelde Highschool	Consultation and exchange with regard to pilot activity 'Young Talents'
Meetjesland	Artevelde Highschool	Providing students to prepare the Meetjeslandday and the Mid Summer Event on June 21.
Meetjesland	College Ten Doorn Eeklo	Participation in the Policy Forum September 2013
Zeeland Flanders	Scalda	Marketing student use chocolate bordermarks for marketing the chocolate product.

Zeeland Flanders	Secondary schools Zwin College Oostburg De Rede in Terneuzen Zeldenrust in Terneuzen	Used ecopolicy game and debate about vital rural areas and their demographic development
Zeeland Flanders	University College Roosevelt	Undergraduate students did research

Table B2: number of knowledge institutes involved in project activities

region	Name institute	Type of contribution
Friese Poort	Kenteq	Developing renewable energy course sun heating
NOFA	Hoge School NHL Leeuwarden	Expertise, incidental
NOFA	Arcadis	Expertise
NOFA	Van Hall Larenstijn	Expertise
NOFA	Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	Expertise in project Maintaining public facilities by regional coordination
Rogaland	IRIS (- International Research Institute of Stavanger)	Start a research project where they will follow the municipalities and Rogaland County Council and how they execute their work on public health, in accordance with the new national Public Health Act.
Zeeland Flanders	University College Roosevelt	Undergraduate students did research

Table B3: number of innovation centres involved in project activities

region	Name institute	Type of contribution
Friese Poort	Knowledge- and education Centre Sustainable energy Leeuwarden	Education of the latest innovations of sustainable energy
NOFA	Nofcom	Participant in the project branding / masterplan
NOFA	Kenniswerkplaats	Participation of WP1 SME's
NOFA	Innovatiehuis Vejen / Innovatiehuis Lauwerdelta NOF	Participation of WP1 SME's
Rogaland	Ryfylke næringsshage (earlier Finnøy næringsshage)	Innovation Centre for SMB, coordinates WP 1,2 and 3

Table B4: number of local politicians and policymakers involved in project activities

Region	number	contribution
Vejen	27 (City Council in Vejen Kommune)	They are informed about the project results and they spread that information to their networks
Finnøy	21	They have been informed about the activities and the outcome from the activities
Langenhagen	50	
NOFA	20 (mayors and eldermen)	Board members Vital's board, Regional Branding Board and the ANNO-board
Rogaland	3 are directly involved	Local politicians are taking part in the steering group meetings and local meetings regarding the "Lifestyle" pilot.
Meetjesland	+100	All municipalities collaborated actively in the preparation of the renewed regional partnership (DVV – the cooperation Agreement Approach).
West-Flanders	250	Trefpunt: 150 / Congress 10 years regional branding: 100

Zeeland Flanders	160	The decide about our Yearly programs and budget
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Table B5: number of regional politicians and policymakers involved in project activities

Region	number	contribution
Finnøy	15	They have been informed about the outcome and result
Langenhagen	2	
NOFA	Over 40 politicians and about a 120 councillors	Defining regional policy (masterplan/ANNO and various other projects) and government meetings on regional masterplan/ANNO)
Rogaland	Approximately 90 people	The whole of the Rogaland County Council were given “Information Back Packs” as part of the dissemination activities, involving approximately 90 politicians and policymakers
Meetjesland	+100	all regional and sectoral structures collaborated actively in the preparation of the renewed regional partnership (DVV – the cooperation Agreement Approach).
West-Flanders	84 members of provincial deputation and council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – discussion on our regional branding plans in deputation and in Commission of the council – approvement of our budget in the provincial council – visits of the provincial deputation to the 64 West Flemish municipalities, divided in 5 regions – presentation of the West Flemish regional branding project and possibilities of ‘ambassadorship’ to 6 municipalities (mayor and eldermen)
Zeeland Flanders	some	knowledge of our goals and activities . Sometimes involved to subsidise requests

Table B6: number of national politicians and policymakers involved in project activities

Region	number	contribution
Finnøy	8	They were represented in the conference at Finnøy 22.08.2014
Rogaland	2	At least 2 have were present at a conference in September, where the Vital Rural Area pilot “Lifestyle” was presented.
Zeeland Flanders	some	knowledge of the demographic changes and our practical solutions around it

Table B7: number of European politicians and policymakers involved in project activities

Region	number	contribution
Zeeland Flanders	3	knowledge of the demographic changes and our practical solutions around it

Table B8: number of expert meetings on region level

Region	date	place	participants	subject
Vejen				As part of our dissemination activities we arranged some webinars/masterclasses with international experts about broadband and digital services. These webinars have been reported as part of the dissemination activities in the project.
Vejen	12 th March 2014	Skype	8 from Belgium, NL and DK	Broadband/FTTH and digital services
Vejen	24 th April 2014	Skype	5 from Belgium, NL and DK	Broadband/FTTH and digital services
Vejen	9 th May 2014	Skype	5 from NL and Denmark	Broadband/FTTH and digital services

Appendix C: detailed information on raising awareness generic indicators

Table C1: number of politicians, policymakers and civil servants that are aware of the outputs of the project

region	Total number
Vejen	50+
Friese Poort	80
Finnøy	300
Langenhagen	500
NOFA	700
Rogaland	Approximately 500*
Meetjesland	+500
West-Flanders	we presented our results on regional branding to the 8 members of deputation and the 30 members of management-team/directors of provincial services
Zeeland Flanders	350

Rogaland: due to presentation on national television, national, regional and local meetings and conferences during the whole project period (not just the last months)

Table C2: number of inhabitants that are aware of the outputs of the project

region	Total number
Vejen	100+
Friese Poort	32.000
Finnøy	100
Langenhagen	10.000
NOFA	200
Rogaland	50.000*
Meetjesland	+5000
West-Flanders	we held a monitoring in 2013 where we asked 600 West Flemish inhabitants some questions about the region and our regional branding project. Some results: 21% knows/recognizes our logo and baseline 41% feels that the Sea/Beach/coast are our most important assets 85% says that West Flanders is a wonderful region for recreation says West Flanders is a nice place to life says West Flanders is an enterprising region
Zeeland Flanders	110.000

*Rogaland: Very difficult to quantify

Table C3: national authorities that are informed on project activities and project results

region	Which national authorities	In what way were they informed
Vejen	At 17 th April the 'Committee for Rural Districts and Islands' in the Danish Parliament 'Folketinget' was informed in a hearing.	Simon Simonsen made a presentation and took part in the debate with the members of the committee. The hearing was transmitted directly by Folketinget's TV-channel and can still be found at Folketinget's website. Later that day Simon Simonsen was invited to another meeting by members from the liberal party 'Venstre'.
Finnøy	The district centre in Norway	In a conference
NOFA	National contact point (Lidwien Slothouwer-Van Schipstal) Extensive review by National Control board (algemene rekenkamer) on Vital's results. Best practices manual of Board of Dutch Municipalities (VNG)	Sending evaluation of Europese Kijkdagen. Reviews, interviews, etc.
West-Flanders	West Flemish members of Flemish, National and European Parliament were invited at our big network events: Congress 10 years regional branding, European Day, Trefpunt	
Zeeland Flanders	Different ministries, VNG United dutch municipalities Chambre of Commerce	By participation in symposia, giving workshops, making publication, providing best practices

Table C4: trade and industry organisations that are informed on project activities and project results

region	Which trade and industry organisations	In what way were they informed
Vejen	UdviklingVejen, the local trade and industry organisation in Vejen Kommune is involved in the Vital Rural Area project, so they are continuously informed.	
Friese Poort	Uneto-VNI, Itho, Solesto, Nefit, FES and SMEs of the installation branche	Seminars, presentations, website www.educationer.eu and personal contact
Finnøy	Agriculture, industry organizations(LO, NHO)	In a conference
NOFA	Chamber of commerce, MKB-Noord, ONOF, Local organizations of entrepreneurs	Sending project documents and organize meetings, project websites, social media (twitter, hyves, youtube, linkedin)
West-Flanders	Important economic stakeholders of the Province (Provincial Development Organisation, Chamber of Commerce, ...) were invited at our big network events: Congress 10 years regional branding, European Day, Trefpunt	
Zeeland Flanders	Portiz and BZW Brabants Zeeuwse werkgeversvereniging	Newsletters, speeches on reunion

Table C5: other relevant stakeholders informed on project activities and project results

region	Relevant stakeholders informed	theme
Finnøy	Two level of county-offices	They have got the final report in norwegian
NOFA	Educational Institutes Local & Regional Government VVV (tourist information) Noardlike Fryske Walden Umbrella organization of entrepreneurs association in Noordoost Fryslân Kennissetwerk Krimp Noord-Nederland (knowledge center to share and develop knowledge about demographic change)	Sending project documents and organize meetings & sounding boards, project websites, social media (twitter, hyves, youtube, linkedin), meetings, public presentations, inviting guest speakers in project groups.
Rogaland	Hjelseth Computer, Telenor, IRIS (International Research Centre of Stavanger)	Meetings, e-mail, contracts
Meetjesland	all companies all 14 municipalities all existing regional and sectoral organizations within our region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – trade unions – employers' organizations – nature association – Agriculture Organization – Sectors Tourism, Culture, Youth, Welfare, Economics, Housing, Elderly Care, Health Care, ... 	
West-Flanders	All stakeholders of the Province (tourist development organisation, sociocultural organisation, regional development organisations, ...) were invited at our big network events: Congress 10 years regional branding, European Day, Trefpunt.	
Zeeland Flanders	Labour market participants	Taking part in brainstorm or projects