

Changing rural societies: a case study of rural youth in North Groningen, the Netherlands, 1950s–1990s.

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Abstract

Under the pressure of ongoing modernization processes, rural societies in north-western Europe have changed substantially since World War Two. One of the effects has been increasing out-migration, caused particularly by migrating rural youth. The remaining rural youth became particularly vulnerable as a social group as they had to cope with a decline in relative living standards and a negative rural regional identity. This paper will focus on how the rural youth dealt with these issues and how these issues developed over time. This paper takes the region of North Groningen, the Netherlands as the context for a case study which considers rural youth from a historical perspective. Drawing extensively on interviews, the paper is mainly based on a qualitative approach. The respondents, who cover different periods, were interviewed about their youth in North Groningen, their perceptions of their prospects, their eventual careers and the choices they made in their lives. This resulted in a comparison over time and demonstrated that in the 1950s life was mainly concentrated in the local village. In the 1970s various youth cultures emerged by re-active agency and in the 1990s political-economic developments negatively impacted on local facilities. Results pointed that over time the enlargement of the social world and individualisation processes had a great impact, both negatively and positively, on the opportunities which determine a person's capabilities.

Introduction

Rural youth is considered to be particularly prone to decline in rural regions. In general, as a group it has the highest migration numbers.² In the North of the Netherlands this problem was recognized in a 1959 report entitled *Threatened Existence*. The report covered the North Groningen region and as the title indicates it foresaw a negative future for North Groningen.³ One of its main concerns was the alarming out-migration of youth.⁴ In rural regions out-migration can be considered as an extra burden on the social environment of those who remain. The value that those young people contribute to the

¹ Email address: k.g.melis@rug.nl. This paper is part of a PhD project about perceptions of livability and identity of inhabitants of North Groningen since World War Two. The research is located at the crossroads of historical and cultural geographic research.

² Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*; Easthope and Gabriel, 'Turbulent Lives'; Gibson and Argent, 'Getting on, Getting up and Getting Out?'

³ The North Groningen region is a rural area in the North of the Netherlands with approximately 70,000 inhabitants (2007) and covering almost 110,000 hectares. Nowadays it consists of the municipalities of Bedum, Ten Boer, Eemsum, De Marne, Loppersum and Winsum. It is a region known for its agricultural history. Although changes had occurred before, World War Two can be distinguished as a turning point in this agricultural past.

⁴ Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*.

area's livability⁵ – relative living standards of a place – and regional identity is influenced by out-migration and its consequences. The concepts of livability and identity are constructed in time – different values are accorded to the concepts in different periods. This paper focuses on three periods, the 1950s, 1970s and 1990s, in order to give a dynamic view of the development in livability and identity in the North Groningen region. To study this, the following research question was formulated. How were the capabilities of rural youth in North Groningen influenced by their environment and what kind of impact did the capabilities have on their lives in a region which was known for its *threatened existence*?

Literature

In historical literature little attention is paid to the social group central to this paper, rural youth aged 15 to 20. One of the reasons is that throughout most of history youth, rural or otherwise, went unrecognized as a social group.⁶ Of course, youth had always existed as an age group, but as a social group they were, depending on their life stage, either children or adults. In many rural societies this meant that a child counted as an adult when they became employed or got married.⁷ In general, throughout the nineteenth century childhood became increasingly separated from the adulthood, and from the early twentieth century onwards, more attention was paid to the transition phase between childhood and adulthood, the adolescence phase and the youth social group.⁸ One of the main reasons for the increasing acknowledgement of rural youth after the turn of the twentieth century is the improvement in educational facilities for all social classes in the Netherlands.⁹ Furthermore, the foundation of special youth associations generated greater attention to rural youth and their acceptance as a group in rural society. However, historical literature mainly pays attention to the period before 1940 and focuses on childhood and adulthood, rather than the stage in between – youth.¹⁰

In other disciplines, such as geography and sociology, more attention is paid to rural youth after World War Two. The construction of youth as a social group with its own characteristics and behaviour attracted particular scientific attention in these fields. Youth was considered as a crucial factor in modern society after World War Two, because they were considered to adopt modern society first.¹¹ It did not emerge suddenly but was a gradual process, as literature concerning rural youth in the different periods shows. In the 1950s the literature focuses on migration and agrarian employment.¹² In the 1970s attention shifted towards social issues, such as living conditions, social life, alcohol use, sexuality and more general 'youth culture'.¹³ Influenced by the cultural turn, since the

⁵ In Dutch the term *Leefbaarheid* is used.

⁶ Chudacoff, 'Adolescence and Youth', p. 15.

⁷ Botke, *Boer en Heer*; Bras, 'Social Change'; Sleebe, 'Van Vader op Zoon'.

⁸ Valentine, Skelton and Chambers, 'Cool Places'.

⁹ Boekholt, 'De Nederlander gaat naar School', p. 220. See also, Backerra, ed., *Vrouwen van het Land*.

¹⁰ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 3; De Rooy, 'Vetkuijfe Waarheen?', p. 76. Some exceptions are: Passerini, 'Youth as a Metaphor'; Karel, 'Blowin' in the House'.

¹¹ De Rooy, 'Vetkuijfe Waarheen?', p. 76; Passerini, 'Youth as a Metaphor'.

¹² Addens, *Over de Beroepskeuze van Kinderen*; Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*.

¹³ Blauw and Kuipers, *Van de Paal Gerukt?*; Keizer and Beukema, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*; Provinciale Jeugdraad, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*; De Rooy, 'Vetkuijfe Waarheen?'.

mid-1990s greater attention has been paid to rural youth as a separate social group, the personal lives of rural youth concerning their social position in communities and their identities.¹⁴ Concepts such as exclusion, rural life and community are used in relation to rural youth and are approached as social constructs. Many of those studies focused on the negative aspects of decline in rural areas, though not all developments have been negative.¹⁵

Recent literature approaches rural youth in a similar way to urban youth – as a diverse and heterogeneous group that faces the same socio-cultural issues.¹⁶ However, rural youth is also discussed in terms of its very particular social environment with respect to other specific issues.¹⁷ One of the reasons for this is the place in which rural youth live. The low population density and the spread of the population in rural areas causes problems concerning transportation, education, employment and social facilities. Rural youth cannot be considered as a homogeneous group. The problem areas mentioned above are individually influenced by aspects, including location, class, religion, gender, occupation and lifestyle.¹⁸ Based on the social environment and personal characteristics of rural youth, a distinction can be drawn between rural youth who want to reach out and those who want to stay.¹⁹ This distinction is comparable to the distinction in the labour markets where rural youth work or intend to work – the national (well-paid, with career opportunities) and the local labour markets (poorly paid, insecure, unrewarding and with fewer prospects).²⁰ As a result of the ambition to ‘reach out’, most rural areas experience high numbers of young emigrants, which has consequences on those staying ‘behind’. This migration of rural youth has received great attention in the literature.²¹

Theory

In this paper rural youth are considered as active agents with their own capacities, competences and activities.²² However, this agency is dependent on a person’s capabilities, which determine their freedom to behave in a particular way, to live the life chosen.²³ For example, a person who wants to study architecture in Delft at the Technical University has to move out of North Groningen because they cannot study architecture in North Groningen. ‘Capabilities’ are what people are *actually* able to do and be.²⁴ The Capabilities Approach of Sen and Nussbaum describes two sorts of capabilities, those

¹⁴ Laegran, ‘Exploring Masculinity’, p. 29; Rye, ‘Rural Youths’ Images of the Rural’.

¹⁵ Auclair and Vanoni, ‘The Attractiveness of Rural Areas’.

¹⁶ Shucksmith, ‘Young People and Social Exclusion in Rural Areas’; Panelli, Nairn and McCormack, ‘We Make Our Own Fun’, p. 109.

¹⁷ See for example, Panelli, Nairn and McCormack, ‘We Make Our Own Fun’. The literature mainly concerns Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian rural sociological and geographical issues.

¹⁸ Shucksmith, ‘Young People’; Panelli, Nairn, and McCormack, ‘We Make Our Own Fun’, p. 109.

¹⁹ Laegran, ‘Exploring Masculinity’, p. 30.

²⁰ Shucksmith, ‘Young People’, p. 46.

²¹ Johnson, Elder, and Stern, ‘Attachments to Family’; Jentsch, ‘Youth Migration from Rural Areas’; Easthope and Gabriel, ‘Turbulent Lives’; Special theme issue of *Geographical Research* 46 (2): Gibson and Argent, ‘Getting on, Getting up and Getting Out?’.

²² Robson, Bell and Klocker, ‘Conceptualizing Agency’, p. 135; Leyshon, ‘The Betweenness of Being a Rural Youth’, p. 3.

²³ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, p. 33.

²⁴ Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development*, p. 5.

which are realized and those which are alternatives. The two provide different types of information, the former about the things a person does and the latter about the things a person is substantively free to do.²⁵ This paper focuses mainly on realized capabilities and the agency related to them. Capabilities are different for every person and are dependent on both personal characteristics and societal characteristics, such as available resources. In this paper the opportunities of the region North Groningen which determine the capabilities of a person are of interest. The capabilities also depend on time. As Figure 1 shows, at t1 there are fewer capabilities compared to t2. This is because the agency that is at work influences the capabilities, and increased age increases their number, for example the possibility of driving a moped at the age of sixteen or a car at the age of eighteen. In the figure, the capabilities are shown as being of the same value, but in reality some capabilities are more important than others. What can be concluded is that the presence and number of capabilities is a process influenced by society, agency and time.

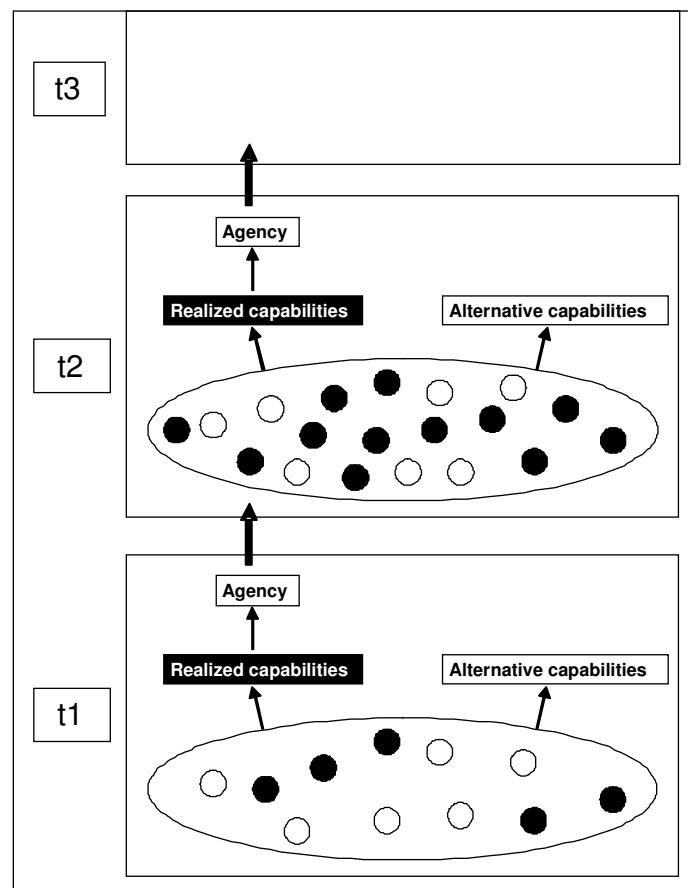


Figure 1: The capabilities of an individual at the micro level.

In addition to personal characteristics, an important factor in relation to the capabilities of rural youth is their social network.²⁶ Their educational institution and employment are

²⁵ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, p. 75.

²⁶ Shoveller et al., 'Around Here, They Roll up the Sidewalks at Night'; Panelli, 'Young Rural Lives'.

important determinants for these social networks, and membership of a club can broaden these networks further. Compared to urban youth, the networks of rural youth are particularly attached to parents and family.²⁷ The distinction described above creates a dichotomy, a person is both an individual social actor and dependent on social institutions. In his structuration theory, Anthony Giddens considers this dichotomy. He distinguishes the concepts of *agency* – individual behaviour – and *structure* – social institutions with rules and resources. Giddens approaches the concepts as interdependent and calls this the duality of structure.²⁸ Social practice is a means to overcome this duality, it constructs social life and gives meaning to both structure and agency.²⁹ The capabilities distinguished by Sen and Nussbaum can create this social practice. On the one hand the capabilities are formed by agency, as shown in Figure 1, and on the other hand they are influenced by society. This paper discusses the North Groningen society. As Giddens makes clear, a society is a social system which has a specifiable overall ‘clustering of institutions’ across time and space. These institutions create the rules and resources which determine the structure.³⁰ An example of such an institution is the educational system. In this sense structure should not be confused with the ‘system’. As Giddens said in response to his critics: ‘structure’ does not refer to descriptive features of social life’.³¹ However, critics are fixated by the concept and especially by what the reality status of rules and resources are.³² In this paper the term society will be used to present all facets of society, including structure, social life, economic processes and physical constraints. Structuration theory will be used in an adapted form alongside the capabilities approach. As is shown in Figure 2, the concept of structure is intertwined in terms of the society, livability and identity of a region. The concept of agency as approached in Figure 1 is the same as that in Figure 2. Figure 1 shows how agency comes into being over time and Figure 2 shows how this agency is influenced by society.³³

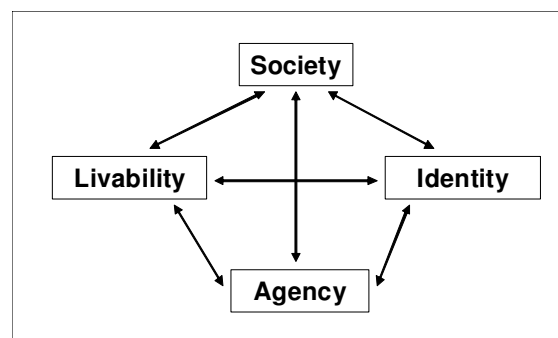


Figure 2: Individual behaviour and structure at the macro level.

²⁷ Shucksmith, ‘Young People’, p. 48; Johnson, Elder and Stern, ‘Attachments to Family’, p. 121; Panelli, Nairn and McCormack, ‘We Make Our Own Fun’, p. 108.

²⁸ Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 19.

²⁹ McGrath, ‘A Problem of Resources’.

³⁰ Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 164.

³¹ Giddens, ‘A Reply to My Critics’, p. 256. One of the main criticism is of Giddens’ use of structure as rules and resources. For more details see Held and Thompson, eds., *Social Theory of Modern Societies*.

³² Waters, *Modern Sociological Theory*, p. 52; MacRaild and Taylor, *Social Theory and Social History*, p. 100.

³³ These concepts are the focus of my PhD project.

Youth in general have to deal with all kinds of social relations and construct their own understanding of their environment.³⁴ The way rural youth approach the livability of their environment is influenced by their capabilities. To a certain extent livability can be conceptualized as the degree to which the resources in the immediate living environment fit the needs of the rural youth, in this case in North Groningen.³⁵ The assumption is that rural youth, in contrast to urban youth, have constraints on their capabilities. This has a negative impact on the experienced livability of North Groningen. One of the capabilities which is considered important in relation to livability is related to employment. The regional labour market usually does not offer the same opportunities for rural youth as the national labour market. This can create a negative livability for rural youth with high employment ambitions. However, like the rural youth group, the sense accorded to livability must be understood in relation to personal characteristics.³⁶ This is because the rural environment can also create positive livability. A person wishing to become a farmer will value the livability positively in a rural area.

Regional identity in this study is defined in terms of the perceptions held or meanings given by the rural youth of North Groningen to the region.³⁷ Historically layered social relationships are important elements of the identities of the region, and provide a sense of place for the youth.³⁸ A historical approach towards identities is thus appropriate. The identities of a region are seen as an interpretation of a process through which a region becomes such or, even more importantly, continues to be a region. The region North Groningen was constructed in the 1950s by a group of inhabitants because of the threat of deprivation.³⁹ The region was assumed to be unattractive to young people because of its focus on agriculture and its lack of employment opportunities.⁴⁰ At that time, the region's identity was marginalized and threatened. This is only one of the identities of the North Groningen region, but different identities can exist at the same time and over time. This is why this paper approaches livability and regional identity as social constructs.

Although the concepts of livability and regional identity have their own meaning which evolves over time, the concepts are connected. In this paper, this connection will be elaborated through the case study of rural youth in North Groningen.

Methodology

In the region of North Groningen twenty respondents were interviewed about their everyday lives during their youth. They are considered as actors with their own agency. The interviews constitute the basis of this paper and are used as a means to understand the reaction to societal developments in North Groningen. At present the respondents are between the ages of 35 and 80 and have continually lived in or have returned to North Groningen. The group of respondents is heterogeneous and socially diverse, they are of

³⁴ Panelli, Nairn and McCormack, 'We Make Our Own Fun', p. 106.

³⁵ Veenhoven, 'Happy Life-Expectancy', p. 9.

³⁶ Panelli, Nairn and McCormack, 'We Make Our Own Fun', p. 110.

³⁷ Paasi, 'Europe as a Social Process'.

³⁸ Kneafsey, 'Tourism, Place Identities'.

³⁹ At that time the *Stichting Noord-Groningen* was established by locals to improve the living conditions in North Groningen. To achieve this goal the foundation constructed the North Groningen region.

⁴⁰ Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*, p. 228.

both genders and have different social and religious backgrounds. The group can be divided into three age groups – young in the 1950s, young in the 1970s and young in the early 1990s.⁴¹ This distinction was made to reveal a development over time and to relate it to ongoing societal processes.

The interviews were semi-structured and considered the different contexts which influenced the lives of the respondents when they were young. These interviews provide ordinary people with the opportunity to tell their own personal stories and relate their experiences in their own words.⁴² This experienced history is central to this paper. For example, glimpses of the disappearing agricultural communities can be seen in the interviews. However, the rural is not automatically related to a traditional agricultural-based identity. Rural regions have great diversity and are related to many different identities.⁴³ The interviews are retrospective and also deal with the realized and alternative capabilities of the respondents' present. In addition to the interviews, research reports from the specific periods are used as comparison and discussion material.

Following the geographer Panelli, in this paper rural youth is approached in relation to local and broader conditions: the cultural, social, economic, political and spatial contexts. A distinction is made between socio-cultural discourses, structural political-economic processes and the spatial context.⁴⁴ These contexts are approached as dynamic and intersecting. The contexts are the society in which rural youth negotiate their agency. The full spectrum of these contexts influences the identities and livability which the youth experience and construct.⁴⁵ The different contexts are investigated using a content analysis. To do this the text analysis programme MaxQDA 2007 was used to code text fragments from the interviews. Owing to their semi-structured nature, it was possible to compare the interviews with respect to the various themes discussed. The content analysis was approached quantitatively, see Figure 3. To gain in-depth information about the different contexts in relation to the role of agency, the interviews were also approached qualitatively through a close reading.

Results and discussion

The interviews discuss all kinds of subjects related to the different contexts. Of all the different individual subjects, the one most frequently mentioned was employment. This is to be expected because employment is a critical aspect in a person's life.⁴⁶ Figure 3

⁴¹ Two different methods were used to approach the respondents. It was possible to trace a number of respondents from research on livability for rural youth in North Groningen in 1977. This yielded most of the respondents from the 1970s group. A state comprehensive school in the region was approached for the rest of the respondents.

⁴² Thompson, 'The Voice of the Past', p. 26.

⁴³ Bushin et al., 'Reflecting on Contexts', p. 69.

⁴⁴ Panelli, 'Young Rural Lives'; Philo, 'The Corner-Stones of My World', p. 253; Panelli, Punch and Robson, 'From Difference to Dialogue', p. 10. Discourses are approached as an indication of a general way of talking about, thinking about or representing something.

⁴⁵ Panelli, 'Young Rural Lives'; Bushin et al., 'Reflecting on Contexts'.

⁴⁶ McGrath, 'A Problem of Resources'.

presents an overview of the contexts discussed, in terms of percentages.⁴⁷ In terms of the different contexts addressed, the most frequently discussed were socio-cultural issues, such as community, family, friends, social activities, religion and dialect. These were followed by political-economic issues, such as employment and education, and then physical issues, such as the environmental characteristics of North Groningen.⁴⁸ Differences between the age groups in terms of the proportional attention paid to different contexts were noted. The 1950s group spoke most about the socio-cultural context, and while the 1970s and 1990s groups also spoke most about this context, a shift towards spatial issues was noticeable. In the following section the values and perceptions of the contexts and their influence on the capabilities of youth are discussed by context.

	<i>1950s</i>	<i>1970s</i>	<i>1990s</i>	Total
Socio-cultural	51.3	47.1	44.4	47.1
Political-economic	39.7	36.5	32.3	35.6
Spatial	9.1	16.4	23.3	17.3
Number of respondents	6	8	6	20

Figure 3: Results of content analysis, relative time spent discussing contexts.

Socio-cultural context

In the discussion of the socio-cultural context is focused on relationships in society which form the values and customs of a person, resulting in a person's perceptions of the social environment.⁴⁹ In that sense, the socio-cultural discourses are important for the formation of the life of a young person. The community in which young people live is in this sense a manifestation of the socio-cultural context.

The respondents from the 1950s group were generally strongly oriented towards the local community. They strongly associated community with their social lives in the local village. In the words of a respondent who was speaking about his village in his youth, where all kinds of activities were organized by the community itself:

You became part of the organization of things as well. I was on the committee of the ice club. I was member of the burial association, there I was bearer and standby leader. In those days everything happened in the village.... (R5, male, 1950s group)⁵⁰

At that time it was common for youth to be a part of a closed community. The focus of the 1950s respondents on the local community had an impact on their capabilities. Capabilities were tightly related to the community, meaning that the local structure influenced youth agency. In the literature on youth in general, the 1950s are marked as a changing point regarding 'youth culture', the youth increasingly created their own culture

⁴⁷ This table compares the total number of discussions related to each context. The individual subjects are part of a context.

⁴⁸ The subjects could be discussed in positive or negative terms.

⁴⁹ Bushin et al., 'Reflecting on Contexts'; Panelli, 'Young Rural Lives', p. 77.

⁵⁰ 'Je ging zelf ook met die dingen organiseren. Je zat in het bestuur van een ijsvereniging. Ik was bij de begrafenisvereniging, daar was je vaste drager en reserve voorman. Toen gebeurde alles nog op dorp ...'.

and place in society.⁵¹ Research on socio-cultural life in North Groningen shows a decrease in facilities at the local community level.⁵² For rural youth in North Groningen this meant that they experienced a newly emerging youth culture on the one hand and a decrease in facilities at the local level on the other. An example of the intertwining of these two processes, demonstrated in the interviews, is going out. The respondents indicated that this was a regional activity which became something through which the youth distinguished themselves from the rest of the community. Even though the fairs and dances across the region were mainly visited with friends from the home village, awareness increased of being young and a separate group in society. However, a tight connection with the traditional community remained and the local community also remained important in the social lives of rural youth. The socio-cultural discourses of the communities have a structuring role for the socio-cultural agency of young people. This is exemplified by a female respondent as she was discussing when she became an adult. She and her husband were not able to have children and she continued to work full time. This agency did not fit the governing socio-cultural pattern of that time. According to the gender pattern, a woman was supposed to quit her job after giving birth and become a full-time mother. The respondent drifted away from her local friends and almost lost contact, she became socially excluded. Nevertheless, having been raised in the community, she did not experience this as social exclusion. For her it was *normal* that her social network decreased and she resigned herself to it. Although some signs of a youth culture emerged (e.g. going out), the 1950s group displayed an acceptance of the persisting socio-cultural discourses.

The 1970s group shows more aspects of a specific youth culture, less strictly connected to the local community than the 1950s group. The associations of the respondents with the community still focus on the local village, but tend to be more on dialect and familiarity. However, the respondents were more critical of the local community; for example, its narrow-mindedness and the social differences. This critical attitude can be linked with the growing awareness of rural people in the 1970s in general.⁵³ In addition, the 1970s rural youth show a more reactive agency in the form of resistance to the lack of opportunities. By their action they created opportunities which expanded their personal capabilities, as the example of an emerging youth culture, such as through youth clubs, shows. Traditionally in North Groningen, leisure activities were mainly organized by religious groups.⁵⁴ However, through secularization and rising demand caused by increased leisure time, a gap in relation to non-commercial leisure opportunities for the youth emerged, which led the youth to search for something more. As the following quote demonstrates:

We were searching for a place where the youth could stay all night without paying a lot of money for drinks. Where they could sip on a glass of coke, a coffee or a

⁵¹ De Rooy, 'Vetkuifje Waarheen?'; In 't Velt, *Jong in de Jaren '50*.

⁵² Sauer, *Onderzoek naar de Culturele Situatie*; Tonckens and Abma, *Verdwijnende Dorpen*, p. 5.

⁵³ Van der Wal, *Opvattingen en Rolverwachtingen*.

⁵⁴ As a discussion in six towns in North Groningen demonstrates: Provinciale Jeugdgraad, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*.

beer all night and still be welcome ... Because you realized that youth in Bedum did not have that many options. (R12, male, 1970s group)⁵⁵

This demand for and search by the youth for a place for themselves is also discussed in the 1970s literature. In 1977 Keizer and Beukema conducted a survey in North Groningen and fifty-six percent of the youth (N = 678) responded that there was no youth club in their environment. Fifty-four percent of this group indicated a need for such a facility.⁵⁶

Some of the respondents from the current study were involved in the establishment of a youth club and for them the youth movement is strongly related to the 1970s period.

It was clearly something of that time, it happened everywhere. I think it was simply the fashion. ... It was not like we performed a serious analysis, we just lacked something or that the youth had the right to [a youth club] ... Maybe we mentioned it, but looking back on it, it doesn't look that way. (R15, female, 1970s group)⁵⁷

This respondent discusses the developments in the 1970s in retrospect. For her it was just an enthusiastic reaction of the youth to societal developments. The youth were looking for a place and space for themselves in the rural socio-cultural context. The emergence of youth clubs could be regarded as a way for the young to rebel against the established community and to adopt a new urban lifestyle.⁵⁸

From another perspective, the youth created a place of its own but this was only possible with the financial support of municipalities. In return, the municipality appointed youth workers, who partly took over the educational tasks of schools, community and churches to teach youth about certain aspects of life. As a respondent mentioned, meetings about all kinds of social topics were organized to give guidance to the youth. Society thus maintained a means to control or dominate the youth.⁵⁹ It is notable that the respondents do not mention the community centres built across North Groningen at that time. These were established to improve the socio-cultural livability for North Groningen inhabitants and to create space for such social life.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, not all youths were attracted to the new youth clubs,⁶¹ which were associated with the alternative youth, as one respondent

⁵⁵ 'Eigenlijk zochten wij een voorziening voor jongeren waar ze zonder dat ze steeds hoefden te betalen, aan een cola, of koffie of biertje konden nippen. Maar wel gewoon de hele avond welkom waren ... Omdat je je eigenlijk wel realiseerde dat jongeren in Bedum weinig mogelijkheden hadden'.

⁵⁶ Keizer and Beukema, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*, pp. 129–131. See also Blauw and Kuipers, *Van de Paal Gerukt?*

⁵⁷ 'Het was blijkbaar iets wat bij die tijd hoorde, het gebeurde op allerlei plekken. Volgens mij is dat ook gewoon aanstekelijk ... Het was helemaal niet zo dat wij een hele serieuze analyse maakten nou, we missen iets, en deze jeugd heeft recht op. Misschien dat we dat wel gezegd hebben, maar zo kijk ik daar niet op terug'.

⁵⁸ Karel, 'Blowin' in the House', discusses drug use in a rural youth club in the province of Drenthe, the Netherlands, as a way of adopting an urban lifestyle.

⁵⁹ Panelli, Punch, and Robson, 'From Difference to Dialogue', p. 7.

⁶⁰ Teuwen, *Dorpshuizen in Noord-Groningen*, p. 1.

⁶¹ Keizer and Beukema, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*, pp. 129–131.

pointed out. An identity was created for the youth who were involved in the youth clubs. This shows the growing development of different types of youth cultures in the 1970s, youth clubs being only one example from the 1970s, which shows the growing effect of leisure time and how youth dealt with it. For the 1990s group the influence of leisure time was even more important and community ties were further loosened.

The respondents from the 1990s group had positive associations with the rural community in contrast with the urban. The rural community is positively associated with safety, familiarity and socialization. This value given to the rural by the respondents is not specific to North Groningen. As Bushin et al. discuss, this appreciation of the rural applies to many diverse rural settings all over the world.⁶² The respondents do not value North Groningen in particular but the rural in general. The ties they have with the region strengthen this positive association. Another aspect which becomes clear about the youth of the 1990s group is their active social lives. Social activities with friends remained important but the impact of sports activities increased. As a result of sports and leisure policies introduced from 1965 onwards, increased attention has been paid to sports facilities across the Netherlands.⁶³ The 1990s respondents show an increased value accorded to sports. Sports were mostly done at a sports club, which might be in the home village but was increasingly found in other villages. This was because not all of the villages had the appropriate facilities – such as a specific type of sports club – or their level of sports proficiency was too low. One of the results for the youth in the 1990s was that their social network was not as tightly related to their home village.

The village was not mine, although I knew every corner, but there was nothing to do. There was a kind of youth club but I never went there. (R18, male, 1990s group)⁶⁴

The respondents had an increasing self-awareness in relation to what they wanted to do and the opportunities available improved which resulted in expanding capabilities. In other words, their social world became larger than in the past. The connection to the village and the local community became less rigid over the years. On the one hand the natural position of being a member of the local community disappeared and on the other hand the socio-cultural context of the youth group enlarged.

Specific to North Groningen are the socio-cultural discourse of social stratification and the various religions in society. In the 1950s these two intertwined and strongly influenced the social life in villages.⁶⁵ The lives of North Groningen youth were structured by social and power relations which were shaped by forces that included these discourses. North Groningen society had various different Protestant groups, a non-religious group and a small Catholic group. The Protestant groups were the reformed,

⁶² Bushin et al., 'Reflecting on Contexts', p. 70. Also see Auclair and Vanoni, 'The Attractiveness', p. 83.

⁶³ See De Haan and Duyvendak, eds., *In het Hart van de Verzorgingsstaat*, p. 159.

⁶⁴ '... het dorp was niet van mij, je kende er wel elke hoek, maar er was niets te beleven. Er was een soort jeugdhonk maar daar ging ik nooit heen'.

⁶⁵ Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*, p. 174.

Dutch reformed and orthodox reformed groups.⁶⁶ This religious compartmentalization along socio-political lines was in evidence across the whole region. However, at a local level the proportions were different in every village, especially those of the various Protestant groups.⁶⁷ This religious variety was apparent to all respondents in their youth. The respondents' particular religious background determined how they dealt with regulations regarding their lives, as the following example shows:

In our family, when I had a boyfriend who was not from a church, my mother used to say after fourteen days: 'you take care you get another boyfriend'. These kinds of things were not allowed. (R7, female, 1970s group)⁶⁸

As young people, the respondents were aware of these kinds of social relations, but in general they were not felt to be very influential. None of the respondents indicated that they had to marry a partner from the same religious group, not even the respondent mentioned above. A few years after this incident she married a man from a different group and it was not a problem at all for her family. The family demonstrates the ongoing trend of secularization in the Netherlands.⁶⁹ One religious group, the orthodox reformed group, was seen to be isolated from the rest of North Groningen society. This religious group splintered from the Dutch reformed church in 1944 and is the most conservative of the reformed groups. A respondent with an orthodox reformed background went to a denominational primary school quite distant from his home village and his youth was influenced by strong religious communal ties to some extent. The respondents from the 1970s and 1990s groups also mention the orthodox reformed group as isolated. The attention paid to the orthodox reformed group can be explained by the strong presence of this religious group in North Groningen.⁷⁰

As mentioned above, North Groningen society was structured hierarchically. Social differences were always present but the emphasis changes. MacRaild and Taylor state in their discussion of Giddens that the position of an individual within the social structure limits the individual's agency.⁷¹ The agricultural past of North Groningen created a social structure based on three social groups: farmers, the middle class and the working class. Research papers from that time discuss this distinction as playing an important role in socio-cultural life and influencing the capabilities of youth.⁷² As an example of how strict this social structure was, in 1958 Sauer stated that the social structure must not be changed to create a youth association for all social groups.⁷³ Another example in which the influence of social stratification becomes clear is education. In North Groningen, as in the Netherlands, school attendance has long been based on the socio-cultural background of a person's family. Due to government intervention in the 1950s, secondary education

⁶⁶ In Dutch: *Hervormd, Gereformeerd and Vrijgemaakt Gereformeerd*.

⁶⁷ See Sauer, *Onderzoek naar de Culturele Situatie*, Appendix 2.

⁶⁸ 'In ons gezin als ik een vriendje had die buiten kerkelijk was dan zei mijn moeder gewoon na 14 dagen, je zorgt toch wel dat je een ander vriendje krijgt. Want dat soort dingen mocht dus niet'.

⁶⁹ Kennedy, 'Recent Dutch Religious History', p. 29.

⁷⁰ See Knippenberg, *De Religieuze Kaart*, Figure 3.14, p. 102.

⁷¹ MacRaild and Taylor, *Social Theory and Social History*, p. 100.

⁷² Addens, *Over de Beroepskeuze van Kinderen*, p. 10; Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*, pp. 173-174.

⁷³ Sauer, *Onderzoek naar de Culturele Situatie*, p. 8.

became accessible to everyone and resulted in an improvement in school attendance by the working class. In the 1950s secondary schools were built across North Groningen, secondary technical schools for boys and domestic science schools for girls. This already shows that the *level* of education in the 1950s in North Groningen was strongly based on a pupil's background. The educational background of the respondents shows that no matter what their capabilities, respondents with farming backgrounds attained a higher level of education compared to respondents with a working class background. The following respondent, with a farming background, talks about his secondary school:

There were farmers' children, and also middle class children. There were few pupils from the working class from this village. Actually, we were a mixed group, though the farmers and the middle class had the upper hand. (R1, male, 1950s group)⁷⁴

In the eyes of this respondent, the presence of all social groups was sufficient to amount to a mixed group in secondary school. His background had a positive influence, and he was unaware of the negative impact on some of the other students. The following quote shows how the opportunities available restricted capabilities of a respondent from the working class:

Either you went to agricultural college or technical school. (R5, male, 1950s group)⁷⁵

For this respondent the options were clear. Like the female who worked all her life, in retrospect the respondent does not criticize his experience, it was part of society. The 1970s continue to demonstrate this agriculturally based social structure, where respondents from working class backgrounds in particular had fewer capabilities. Nevertheless, as discussed in the context of other issues, the 1970s group was much more critical. The respondents of the 1990s group were barely influenced by this cultural background.

This process shows that the capabilities of youth in the 1950s were influenced by the socio-cultural context of North Groningen. However, in the 1950s, political-economic developments increased the number of capabilities. This is an example of how the socio-cultural context is connected to the political-economic context.

Political-economic context

Political-economic developments are an important factor in relation to the capabilities of rural youth. Critical to the capabilities of rural youth is the availability of employment, educational facilities and housing.⁷⁶ On the one hand these are provided by economic processes and, on the other hand, by governmental involvement in societal processes. An

⁷⁴ 'Daar waren boeren kinderen bij, maar ook van de middenstand, en ook hier uit het dorp, uit de arbeiderskringen waren een paar leerlingen. Het was eigenlijk wel een gemengd gezelschap, maar waar wel de boeren en de middenstand de overhand hadden'.

⁷⁵ '... Of je ging naar de landbouwschool of je ging naar de ambachtsschool'.

⁷⁶ McGrath, 'A Problem of Resources'.

example of governmental involvement was given above in terms of policies concerning secondary education.

Rural society of North Groningen changed after World War Two, from an agriculturally oriented society to a services oriented society. The employment opportunities became less agricultural and as a result the capabilities related to employment *in* the region decreased.⁷⁷ The main concerns of that time, the rising unemployment and the out-migration of the young population, were not noted by the respondents as major issues. They were aware of people who migrated but it did not really affect their personal lives. Due to growing mobility, employment in the urban regions of Groningen, Delfzijl and Appingedam became a possibility for the inhabitants of North Groningen and the situation turned out to be less problematic as foreseen. In the 1970s, youth unemployment was high again.⁷⁸ Some of the 1970s group did experience unemployment themselves. One of the respondents found a job at that time with the help of a government employment project. However, looking back he did not regard unemployment as a major problem for himself or his friends. Unemployment did not really affect the lives of the other respondents either. Some of them did not have to deal with the problem at all. This makes sense, because if they had experienced unemployment to a greater extent, they would have migrated. Some of the respondents indicated that migration for employment reasons was available to them, and some of them did so. To recall, for this research respondents are interviewed who had lived continually or have returned to live in North Groningen; meaning they had the capability to stay or to return to North Groningen.

Based on the experiences of the respondents it becomes clear that the more highly educated rural youth were generally those who had to leave first. It is not surprising that rural migration issues receive a lot of attention in the literature.⁷⁹ There is a lack of higher education and related and nearby employment opportunities in the North Groningen region. All kinds of educational facilities are available in the city of Groningen, meaning the shortfall is not as great as it looks at first sight. However, this is also connected to perceptions. As the socio-cultural context showed, the respondents from the 1950s had a close connection to their local village. For them the city of Groningen was distant and different. The 1990s group has a totally different perception of the city Groningen; for them the city was close and inspiring. The 1990s group indicates another process, highly educated rural youth chose to study in places other than Groningen to a greater extent. Residential preferences became important and were related to academic achievement and job opportunities.⁸⁰ An improved financial position due to governmental support increased the opportunities to migrate. This process is in line with the idea that youth migration can be viewed as part of the overall lifecycle. Because of the limitations of the rural region, young people have to migrate to develop.⁸¹ In Giddens' terms the structure of rural regions is not appropriate for the agency of youth. Therefore, for the youth themselves leaving North Groningen was a positive step.

⁷⁷ Bouman, *Bedreigd Bestaan*.

⁷⁸ Keizer and Beukema, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*; Provinciale Jeugdraad, *Op Weg naar Verbetering*.

⁷⁹ See page 3.

⁸⁰ Johnson, Elder and Stern, 'Attachments to Family'.

⁸¹ Argent and Walmsley, 'Rural Youth Migration Trends in Australia'.

The respondents who lived their whole lives in North Groningen had the capability to stay or did not use the alternative capability to migrate. All of them had the capability to find employment. For some of them, local employment opportunities influenced their careers or financial possibilities, but the social environment was more important. These respondents felt themselves fortunate that they could stay in the region. For other respondents, employment was the main reason for staying in North Groningen, for them it was a logical choice. Based on the discussion above, it could be observed that the respondents who stayed were the less successful ones, they did not develop themselves to the same extent as their urban counterparts. This observation can be questioned, firstly because most of the respondents did not express regrets about their decision to stay in North Groningen. This positive feeling about North Groningen differs for each respondent, sometimes it is based on social ties, the bond with the landscape or employment possibilities. A second reason to question the assumption that those leading a rural life are losers is that some of the respondents returned to North Groningen at a later age.⁸² For these respondents the political-economic situation was the main reason for leaving, but not the main reason for returning to North Groningen. For them the physical environment was important and this was closely connected to their youth in a rural region, as the following quote shows:

It is very nice to live in such a village. You have room to live. You can horse around in the garden. And I remember [in my youth] we went on trips in the fields, jumped over ditches. I cannot think of something more beautiful than a black field and a horizon. (R 18, male, 1990s group)⁸³

Although the differences between North Groningen and the urban environment are clear for the respondents, they feel themselves to be ‘winners’. They live in an environment which is currently the best for them and the identity they assign to the North Groningen region is positive.

Although the political-economic situation, especially employment, is important in all time periods, a development can be observed in terms of the decreasing value which is given to employment by the respondents. As discussed above, the 1970s group and especially the 1990s group value many other aspects as highly as employment. Education becomes more important in the lives of youth and aspects such as social life, music, sports and environment have a growing influence in their lives. Therefore, the political-economic situation in North Groningen changed and due to the influence of the national government, youth were less dependent on employment opportunities and able to enjoy their increased leisure time. This is in line with the general assumptions concerning youth after World War Two.⁸⁴

⁸² Respondents R 14, R 15, R 18 and R 20.

⁸³ ‘Het is heel fijn wonen in zo’n dorp. Je hebt leefruimte, je kan lekker ravotten in de tuin, ik weet nog wel, we maakten hele tochten over de akkers, slootje springen. Ik kan ook niets mooiers bedenken dan een zwarte akker en een horizon’.

⁸⁴ Stearns, *Childhood in World History*, p. 99.

Spatial context

Besides the socio-cultural and the political-economic contexts, the spatial context is an important aspect in the lives of rural youth, covering the particular environmental aspects of a rural region like North Groningen. The spatial context is often related to the given identity of a region.⁸⁵ In retrospect, some of the respondents revealed a close connection to the North Groningen environment, especially those who had returned. The physical environmental aspects were explicitly connected to North Groningen, and not to rural regions in general as was the case in relation to the socio-cultural environment.⁸⁶ Those who had returned demonstrated a close connection to the environment and confirmed the belief that people are closer to the physical world in rural areas.⁸⁷

Above we saw that the environment was valued positively, but for the youth, the rural environment can also be a constraint in negotiating their capabilities.⁸⁸ For instance, the poorer distribution of social services and the lack of transportation facilities makes it harder for rural youth to have the same kinds of social lives and social networks as urban youth.⁸⁹ As becomes clear from the interviews, an important aspect in this sense is geographical distance. The low population density in rural areas results in fewer facilities per square kilometre compared to urban areas. This affects school choice, for example. After World War Two secondary schools were built in some rural villages. Some respondents from the 1970s group grew up in villages with domestic science schools and schools for lower general secondary education. In these villages it was common for almost everyone to go to these schools. Two female respondents from the 1970s group made this clear:

Perhaps I could have gone on to higher general secondary education, but no one from my school class went. Oh no, I think just one. That was very extraordinary. It did not occur to them. (R10, female, 1970s group)⁹⁰

It was simple, it was in the village. Almost everyone went to the school for lower general secondary education, actually. And if someone could not learn that well, she would go to the domestic science school. It was like that in those days. (R13, female, 1970s group)⁹¹

These two examples demonstrate the assumption made by village inhabitants that all of the village students would go to the educational facilities in the village. There was thus not really a choice for respondents. Nevertheless, the facilities in the village had a

⁸⁵ Auclair and Vanoni, 'The Attractiveness', p. 81.

⁸⁶ This process is discussed on p. 11, where rural communities are strongly valued in contrast to the urban.

⁸⁷ Bushin et al., 'Reflecting on Contexts', p. 70.

⁸⁸ Auclair and Vanoni, 'The Attractiveness', p. 82. See Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 174.

Giddens discusses the different constraints a person may face, and material constraints deriving from the character of the material/environmental world are one of them.

⁸⁹ Shoveller et al., 'Around Here, They Roll up the Sidewalks at Night', p. 831. See Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*, p. 176.

⁹⁰ 'Misschien had ik zelfs wel naar de havo gekund, maar dat ging niemand uit mijn klas. Oh nee, één iemand denk ik. Dus dat was al heel uitzonderlijk, dat kwam verder ook niet in ze op'.

⁹¹ 'Was makkelijk, was hier in het dorp. Eigenlijk ging bijna iedereen naar de mavo. En iemand die iets minder goed kon leren die ging naar de huishoudschool. Dat was toen zo'.

negative impact on the capabilities of youth. It was difficult for someone to attend a school of a different educational level.

The geographical distribution of schools in North Groningen since the 1950s has been respectable, especially for the lower educational levels. In the 1990s, influenced by government policies (economic-political context), a wave of closures of these local schools occurred. Schools had to close because of low pupil numbers. A few schools remained in the region and students were allocated to these schools or schools in the urban regions of Groningen or Appingedam and Delfzijl. For the rural youth this meant that capabilities related to education *in* their region actually decreased. For example, they had to choose whether to travel further for one option or go to a school closer by for the other option. The following respondent makes this clear:

My parents had a religious background and their preference was to send me to a denominational school. However, that would have to be in Groningen. Then they said: 'you know we have a very good state school only three kilometres away, it is aggravating to go to a school thirty kilometres away. So you have to go to confirmation classes and you can go to the state school. (R20, female, 1990s group)⁹²

In the context of the 1990s in North Groningen, capabilities were at first limited because of the number of schools. Over time the capabilities became more restricted; however, due to less social control, the environment became more permissive, with people having more options and being governed by their own choices. The proximity of the city of Groningen, within commuting distance, made the choice even greater.

In the above example, education is only one of the aspects which is influenced by distance. Spatial and especially relative distance plays an important role in all kinds of aspects of the lives of youths.⁹³ Over time the supply of facilities increased in scale, and distance became more important. Simultaneously, this caused a dilemma for the various facilities that were actually located in many North Groningen villages. On the one hand, the inhabitants wanted to preserve the local community facilities but, on the other hand, the facilities were much better in other larger villages and the city of Groningen. However, as long as the opportunities for youth remained within commuting distance, the rural youth was satisfied and had the capability to remain in North Groningen.

Conclusion

This case study of youth in North Groningen indicates positive and negative developments in terms of youth capabilities. It became clear that capabilities are determined by all kinds of contexts and many various aspects are important in the lives of

⁹² 'Mijn ouders hebben wel een religieuze achtergrond en het liefst zouden ze me ook naar christelijk onderwijs sturen, maar dan zou ik naar Groningen moeten. Maar toen zeiden ze: 'weet je wat, je hebt een hele goede school hier drie kilometer verderop, en we vinden het nogal belastend als je dertig kilometer verder op naar school zou gaan, dus we verplichten je om naar catechisatie te gaan en dan mag je wel naar de neutrale school'.

⁹³ Auclair and Vanoni, 'The Attractiveness', pp. 80-85.

youth. The capabilities of rural youth are dependent on regional developments to a great extent. Although the powers governing these regional developments may be national or international, the outcomes are always regionalized.⁹⁴ For youth in North Groningen this means the political-economic processes are mainly national, but the outcomes are to a larger extent dependent on the specific socio-cultural and spatial circumstances in North Groningen.

In this paper has been sought to identify how the capabilities of rural youth are influenced by their environment. It is clear that the capabilities of rural youth have changed over time. One of the reasons is the enlargement of the social world of youth in North Groningen. In the 1950s the capabilities of youth were strongly related to the facilities which the local community had to offer. In Giddens' terms, the agency of youth was mainly influenced by society, especially the socio-cultural context. In the 1970s the capabilities increased through the reactive agency of youth and due to political-economic processes, such as improvement in facilities and mobility. In the 1990s the political-economic developments negatively impacted on local facilities. Due to these changes the spatial constraints became more important in relation to capabilities. It means that the agency of rural youth was negatively influenced by society. This influence has changed over time, from a more socio-cultural influence to a more spatial burden. These are general developments and it is clear that they do not influence all rural youth in the same manner. This can create tensions, such as the increase in mobility based on car use. For rural youth with access to a car this can positively influence their capabilities, but for rural youth without such access and dependent on public transport, capabilities decrease. Because of the influence of society on the agency of youth it is generally assumed that rural youth has fewer capabilities compared to rural adults and urban youth, and therefore is vulnerable to migration.⁹⁵

When the above conclusions are compared with the results in Figure 3, it becomes clear that they generally show the same pattern. Some more specific remarks can be made. Firstly, the interviewees from the 1970s group do not pay as much attention to the political-economic process as is done in the literature and in reports of that time. From a retrospective point of view the political-economic situation was not considered influential by the respondents, as was felt at that time by policymakers and researchers. The respondents' experiences were subject to a reconstruction and a reinterpretation of their youth.⁹⁶ Secondly, Figure 3 shows the influence of the different contexts, but as became clear from the qualitative analysis, the capabilities are influenced more by the personal biography of the respondent and their own agency over time. The influence of the individualization process on capabilities is double-edged. On the one hand, the capabilities of youth increased over time because of growing individual possibilities (agency) and the general increase in mobility in society. On the other hand, the physical and political-economic contexts constrained the capabilities of the rural youth over time.

⁹⁴ Marsden et al., *Constructing the Countryside*, p. 129.

⁹⁵ Johnson, Elder and Stern, 'Attachments to Family'; Jentsch, 'Youth Migration from Rural Areas'; Gibson and Argent, 'Getting on, Getting up and Getting Out?'; Easthope and Gabriel, 'Turbulent Lives'; Davies, 'Declining Youth in-Migration'.

⁹⁶ Morgan, 'Towards a Developmental Theory'.

The increased focus on individuals and their capabilities or lack thereof can result in migration behaviour. Thirdly, a more general point is that the capabilities of rural youth are usually interpreted by policymakers and researchers as quite negative. However, the capabilities of rural youth in North Groningen must be viewed in a more nuanced way. The structures influencing capabilities are both constraining and enabling.⁹⁷ The respondents who stayed in the region generally look back positively on their youth. For them, the opportunities in the region were positive enough for them to have the capability to remain.

Where the capabilities in North Groningen changed, livability and regional identity also changed. The focus on the local socio-cultural context in the 1950s created a value for livability which is oriented to the local community. The regional identity is mainly based on local experiences and contrasted to 'outside' experiences. Over time the social world expanded and greater value was accorded to the environmental aspects of North Groningen. Increasingly, youth created their own capabilities and thereby improved the livability of the region. The rural identity of North Groningen was increasingly formulated in contrast to the urban identity. Rural youth in North Groningen was not a homogenous group, which means that everyone accorded different values to the region, its structures and its opportunities, which determined people's capabilities, its suitability as a place to live and its identity. However, the respondents all had their own stories about their youth in North Groningen. For some the opportunities were not adequate at a particular time period, thus limiting their capabilities, which resulted in a temporary stay somewhere else. At present, all of the respondents live in North Groningen because they perceive it to foster the best possible conditions to enhance their capabilities. Clearly, they do not currently feel a *threat* to their *existence*.

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⁹⁷ McGrath, 'A Problem of Resources'.

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Appendix 1: The respondents and their background

	Res. Nr.⁹⁸	Gender	Place where youth was spent⁹⁹	School-leaving age¹⁰⁰	Parents' main employment¹⁰¹	Religion
1950	R1	Male	Local village	17 *	Farmer	Reformed
	R2	Female	Regional village	19 *	Farmer	None
	R3	Female	Small village or country side	16	Carrier	Reformed
	R4	Female	Local village	12 *	Working class	Dutch reformed
	R5	Male	Small village or country side	16 *	Small farmer – transport firm owner	Reformed
	R6	Male	Small village or country side	18 *	Agricultural labourer	Orthodox Reformed
1970	R7	Female	Regional village	15	Grain and seeds agent	Dutch reformed
	R8	Male	Local village	18	Factory worker	Reformed
	R9	Male	Small village or country side	18	Farmer	Dutch reformed
	R10	Female	Local village	16	Working class	Reformed
	R11	Male	Local village	16 *	Agricultural labourer and housekeeper*	None
	R12	Male	Regional village	21	Craftsman	None
	R13	Female	Local village	17	Chauffeur	Dutch reformed
	R14*	Male	Local village	23	Construction firm owner	None
	R15*	Female	Regional village	22	Farmer	None
1990	R16*	Male	Regional village	22	Caretaker and housekeeper*	Catholic
	R17*	Female	Local village	23	Bookshop owner*	None
	R18*	Male	Local village	24	Teachers*	None
	R19	Female	Local village	19	Transport firm owner	None
	R20*	Female	Small village or country side	+/- 26	Project manager at municipality and nurse*	Reformed – Dutch reformed

⁹⁸ Respondents with an asterisk are retour migrants.

⁹⁹ Categories based on facilities level.

¹⁰⁰ Respondents with an asterisk had again education at an older age.

¹⁰¹ Both parents of the respondents with an asterisk were employed. Otherwise it was the traditional situation where the father had paid employment and the mother was a housewife.