

## Lonely Teleworkers

### the downside of remote working

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### Project description

More and more people live further away from their workplace. They work from home, often part of the week (hybrid), sometimes completely. These new modes of working allow them to live in cheaper, greener, more spacious peripheral locations.

However, there is a drawback to that spatial reorganization. Living away from the bustle of the big city and the buzz of the office can make employees lonely. To counter that, new waves of co-working spaces are opening up in the periphery – something we first saw in cities, as hubs for creatives and other entrepreneurs (Mariotti et al., 2021; Merkel, 2015), but peripheral spaces attract customers from different types (Brouwer et al., 2022).

In this project, we visit several peripheral co-working spaces, and interview workers on their motivations to work at the space, in the light not of the characteristics of the space itself (as was done by la Fleur et al., 2022) but in the light of the spatio-temporal configuration of the rest of their lives, their migration history, and their wellbeing. For comparison, we also interview workers in the same areas that do not seem to use the space. We focus on (rural) Friesland and possibly (rural) Groningen, but other peripheral areas are an option as well.

A lot of the preparatory work has already been done, including mapping of coworking spaces in Friesland and obtaining ethical clearance. Even a first set of interviews has already been done, providing inspiration of what may be achieved.

### Job requirements

- Experience with interviewing is a plus, but it is also a skill that can be acquired on the job.
- An inquisitive mind is of course necessary: you have to probe to get beyond the usual story of “I love it here and I want to go to my office in the Randstad as little as possible”, because we want to find out how the life of respondents has really changed, and whether it was all for the better.
- You will travel to Friesland, Groningen or another peripheral region; a student OV will be helpful here, but there is a project budget to cover these travel costs.