

How to strengthen labor markets in border regions by cross-border vocational training: Experiences from the Greater Region

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Outline

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- Framework agreements and other agreements in the Greater Region to overcome institutional / cultural distances
- Agreements as collective learning processes
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Intro:

Differences and distances weakening or strengthening the development of border regions?

on the one side,

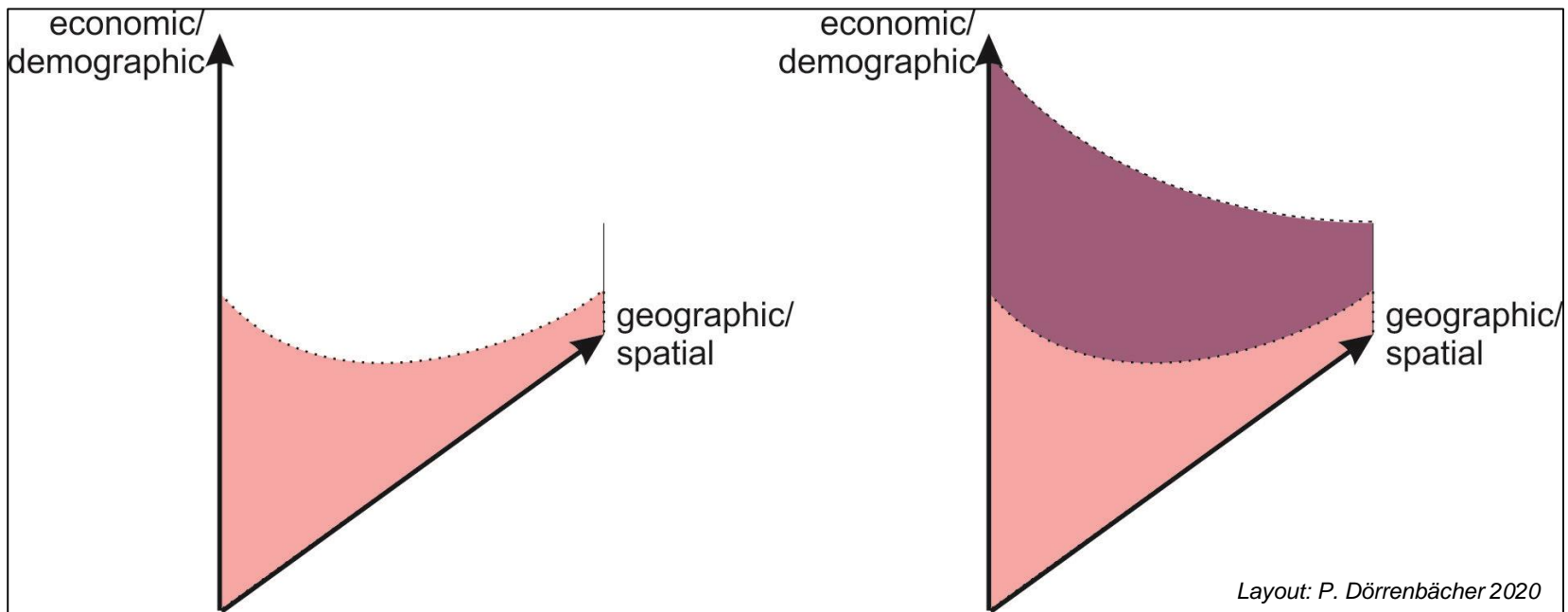
border regions and their development are weakened by their peripheral geographical and institutional locations, i.e. by their distance from their respective national centres,

but on the other side,

border regions, including their economy and their labour markets, are strengthened by differences on both sides of the border (e.g. GDP, supply and demand of goods, services and labour force).

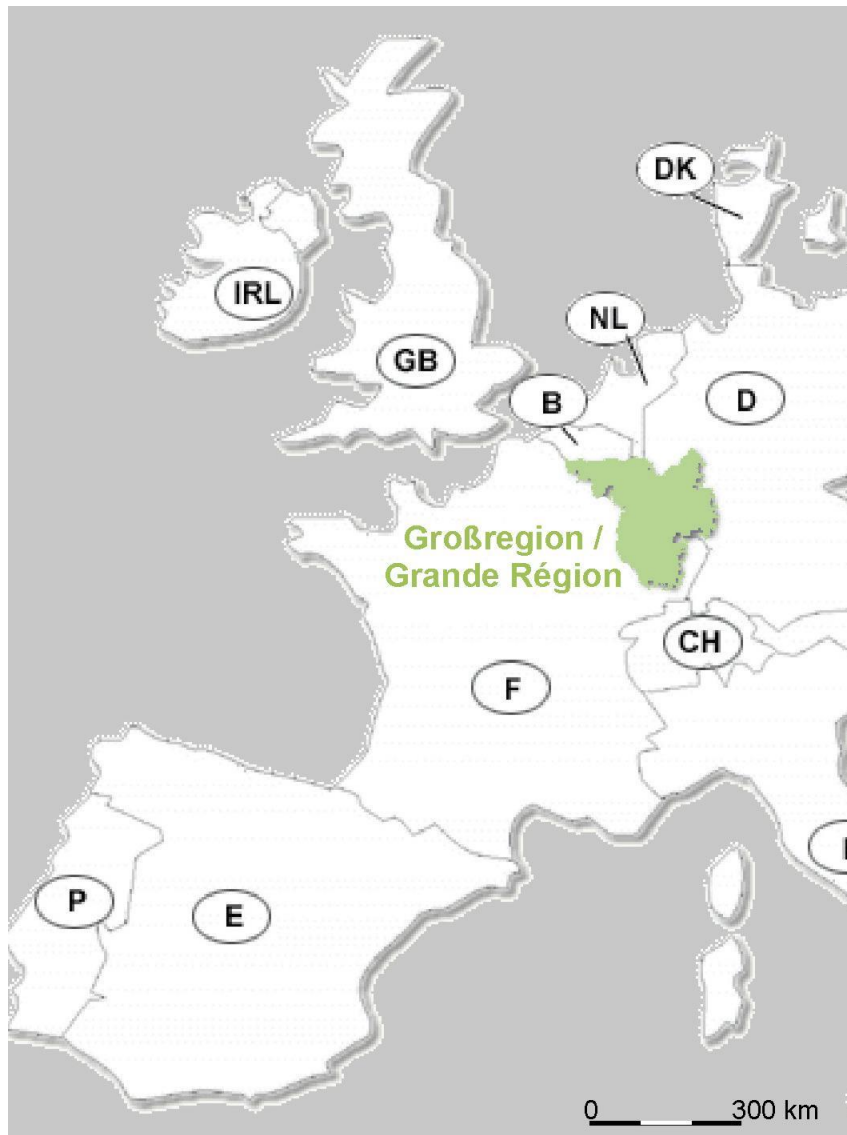
Intro:

Cross-border flows: Economic/demographic differences/distances and geographic distance



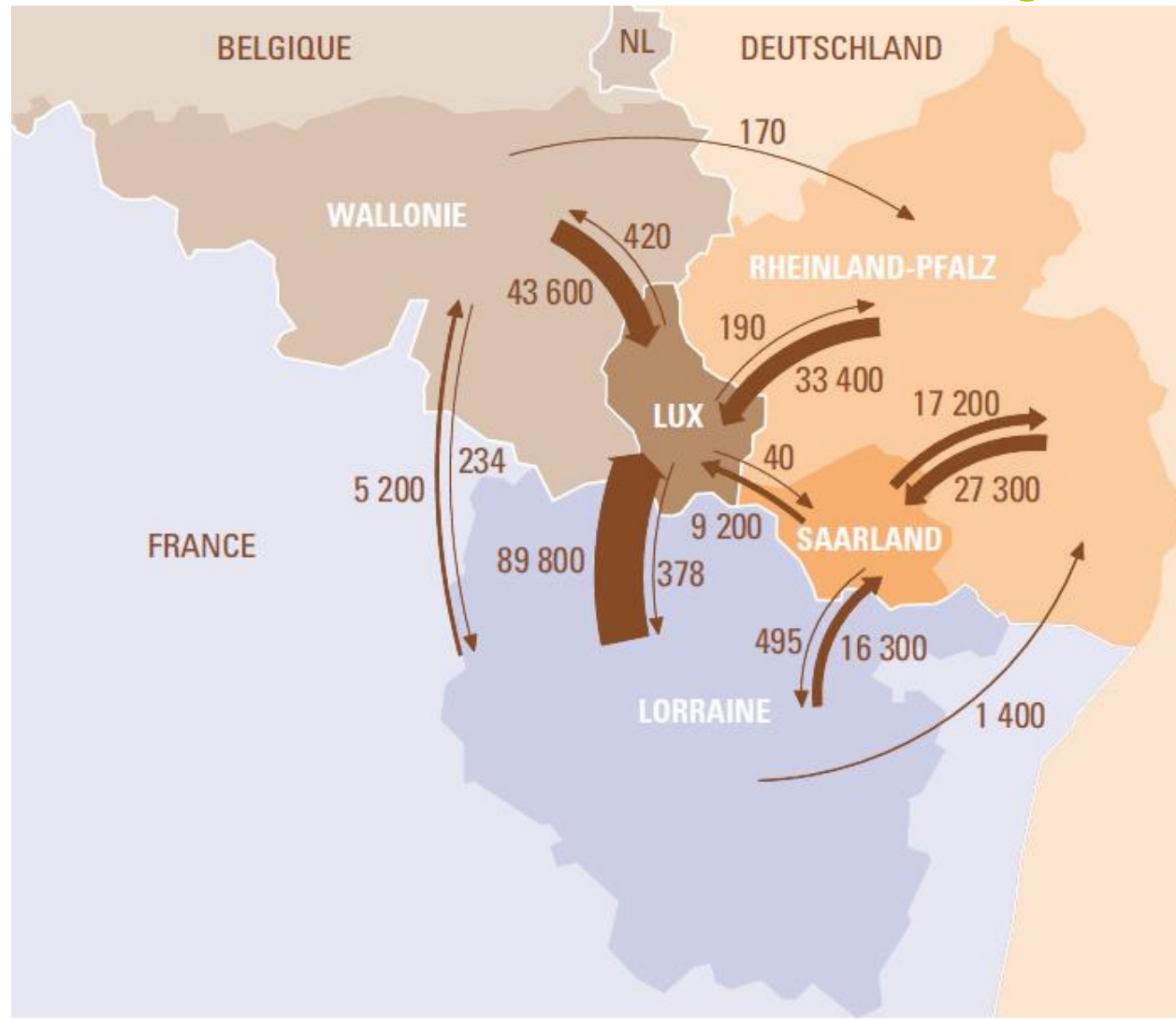
Cross-border labor mobility in the Greater Region:

The Greater Region



Cross-border labor mobility in the Greater Region:

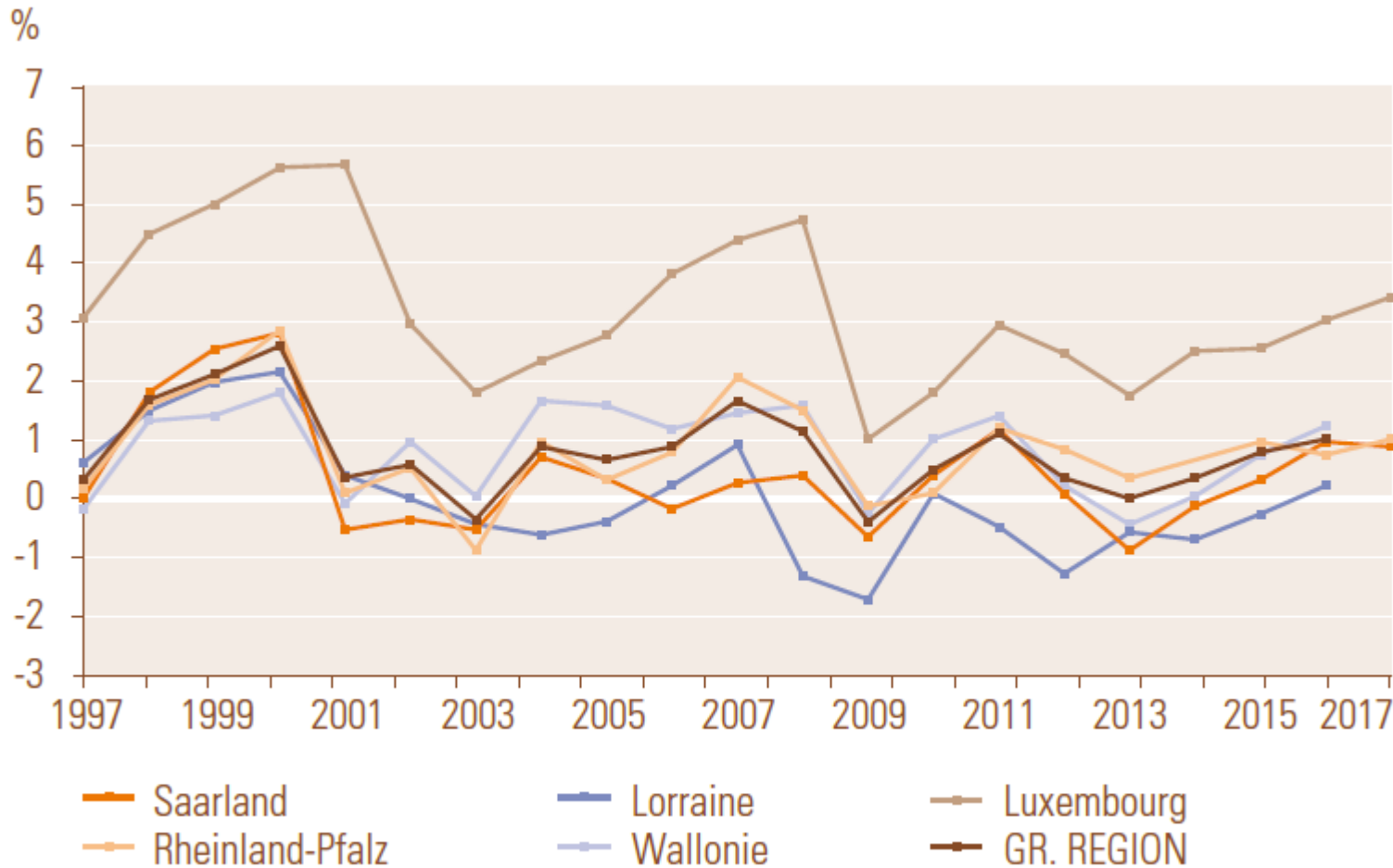
Cross-border commuters in the Greater Region 2017



With 240.500 cross-border commuters, thereof 197,000 to Luxembourg, the Greater Region is the cross-border region with the highest cross-border labor mobility in the EU.

Source: Statistische Ämter der Großregion/ Les offices statistiques de la Grande Région (2018, 17)

Cross-border labor mobility in the Greater Region: Uneven Development of Employment (at the place of employment) 1997-2017

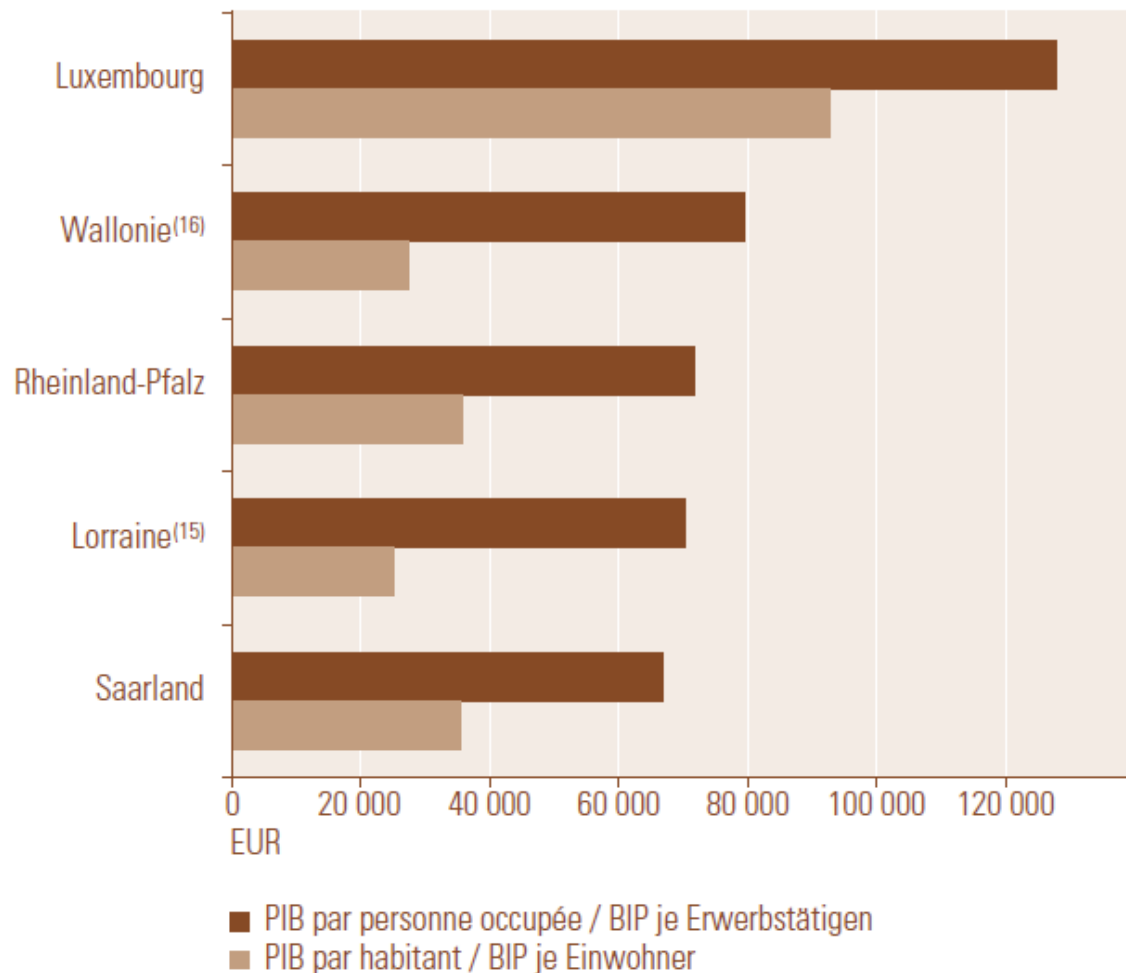


Source: Statistische Ämter der Großregion/Les offices statistiques de la Grande Région (2018, 17)

Cross-border labor mobility in the Greater Region:

Differences of GDP in the Greater Region

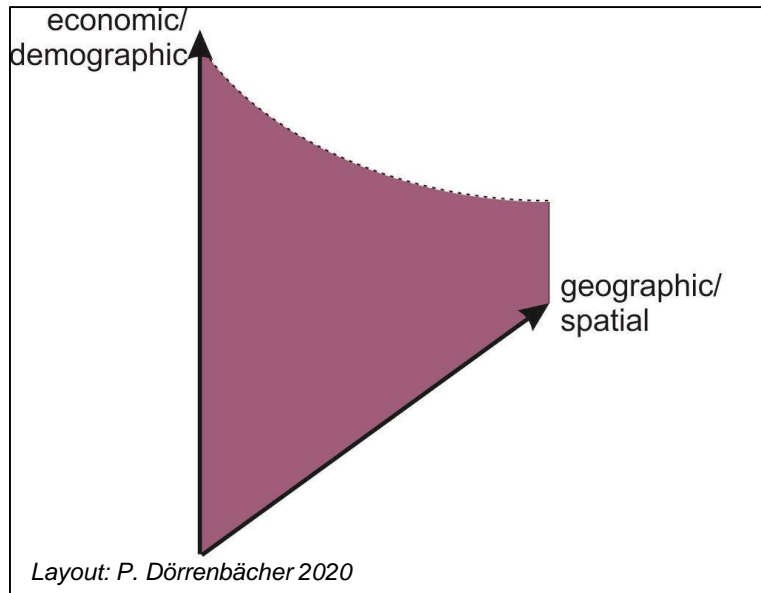
PIB 2017 par personne occupée / par habitant
BIP 2017 je Erwerbstätigen / je Einwohner



Source: Statistische Ämter der Großregion/Les offices statistiques de la Grande Région (2018, 37)

Cross-border VET in the Greater Region: Potential and limitations

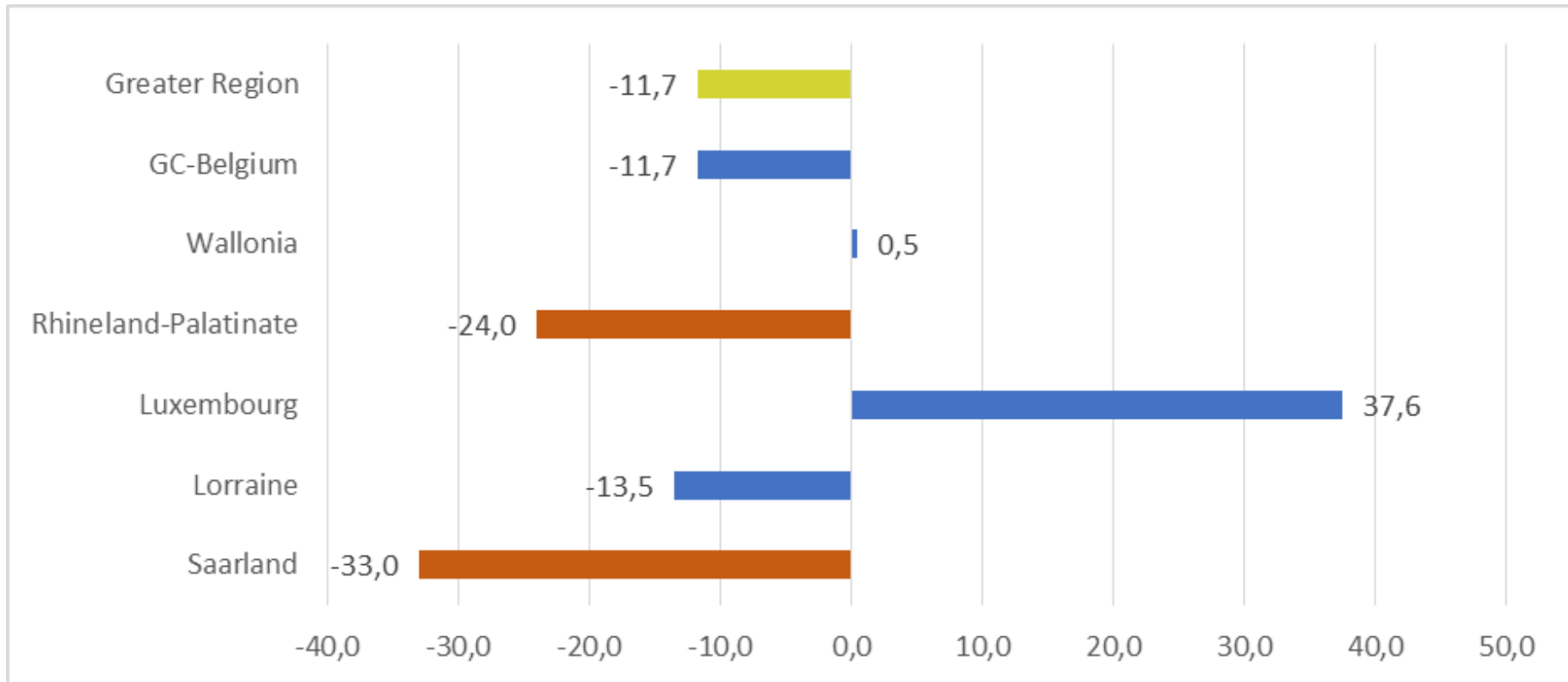
A high potential, caused by inter-regional demographic differences



- An aging and decreasing population in some regions and a high population influx and growth in other regions
- Excess / shortage of the supply of young workforce (trainees/ apprentices)
- Company transfer and generation change of many SMEs in the near future

Cross-border VET in the Greater Region: Potential and limitations

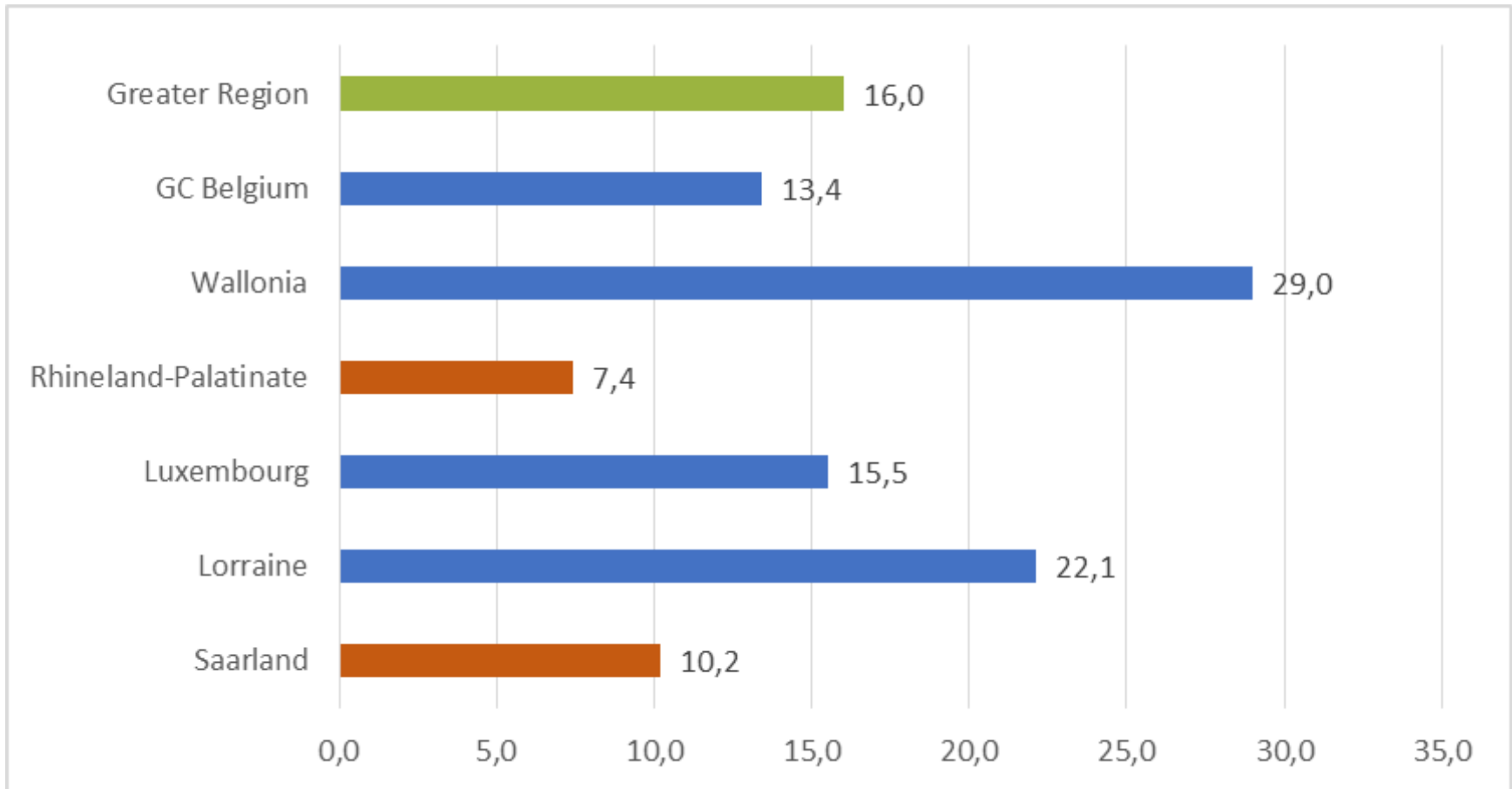
Uneven projection of the workforce (2018-2050, in %)



Source: Dörrenbächer 2020, 123, database: IBA/OIE 2019, 1)

Cross-border VET in the Greater Region: Potential and limitations

Uneven youth Unemployment (2017, in %)



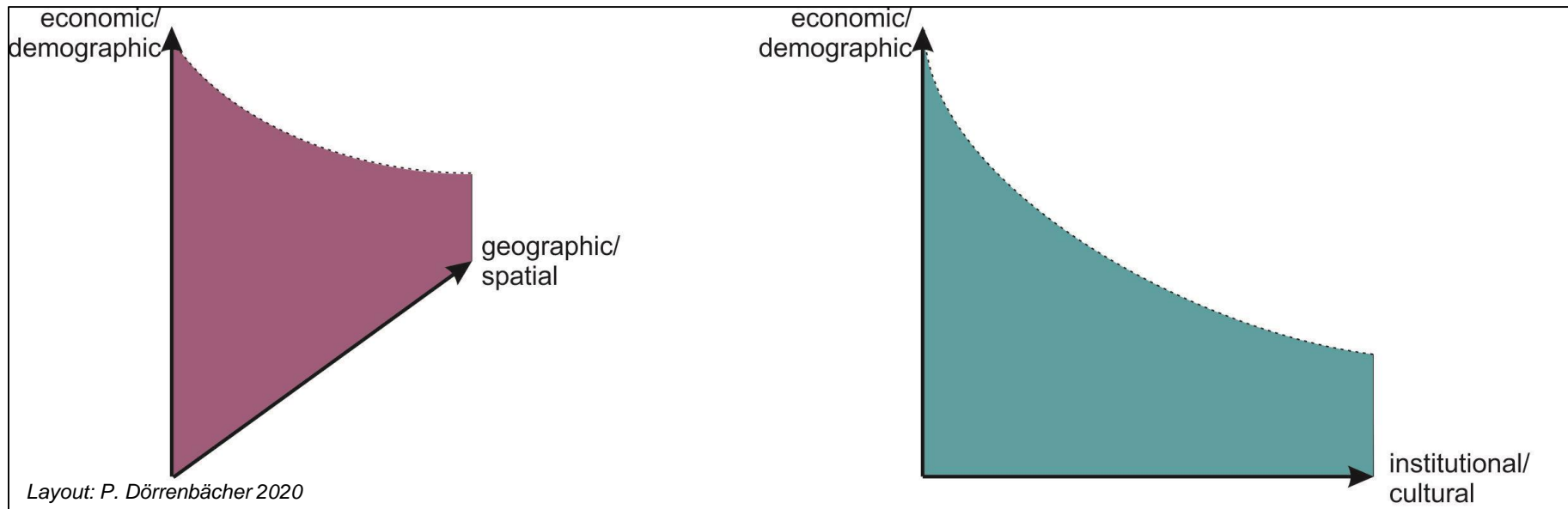
Source: Dörrenbächer 2020, 123, database: IBA/OIE 2019, 3)

Cross-border VET in the Greater Region: Potential and limitations

Limitations, caused by institutional and cultural differences /distances

a high potential...

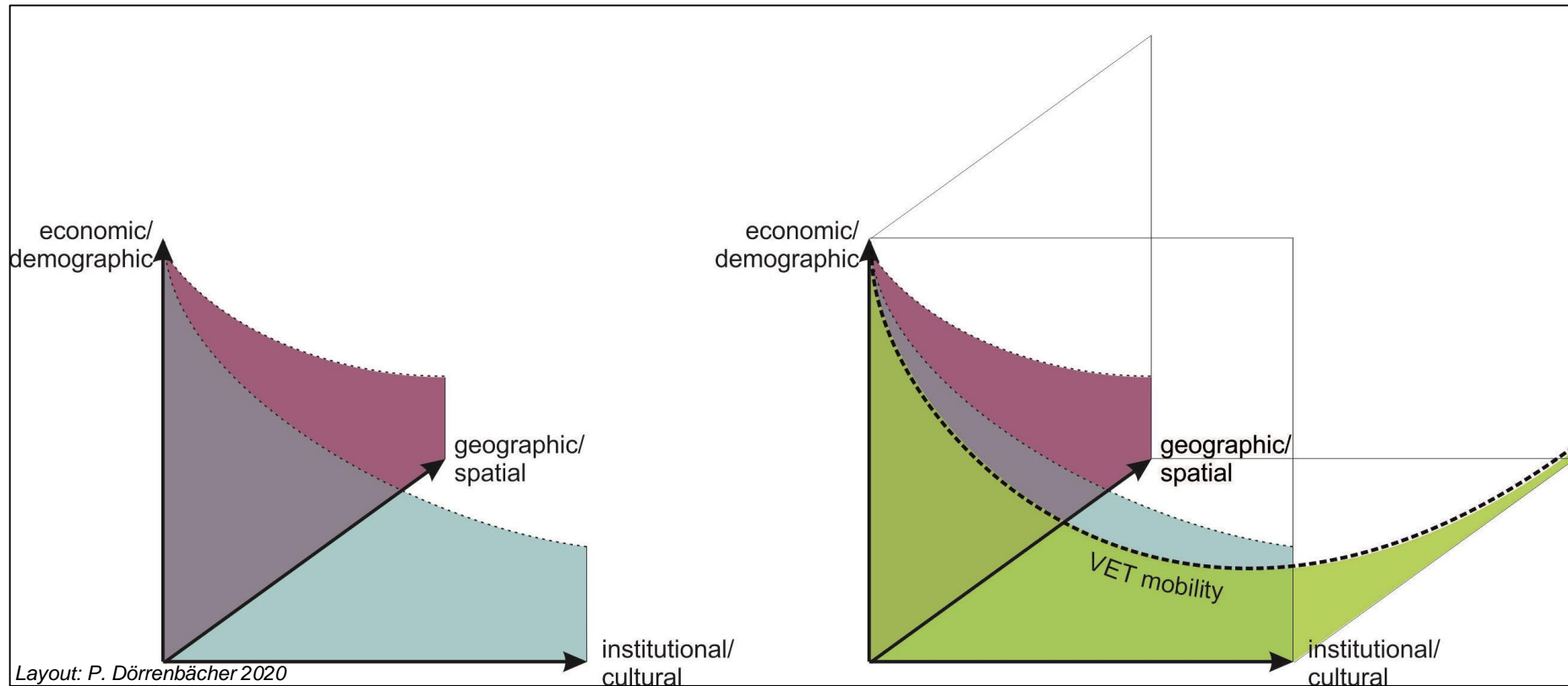
...but limited by institutional/cultural differences/distances



- *An aging and decreasing population in some regions and a high population influx and growth in other regions*
- *Excess / shortage of the supply of young workforce (trainees/ apprentices)*
- *Company transfer and generation change of many SMEs in the near future*

- weak language skills
- different VET systems
- different legal regulations

Dimensions of differences / distances and the challenge of institutional / cultural differences / distances



...back to our main question

“How to strengthen labor markets in border regions by cross-border vocational training (VET)?”

leads us to the question

“How to overcome institutional / cultural distances in order to strengthen cross-border VET”

Framework agreements and other agreements in the Greater Region to overcome institutional / cultural distances

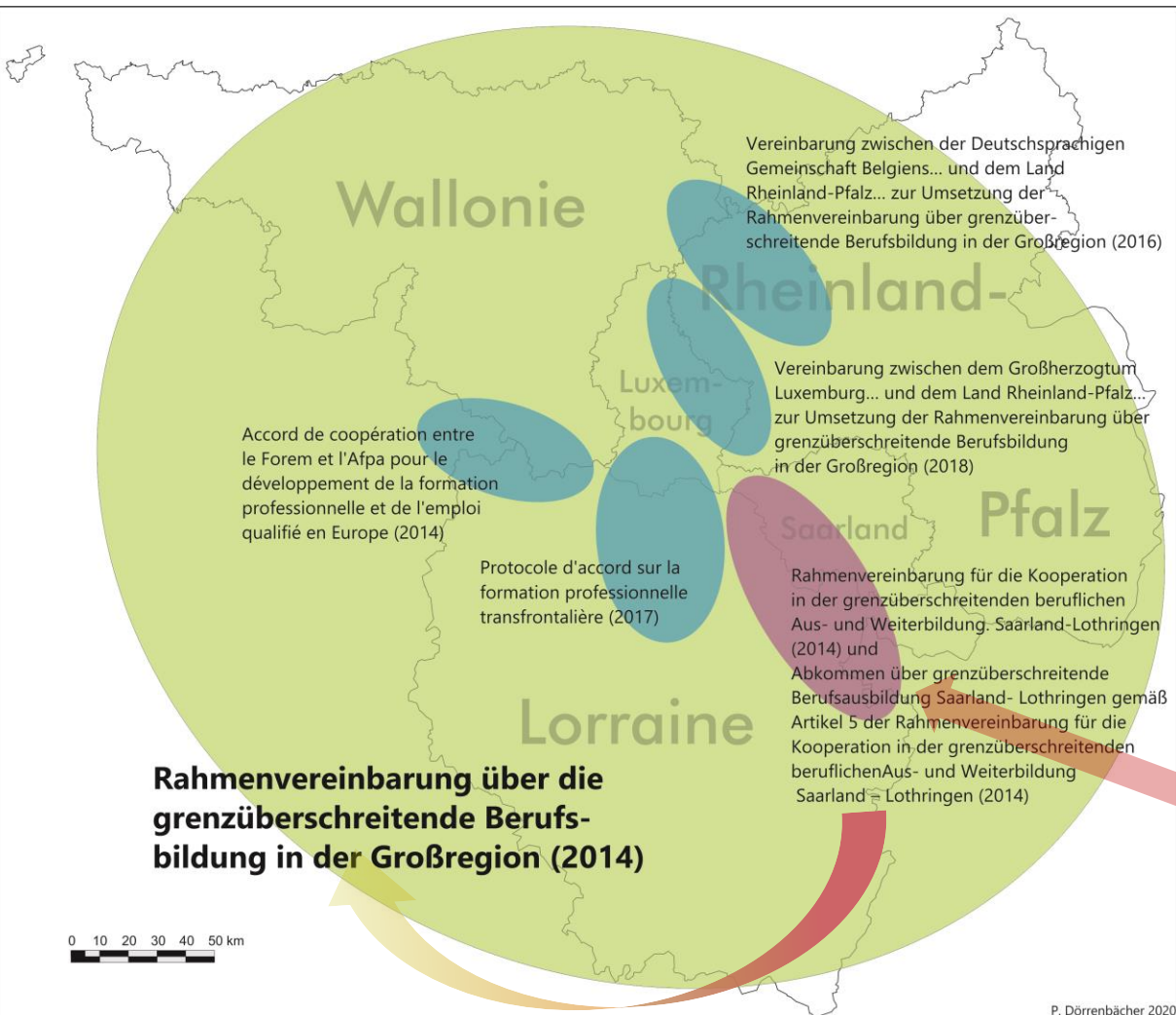
Agreements as collective learning processes

The negotiation of agreements and the agreements themselves are

- based on long-standing intensive transboundary interrelations (strong commuter flows experiences) and on confidential interpersonal relationships resulting from these relations (Dörrenbächer 2018; 2020)
- informal and institutionalized inter- and intra-regional learning processes (cf. Funk, Nienaber, Dörrenbächer 2020).

Framework agreements and other agreements in the Greater Region to overcome institutional / cultural distances

Agreements as collective learning processes



*Towards the
Framework Agreement on Cross-border Vocational Training in the Greater Region (2014)
and
other agreements*

Rahmenvereinbarung über die grenzüberschreitende Berufsausbildung am Oberrhein /
Accord cadre relatif à l'apprentissage transfrontalier dans le Rhin supérieur (2013)

Framework agreements and other agreements in the Greater Region to overcome institutional / cultural distances

Agreement(s) as flexible toolboxes, and Examples of comprehensive cross-border VET

- by combining elements of different national VET systems (e.g. „German dual VET /French VET system: theoretical training in the home country and practical company-based training in the neighboring country)

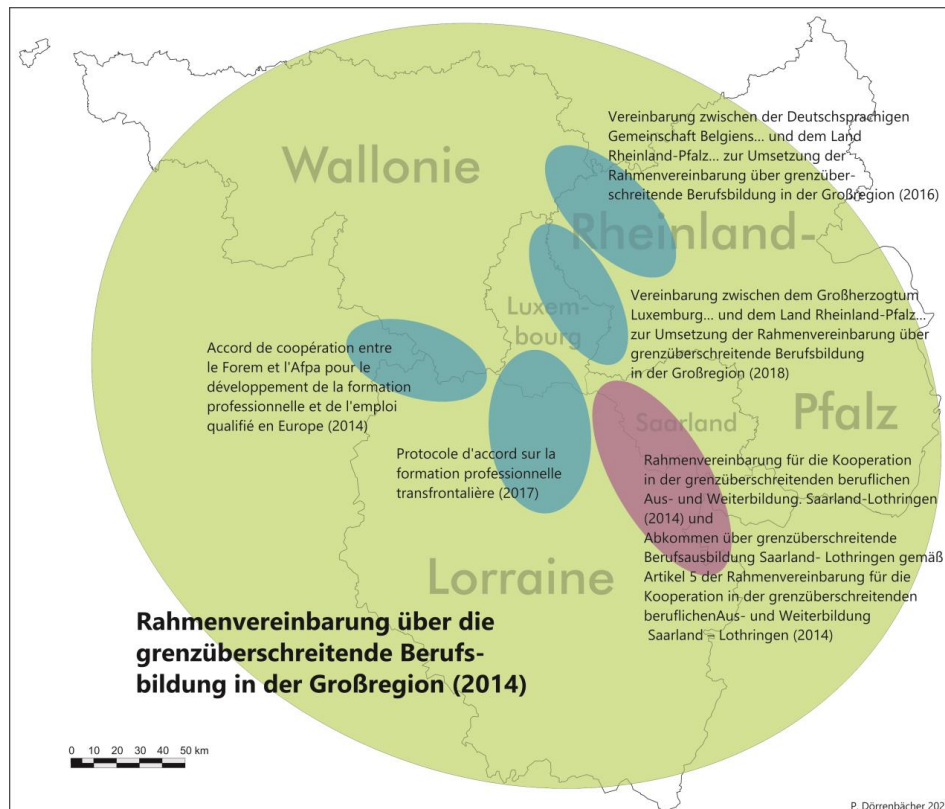
Exemples:

- Globus self-service department stores
- Möbel Martin (furniture retail)
- Michelin (Homburg/Saar plant)

Framework agreements and other agreements in the Greater Region to overcome institutional / cultural distances

Agreement(s) as flexible toolboxes, and Examples of comprehensive cross-border VET

- by combining elements of different national VET systems (e.g. „German dual VET /French VET system: theoretical training in the home country and practical company-based training in the neighboring country)
- setting a flexible framework for diverse forms of cross-border cooperations in the field of VET



- *to date, 4 agreements between different regions of the Greater Region, diverse forms of cooperation (→ internships, continuing VT) in diverse sectors*
- *allowing for „experimentation clauses“ by-passing strict national regulations,*
- *Establishment of soft forms of harmonization of national VET*
- *Regular cross-border communication*

Other interregional agreements and measures of cross-border VET

Prior to the negotiation and signing of these framework agreements: 50 cross-border VET measures in the broader sense, and 20 in the narrow sense (most of them short term) have been set up and implemented (Interregionale Arbeitsmarktbeobachtungsstelle 2014, 173 ff; Task Force Grenzgänger 2012, Nienaber, Dörrenbächer et al. 2020)

Examples:

- **Fachstelle für grenzüberschreitende Ausbildung (FagA):** since 2009 several hundreds of trainees, mostly from Lorraine to Saarland (VAUS; Rectorat de l'Académie Nancy-Metz, Saarland Ministry for Education; Eurodistrict SaarMoselle)
- **EcoSop:** short term comprehensive trainee programs (Schengen Lyceum, Perl/Saar; Anefore (agence nationale du Luxembourg pour les programmes Erasmus+ et le Corps européen de solidarité et d'autres initiatives européennes liées à l'éducation, la formation et la jeunesse); Le Rebours (French Management School); Zentrum für Aus- und Weiterbildung des Mittelstandes, St. Vith; Printemps (French retail company); Volkssbank Untere Saar eG): at the moment, 45 trainees from high schools in the Greater Region performing an internship in one neighboring country of the GR

Summary

- 1) Border Regions, in general, can gain from cross-border differences (distances) enabling, cross-border cooperation (interaction, exchange).
- 2) With regard to economic development, border regions, more specifically, can gain by establishing cross-border labor markets (commuter flows) and cross-border VET.
- 3) Institutional and cultural differences (distances) are the greatest challenge for the establishment of cross-border VET.
- 4) In the Greater Region, the negotiation, signing and implementation of VET framework agreements have helped to overcome these institutional/cultural differences/distances.
- 5) As such, VET framework agreements are toolboxes, setting a flexible framework for the implementation of cross-border VET programs.
- 6) At the same time, they are far more than just any written documents. They are collective and contingent learning processes strengthening the evolution of dynamic cross-border regions, in general, and particularly of cross-border labor markets.

Thank you very much for your attention!

• Projektpartner



• Strategische Partner



• Assoziierte Partner



• Ko-Finanzierung

