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Developing Europe's Rural Regions in the Era of Globalization

An interpretative model for better anticipating and responding to challenges for regional development in an evolving international context

WP5

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Case Study Report “Saarland”

**Birte Nienaber, Ursula Roos and Wioletta Frys
(USAAR)**

With contributions of: Robert Nadler, Michael Kriszan and Joachim Burdack (IfL), Wiebke Wellbrock and Dirk Roep (WU), Laura Jones and Michael Woods (AU)

Table of contents

1.	Introduction and context	4
1.1.	Location and Geography	4
1.2.	Regional Economy.....	5
1.2.1.	Development of regional Economy.....	5
1.2.2.	Rural Primary Industries	6
1.2.3.	Tourism	6
1.2.4.	International Integration	6
1.3.	Population and Migration	7
1.4.	Environment and Sustainable Development	8
1.4.1.	The Regional Environment	8
1.4.2.	Protected Areas	8
2.	Sections on each WP	9
2.1.	WP 2	9
2.1.1.	Data and information	9
2.1.2.	Qualitative interviews with migrants	9
2.1.3.	Good practices in the case study region	10
2.1.4.	Motivations of migrants to come to the region.....	11
2.1.5.	Satisfaction of migrants with overall situation in the region.....	11
2.1.6.	Suggestions for improvements regarding the situation of migrants in the region	11
2.2.	WP 3	12
2.2.1.	Data and information	12
2.2.2.	Results of the research.....	12
2.3.	WP 4	14
2.3.1.	Data and information	14
2.3.2.	Overview of learning and innovation support strategies.....	14
2.3.3.	Support of joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives	15
2.3.4.	Operational quality of arrangements	16
3.	Overview	17

4.	Conclusions and recommendations	18
4.1.	WP 2	18
4.1.1.	Conclusions in view of the multidimensional research approach	18
4.1.2.	Conclusions of the 'good practice' research.....	18
4.1.3.	Recommendations	19
4.2.	WP 3	20
4.3.	WP 4	21

1. Introduction and context¹

The EU- financed project “Developing Europe’s Regions in the Era of Globalization (DERREG)” is dealing with the impact of globalization on, for example, the rural areas of Saarland, Germany as one of the case study regions.

Globalization is increasingly shapening the challenges for European regional development. It affects every single area of life, representing both threats and opportunities, especially for rural regions – where more than 56% of its population lives and which constitute 91% of the EU land area (European Commission 2008). Global markets and their competition have an influence on traditional industries. Transnational migration does not only occur in big cities, but it also affects people in rural areas increasingly internationalised property markets, large international enterprises and global actors represent new challenges for traditional environmental management. At the same time, however, globalization has reordered notions of ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ that have historically marginalised rural regions (McDonagh 2002, Copus 2001, Dühr 2009, Eriksson 2008, Labrianidis 2004, Wild/Jones1993), and which now assign a whole new importance to rural areas, particularly for economic reasons. Adopting appropriate responses to both the challenges and opportunities of globalization is critical to the future development of rural regions, yet the evidence on which such strategies can be founded is currently limited (DERREG Consortium 2008: 7).

Globalization is one of the key challenges for rural regions in Europe, bringing significant social, economic, cultural, environmental and political changes.

Globalization leads to a worldwide fundamental change in the territorial organisation of economic, cultural and social activities and to a shift in the politico-economic balance of power.

The following Case Study report will combine the different scientific findings on the impact of globalization on rural Saarland.

1.1. Location and Geography

Saarland is one of the sixteen Länder or federal states which make up Germany (figure 1). Saarland is situated on the French-German-Luxembourgian border and has historically occupied a transitional location, with shifting territorial allegiances, until it was formally integrated into the Federal Republic of Germany after a referendum in 1957. The state of Saarland borders the French region of Lorraine to the South and West, Luxembourg to the West and the German state of Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palatinate) to the North and the East.

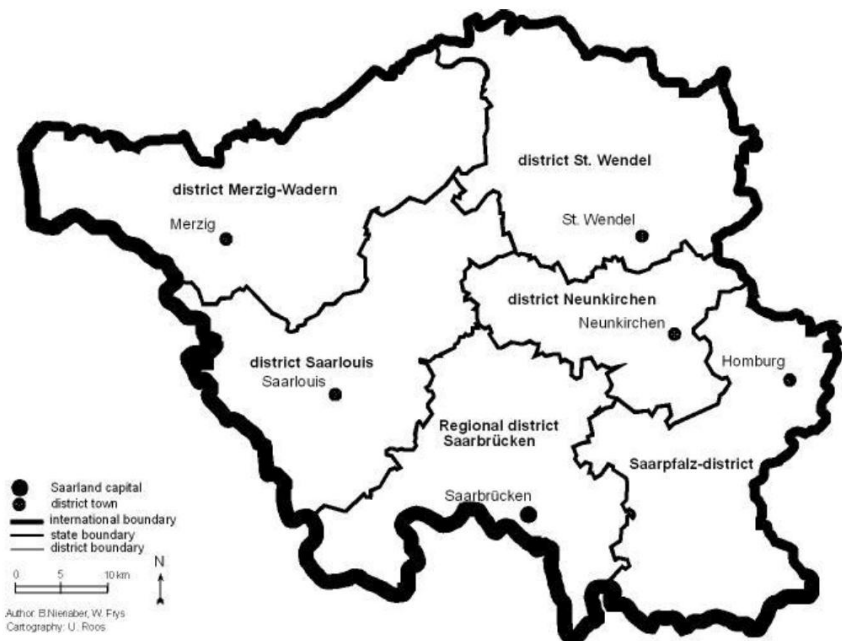


Figure 1: Districts of Saarland with major towns
Source: Universität des Saarlandes

¹ This section is a revised and updated version of D5.2 by USAAR.

Saarland is named after the Saar River which runs through the state from the South to the Northwest. With an area of 2,568.65 km², it is the smallest of the German states aside from the three city-states of Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg. Within this small area, the region encompasses a wide variety of topography across its generally hilly landscape, ranging from the lime soil of the Bliesgau and sandy soil around Homburg, the coal mountains near Neunkirchen, the thick deciduous and primeval forest only a few kilometres away from the state capital Saarbrücken, to the scenic plateaus of the Saargau with its green hills. One third of the land area of Saarland is covered by forest, one of the highest percentages in Germany.

Saarland is categorised by Eurostat as „predominantly urban’ (only 18.5% of the regional territory is classified as „intermediate rural’) (European Union, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development 2008) with a population density of 407.5 persons per km², or 357.1 persons per km² for the case study region without the city of Saarbrücken. This makes Saarland the most densely populated of the DERREG case study regions. Only 1.6% of the population of the case study region live in communities of fewer than 5000 people.

1.2. Regional Economy

1.2.1. Development of regional Economy

Saarland has experienced a period of fundamental change in its economic, social and spatial structures during the last 50 years since it rejoined the Federal Republic. However, another major period of economic change in the region began in the first half of the nineteenth century due to innovations in coal mining and the development of a large iron and steel industry based on the region’s vast coal fields. The growth of these industries led to concurrent social changes throughout Saarland. Industrial development was concentrated along the chief transport routes, principally along the River Saar, giving rise to the development of large urban conurbations and an increasing population density. The coal and iron/steel industries remained predominant in Saarland until the middle of the 20th century, when structural changes related to global economic pressures let the region’s heavy industries fall into a steady decline.

At the same time, these losses were partly offset by the creation of new jobs in the manufacturing sector utilising modern production techniques. The 1990s saw a massive growth in the automotive industry in Saarland, with Ford having previously opened a manufacturing plant in Saarlouis in 1970. In Saarland (NUTS 2), the service sector is the most important field of economic activity, accounting for 72% of regional employment in 2010 compared to 27% employees working in industry and just 1% in agriculture (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2011b). In the economy of the rural case study region (without Saarbrücken), the service sector is still dominant but the industrial sector has remained a larger regional employer, with figures from 2009 census data indicating industry accounting for a 33% share of employment compared to 66% in services and again 1% in agriculture (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2011c).

This strong industrial sector in the case study region is also reflected in terms of contribution to GVA, accounting for 31.4% of regional GVA in 2008 compared to 68% from services and only 0.6% from agriculture (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2010c).

Yet despite the relatively small land area of Saarland, there are noticeable geographical variations in unemployment rates, with the highest rate actually in Saarbrücken (9.6%) compared to the rural case study districts of Saarpfalz-Kreis (5.4%) and Saarlouis (5.7%) (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2011). Saarbrücken is the largest focus for employment (and unemployment) in Saarland, with the city and its surrounding urban conurbation being home to approximately one-third of the regional population. This urbanisation was driven by Saarbrücken’s position at the heart of the region’s former industrial activity around the Saar River while outlying rural areas of Saarland are now highly priced residential and commuter locations. Thus, for example, Greater Saarbrücken has a net influx of 37,000 commuters daily, while the rural district of Merzig-Wadern has a net outflow of 3,700 commuters (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2009). In addition, comparatively high 10% of the workforce of Saarland commutes to work in a different NUTS 2 region, reflecting Saarland’s small land area and good transport links to neighbouring regions in Germany, France and Luxembourg. However, net cross-border commuting into Saarland from neighbouring countries exceeded out-commuting in 2005 by a factor of more than 3:1 (Wille 2008).

Saarbrücken is the region’s business, administrative and educational centre, with local and state government branches as well as the city’s five public universities. Private business enterprises expanded in Saarland alongside the growth of the region’s service economy, with the border location proving an attractive location for corporate headquarters as well as smaller scale enterprises. The distribution of businesses varies geographically within the state, with 35% of the 38,747 registered businesses in 2004 located in the district of Saarbrücken and the remaining 24,700 within the 5 districts of the case study region. Of these, the highest percentages were in the neighbouring districts of Saarbrücken, Saarlouis (19.5%), Saarpfalz-Kreis (15%) and Neunkirchen (12.6%), and the lowest in the northerly districts of Merzig-Wadern (9.2%) and St. Wendel

(7.7%). The largest sectors are in business services (e.g. IT and consultancy), hotels and restaurants, and real estate (Eurostat 2010).

Real estate prices in Saarland have fluctuated over the past decade, with the price of building ground increasing by over 300% between 1997 and 2001 (from 856.6 €/m² to 2,895.1 €/m²), before decreasing (although not consistently) by 40% to 1734.8 €/m² in 2006 (Statistisches Amt Saarland 1999-2008).

1.2.2. *Rural Primary Industries*

As mentioned above, agriculture has only played a minor role in the regional economy of Saarland as a whole due to competing claims on the state's limited land area and this has reduced further since the 1990s. Agricultural GVA decreased from €77.2 million in 1995 to €45.7 million in 2005, which as a proportion of regional GVA represented a drop from 0.6% to 0.3%. Although there was a slight increase in the total number of agricultural employees between 2001 and 2003, the general trend over the decade has been downwards from around 5,200 full-time equivalent employees in 2001 to 4,700 in 2007, comprising just 1% of total employment in Saarland (Eurostat 2010). Even in the more rural districts of Merzig-Wadern and St Wendel, agriculture employs less than 1.5% of the workforce (Eurostat 2010).

Agriculture in Saarland is polarised between the development of large-scale economically competitive farm holdings and supporting the development of individual holdings by young farmers (European Commission n.d.).

This land is of varied quality, with two-thirds (66.7%) classified as 'less favoured areas' and consequently agricultural production is a mixture of cereal and fruit crops, and a large livestock sector focused on dairy and beef products. In 2005, nearly 80% of farm holdings in Saarland incorporated some form of livestock farming and 65% had arable land for cultivation, with figures for 2001 also showing roughly equal proportions of arable land use and permanent grassland for animal grazing (Eurostat 2010). Important agricultural areas include the Saargau in Western Saarland, along the French border, and the Bliesgau in the south-east, where there are fertile chalky soils.

Forests and woodland comprise just less than a third (32.5%) of the territory of the Saarland case study region, with particular concentrations in the higher elevations of the Merzig-Wadern district to the north of the state.

1.2.3. *Tourism*

With the collapse of the region's heavy industry, continuing efforts are being made to promote and further enhance Saarland's attractiveness as a tourist destination emphasising the region's natural environment and cultural heritage. Figures for the whole of Saarland indicate that tourist numbers increased by more than 20% between 1994 and 2007, from 599,181 to 735,876 visitors. The vast majority of visitors are domestic tourists from Germany, as further indicated by the preponderance of short stays. The average length of visit in 2007 was 2.9 days, and the majority of income from tourism in Saarland is generated by day-trips. International visitors account for only 17% tourists to Saarland, with many of these coming from neighbouring France and Luxembourg. Although the volume of international visitors increased by 12% between 2004 and 2007, the region has yet to develop the international reputation of a neighbouring tourist destination such as the Mosel valley.

Efforts to develop tourism have focused on the more rural districts of Saarland, with opportunities for outdoor recreation, and on valorising the industrial heritage of communities such as Bexbach, where the Saarland Museum of Mining is located. As such, the total number of tourist bed places available in the rural case study region increased by 20% between 2000 and 2006, compared to an increase of only 3% in Saarbrücken district (European Union, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development 2008).

In 2007, the gross turnover of tourism in Saarland amounted to €1.32 billion, with about 32,000 jobs linked directly (63%) or indirectly (37%) to tourism (Ministerium für Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft des Saarlandes 2009).

1.2.4. *International Integration*

Saarland's border location has traditionally produced close trade relations with its European neighbours, in particular France, and these cross-border interconnections have been more formally acknowledged through its involvement in the 'Saar-Lor-Lux' Euroregion. The term was originally coined in the 1960s in reference to the close historical and economic ties among the coal mines and steelworks of Saarland, the Lorraine region of France and the country of Luxembourg. This has expanded since to include Belgium's Wallonia, comprising the French- and German-speaking parts of Belgium, and the German federal state of Rhineland-Palatinate, with the five different municipalities of this so-called 'Greater Region' entering into various treaties of economic, social and cultural cross-border co-operation, as well as benefiting from European Interreg funding (Industrie- und Handelskammer des Saarlandes n.d.).

While the Saar-Lor-Lux+ region aims to develop trade and coordination between Saarland and adjacent regions in France, Belgium and Luxembourg, the second largest source of foreign direct investment in Saarland (after France) is the United States, and the U.S. is also Saarland's largest international trading partner. In 2007, exports from Saarland to the United States totalled €480 million in value, primarily from automotive parts and steel wire (U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany 2008).

1.3. Population and Migration

In terms of demography, Saarland occupies a unique position between the new (former Eastern) and the West German federal states, with the extensive economic changes experienced in Saarland over the past few decades closely impacting on the state's demographic development. For instance, while the residential population in West Germany grew by more than 20 percent in the period of 1961 to 2004, the population in Saarland stayed approximately the same during this period. Saarland thus more closely resembles an 'East German' federal state in terms of its demographic profile, being the only West German state to have reported a decrease in population for the period of 1990 to 2004 (Hohnhorst 2007, p. 69).

Since 1980, there has been an overall trend of population decrease for the whole state of Saarland, with the population having fallen by of 4,6% or about 49,000 people by 2010 (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2011d). Yet within this downwards trend there have been fluctuations, with a period of population growth between 1990 and 1998 before numbers resumed their decline. Similarly, in the case study region there was a period of minor population growth between 1990 and 1996 when the population increased by 13,200 people (2%), before steadily decreasing back to 0.5% below 1990 population levels by 2008.

The decrease in Saarland's population has resulted from a combination of a natural population deficit and net out-migration. The crude birth rate in the case study region fell from 9.2 per thousand in 2000 to 7.2 per thousand in 2008, while the crude death rate remained fairly stable at between 11.5 and 11.6 per thousand (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2009). At the same time, migration from Saarland between 1997 and 2007 exceeded in-migration by 970 people. The closeness of this figure reflects a short period of net in-migration between 1999 and 2003 which ran counter to the long-term trend. In the years from 2004 to 2006, the balance of out-migration over in-migration widened, before narrowing in 2008.

The vast majority (78%) of migration into the rural case study region in 2009 was from within Germany, with 59% coming from within Saarland itself, exemplified, for example, by the urban to rural migration of people from Saarbrücken to the state's outlying districts. At the same time, there is evidence that international migration is making an increasing contribution. While the overall number of in-migrants to Saarland has been decreasing in recent years, the proportion coming from outside Germany has increased from 18% in 2003 to 22% in 2007. This increase was entirely accounted for by migrants from other EU countries, whose numbers increased from 2,302 in 2003 to 4,875 in 2009, reflecting EU enlargement in 2004 and increasing flows of migrant workers (Statistisches Amt Saarland 1999-2008). At the same time, the number of out-migrants moving from Saarland to other EU countries has also increased from 2,727 persons in 2003 to 4,786 in 2009.

Over a quarter of the residents are aged over 60, reflecting an ageing population, while only 17% of residents (2010) are aged between 15 and 29, suggesting that many younger people are migrating out of the region for further education or employment.

While the majority of Saarland's population are of German nationality, the historical connections between Saarland and France mean that the influence of French culture is strongly felt in the region; with the French the first foreign language to be learned at school as opposed to English. The number of foreign nationals resident in Saarland has decreased slightly since a peak in 2003, but has remained fairly stable at around 77-78,000 people (approx. 7-8% of the population). Among these there were 29,188 registered migrant workers in 2006, down from 36,103 in 2001 (Statistisches Amt Saarland 1999-2008).

By far the largest national group among Saarland's non-German population are Italians, with 18091 individuals recorded in 2010, followed by Turkish (12,043) French (6,532), Polish (3,787) and Luxembourgian (2,628) citizens (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2010a). There were also 8,784 non-national residents from Asia, 3,026 from Africa, and 1,813 from the Americas. In recent times, Saarland's northern border with Luxembourg has seen a number of migrants moving into the district of Merzig-Wadern to live while continuing to work in Luxembourg, due to the lower living costs in Germany (so-called "atypical cross-border commuters"). More than a quarter (26% in 2009) of the population of Perl, the community adjacent to the Luxembourg border, are foreign citizens, the highest proportion in Saarland. In spite of this, there has been a net out-migration of people across Saarland's national borders from 2004 to 2009 (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2011a).

The typical cross-border commuters, who do not change their registered residence, are not the main object of our research. Nevertheless, the movements of cross-border workers coin Saarland (and the whole "Greater

Region²), whereby they have to be taken into consideration in migration research. Thus, the European Council estimates that on average 0.4% of all gainfully employed persons in the EU-25 work in a Member State in which they do not live. Within the Greater Region, this proportion adds up to more than ten times as much with 4.2% (Wille/Bläser 2009: 37). Examinations show that a majority of commuter movements happen within a mobility corridor of 20 to 30 kilometres along the Luxembourgian border. The small-scale mobility is reinforced by the fact that cross-border workers, who originated from far-off regions, often relocate their residence to the Luxembourgian border. Weekend commuters, too, who partly come from outside the Greater Region, often settle in the border areas (and live there in communal residences) because of the low rental prices. These developments evoke social and infrastructural problems: besides rapidly increasing rental and real estate prices (as mentioned above), many communities close to the border develop into dormitory towns, which can also have negative impacts on the cohabitation of locals and newcomers. Furthermore, the local communities lose a considerable amount of tax revenues, although the public infrastructure is used by cross-border commuters, but it is taxed at their place of work (Wille/Bläser 2009: 40). Positive impacts of the Luxembourgian labour market are decreasing unemployment and migration rates in the native regions of the commuters in the nearby border areas (Wille/Bläser 2009: 42).

1.4. Environment and Sustainable Development

1.4.1. The Regional Environment

The environment of Saarland is characterised by a variety of topography within its small land area, including large tracts of mixed deciduous forest just outside the urban conurbation of Saarbrücken, which rises to green plateaus in the Saargau to the West and gently mountainous areas of around 600 metres above sea level. Saarland is also traversed by fertile rivers valleys, with the longest being the Saar River, which has its middle and lower reaches in Saarland. Saarland is situated in one of the warmest regions of Germany, with a moderate oceanic climate and average amounts of precipitation of around 800 millimetres a year.

According to Eurostat data for 2004, around 30% of Saarland's territory (NUTS 2) is utilised agricultural area (UAA; although Eurostat's rural development report suggests that 50% of the total land area is "agricultural land"). Of the 77,200 hectares of UAA, 37,300 ha is arable land, 39,500 ha are permanent grassland and just 100 ha are vineyards. Forests and woodlands cover 85,800 ha, or 33% of the total land area, while over 38,500 ha (15%) is artificial/built-up land. Improving the competitiveness of the agriculture and forestry sectors and improving the quality of the environment are both major tenets of the regional development initiatives in Saarland. As such, organic cultivation is strongly promoted as a part of sustainable agricultural objectives and currently accounts for 8.5% of agricultural land in Saarland. This is more than the German national average and the highest proportion of organically cultivated land within the DERREG case study regions. Yet, while the area of organic farmland in Saarland increased by nearly 5% between 1997 and 2007, the number of agricultural holdings involved in organic farming actually fell from 609 in 1998 to 374 in 2007, indicating the concentration of organic agriculture on a smaller number of larger farms, possibly as part of a process of conventionalisation (Statistisches Amt Saarland 2010b).

The development and implementation of renewable energies is a central pillar of regional and national sustainability policy, with the German federal government's objective to provide 12.5% of gross electricity consumption with renewables by 2010 having already been exceeded with 14% achieved in 2007. In Saarland, the structural economic change away from coal and steel has seen the renewable energy sector experience strong growth in recent years, providing around 10% of Saarland's final energy consumption.

1.4.2. Protected Areas

Despite Saarland's relatively small size, it encompasses a significant number of areas afforded protection by national and international designations based on their environmental and/or cultural importance.

On May 26th, 2009, the biosphere reserve "Biosphäre Bliesgau" was admitted to the global network of UNESCO biosphere reserves. The UNESCO biosphere reserve Bliesgau is situated in the southeastern part of the Saarland bordering France and Rhineland-Palatinate, including the municipalities of Mandelbachtal, Kleinblittersdorf, Gersheim, Blieskastel, Kirkel, the city of St. Ingbert, and the rural parts of the city of Homburg. It surrounds a total area of 361.5 km² of which 11 km² are dedicated to be core zone and 70.5 km² are buffer zone. 111,000 inhabitants live in this region (Kühne 2010: 28) (figure 2).

The close integration of people and nature means that the biosphere supports ongoing research on ecological changes in its urban, suburban and rural areas in the context of global climate change, and promotes

² The term "Greater Region" identifies the transfrontier region Saar-Lor-Lux that includes today Saarland, Lorraine, Luxembourg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Wallonia (five different municipalities located in four different European countries). The term "Saar-Lor-Lux" primarily referred (since 1969) to the industrialised borderland of Saarland, Lorraine and Luxembourg.

sustainable development initiatives. The main characteristics of the designated UNESCO biosphere reserve Bliesgau are: population decrease, orchard fields and fruit meadows, bunter and shell lime as well as the inclusion of an old industrialised city (Barth/Gerstner/Wagner 2006: 31; Kühne 2010: 29).

Biosphere reserve Bliesgau in Saarland

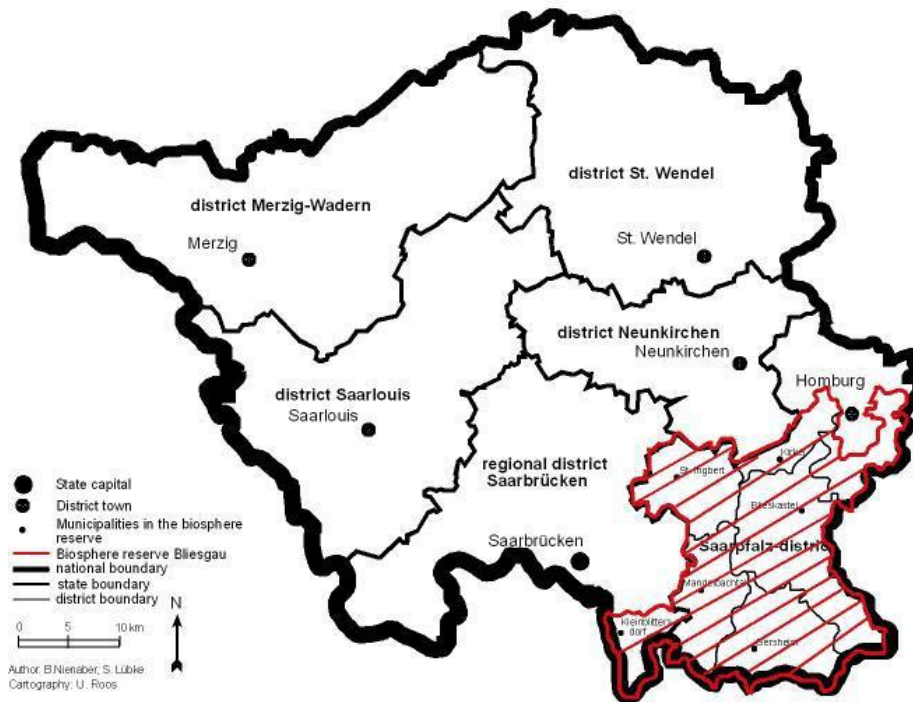


Figure 2: Location of the UNESCO biosphere reserve Bliesgau in Saarland
Source: Universität des Saarlandes

Saarland has 118 zones of the FFH-Directive (Flora-Fauna-Habitat-Directive) and 41 bird sanctuaries which are designated as Natura 2000 areas. Due to the fact that some of these areas partly overlap, the Natura 2000 network in Saarland consists in total of 127 zones with an area of 29,940 hectares, which corresponds to 11.6% of the state's territory. Additionally, Saarland has 117 nationally designated nature reserves which cover a total area of 10,500 hectares (4.1 % of the state's territory) and include, for example, the areas of Wolferskopf, the forest reserve of Steinbachtal/Netzbachtal and the Ostertal between Herchweiler and Marth. Saarland also has several Landscape Protection Areas (Landschaftsschutzgebiete) designated by Germany's Federal Nature Conservation Act (BNatSchG). These include the "Saarschleife" (bend in the river Saar) or the conservation area Feilbachaue-Höcherwald at Bexbach.

2. Sections on each WP³

2.1. WP 2

2.1.1. Data and information

The data was collected and analysed from existing sources for migration statistics to establish key migration trends and the demographic impact of migration.

2.1.2. Qualitative interviews with migrants

Task 2-3 consisted of the study of two types of migrants in Saarland: migrant workers and foreign home owners. Due to the fact that the participating regions have significant types of migrants, the particular groups of migrants were analysed in the respective regions. According to this, the following model of task sharing was made up: qualitative interviews, being compatible and geared to the respective target group, were carried out

³ This section is a revised version of D2.4

with the two types of migrants. These served for the creation of individual migrants' biographies in order to find out about the significant characteristics of the respective types of migrants. Besides the socio-demographic data of the migrants, their respective experiences in their home countries and abroad, as well as their motivations and their future plans with regard to the survey area constitute the focus. A fair distribution regarding the respondents' sex and age was taken into account for the interviews.

Altogether, the study was supposed to inform about the following aspects: earlier experiences, professional career, socioeconomic position in society, experiences at home and abroad, courses of education and occupation of the respondents, as well as strategies of existence of migrants, influence of social and family networks, subjective assessment of the migrant's own living situation as well as socio-demographic backgrounds.

At first, comparable questionnaires were developed in all case study regions and the migrants surveyed were identified. After a pre-test, the qualitative interviews were carried out in the survey areas and the analysis of the results was made according to mutually consented criteria for the evaluation of data and information.

In the qualitative survey and analysis, the random samples referred to the respective target groups and were supposed to represent them at their best in the categories of origin of migrants, professional and family status, duration of stay and gender.

The samples can be characterised in the following way: in the period between October 11th, 2009 and March 9th, 2010, eleven migrant workers and fourteen foreign home owners were interviewed in the rural administrative district of Merzig-Wadern. Thereby, the heterogeneity of the random samples is taken into consideration. The respondents are between 27 and 46 years old in the sample of migrant workers and between 31 and 63 years old in the sample of foreign home owners. They have different educational backgrounds. Concerning the gender-specific aspect, the migrant workers' sample is represented by four women and seven men and the foreign home owners' sample by eight women and six men.

Carrying out the interviews, the technique of face-to-face guideline interviews was used. The interviewers went to the respective target areas of the respondents, so that the interviews took place in the respondent's familiar environment. Most of the interviews were carried out at the respondents' home or at their work place. The interviews were recorded on a sound storage medium (according to the advice and insofar as the interviewee has agreed). All of the recordings available were transcribed entirely.

For the analysis of the interviews, tabular biographies were drawn up at first. These were made with the help of a matrix with the aspects of the respondent's life, which had to be taken into consideration. Another matrix with the dimensions of migration, which are relevant for the target group, served for the characterisation of the features of migration with regard to the respective survey area and the two types of migrants, which were analysed for each case study region. The evaluation reports were made subsequently. Thereby, the focus was, on the one hand, on the interpretation of individual quotes and on the other hand, on the consideration of the biographical context which was presented in the interviews. For each topic the cases taken into consideration attempted to reflect those that presented the different aspects, patterns and dimensions of research particularly clearly. For quoting, the respective spoken language was transformed into written text and not into grammatically correct written language, to ensure the traceability of the primary data material and not to falsify the statements by subjective interpretation. All quotations are rendered in English. In order to provide the promised anonymisation, the reports and biographies of the respondents were encoded with numbers and no names were used.

2.1.3. *Good practices in the case study region*

Within Task 2-4 several regional development initiatives, both in promoting and facilitating regional engagement with internationalised migration flows, and in responding to key social challenges, were identified and characterised as examples of good practice in all case study regions, which are involved in the WP2.

For this survey, initiatives with different topics, different target groups, different financing systems and different years of foundation, as well as of different regional levels inside the case study region (from local, to regional and also state level) have been included.

The research has been carried out by deep and intensive internet and literature review combined with e-mail and telephone inquiries with the responsible persons of the initiatives. Regional stakeholders were included as qualitative expert interviews were carried out with representatives of different initiatives identified as 'good practices'. The interviewees hold leading positions in fields, which affect the WP2, and therefore represent important sources for the acquisition of information within the context of research. The interviews were recorded, if the respondent consented. In order to protect the intended anonymity of the information, the statement was given in the general sense and without quoting it in the survey of good practices.

The good practice initiatives had to meet most of the criteria of each dimension of migration. The topic or aim of the initiative characterised as good practice should concern the largest number of criteria of the six dimensions: dimension of kind of migration, time-related dimension, distance-related dimension, political dimension, purpose-related dimension, sociologically related dimension.

2.1.4. *Motivations of migrants to come to the region*

The main motivation of migrant workers to leave their home country and to move to the district of Merzig-Wadern was the improvement of the respondent's own economic situation. This was often connected with a bad political or economic situation of the home country. Furthermore, the respondents appreciate the social security and the very good educational opportunities in Germany:

"In Germany, you have more social security, for example, if you are out of work and as a foreigner, you can learn here more and you can get to know the culture. If you work and pay taxes, you are secured" (translated according to interviewee 7, MW).

The main motivation of the foreign home owners in Saarland was to purchase property, a proper home. Very often, this is considered to be a provision for retirement and/or an inheritance for the offspring. The respondents in the case study region either bought a house or had it built. This is connected to the fact that the real estate prices and the prices for building plots in the rural district of Merzig-Wadern are much lower than in Luxembourg, regardless of whether it is the situation in the Luxembourgian capital or in remote rural regions that is taken into consideration. Furthermore, some Luxembourgers do not feel at ease in their home country because of the high number of migrants⁴. Personal circumstances, such as divorce, often become reasons to start again in Germany.

Other respondents move to the case study region in order to enjoy the landscape and the calm of the rural environment.

Finally, the proximity to the workplace in Luxembourg was also a crucial reason to move to the district of Merzig-Wadern.

2.1.5. *Satisfaction of migrants with overall situation in the region*

In general, the self-employed migrant workers are very satisfied with the situation in the region. Only one of the interviewees complained about the political situation in Saarland and – according to him - the problems, which are connected to that, namely to receive citizenship he had applied for years ago. One of the self-employed restaurateurs would find an urban environment more pleasant than the rural one of the district of Merzig-Wadern, because then distances would not be that great. Moreover, he thinks that the administration of foreign nationals in Saarland is impersonal and complicated. Another respondent appreciates his life in a rural environment, although he criticises the poor public transport connections, which makes the possession of a car indispensable.

Whereas the majority of employees describe their satisfaction as average (two of three people), all of the unemployed respondents express their general satisfaction with their situation in the region. One reason for this could be the certainty that there is no better situation in the home country they left.

Thereby, one of the respondents needs to get used to this rural life, because he is from a big city. Nevertheless, he likes the landscape as well as the living quality. The location of the district of Merzig-Wadern at the border triangle is very pleasant to him, as he has lots of possibilities for trips with his family. Furthermore, he feels accepted by the locals and he is glad that there is no nationalism in the region. However, he regrets that there is no larger city near by. Another female migrant appreciates the fresh air in her rural environment.

In general, the foreign home owners are very satisfied or content with the situation in Saarland. The satisfaction of the respondents can be partly put down to the foreign home owner's fear of cultural and social domination by foreign influences in their home country because of the high percentage of foreign nationals (in Luxembourg). To that effect, the interviewees expressed themselves very positively with regard to their living situation in the case study region and rather critically about the situation in their home country:

"The people here are really very nice. That's not the case in Luxembourg, I'm abroad here as well and for heaven's sake, I'm not a racist, but in our country [Luxembourg] that's too multicultural. It's getting out of hand. There were Cubans, my husband couldn't talk to them at all; my husband is Portuguese. There was a Belgian, there were Germans, there were Portuguese. (...) [In Luxembourg], everything is multicultural, that's too much. You can't [speak] your own language in your own country anymore. And here, I can still speak it" (translated according to interviewee 11, FHO⁵).

2.1.6. *Suggestions for improvements regarding the situation of migrants in the region*

Both migrant workers and foreign home owners made suggestions for improvement of their situation in the district of Merzig-Wadern.

⁴ The percentage of foreign nationals in Luxembourg adds up to 44.5%, whereas 16.5% of the inhabitants are Portuguese, 5.8% are French, 4.1% are Italian, 3.5% are Belgian, 2.5% are German and 1.6% are Serbian.

⁵ FHO – Foreign Home Owner

Accordingly, some respondents uttered the wish that the wages of migrant workers should be brought into line with the wages of the locals:

”Sometimes in Germany, migrants, who come here, directly get a job and people, who were born in Germany, can’t get a job, because the migrants are paid worse and of course, that’s better for the business manager. That is definitely a big disadvantage. For migrants, the working situation isn’t good in general” (translated according to interviewee10, MW).

Other migrant workers wish for better working conditions and a larger spectrum of job offers or better language assistance. Also bureaucracy should be made easier and the waiting period of the migrants concerning the naturalisation should be shortened; the immigration authority was criticised, too. They also suggested to finally found of a country-specific culture association, which would organise events and celebrations for everybody who is interested.

The foreign home owners in the district of Merzig-Wadern presented themselves to be predominantly satisfied with their situation and accordingly, did not make any suggestions for improvement. One migrant even stated that the situation of Luxembourgers, who move to the region, can only be improved by their own willingness to adapt themselves better. Another respondent has no expectations for the case study region and points out that some proper initiatives of the foreign home owners would be helpful.

Another migrant expresses great satisfaction and does not see any necessity for improvement for foreign home owners. Then however, he states that his village needs a meeting place, for example, a restaurant, a pub or a beer garden, where everyone (locals, migrants and visitors) could meet and exchange opinions. He misses such a place with an integrative function for the whole municipality of Perl.

Whereas one respondent suggests to generally reduce taxes in Germany, another one, who lives in a rented accommodation, wishes for landlords in the case study region to be more willing to help. Other interviewees miss information about the conditions and the legal situation in Germany. Such a support could be published as a freely available brochure for migrants. This should include relevant information on laws and regulations, for example, the procedure of how to register one’s car in Germany. Such a brochure would make the start a lot easier for many foreign home owners and other migrants in the district of Merzig-Wadern.

2.2. WP 3⁶

2.2.1. Data and information

The results on Saarland were received due to combination of different methods (statistical overview, documentary research and media analysis, interviews with key actors, identification and characterisation of good practices, as well as discussing the results on meetings with regional stakeholders).

The overall aim of the analysis was to gain more detailed insights into regional discourses about specific environmental topics and the involved stakeholders. The main emphasis of this survey was fortifying the establishment of the UNESCO Biosphere Bliesgau as a protection area. UNESCO-biosphere reserves shall protect the environment and also enable economic activities for regional development. The Bliesgau is a special biosphere reserve, as it combines not only rural, but also suburban areas and also the old-industrialised city of St. Ingbert.

Therefore, a long discussion process has led to this with discussion on the local and regional level, but also with interventions of the national (German MAB committee) and international level of the UNESCO. These are the reasons why the analysis in Saarland has been focused on this process.

2.2.2. Results of the research

In order to show the development regarding environmental capital and sustainable rural development in the case study region as a whole, the research in Saarland refers to sources of current analysis, as well as of the 1980s and the 1990s.

The documentary analysis showed already that some topics, such as “extensive farming”, “agri-tourism”, “biomass”, “geothermal energy” and “energy efficiency”, were not mentioned at all in the analysed development plans (Chef der Staatskanzlei 1980 and Saarland - Ministerium für Umwelt 2004). Others topics, such as “sustainable forest management”, “water-based activities”, “renewable energies”, “solar energy”, “hydro energy”, “deforestation” and “soil erosion”, were referred to very generally or just very briefly. “Afforestation”, “sustainable tourism” and “ecotourism” were of no or almost no significance in the current development plan.

Interesting observations could be made with regard to “organic farming” and “wind energy”. While these topics obviously were not on the agenda of regional policy in 1980, their relevance had been grown significantly until

⁶ This section is a revised version of D3.5 by USAAR and the support of the WP3 leader IfL.

2004. A similar development could be identified concerning the “protection of species”. Issues related to “water pollution” and “designation of protected areas” were of high relevance in 1980 as well as in 2004. The development plan of 1980 was much more precise with regard to spatial assignments. The 2004 development plan, on the other hand, was rather general and often referred to specific programmes or plans that had been elaborated especially for particular topics. Furthermore, it seems as if the 1980 document pursued a more problem-oriented approach.

Referring to the question of involvement of actors, it is evident that the current documents refer just to regional actors. In most cases, they represent public authorities and private research and consulting institutions.

The quantitative media analysis⁷ leads to the following results:

- The number of articles about environmental topics increased significantly between 2001 and 2008. In 2008 the “Saarbrücker Zeitung” (the only daily newspaper located in Saarland) published 1.316 articles about selected environmental topics, whereas in 2001 the number of articles amounted to 824 (+ 60 %).
- Some keywords are outstanding with regard to their relevance for reporting, while others seem to attract only little interest for the regional newspaper “Saarbrücker Zeitung”. “Climate protection” and “climate change” are the by far the leading topics, whereas issues connected to the categories “water/soil”, “forestry” and “tourism” are of lower importance for reporting.
- The focus of reporting changed: some issues gained in significance while others lost their relevance for reporting. For instance, in 2001, a large number of articles was published about issues dealing with “nature reserves” (142), “landscape conservation” (82) and “animal husbandry” (65). In 2008, these keywords lost in relevance as the number of articles dedicated to them declined. On the other hand, other keywords gained in significance as the number of articles related to them increased: this is particularly the case for keywords, such as “climate protection”, “climate change”, “energy consumption”, “saving of energy”, “renewable energy” and “waste separation”.
- In 2008, most articles (67 %) were published as local news. This share was higher in 2001, when 77 % were published as local news.
- Some categories seem to be typical for local reporting, such as “water/soil”, “landscape”, “tourism” and “waste/sewage”.
- Some cases - especially the categories “air/climate” and “energy” - indicate a rising relevance of the selected topic even on national or global level.

The in-depth-analysis of the selected articles from 2001 up to 2006 showed that media coverage about the selected topics of investigation was limited to the regional context.

There were two main strands of discussion on the biosphere reserve Bliesgau during the examined period from 2001 to 2006:

- the boundary and zoning of the biosphere reserve as well as
- the restriction in the core zone for farmers and hunters.

The first matter of discussion mainly dealt with the inclusion or exclusion of the old industrialised city of St. Ingbert. The member of the city council and the UNESCO wanted an inclusion, the Saarland Environment Minister and environmental protection organisations wanted an exclusion.

The second matter of discussion was a land use conflict. Two main opponent groups were involved: on the one hand, the farmers and hunters, who want to use the land as they have always done, and on the other hand the Saarland Ministry for Environment and environmental protection organisations, which want a core zone with no permitted use for farming or hunting to strengthen the environment.

The opinions of the different groups were also confirmed by the main international stakeholder in this case, the UNESCO. To be designated as a biosphere where regional development, economic activities are combined with landscape protection; this always has to happen against the background of the UNESCO guidelines. UNESCO can influence the development through the national MAB committee and, in this case, they have done so. Thus, the development towards a biosphere reserve was a discussion process on a local and regional level, but eventually it was heavily influenced and partly controlled by the national and international level.

After the UNESCO designation on 26th of May 2009 the biosphere Bliesgau is still facing further challenges which are connected to the designation as a UNESCO biosphere reserve. This designation entails many obligations that are conditions and restrictions for the actors on the one hand, and that provide opportunities for key personalities on the other hand, in order to progress in achieving their aims concerning nature conservation. Hence, not only prospects but potential for conflict emerged which still complicates regional

⁷ The regional daily newspaper “Saarbrücker Zeitung“ of 2001 and 2008

development in rural Saarland. Interviews⁸ with key actors as a primary survey in the biosphere reserve allowed for the identification some of the conflicts.

Generally, two different opinions predominate concerning the environmental situation and the environmental potentials, as well as the environment protection and the sustainable use of resources in the case study region, which are both connected to the latter. On the one hand, the agriculture experts think that the environmental situation is very stable. They see threats only in restrictions concerning land use. On the other hand, the other experts (representatives of administrative level, as well as of companies and other institutions) think that especially an intensive way of farming or one which is geared towards monocultures affects the environment essentially. These respondents concur that a stronger economic orientation towards sustainable forms of economy, i.e. organic farming, gentle tourism, sustainable forest management, renewable energies, the initiation of regional economic cycles in the sense of an 'eco-economy', should be advanced in the case study region. Furthermore, ecological interests and thus the idea of an eco-economy have been highlighted explicitly in Saarland: 'For the interest of environmental protection (...) the share of areas for organic farming has to be stepwise increased. The use of fertilisers and pesticides has to be reduced to a reasonable extent' (Saarland – Ministerium für Umwelt 2004).

With the thematic focus on "management of protected landscapes" in the UNESCO biosphere reserve Bliesgau some examples of 'Best Practice' were selected. Due to the fact that the Bliesgau is a small area, the number of regional activities is limited. Nevertheless, altogether ten examples with positive impacts on regional development could be identified and characterised. As mostly 'Registered Association', Ltd., Private partnership, Initiative or Campaign the 'Good Practices' cannot be referred to one of the predefined types of Best Practice Examples (BP types). However, these types of the examples identified work very good in the German Case Study Region.

It was important to identify 'Best Practices' for the region especially concerning a positive integration of conflict issues. The identification and explanation of the 'best practice' shows the work of associations or institutions, which is exemplary and other key actors and regions can learn from it. The most important work of the 'Best Practices' in Saarland consists in establishing regional marketing as an important and supporting pillar and raising awareness for regional products. Execution and promotion of public relations and environmental education take place, too. Regionally sustainable and ecologically produced goods and renditions of services that go along with it are promoted in doing so, but also traditional farming is supported to preserve the richly-structured cultural landscape as well as regional partnerships. The promotion of regionally typical food culture helps to identify with the rural region. Furthermore the 'Best Practices' have the following objectives:

- Nature conservation through extensive cultivation
- A sustainable protection of the tree population is to be guaranteed through replanting and new creation
- Preserving a versatile range of variety
- Developing education programs and educational offers
- A regional beverage and kitchen culture with regional products
- The cultural landscape of the Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau is to be preserved

2.3. WP 4⁹

2.3.1. Data and information

In this research package, an in-depth analysis of the learning and innovation support strategies and documents on them in Saarland was carried out. In the further steps, in-depth interview with stakeholders and with members of "good practice"- initiatives (2009 till 2011), as well as a focus group discussion in 2011 were carried out. The interviews were recorded and transcribed before being analysed according to the DERREG guidelines.

2.3.2. Overview of learning and innovation support strategies

To give an overview of public strategies for capacity building within the domain of rural regional development in 'Saarland', a documentation of regional learning supporting (public) policies (strategies and instruments) was drawn up by examining rural development policies, regional development policies and learning and innovation policies. These policies are translated into programmes and initiatives which are funded by the European Union and/or the German government and/or the federal state.

⁸ This part of research is based on the expert interviews with twelve key actors, which are directly or indirectly involved in the process of the development of the Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau and represent administrative level, agriculture as well as companies and other institutions.

⁹ This section is a revised version of D4.4 by USAAR with support of the WP 4 leader WU.

2.3.3.

Support of joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives

In Saarland, a large proportion of measures concerning support for learning and innovation stems from projects funded through regional learning and innovation policies. These projects are financially supported by the German government and the European Union (e.g. ESF) and related national funds. With the help of the 'Learning Region' programme, many projects have been realised by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, as for example the Weiterbildungsdatenbank Saar (database for further education) or the project "Lernortlich" in Greater Saarbrücken, which carries out a kind of educational management. Today, these projects are run independently, without federal or EU funds. In addition, there are self-study centres as a new form of learning which try to attract new learners who – for whatever reasons - have not used the course offerings of other institutes so far.

Depending on the type of educational institute, different forms of support and facilitation are available from the knowledge support structure, including counselling and further education within the field of environmental and quality management or language courses. According to the Saarland Ministry of Education- the leading voice in education at federal state level-, support is requested both from congested areas, as well as from rural regions. Requests for support come from educational institutes and individuals and deal substantially with counselling or funding opportunities. Public knowledge institutes cover different fields of educational opportunities concerning general and vocational further training. After the OECD's educational survey PISA and the subsequent political discussion, the need for the creation and/or increase of abilities and competences has been recognised. For this reason, providers of further education are not bound to instructions where to put their main focus on. A broad offer supplied by qualified staff is the only thing which is required and regulated by law.

An important basic idea of public knowledge institutes is the idea of networking. The cooperation with local actors, with public administration and knowledge institutes is principally set up by law. The main cooperation partners of the Ministry of Education are, for example, organisations of further education. Knowledge institutes mainly work together with the German Institute for Adult Education (DIE) and the Institute for Development Planning and Structural Research (IES) in Hanover. Due to this general networking, ever new ideas and strategies are emerging. The most important institutions for further education are adult education centres and the Catholic Adult Education, because they offer educational opportunities in remote rural regions. Both are funded by the Saarland Ministry of Education. They supply the local population with so-called small-scale education. The basic idea is that further training is provided on the spot so that interested people do not have to travel to more centrally located institutions. Therefore, these projects are of great interest in many different respects. Adult education centres and the Catholic Adult Education are the main providers of education to rural Saarland because they can be found in small towns and villages. There are several further public and private institutes and association involved with supporting and facilitation joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives, e.g. FORUM EUROPA, the European Academy of Otzenhausen, the State Office for Political Education Saarland, GeBIT Company, the Chamber of Employment, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the German Federal Employment Agency. Furthermore, authority cooperates with schools in Saarland and with the "SaarLernNetz" (Saar Learning Network), a kind of educational market place for new learning with new media has been developed in the region. Finally, the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau offers environmental education in terms of competitions for schools and nursery schools, further training for educators and a school project "Mixed orchard". The SaarLernNet (SLN) Education network of Saarland offers an online educational portal with search functions for further training courses, jobs and literature. The cooperation with universities, in contrast, is relatively low.

With regard to public administration, the cooperation between ministries is very productive. The network of the Saarland Ministry for Environment includes, for example the network 'Environmental Education' with the work group "Solar" in the energetic-technical sector, the BUND (Association for Environment and Nature Protection; German branch of Friends of the Earth) with its "KunterBUNDMobil" ('kunterbunt' means motley) for the ecological exploration of the environment, the LAGS (professional association for health promotion and prevention) which support healthy school feeding, the State's Youth Welfare Office (which provides further education in the pre-school sector), the Landesjugendring Saar (a youth association of the state) as an umbrella organisation and contact for many extracurricular youth organisations, the Ministry of Education, Family, Women and Culture which is responsible for the content and composition of instruction, among others, the 'SaarForst' (a state company running commercial forests) State Office which committed itself to Forest pedagogy, or the NABU (German non-governmental nature conservation organisation). Other examples of networks include the association of conversation project "Saar-Blies-Gau/Auf der Lohe" which supervises a centre of cultural landscape in Wittersheim, the so-called 'Lochfeld', in cooperation with the district of Saarpfalz and works together with the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Protection and Reactor Safety, Berlin, the state of Saarland, the Saarpfalz district, the municipality of Gersheim, the municipality of Mandelbachtal, Naturlandstiftung (a foundation) Saar, the City of Saarbrücken. Due to the

protection of the environment in the project area, the association boosts informal regional learning as an additional advantage.

In order to find out more about the operationalisation of available support and facilitation for learning and innovation, four grassroots development initiatives were inventoried in-depth. One is the initiative KuLanI (Cultural Landscape Initiative St. Wendeler Land). The main focus of KuLanI is on preserving and further developing the cultural landscape 'St. Wendeler Land' (Northeast Saarland), protecting and using natural resources and the cultural heritage. For this reason there are three spheres of activity: awareness raising, local commodity market and tourism. These focal points decree the support and facilitation of the grassroots development initiative. Of great importance is the implementation of the regional development concept 'Lokalwarenmarkt St. Wendeler Land' (REK) (local produce store) that is to support the rural development of the St. Wendel region due to development strategies, information platform and partner farms. Especially, the use of the inherent potentials 'natural resources', 'cultural heritage' and 'local population' are thereby the focal points. Some measures follow the tourism conception as 'St. Wendeler Land – Steinreich' (see also below) or arrangements for construction and establishment of a self-reinforcing market of local products and service. Concerning the three pillars of learning and innovation, there are local schools and school camp 'BiberBurg Berschweiler' for knowledge infrastructure as well as supporting policies from EU, federal ministries, Saarland ministries, districts and municipalities to denote in the Case Study Region.

2.3.4. *Operational quality of arrangements*

The important and really effective form of support and facilitation from public administration appears to be the financial support by means of formal subvention contracts, for example LEADER, ILE. The special purpose association 'Renaturation of the Ill', for example, applied for becoming an 'Integrated Rural Development Concept (ILEK)' -region. The 'Integrated Rural Development Concept (ILEK)' offers a new financial base. Because of the disposition as an ILEK-region, the initiative has been supported referring to the ILEK subsidies directives of Saarland. Furthermore, the inventoried initiatives have been predominantly founded and developed by stakeholders of public administration. The closeness to superior public authorities (mainly to the Saarland ministries and the Saarland government) seems to be appreciated by the initiatives. The inventoried initiatives, for example, benefit from a high social reputation and are supported by politically independent circles. Such a support is being expressed, for example, through the personal presence of political representatives at special occasions. In contrast, administrative guidelines and guidelines for public expenditure appear to be very complex and therefore too complicated for users, specifically if different ministries bring out various guidelines which are contradictory. As a result, not many grassroots development initiatives in the CSA use the support of public administration as it is evaluated as too bureaucratic. The grassroots development initiatives also fear control of public bodies in the region because the public bodies with their policy framework are seen as controllers (e.g. LEADER projects). Regrettably, facilitating support suffers from a too short-term and often is adaptive only for a specific funding period (e.g. 2007-2013) with no guarantee of support afterwards which hinders long-term innovation processes.

Public information and advisory service were evaluated as partly complex and difficult for users. Sometimes there are different contact persons in different authorities that all have to be included as each authority has different information strategies and different regulations that have to be followed. The provision of information on educational opportunities, e.g. by database or educational portal in the internet brings the drawback of restrictions of an individual advisory service. The high accessibility and availability of new information, however, are the most important advantages of this support form available in rural Saarland. The most important and sustainable support for grassroots development initiatives in the future is the establishment of networks mediated by public authority. Even if some networks have artificial character, the networking in the region facilitates knowledge transfer, dissemination of support forms and sustainable development. Most of the networks are evaluated to be very sustainable after being established.

With regard to the knowledge support structure, especially universities and academies in Saarland and neighbour regions collaborate with the grassroots initiatives in the CSA, for example, Saarland University, University of Kaiserslautern or the European Academy of Otzenhausen. With regard to this co-operation, especially the provision of scientific knowledge and of access to scientific publicity and networks runs successfully. The project 'Steinreich', for example, in which different topics are brought together and are discussed, the cultural initiative St. Wendeler Land aims to work more closely with the European Academy of Otzenhausen. This collaboration with one of the key knowledge institutes in Saarland also contributes to a positive evaluation of the initiative. Furthermore, the creation of a network is especially helpful for women in rural areas. They have then the possibility to make collective undertakings and learn from each other. The ideas for support arise by the analysed initiatives mostly at the level of the members. There are board meetings, where everyone can suggest new proposals. This creates ideas for workshops and trainings, for example, members suggest what they could offer by knowledge transfer.

The grassroots development initiatives appreciate the opinions of external experts, who they mostly know personally, and obtain the newest knowledge available in this way. Also, scientific studies concerning grassroots development initiatives are seen as professional and efficient. The high costs of scientific research and resources, however, do not allow the grassroots development initiatives to use this form of support very often. Similar aspects apply to various stakeholders from other knowledge institutions of public authorities. Consultants at federal state level, for example at the ministries, render their work to the initiatives also gratuitously, because they are paid by the state within the scope of their position.

Furthermore, skilled labour provided by students, who are doing internships and writing theses, is very useful for grassroots development initiatives as they receive the newest knowledge. However, it is a short-term support, as the students often leave the initiative after finishing the project. The partially high fluctuation of employees and low-cost labour (if students work for initiatives within their research project and are not paid for their contribution) are disadvantages of this form of support. Even if the cooperation with knowledge institutes, which are official partners of the initiatives (as members, founders or partners of initiative) appears very useful due to a good knowledge exchange on a non-scientific basis, there are too few co-operations like these in Saarland.

Lastly, among the chosen initiatives occurs a process of learning from each other, as well as a mutual exchange. The members' learning process includes not only the work within their own initiative, but also the cooperation with partners of other projects, whether established or potential ones. For this reason, it is also a question of a learning process in which the participants can broaden their horizons and where they can casually proof which new cooperation partners are good to work with (e.g. other communes). Apart from this fact the employees and members join different advanced training courses, meetings, conventions or skill enhancement workshops. One example are the strategy meetings which are organised every six months by the regional manager (cooperation partner of the initiative). One of the initiatives is supported by the University of Kaiserslautern. This assistance is project-oriented and based on specialist counselling and a research project. There are also trainings, workshops, meetings with experts and referees, etc. for the members of the initiatives concerning certain topics, for example medical science, insurances, communication or legal matters. Afterwards, the acquired knowledge is passed to other members. Furthermore, according to the initiative, support exists from their own ranks, allowing information and knowledge to exchange at different levels (e.g. local or national level). Often, knowledge institutes offer an advisory support free of charge, for example by means of the research project mentioned before and the supervision by the professors of the University of Kaiserslautern. Something similar applies to varied stakeholders from other knowledge institutions of public authorities. The consultants at federal state level (e.g. at the ministries) render their work to the initiatives gratuitously, too, because they are paid by the state within the scope of their position. Finally, it has to be noted that the thematically orientated training, meetings with experts and referees, as well as the educational advancements are determined by daily routine respectively the spatial location and the project obligation. It is of great significance to incorporate the professorship of Kaiserslautern, which will accomplish a specific research project. Furthermore, a continuous search for new ideas is as important as to observe mentioned wishes. Thus, the selection of topics is carried out in a system-oriented, project-oriented and territorial-oriented way.

Certainly there will be a demand for additional support, for example by charitable foundations. This could assume the shape of cooperation. A definite know-how is the condition for a successful collaboration, as well as the consideration of further cooperative domains with other organisations or institutions. One important support refers to the acquisition of new members who would join just for the project itself. Moreover, the acceptance of the population is generally of great importance. Depending on the topic, the initiatives implement regional identity which can only be recognised seriously through acceptance. To receive this support the initiatives require the encouragement of public institutions in order to appeal to potential cooperation partners and members by public campaigns.

3. Overview

Combining the different aspects from the chapters above, there are different impacts of globalization on the case study area Saarland.

Saarland is part of the globalized network of migration because of two main factors. The first is the proximity to the French and Luxembourgian borders. This open border situation between Germany, France and Luxembourg is a special advantage of a globalization or europeanization process as it enables the people in the region to "use the best" of each country. Moreover, people from Luxembourg move over to Saarland because of the cheaper land and real estate prices and the feeling of cultural foreignness in the home country (high amount of foreigners living in Luxembourg), which is also an impact of globalization processes. The second factor is the steel and coal mining history of Saarland, which provided jobs mainly for the so-called "Gastarbeiter" (guest workers).

A direct impact of globalization in Saarland can be found in nature conservation. In May 2009, the UNESCO biosphere reserve Bliesgau has been established. During the discussion process leading to the establishment, the international organization UNESCO and its framework rules for the designation of biosphere reserves had high impact on the design of the biosphere reserve Bliesgau, especially on the definition of the different zones. Moreover, with the designation as a UNESCO biosphere reserve, the region became part of the so-called "World Network of Biosphere Reserves" as it is defined in the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves (UNESCO 1995). Likewise, the Bliesgau region is now internationally connected with other biosphere reserves and global regulations.

As an anti-globalization or a regionalisation trend, as well as to strengthen the human and social capital to counter globalization, regional learning (public) strategies and support are of great importance in Saarland. This is shown in the support of regional networks.

There are also other aspects of globalization in Saarland (e.g. the connection of enterprises), but these were not part of the research interest in the Saarland case study region. Initial aspects deduced from the literature and statistical review can be found in the case study contextual report (Jones/Woods 2010).

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. WP 2¹⁰

4.1.1. *Conclusions in view of the multidimensional research approach*

The multidimensional analysis shows that the majority of foreign home owners, migrant workers and return migrants came from urban areas to the rural case study regions. In doing so, migrants from EU countries predominate, whereas for migrant workers; the sample mainly consists of non-EU citizens. Relating to individual, chain or group or collective migration, the samples are very heterogeneous and do not show any clear trend (cf. dimension of kind of migration).

The biographies in Saarland refer to long-term migration, for a period of at least 12 months (cf. time-related dimension).

With regard to the distance-related dimension, the case studies predominantly refer to long-distance migration. Only in Saarland, a kind of behaviour typical for the target group of the neighbouring Luxembourgers has been observed, who use the proximity to cheaper, rural Saarland in order to shift their residence there.

The results for the political dimension are closely connected to the kind of migration. Thus, labour market policy is in most cases the reason for the questioned migrant workers to move to the case study regions. However, there are other factors, such as residential market, social and public rules, as well as environmental specificities and historical relations between certain countries which encouraged the migrant workers to come to the survey areas. As expected, foreign home owners appreciate the residential market in the case study regions, whereas again the relations between certain countries and environmental advantages do play a role. For return migrants, all of the conditions mentioned above – except for the environmental advantages – were decisive for migration (cf. political dimension).

Since - according to research parameters - only those who migrated for work, to acquire property or to return to their country of origin were included in the samples, the purpose-related dimension is both easily comprehensible and can be found in these conditions.

Except for one case, the interviewees migrated legally. The majority of the respondents were very well integrated into local everyday life; many were involved into local or regional organisations, associations and clubs. The latter group was especially represented by foreign home owners and predominantly by migrant workers (cf. sociologically related dimension).

4.1.2. *Conclusions of the 'good practice' research*

Within this research the following initiatives were identified as examples of the 'good practice':

- Initiative: *Dynamo Merzig*
- Advice service: *Integration Guides - Integrationslotse/in (ILO)*
- Registered association: *Living Together Association - MiteinanderLebene.V.*
- Registered association: *Ramesch Forum for Intercultural Encounter - Ramesch Forum für Interkulturelle Begegnung e.V.*
- Federal programme: *Diversity is good. Youth for Diversity, Tolerance and Democracy - Vielfalt tut gut. Jugend für Vielfalt, Toleranz und Demokratie*

¹⁰ This section is a revised version of D2.4 by USAAR.

In the case study region 'Saarland' thirteen grassroots initiatives were identified, from which five exemplify the 'good practices'.

Right-wing extremism, hostility against foreigners, and anti-Semitism are to be fought sustainably and the educational and pedagogical work in this field has to be strengthened. In the administrative district of Merzig-Wadern, the analysed rural area of Saarland, this means to promote democratic behaviour with children and adolescents and to strengthen sensibility with citizens in conflict with extremism. With the following focal points, the implementation is to be carried out: information and educational measures, public relations and networks. For this reason there are initiatives which deal with these topics, for example *Diversity is good*, *Youth for Diversity*, *Tolerance and Democracy*.

Support and integration of late ethnic German repatriates (mostly from the former Soviet Union) are the other focal point of initiatives identified as 'good practices' in Saarland. Social, educational, sporting and cultural activities are offered for support. Simultaneously, they want to preserve the eastern European cultural heritage. In particular, the association *Living Together* and the initiative *Dynamo Merzig* work with these topics. This target group among migrants is naturally considered by other 'good practices', for example by *Integration Guides*, whose responsibilities are counselling migrants and helping with familiarisation (assisting with bureaucratic affairs, preparation for language courses, finding childcare, interpreters etc.).

4.1.3. Recommendations

In summarising, it can be stated that the migration stream to Saarland, particularly concerning foreign home owners, is heavily coined by the phenomenon of cross-border workers. Typical conditions of the border regions (border proximity, tax benefits) favour movements, but at the same time they hinder them (language barrier, differences in mentality). Finally, the less favourable socio-economic conditions in rural areas, but also in former industrial areas, lead to migrations within the case study region. Although Saarland's location on the outskirts of Germany indeed lead to the low economic development in the case study region, it is economically attractive for migrant workers coming especially from the Far East, South-Eastern Europe and Turkey. It should be pointed out that in the 1960s and 1970s, Saarland was a typical immigration region for migrant workers, especially from Italy and Turkey. Due to the industrial development in Saarland at that time, the 'Gastarbeiter Agreement' was drawn up. Many people who live in Saarland today like, for example, people from Turkey or Italy, but also from other countries have a migration background and they are mostly the following generations of the first 'Gastarbeiter' in Saarland. Besides that, some foreigners come to Saarland because their relatives are living there already.

The migrant workers in the case study region are generally satisfied with their life. Even those, who were unemployed at the time of the survey, do not plan to move away. The difficult situation on the job market is regretted, however, it is considered to be a circumstance which affects everyone and, to some extent, as a consequence of the current economic crisis. Therefore, other regions or their respective home countries are not regarded to offer better chances. The migrant workers do not even see opportunities for a better work life in an urban area. They appreciate rural regions for the fresh air and the easier integration into the local population.

The housing and living costs are the main motivations of the foreign home owners to come to the district of Merzig-Wadern. Furthermore, the fact that many Luxembourgers do not feel at ease in their own country because they feel culturally and socially dominated by foreign influences – which hints at a social crisis of the respondents – contributes to their decision-making process to move to Germany. Moreover, they also appreciate the quality of the rural environment of the case study region, particularly the landscape and the calm.

The decision process to immigrate to the case study region does not seem to be influenced by the economic crisis as well. All of the Luxembourgian respondents said that the real estate prices in Luxembourg induced them to move to Germany, however, none of them named the economic crisis, which was still prevailing at the time of the survey, as an immediate reason for the decision.

However, some of the foreign home owners in Saarland plan to spend their retirement not in Germany but either in their region of origin or in another country which is climatically more favourably. Due to the fact that the number of the interviewees, who want "to move south" predominates, it can be concluded that it is not the region's conditions, which induce the foreign home owners to move, but their personal disposition to gain new experiences.

Nevertheless, some of the respondents did not make big efforts to become integrated in Germany as a result of professional integration and social rootedness in Luxembourg. Furthermore, the Luxembourgian migrants do not intend to change their jobs because they feel more secure with the more favourable tax policy and the well-balanced health care system of their home country.

Due to the results of analysing and interpreting the data and information as well as the good practices identified in Saarland, but first of all because of the qualitative interviews with migrants and their suggestions for the case study region, the following recommendations can be stated:

- In view of integration problems of migrants in Saarland, there is still a considerable need for localities with an integrative function on a private level. The public authorities should provide meeting places, like sports clubs, club houses, pubs, beer gardens, where locals and migrants could meet and exchange opinions. Finally, the foundation of country-specific cultural associations, which would organise events and celebrations for everybody who is interested in the migrants' native culture, would be very important.
- Minimum wages should be introduced in order to avoid disadvantages for migrant workers in Germany. If the wages of migrant workers will be brought into line with the wages of the locals there will be a win-win-situation for both migrants and natives. Migrants would not be disadvantaged anymore and natives would not have to fear unemployment due to 'cheaper competitors'. Furthermore, working conditions must not be designed differently than the conditions for the natives.
- In Saarland, there are organisations and associations helping migrants in the case study regions. The migrant workers and foreign home owners receive support in terms of language courses and information provided by these institutions. This support should be indeed introduced to a broad public, so that the migrants always know (Komma weg) where they can find help and what forms of support they can receive.
- There is still a lack of information on everyday life for migrants in Germany. Public authorities in rural regions should promote the publishing of freely available brochures for migrants. These multilingual brochures should display the conditions and the legal situation in Germany and include relevant laws and regulations, for example, the procedure of car registration or purchasing real estate property in Germany. The brochures should make the start easier for migrants.
- The cross-border migration between the neighbouring countries of Luxembourg, France and Germany should be supported more extensively. Saarland is located on the periphery of Germany, but it has a large potential to reach a better position in Europe, if regional development would grow due to cross-border exchange. For this reason the cross-border migration in Saarland should be supported by more information, facilitations and less bureaucracy. Furthermore, the cross-border exchange supports the European regional development.

4.2. WP 3¹¹

The designation of the Bliesgau as a UNESCO biosphere reserve represents an enormous re-evaluation of the case study region. However, this designation is connected to many obligations which lead to conflicts. On the one hand, there are conditions and restrictions for certain actors. On the other hand, there are possibilities for other key personalities to come closer to their objectives concerning nature protection. Thus, the biosphere's administrative body has been affirmed in its activities and encouraged to undertake further actions in terms of sustainability. The public does doubtlessly have great expectations of the biosphere's administrative body, which range from educational work for the population, a faultlessly working management to successful networking and tasks of environmental education.

Furthermore, there is a large potential for developing of sustainable tourism in the Bliesgau biosphere. There are many things to explore and to learn - even for the locals - also with regard to environmental capital and sustainable rural development. The Biosphere Bliesgau Association has been doing very important and valuable steps towards an acceptance among the regional population by organising and offering workshops and tours for everybody in the region. The responsible people themselves take part in the trainings to be able to present the region to the local population. Here, especially the training in order to become a nature and landscape guide is to emphasise. This service improves the natural introduction of the region to foreign visitors and promotes walking-tours in the biosphere for locals and for people from outside the region.

The research within the DERREG project is very important for the regional management in the biosphere because it helps to detect the deficits, on which the regional managers want to work. There is even a lack of information within the region. People should be educated, especially as there is still a potential for conflict in the Bliesgau biosphere. Wind energy, for example, "destroys" the natural landscape in the subjective perception. It can be predicted that this topic will be on the regional agenda for the next years. There would be a contradiction, because on the one hand, the population wants renewable forms of energy, but on the other hand, they reject the construction of these facilities.

However, the analysis of the interviews with regional stakeholders reflects subjective perceptions and had to be examined carefully, because it consists of qualitative interviews with only twelve respondents. This is a

¹¹ This section is a revised version of D3.5 by USAAR.

qualitative study which cannot claim to be representative. Furthermore, it was possible to determine the focal points of the stakeholders' perception by analysing all subjective opinions. The survey can properly reflect a tendency of environmental attitudes in the Bliesgau biosphere.

For this reason and by taking the opinion of regional stakeholders into consideration, USAAR proposes to extend the analysis in a future project by the Delphimethod. After the second round of interviews the findings would be meaningful. Furthermore, the media response to the environmental topics in the Bliesgau biosphere was assumed to be more extensive in 2009 as in the analysed period – the year of 2008 - because in 2009, the Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau was designated by the UNESCO. Since the analysis took place in the first half of 2009, only 2008 could be taken into consideration. Therefore, it is recommended to continue the research.

The results of the DERREG should be used to indicate communication problems as well. Since most of the fears proved to be unfounded, the findings of DERREG could provide more information for everyone. If more people were better informed, there might also be fewer problems in the Bliesgau biosphere.

From the main WP3 results in the case study region of Saarland, USAAR could deduce the following (policy) recommendations:

- Regional development strategies should encompass both information concerning environmental capital and sustainable rural development and also learning programmes for local people to popularise the importance of these topics for a further development of their regions.
- The eco-economy activities and measures for sustainable rural development could be deployed for tourism, for which they could be promoted as specific features and therefore as attractions for tourists in rural regions. Especially innovative environmental solutions can be offered as an attraction for people from outside the regions, but also for locals.

Policies for sustainable development should emphasise the current studies according to the environmental capital and sustainable rural development in rural regions, which in turn should be carried out constantly.

4.3. WP 4¹²

In summarising, it can be stated that there is a good support from public administration and knowledge infrastructure in Saarland. The grassroots development initiatives in rural Saarland have a good developing progress, depending on the acceptance of the stakeholders and the other people involved. Support from the public sector and knowledge support structure for grassroots development initiatives in Saarland is very relevant for their development. Even if more support means more efficiency of the initiatives, the facilitation is commendable. Besides that, the developing initiatives mostly provide self-support and facilitation to their members as well as to interested inhabitants and visitors. These activities are evaluated especially well as they account for regional development in rural Saarland.

From the conclusion of WP4, some policy recommendations can be formulated:

- It seems important that policy makers acknowledge that operational agents and agencies can be diverse, ranging from regional development initiatives to public-private partnerships, public institutes and professionals. The results suggest that particularly the involvement of private actors and agencies increases the effectiveness with which support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation can be provided to targeted beneficiaries, since private agents and agencies - such as regional development networks - often have better connections with beneficiaries at grassroots level.
- Long-term, commissioned assignments are vital to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives because interactions that lead to joint learning and innovation require trust which cannot be built during short-termed involvements. One possibility of creating longer lasting involvements between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives may be to direct existing policy frameworks, directives and publicly funded education and research programmes towards a long-term cooperation between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives rather than supporting short-term, project-based research activities in rural regions.
- In order to organise successful informal networking activities, it is important to consider an adequate scale and environment that allows beneficiaries as well as operational agents and agencies to interact in an informal and trustful atmosphere.
- In contrast, it may be important to empower operation agents by providing them with space to work in order to prevent the creation of obstacles through complicated, bureaucratic procedures.

¹² This section is a revised version of D4.4 by USAAR.

- The adequate scale of operation is highly dependent on the targeted beneficiaries as well as on the regional context. It seems nevertheless important to find an adequate scale at which accessible and visible operational interfaces and grassroot initiatives can be created.
- Operational interfaces, which integrate different policies and funding schemes which coordinate and align different development programmes to ensure an integrated, regional approach, are necessary.

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