ESPON

EUROPEAN UNION

Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

EXPERIENCE FROM MËLLERDALL WORKSHOP //

ESPON tool for mapping soft territorial cooperation areas and initiatives

Monitoring and Tools // October 2021

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Disclaimer

The information contained herein is subject to change and does not commit the ESPON EGTC and the countries participating in the ESPON 2020 Cooperation Programme.

The final version of the report will be published as soon as approved.

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1 The Mëllerdall Region

The LEADER region Mëllerdall is located in the eastern part of Luxembourg, on the border to Germany. Strengthening regional development is one of the main objectives of the LEADER initiative, which has existed in the region since 2003. Tourism has a long tradition and is economically an important pillar of the region. The Regional Tourism organisation “Mullerthal Region - Luxembourg’s Little Switzerland” works closely with the partners from the sector for the development of a sustainable tourism.

With the creation of the Nature & Geopark Mëllerdall in 20216, another partner has been established, offering many services to develop the region in a sustainable way. Because of the unique geology with e.g. the impressive sandstone rock formations, the region is therefore also in the process of applying for the label UNESCO Global Geoparc. Other important policy areas is the development and marketing of regional products, e.g. in the agricultural sector, and the preservation of the natural and cultural capital.

2 Workshop organisation

The workshop was organised on 15th September 2021 in the evening, at the “A Schmadds” Cultural Centre in Berdorf. The group of participants included regional and local organisations such as the Regional Tourism organisation, the Natur & Geopark Mëllerdall, federations of producers and other regional initiatives. There was a total of 10 participants, which were organised in 5 groups:

- Table 1: Anette Peiter (LEADER-Office) & Pierre Wies (Alderman)
- Table 2: Caroline Kohl (LEADER-Office) & Fernand Schmit (Alderman)
- Table 3: Anne Muller (Tourism Office City of Echternach) & Robi Baden (Local producer) Table 4: Bob Bintz (Alerdman) & Luc Birgen (LEADER-president) & Linda Salentin (Tourism Office Müllerthal)
- Table 5: Christiane Francisco (Natur- & Geopark Mëllerdall) & Jos Schöllen (Alderman)

One participant from each table was invited to joint one hour earlier, on order to be familiarised with the tool and function as group secretary. This familiarisation took considerably less time (10-15 minutes).

3 Workshop objective, starting point and questions

The primary objective of the workshop was to explore functional connections, issues and opportunities that bring actor together across municipal boundaries. Second, the workshop sought to identify possible differences in perceptions of the cooperation e.g. between regional institutions based in eastern and western parts of the LEADER region.

There was no ambition to generate a consensual representation at this stage. For this reason, the consensus-building interface was not used.

A preliminary Mapshot was elaborated as a basis for analysis (see Figure 1). This Mapshot includes:

- Outer borders of the LEADER region

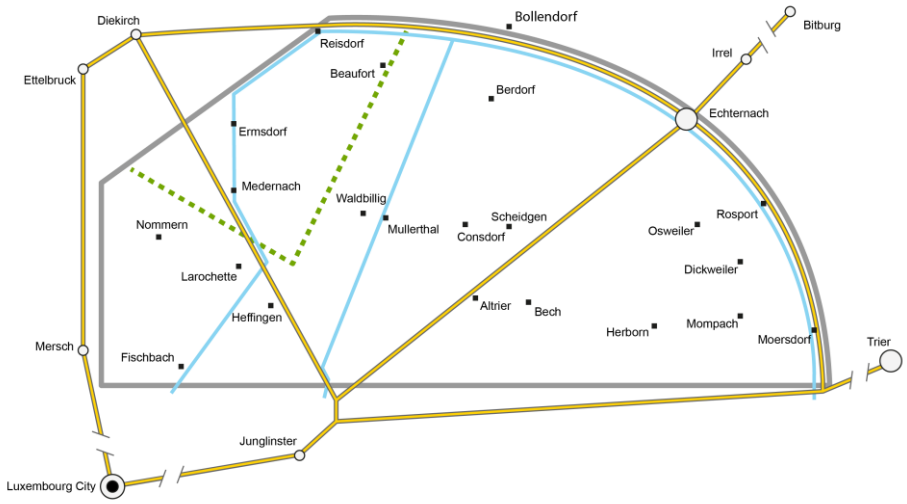
- A selection of villages within the LEADER region

- Main rivers

- Main transport axes

- The border between parts of the region that belong to the Geopark (south of the dotted line) and those that do not.

Figure 1 Mapshot basis for the Mëllerdall LEADER Region workshop



Two series of questions/assignments were submitted to the participants:

- Activities and attractors: restaurants (question 0), commercial venues and their catchment areas (question 1a and 1b), Tourism attractions and routes (questions 2a and 2b), cultural and leisure activities (question 3) regional producers (question 4)
- Development perspectives: demographic trends (question 5) and tourism development (question 6).

Participant inputs provided in response to these questions are compiled in the Annex.

4 Experience with the use of the tool and possible improvements

Participants found the tool to be easy and fun to use. All parameters had been set for drawing tools offered (i.e. no parameter could be changed by the facilitator). When one for example wanted them to indicate pictograms in different colours, one drawing tool was offered for each colour. This approach functioned well.

Small technical issues occurred at the beginning of the workshop, as some participants could not move pictograms placed on the canvas. This issue could be overcome by the facilitator, by locking and unlocking some other layers. It has been reported to the developers and corrected.

The process overview interface, which was initially intended for the facilitator, proved very useful also in interactions with the participants. The overview screen was displayed on a projector screen with the help of a beamer. The facilitator could then easily select the layers to be shown or hidden. Participants engaged in discussions while standing in front of the projector screen.

The “legend” tool proved particularly useful and easy to use by participants. Using numbered pictograms and indicating the name of the geographic feature each of which represents in the legend proved to be a better option, compared to using labels or free text.

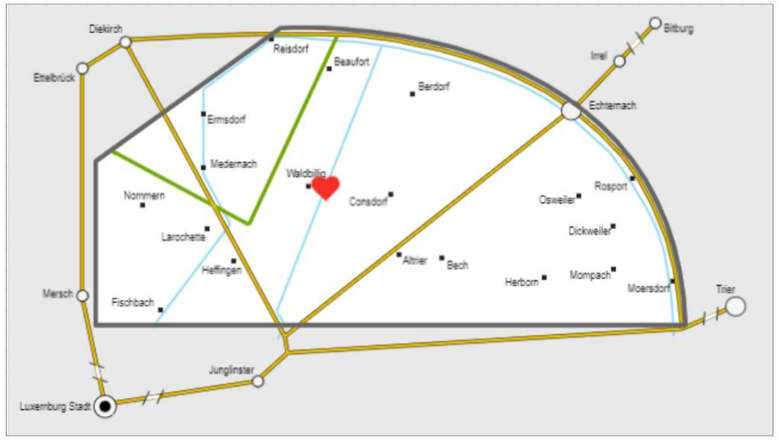
The workshop confirmed the need for an export functionality for each individual layer, as the combined export of all layers is too complex to be legible. The workshop demonstrated the usefulness of exports of combination of layers (e.g. tourist attractions and tourist routes, see question 2b). This is not foreseen in the specifications and will not be possible to implement at this stage. However, such exports may be obtained by logging using each participant group credentials and making screen copies. One may also combine such questions whose answers should be combined in the exports in a single layer.

The workshop confirmed that, compared to using flip chart paper, the ESPON ACTAREA web app makes it possible to produce more unified and comparable inputs, as the starting point and drawing tools are the same for all participants. The workshop process is also much faster and easier to manage and can be organised face-to-face or online. The questions listed below were addressed in about one hour. The workshop facilitator can follow the production of inputs in real time, tracking the progress of individual participants or groups. The inputs can then be compared by the facilitator, or by all participants by displaying the overview screen on a projector screen.

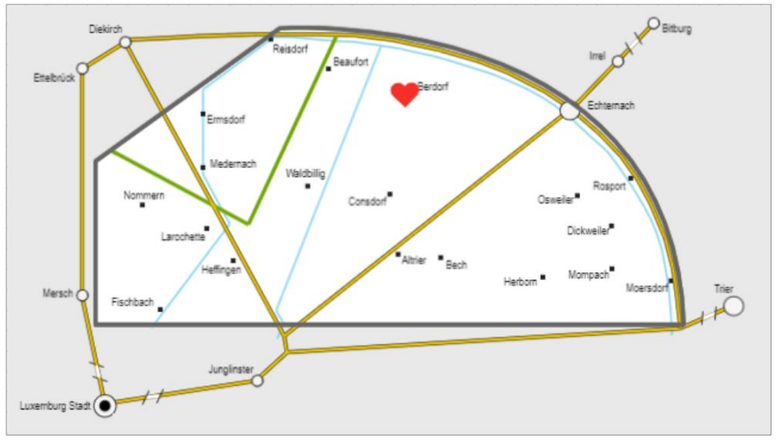
Annex: participant inputs and comments

Question 0: Break the ice and get acquainted with the web app – Please locate your favourite restaurant

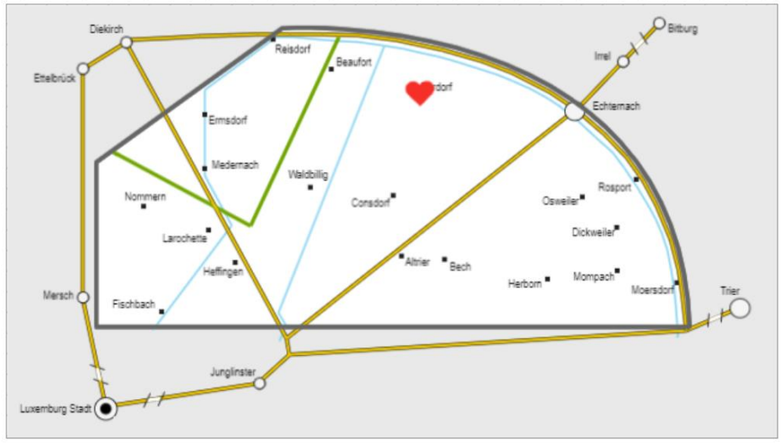
Group 1



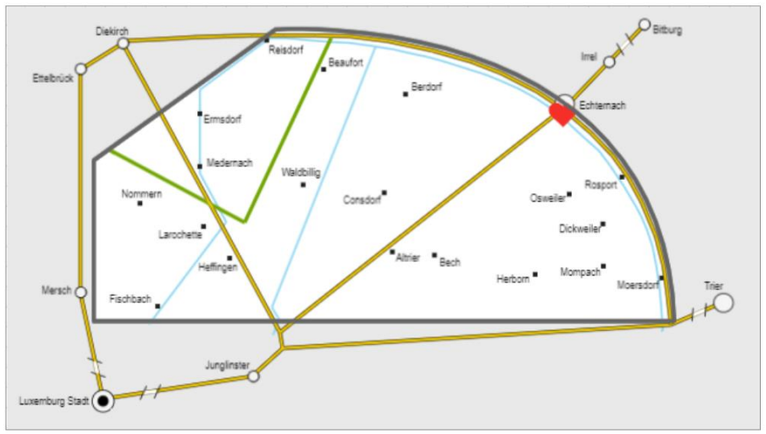
Group 2



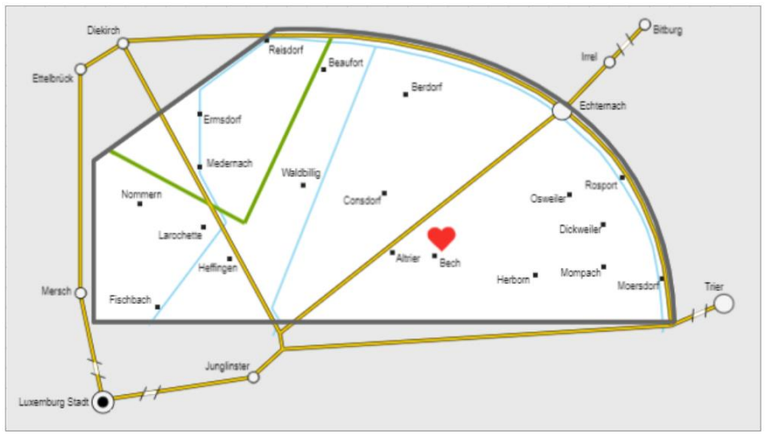
Group 3



Group 4



Group 5



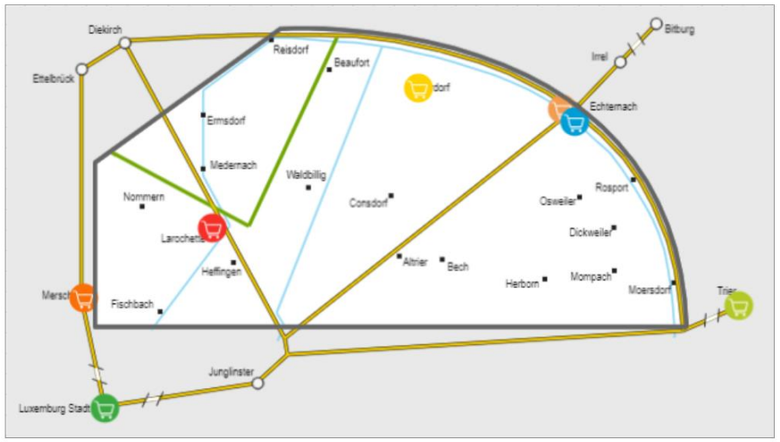
Comment

The purpose of this activity was mainly to serve as icebreaker.

Despite the high restaurant density across the entire region, the workshop participants mainly indicated restaurants around the centre of the area in municipalities of Waldbillig, Berdorf and Bech. One group indicated their favourite restaurant in Echternach, the only city of the Mëllerdall region.

Question 1a: Shopping and commercial offer – In which places do the inhabitants of the Mëllerdall region mainly go shopping? Please locate these places on the map.

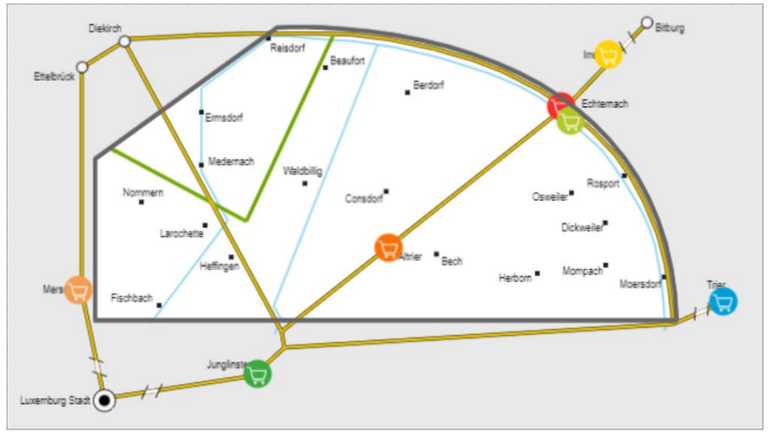
Group 1



1a - Einkaufsorte / kommerzielles Angebot

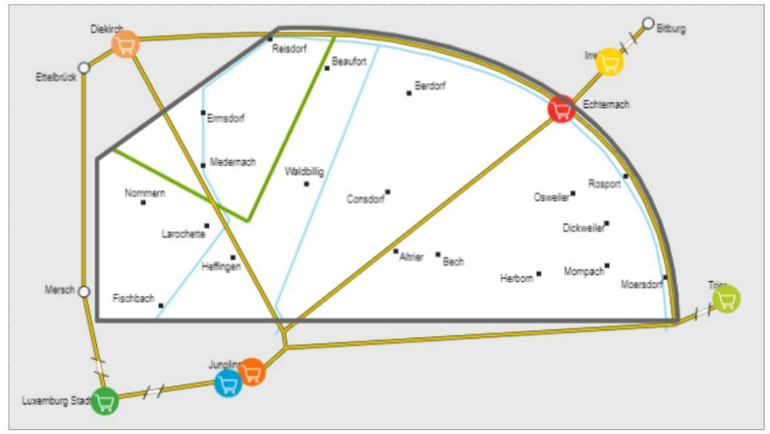
- Proxy, Fischer
- Cactus
- Cactus
- Berdorfer Eck
- Stadt
- Trier
- Faber, Side-Lane

Group 2



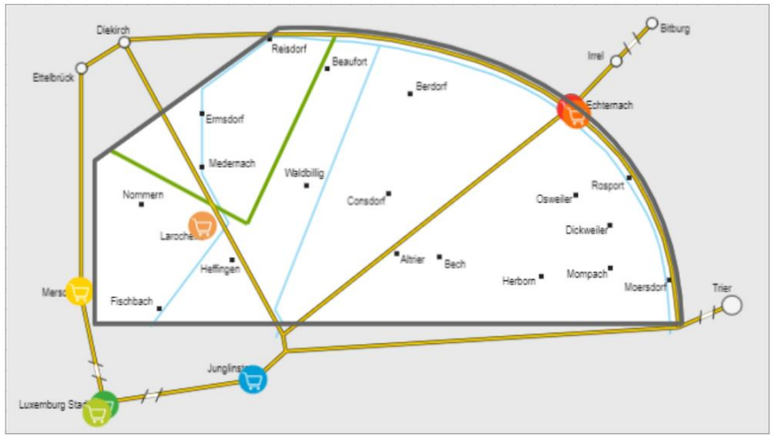
- Cactus
- Naturata
- Cactus
- Aldi
- Globus
- Apdikt Thiry
- Thalia

Group 3



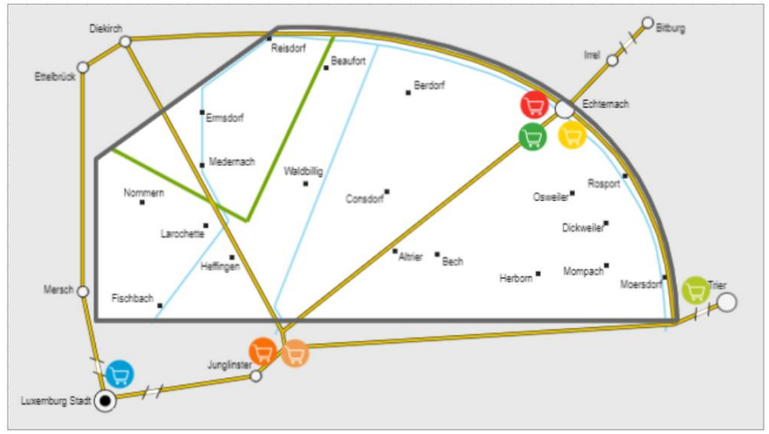
- Cactus, Rewe, Delhaize
- Cactus
- Aldi, Edeka
- Delhaize
- Kleidergeschäft, Baumarkt, Bücherei
- Kleidergeschäft, Schuhe, Fachhandel
- Globus

Group 4



- Cactus
- Ville Haute
- Delhaize
- Delhaize
- Cactus
- Belle Etoile
- Globus

Group 5



- Cactus
- Delhaize
- Delhaize
- Rewe
- Haaler Gaass
- Innenstadt
- Allgemein

Comment

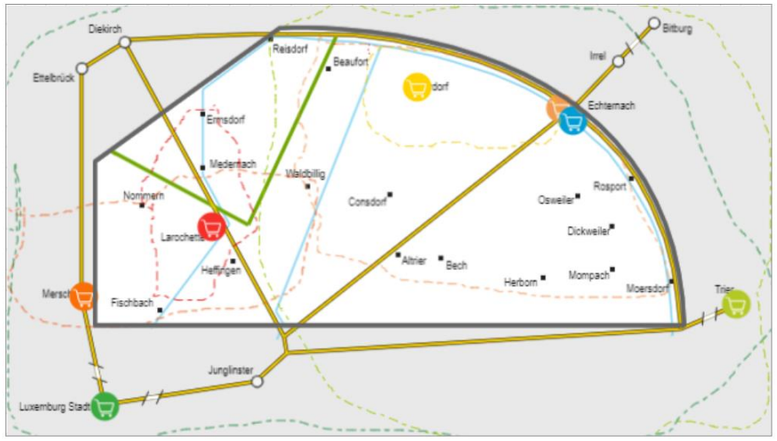
With the exception of a few small shops in the Mëllerdall villages, satisfying basic everyday needs, residents go shopping in places located at the outer perimeter of the Mëllerdall region or to shops that are located outside of the region. Examples for shops at the perimeter but inside the region is the cluster of different shops in Echternach, an example for shops outside the region. Respondents tend to focus on shops in Luxembourg (e.g. Junglinster, Mersch, Luxembourg city) rather than in Germany (e.g. Trier).

The centre of the region features an undersupply of commercial offers of all types, i.e. of foodstuff and of any other produce, like clothing, hardware, etc. The shops in the villages of the Mëllerdall are of mostly small and offer a limited range of products.

As most shopping areas are located at the perimeter or outside of the region, residents need to travel long distances to satisfy their everyday basic needs. In conjunction with a thinned-out public transport network, private means of transport present in most cases the first choice for residents.

Question 1b: Catchment areas of the shopping locations - Please locate the respective catchment areas of the shopping locations on the map. Please use similar colours to those you have used to mark the places where the inhabitants of the Mëllerdall region go shopping.

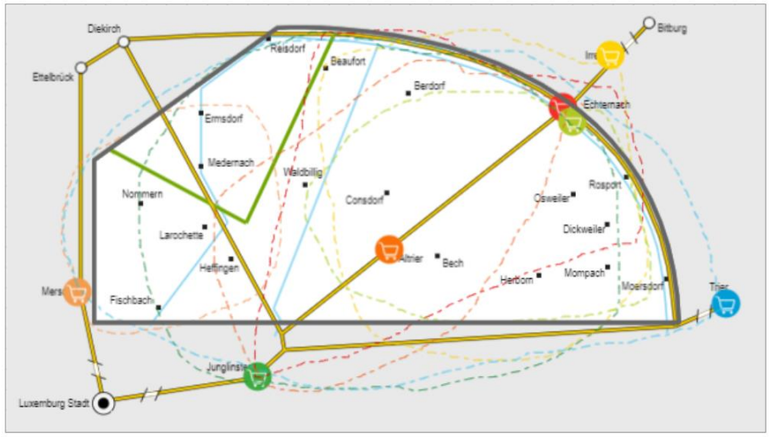
Group 1



1a - Einkaufsorte / kommerzielles Angebot

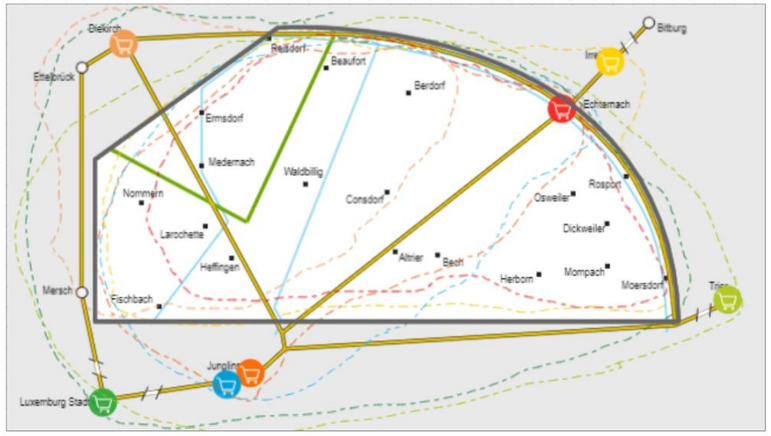
- Proxy, Fischer
- Cactus
- Cactus
- Berdorfer Eck
- Stadt
- Trier
- Faber, Side-Lane

Group 2



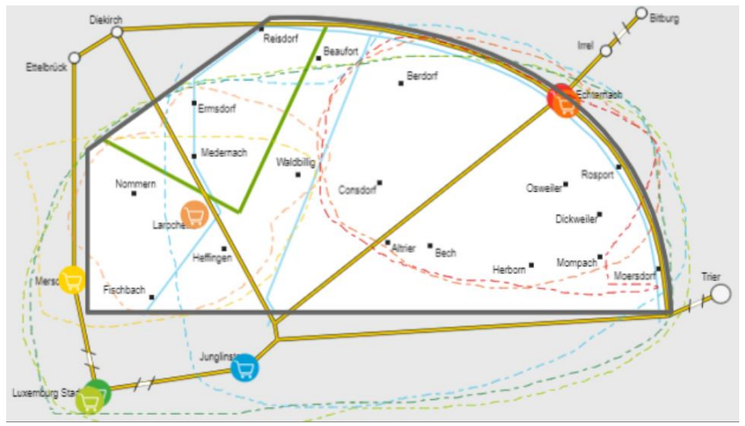
- Cactus
- Naturata
- Cactus
- Aldi
- Globus
- Apdikt Thiry
- Thalia

Group 3



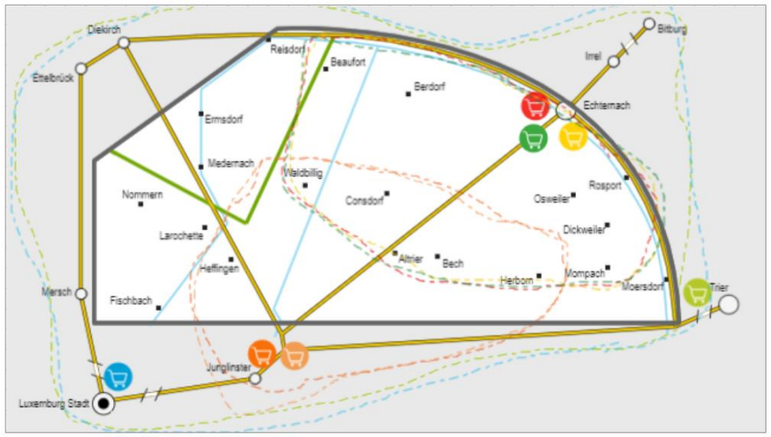
- Cactus, Rewe, Delhaize
- Cactus
- Aldi, Edeka
- Delhaize
- Kleidergeschäft, Baumarkt, Bücherei
- Kleidergeschäft, Schuhe, Fachhandel
- Globus

Group 4



- Cactus
- Ville Haute
- Delhaize
- Delhaize
- Cactus
- Belle Etoile
- Globus

Group 5



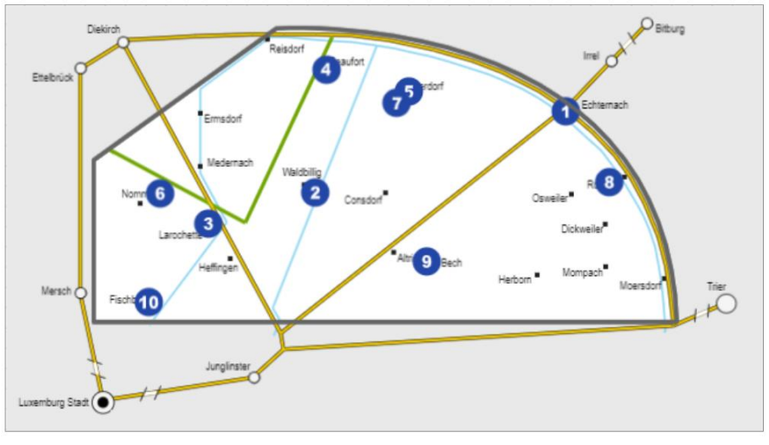
- Cactus
- Delhaize
- Delhaize
- Rewe
- Haaler Gaass
- Innenstadt
- Allgemein

Comment

For foodstuff, catchment area ranges of 10-15 km are expected. In some cases, catchment areas have been indicated by workshop participants as significantly smaller. Reasons for this are either a decreased accessibility (e.g. through suboptimal road connections), through competition between proximate shops or because of a limited offer of some shops (e.g. Delhaize Proxy in Larochette). For some types of products, no shops are established within the Mëllerdall area. Consequentially, the catchment area of these shops spread across the entire region. Examples are electronic, clothing or hardware stores, that are established in the Alzette valley west of the Mëllerdall or in the urban centres around Luxembourg City, Ettelbrück and Diekirch or Trier. Supermarkets on the German side of the border are rarely mentioned. This might have several explanations; during the COVID-19 pandemic, border crossing to Germany were closed in this area, leading eventually to a reorientation of shopping behaviour.

Question 2a: Tourist attractions – Please locate 10 tourist attractions on the map.

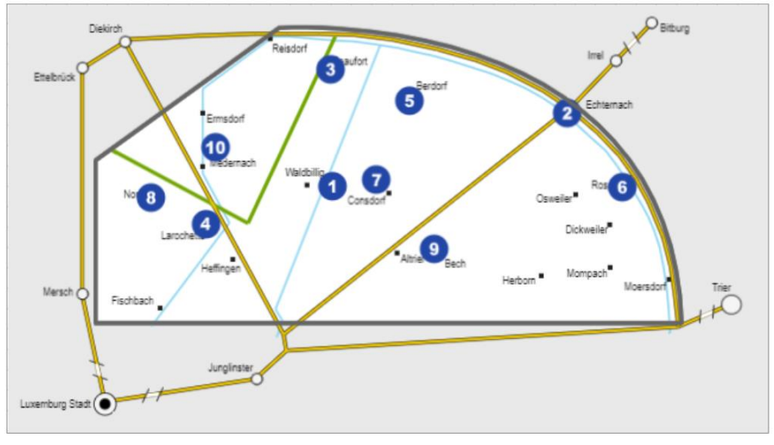
Group 1



2a - Touristenattraktionen

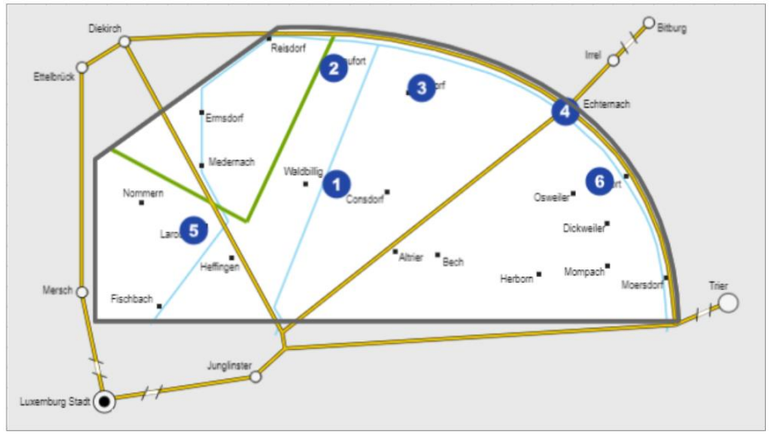
1. Basilika und Abtei
2. Schéissendempel
3. Burg Larochette
4. Burg Beaufort
5. Felsenformationen
6. Champignon
7. Aquatower
8. Musée Tudor
9. Becher Gare
10. Napoleonshut

Group 2



1. Schiessentümpel
2. Stadt Echternach
3. Beeforter Schlässer
4. Fielser Buerg
5. Hohlay
6. Musee Tudor
7. Kalktuffquelle
8. Noumerleeen
9. Tumulus
10. Barfusswanderweg

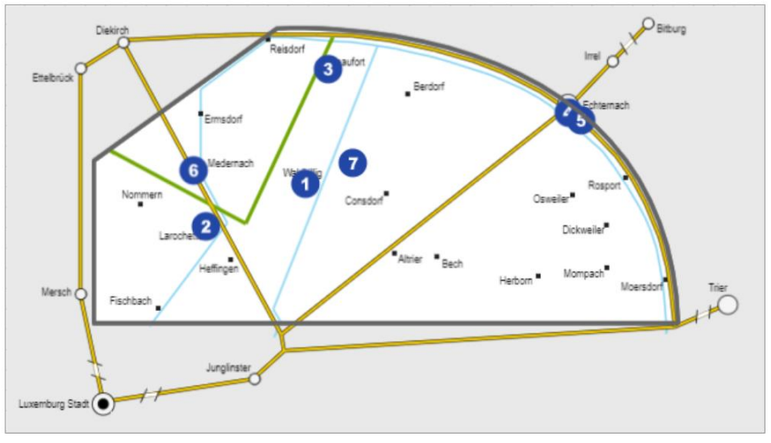
Group 3



2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Scheissendempel / Kalektüffquelle
2. Beeforter Schlass
3. Huehlee
4. Abtei / See
5. Fielser Buerg
6. Tudor Musée

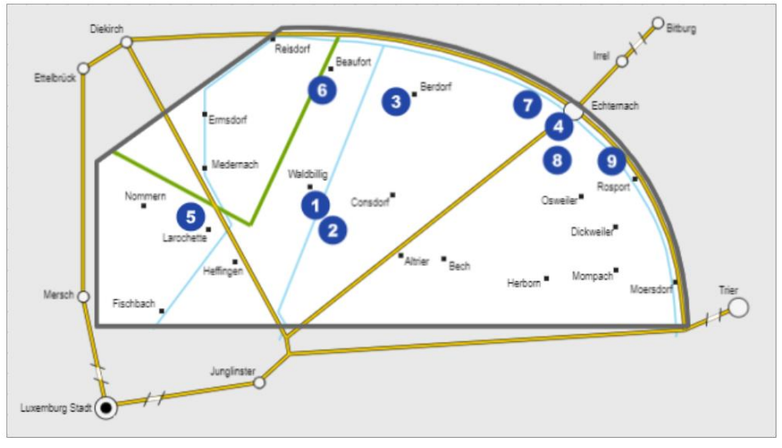
Group 4



2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Schiessentümpel
2. Burg Fels
3. Burg Beaufort
4. Echternach See
5. Echternach Basilika
6. Barfussweg
7. Bech Tunnel Radweg

Group 5



2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Schiessentümpel
2. Kalektuffquell
3. Wanterbaach Siwenschléff
4. Stad lechternach
5. Buerg Fiels
6. Buerg Before
7. Wollefsschlucht
8. lechternacher Sei
9. Hoelt
10. Legend name

Comment

The Mëllerdall region is known for being a touristic region in Luxembourg and beyond. Therefore, many attractions of the area have been valorised for tourists and residents and are well-documented.

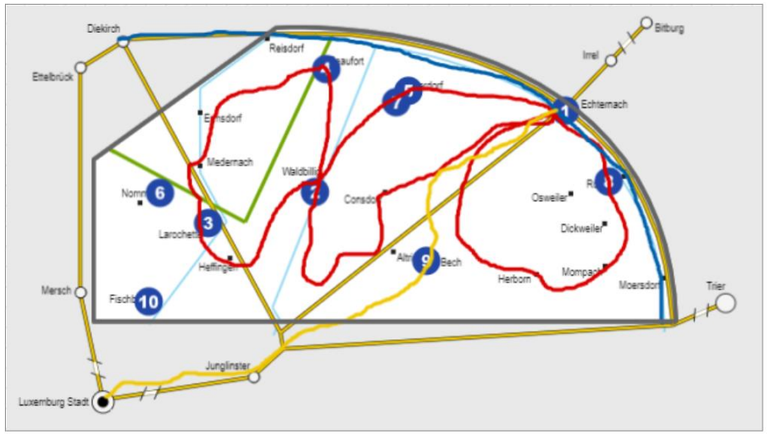
Attractions mentioned by are distributed across the region. It confirmed that there was consensus the key attractions of the region, such as the Schiessentümpel waterfall in Waldbillig, the Echternach abbey and basilica and the Larochette Castle (“Burg Fels”), Schiessentümpel, the Larochette castle, the Echternach monastry/basilika, the Hohlay cave and the calcarous tufa spring in Consdorf.

However, a broad range of secondary or emerging sites were also mentioned.

Only few tourist attractions have been mentioned by participants in the North West (Vallée de l’Ernz) and South-East (Rosport-Mompach) of the region.

Question 2b: Tourist routes in the Mëllerdall region - Please locate 2-3 current or potential tourist routes in the Mëllerdall region (e.g. between tourist hotspots in neighbouring regions and the Mëllerdall region or between places within the Mëllerdall region).

Group 1



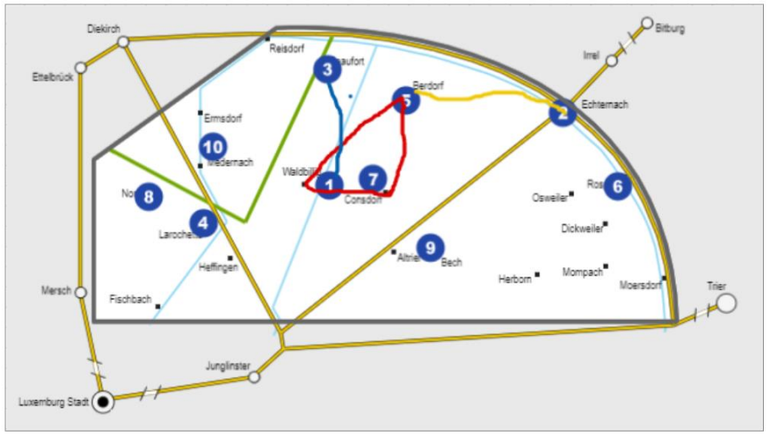
2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Basilika und Abtei
2. Schéissendempel
3. Burg Larochette
4. Burg Beaufort
5. Felsenformationen
6. Champignon
7. Aquatower
8. Musée Tudor
9. Becher Gare
10. Napoleonshut

2b - Touristische Routen in der Region Mëllerdall

- Mullerthal Trail
- PC
- PC

Group 2

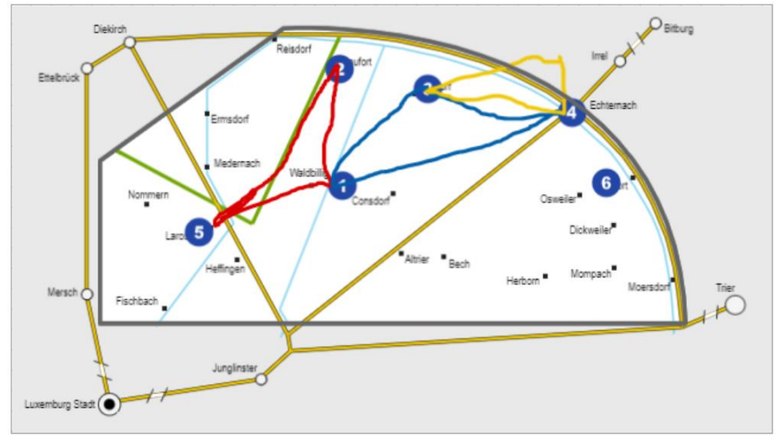


1. Schiessentümpel
2. Stadt Echternach
3. Beeforter Schlässer
4. Fielser Buerg
5. Hohlay
6. Musee Tudor
7. Kalktuffquelle
8. Noumerleeen
9. Tumulus
10. Barfusswanderweg

2b - Touristische Routen in der Region Mëllerdall

- Mullerthal Trail -2
- Wanterbaach
- Echt.-Berdorf

Group 3



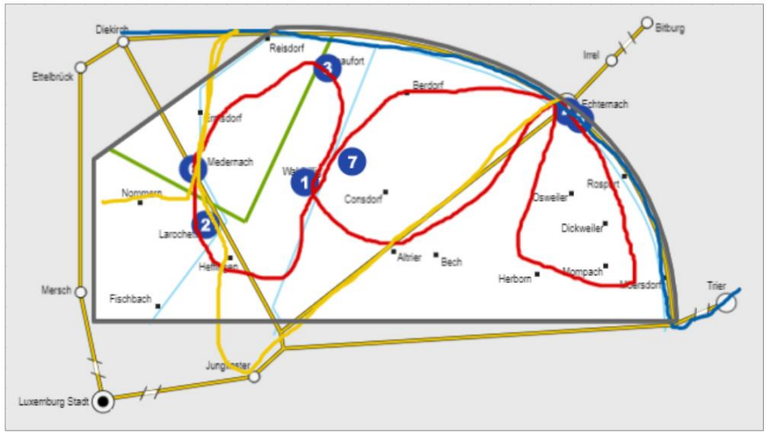
2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Scheissendempel / Kalektüffquelle
2. Beeforter Schlass
3. Huehlee
4. Abtei / See
5. Fielser Buerg
6. Tudor Musée

2b - Touristische Routen in der Region Mëllerdall

- Legend name
- Legend name
- Legend name

Group 4



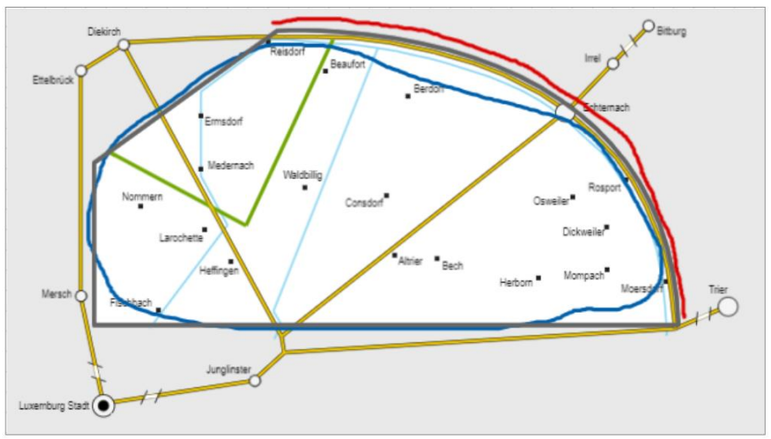
2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Schiessentümpel
2. Burg Fels
3. Burg Beaufort
4. Echternach See
5. Echternach Basilika
6. Barfussweg
7. Bech Tunnel Radweg

2b - Touristische Routen in der Region Mëllerdall

- Legend name
- Legend name
- Legend name

Group 5



2a - Touristenattraktionen

1. Schiessentümpel
2. Kalektuffquell
3. Wanterbaach Siwenschléff
4. Stad Iechternach
5. Buerg Fiels
6. Buerg Before
7. Wollefsschlucht
8. Iechternacher Sei
9. Hoelt
10. Legend name

- Velospist Sauer
- Mëllerdall-Trail

Comment

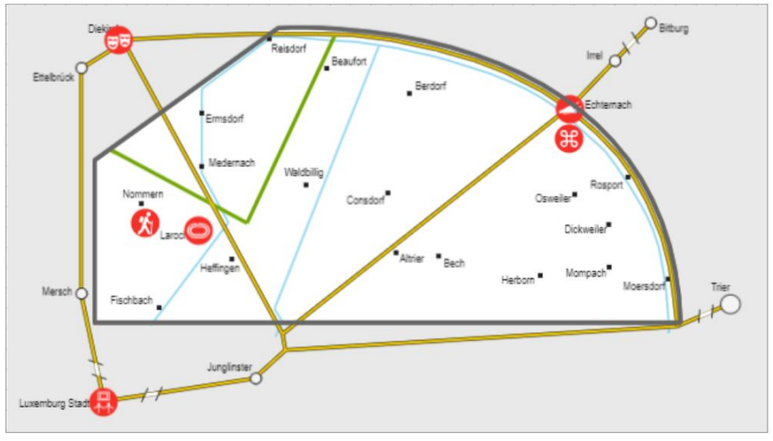
Majority of tourist routes that have been indicated by participants spread across several municipalities and link tourist attractions, that were indicated in the previous question.

Tourist routes around the attractions Schiessentümpel in Waldbillig, (waterfall), Huellay (artificial cave from millstone mining) in Berdorf, calcarous tufa spring in Waldbillig, the Larochette castle and the monastry and the inner city in Echternach, have been indicated.

By majority tourist routes in the centre of the Mëllerdall region have been mentioned by the working groups. Only two groups indicated the Mëllerdall Trail around the entire area and the bike path along the Sauer river. No tourist routes between the Mëllerdall region and surrounding regions have been indicated.

Question 3: Cultural and recreational activities - Please locate cultural and recreational activities in the Mëllerdall region (e.g. museums, clubs, cultural activities, recurring festivals or other events).

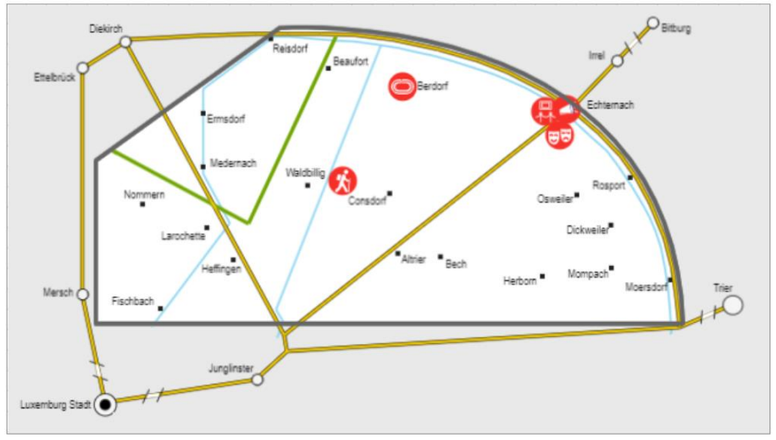
Group 1



3 - Kulturelles Angebot und Freizeitaktivitäten

- Trifolion
- Sportshalle FiLaNo
- Nommerleeen
- Museen in der Stadt
- Kino Scala Diekierch
- Echternacher See

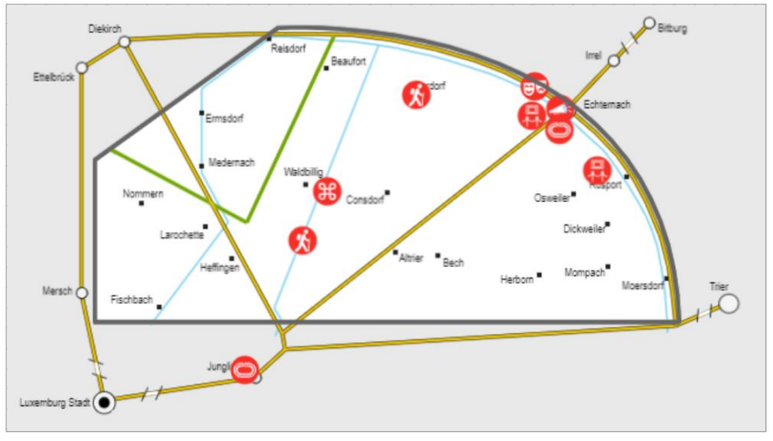
Group 2



3 - Kulturelles Angebot und Freizeitaktivitäten

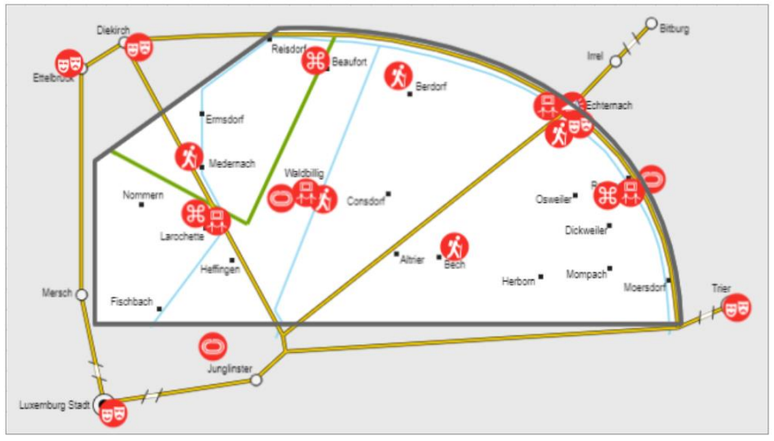
- Echterlive
- Klettern
- Mullerthal trail
- Echternach Abteimusee
- Cine Sura

Group 3



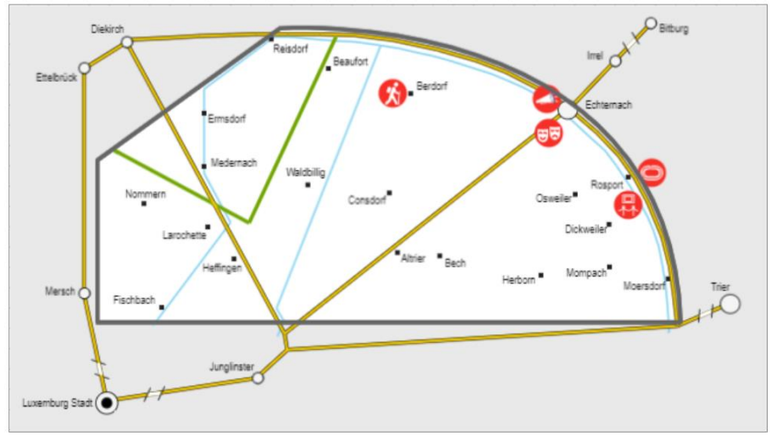
- E-Lake + Echterlive
- Fitness
- Klettern / Wander ganze Region
- Tudor Musée / Römervilla Echternach
- Cine Sura
- Millefest

Group 4



- Trifolion
- Golf Belenhaff & Christnach
- Müllerthal
- Abtei & Basilika
- CINE SURA
- Burgen & Schlösser

Group 5



3 - Kulturelles Angebot und Freizeitaktivitäten

- Wanterbaach Siweschléff
- Trifolion
- Waasserski
- Tudor Museum
- Ciné Sura

Comment

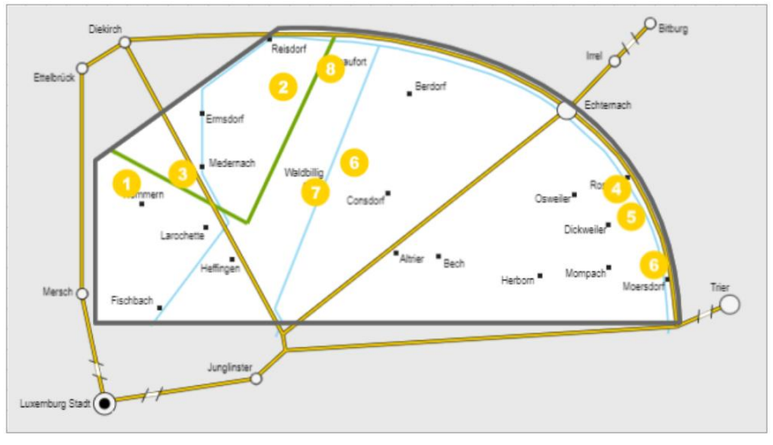
For cultural and recreational activities, the participants indicated a wealth of information, reflecting the diversity of offers in the respectively small area of the Mëllerdall region.

All groups mentioned the Trifolion in Echternach, a concert hall with regular events as a central cultural offer of the area. Its offer is complemented by music festivals around the city, such as the ‘Echterlive’ or the ‘E-lake’ event. Other activities relate to sports and outdoor activities, such as golf, sport events, hiking and climbing or fitness, that are spread across the region. A few museums have also been indicated in Echternach, Larochette, Rosport-Mompach but also outside of the Mëllerdall region in Luxembourg City.

Contrary to results to the previous questions, the indicated offers appear to be more clustered in smaller parts of the region. The assignment requires a very good knowledge on features of the region or at least of some smaller parts. With participants coming from different areas of the region, the created maps reflect their living environment and the knowledge on activities thereof.

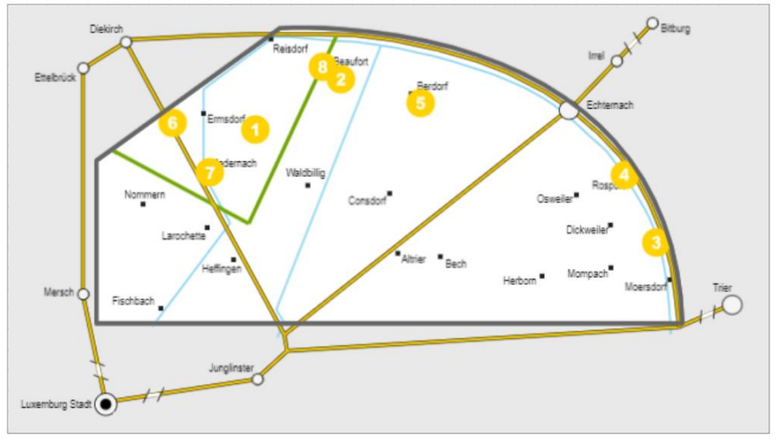
Question 4: Regional producers – Please locate regional producers within the Mëlledall Region (e.g. food and beverages, handicrafts, wood products).

Group 1



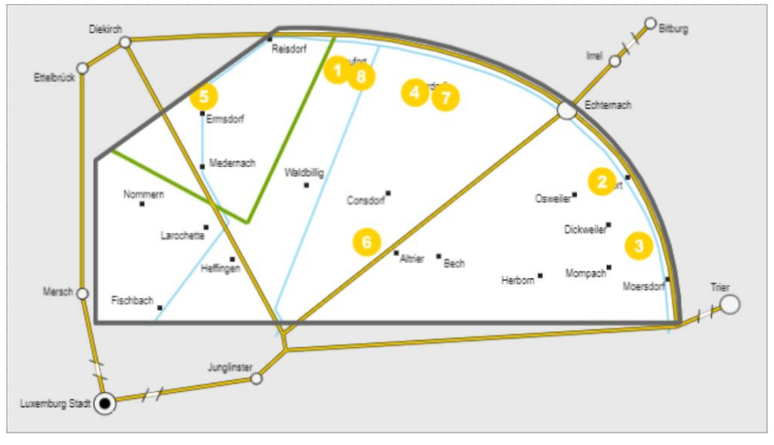
1 Schrondweiler Eck
2 Eppelpress
3 Biohaff Baltes
4 Tudorsgeeschter
5 Kulturhaff Millermoler
6 Ramborn
7 Touristcenter Heringer Millen
8 Cassero

Group 2



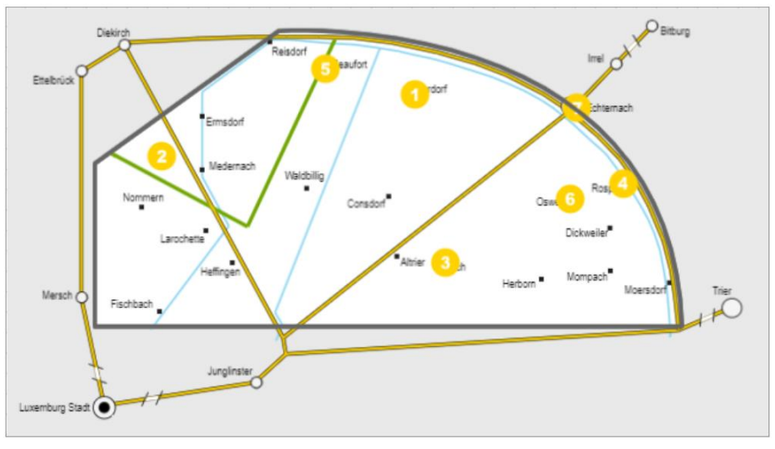
1 Eppelpress
2 Cassero
3 Ramborn
4 Tudorsgeeschter
5 Berdorfer
6 Biohaf Baltes
7 Roger Baulesch
8 Metzlerei Wietor

Group 3



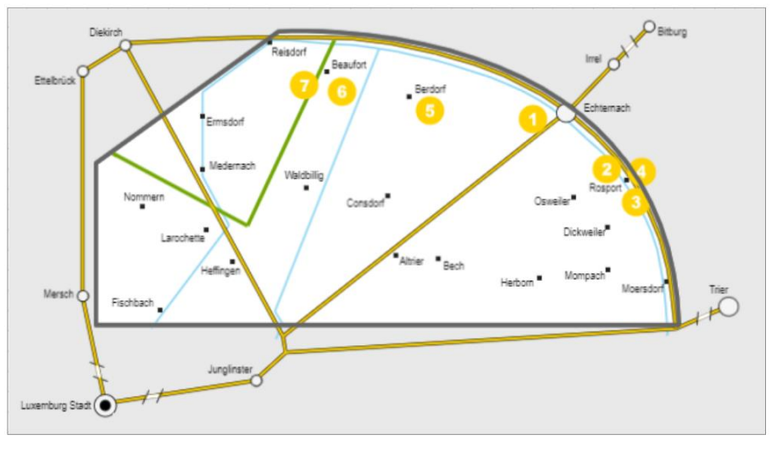
1 Cassero / Wietor
2 Tudorsgeeschter
3 Ramborn
4 Berdorfer Keis
5 Opyos
6 Poterie
7 Glasbläserei Seil
8 Goldschmuck

Group 4



4 - Regionale Produzenten
1 Berdorfer Keis
2 Biohaff Baltes
3 Echternacher Brauerei
4 Tudors Geeschter
5 Cassero
6 Frombourg
7 Moulin Dieschbourg

Group 5



4 - Regionale Produzenten
1 Moulin Dieschbourg
2 Georges Schiltz
3 Ramborn
4 René Krippes
5 Berdorfer Keisters
6 Cassis
7 Wietor

Comment

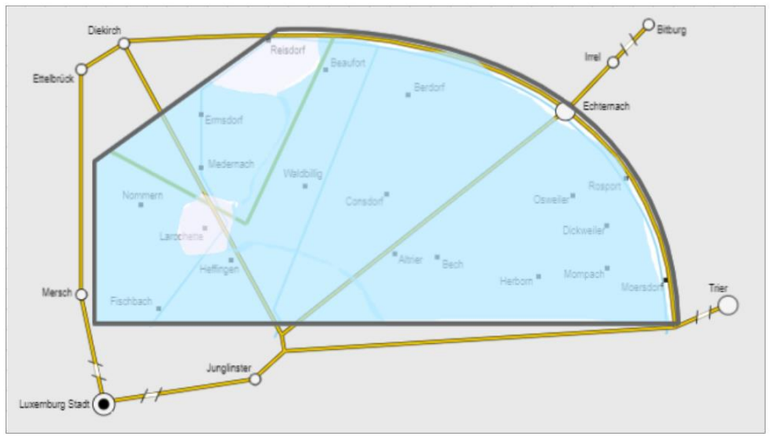
Mëllerdall region is well-known for its landscape, which has been shaped by centuries of extensive agriculture. Today, a lot of agriculture in the area is still extensive with pasture farming being the dominant type of agricultural production. Some of the primary products are processed by well-known regional producers.

Paradoxically, many regional producers were indicated by the working groups in areas with low share of agricultural surfaces in relation to total municipal size. This applies to producers in municipalities of Beaufort, Berdorf, Consdorf and Echternach. A possible explanation is that where primary agricultural production is sub-optimal, economies have developed that are focussing on processing of primary matter.

In addition, the working groups indicated much more regional producers in the Northern half of the Mëllerdall region. There are only few producers In the South with the only exception being Resport-Mompach in the East.

Question 5 – Demographic trends – In which parts of the Mëllerdall region do you think the population will ... a) ... grow in the next 20 years? b) ... be stable? c) ... population growth will be uncertain?

Group 1

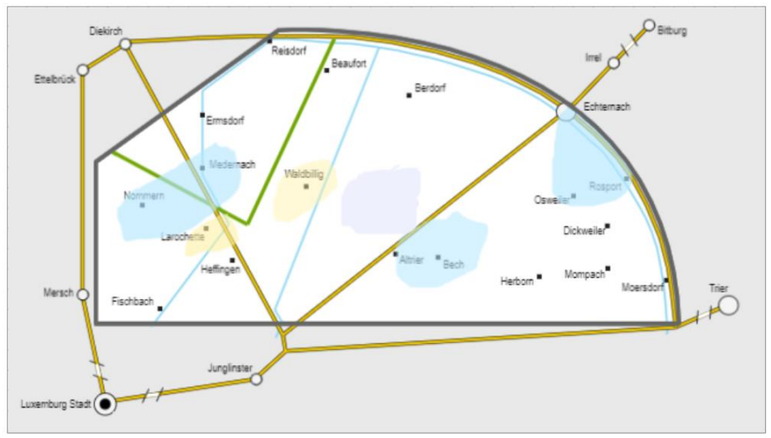


Population growth

Stable population

Uncertain development

Group 2

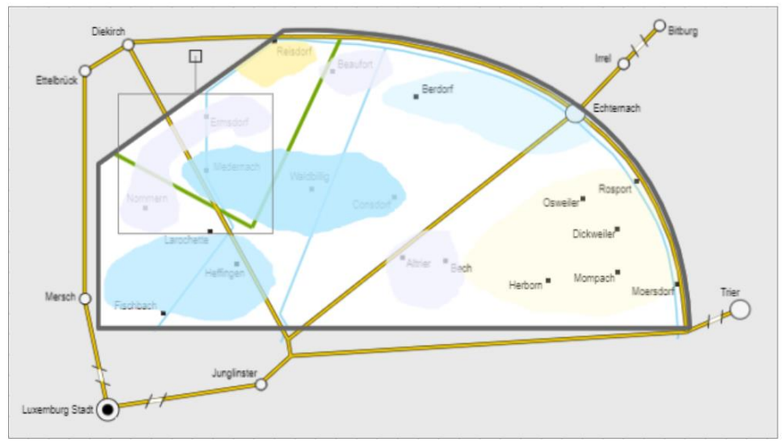


Population growth

Stable population

Uncertain development

Group 3

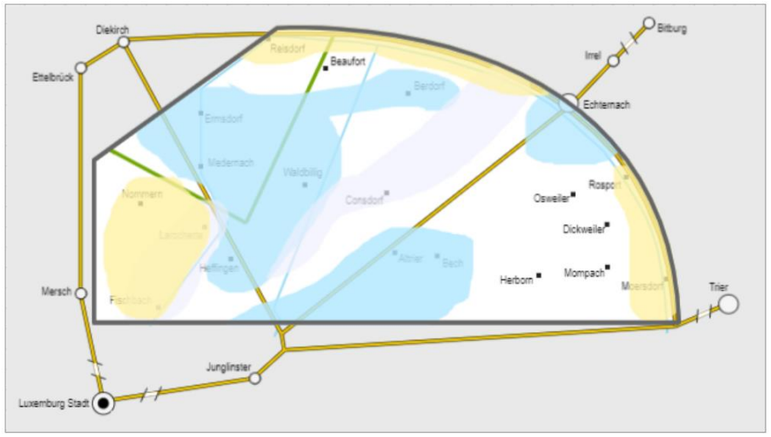


Population growth

Stable population

Uncertain development

Group 4



Population growth

Stable population

Uncertain development

Group 5

Population growth

Stable population

Uncertain development

Comment

Potentials for population growth were assessed quite differently by the five groups. There was consensus on the fact that population growth will continue around Echternach. Many participants also agreed that positive demographic developments could be expected in an area stretching from Heffingen to Waldbillig, while the future was more uncertain between Rosport and Mompach in the south-east part of the region. The diverging positions on these and other areas offer a basis for discussions on the opportunities and challenges of different parts of the LEADER region, and perspectives for socially, economically and territorially cohesive development for the region as a whole.

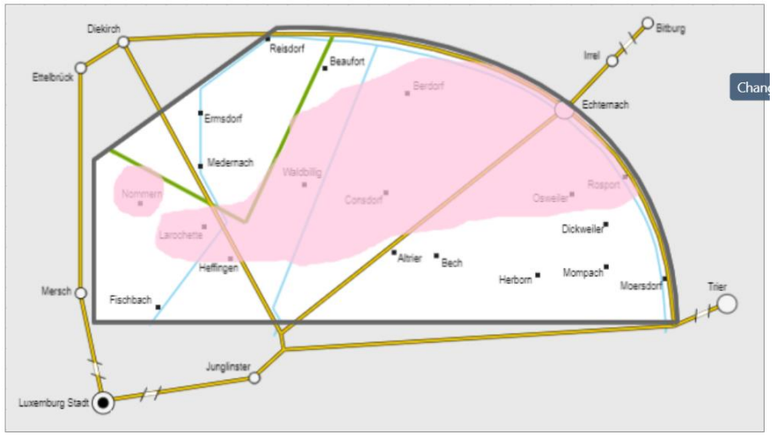
These inputs may be compared to demographic trends in the last decades-

Between 2001 and 2021, all twelve municipalities have gained population. Their relative growth over these two decades ranges from +22% to +95%.

Question 6: Development of tourism – In which parts of the Mëllerdall region do you think that in the next 20 years...

a) ... the number of tourists will increase the most?, or b) ... the local tourism potential will be used less?

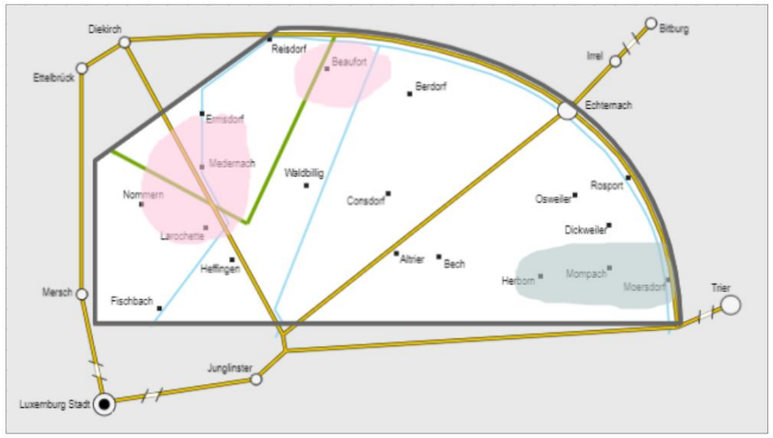
Group 1



Highest increase in tourism

More limited use of tourism potentials

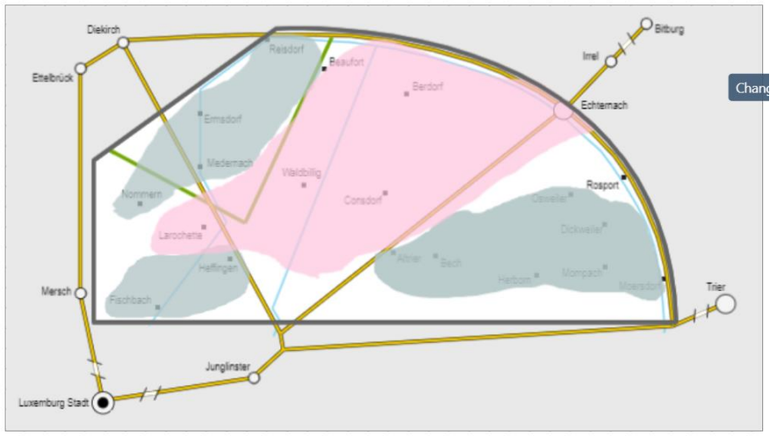
Group 2



Highest increase in tourism

More limited use of tourism potentials

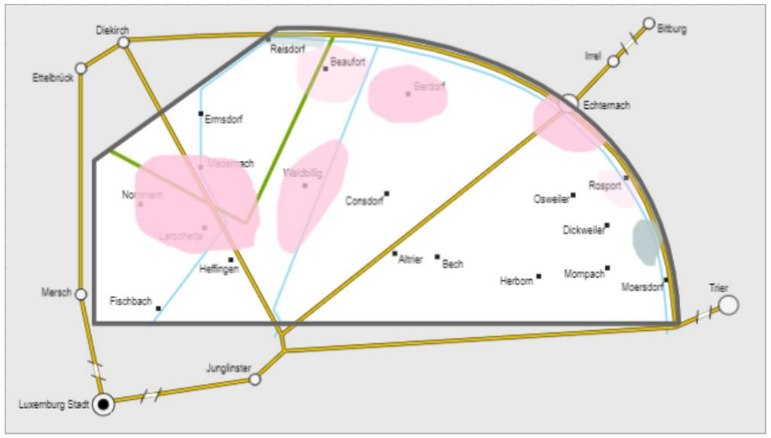
Group 3



Highest increase in tourism

More limited use of tourism potentials

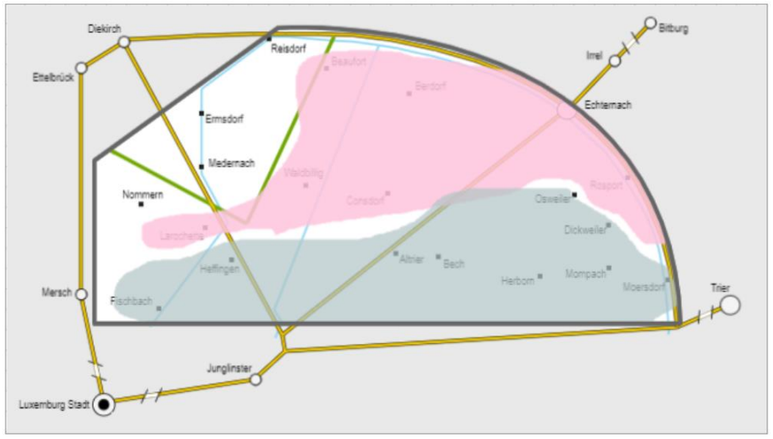
Group 4



Highest increase in tourism

More limited use of tourism potentials

Group 5



Highest increase in tourism

More limited use of tourism potentials

Comment

Development of tourism numbers for the entire Mëllerdall area has seen significant decrease since the 1960s but figures stabilised and even increased again since 2015.

Participants indicated a differentiated development of tourism numbers for the future: most groups indicated the highest increase in tourism around the central part of the regions. These surfaces overlap with the tourism attractions and activities located for the previous questions.

More limited use of tourism potential is observed for the Southern and Eastern part of the region in Rosport-Mompach, Bech and Fischbach. One group also indicated the Northern area around Reisdorf and Vallée de l'Ernz as areas with limited use of tourism potentials.

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