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4 Remigration to Luxembourg. Examining a New Research Question by Means of Digital Hermeneutics

Abstract: The chapter demonstrates how revisiting a recently composed Nodegoat database with information about migrants moving to the Luxembourgish municipality of Dudelange in the year 1924 to unravel remigration, a practice that was not documented as such in the past, turned out to be a fruitful exercise. The process of asking a new research question and testing it out using an existing database by playing around with the data and several digital tools enabled the authors to unravel, analyze, and compare past remigration practices to and from Luxembourg and the Minett region. Two periods of time generating most outmigration were identified: World War I and the years 1923 and 1924. The war mostly provoked a direct outmigration-remigration pattern among Italian, and to a lesser extent German, remigrants. While the rapid outmigration of Italian migrants was already documented in historiography, the fact that only a few German foreigners remigrated indicates a new finding. We found a comparable number of German and Italian remigrants who had outmigrated during the years 1923 and 1924, but while German foreigners tended to move back and forth between Germany and Luxembourg, many Italian foreigners preferred to frequently migrate within, or beyond but still in the vicinity of, the Minett.

“We had never thought of that,” was our reaction when Eva Pfanzelter and Sarah Oberbichler asked us whether we could decipher remigration practices in our database of migrants arriving in the Luxembourgish municipality of Dudelange in the year 1924. We accepted the invitation to revisit our database and reinterpret the data from the perspective of remigration, as this challenged us to go beyond the administrative categorizations used by policy-makers at the time; remigration was not reported in the source we had based our analysis on, the forms used to declare the arrival of foreigners in municipalities of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, or in other historical sources documenting migration to the country.¹

¹ Machteld Venken and Arnaud Sauer, “Arrival declaration forms. A new gateway for mapping migration to Luxembourg,” *Front. Hum. Dyn.* (2022): 1–19, accessed March 3, 2023, doi: 10.3389/fhumd.2022.931758.

This chapter uses a case study approach to ask the question of how best to research remigration practices of foreigners. To that purpose, it revisits the database of migrants arriving in the Luxembourgish municipality of Dudelange in the year 1924. Fickers, Tatarinov, and van der Heijden wrote that: “Depending on how the research question is approached, and modified over time, new searches for data have to be made, new tools to be tested, datasets to be adapted and modified, and visualizations or interpretations to be revised and refined.”² We accompany our analysis with a hermeneutical reflection, investigating the conditions for knowledge production on remigration by means of our self-composed digital workflow. We describe how much digital intervention is needed to unravel a phenomenon that was not specifically reported in the past, and also outline the extent to which that digital intervention is based on assumptions and presents data that can be scientifically interpreted. After offering a critical assessment of the source of our analysis and the main tool we used, the software program Nodegoat, this chapter will introduce the reader to migration and remigration to Luxembourg. A systematic comparison of remigration to Dudelange in the year 1924, after outmigration during either the First World War or the years 1923 and 1924, follows. The conclusion reflects upon the usefulness of the concept of remigration for understanding past (re)migration and mobility practices in and beyond the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Remigration and Digital Hermeneutics

This article presents a case study based on data contained in the declaration forms of arrivals of foreigners in 1924 from one municipality in the Grand Duchy. The municipal archives of Dudelange hold a complete collection of declaration forms from 1893 to 1947, as do other local archives in southern Luxembourg, such as the city archives of Differdange and Esch-sur-Alzette. The case study does not seek to draw conclusions on remigration practices across the entire Grand Duchy over an extended period, and instead explores a research question that could be further investigated using a larger collection of declaration forms in the future.

Our reflection starts by situating and evaluating the steps we took to prepare the source base for digital interpretation. The source base consists of 1,115 decla-

² Andreas Fickers, Juliane Tatarinov, and Tim van der Heijden, “Digital History and Hermeneutics – Between Theory and Practice: An Introduction,” in *Digital History and Hermeneutics. Between Theory and Practice*, ed. Andreas Fickers and Juliane Tatarinov (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022), 19.

ration forms of foreigners who arrived in the Luxembourg municipality of Dudelange in the year 1924, a pivotal period during which migration flows to the Grand Duchy were increasing and diversifying. The forms include the personal data of the declarant and his or her family members, as well as information about his or her migration trajectory before arrival in Dudelange. Whereas it was an obligation for foreigners to declare their arrival, clandestine migration and therefore also, possibly, clandestine remigration did exist. The latter is, however, not considered in this chapter.³

During a pilot project, the data were included manually in a self-composed database in the software program Nodegoat. In our pilot, we had found a way to use digital techniques to adjust a limitation in our source base, but our method was not applicable for researching remigration. When a family of foreigners arrived in Dudelange in the year 1924, officials registered the father as the declarant and mentioned the migration data of his wife and children on the same form. In our data model, however, we made wives and children more visible by creating the possibility to include them, along with their husbands or fathers, as “persons” instead of “declarants,” and to link them to a specific declaration form. Nevertheless, the way migration was reported administratively made it impossible for us to retrace the remigration practices of married women and children; at this stage of our research, we were only able to pinpoint them if the husband, wife, and children migrated and remigrated together to Dudelange. In the case of Angelina Strappaza, the wife of Francisco Corrazol, for example, we know that she arrived with her husband in Dudelange in 1924. We also know that the couple married in 1920, and that her husband had already migrated to the French border town of Audun-le-Tiche in the Minett region the year before, but we have not been able to trace whether or not she joined her husband for his stay in France.⁴

Apart from being biased in terms of gender and age, the source base did not classify remigration administratively. However, the administrative text box “residence during the last ten years” on the declaration forms was meant to document the migratory trajectory of foreigners before their arrival in Dudelange. As officials generally also tended to document previous migration trajectories of incoming foreigners (prior to this ten-year period), we possess richer data than what was legally required to be documented. Although this additional information offers us the opportunity to trace remigration over an even longer period of time, it

³ The ongoing research of Irene Portas “examines the clandestine pathways of refugees, smugglers and miners in the Franco-Luxembourgish border throughout the first half of the twentieth century” (www.c2dh.uni.lu, last consulted March 6, 2023).

⁴ Municipal archives of Dudelange, Declaration forms of arrival for the year 1924 (further – DA 1924), 948.

should be kept in mind that all migration data from more than ten years before migrants' arrival in Dudelange in 1924 that we refer to in this chapter are the result of officials' willingness to exceed legal requirements.

Remigration practices could not always be easily distilled from declaration forms of arrival, however, because of the imprecise way officials reported space and time, as well as the imprecise way we as historians may have interpreted the reporting of space and time. Officials inaccurately transcribed the Cyrillic alphabet, for example, making it impossible for us to localize the former places of residence and retrace the migration trajectories of Russian foreigners, which consequently leaves the question of their possible remigration open.⁵ In addition, we distorted the spatial and temporal information provided in the declaration forms in our own way. We used the website service "Geonames"⁶ to indicate the geolocalization of the municipalities and cities mentioned in the declaration forms, and we were also able to include the geolocalization of historical regions – such as "Lothringen (DE)" to indicate that it belonged to the German Empire between 1871 and the end of the First World War – but were sometimes unable to geolocalize small historical villages which in the meantime may have disappeared.⁷ In addition, officials often used estimations when documenting how long a person had resided in a specific place (e.g. "for two and a half years" or "since the war"), and in our interpretation of the way officials estimated time we were forced to make approximate calculations and ultimately accept a certain margin of error.⁸

Our reflection continues with an evaluation of the possibilities of the software tool Nodegoat to digitally process and geographically visualize remigration practices. The software uses iterative data modeling, allowing researchers to adapt and further develop their data model while inserting and interpreting data.⁹ We exploited the possibility of changing objects and sub-objects, cross-referencing data and adapting and modifying filters in our existing data model through a "hands-on approach that combines playful tinkering with critical thinking"; this "thinkering" was embraced as "a heuristic mode of doing" and knowing.¹⁰ In other words, we chose "screwing around" with data, as Joris van Zundert called it, as our method

5 DA 1924, 786.

6 "Geonames," last consulted March 6, 2023, www.geonames.org.

7 DA 1924, 455.

8 DA 1924, 1068.

9 Pim van Bree and Geert Kessel, "Iterative Data Modelling. From Teaching Practice to Research Method," abstract retrieved from *Digital Humanities Montreal* database, 2017, 2.

10 Fickers et al., "Digital History and Hermeneutics," 7.

and saw that task as the central part of our analysis.¹¹ Revisiting our data from the perspective of remigration through playful thinking was a suitable approach given the fact that we found ourselves at an early stage of the research cycle and had a relatively small and therefore easily adjustable dataset. The exercise sat “particularly well as an additional layer in the hermeneutic process of hypothesis formation,” as it prompted us to evaluate the potential of our database for scientific research.¹² On the other hand, the size of the dataset also means that our findings can only be indicative; a larger dataset will need to be built in the future in order to draw broader conclusions.

Four figures resulting from our playful thinking show the adjustments we made in Nodegoat. First, we decided that the borders of the zone in which people needed to reside as a foreigner, leave, and remigrate to could not be limited to the national borders of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg but needed to include the wider Minett region as well. This hub for iron ore mining in Europe – the second largest iron ore deposit in the world – is a cross-border space stretching over a vast area from contemporary northern France to southern Luxembourg and south-east Belgium. In this chapter, the spatial zone of reference for remigration includes the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett region, to which some municipalities in southern Luxembourg, such as Dudelange, belonged.

We included a new object in our Nodegoat data model called “remigration” and selected foreigners who found themselves within Luxembourg and the Minett, changed their place of residence at least once for a place outside Luxembourg and the Minett, and then declared a municipality within the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett region to be their place of residence again.

Afterwards, we created search categories to unravel the mobility practices of migrants, as explained in Figure 3. For each remigrant we needed to find three specific places of residence: (1) the first place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett = chronologically the first place of residence of the category INSIDE; (2) the first place of residence outside Luxembourg and the Minett after (1) = EXIT, and (3) the first place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett after (2) = chronologically the second place of residence belonging to the category ENTER. A Nodegoat search enabled us to find all places of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett, but we could not make a filter to find the first place of residence, as this is a relative search for the first place over a period of time,

11 Joris J. Van Zundert, “Screwmenetics and hermeneumericals: the computability of hermeneutics,” *A new companion to digital humanities* 15, no. 12 (2015): 331.

12 Shawn Graham, Ian Milligan, and Scott Weingart. *Exploring Big Historical Data: The Historian’s Macroscope* (London: Imperial College Press, 2016), 163.

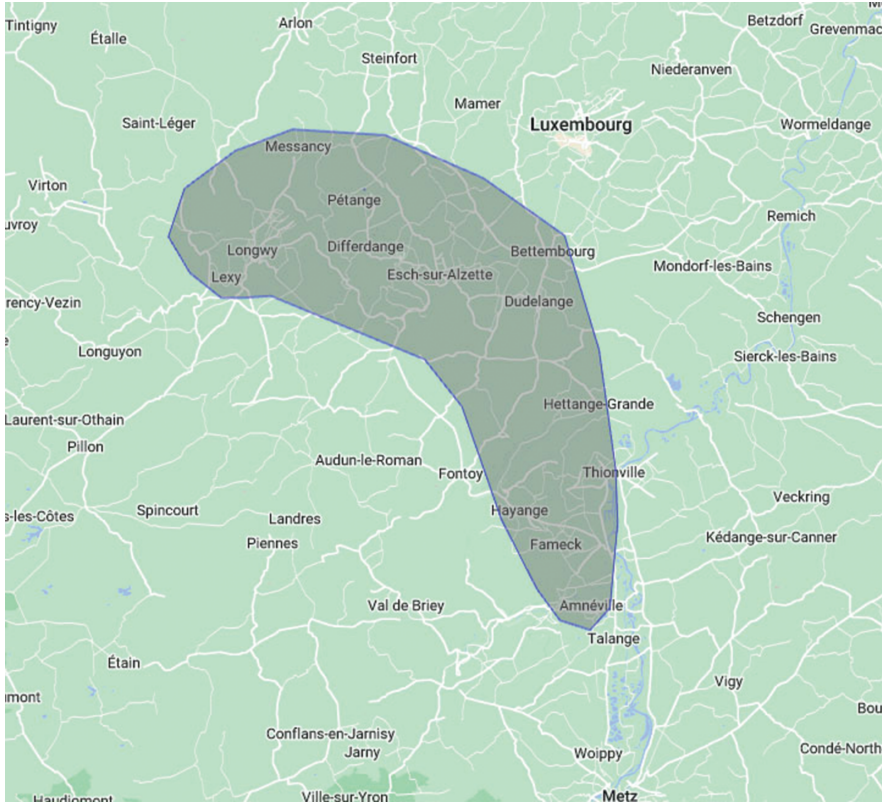


Figure 1: A geographical visualization of the cross-border Minett region as a Nodegoat zone.¹³

13 The Minett region as a Nodegoat zone consists of the following 75 contemporary municipalities. In France: Algrange, Amnéville, Angevillers, Audun-le-Tiche, Cosnes-et-Romain, Ebange-et-Daspich, Fameck, Fensch, Florange, Gandrange, Gorcy, Haucourt-Moulaine, Hayange, Herserange, Hettange-Grande, Hussigny-Godbrange, Knutange, Lagenberg, Langlaville, Longwy, Mexy, Micheville, Mont-Saint-Martin, Nilvange, Ottange, Rédange, Rehon, Remelange, Russange, Saulnes, Soetrich, Suzange, Thil, Thionville, Villerupt, Vitry-sur-Orne, Volmerange-les-Mines, Warnimont, Wolmeringen, and Zoufftgen. In Luxembourg: Bascharage, Belvaux, Bergem, Bettange-sur-Mess, Bettembourg, Buringen, Clemency, Differdange, Dudelange, Esch-sur-Alzette, Fond-de-Gras, Kayl, Lamadelaine, Lasauvage, Limpach, Linger, Mondercange, Niederkorn, Noertzange, Oberkorn, Oberdonven, Pétange, Reckange-sur-Mess, Rodange, Rumelange, Sanem, Schifflange, Schouweiler, Soleuvre, and Tétange. In Belgium: Athus, Aubange, Messancy, and Musson (Musée nationale des Mines. Rumelange, ed. V. Kremer. *Panorama d'ensemble du Bassin minier et métallurgique de Longwy et d'Esch* (France, Grande Duché de Luxembourg, Allemagne, Belgique), no date.

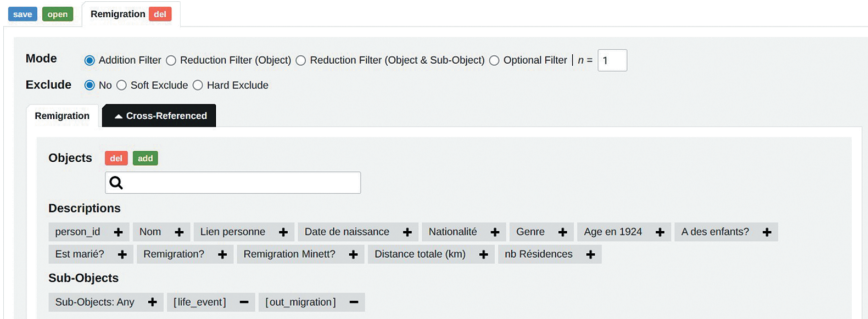


Figure 2: Inclusion of a remigration filter in the Nodegoat data model.

Search category	Explanation
BEFORE	A place of residence outside Luxembourg and the Minett before migration to Luxembourg and the Minett
OUTSIDE	A place of residence outside Luxembourg and the Minett in between migration out of Luxembourg and the Minett and remigration to Luxembourg and the Minett
ENTER	The last place of residence before entering Luxembourg and the Minett
INSIDE	A place of residence inside Luxembourg and the Minett
EXIT	The first place of residence after leaving Luxembourg and the Minett
EXIT/ENTER	The last place of residence before entering Luxembourg and the Minett and the first place of residence after leaving Luxembourg and the Minett are identical

Figure 3: Overview of search categories with explanations.¹⁴

whereas Nodegoat required us to insert a fixed date, e.g. “<1914” or “a date between 1914 and 1918.” To find the data that matched the search categories, we therefore needed to think beyond Nodegoat. We needed to export our data in CSV, Comma-Separated Values, a file format used to store tabular data such as spreadsheets or databases in a plain text format, and insert them into our own data model created in MySQL without being influenced by the Nodegoat interface. There, we could use the following aggregation function to find the first place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett: `SELECT MIN(date) FROM`

¹⁴ In Nodegoat: `SELECT distinct (remigration_state), count (*) FROM remigration.life_event group by remigration_state.`

events WHERE code='LU'. The same logic was then followed for detecting (2) and (3), and we could then inject the output of the first query as input to the second query, for example SELECT * FROM events WHERE date > (SELECT MIN(date) FROM events WHERE code='LU') AND code <> 'LU'.

The database we created outside Nodegoat enabled us to perform several calculations, but these calculations could not be visualized geographically. We approach maps as “primary modes of knowledge production,”¹⁵ having the potential to “generate questions that might otherwise go unasked, reveal historical relations that might otherwise go unnoticed, and undermine, or substantiate, stories upon which we build our own versions of the past.”¹⁶ In order to exploit that possibility, we transformed our data via several SQL scripts (calculation of remigration routes, distances of migration trajectories, duration, etc.), exported these data in CSV format, and then imported them into Nodegoat again. Figure 4 shows which data from an individual remigrant were generated in Nodegoat (in black) and which were calculated in a database outside Nodegoat and subsequently imported into Nodegoat for visualization (in blue).

–	person_id	9676230	<i>Link to database ID</i>
–	Nom	T. Giulio	<i>Link to person within the primary model in Nodegoat</i>
–	Date de naissance	26-02-1890	
–	Nationalité	Italienne	
–	Genre	Homme	
–	Age en 1924	34	
–	A des enfants?	Non	
–	Est marié?	Oui	
–	Distance totale (km)	4.425.128	
–	nb Résidences	5	
–	flag	MIGRATION_WW1, MIGRATION_1923	
–	Exit_to_italy?	Oui	

Figure 4: Data about the migration trajectory of Giulio Tomasetti processed in Nodegoat (black) and our MySQL database before being reimported into Nodegoat (blue).¹⁷

¹⁵ Johanna Drucker, *Visualization and Interpretation: Humanistic Approaches to Display* (Cambridge; Massachusetts; London, England: The MIT Press, 2020), 17.

¹⁶ Todd Presner and David Shepard, “Mapping the geospatial turn,” in *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2015), 209.

¹⁷ DA 1924, 1006.

Date Start	Location	Event type	Distance km	Migration type	Age
26-02-1890	Fiuminata (IT)	Birth		ENTER	0
1911	Differdange (LU)	Residence	887.178	INSIDE	21
01-08-1914	Nocera Umbra (IT)	Residence	887.392	EXIT/ENTER	24
02-08-1923	Differdange (LU)	Residence	887.392	INSIDE	33
23-03-1924	Nocera Umbra (IT)	Residence	887.392	EXIT/ENTER	34
06-11-1924	Rue Gare-Usines Unter-Italien Dudelange (LU) 43	Residence	874.438	INSIDE	34
08-11-1924	Dudelange (LU)	Declaration		INSIDE	34

Figure 4 (continued)

Figure 9 included and discussed in this chapter is an example of a visualization that enabled us to detect certain migration patterns by visualizing them on a geographical map. But once we had visualized these patterns, we found that the possibilities offered by Nodegoat to analytically interpret the displayed data were limited. Although it was possible to hover over dots on the map, interpreting the meaning of these dots and understanding how they were interrelated with other categories of analysis, such as age, gender and citizenship, was sometimes very difficult within Nodegoat. We therefore imported the data displayed on the map into Excel and used its search functions in parallel to our investigations in Nodegoat.

Migration and Remigration to Luxembourg

Our search for remigrants started in a database containing the data from 1,115 declaration forms of foreigners who arrived in Dudelange in the year 1924. As discussed in previous work:

Given the strong demand for industrial workers as well as the low availability of local workers who were employed in agriculture, industrial companies had already extended their recruitment policies in the last quarter of the 19th Century. Foreign workers were invited from neighboring countries first, from the Italian peninsula since the end of the 19th Century, and later increasingly also from the Eastern Empires which transformed to various young interwar states in Central and Eastern Europe after the First World War (. . .). Dudelange, a municipality in the south of Luxembourg situated at the border with France and

belonging to what soon became one of Europe's most dynamic industrial regions, grew exponentially from a little village into a municipality.¹⁸

Among the 1,115 foreigners declared in 1924, the biggest groups of foreign workers came from Italy and Germany, while there were also French, Belgian, Polish, Austrian, Spanish, Russian, American, Swiss, Yugoslav, Dutch, and Czechoslovakian citizens. Before the First World War, some of these foreigners had already migrated to Dudelange¹⁹ and possibly also outmigrated from Dudelange.²⁰ The first remigration to Luxembourg occurred as early as 1904.²¹ Most of the foreigners declaring residence in Dudelange were male migrants between the ages of 20 and 40.²²

Our collection includes foreigners displaying immigration, outmigration, and remigration practices which involve just two addresses of residence: one in the country of origin, and one in Luxembourg and the Minett. A typical example is Giovanni Cruciani, who was born in Foligno in Italy in 1889, came to Dudelange in 1913, and left at the beginning of the First World War on August 1, 1914. Afterwards, his declaration form reads, he resided in Foligno for ten years but, given the fact that he was most probably enrolled in the Italian army during the war, it is uncertain whether he stayed in Foligno or also fought on the battlefield as a soldier. He married in 1915 in Foligno and returned to Dudelange in August 1924 without his wife.²³ However, remigration to Luxembourg and the Minett was often much more complex for two reasons. Firstly, the turnover of foreign laborers was often very high; although foreign laborers were initially recruited as an additional temporary workforce to compensate for a local labor shortage, by the 1920s they had become a structural solution. The steelworks in the town of Dudelange reached 1,799 foreigners in 1927 out of a total workforce of 4,105 people, and these figures hide the turnover; between 1919 and 1939, 13,503 declaration forms for foreigners were signed in the municipality.²⁴ The Minett was indeed a cross-border employment market characterized by a highly volatile in- and outflux of foreign labor. The French sociologist Piero-D. Galloro has called the foreign

18 Venken and Sauer, "Declaration forms," 3.

19 See for example DA 1924, 747.

20 See for example DA 1924, 563.

21 DA 1924, 213.

22 Search in Nodegoat: SELECT count(*), age_of_arrival FROM person WHERE have_fiche=1 AND is_dudelange_1924=1 GROUP BY age_of_arrival ORDER BY age_of_arrival.

23 DA 1924, 734.

24 Denis Scuto, "Histoire des immigrations au Luxembourg (XIXe-XXIe siècles)," in *25 ans d'action pour l'immigration, 1985-2010*, ed. OGBL, Département des Immigrés (Luxembourg: OGBL/ Département des Immigrés, 2010), 13-38.

laborers working on the other side of the French-Luxembourgish border in Lorraine “princes of the wind” to indicate their nomadic lifestyle within the Minett; they often changed employers and sometimes moved across the national border as often as every two weeks, the typical duration of a labor contract for miners and steel workers at the time.²⁵ And secondly, although during the First World War the Luxembourg national authorities had decided to steer a neutral course, in practice the country was occupied by German troops. Most importantly for our study, a German military post hindered and eventually stopped the cross-border supply of iron ore, which led to the closure of the steelworks in Dudelange and to the majority of the labor force in the municipality losing their jobs.²⁶ In 1910 Dudelange had 2,037 Italian inhabitants out of a total population of 10,788, but most subsequently returned to Italy as they feared being stuck in exile during the war.²⁷ About 18,000 Italians left the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in the summer of 1914, and others followed once they were called up to join the Italian army in 1915. As Luxembourg maintained a neutral stance during the war, Italians could continue living in the country without being transferred to internment camps, unlike Italian citizens living in Belgium and France.²⁸ The steelworks reopened during the war but recruited differently; 15-year-old Luxembourgish girls were no exception.²⁹

In order to capture the specific characteristics of mobility within and beyond the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett, we decided to employ a broad definition of remigration. Initially, to be included in our remigration database, a foreigner who declared his or her arrival in Dudelange in 1924 needed to have resided within the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett as a foreigner, and to have moved away from and later returned to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett at least once. During our analysis, however, we realized that we needed to clarify our definition. One problem we encountered was that of local women marrying foreigners; Anna Wahl, for example, was born in Lux-

25 Piero-D. Galloro, *Ouvriers du fer, princes du vent, Histoire des flux de main-d'œuvre dans la sidérurgie lorraine (1880–1939)* (Metz: Éditions Serpenoise, 2001).

26 For more information, including reactions of the population, see: Sandra Camarda, Antoinette Reuter and Denis Scuto, *Être d'ailleurs en temps de guerre (14–18). Étrangers à Dudelange / Dudelangeois à l'étranger* (Dudelange: CDMH/C²DH, 2018), 15.

27 Ständige Kommission für Statistik (ed.), *Ergebnisse der Volkszählung vom 1. Dezember 1910 nebst Ortschaftsverzeichnis. Heft XXXVI* (Luxembourg: Charles Beffort, 1911).

28 Maria Luisa Caldognetto, “Autour d'une photo. Des prisonniers de guerre italiens au Luxembourg en 1918.” *Mutations. Mémoires et perspectives du bassin minier* 10 (2018): 120.

29 Jacques Maas, “Rails et poutrelles, bombes et luttes sociales. L'usine sidérurgique de Dudelange à l'époque de la Première Guerre mondiale,” *Mutations. Mémoires et perspectives du bassin minier* 10 (2018): 13–28.

embourg, and when she married an American man in 1919 in Dudelange, she exchanged her Luxembourgish citizenship for American citizenship in accordance with the law.³⁰ When she left Dudelange for Paris in 1923, she did so as a foreigner, and hence falsely appeared in our database.³¹ Another specific feature was the redrawing of the French-German border after the First World War, when Alsace and Lorraine, which had become part of Germany following the French-German War in 1871, became French again. We had included “Lothringen (DE)” as a historical region in our database but had not specified the change in national status of smaller entities within Lothringen, such as “Algringen” and, as a result, Arthur Deichfischer, for example, appeared in our database as a remigrant, whereas he outmigrated from Algringen (nowadays Algrange) to Stuttgart during the First World War as a German citizen, not as a foreigner.³² The last adjustment we made was to erase those migrants from the database who spent less than 14 days between outmigration and remigration, which was based on the typical length of a labor contract for a miner or steelworker at the time. It was, of course, arbitrary, as any other decision regarding the number of days that would define mobility as distinct from remigration would have been. While one could argue that the decision was justified given that the majority of foreigners in the Minett worked in the mining and steel industries and that most of these workers were male, that decision nonetheless makes female migrants in the database appear as remigrants according to a query based on a male migration pattern. One example of a mobility pattern excluded from our definition of remigration was a Polish man registered as “Wladislaus Sloma” (the man only held a certificate for foreigners issued outside his country of origin and probably mentioning the same name, but his real Polish name was likely to have been Władysław Słoma), a driver who collected three places of residence within nine days in August 1924; he left Dudelange for Luxembourg City and was found in Esch-sur-Alzette two days later, after which he travelled to Trier in Germany before returning to Dudelange six days later.³³

Using our definition of remigration, i.e. excluding Luxembourgish women married to foreigners, taking into account the historical changes of state border lines and considering at least 14 days between outmigration and remigration, we

³⁰ The French Civil Code of 1803 required women who married foreigners to change citizenship. In Luxembourg, this remained a legal requirement until 1934, and again between 1940 and 1975 (Scuto 2012: 345–346).

³¹ DA 1924, 507.

³² DA 1924, 188.

³³ DA 1924, 353.

counted 149 remigrants among the foreigners who declared their arrival in Dudelange in 1924 (Figure 5).

Citizenship	Number
Italian	82
German	53
French	10
Belgian	2
American	1
Swiss	1

Figure 5: A total of 149 remigrants among the 1,115 foreigners who declared arrival in Dudelange in 1924.³⁴

Figure 6 shows the number of outmigrations of foreigners whose data can be found in the declaration forms filed by officials in 1924 from Luxembourg and the Minett each year, which indicates that most departed during the First World War or during the period encompassing the years 1923 and 1924.

Since foreigners were only legally required to declare their location for the ten years prior to their arrival, the declaration forms of 1924 provide systematic reporting of mobility and migration patterns from 1914 onwards. To research remigration for a period before 1914, one would need to use declaration forms from an earlier year. Based on the distribution of outmigrations over time, we decided to focus on a comparative analysis of remigration to Luxembourg and the Minett in 1924 for the two time periods generating the most frequent outmigration: the period of the First World War (July 28, 1914 until November 11, 1918) and the period encompassing the years 1923 and 1924. The total number of remigrants who left Luxembourg and the Minett during the First World War was 33 and the total number of remigrants who left Luxembourg and the Minett during the years 1923 and 1924 as documented in the declaration forms produced in the year 1924 was 59. The total number of outmigrations does not correspond to the total number of remigrants, as seven foreigners outmigrated more than once; they might be referred to as “double remigrants.”³⁵

³⁴ Search in Nodegoat: SELECT count(*), n.base FROM person p, person_nationalite pn, nationalite n WHERE p.is_dudelange_1924=1 AND (p.is_remigration=1 OR p.is_remigration_minett=1) AND p.id=pn.person_id AND pn.nationalite_id=n.id GROUP BY n.base ORDER BY count(*) DESC.

³⁵ List of “double remigrants” outmigrating during the First World War and the years 1923 and 1924: DA 1924, 286, 640, 832, 907, 1006, 1009, 1089.

Year	Number of foreigners migrating out of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Minett
1903	1
1904	1
1905	1
1906	1
1907	1
1909	2
1910	1
1911	3
1912	2
1913	6
1914	31
1915	2
1916	3
1917	3
1918	3
1919	3
1920	6
1921	9
1922	20
1923	29
1924	29

Figure 6: The number of outmigrations from Luxembourg and the Minett each year.

Remigration Following Outmigration During the First World War

We now discuss and compare remigration practices for the two time periods by looking at changes in places of residence and especially focusing on potential differences between the two biggest groups of remigrants: Italian and German citizens. We first consider the 33 people who migrated from somewhere in Europe or the United States of America to Luxembourg and the Minett before the First World War, left the Minett at some moment during the period between July 28, 1914 and November 11, 1918, and migrated to the municipality of Dudelange in 1924. We demonstrate that this major international crisis was most likely to provoke an outmigration-remigration pattern between two places of residence.

Among the 33 remigrants, there were 28 Italians, four Germans, and one Swiss national. The most popular place of residence among the foreigners who moved to

Luxembourg and the Minett before the First World War and remigrated to Dudelange in 1924 was actually Dudelange; this municipality was the place of residence for 44 migrants, and the second and third most popular destinations (Kayl-Tétange in Luxembourg, five individuals; and Esch-sur-Alzette in Luxembourg, four individuals) were only respectively five and 16 kilometers away. This demonstrates that when migrants returned in 1924, they did so to a place they had already known and where they had most likely already worked before. One might question whether remigrants were reemployed by the same employer, or within the same profession, in 1924, however, these questions cannot be conclusively answered because the declaration forms of remigrants were not compared with their initial declarations upon arrival in Dudelange or another municipality in southern Luxembourg. Given that the most likely employers for male foreigners in southern Luxembourg were a limited number of big steel companies, it is plausible to assume that many remigrants were reemployed by the same employer.

The fact that six remigrants had two different places of residence in Luxembourg and the Minett before outmigration indicates that already before the First World War, there was a tendency to migrate within Luxembourg and the Minett. One of these remigrants was Pasquale Pezzuti. Born in Villa Sant'Angelo in Italy in 1889, he moved to Dudelange in 1906, but just half a year later he declared residence in the United States, where he stayed for two years; afterwards, he came back to the Minett and settled in Herserange on the French side of the French-Luxembourgish border in 1909. His declaration form does not provide us with more information about where he lived, and what he did, between 1909 and 1923. We do know that he married in his birth village in 1923 and returned to Dudelange shortly afterwards, 18 years after having declared residence in the municipality for the first time.³⁶

The outmigration of Italians at the beginning of the war was rapid. By the end of August 1914, 20 of the Italian citizens who later remigrated to Dudelange in 1924 had already left Luxembourg, and by the end of the year, another five had followed. The migration pattern of Venanzo Cherubini is an example of a typical practice for an Italian steel worker including both internal migration within the Minett and migration between Italy and Luxembourg. His trajectory consisted of a direct travel route from Italy to Dudelange, internal migration within the Grand Duchy and the Minett, a direct journey back to Italy in 1914, followed by a direct path back to Dudelange in 1924. Born in 1886 in Nocera Umbra in the middle of Italy, Venanzo Cherubini arrived in Dudelange on September 23, 1913 and, just two and a half months later, on December 4, 1913, he registered in another Luxem-

³⁶ DA 1924, 1008.

bourgish municipality in the Minett region: Kayl-Tétange. Cherubini left Luxembourg to return to his place of birth in October 1914, where he stayed for “10 years in Nocera Umbra” (we have no information about what he did during the war), after which he returned to Dudelange in October 1924.³⁷

Just three Italian citizens emigrated from Luxembourg between 1915 and 1917. It may very well be that Amadeo Lisarelli and Ambrogio D’Ambros waited until they were called to arms to serve in the Italian army, although the declaration forms did not document this; for example, we know that Ambrogio D’Ambros left Luxembourg and declared residence in Seren on June 4, 1915. In 1924, it was reported that he “came from Seren (IT), where he spent 9 years, after spending 11 years in Ettelbruck (LU).”³⁸ Interestingly, Giovanni Valdini migrated to Luxembourg during the First World War; he declared residence under number 135 on May 20, 1916 as a blue-collar worker in Dudelange, where he stayed for about a year, before returning to Verona in Italy.³⁹ He was not alone; it may come as a surprise that 74 Italians declared their residence in Dudelange in 1916, as did 87 German citizens.⁴⁰

The outmigration of German citizens who left Luxembourg and the Minett during the First World War and declared residence in Dudelange in 1924 concerned fewer individuals and differed in nature. Among the men, there were two who only returned to Dudelange once they had retired; they never returned to the Luxembourg labor market. Peter Muno had already lived in Dudelange between 1882 and 1918, and after spending five years 100 kilometers further south in the German municipality of Völklingen, he decided to return at the age of 68.⁴¹ Ernst Ries, on the other hand, was born in Germany, moved to Luxembourg City during the First World War in August 1914, returned to Germany in December 1916, and moved back to Dudelange on Christmas Eve 1924 as a retired person.⁴² The two remigrants who did join the Luxembourg labor market had both already lived in Luxembourg before the war. One German remigrant had followed his parents to Luxembourg as a minor in 1913, stayed until he turned 18 in 1917, then moved back to Hassloch in Germany, where he had been born, probably to join the German army; he moved back to Dudelange in 1924 as an adult.⁴³ Alfred Koch was born in the German municipality of Schwanebeck in 1892 and lived in Luxembourg before the war as a

³⁷ DA 1924, 934.

³⁸ DA 1924, 501, 907.

³⁹ DA 1924, 73.

⁴⁰ Municipal archives of Dudelange, Declaration forms of arrival for the year 1916.

⁴¹ DA 1924, 51.

⁴² DA 1924, 1109.

⁴³ DA 1924, 297.

German citizen until he was called up for the German army in 1915. The declaration form does not inform us where he spent the rest of the war, but it was most probably outside Luxembourg; after living for three years in the German municipality of Hirschberg following Germany's defeat, he remigrated to Luxembourg.⁴⁴

The only example of a remigration trajectory of a migrant not holding German or Italian citizenship is that of Charlotte Offenbach, a Swiss citizen who never actually lived in Switzerland.⁴⁵ She declared residence by herself in Dudelange in 1924 at the age of 39. She arrived alone, without her adult child and while living separately from her husband, and she earned her own money.⁴⁶ Figure 7 displays her lived social space, which encompassed the German municipality of Sankt Johann in the vicinity of Koblenz, the Minett and Alsace. This indicates that researching remigration

[01 Before LU]	24-03-1885	-	City [Located]	Sankt Johann (DE)
[01 Before LU]	25-04-1911	-	City [Located]	Boulangé (FR)
[01 Before LU]	11-06-1912	-	City [Located]	Esch-sur-Alzette (LU)
[02 During LU]	12-06-1912	-	City [Located]	Esch-sur-Alzette (LU)
[02 During LU]	12-06-1914	-	City [Located]	Knutange (FR)
[03 Start outmigration]	13-06-1914	-	City [Located]	Knutange (FR)
[03 Start outmigration]	13-06-1917	-	City [Located]	Brumath (FR)
[04 outside]	14-06-1920	-	City [Located]	Brumath (FR)
[04 outside]	15-06-1920	-	City [Located]	Maizières-lès-Metz (FR)
[04 outside]	15-06-1923	-	City [Located]	Metz (Moselle) (FR)
[04 outside]	16-06-1924	-	City [Located]	Strasbourg (FR)
[05 end outmigration]	17-06-1924	-	City [Located]	Strasbourg (FR)
[05 end outmigration]	01-11-1924	-	City [Located]	
[02 During LU]	02-11-1924	-	City [Located]	
[02 During LU]	03-11-1924	-	City [Located]	Dudelange (LU)
[02 During LU]	05-11-1924	-	City [Located]	Dudelange (LU)
[02 During LU]	07-11-1924	-	City [Located]	Dudelange (LU)

Figure 7: The migration trajectory of Swiss citizen Charlotte Offenbach.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ DA 1924, 66.

⁴⁵ The Swiss state granted citizenship based on descent rather than place of birth. This meant that a person could be a Swiss citizen by virtue of being born to Swiss parents, even if they never actually lived in Switzerland.

⁴⁶ DA 1924, 999.

⁴⁷ DA 1924, 999.

through the lens of the Minett's iron ore and steel industry imposes a filter that highlights steel workers' migration practices and possibly hinders us from unraveling the less frequent and more uncommon migration trajectories of independent women.

The Years 1923 and 1924

The second period under consideration in this chapter is the years 1923 and 1924. Fifty-nine migrants who declared residence in Dudelange in the year 1924 had already migrated away from Luxembourg and the Minett at least once in the years 1923 and 1924; unlike the First World War, this was a peaceful period when foreign labor was in high demand across various national borders within and beyond the Minett. We demonstrate that while industrial competition resulted in repeated remigration practices among the foreign labor force, these practices had a different spatial dimension for Italian and German workers.

The outmigrations of Italian and German migrants were more balanced in the years 1923 and 1924 in comparison to the period of the First World War; in total there were 27 Italian, 28 German, and four remigrants holding a different citizenship. Although the direct outmigration-remigration pattern was most common among remigrants who left Luxembourg and the Minett during World War I, and there were only six remigrants who had two places of residence before outmigration, the period 1923–1924 shows the opposite. The fact that only one remigrant held one place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett and 56 held at least two residences before migrating outside that spatial universe in 1923 or 1924 demonstrates a more volatile migration pattern (Figure 8).

Number of residences	Italian remigrants	German remigrants	Remigrants holding another citizenship	Total
4 residences	3	0	0	3
3 residences	8	1	1	10
2 residences	15	25	3	43
1 residence	0	1	0	1

Figure 8: Number of residences before migrating out of Luxembourg and the Minett in the years 1923 and 1924.

A geographical visualization (Figure 9) clearly shows how different the spatial migratory universes of Italian and German remigrants were. While German migrants had a greater tendency to move back and forth between Luxembourg and the Minett and Germany, two groups of Italian remigrants could be distilled based on their migration trajectories: those who had a greater tendency to be mobile within or near the Minett, and those who traveled back and forth to and from Italy. This implies that while the German and Italian remigrants in our study frequently lived and worked together in Luxembourg, they did not do so – or at least not as often – when working in other places in the Minett, where a relatively higher percentage of Italian migrants was found, or in Germany, where Italian workers were an exception.

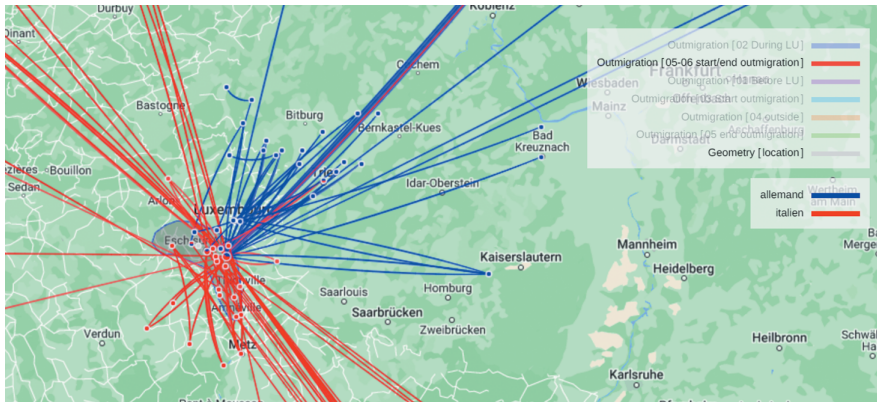


Figure 9: The migration trajectories of German and Italian remigrants to Dudelange during the years 1923 and 1924.

The 28 German migrants mostly left a specific place in Luxembourg and the Minett for a municipality in Germany in the years 1923 and 1924 and returned from that German municipality to Luxembourg and the Minett, most frequently to the same municipality they had left.⁴⁸ An example of a person showing a typical remigration pattern was Peter Kickert, born in Wallendorf, on the German side of the German-Luxembourgish border, in 1873, who migrated for the first time to Dudelange in May 1923 and stayed until the end of the high season in November, when he returned to Wallendorf for the winter; that Kickert was a

⁴⁸ See for example DA 1924, 69.

seasonal worker is acknowledged by the fact that he moved back to Dudelange at the end of April 1924.⁴⁹ Interestingly and contrary to the profile of German remigrants who outmigrated during the First World War, the cohort of German migrants declaring residence in Dudelange in 1924 after having outmigrated in the years 1923 and 1924 did not have a documented history in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg or the Minett during the First World War.

Inspired by the geographical visualization, we decided to divide the 27 Italian foreigners who arrived in Dudelange in 1924 after having outmigrated in the years 1923 and 1924 into two groups based on the number of kilometers between the last place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett before outmigration and the first place of residence within Luxembourg and the Minett after remigration. Seventeen Italian workers did not return to Italy after leaving Luxembourg and the Minett in the years 1923 and 1924; unlike the German migrants, these 17 Italian workers outmigrated to municipalities in Belgium, France, and Luxembourg, mostly in geographical proximity to Luxembourg, however, like the German migrants, most displayed a direct outmigration-remigration pattern.⁵⁰ Francesco Corrazol, however, born in Pedavena in Italy in 1895, displayed a more frequent migration pattern; he moved to Boulogny in France for three months in 1922, then moved 33 kilometers north and entered the French part of the Minett, specifically the municipality of Audun-le-Tiche, where he stayed for one year. He then moved 100 kilometers south-east within France, where he stayed in two different places of residence within 15 kilometers of each other for one year in total, before traveling another 90 kilometers to Dudelange in October 1924.⁵¹

The second group consists of the 10 remigrants who traveled more than 500 kilometers back and forth between Luxembourg and the Minett and Italy. The fact that these migrants stayed outside Luxembourg and the Minett for a period ranging from 33 to 591 days demonstrates that they did not necessarily always need more time to remigrate than the other 17 remigrants who traveled between 18 and 370 kilometers within a time frame ranging from 16 to 398 days, which indicates the importance of taking time-space contraction into consideration.⁵² The

49 DA 1924, 285.

50 See for example DA 1924, 153, and 862.

51 DA 1924, 948.

52 See for example Randy Widdis' "spatial grammar," which approaches borderlands as spaces of flows and networks displaying various roads of "people, goods, capital and ideas" through time and space; borderlands vary in spatial extent and can embody different kinds of flows (Randy W. Widdis, "A Spatial Grammar of Migration Within the Canadian-American Borderlands at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in *Entangling North America: Space and Migration History*, ed. Alexander Freund and Benjamin Bryce (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015)).

fact that traveling more kilometers did not necessarily influence the migration practices of Italian remigrants prompts us to question whether instead of imposing a static spatial universe (Luxembourg and the Minett) on our definition of remigration, it would be more meaningful to let the trajectories of the migrants determine space and remigration; for example, other than kilometers, gender proved to be a decisive factor in determining whether an Italian foreigner moved within the Minett or returned to Italy. As Figure 10 shows, women were less than half as likely to remigrate, and they were less likely to travel back to Italy as men. Future research could investigate whether other categorizations, such as the job titles of migrants as recorded in the declaration forms, were also significant in determining the remigration practices of individuals.

Gender	Remigration to Italy	Remigration to non-Italian municipalities
Men	8	14
Women	1	4
Total	9	18

Figure 10: Gender distribution of Italian remigrants outmigrating to Italy or to other places within and beyond the Minett during the years 1923 and 1924.

One of these women was Margaretha Rauchs. Born in Schifflange (LU) in 1891 as a Luxembourgish national, she probably followed the Italian migrant Nicola Di Felice to Pietracamela following the outbreak of the First World War, where she married him in 1915. Margaretha migrated together with her husband to Dudelage in 1920,⁵³ and later outmigrated to the Belgian coal mining municipality of Lize in 1924 for two months and returned to Dudelage afterwards, probably without her husband, as she traveled alone and therefore received her own declaration form. On that form is nevertheless mentioned between brackets that her husband worked 24 kilometers south of Dudelage across the French border, in a French municipality that was referred to by its former German name of “Hay-inger-Lothringen,” and that her living expenses were paid from his salary.⁵⁴

The three remigrants who outmigrated from Luxembourg and the Minett both during the First World War and in the years 1923 and 1924 were all Italian workers, and they were not typical seasonal workers who had traveled to Luxembourg and the Minett for the summer months. Amadeo Lisarelli, for example, outmigrated to his place of birth in 1915, probably to join the Italian army, and once

⁵³ Municipal archives of Dudelage, Declaration forms of arrival for the year 1920, 63.

⁵⁴ DA 1924, 241.

again between August and December 1923.⁵⁵ Some remigrants holding other citizenships displayed different practices from those of German or Italian remigrants. Mathilde Meyer, for example, was a French woman born in 1905 who followed her mother to Dudelange in 1924 for one month, then went to Paris for some months, maybe to work as a domestic servant, and returned to Dudelange by the end of the year.⁵⁶ Given the small number of migrants holding a citizenship other than German or Italian, we did not further analyze their remigration practices. Such analysis would be feasible if data from a larger collection of declaration forms were included in another study.

Conclusion

Revisiting our recently composed Nodegoat database with information about migrants moving to the Luxembourgish municipality of Dudelange in the year 1924 to unravel remigration, a practice that was not documented as such in the past, turned out to be a fruitful exercise. The process of asking a new research question and testing it out using our empirical sources by playing around with the data and several digital tools enabled us to unravel, analyze, and compare remigration practices in the past, as well as evaluate the potential of our data model. The fact that we were still in an early phase of our research process was to some extent an advantage as we could freely practice iterative data modeling within a relatively small database including data from 1,115 declaration forms of arrival. It was also a disadvantage as our dataset was too small to draw larger conclusions, meaning that our findings are indicative and need to be verified with further research.

Through playful thinking, we were able to establish a definition of remigration that aligned with the practices of a majority of remigrating foreigners arriving in Dudelange in 1924. We define as remigrants those individuals who had arrived in Luxembourg and the Minett as foreigners, declared residence in Luxembourg and the Minett, left Luxembourg and the Minett and then returned after at least 14 days to Luxembourg and the Minett, at least once. Using this definition enabled us to identify the two periods of time generating most outmigration: the First World War and the years 1923 and 1924. The war mostly provoked a direct outmigration-remigration pattern among Italian, and to a lesser extent German, remigrants. While the rapid outmigration of Italian migrants was already docu-

55 DA 1924, 907. See also DA 1924, 241, 1006, and 1089.

56 DA 1924, 88 and 958.

mented in historiography, the fact that only a few German foreigners remigrated and that they had specific profiles – they were either retired migrants or had lived for a longer period in Luxembourg before the outbreak of the conflict – indicates a new finding. We found a comparable number of German and Italian remigrants who had outmigrated during the years 1923 and 1924, but, as Figure 9 shows, while German foreigners tended to move back and forth between Germany and Luxembourg, many Italian foreigners preferred to frequently migrate within, or beyond but still in the vicinity of, the Minett.

Our definition of remigration is not without flaws. We decided to set the temporal period to distinguish migration from mobility at 14 days, a decision which, although justified based on the usual length of labor contracts for foreign workers in the iron ore industry in Luxembourg and the Minett, remains somewhat arbitrary, especially for foreigners not working in iron ore mines or steelworks. The definition does exhibit a gender bias, as the query is based on a male migration pattern. Moreover, it can be discussed to what extent our imposition of a spatial zone consisting of Luxembourg and the Minett emphasizes the migration trajectories of certain foreigners, most prominently miners and factory workers, possibly to the detriment of others (such as independent working women). This observation does indeed call for a more fluid spatial understanding of the migratory universe of individual migrants composed by their many places of residence, both within and outside Luxembourg and the Minett. This is also supported by the fact that advances in transportation had made the geographical distance between Luxembourg and Italy easier to manage, meaning that distance no longer always played a decisive role in where an Italian foreigner leaving Luxembourg settled next.

During the exercise, we acquired new empirical knowledge on how to read, evaluate, and adapt our Nodegoat database, as well as how to let the data speak in tandem with other digital tools, such as another version of MySQL and Excel. This knowledge will be fruitful when adapting the data model both to include more data from different sources in the database and to answer new research questions. Data from other sources could enable a more detailed explanation of the reasons why foreigners migrated, outmigrated, and remigrated. This chapter demonstrated that while one can extract factual data from administrative sources about a phenomenon not explicitly reported, it is not possible to extract the underlying reasons for that phenomenon.

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