



ideas



The spatial dynamics of nonmarital births in  
France and Belgium (1968-2017):  
emergence, spatial diffusion and borders

Yoann Doignon

*Wittgenstein Centre Conference 2023: exploring population heterogeneities*

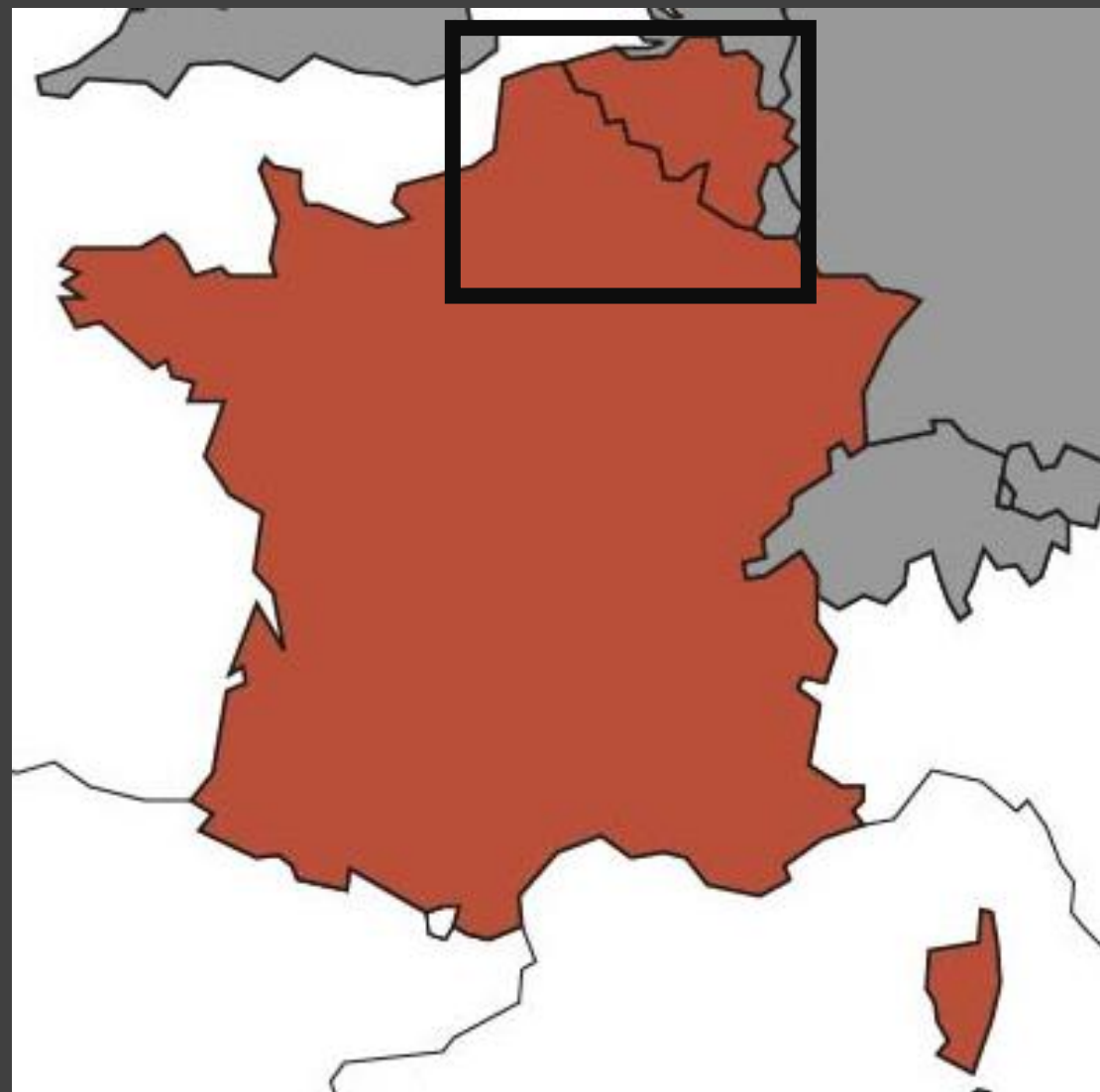
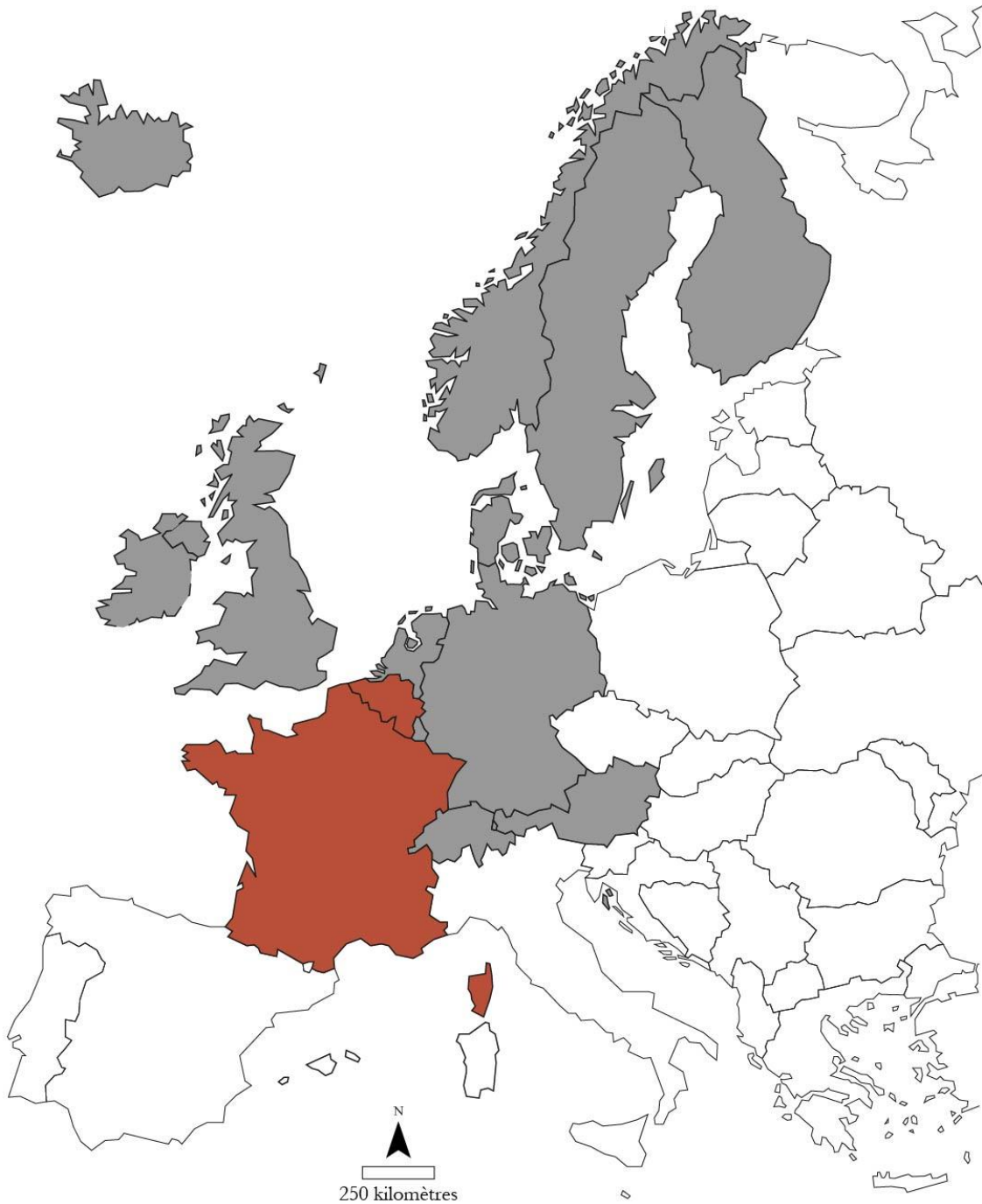
06/12/2023

# CONTEMPORARY FAMILY CHANGE

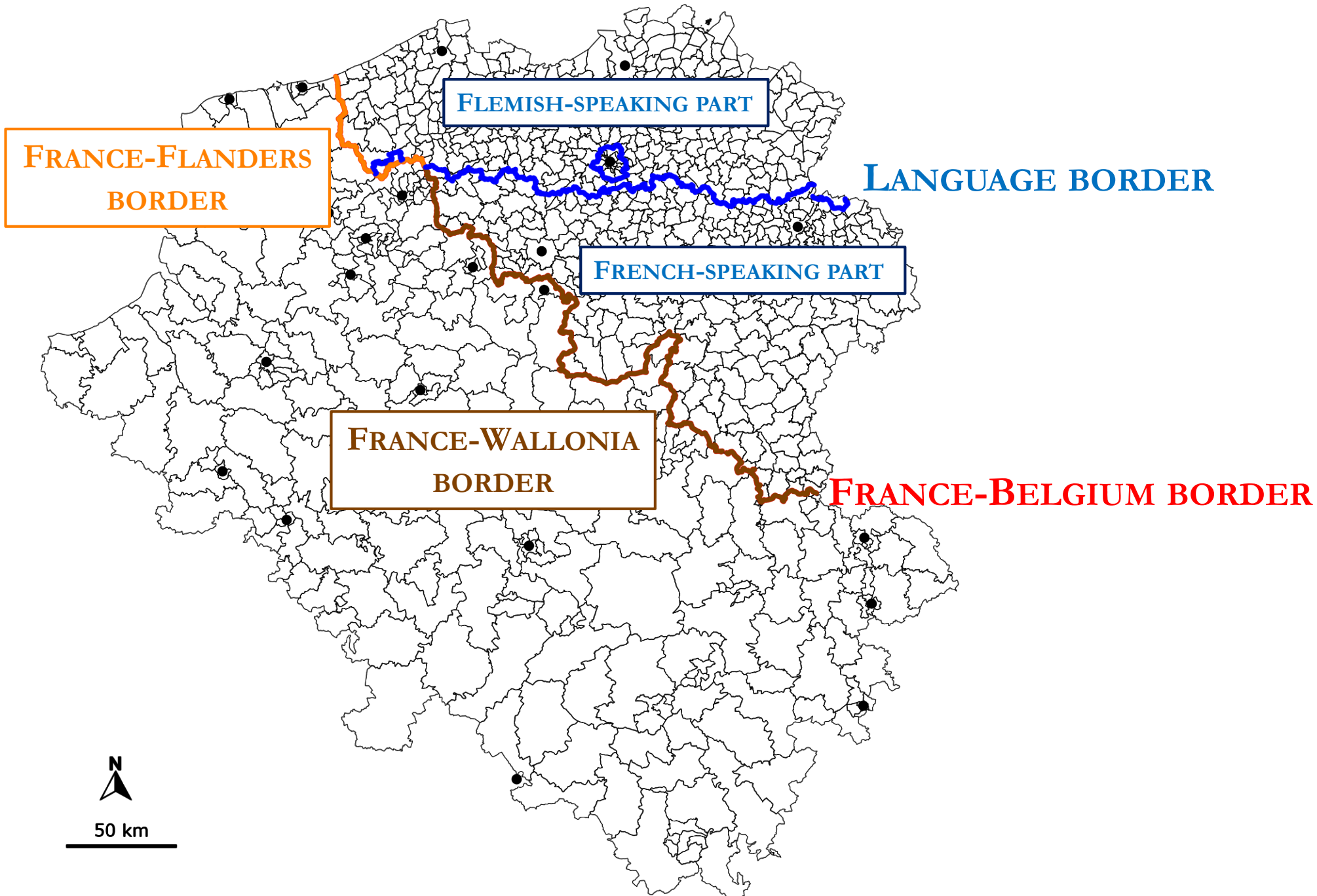
Increase in nonmarital births, cohabitation, divortiality, age at 1st marriage, age at 1st child ...

Large literature and discussions (Zaidi *et al.* 2017). But a field is less studied : the **spatial dimension** of these demographic changes.

- Spatial diffusion of nonmarital births (Vitali *et al.* 2015; Bleha *et al.* 2019; Doignon 2020), one-parent family (Caltabiano *et al.* 2017), cohabitation (Doignon, 2020)...
- Strong geographic divides of nonmarital births along borders in Europe (Klüsener *et al.* 2013)
- **Limited information on the role of borders in the spatial diffusion of family change**



# THE DIFFERENT BORDERS IN THE FRANCO-BELGIAN AREA



**What role do borders play in the spatial diffusion of nonmarital births in France and Belgium?**

Hypothesis 1: The national and language borders play a role of barrier

Hypothesis 2: The national border is a stronger spatial divides than language border

## Spatio-temporal approach

- Local geographic level
  - France: "pseudo-cantons" (aggregation of municipalities)
  - Belgium: municipalities
- Temporal range of 50 years (1968-2017)

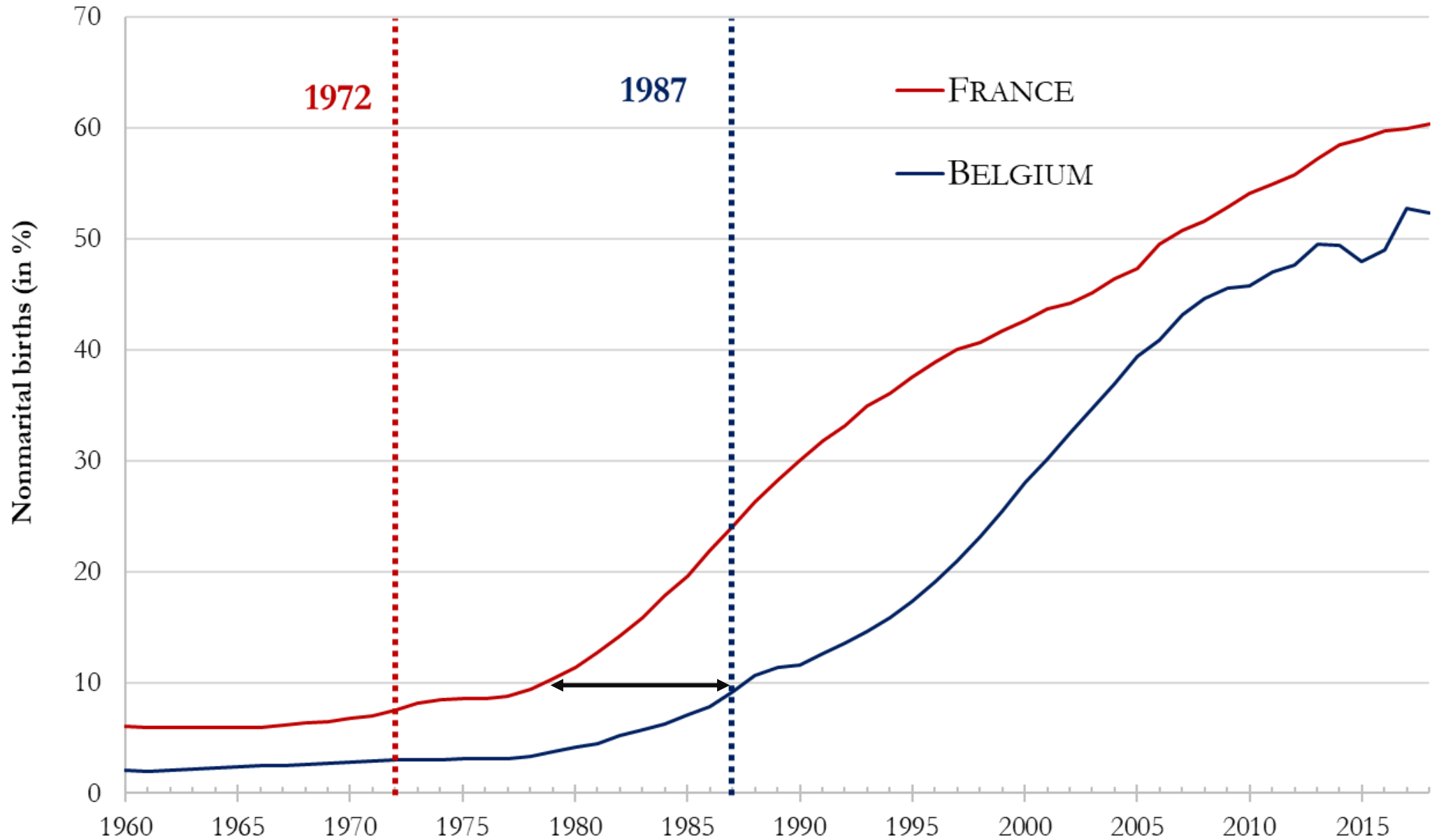
# Data

- Data sources: Civil Registry and National Register
  - Annually since 1968
  - Aggregation by 5-years periods
  - 10 periods between 1968 and 2017
- Indicator: Share of nonmarital births (in %)
- Measure of spatial divides (Decroly *et al.* 1993; Klüsener *et al.* 2013):  
absolute difference

# 4. RESULTS

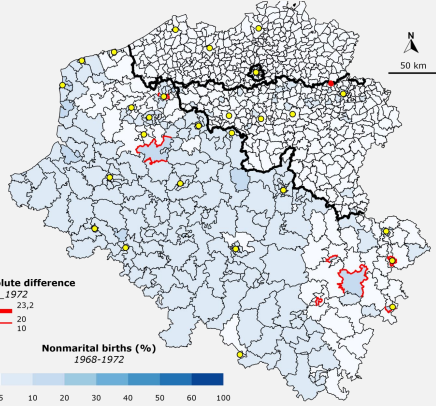


# NONMARITAL BIRTHS IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM SINCE 1960

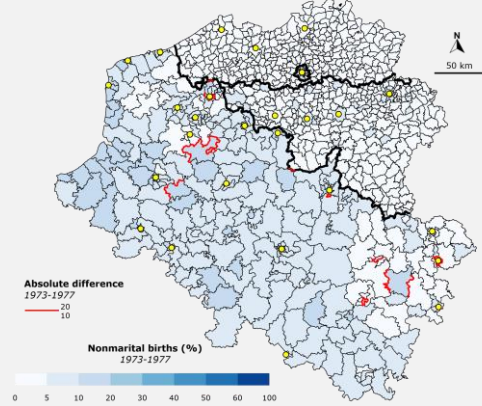


# SPATIAL DIVIDES IN NONMARITAL BIRTHS FRANCE-BELGIUM CROSS-BORDER AREA

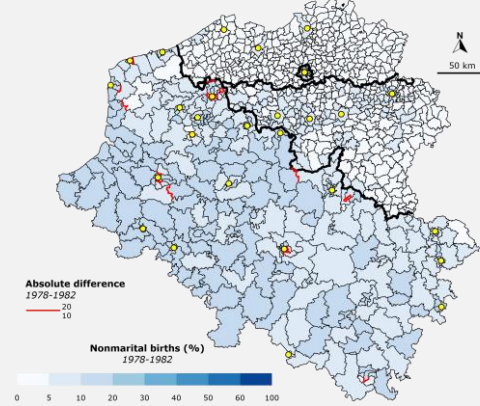
1968-1972



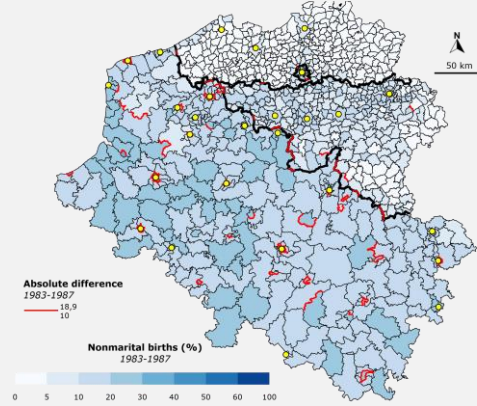
1973-1977



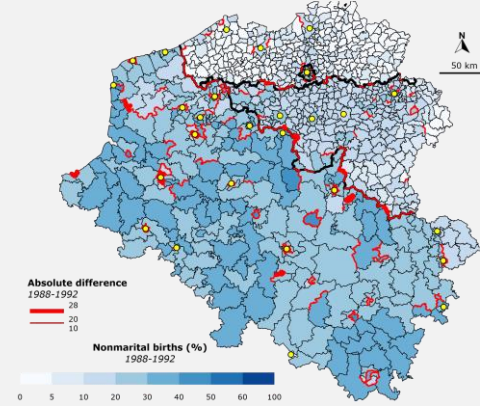
1978-1982



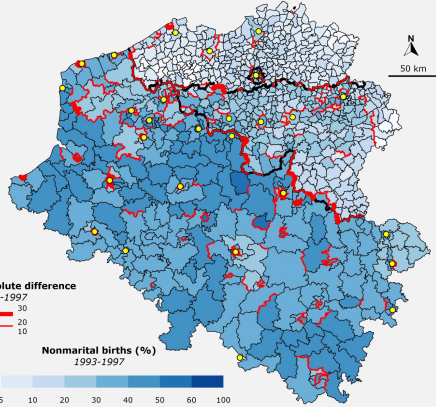
1983-1987



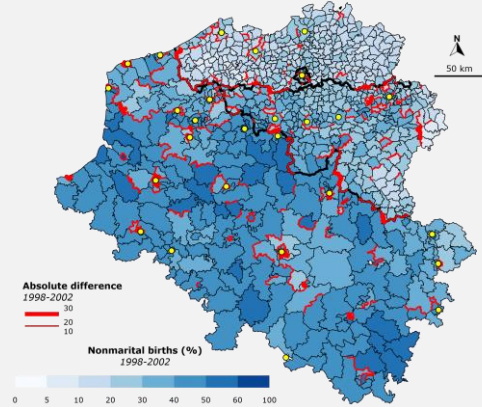
1988-1992



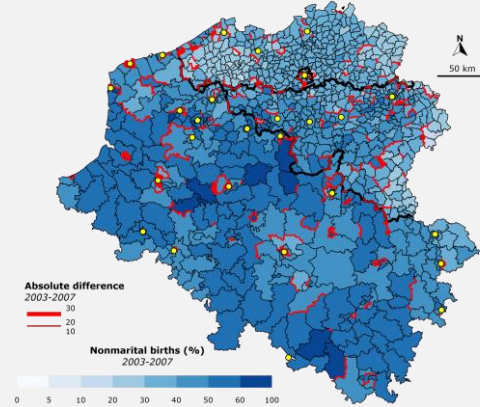
1993-1997



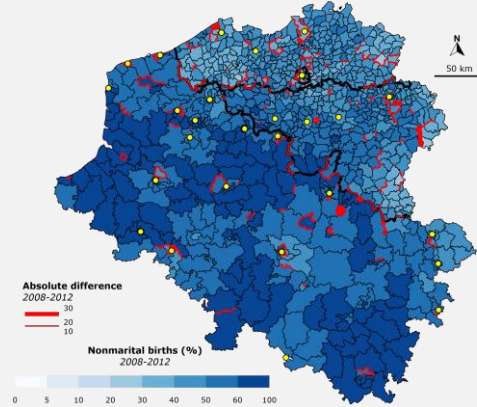
1998-2002



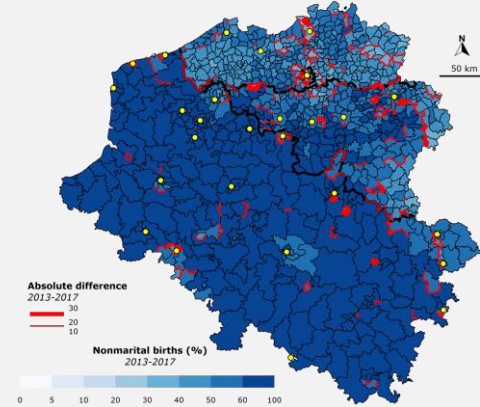
2003-2007



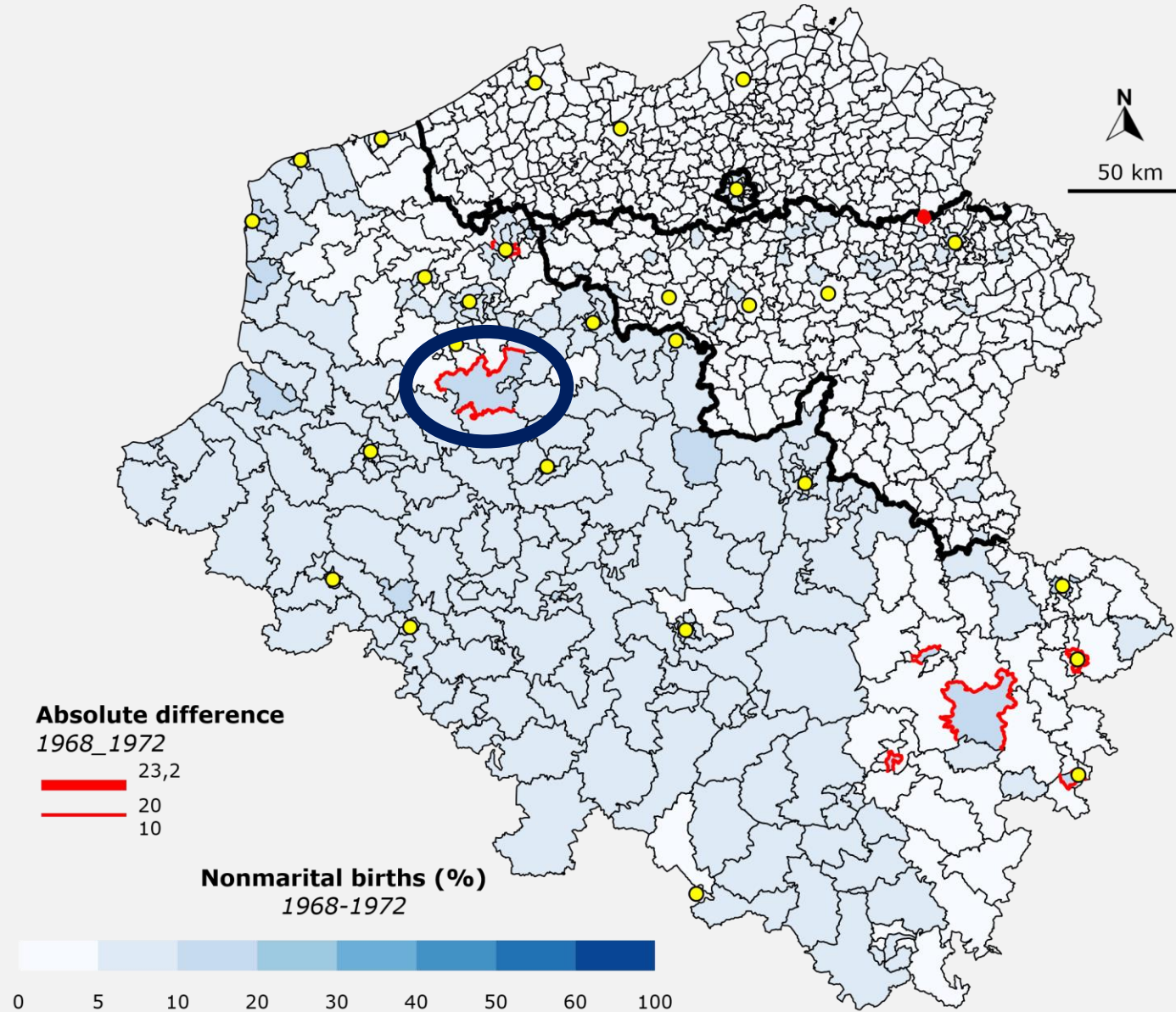
2008-2012



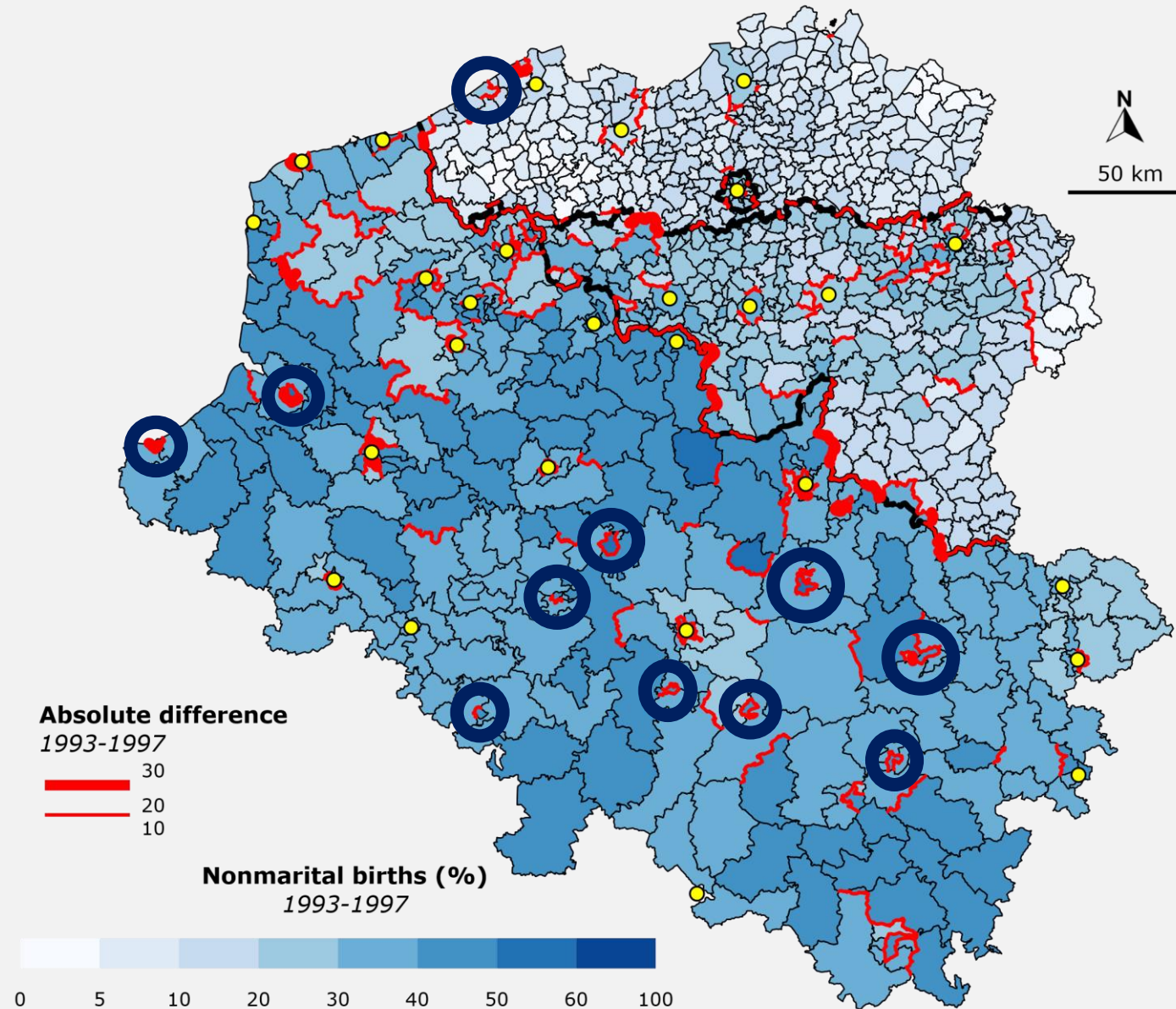
2013-2017



# SPATIAL DIVIDES IN NONMARITAL BIRTHS FRANCE-BELGIUM CROSS-BORDER AREA 1968-1972

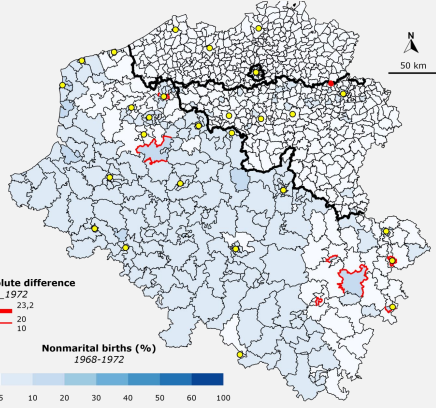


# SPATIAL DIVIDES IN NONMARITAL BIRTHS FRANCE-BELGIUM CROSS-BORDER AREA 1993-1997

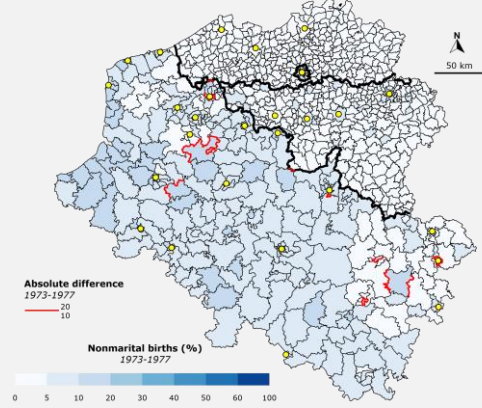


# SPATIAL DIVIDES IN NONMARITAL BIRTHS FRANCE-BELGIUM CROSS-BORDER AREA

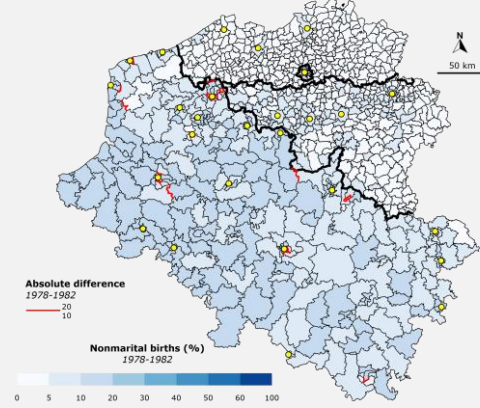
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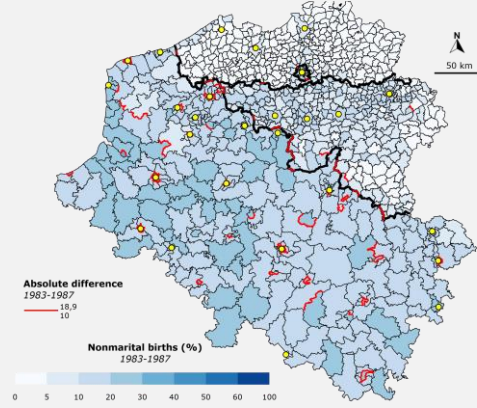
1973-1977



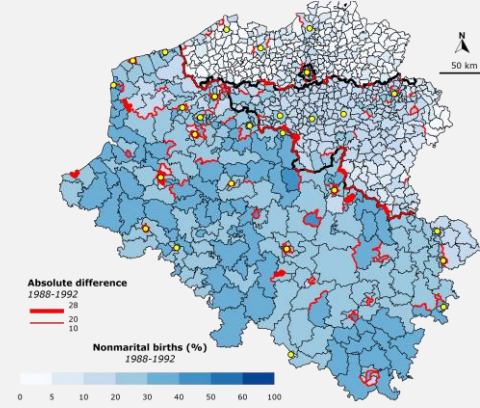
1978-1982



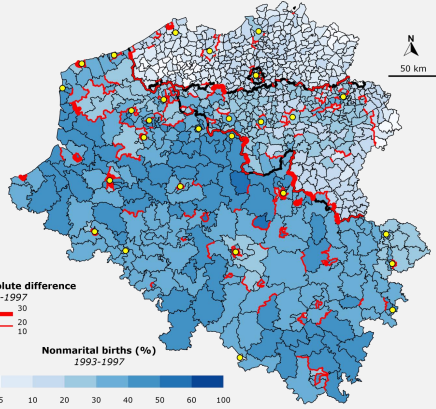
1983-1987



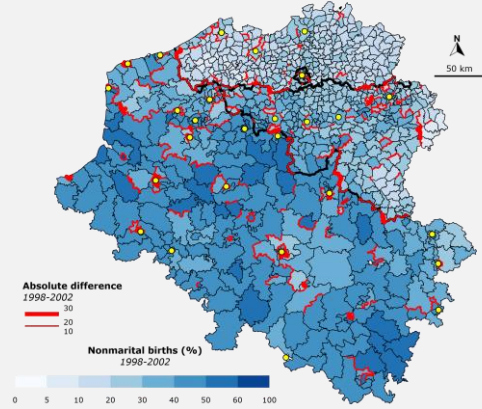
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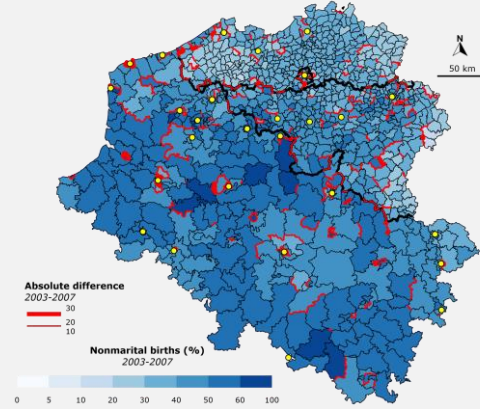
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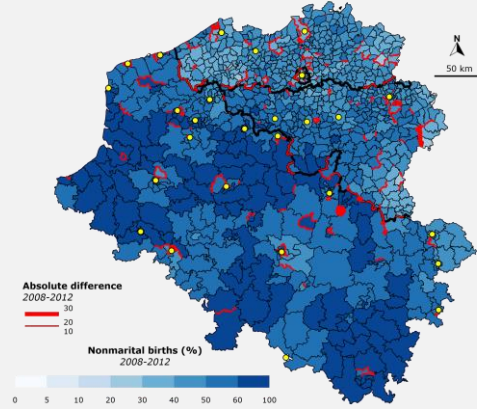
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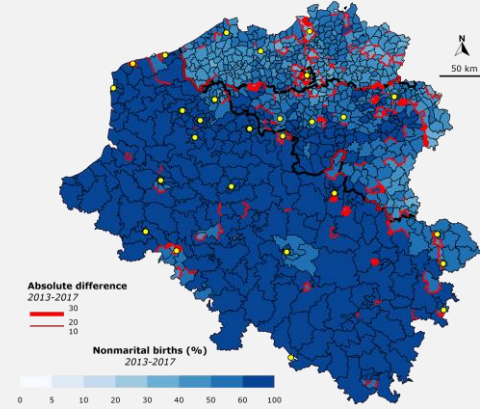
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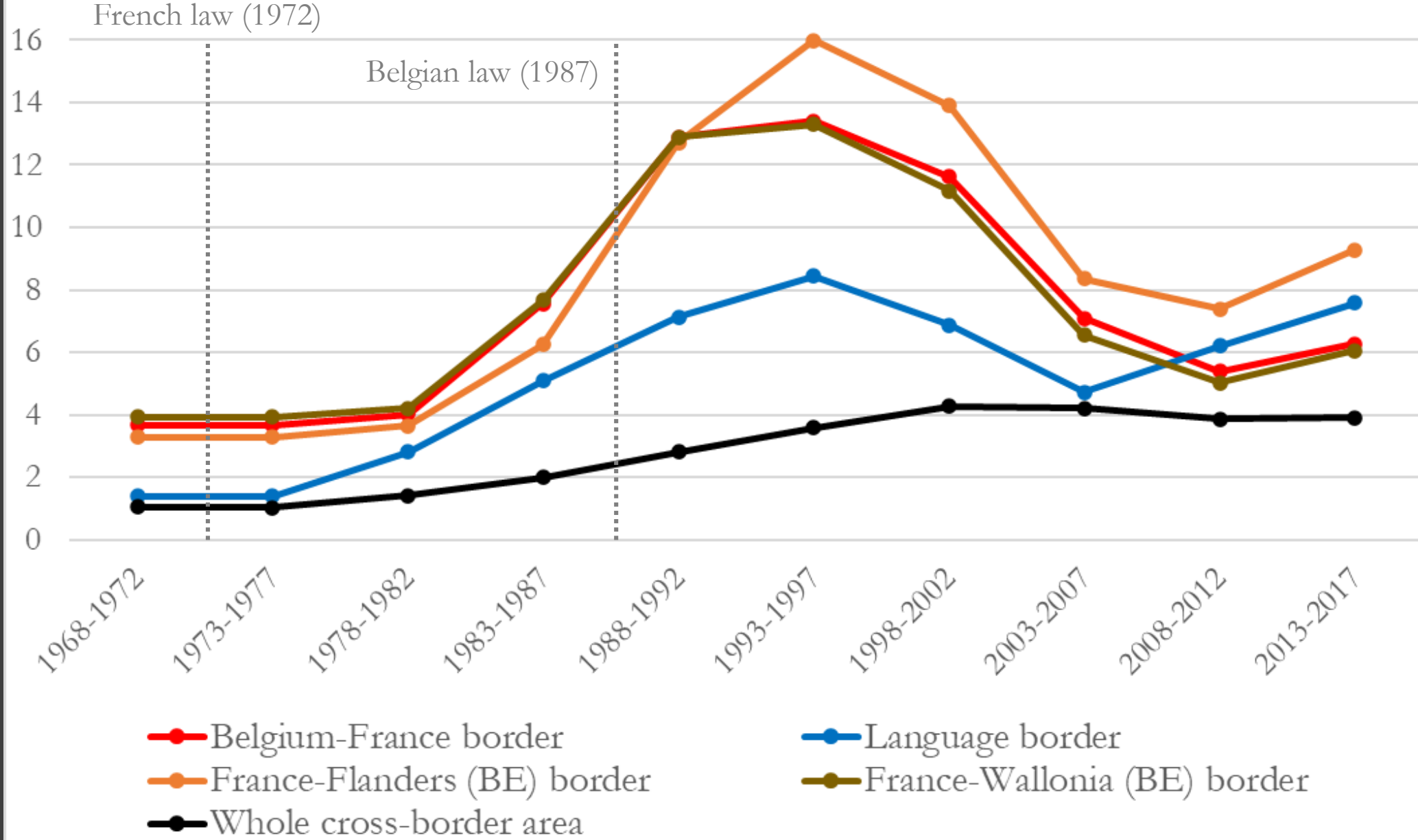
2008-2012



2013-2017



# MEDIAN OF THE ABSOLUTE DIFFERENCE IN THE RATE OF NONMARITAL BIRTHS



# 5. CONCLUSIONS

- Spatial heterogeneities along borders and between urban/rural areas
- All borders are barriers, but national border is a stronger barrier than language border
- The barrier effect evolve over time
- Spatial heterogeneities in nonmarital births change with spatial diffusion and the intensity of the border barrier effect
- Perspectives
  - Robustness tests with relative difference instead of absolute difference; and another territorial grids
  - Reproduce the analyses with other family changes



ideas



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



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