We would like to thank the reviewers for their time to review this manuscript and helpful suggestions to improve the manuscript. The reviewers questions are highlighted in bold, and the modifications to the manuscript in red. Figures 6 and 7 have been recomputed with a smaller number of elevation angles, and new colors have been chosen for figures 6, 7 and 9 to 13.

To answer to reviewer 2 comments, original figures 9 to 15 have been modified. We hope that the improvement we brought to the figures will now fit the reviewer comments to make the manuscript suitable for publication.

Reviewer 1 comments :

Figure 16 - it is well known that the radiometer could resolve ground-based inversions but poor in depicting elevated temperature inversions. What would be the value added by 1DVAR?

The main improvement from 1DVAR can be expected above 1 km altitude but for the two cases shown in the paper, the 1DVAR performs slightly better than regressions even below 1km. For the stable case (deep near surface temperature inversions), both 1DVAR and regressions can resolve the temperature inversions but the best accuracy is found with the 1DVAR particularly below 1 km altitude. For the cloud-based temperature inversion, the 1DVAR retrieval resolves better the inversion than the regressions. With both configurations (from the AROME background or the radiosonde), the inversion is more pronounced and closer to the radiosonde. Figures 9, 12 and 13 show that the value added by the 1DVAR is mainly above 1 km altitude where the RMSE stays within 1 K whereas it reaches 3 K with regressions.

One of the scientific objectives of the paper is to study the performance of radiometer in deep valley. However, the results look like similar observations have been reported for flat terrain as well. Which unique features of the measurements of the radiometer have been shown in the paper?

In such complex terrain we could have expected the measurements to be affected by surrounding mountains and one major result of this study is to show that MWR observations are not affected in such a narrow valley even going down to 5° elevation angles. In fact, previous papers deploying MWR in truly complex terrain are not abundant, from our knowledge only three : Kneifel et al 2010, Cimini et al 2011 and Massaro et al 2015. The study of Kneifel et al 2010 does not investigate the temperature profile retrievals and the radiometer is deployed at the mountain top above the crest.

In Cimini et al 2011, the terrain is more complex but the 1DVAR is investigated with a global NWP model at a 10 km horizontal resolution and only one elevation angle in addition to the zenith. The radiometer measurements do not go lower than 15° elevation angle which significantly limits the possible perturbance from surrounding mountains.

Massaro et al 2015 deploys the instrument in a valley with a free viewing angle up to 28 km whereas the Passy valley is only 5 to 6 km long in the Passy direction. This is also the first time, from our knowledge, that the instrument was operated scanning in two directions. In addition, Massaro et al 2015 only focussed on regressions without any comparison with the 1DVAR algorithm and the temperature gradients were smaller compared to what was observed during Passy. The study has thus shown that microwave radiometers are suitable for very complex terrain where mountains at less than 5 km from the instrument do not affect the quality of the measurements even if very low elevation angles are used (down to 5.4 °), in particular during cold pool events.. This is also the first time that 1DVAR retrievals in a very complex terrain are evaluated using forecasts from a convective scale model.

What new features have been found for retrieval at an elevation angle/boundary layer

scans?

This study confirms that low elevation angles can be used in a complex terrain. The improvement brought by low elevation angles is equivalent to what was found in previous studies on flat terrain.

To summarize these comments, the following sentence has been added to the introduction :

To that end, this is the first time that a MWR has been deployed in such a narrow valley (less than 5 km between the closest mountain slope and the instrument) with measurements going down to 5 ° elevation angle during which 1DVAR retrievals are performed from a convective scale model.

We would like to thank the reviewers for their time to review this manuscript and helpful suggestions to improve the manuscript. The reviewers questions are highlighted in bold, and the modifications to the manuscript in red. Figures 6 and 7 have been recomputed with a smaller number of elevation angles, and new colors have been chosen for figures 6, 7 and 9 to 13. To answer to reviewer 2 comments, original figures 9 to 15 have been modified. We hope that the improvement we brought to the figures will now fit the reviewer comments to make the manuscript suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2 comments :

1) In the introduction, the authors pose the question whether the surrounding mountains in the narrow valley affect the microwave observations. However, this is not really investigated in this study as only a comparison with radiosondes is made. Neither the atmospheric volume observed by the radiometer nor the flight track of the radiosonde is considered. One would need to calculate the effect of the antenna pattern or perform azimuth scans to see at which point the mountain slopes are in the field of view. In fact a simple calculation shows that even for transparent channels which receive radiation over the full extent of the atmosphere, mountains in 2 km wide valley should not provide a contribution to the main beam (2.5 deg FWHM). As side lobe suppression is -30 dB this is unlikely to contribute. More interesting is the question how strongly the true temperature field varies across the valley, e.g. is there any influence of mesoscale circulations or solar insolation? I do not expect the authors to perform an elaborated analysis in this respect but a more careful wording is necessary, e.g. "..thus can be safely deployed in complex terrain.."(p8, l5) or at p13,l1. It would be very interesting to know if the boundary layer scans performed in the two different directions as indicated in Figure 1 differ from each other?

We agree with the reviewer that the paper does not clearly investigate the effect of the mountain emission as azimuthal scans should have been performed. It is also true that mountain slopes should not contribute to the main beam at zenith. However, the mountain slopes were quite close in the Passy direction and it was interesting to investigate to what extent it impacts the MWR measurements. In fact, measurements at 54.94 GHz receives a small contribution of emission further than 6000 m and the first mountain slopes in the Passy direction are found at a distance of 4.5 km from the radiometer. As the sensitivity to the mountain slope is not detailed in the paper, we propose to remove « without being affected by surrounding mountain » in the introduction. The sentence « MWR can thus be safely deployed in complex terrain and similar temperature accuracy to that of flat and less complex terrain can be expected, at least if the line of sight of the MWR is free of obstacles over distances larger than about 5 km.

6000 ALL Figure 1:Vertical PASSY profiles of bias (solid SALLANCHES line) and root-mean-5000 square-error (dashed line) of temperature profiles 4000 retrieved by regression radiosondes. against Altitude [m] Profiles retrieved using 3000 all measurements (black) onlv measurements or made in the Passv 2000 direction only or measurements made in the Sallanches direction 1000 0∟ -1.5 -1 0.5 1.5 2 2.5 -0.5 0 1

The reviewer is right that it is interesting to investigate the differences in boundary layer scans. It was the reason for this alternance of observations in the valley.

Temperature [K]

Figure 1 shows that most differences between temperature profiles retrieved in each direction are located above the boundary layer. The agreement with radiosonde is degraded between 2 and 5 km with measurements in the Sallanches direction. Figure 2 also investigates the differences in brightness temperatures between Passy and Sallanches. We can see that very few differences are found for opaque channels. On the contrary, the lower the elevation angle is, the larger the BT differences are for transparent channels. The maximum of differences is found at 5.4° with BT measurements colder in the Sallanches direction than Passy. Figure 3 shows a time serie of BT measurements at 51.26 GHz and 5.4° of elevation and we can observe a time delay in the diurnal cycle between Sallanches and Passy, Sallanches getting warmer before Passy.

The brightness temperatures are also warmer in the direction of Passy all day long that can be explained by the local orography differences between Passy and Sallanches (for example the altitude of the valley bottom is lower at Sallanches than Passy and the valley is narrower at Sallanches) and maybe by the impact of the urbanization in the direction of Passy. Another source of explanation could be the formation of cold pool in Sallanches.

If we look at the time series of BT measurements at 58 GHz (figure 3, bottom panel), we observe the same diurnal cycle and measurements in both directions. The city of Passy at 2.5 km is too far to affect the measurement of opaque channels and the mountain emission is totally absorbed by previous atmospheric layers. We observe thus the diurnal cycle of the atmospheric temperature in the valley at less than 2 km of the radiometer. Even though temperature heterogeneities probably exist in the valley, it is likely that they are not strong enough over such a short distance to be captured by the MWR. This will be investigated in future work.

The differences observed at 5.4° should be investigated more in details in a future work to understand and explain how temperature heterogeneity in the valley can be linked to the atmospheric circulation. This perspective has been described in the discussion:

Scanning in two different directions of the valley, MWR observations also offer the possibility of investigating temperature heterogeneity in the valley and how these differences are linked to the mesoscale circulation. This will be further investigated in a future study.

Figure 2 : Bias (solid lines) and standard deviations (dashed lines) of BT observations between Sallanches and Passy (BT Sallanches – BT Passy)



Figure 3 : Time series of BT observations at 51.26 GHz (top panel) and 58 GHz (bottom panel) in the Sallanches direction (blue) or Passy direction (red) at angle 5.4°



As far as I know the HATPRO standard regression boundary layer temperature rerieval makes use of the inbuilt in-situ temperature measurements. This might explain the good performance despite the lack of bias correction. However, the HATPRO sensor should not be as accurate (representative) as the weather station - did you intercompare them?

This is right that the inbuilt in-situ temperature measurements can normally be included in the regressions. However, the HATPRO sensor is known to suffer from large errors due to an inappropriate ventilation of the sensor. Figure 4 shows the bias and standard deviation of the HATPRO in-situ sensor minus the 2.5 m tower measurements. We observe a large bias during the day with a maximum of 7 K around 12 UTC. The use of this in-built sensor would thus degrade the retrievals. For that reason, the manufacturer regressions are generally provided without the inclusion of this in-situ sensor and it would need a lot of extra work to properly recompute the regression coefficients including the surface temperature which could be applied by replacing the HATPRO in-situ station by an accurate weather station. However, we made some testing during our previous campaign and the inclusion of the temperature sensor only improves the result in the first 200m where regressions are already very accurate in our experiment.

Figure 4 : Bias and standard deviation of HATPRO in-built station minus tower measurements at 2.5 m.



The authors use radiosonde measurements down to 10 m, however, the first roughly 100 m of the radiosonde ascent suffer from the fact that the sensors are not fully vented, Do the authors have some information on this from the tethered balloon measurements ?

The Vaisala probe used in the radiosonde has a very short time response of less than 0.5 s and is naturally ventilated by the balloon ascent at a 5m/s speed. We are thus quite confident in the accuracy of the radiosonde measurements. We do not expect the measurements to be degraded in the first 100 m but only in the first 10 to 20 m.

The Vaisala probe used under the tethered balloon has a similar time response but the tethered balloon at about 1 m/s so it is even less ventilated than the radiosonde probe.

However the temperature profiles from RS and tethered balloon (both from Vaisala probes) have been compared from the ground to 45 m (maximum height of the tethered balloon when it was on the same site than the RS from 6/02 3pm to 10/02 noon). Maximum differences observed are lower than the sensors accuracy (0.5 deg C).

A short discussion on the vertical resolution of the MWR should be included. Löhnert and Maier (2012) smooth the radiosonde profile with the averaging kernels for comparison to take these effects into account but here you are interested in the optimal retrieval. In fact, this discussion would support your outlook that the inclusion of infrared radiometers and lidar could improve the vertical resolution (p26, l27), cf Barrera et al., AMT, 2016. I do not agree that this would help only below clouds: IR and lidar give information below clouds and thus the information content from the MWR could be exploited for the higher levels.

The reviewer is right and a small discussion about the limited vertical resolution of the MWR has been included. Firstly in section 3.3 :**It is important to note here that the retrieval grid is finer than the true instrumental resolution but matches the AROME model vertical resolution**.

and section 6.2 :

Here the radiosonde profiles are interpolated to the retrieval grid without taking into account the smoothing errors due to the limited vertical resolution of the MWR. In fact, this resolution is approximately between 50 m and 500 m and only 4 independent pieces of information can be extracted from the signal {Lohnert et al 2012}. On the contrary, the temperature profile is sampled approximately every 10 m by the radiosonde. In the future, the averaging kernel matrix could be used to bring the radiosonde profile onto the MWR vertical resolution.

Fig. 8 shows a bias of about -5 K with STD of about 3 K. Looking at Fig.3 the difference between Arome and RS is certainly not Gaussian distributed - what is the impact on the B matrix? This might be discussed in respect to the question what the optimal way to build the B-matrix is, e.g. dependence on flow and diurnal cycle?

Even though a bias is observed in the AROME forecast errors it does not necessarily imply that the forecast errors are not Gaussian. The only accurate way that is known nowadays to infer the forecast error distribution is to use an ensemble assimilation with an adequate number of members. It allows the evaluation of the Gaussianity by computing the distribution of the member differences with respect to the mean ensemble, all members being valid for the same forecast time. In our case, this ensemble assimilation is not available and we can only plot the frequency distribution of AROME minus RS differences mixing different days and forecast hours. This comparison is thus not-optimal for this estimation. However, we computed these differences for levels below 1000 m because the sample is too small above due to fewer radiosondes reaching high altitude (figure 6). We can see that the approximation of Gaussian distribution is respected for the lowest levels but a

negative skewness is observed at 1000 m. This is due to the small number of large errors at 1000 m at the beginning of the period corresponding to the cloud-based temperature inversions.

Figure 6 : Frequency distribution of AROME minus radiosonde differences at 500 m (left panel) and 1000 m (right panel) with corresponding Gaussian Distributions (red line).



Legrand et al 2016 recently evaluated this non-Gaussianity for the AROME model with a 90 member assimilation system. It was found that all control variables present some non-gaussianity but vorticity and divergence are more affected than temperature and humidity. This non-Gaussianity is reduced by the analysis process in areas constrained the most by observations. Even though non-gaussianity exists, current 3D-Var and 4D-Var system does not take into account this error. In addition, the B matrix should not be affected by the non-Gaussianity as it only affects the higher moments of the distribution (skewness and kurtosis) and not the ones used to compute the B matrix (mean and standard deviation).

The optimal way to build the B-matrix and to make it flow dependent and evolve with the diurnal cycle is again to use an ensemble assimilation to compute a new B matrix at each assimilation cycle (see Ménétrier et al 2014). This system has been extensively developed at Météo France in the last 5 years and should be operational by 2018. A B matrix flow-dependeng and varying in time will thus be available in the future and the impact on the 1D-Var will also be possible.

This problem has been discussed in the manuscript :

Section 6.1 :

Non-Gaussianity can also affect forecast errors. Recently, Legrand et al 2016 evaluated the non-Gaussianity of analysis and forecast errors using a 90 member AROME ensemble assimilation. It was found that for all variables, non-Gaussianity exists but dynamical variables (vorticity and divergence) are more affected than temperature and humidity. The data assimilation reduces this non-Gaussianity at each cycle in regions well covered by observations. This ensemble assimilation does not exist for our period making complicated the evaluation of this Gaussianity in our context. However, it should affect higher moments of the error distribution than those used in the B matrix.

Section 6.2:

The flow-dependency and diurnal cycle of forecast errors can be determined by implementing a real-time AROME ensemble assimilation system (Menetrier et al 2014). This is underdevelopment and should be available next year.

Minor Comments

All comments have been taken into account. The changes are highlighted in red in the manuscript.

P10, l3 : A more

Not clear to us what the referee refers to here; thus, we take no action

p7, l19 : One sentence explaining O-B would be helpful.

O-B monitoring has been introduced at the end of section 3.3 :

Information about instrumental errors can be obtained by investigating differences between observations and simulations from background profiles (short-term forecasts or radiosondes). The monitoring of these differences called O-B (observations minus background) departures is essential to remove any systematic errors in the measurements, the forward operator or the background profiles (De Angelis et al 2017). They are investigated in section 5.

p12,l4: Did you look at the variability of Arome within the valley?

The variability of the AROME profiles has been studied and was found very homogeneous justifying the use of only the closest AROME grid point in the valley. Figure 7 shows a time serie of the temperature values extracted at different levels for all AROME grid points within the Valley. Figure 8 shows a comparison of the different temperature profiles within the valley for two different days.

Figure 7 : Time series of AROME temperature values at three different levels (300 m top panel, 800 m middle panel, 1500 m bottom panel) for all AROME grid points within the valley (grey dots) and the AROME grid point closest to the microwave radiometer (black dots). This is compared to the radiosonde (red) and the 2.5 m tower (orange) measurements.



Figure 8 : Temperature profiles for all AROME grid points within the valley (grey lines) compared to the closest grid point to the microwave radiometer (black line) during two different days.



P15, l19 : How is this done in detail, should be reproducible

As the standard deviation of RS minus AROME differences are on top of the operational standard deviation above 2 km altitude, a new standard deviation vector is obtained by combining the operational standard deviation above 2 km and the one computed from AROME minus RS differences below 2 km altitude :

sigma_new = [sigma_oper(1:61), sigma_Passy(62:90)]

Covariances are then computed with the usual formulation :

cov(i,j)=cor(i,j) * sigma_new (i) * sigma_new (j)

with the operational correlations.

In order to make this more clear, we modified the sentence :

As the 1DVAR retrieval accuracy depends on how well the B matrix is defined, the diagonal terms of the B matrix (auto-covariance of the temperature errors) were simply replaced by the variance of the radiosonde minus AROME differences (i.e. the square of standard deviation values in Figure 8) below 2 km.

Tower measurement differences between 2.5 and 5 m :

The values were not mixed up but we are more confident with the accuracy of the 5 m measurements. They are based on a Socrima shield which is naturally ventilated whereas the 2.5 m sensor is a new development undertaken in our laboratory. It is composed of a PT100 probe and a thin wire in a prototype shield with a forced ventilation to retrieve temperature at a high temporal frequency. The experiment highlighted some problems that would request an improved shield

design. We suggest to modify the figure to remove the comparison with the measurements at 2.5 m and only compare with the measurements at 5 m. Figure 11 has been changed accordingly.

$p18,\,l10:$ A bit provocative: When you use the RS as a priori and also evaluate with an RS one could argue that systematic RS errors (time lag, calibration..) might be similar and therefore Arome has no chance

Of course using radiosonde measurements which show less background errors than AROME was expected to improve the retrievals especially at the cloud-based temperature inversions. However, the systematic RS errors should be negligible in this comparison. Here, we just want to illustrate how the 1DVAR can be applied in an experimental campaign adapting the background profile to obtain the best estimation of the true atmosphere and how to deal with elevated cloud-based inversion by using a more appropriate background. This has been highlighted in section 6.4 : **Our study shows that another way of improvement is to use an external information to infer the presence of an elevated temperature inversion that will be incorporated in the background of the 1DVAR algorithm.**

P24, I7 : I do not understand how the valley constrained the measurement configuration - do you mean the difficulty to find a site with a free view?

By « constrained the measurement configuration » we mean a direction free of obstacles. We changed the sentence into :

Within the Passy-2015 field campaign, a HATPRO ground-based microwave radiometer was operated in a deep Alpine valley making complex the instrumental deployment due to surrounding mountains.

Regarding Dr. Stefan Kneifel additional discussion, our comments on the deployment of MWR in complex terrain have been moderated.

In the introduction we have changed the sentence :

To that end, this is the first time that a MWR has been deployed in such a narrow valley (less than 5 km between the closest mountain slope and the instrument) with measurements going down to 5° elevation angle during which 1DVAR retrievals are performed from a convective scale model.

Into:

To that end, a MWR has been deployed in a narrow Alpine valley (less than 5 km between the closest mountain slope and the instrument) with measurements going down to 5° elevation angle. This is the first time 1DVAR retrievals are performed from a convective scale model in complex terrain during which large forecast errors are observed.

In the conclusion we have changed :

In such complex terrain we could have expected the measurements to be affected by surrounding mountains and one **major** result of this study is to show that MWR observations are not affected in such a narrow valley even going down to 5° elevation angles

into :

In such complex terrain we could have expected the measurements to be affected by surrounding mountains and one **interesting** result of this study is to show that MWR observations are not affected in such a narrow valley even going down to 5° elevation angles

The discussion on the literature of complex terrain deployment has been changed from :

Previous papers deploying MWR in complex terrain are not abundant, only three to our knowledge : Kneifel et al. (2010), Cimini et al. (2011) and Massaro et al. (2015). The study of Kneifel et al. (2010) does not investigate the temperature profile retrievals and the radiometer is deployed at the mountain top above the crest. In Cimini et al. (2011), the terrain is more complex but the 1DVAR is investigated with a global NWP model at a 10 km horizontal resolution and using only one elevation angle in addition to the zenith. The radiometer measurements do not go lower than 15° elevation angle which significantly limits the possible perturbance from surrounding mountains. Massaro et al. (2015) deploys the instrument in a valley with a free viewing angle up to 28 km whereas the Passy valley is only 5 to 6 km long in the Passy direction and only focussed on regressions without any comparison with the 1DVAR algorithm. Temperature gradients were also smaller compared to those observed during Passy. This is also the first time, to our knowledge, that the instrument was operated scanning in two different directions.

Into:

Previous papers deploying MWR in complex terrain are not abundant, **among them we can cite** : Kneifel et al. (2009), Kneifel et al. (2010), Cimini et al. (2011), Xie et al. (2012) and Massaro et al. (2015). In Kneifel et al. (2009) the terrain is not as complex as in Passy with a maximum elevation of only 350 m and only integrated water vapor retrievals are investigated. Both studies of Kneifel et al. (2009) and Xie et al. (2012) do not investigate temperature profile retrievals neither and the radiometer is deployed at 2650 meters above sea level which differs from the deployment at the bottom of the 2000 m deep Passy valley. In Cimini et al. (2011), the

terrain is more complex but the 1DVAR is investigated with a global NWP model at a 10 km horizontal resolution and using only one elevation angle in addition to the zenith. The radiometer measurements do not go lower than 15° elevation angle which significantly limits the possible perturbation from surrounding mountains. Massaro et al. (2015) deploys the instrument in a valley with a free viewing angle up to 28 km and only focussed on regressions. **Regarding the Passy valley, the free line of sight is limited to 5 km in the Passy direction and 1DVAR retrievals from a convective scale model are performed. Temperature gradients were also larger compared to those observed in Massaro et al. (2015).**

1D variational retrievals of boundary layer temperature profiles from Combining ground-based microwave **radiometers radiometer** and the AROME convective scale model through 1DVAR retrievals in complex terrain: an Alpine **valley** Valley case study

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Abstract. A RPG-HATPRO ground-based microwave radiometer (MWR) was operated in a deep Alpine valley during the Passy-2015 field campaign. This experiment aims at investigating how stable boundary layers during wintertime conditions drive the accumulation of pollutants. In order to understand the atmospheric processes in the valley, MWR continuously provide vertical profiles of temperature and humidity at a high time frequency, providing valuable information to follow the evolution

- 5 of the boundary layer. A one-dimensional variational (1DVAR) retrieval technique has been implemented during the field campaign to optimally combine MWR and 1h forecasts from the French convective scale model AROME. Retrievals were compared to radiosonde data launched at least every 3 hours during two intensive observation periods (IOP). An analysis of the AROME forecast errors during the IOPs has shown a large underestimation of the surface cooling during the strongest stable episode. MWR brightness temperatures were monitored against simulations from the radiative transfer model ARTS2
- 10 (Atmospheric Radiative Transfer Simulator) and radiosonde launched during the field campaign. Large errors were observed for most transparent channels (i.e., 51-52 GHz) affected by absorption model and calibration uncertainties while a good agreement was found for opaque channels (i.e., 54-58 GHz). Based on this monitoring, a bias correction of raw brightness temperature measurements was applied before the 1DVAR retrievals. 1DVAR retrievals were found to significantly improve the AROME forecasts up to 3 km but mainly below 1 km and to outperform usual statistical regressions above 1 km. With the present
- 15 implementation, a root-mean-square-error (RMSE) of 1 K through all the atmospheric profile was obtained with values within 0.5 K below 500 m in clear-sky conditions. The use of lower elevation angles (up to 5 °) in the MWR scanning and the bias correction were found to improve the retrievals below 1000 m. MWR retrievals were found to catch very well deep nearsurface temperature inversions. Larger errors were observed in cloudy conditions due to difficulty of ground-based MWR to resolve high level inversions that are still challenging. Finally, 1DVAR retrievals were optimized for the analysis of the IOPs
- 20 by using radiosondes as backgrounds in the 1DVAR algorithm instead of the AROME forecasts. A significant improvement of the retrievals in cloudy conditions and below 1000 m in clear-sky was observed.

From this study, we can conclude that MWR are expected to bring valuable information into NWP models up to 3 km altitude

both in clear-sky and cloudy-sky conditions with the maximum improvement found around 500 m. With an accuracy between 0.5 and 1 K in RMSE, our study has also proved MWR to be capable of resolving deep near-surface temperature inversions observed in complex terrain during highly stable boundary layer conditions.

1 Introduction

- 5 Atmospheric boundary layer (ABL) observations of temperature and humidity profiles at a high temporal resolution are necessary for the improvement of numerical weather prediction (NWP) and for a better understanding of small-scale phenomena. In fact, new generation of convective scale models have has been developed in the last ten years in order to improve the forecasts of high impact weather events like heavy convection, precipitation, fog or low clouds. In order to initialize convective scale models through data assimilation algorithms, a denser network of ABL observations is needed as it is the most
- 10 important under-sampled part of the atmosphere (National Research Council United States (2010)). In parallel, a better understanding of boundary layer processes is essential to improve parameterisations used to describe the evolution of phenomena at a smaller scale than the model grid. To that end, observations enabling a fine description of the diurnal evolution in the ABL are important to improve our knowledge and understanding of these small-scale phenomena. Among them, ABL processes in mountainous regions are an active area of research due to complex atmospheric dynamics, anabatic and katabatic winds and
- 15 strong temperature inversions (Rotach and Zardi (2007)). Urban valleys are often affected by severe pollution events during wintertime anticyclonic conditions while the atmospheric circulation in the valley is decoupled from the synoptic dynamics aloft (Lehner and Gohm (2010), Gohm et al. (2009), De Franceschi and Zardi (2009), Silcox et al. (2012)). This is particularly the case in the Arve River Valley near the city of Chamonix located in the French Alps where the air quality is one of the worst in France. The Passy-2015 field campaign was conducted to improve our knowlegde on how pollutants are accumulated and
- 20 dispersed during stable episodes in this urbanized valley (Paci et al. (2016)). To better understand and forecast these pollution events, vertical profiles of temperature at a high temporal resolution can be valuable. In fact, information on the link between the atmospheric stability and the amount of pollutant in the atmosphere can be studied as well as the description of temperature inversions and stratifications (Silcox et al. (2012), Chemel et al. (2016)).
- Radiosounding remains one of the most accurate method to measure temperature profiles but their cost and induced finite time resolution (once or twice per day usually for instrumented site) is a limitation for a fine description of the diurnal cycle of the boundary layer. On the contrary, ground-based microwave radiometers (MWR) can provide continuous observations of temperature and humidity profiles at a high frequency rate (up to 1 s for humidity profiles, a few minutes for temperature). Even if the vertical resolution decreases with altitude (Cimini et al. (2006)), information from MWR mostly resides in the ABL (Löhnert and Maier (2012)) and atmospheric profiles are provided in both clear and cloudy-sky conditions making
- 30 them useful for a long-term monitoring of boundary layer dynamics. Atmospheric profiles are generally retrieved from statistical regressions using a long-term database of radiosoundings (Crewell and Lohnert (2007), Löhnert and Maier (2012)). This method relies on a long time serie of radiosonde profiles to represent most of the atmospheric variability. However such a large number of radiosonde profiles is rarely available. NWP models can provide a database of atmospheric profiles when no

radiosonde is available (Güldner (2013)). However, this method may not be well suited in complex terrain for which forecast skills are known to be less accurate particularly due to unrepresented processes associated with subgrid scale orography. One-dimensional variational (1DVAR) retrievals have also been used to retrieve in an optimal way temperature and humidity profiles by combining observations and an *a priori* of the atmospheric state. This *a priori* profile can either be represented by

- 5 a <u>climatology</u>, radiosounding on instrumented site (Löhnert et al. (2004), Löhnert et al. (2008)) or a short-term forecast from a NWP model. The 1D-Var technique was applied by Hewison (2006), Cimini et al. (2006), Hewison (2007), Cimini et al. (2010) and Cimini et al. (2011) using forecasts from a mesoscale model on various datasets of MWR observations from the MeteoSwiss station of Payerne to observations in Alaska or Vancouver during the 2010 Olympic games. A root-mean-squareerror (RMSE) within 1.5 K was obtained for the three experiments by comparison to radiosondes. Recently, Martinet et al.
- 10 (2015) illustrated for the first time a 1DVAR assimilation of <u>real</u> MWR observations into the convective scale model AROME and obtained a RMSE within 1 K in clear-sky and 1.3 K in cloudy sky up to 6 km, most of the information content brought into the model being located below 3 km altitude.

During the Passy-2015 field campaign, a 14 channel MWR has been operated from December 2014 to March 2015 in a deep and narrow Alpine valley. Although there have already been MWR deployments on complex terrain (Kneifel et al. (2010),

- 15 Cimini et al. (2011), Massaro et al. (2015)), this study investigates the following questions:
 - Can ground-based MWR resolve temperature profiles characterized by sharp temperature inversions during very stable conditions in such a deep and narrow valley , without being affected by surrounding mountains-?
 - What <u>added value</u> can MWR bring to NWP models in stable conditions which are known to be a current issue in NWP forecasts ?
- 20 To that end, a MWR has been deployed in a narrow Alpine valley (less than 5 km between the closest mountain slope and the instrument) with measurements going down to 5 ° elevation angle. This is the first time 1DVAR retrievals are performed from a convective scale model in complex terrain during which large forecast errors are observed.

The paper begins with an overview of the instrumentation used in the Passy-2015 field campaign (section 2) and the 1D-Var algorithm (section 3) followed by an analysis of the AROME forecast errors during the experiment (section 4). Monitoring of

25 the radiometer brightness temperature measurements enabling the computation of a bias correction is presented in section 5. Finally, performance of 1DVAR retrievals compared to regressions is discussed in section 6.

2 Instrumentation

2.1 The Passy-2015 field campaign

The Passy-2015 field campaign was designed in order to improve our understanding on how the atmospheric dynamics during
wintertime anticyclonic conditions, leading to persistent stable boundary layers, drives the accumulation and dispersion of pollutants in the atmosphere of the Arve Valley around the city of Passy. This French urbanized valley is known for severe



Figure 1. View of the area of interest, close to the city of Passy in the Arve river valley. Microwave radiometer and radiosondes were deployed on measurement site 1. Topographic maps from www.geoportail.gouv.fr, IGN 2017

pollution episodes with daily concentration of PM10 (aerosols with diameter less than 10 μ m) regularly above 50 μgm^{-3} . The valley is approximately 2000 m deep and maximum 2 km wide (fig. 1). The ground altitude is approximately 560 m a.g.l down the valley. A large number of instruments were deployed from end of November 2014 to end of March 2015 on five instrumented sites down the valley. Among them, there are microwave radiometers, wind profilers, ceilometer, sodar, lidars, tethered ballons, instrumented towers. A detailed presentation of the field campaign can be found in Paci et al. (2016). Two intensive observation periods (IOP) have been carried out during the campaign. The observing system was reinforced during these periods with radiosondes launched every 3 hours and up to 1.5 hours. The first IOP took place from the 6th to the 14th of February, the second one from the 17th to the 20th of February.

10 2.2 HATPRO MWR

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A HATPRO MWR (Rose et al. (2005)) was deployed on site 1 (Fig. 1) and is oriented to scan the Passy valley in two opposite directions: Passy in the NorthEast and Sallanches in the NorthWest direction. The HATPRO MWR measures downwelling

brightness temperatures in 14 channels. The first seven are located on the upper-frequency wing of the 22.24 GHz water vapor absorption line (called K-band), the last seven at the 60 GHz oxygen complex band (called V-band). K-band channels are used to retrieve atmospheric humidity and liquid water content while V-band channels are used for atmospheric temperature retrievals. Observations are made either in zenith mode pointing at 90 $^{\circ}$ or in boundary layer mode scanning the atmosphere

- 5 under lower elevation angles from 90° to 5.4°. One boundary layer scan is performed in each direction approximately every 10 minutes. The use of boundary layer scan was found to significantly improve the accuracy of temperature profiles in the first km assuming that the atmosphere is horizontally homogeneous around the MWR (Crewell and Lohnert (2007)). Even if this assumption is not necessarily valid in complex terrain, the study of Massaro et al. (2015) has shown a good accuracy of temperature profiles with no degradation due to the nearby mountain. The radiometer needs to be well calibrated to exploit
- 10 the optimal <u>calibration</u> coefficients in order to convert detected intensities into brightness temperatures. To that end a liquid nitrogen cooled load considered as a blackbody at the boiling temperature of 77 K is generally used (Küchler et al. (2016)). A liquid nitrogen calibration was performed at the beginning of the experimental campaign at the end of November -2014.

2.3 Ancillary Data

In addition to the HATPRO MWR, observations by 84 radiosonde ascents are used to validate temperature profiles retrieved

- 15 by the MWR. VAISALA RS92 radiosondes with an expected accuracy of 0.5 K in temperature and 5 % in relative humidity were launched approximately every 3 hours and up to 1.5 hours during the IOPs. Radiosondes were launched approximately at 00, 03, 06, 09, 12, 15, 18 and 21 UTC. They provide vertical profiles of pressure, temperature, relative humidity, dew point temperature, and wind profiles at approximately 10 m vertical resolution. The temperature at 1.5 m is provided by an external weather station combined with the RS measurements through the VAISALA software. A new system to increase the frequency
- 20 of radiosondes by recovering previously launched probes has been used during the field campaign (Legain et al. (2013)). In order to be able to pick up the probes, they should not drift too far away from the launching site. As a consequence, most of the radiosondes were released at about 2 km altitude, to make sure they can be picked up in the valley.

A ceilometer Vaisala CT25K deployed a few meters from the MWR is also used to determine the cloud base altitude. This cloud base can be used to optimize the 1DVAR retrievals in cloudy conditions and to separate clear-sky from cloudy-sky observations when analysing the results.

3 Retrieval Algorithm

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3.1 1DVAR framework

A comparison of several methods to convert brightness temperatures into temperature and humidity profiles have proved the 1DVAR technique to be the optimal one (Cimini et al. (2006), Martinet et al. (2015)) when the *a priori* profile and uncertainty estimates are suitable. The 1DVAR framework used in this study is based on the optimal estimation theory by Rodgers (2000).

MWR observations are combined with an *a priori* estimation of the atmospheric state which can be either a short-term-forecast

or a previous radiosonde profile. In this context, *a priori* refers to the first guess of the iterative algorithm representing a good estimate of the atmospheric conditions as the starting point of the minimization. Each source of information is weighted by corresponding uncertainty called the background-error-covariance matrix (\mathbf{B}) for the *a priori* profile and the observation-error-covariance matrix (\mathbf{R}) for the observation to find the optimal state. The background-error-covariance matrix represents the

5 auto-covariances and cross-covariances of the first guess errors. Thus, it defines the variances of the first guess errors at each vertical level for each variable, the vertical correlations of the first guess errors at different levels and the correlation of these errors between different variables (temperature and humidity for example). An observation operator including interpolations from model space to observation space and a radiative transfer model is needed to compute the equivalent observation from the *a priori*. The method iteratively modifies the state vector x from the *a priori* x_b to minimize the following cost function:

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$$J(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_b)^T \mathbf{B}^{-1}(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_b) + \frac{1}{2}(\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x}))^T \mathbf{R}^{-1}(\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x}))$$

where H represents the observation operator, T represents the transpose operator and $^{-1}$ the inverse operator. The observationerror-covariance matrix **R** should take into account representativeness and forward model errors as well as radiometric noise.

During the minimisation process, a Levenberg-Marquardt descent algorithm is applied by introducing a factor γ that is adjusted after each iteration. If the cost function is not decreased with the new profile, the factor γ is multiplied by 10. The 15 iterative solution that minimizes the cost function J is given by:

$$\mathbf{x}_{i+1} = \mathbf{x}_i + \left((1+\gamma)\mathbf{B}^{-1} + \mathbf{H}_i^T \mathbf{R}^{-1} \mathbf{H}_i \right)^{-1} \times \left(\mathbf{H}_i^T \mathbf{R}^{-1} (\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{x}_i)) - \mathbf{B}^{-1} (\mathbf{x}_i - \mathbf{x}_b) \right)$$
(1)

where \mathbf{H}_i is the Jacobian matrix which represents the sensitivity of the observation operator to changes in the control vector x $(\mathbf{H}_i = \partial \mathbf{H}(x_i) / \partial x_i)$.

20 **3.2** NWP model

In this study 1-hour forecasts from the French convective scale model AROME (Application of Research to Operations at MEsoscale, Seity et al. (2011)) are used as *a priori* profiles or "backgrounds". AROME is a limited area model covering Western Europe with non-hydrostatic dynamical core. Since beginning 2015, the horizontal resolution of AROME has been increased from 2.5 km to 1.3 km as well as the number of vertical levels from 60 to 90 (Brousseau et al. (2016)). This in-

25 crease in horizontal and vertical resolutions is particularly useful to better represent complex terrains. Vertical levels follow the terrain in the lowest layers and isobars in the upper atmosphere. The detailed physics of Arome are inherited from the research Meso-NH model (Lafore et al. (1997)). Deep convection is assumed to be resolved explicitly, but shallow convection is parameterized following Pergaud et al. (2009). A bulk one-moment microphysical scheme (Pinty and Jabouille (1998)) governs the equations of the specific contents of six water species (humidity, cloud liquid water, precipitating liquid water, pristine ice, snow, and graupel). This new version also performs 3D-Var analyses every hour instead of every three hours to optimize the use of frequent observations. All conventional observations are assimilated together with wind profilers, winds from space-borne measurements (Atmospheric Motion Vectors and scatterometers), Doppler winds (Montmerle and Faccani (2009)) and reflectivity (Wattrelot et al. (2014)) from ground-based weather radars, satellite radiances as well as ground-based

5 GPS measurements (Mahfouf et al. (2015)).

3.3 Settings

In this study the control vector x consists in temperature and humidity profiles on the same 90 levels as defined in AROME. These levels cover the atmospheric range from the ground up to 30 km, the vertical resolution decreasing with altitude: 20-100

- 10 m below 1 km, 100-200 m from 1 to 5 km, around 400 m at 10 km. It is important to note here that the retrieval grid is finer than the true instrumental resolution but matches the AROME model vertical resolution. The observation vector *y* consists in brighness temperatures (BT) in all V-band channels (51.26, 52.28, 53.86, 54.94, 56.66, 57.3, 58 GHz) at zenith and only opaque channels (above 54 GHz) at low elevation angles: 42, 30, 19.2, 10.2 and 5.4 °. This study only focusses on temperature profiles, thus only V-band channels are used. The forward model operator used in this study is the line-by-line Atmospheric
- 15 Radiative Transfer Simulator 2 (ARTS, Eriksson et al. (2011)) and 1DVAR experiments are performed using the Qpack2 package (Eriksson et al. (2005)) provided with the ARTS software. For the radiative transfer simulations, the gaseous absorption is calculated according to Rosenkranz (1998) for O_2 and water vapour. In simulations taking into account the liquid water absorption, the model of Liebe et al. (1993) is used.
- The observation-error covariance matrix **R** is assumed to be uncorrelated with a standard deviation of 0.5 K for channels 8 to 9 and 0.2 K for channels 10 to 14. These values have been chosen empirically on the basis of previous studies by Löhnert et al. (2008) and Hewison (2007). The same values have been used in Martinet et al. (2015) with the instrument used in this study and have shown to be good estimates of the observation errors. In the future, a dedicated study will be performed to review these values and quantify the correlations in noise between the different channels by continuously measuring the BTs of the internal black body target.
- 25 Information about instrumental errors can be obtained by investigating differences between observations and simulations from background profiles (short-term forecasts or radiosondes). The monitoring of these differences called O-B (observations minus background) departures is essential to remove any systematic errors in the measurements, the forward operator or the background profiles (De Angelis et al. (2017)). They are investigated in section 5.

4 Evaluation of the AROME model during the Passy-2015 field campaign

30 In real-time during the Passy-2015 field campaign, temperature profiles were retrieved from the MWR measurements using linear regressions implemented within the HATPRO proprietary software. The regression coefficients were provided by the RPG manufacturer to the national service MeteoSwiss and are based on the 1989-2005 Payerne radiosonde data via radiative transfer calculations. The Payerne coefficients were chosen due to the lack of radiosonde data close to the city of Passy and for the similar climatic conditions between Passy and Payerne.

Figure In order to evaluate the performance of the AROME model during the Passy-2015 experiment figure 2 shows the time series of temperature profiles observed by radiosondes(top panel), retrieved from the HATPRO MWR by the Payerne linear regression coefficients (middle panel) and and those extracted from the AROME analyses (bottom panel) during the first IOP.

- 5 The stable episode starts the 9th of February and ends the 13th of February. During this event a persistent inversion is observed, however we can note the destruction of the stability that stability is depleted in the first 500 meters every day between noon and 3 to 5 pm due to the solar heating. The diurnal cycle and a very cold air mass (up to -10 ° C) close to the surface at night are very well detected by the MWR. We observe a good agreement of the overall atmospheric structure between radiosonde data and MWR observations. The root-mean-square differences (RMSE) between the regressions and the radiosondes are 0.7
- 10 K below 500 m except the first two points close to the surface, below 1.3 K at 1200 m and increase up to 2 K at 4000 m. These values are consistent with those reported in Löhnert and Maier (2012) from another HATPRO radiometer operated in a less complex terrain and from Massaro et al. (2015) in a truly complex terrain in the Inn Valley. This result confirms that microwave radiation that could originate from nearby slopes does not seem to degrade the quality of MWR inversions. MWR can thus be safely deployed in complex terrain and then similar temperature accuracy to that of flat and less complex terrain
- 15 can be expected..., at least if the line of sight of the MWR is free of obstacles over distances larger than about 5 km. Figure 2 also demonstrates that the 10 minute resolution of the MWR observations during the field campaign is a real advantage to complete the radiosonde time serie for a detailed description of the boundary layer diurnal cycle. During IOP 1, the 2015 operational version of the AROME model had troubles stabilising the air mass and missed the large cooling of the surface at nighttimes. The AROME model demonstrated difficulties in properly representing such conditions which is a well known issue
- 20 of current NWP models. It induces large differences between the radiosonde observations and the AROME forecasts by up to -12 K at the surface during the strongest stable event (10th, 11th and 12th of February).

Figure 3 shows more in details To quantify the accuracy of the AROME analyses in the valley during the IOP 1. The top panel-IOP1 figure 3 shows temperature differences between radiosonde and AROME at three different levels: 2–1.5 m a.g.l.in black, 1000 m a.g.l. in red and 1500 m a.g.l.in blue. The measurement at 1.5 m comes from an external weather station

- 25 well ventilated. To interpret these temperature errors, the bottom panel shows differences between the radiosonde temperature difference between measurement at the boundary layer height *zi* and the surface $:\Delta T = T_{RS}(zi) - T_{RS}(1)$ where *zi* represents the boundary layer heightmeasurement from the external weather station: $\Delta T = T_{RS}(zi) - T_{station}(1.5m)$. To estimate during the day the thin convective layer top which develops under the effect of solar heating, we used one of the standard definitions given by Stull (2012) and Sullivan et al. (1998) as the height of the maximum gradient of potential temperature.
- 30 The estimation of the boundary layer height in stable conditions is more tricky and has been a longstanding problem with definitions varying according to the application. Here, the stable boundary layer top has been defined as the top of the surface inversion of the stable layer using the definition from Beyrich (1997). This definition is used when a positive temperature gradient near the surface is found. The temperature difference ΔT quantifies the atmospheric boundary layer stability. Negative values indicate convective conditions while positive values indicate stable conditions more pronounced when the temperature
- 35 difference is larger. The term "stability index" will be used in our analysis. We can note that the surface error is relatively low at



Figure 2. Time series of temperature profiles during IOP 1: (a) from radiosounding <u>with corresponding boundary layer heights (black</u> crosses), (b) from microwave radiometer, (c) from AROME analyses. Altitudes are given in m above ground level.

the beginning of the period (smaller than 5 K) and increases with the atmospheric stability. The stability index increases from the 9th to the 11th of February and decreases after to reach values similar to the beginning of the episode. The stability index changes from positive (i.e. stable) to negative (i.e. unstable) every day between 12 and 18 UTC approximately. The temperature errors of the AROME analyses at the surface are consistent with the evolution of the atmospheric stability. The largest errors

reach -12 K the 11th of February at 03 UTC (Fig. 4) when the stability is maximal with a value of 14 K.
 On the contrary, the evolution of the 1000 m temperature error is not correlated with the atmospheric stability with larger errors

during unstable conditions before the and shows larger errors before the stable conditions (9th of February) with a stability index reaching -10 K. At the beginning of the IOP cloudy conditions with low level clouds located around 1000 m were observed. It results in a sharp temperature inversion at the cloud base (Fig. 4) which is also a known source of error in NWP forecasts. At 1500 m a.g.l, the error stays within 2 K during all the period showing a good accuray of the AROME analyses at an altitude corresponding roughly to the averaged valley crest.

To summarize, the accuracy of the AROME analyses is degraded inside the valley which is affected by an atmospheric circulation decoupled from the synoptic dynamics above the valley crest. The degradation of the AROME analyses is correlated with the establishment of the stable episode. The surface cooling is strongly underestimated by AROME in this context. However, above the top of the valley, the analysis errors are much smaller and correspond to the expected accuracy of the model. This result confirms the fact that MWR can bring valuable information in the altitude range where the NWP error is the largest and where a lack of observations is still observed in operational networks.

5 5 Observation minus background monitoring

5.1 Data screening

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In order to remove discrepancies in the forward simulations due to cloud mislocations in the forecast model, a screening of MWR observations between clear and cloudy-sky cases has been performed. First of all, a sanity check is performed to remove MWR observations for which the rain flag provided within the instrument datastream was activated. As the HATPRO configuration was optimized to retrieve temperature profiles at a high vertical resolution, few zenithal observations were performed between two boundary layer scans. The Note that the small amount of data at zenith does not allow the use of the standard deviation of MWR BT measurements at 31 GHz to detect possible clouds in the field of view of the instruments (Ebell et al. (2017)). The cloud base height provided by the CT25K ceilometer was thus used as a reference to identify cloudy-sky observations. If the lowest cloud base height during a +/- 20 min window around the MWR observation is smaller than 6000 m, the observation is classified as cloudy. In case no ceilometer observation is available, the infrared radiometer temperature provided with the HATPRO platorm has to be smaller than -30 ° C to consider the observation as liquid free (similar approach used in Martinet et al. (2015)). Figure 5 shows the ecilometer cloud base height and the classification of radiosonde The result of this classification of radiosondes between clear-sky and cloudy-sky observations is shown in figure 5 in addition to the ceilometer cloud base height. Among the 84 radiosondes launched during the Passy-2015 field campaign, 56 were classified as clear-sky.

5.2 O-B analysis from AROME forecasts

5 Monitoring observation minus background departures is an important step before any assimilation. First of all, the best estimate of the analysis state is obtained only if background and observation errors follow Gaussian distribution with zero mean. Quality-controlled and bias-free observations are thus necessary to obtain good estimate of atmospheric profiles. Should not this be the case, a bias correction of the observations can be proposed to meet the requirements of variational assimilation.



Figure 3. Top panel: Temperature differences between radiosondes and AROME analyses at three levels: 21.5 m in black, 1000 m in red, 1500 m in blue. Bottom panel: radiosonde temperature differences between the radiosonde measurement at the boundary layer height and the surface measurement from an external weather station. Altitudes are given in m above ground level.

While Löhnert and Maier (2012) and Navas-Guzmán et al. (2016) used radiosonde to simulate the equivalent brightness temperature spectrum, Martinet et al. (2015) showed the possibility of using the AROME forecasts instead of radiosonde data. Using AROME forecasts enables the detection of BT bias offset when no radiosonde is available close to the MWR site. However, a new source of error is added coming from possible systematic NWP errors. Even though differentiating the different sources of errors (instrumental, forward model and background errors) can be complex, this monitoring is widely used in the satellite data community.

15 BT simulations were performed with the ARTS radiative transfer model and 1-hour AROME forecasts (temperature, humidity) using 2 months of data (February and March 2015). The closest AROME grid point in the valley with an altitude difference of only 2 m compared to the MWR location was used. Figure 6 shows the observation minus background departures (O-B) as a



Figure 4. Temperature profiles observed by the radiosonde (red line) or extracted from the AROME analyses (black line): during unstable conditions the 07th of February at 21 UTC (left panel) and during the most stable periode the 11th of February at 03 UTC (right panel). Altitudes are given in m above ground level.



Figure 5. Cloud base height retrieved from ceilometer CT25K during the two IOPs of the Passy-2015 experiment. Stars represent the launch times of the radiosondes during the campaign classified as clear-sky in red and cloud-sky in blue. When no cloud is found by the ceilometer (clear-sky), a value of 10 000 m has been chosen by default.

function of the atmospheric boundary layer stability for one transparent channel (51.26 GHz) and one opaque channel (58 GHz) and different elevation angles. Only clear-sky observations are considered with a screening procedure described in section 5.1.



Figure 6. Observation minus background (AROME forecasts) departures as a function of HATPRO temperature differences between 500 m and 50 m and different elevation angles from 90 $^{\circ}$ to 5.4 $^{\circ}$.

As radiosondes are not available throughout the period, the atmospheric stability is computed from MWR temperature profiles retrieved by linear regression. The temperature difference between 500 m and 50 m is used. Different altitudes have been tested but 500 m was found to describe best the development and destruction of stability in the boundary layer at least during the IOPs. The MWR temperature retrieval at surface was not used as large errors have been observed in Martinet et al. (2015) (1.9)

- 5 K see figure 9) and would impact the evaluation of the stability. Instead, the second level of the MWR retrievals (50 m) has been chosen as it has shown a better accuracy with respect to radiosonde measurements. From this figure, we can observe that the O-B departures at 58 GHz are highly correlated to the atmospheric stability which is not the case at 51.26 GHz. As opaque channels are more sensitive to the lowest atmospheric layers, this result indicates that the forward simulations are highly affected by the larger AROME forecast errors in the boundary layer during stable episodes. On the contrary, the accuracy of the
- 10 AROME forecasts in the upper layers stay stable during the period. The forward simulations at 51.26 GHz are thus quite stable during the whole campaign. Larger errors are also found with decreasing elevation angles for both transparent and opaque channels. For opaque channels, this can be explained by an increased sensitivity to atmospheric layers close to the surface where the largest errors in the AROME forecasts are observed. For transparent channels, radiations from surrounding slopes can degrade the observations and atmospheric inhomogeneities can cause larger discrepancies with the simulation.
- 15 This section has shown that, in the particular case of the Passy-2015 experiment, the use of AROME forecasts to infer any systematic BT offset is not appropriate. In fact, the large forecast errors during wintertime stable episodes exceed the instrumental errors. The computation of O-B departures on a larger time period could probably smooth the forecast errors to only highlight instrumental errors like calibration jumps, systematic errors and drifts. In order to correctly infer any BT offset, the O-B departures are computed from the radiosondes launched during the IOPs in the next section.

5.3 O-B analysis from radiosondes

Observation minus background departures have been computed from radiosonde profiles launched during the field campaign. As most of the radiosondes did not reach more than 2 km altitude above ground, it is important to complete the atmospheric profiles up to 30 km to avoid large discrepancies in the simulation of transparent channels. Radiosondes were interpolated into

- 5 the AROME vertical grid below 2 km and completed with AROME analyses above. As the accuracy of AROME analyses is better than 1 K above 2 km, this combination should not degrade the forward simulations. Figure 7 shows the bias and standard deviation of O-B departures at different elevation angles. We can note a stronger dependency to the elevation angles for transparent channels (51 to 52 GHz). These channels are more sensitive to calibration errors for decreasing optical depth (higher elevation angles). The largest bias (-4.2 K) is found at 52.25 GHz and an elevation angle of 90 ° while it is below 0.5 K
- 10 for opaque channels. Standard deviations within 1 K are observed for all channels and all elevation angles except at 51.25 GHz for elevation angles lower than 19.2 ° and at 52.25 GHz at 5.4 °. This degradation can be due to an increase in atmospheric inhomogeneities explaining that transparent channels are generally not used at low elevation angles (Crewell and Lohnert (2007)). For opaque channels, bias and standard deviation smaller than 0.2 K are observed at all angles except at 5.4 ° where the bias reaches 0.5 K. Similar values were found in the study of Martinet et al. (2015) with the same HATPRO instrument
- on a less complex terrain. The consistency between both studies points out a good stability of the instrument despite several deployments and calibrations. An improvement in the calibration procedure has also been observed with a significant decrease of standard deviation for all channels (up to 3 times at 90 °). A similar bias shape was found in Löhnert and Maier (2012) and Navas-Guzmán et al. (2016) with a large negative bias at 52.25 GHz but also on several sites in Europe (De Angelis et al. (2017)). This large bias can be due to a combination of calibration errors and absorption model uncertainties (Hewison 2006). This analysis demonstrates that a constant bias correction can be safely applied to the set of measurements used for temperature retrievals: only zenith angle for frequency below 53 GHz, and all elevation angles above. It will be applied and discussed in the next sections.

6 1DVAR retrievals

5 6.1 Background errors

In the operational AROME model, the background-error-covariance matrix \mathbf{B} is computed from an ensemble assimilation that considers explicit observation perturbations and implicit background perturbations through the cycling (Brousseau et al. (2011)). The AROME ensemble assimilation is coupled to the operational ensemble assimilation at global scale AEARP (Berre et al. (2007)). However, the expected background accuracy (diagonal terms of the \mathbf{B} matrix) suggests a forecast error of

10 less than 1 K in the boundary layer on average through all the AROME domain. This operational B matrix significantly underestimates the AROME forecast errors during the Passy-2015 experiment. A new B matrix has thus been computed from the differences between the AROME forecasts and the radiosonde data both in clear-sky and cloudy-sky similarly to Cimini et al. (2011). Figure 8 shows the The bias and standard deviation of these differences compared to the operational background errors



Figure 7. Observation minus background departures from radiosondes combined with AROME analyses for different elevation angles from 90 $^{\circ}$ to 5.4 $^{\circ}$ (coloured lines). For each angle, the bias is shown in solid line and the standard deviation in dashed line.

used for the assimilation of satellite data are shown in figure 8. In temperature, a large bias of approximately -5 K is observed at the surface and corresponds to the large overestimation of the temperature by AROME during the stable episodes. A standard deviation of 2 to 3 K, which is two to three times larger than the expected background error, is observed evident between the surface and 1700 meters. The temperature error at higher altitude is much smaller (~ 1 K) and closer to the value prescribed in the operational assimilation system, corresponding to a decrease in the forecast error above the valley crest. Similar features were found with ECMWF and NCEP models in an Arctic environment in the study of Cimini et al. (2010). As the 1DVAR retrieval accuracy depends on how well the **B** matrix is defined, the diagonal terms of the **B** matrix (auto-covariance of the temperature errors) were modified below 2 km altitude with the standard deviation simply replaced by the variance of the radiosonde minus AROME differences -(i.e. the square of standard deviation values in Figure 8) below 2 km. In order

- 5 to provide statistically consistent increments at the neighbouring levels of the model, the vertical correlations of the operational B matrix were conserved. Non-Gaussianity can also affect forecast errors. Recently, Legrand et al. (2016) evaluated the non-Gaussianity of analysis and forecast errors using a 90 member AROME ensemble assimilation. It was found that for all variables, non-Gaussianity exists but dynamical variables (vorticity and divergence) are more affected than temperature and humidity. Data assimilatione reduces this non-Gaussianity at each cycle in regions well covered by observations. This ensemble
- 10 assimilation does not exist for our period making complicated the evaluation of this Gaussianity in our context. However, it should affect higher moments of the error distribution than those used in the **B** matrix.

6.2 Sensitivity of retrievals to elevation angles and bias correction

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The 1DVAR method with the settings previously described has been applied to MWR observations during the two IOPs of the Passy-2015 campaign. The retrievals are evaluated against radiosondes and compared to the <u>standard HATPRO</u> linear regressions with the Payerne coefficients. Here the radiosonde profiles are interpolated to the retrieval grid without taking into



Figure 8. Bias (black line), standard deviation (red line) of the radiosonde minus 1h-AROME temperature differences. The operational background error used in AROME for the assimilation of satellite data is shown as the blue dashed line.

account the smoothing errors due to the limited vertical resolution of the MWR. In fact, this resolution is approximately between 50 m and 500 m and only 4 independent pieces of information can be extracted from the signal (Löhnert and Maier (2012)). On the contrary, the temperature profile is sampled approximately every 10 m by the radiosonde. In the future, the averaging kernel matrix could be used to bring the radiosonde profile onto the MWR vertical resolution. According to section 5, a constant bias correction is removed from all channels before the 1DVAR algorithm. This bias correction is not used for the linear regressions

that directly come from the raw-uncorrected BT measurements and the HATPRO proprietary software. Figure 9 evaluates temperature retrievals against radiosondes in terms of bias and RMSE focussing only on clear-sky profiles. Hove retrievals are compared to AROME 1h forecasts used as backgrounds in the algorithm and to linear regressions. For the sake of clarity figure 9 also shows MWR retrievals either with regression or 1DVAR with a focus on the range 0 - 1000 m. To evaluate the

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25 impact of the bias correction, 1DVAR retrievals with and without bias correction are also compared while the impact of low elevation angles is investigated by comparing retrievals using only zenith angle or all angles. As previously mentioned, we observe a positive bias up to 6 K in the AROME backgrounds decreasing with altitude to reach -0.5 K above 1200 m.

Very similar values of mean deviations are found between both (from -0.4 K to 0.2 K) for the two 1DVAR retrievals when configurations implementing a bias correction is applied to the measurements (zenith and boundary layer scan) despite a

30 decrease of the bias in the first 100 m with additional low elevation angles. Regressions show also almost identical values demonstrating a better behaviour compared to the large bias a larger bias with values between -0.1 K and 0.8 K. These values are reduced compared to those observed with neural networks in Martinet et al. (2015). Without applying a bias correction to the measurements, a small degradation in the 1DVAR bias is observed below 1000 m. The maximum degradation is found at 1000-1150 m where the bias reaches 0.7 K instead of -0.1 K. The RMSE profiles of -0.03 K.

1DVAR retrievals indicate that a significant amount of information can be extracted from MWR observations to improve the AROME backgrounds even though large errors below 1500 m are observed (from 1 to 8 K) in the *a priori* profile. This situation is quite extreme as the background is very far from the truth at the beginning of the minimisation. However, the largest background errors are found in the 0-1000 m range where MWR can constrain the most the minimisation due to the

- 5 high information content of the instrument in this altitude range. Above 1000 m 1DVAR outperforms regressions whose RMSE values increase up to 2.5 K at 6000 m. The performances of 1DVAR retrievals are similar when using the standard deviations from the operational B matrix and a custom B matrix computed comparing AROME and RS profiles (not shown). This suggests that the operational B matrix may be safely adopted for other sites where RS profiles are not available for computing a custom B matrix. However, in the future, it would be interesting to investigate the sensitivity of the 1DVAR retrievals to the flow.
- 10 dependency of the **B** matrix and particularly to the vertical correlation lengths.For the sake of clarity figure ?? shows MWR retrievals either with regression or 1DVAR with a focus on the range 0 1000 m. 1DVAR RMSE values are RMSE values are smaller than 0.8 K below 500 m and within 1 K through all the atmospheric profile. Large RMSE values are found close to the surface for all retrieval methods (up to 1.6 K). The best accuracy of 1DVAR retrievals is found when the bias correction is applied to the measurements and using all elevation angles up to 5.4 °. A degradation below 1000 m in the 1DVAR retrievals
- 15 is observed when only observations at zenith are used in the minimisation. In this case, the RMSE values can reach 1.2 K instead of 0.8 K with low elevation angles. This result demonstrates the benefit of low elevation angles to resolve temperature inversions below 1000 m. Below 1000 m, regressions perform slightly better (differences between 0.1 and 0.2 K in RMSE) than 1DVAR. Above 1000 m 1DVAR outperforms regressions whose RMSE values increase up to 2.5 K at 6000 m. Overall, 1DVAR retrievals provide the best estimate of the atmosphere. The performance of 1DVAR retrievals is similar when using the standard deviations from the operational **B** matrix and a custom **B** matrix computed comparing AROME and RS profiles (not
- 5 shown). This suggests that the operational **B** matrix may be safely adopted for other sites where RS profiles are not available for computing a custom **B** matrix. However, in the future, it would be interesting to investigate the sensitivity of the 1DVAR retrievals to the flow dependency of the **B** matrix and particularly to the vertical correlation lengths. The flow-dependency and diurnal cycle of forecast errors can be determined by implementing a real-time AROME ensemble assimilation system (Ménétrier et al. (2014)). This is under-development and should be available next year.
- 10 Vertical profiles of bias (dashed lines) and root-mean-square-errors (solid lines) of MWR retrievals against radiosondes with a focus on the range 0-1000 m. 1DVAR retrievals from AROME 1h forecasts and bias correction (magenta), without bias correction (eyan), with bias correction but using only zenith angle (blue) and linear regressions (black). Results on 56 clear-sky temperature profiles.
- Time In order to investigate more in details the large RMSE values observed close to the surface, time series of the temperature difference between the surface (external weather station) and the first HATPRO level is are investigated in figure 10. This difference is compared to the differences between the surface station and tower measurements at 2.5 and 5 m. The evolution of the temperature error is compared to the diurnal cycle of the temperature difference between the surface (1.5 m) and the RS measurement at the first level above (~ 10 m a.g.l). Positive values indicate stable atmosphere while negative values indicate convective conditions. We can note a correlation between the decrease in the stability and the increase in the HATPRO surface
- 20 error. Maximum differences (- 9 K) are found when the stability is minimum corresponding to a maximum of convective activity during daytime. The MWR seems to significantly underestimate the surface warming during the transition phase from



Figure 9. Vertical profiles of bias (left paneldashed lines) and root-mean-square-errors (right panelsolid lines) of the AROME background (red line) and MWR retrievals using all elevation angles against radiosondes: 1DVAR retrievals from AROME 1h forecasts, all elevation angles and bias correction (magentagreen), without all elevation angles but no bias correction (eyanred), with bias correction but using only zenith angle and bias correction (blue) and linear regressions (black). Results on 56 clear-sky temperature profiles.

stable to convective conditions. However, MWR retrievals can easily be combined with surface sensors providing an higher accuracy at the surface. Figure 10 also shows the differences of the tower measurements at 2.5 and 5 m with respect to the surface station. The standard deviation is slightly larger with the measurement at 2.5 m compared to the 5 m measurement (1.1 K instead of 0.9 K respectively). To test the feasibility of combining surface measurements and MWR observations in a physical way, the tower measurement at 5 m was included in the observation vector with a sharp surface-peaked Jacobian associated. The 1DVAR retrievals look very similar to what was previously shown but a significant improvement in the RMSE at the surface was found with a decrease from 1.6 K to 1 K as expected (this configuration is used later on in figure 13). In the future, this combination could thus be used by deploying a well calibrated surface station in parallel to the MWR.

30 6.3 Sensitivity of retrievals to the *a priori*

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The previous section has investigated the capability of MWR observations to be assimilated into NWP models by following a similar approach to operational assimilation systems (3DVAR, 4DVAR). However, in the context of field campaigns and the study of boundary layer processes, it can be interesting to get the best possible 1DVAR retrievals by using a more appropriate background profile. In the case of the Passy-2015 field campaign, thanks to the high temporal resolution of RS, the previously launched radiosonde can be used as the background profile instead of the AROME 1h forecast to start the minimisation from a



Figure 10. Time series of temperature differences between the first HATPRO level and a surface weather station (blue line), between tower measurements at 2.5 and 5 m and the surface station (eyan and red lines respectively line). Radiosonde temperature difference (black line) between the surface weather station and the first level above.

more reasonable *a priori* profile. The **B** matrix has also been recomputed according to the differences between two successive radiosondes in order to be consistent. Figure In order to evaluate this new configuration figure 11 compares the accuracy of 1DVAR retrievals if either 1h AROME forecasts or the previously launched radiosondes are used as backgrounds. When As

5 expected when radiosondes are used as backgrounds, the bias is decreased during the analysis providing the best accuracy compared to the other retrievals. In terms of RMSE, the 1DVAR accuracy is improved between 400 m and 1200 m and outperforms the regressions through all the atmospheric profile except a slight degradation at 1200 m. Using RS as backgrounds, RMSE values are below 0.6 K in the first 1000 m and within 1 K above.

An attempt to use the 1DVAR algorithm in cloudy conditions is also shown in figure ??!!!. The liquid water path is estimated

10 from HATPRO with a simple and classical dual channel algorithm using brightness temperature measurement at 23 and 31 GHz (Westwater (1978)). The liquid water content profile is estimated from the background temperature and humidity profiles from a modified adiabatic assumption (Karstens et al. (1994)) in layer where the relative humidity exceeds 95 %. The computed liquid water content profile is then scaled with the estimated liquid water path. The obtained liquid water content profile

is translated vertically to fit the cloud base height provided by the ceilometer. In case no atmospheric layer exceeds the 95 % relative humidity threshold, a cloud layer is placed at the cloud base height provided by the ceilometer with a geometrical thickness of one layer and a liquid water path equal to the one derived from HATPRO measurements. As MWR are mostly

- 5 sensitive to the integrated liquid water content rather than the vertical distribution of clouds, this configuration should be sufficient to take into account the cloud contribution in the radiative transfer. Note that only 25 profiles are taken into account in the statistics which makes the dataset too small for a good representativness. A large degradation of the 1DVAR retrievals from AROME forecasts is observed in cloudy-conditions with an increase of RMSE values up to 3 K at 1000 m. Contrary to what one may think, this degradation does not seem to be directly related to large background errors in the liquid water
- 10 content but more to the misrepresentation of cloud-based temperature inversions in AROME. In fact, figure 5 shows that most of the cloudy profiles are located at the beginning of the first IOP between 07 and 09 February. This period corresponds to the strong temperature inversion at 1000 m altitude missed by AROME (fig. 4) inducing large forecast errors up to 9 K. As the information content from the microwave radiometer is maximum below 1000 m and decreases with altitude, the MWR likely does not bring enough information during the analysis to correct the background profile. In addition to this decrease in
- 15 information content, the large RMSE value at 1000 m is likely due to the smoothing error related to the low vertical resolution of MWR. This is evident in the bias, showing large positive to negative values going from 500 to 1500 m altitude. To confirm that this degradation does not come from large errors in the liquid water content background profile, 1DVAR retrievals have been performed using only opaque channels (54-58 GHz). These channels are known to be less affected by cloud-liquid water emission contrary to transparent channels. Figure 12 shows the RMSE of 1DVAR retrievals with this re-
- 20 duced channel set differentiating the results between clear-sky and cloudy-sky conditions. In clear-sky conditions, using only opaque channels, a slight improvement between 900 and 1600 m and a degradation between 1600 and 3000 m are observed although these differences stay small (0.1 K in RMSE). In cloudy-sky conditions, the same 1DVAR statistics are found with the different channel configurations. As transparent channels are more affected by cloud liquid water emission, we could have expected to observe a larger degradation when these channels are used if the liquid water content is not well modelled. As few
- 25 differences are observed with transparent channels included in cloudy-conditions, it supports that the degradation in cloudy-conditions is likely to come from sharp elevated temperature inversions. In cloudy-sky, regressions also show a degradation with a RMSE of 2.2 K at 1000 m but are slightly better than 1DVAR be-low 1300 m if AROME is used as background (fig. ??11). Above 1300 m, an increase in the bias makes the regressions less accurate than both 1DVAR configurations. The best performance is found if radiosondes are used as backgrounds even though
- 30 the RMSE values still reach 1.8 K at 1000 m. This configuration shows that one way to deal with sharp elevated temperature inversion with MWR could be to use a background profile already simulating this inversion.
 Figure In order to evaluate the added value brought by MWR to the background profile and how much improvement could be expected in future data assimilation, figure 13 summarizes the performance of the 1DVAR retrievals either from RS or from AROME backgrounds compared to the AROME forecast errors. When the previously launched It also shows the performance
- 35 of the "persistent" method where the last RS is used as background, the external weather station was added to the observation vector an estimate of the current conditions. As radiosondes were launched every 3 hours during the Passy-2015 campaign,

it is interesting to investigate if MWR could still bring an information on atmospheric changes during the 3 hour time window. Figure 13 also shows the performance of the "persistent" method where the last RS is used as an estimate of the current conditions. We Note that when the previously launched RS is used as background, the external weather station was added to

5 the observation vector.

In clear-sky conditions, as previously mentioned, we observe a large RMSE of the AROME forecasts up to 8 K due to a positive bias up to 6 K in the AROME background decreasing with altitude. The RMSE profiles of 1DVAR retrievals indicate that a significant amount of information can be extracted from MWR observations to improve the AROME backgrounds even though large errors below 1500 m are observed in the *a priori* profile. This situation is quite extreme as the background is very far from

- 10 the truth at the beginning of the minimisation. However, the largest background errors are found in the 0-1000 m range where MWR can constrain the most the minimisation due to the high information content of the instrument in this altitude range. In cloudy-sky conditions, AROME suffers from large errors both at surface and 1000 m corresponding to sharp temperature inversions. A significant improvement of the AROME forecasts is observed in the first 1200 m. Temperature errors are decreased from 3.5 K to 0.4 K at 200 m and from 4.5 to 2.5 K at the cloud-based inversion. This result demonstrates the
- 15 potential benefit of assimilating MWR observations in NWP models both in clear-sky and cloudy-sky conditions. Even though RS could be launched at a high temporal resolution (here up to three hours), the 10 minute resolution of MWR can be valuable to fill in the gap between RS. In fact, we note that even if radiosondes are launched every three hours, significant changes in the boundary layer temperature profiles are observed between two adjacent RS with RMS-RMSE values larger than 1 K below 1000 m and up to 3.6 K at 2 m 4.4 K at the surface in clear-sky conditions. Errors In cloudy-sky conditions, errors up
- 20 to 1.6 K in RMSE in the temperature profile are also associated to the cloud-based inversion with the this "persistent" method. 1D assimilation of MWR observations manages to significantly decrease the errors in the boundary layer mainly below 1500 m with values between 0.3 and 1-1.3 K in the first 1000 m. MWR observations can thus fill in the gap between 3 h radiosondes to provide valuable temperature profiles. This result also demonstrates how the MWR temporal resolution is a necessity to complete our understanding and description of the ABL diurnal cycle. As already shown, the AROME forecasts are significantly
- 25 improved in clear-sky conditions but also in cloudy-sky. Even though errors up to 3 K are observed with the 1DVAR from the AROME forecasts, a significant improvement of the AROME forecasts is found in cloudy-sky conditions in the first 1200 m. Temperature errors are decreased from 3 K to 1 K in the boundary layer and 4.5 to 2.5 K at the cloud-based inversion. This result demonstrates the potential benefit of assimilating MWR observations in NWP models both in clear-sky and cloudy-sky conditions.
- 30 Vertical profiles of bias (left panel) and root mean square errors (right panel) of 1DVAR retrievals using either AROME 1h forecast (blue line) or previously launched radiosonde (purple line) as background. 1DVAR retrievals are performed with bias correction and using all elevation angles (90 to 5.4 °). Comparison with linear regressions (black line). Results on 25 cloudy-sky temperature profiles.
 - 6.4 Examples of temperature profiles



Figure 11. Vertical profiles of bias (left paneldashed lines) and root-mean-square-errors (right panelsolid line) of 1DVAR retrievals using either AROME 1h forecast (blueline) or previously launched radiosonde (purple linered) as background. 1DVAR retrievals are performed with bias correction and using all elevation angles (90 to 5.4 °). Comparison with linear regressions (black line). Results Left panel shows results on 56 clear-sky temperature profiles while right panels shows results on 25 cloudy-sky temperature profiles.

Figure In order to illustrate the capability of MWR to resolve deep near surface as well as elevated temperature inversions, figure 14 shows temperature profiles during two opposite weather regimes: convective and cloudy conditions the 07th of February at 06:04 UTC and stable clear conditions the 13th of February at 02:56 UTC. In each figure, temperature retrievals from different configurations (regression, 1DVAR from AROME forecast, 1DVAR from radiosonde) are compared to radiosonde.

- 5 The *a priori* profile used in each configuration, either the previously launched radiosonde or the 1h AROME forecast is also shown. First of all, we can note the difficulty of ground-based MWR to resolve high level inversions. Neither the regression or the AROME 1DVAR can catch the sharp inversions at 1000 m above ground level. Only the RS 1DVAR is able to catch it as the minimisation starts from a background profile already simulating an elevated inversion that is barely modified during the retrieval. Note that 1DVAR with AROME background shows an elevated inversion, though the AROME profile is almost linear.
- 10 This already represents an improvement with respect to the AROME background which is too smoothmuch smoother. This limitation is a well-known issue of MWR; Massaro et al. (2015) suggested the use of additional pressure and temperature observations from meteorological stations on the surrounding mountain slopes. Our study shows that another way of improvement is to use an external information to infer the presence of an elevated temperature inversion that will be incorporated in the background of the 1DVAR algorithm. An improvement can also be expected from more appropriate vertical correlations in the B matrix. In fact, correlations currently used probably smooth the increments and a reduction on the vertical correlation length



Figure 12. Vertical profiles of root-mean-square-errors of 1DVAR retrievals using AROME 1h forecasts as backgrounds. Either all V-band channels are used (blue) or only opaque channels (magentared). Results differentiated by clear-sky (solid lines) or cloudy-sky conditions (dashed lines)

should lead to a beneficial impact on the retrievals in such conditions. This approach will be investigated in the future.

Contrary to the high-level inversion, MWR can catch very well clear-sky deep near-surface temperature inversions as observed during the stable episode of the Passy-2015 campaign. Both 1DVAR and regressions capture well the structure of the profile even though 1DVAR retrievals are slightly more accurate than regressions. We can again note the significant improvement of

5 even though 1DVAR retrievals are slightly more accurate than regressions. We can again note the significant improvement of the AROME profile in the lowest 500 m thanks to the MWR information content brought during the analysis.

7 Conclusions

Within the Passy-2015 field campaign, a HATPRO ground-based microwave radiometer was operated in a deep Alpine valley
constraining the measurement configuration making complex the instrumental deployment due to surrounding mountains.
A 1DVAR technique combining 1h forecasts of the convective scale model AROME and observations from the HATPRO MWR was tested and evaluated during two IOPs foccussing on wintertime stable boundary layers out of three months of instrumental deployment. In such complex terrain we could have expected the measurements to be affected by surrounding mountains and one interesting result of this study is to show that MWR observations are not affected in such a narrow valley
even going down to 5 ° elevation angles. Previous papers deploying MWR in complex terrain are not abundant, among them

we can cite : Kneifel et al. (2009), Kneifel et al. (2010), Cimini et al. (2011), Xie et al. (2012) and Massaro et al. (2015). In



Figure 13. Vertical of profiles root-mean-square-errors of 1DVAR retrievals using the previously launched radiosonde (magenta red line) or the AROME forecasts (blue line) as backgrounds. Comparison with the persistent method where the last RS is used as an estimate of the current conditions (dashed magentared) and the AROME forecast errors (dashed blue). Here, the weather station is included in the 1DVAR from RS to improve the temperature retrieval at the surface (1.5 m). Statistics on 56 clear-sky profiles (left panel) and 25 cloudy-sky profiles (right panel).

Kneifel et al. (2009) the terrain is not as complex as in Passy with a maximum elevation of only 350 m and only integrated water vapor retrievals are investigated. Both studies of Kneifel et al. (2009) and Xie et al. (2012) do not investigate temperature profile retrievals neither and the radiometer is deployed at 2650 meters above sea level which differs from the deployment at the bottom of the 2000 m deep Passy valley. In Cimini et al. (2011), the terrain is more complex but the 1DVAR is investigated with a global NWP model at a 10 km horizontal resolution and using only one elevation angle in addition to the zenith. The radiometer measurements do not go lower than 15 $^{\circ}$ elevation angle which significantly limits the possible perturbation from

- surrounding mountains. Massaro et al. (2015) deploys the instrument in a valley with a free viewing angle up to 28 km and only focussed on regressions. Regarding the Passy valley, the free line of sight is limited to 5 km in the Passy direction and 1DVAR retrievals from a convective scale model are performed. Temperature gradients were also larger compared to those
- 10 observed in Massaro et al. (2015).

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An evaluation of the accuracy of the AROME model was first studied. A large underestimation of the surface cooling up to -12 K during the most stable episode was observed. This is a well-known issue of current NWP models that motivated, among other scientific questions, the preparation of the Passy-2015 campaign. This issue is currently investigated by the modelling community at CNRM and some significant leads for improvement have already been found. During the beginning of the IOP,

15 AROME was found to smooth cloud-based inversions leading to larger errors at the cloud base around 1000 m while during



Figure 14. Vertical profiles of temperature during convective conditions (07 February 2015 at 06:04 UTC, top panel) or stable conditions (13 February at 02:56 UTC). Comparison between radiosonde profile (magenta), linear regression (dashed black line), 1DVAR from AROME forecasts (blue), 1DVAR from previous radiosonde (red). Background profiles corresponding to either the 1h AROME forecast (black) or the previously launched radiosonde (cyan) are also shown.

clear-sky conditions the temperature inversion is not large enough. The measured brightness temperature (BT) measurements were compared with the ones simulated either from AROME 1h forecasts or RS and the ARTS radiative transfer model. The goal of this monitoring is to propose a bias correction to improve the retrieval of atmospheric profiles. The use of the AROME model to compute the instrumental bias correction was found inappropriate because the BT deviations for opaque channels

- 5 are mainly driven by the large forecast errors in the boundary layer during stable conditions. The instrumental bias was thus inferred from BT simulations with the RS launched during the campaign in clear-sky conditions. A large negative bias was observed for the most transparent channels with values up to -4.2 K (52.28 GHz, 90 °) while it is below 0.5 K for opaque channels and all elevation angles. Relatively low standard deviations (within 1 K) were observed for channels and elevation angles used in the retrieval demonstrating that the biases can be safely removed by applying a constant bias correction. The
- 10 bias is close to that found in previous studies. This demonstrates that the bias can be assumed constant as long as calibrations are performed properly. The second part of this study has evaluated 1DVAR retrievals in terms of bias and RMSE against collocated radiosondes. By exploiting the 1DVAR assimilation of MWR observations, the large forecast errors close to the surface (up to 8 K in RMSE) were decreased within 1 K through all the atmospheric profile except the surface temperature (1.6 K RMSE). This result is really encouraging as it shows the high information content of MWR in the boundary layer specifically

where the AROME forecasts are less accurate and could be improved by a dense network of ground-based instruments. 1DVAR retrievals were found to outperform linear regressions above 1000 m where RMSE values increase up to 2.5 K at 6000 m. Linear regressions show similar performance below 1000 m. The use of the elevation scanning mode was also found to significantly improve the retrievals below 1000 m while the use of a bias correction improves the retrievals below 2000 m. These last results

5 are not in agreement with the results in Martinet et al. (2015). However, the dataset used in this study contains mainly deep clear-sky near-surface temperature inversions for which low elevation angles can bring new information to the zenith mode. Finally, the use of an external weather station to constrain the temperature retrieval at the surface can decrease the RMSE values from 1.6 K to 1 K which includes the uncertainty due to relative distance.

In order to improve 1DVAR retrievals for processes study in the context of field campaigns, RS previously launched during the

- 10 field campaign can be used as backgrounds in place of AROME forecasts. Starting from an *a priori* profile already closer to the true atmospheric state, a better estimation of the optimal atmospheric profile should be observed. In clear-sky conditions, this configuration leads to an improvement of 1DVAR retrievals below 1000 m with RMSE values below 0.6 K. An attempt of retrieving temperature profiles in cloudy-conditions was also studied. A significant degradation of both regressions and 1DVAR was found especially around 1000 m with RMSE values around 2 K for regressions and 3 K for 1DVAR retrievals. This
- 15 degradation is significantly reduced if RS are used as backgrounds. This degradation at 1000 m is probably due to cloud-based temperature inversions not caught by the MWR and does not seem to be directly related to large background errors in the liquid water absorption. This study confirms the known difficulty of MWR to capture elevated temperature inversions in cloudy-sky at the level of the valley crest (Crewell and Lohnert (2007), Massaro et al. (2015)) while highlighting the high capability of MWR to catch clear-sky deep near-surface temperature inversions during stable boundary layers. MWR observations were also
- 20 found to provide valuable information between two adjacent RS to catch significant changes in the ABL temperature profile. Regarding the scientific questions addressed in section 1, our results show that MWR are expected to bring valuable information into NWP models up to 3 km altitude but mainly in the first km both in clear-sky and cloudy-sky conditions. With an accuracy between 0.5 and 1 K in RMSE, our study has proved MWR to be capable of resolving deep near-surface temperature inversions observed in complex terrain during stable boundary layer conditions. This accuracy can be obtained only if the MWR field
- of view is free of obstacles and is similar to what was observed in less complex terrain. Elevated temperature inversions are still challenging due to the decreased vertical resolution of the instrument with altitude. Using a more appropriate background already simulating an elevated inversion was already found to greatly improve the retrievals. In the future, extra work needs to be undertaken to decrease the correlation length of the background error covariance matrix which should improve the retrievals. New generation of MWR also shows a larger sensitivity which is expected to help resolving elevated inversions.
- 30 Finally, synergy with other passive and active instruments (infrared radiometers and lidars) is expected to improve the vertical resolution of the retrievals through all the atmospheric column (Barrera-Verdejo et al. (2016)).

The results shown in this study are encouraging and show-demonstrate the potential for assimilating MWR in operational convective scale models even though studies on larger dataset and larger time periods should be investigated. The development of the ground-based version of the fast radiative transfer model RTTOV (RTTOV-gb, De Angelis et al. (2016)) paves the way for future data assimilation of brightness temperature measurements which should bring more in the assimilation system than

5 retrievals (Caumont et al. (2016)). In the context of urbanized valley, this study has proved the capability of MWR for long-term monitoring to improve our understanding of wintertime pollution events. Temperature gradients linked to the atmospheric stability could be used to better forecast wintertime pollution events. Scanning in two different directions of the valley, MWR observations also offer the possibility of investigating temperature heterogeneity in the valley and how these differences are linked to the mesoscale circulation. This will be further investigated in a future study.

In the future, 1DVAR retrievals will be extended to humidity and liquid water content. Improvement in the definition of the \mathbf{R} and \mathbf{B} matrices will also be carried out to be optimized with the weather regime.

8 Data availability

5 Data used in this paper are available on the Passy-2015 campaign website: http://passy.sedoo.fr.

Acknowledgements. We thank Alexander Haefele from MeteoSwiss for kindly providing us with the Payerne coefficient files used in the microwave radiometer retrievals. All the members of the CNRM/GMEI/LISA team are thanked for the maintenance and deployment of the MWR during field campaigns. The Passy-2015 field campaign was supported by ADEME through the French national programme LEFE/INSU and by METEO-FRANCE. We thank the cities of Passy and Sallanches for their kind support. The field experiment was led by

10 CNRM while LEGI is the principal investigator of the LEFE/INSU project. Data are managed by SEDOO at Observatoire Midi-Pyrénées. This work has also been supported through the COST Action ES1303 (TOPROF), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) and by SBFI-contract no. C15.0030. We acknowledge the helpful comments from two anonymous reviewers to improve the manuscript.

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