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# Two-dimensional Jacobians det and Det for bounded variation functions. Application.

Marc Briane<sup>a</sup> & Juan Casado-Díaz<sup>b</sup>

#### Abstract

The paper deals with the comparison in dimension two between the strong Jacobian determinant det and the weak (or distributional) Jacobian determinant Det. Restricting ourselves to dimension two, we extend the classical results of Ball and Müller as well as more recent ones to bounded variation vector-valued functions, providing a sufficient condition on a vector-valued U in  $BV(\Omega)^2$  such that the equality  $\det(\nabla U) = \operatorname{Det}(\nabla U)$  holds either in the distributional sense on  $\Omega$ , or almost-everywhere in  $\Omega$  when U is in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2$ . The key-assumption of the result is the regularity of the Jacobian matrix-valued  $\nabla U$  along the direction of a given non vanishing vector field  $b \in C^1(\Omega)^2$ , *i.e.*  $\nabla U b$  is assumed either to belong to  $C^0(\Omega)^2$  with one of its coordinates in  $C^{1}(\Omega)$ , or to belong to  $C^{1}(\Omega)^{2}$ . Two examples illustrate this new notion of two-dimensional distributional determinant. Finally, we prove the lower semicontinuity of a polyconvex energy defined for vector-valued functions U in  $BV(\Omega)^2$ , assuming that the vector field b and one of the coordinates of  $\nabla U b$  lie in a compact set of regular vector-valued functions.

**Keywords:** Jacobian determinants, Det and det, bounded variation function, ODE's flow, minimization under constraint, polyconvex energy

Mathematics Subject Classification: 34E10, 37C10, 37C40, 42B05

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## 1 Introduction

Following the seminal work of Morrey [22, 23] Ball showed in his famous article on nonlinearity elasticity [1, Sec. 6] (see also [10, Lemma 2.7]), that for any mapping  $U = (u_1, \ldots, u_N) : \Omega \to \mathbb{R}^N$  defined on a non-empty bounded open set  $\Omega$  of  $\mathbb{R}^N$ , the two Jacobian determinants

$$\begin{cases} \det(DU) := \nabla u_1 \cdot (\nabla u_2 \times \dots \times \nabla u_N) \\ \det(DU) := \operatorname{div} \left( u_1 \left( \nabla u_2 \times \dots \times \nabla u_N \right) \right), \end{cases}$$
(1.1)

which in dimension two with U = (u, v), reads as

$$\det(DU) := \nabla u \cdot \nabla v^{\perp} \quad \text{and} \quad \det(DU) := \dim(u \,\nabla v^{\perp}), \tag{1.2}$$

agree in the distributions space  $\mathscr{D}'(\Omega)$  if  $U \in W^{1,N}(\Omega)^N$ . But they may differ if  $U \in W^{1,p}(\Omega)^2$  with p < N. He also conjectured that  $\det(DU) = \operatorname{Det}(DU)$  as soon as  $\operatorname{Det}(DU) \in L^1(\Omega)$ . Müller [25] has answered to Ball's conjecture assuming the slightly stronger assumption that the vector-valued function U belongs to  $W^{1,N^2/(N+1)}(\Omega)^N$ . This extra condition is quite natural since it implies that  $\operatorname{Det}(DU) \in \mathscr{D}'(\Omega)$  as a distributional divergence of a vector-valued function in  $L^1(\Omega)^N$ .

Müller's result has been the object of several extensions: either the mapping U is assumed to be in  $W^{1,N-1}(\Omega)^N$  and to satisfy some Lusin condition [20, 14], or the distributional determinant Det(DU) is based on a current approach which provides some new properties as shown in [26, 9, 11, 12]. Moreover, Müller [24] has proved that the non-negativity of the Jacobian determinant implies some extra regularity of  $\det(DU)$ .

In the present note, we use use a radically different approach restricted to dimension two. We construct a new distributional definition of the weak Jacobian determinant  $\text{Det}(\nabla U)$ , but also of the strong Jacobian determinant  $\det(\nabla U)$  (<sup>c</sup>) (see Definition 2.5), which hold for any vector-valued function  $U \in BV(\Omega)^2$  satisfying the following condition: the Jacobian matrix-valued  $\nabla U$  is assumed to be regular along the direction of some non vanishing vector field  $b \in C^1(\Omega)^2$ , *i.e.*  $\nabla U b$  is at least continuous in  $\Omega$ .

Then, we prove (see Theorem 2.6) the distributional identity

$$Det(DU) = det(DU) \quad in \ \mathscr{D}'(\Omega), \tag{1.3}$$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>c</sup>Since det( $\nabla U$ ) may be also distributional, det( $\nabla U$ ) will be called the strong Jacobian and Det( $\nabla U$ ) will be called the weak Jacobian to avoid any confusion.

for any vector-valued function U = (u, v) satisfying

$$\nabla U \, b \in C^0(\Omega^2)^2,$$

$$\begin{cases}
U \in BV(\Omega)^2 & \text{with } (\nabla u \cdot b \in C^1(\Omega) \text{ or } \nabla v \cdot b \in C^1(\Omega)), \quad (1.4) \\
\text{or} \\
U \in W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2 & \text{with } \nabla U \, b = (\nabla u \cdot b, \nabla v \cdot b) \in C^1(\Omega)^2.
\end{cases}$$

Moreover, under the second assumption of (1.4) equality (1.3) is shown to hold a.e. in  $\Omega$  with det(DU) in  $L^1_{loc}(\Omega)$ . This provides a new approach of Ball's conjecture, and extends Müller's result [25] in dimension two. In particular, contrary to [25] the weak Jacobian determinant Det $(\nabla U)$ does not need to be *a priori* in  $L^1(\Omega)$ . The apparently unnatural condition (1.4) has been actually motivated (see [5, Corollary 2.8] and [5, Remark 2.9]) by the celebrated Franks-Misiurewicz ergodic theorem [17] on the Herman rotation set [21], when the weak Jacobian determinant Det(DU) is null.

The proof of our main result (Theorem 2.6) is based on an original local decomposition (see Proposition 2.4 below) of any function  $u \in BV(\Omega)$ such that  $\nabla u \cdot b$  is regular, using to this end the ODE's flow induced by the vector field b.

Section 3 is devoted to examples. On the one hand, we get a counterexample of Ball's conjecture (see Example 3.1) for a vector-valued function U in  $BV(\Omega)^2$  rather than in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2$ . On the other hand, Example 3.2 below illustrates the second condition of (1.4), and cannot be derived from Müller's result [25].

We conclude the paper with Section 4 by proving the lower semicontinuity (see Theorem 4.1) of the polyconvex functional defined by

$$\mathscr{F}(U) = |\nabla U|(\Omega) + \int_{\Omega} \psi \left( \det(\nabla U) \right) dx \quad \text{for } U \in BV(\Omega)^2, \qquad (1.5)$$

involving the strong but distributional Jacobian determinant of Definition 2.5, and satisfying a compact set of contraints based on the regular conditions (1.4). The implication (2.18) of Theorem 2.6 shows actually that det( $\nabla U$ ) = Det( $\nabla U$ ) in (1.5). This result is in the spirit of the Müller-Spector minimization result [26, Theorem 4.2] (and the references therein), replacing the delicate stability of the positive Jacobian determinant [26, Theorem 4.2] (which is based on the global invertibility condition INV) for vector-valued functions in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^N$ , by the stability of the two-dimensional weak Jacobians of Definition 2.5 for vector-valued functions in  $BV(\Omega)^2$ . At this point, we have to mention the very fine weak continuity of the Jacobian determinant obtained by Brezis and Nguyen [4] for BMO functions, and partly based on the famous div-curl approach of Coifman, Lions, Meyer and Semmens [8]. Restricting ourselves to dimension two, we have extended the weak continuity of [4] to BV functions [6, Theorem 3.8] using a different divergence-curl result [6, Theorem 2.1], and assuming in addition that one of the two gradients of the Jacobian matrix is equi-integrable in some Lorentz space. In the proof of Theorem 4.1 this condition is replaced by the regularity condition (1.4) satisfied by the Jacobian matrix along some vector field b.

#### Notation

- $(e^1, e^2)$  denotes the canonical basis of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , and  $0_{\mathbb{R}^2}$  denotes the null vector of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .
- $I_2$  is the unit matrix of  $\mathbb{R}^{2\times 2}$
- $R_{\perp}$  denotes the  $(2 \times 2)$  rotation matrix  $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$ . For any  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}^2$ ,  $\xi^{\perp}$  denotes the perpendicular vector  $R_{\perp}\xi$ .
- " $\cdot$ " denotes the scalar product and  $|\cdot|$  the euclidean norm in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .
- $\mathbb{1}_A$  denotes the characteristic function of the set A.
- B(x, R) denotes the euclidean open ball of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  centered on  $x \in \mathbb{R}^2$ and of radius R > 0.
- dx the Lebesgue measure on  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , and |A| denotes the Lebesgue measure of any measurable set in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .
- $\mathscr{D}'(\Omega)$  denotes the space of the distributions on an open set  $\Omega$  of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ .
- The Jacobian matrix of a mapping  $\Phi \in L^1_{loc}(\Omega)^2$  is defined by the matrix-valued distribution  $\nabla \Phi$  with entries

$$\left[\nabla\Phi\right]_{i,j} := \partial_{x_j}\Phi_i \in \mathscr{D}'(\Omega) \quad \text{for } i, j = 1, 2.$$

The divergence of  $\Phi$  is defined by the distribution

div 
$$\Phi := \sum_{i=1}^{2} \partial_{x_i} \Phi_i \in \mathscr{D}'(\Omega).$$

 The abbreviation "a.e." for almost anywhere, will be used throughout the paper. The simple mention "a.e." refers to the Lebesgue measure on ℝ<sup>2</sup>.

- $\mathcal{M}(\Omega)$  denotes the space of the bounded Borel measures  $\mu$  on an open set  $\Omega$  of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , and  $|\mu|(\Omega)$  denotes the total variation of  $\mu$  on  $\Omega$ .
- $BV(\Omega)$  denotes the space of the bounded variation functions on an open set  $\Omega$  of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , *i.e.* the set of the functions  $u \in L^1(\Omega)$  such that the gradient distribution  $\nabla u$  is in  $\mathcal{M}(\Omega)^2$ .
- $o(\delta) = \delta o_{\delta}(1)$  where  $o_{\delta}(1)$  denotes a term satisfying  $\lim_{\delta \to 0} o_{\delta}(1) = 0$ .  $O(\delta) = \delta O_{\delta}(1)$  where  $O_{\delta}(1)$  denotes a bounded term with respect to  $\delta$ .
- C denotes a positive constant which may vary from line to line.

## 2 Jacobians Det and det for bounded variation functions

In the sequel,  $\Omega$  denotes a fixed non-empty bounded open set of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , and b denotes a fixed non vanishing vector field in  $C^1(\Omega)^2$ . For any vectorvalued function U = (u, v) satisfying the regularity conditions

$$U = (u, v) \in BV(\Omega)^2$$
 and  $\nabla U b = (\nabla u \cdot b, \nabla v \cdot b) \in C^0(\Omega)^2$ , (2.1)

we will be able to give a suitable definition of the weak Jacobian of U.

We start by the following result about the pointwise properties of any function in BV(a, b) where (a, b) is a non-empty bounded open interval of  $\mathbb{R}$ .

**Lemma 2.1.** Let  $S \in BV(a, b)$  and let  $(r_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$  be the countable set of the discontinuity points of S. Then, for any sequence  $(\alpha_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$  in  $[0, 1]^{\mathbb{N}}$ , there exists a sequence  $(S_m)_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$  in  $W^{1,\infty}(a, b)^{\mathbb{N}}$  such that for any  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ ,

$$\begin{cases} \sup_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \|S_m\|_{L^{\infty}(a,b)} < \infty, \\ \lim_{m \to \infty} \|S'_m\|_{\mathscr{M}(a,b)} = \|S'\|_{\mathscr{M}(a,b)}, \\ \lim_{m \to \infty} S_m(t) = S(t), \quad \forall t \in (a,b) \setminus \{r_n\}, \\ \lim_{m \to \infty} S_m(r_n) = \alpha_n S(r_n^+) + (1 - \alpha_n) S(r_n^-), \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N}, \end{cases}$$

$$(2.2)$$

where  $S(r_n^+)$  and  $S(r_n^-)$  denote respectively the limit from the right and the limit from the left of S at any point  $r_n$ .

**Remark 2.2.** Approximating the Lipschitz functions by smooth functions, it is clear that the functions  $S_m$  in Lemma 2.1 can be chosen in  $C^{\infty}([a, b])$ .

**Remark 2.3.** Lemma 2.1 shows that the representative of S which consists in defining

$$S(r_n) := \alpha_n S(r_n^+) + (1 - \alpha_n) S(r_n^-), \quad \forall n \in \mathbb{N},$$

is a bounded Borel function for any choice of  $(\alpha_n)_{\in\mathbb{N}}$ . Therefore, the function S can be integrated with respect to any measure  $\mu$  in (a, b), but this integral clearly depends on the choice of  $\alpha_n$  as soon as there exists some  $r_n$  with  $\mu(\{r_n\}) > 0$ .

Proof of Lemma 2.1. Let  $H := \mathbb{1}_{(0,\infty)}$  be the Heaviside function (which is not well defined at the point 0). The function S can be written

$$S(r) = g_c(r) + \sum_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \left( S(r_n^+) - S(r_n^-) \right) H(r - r_n), \quad \forall r \in (a, b) \setminus \{r_n, n \in \mathbb{N}\},$$

where  $g_c$  is a continuous function in (a, b). Then, define

$$H_{m,n}(s) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } s < -\frac{\alpha_n}{m} \\ ms + \alpha_n & \text{if } -\frac{\alpha_n}{m} \le s \le \frac{1 - \alpha_n}{m} \\ 1 & \text{if } \frac{1 - \alpha_n}{m} < s, \end{cases}$$

and let  $(\rho_m)_{m\in\mathbb{N}}$  be a sequence of mollifiers in  $C^{\infty}(\mathbb{R})$ . Finally, extending the function  $g_c$  on  $\mathbb{R}$  by the constants  $g_c(a)$  and  $g_c(b)$  respectively in  $(-\infty, a)$  and in  $(b, \infty)$ , we get that the functions  $S_m$  for  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ , defined by

$$S_m(t) := (\rho_m * g_c)(t) + \sum_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \left( S(x_n^+) - S(x_n^-) \right) H_{m,n}(t - x_n), \quad t \in \mathbb{R},$$

satisfy the desired conditions (2.2).

The next result provides a decomposition for any function u in  $BV(\Omega)$  such that  $\nabla u \cdot b$  belongs to  $C^0(\Omega)$ .

**Proposition 2.4.** For any point  $x_0 \in \Omega$ , there exists  $\delta > 0$  and an open set  $O \subseteq \Omega$  containing  $x_0$ , such that the mapping  $\Phi : (-\delta, \delta)^2 \to O$  defined by the dynamical system

$$\partial_t \Phi(t,r) = b(\Phi(t,r)), \quad \Phi(0,r) = x_0 + r \, b^{\perp}(x_0),$$
 (2.3)

is a  $C^1$ -diffeomorphism from  $(-\delta, \delta)^2$  onto O. Moreover, for any function  $u \in BV(\Omega)$  and any function  $f \in C^0(O)$ satisfying

$$\nabla u \cdot b = f \quad in \ O, \tag{2.4}$$

there exists a function  $S \in BV(-\delta, \delta)$  such that the following decomposition holds:

$$u = \hat{u} + \tilde{u} \quad in \ O, \tag{2.5}$$

where  $\hat{u} \in BV(O) \cap C^0(\overline{O})$  defined by

$$\hat{u}\big(\Phi(t,r)\big) := \int_0^t f\big(\Phi(s,r)\big) \, ds - \frac{1}{2\delta} \int_{-\delta}^{\delta} \left(\int_0^q f\big(\Phi(s,r)\big) \, ds\right) dq, \quad (2.6)$$

and where  $\tilde{u} \in BV(O)$  defined by

$$\tilde{u}(x) := S(\Psi_2(x)), \quad with \ \Psi := \Phi^{-1},$$
(2.7)

are solutions to

$$\nabla \hat{u} \cdot b = f \quad and \quad \nabla \tilde{u} \cdot b = \nabla \Psi_2 \cdot b = 0 \quad in \ O.$$
 (2.8)

Proof of Proposition 2.4. Since  $\nabla \Phi(x_0) = (b(x_0), b(x_0)^{\perp})$  is invertible, the existence of  $\delta$  and O is a simple consequence of the inverse function theorem.

Next, let  $u \in BV(\Omega)$  be a function satisfying the assumptions of Proposition 2.4, and define the functions  $w, \hat{w}$  and  $\tilde{w}$  by

$$\begin{aligned} & \left( \begin{array}{l} w(t,r) := u \big( \Phi(t,r) \big), \\ & \hat{w}(t,r) := \int_0^t f(\Phi(s,r)) \, ds - \frac{1}{2\delta} \int_{-\delta}^{\delta} \left( \int_0^q f \big( \Phi(s,r) \big) \, ds \right) dq, \\ & \tilde{w} := w - \hat{w}. \end{aligned}$$

The function  $\hat{w}$  clearly belongs to  $C^0([-\delta, \delta]^2)$ , and taking into account that  $\partial_t w = \partial_t \hat{w}$ , we get that  $\tilde{w}$  does not depend on t. Thus,  $\tilde{w} = S(r)$ for some function  $S \in L^{\infty}(-\delta, \delta)$ . Hence, it follows that

$$\begin{split} w(t,r) &- \frac{1}{2\delta} \int_{-\delta}^{\delta} w(q,r) \, dq = \hat{w}(t,r) + S(r) - \frac{1}{2\delta} \int_{-\delta}^{\delta} \left( \hat{w}(q,r) + S(r) \right) dq \\ &= \hat{w}(t,r), \end{split}$$

which combined with w in  $BV((-\delta, \delta)^2)$ , implies that  $\hat{w}$  and  $\tilde{w} = w - \hat{w}$  belong to  $BV((-\delta, \delta)^2)$ . Therefore, S also belongs to  $BV(-\delta, \delta)$ .

Finally, we easily deduce from the definition (2.6) of  $\hat{u}$  that  $\nabla \hat{u} \cdot b = f$ in O, which combined with (2.4) yields  $\nabla \tilde{u} \cdot b = 0$  in O. Moreover, taking the derivative with respect to the variable t of the equality  $r = \Psi_2(\Phi(t,r))$  and using (2.3), we get that

$$0 = \nabla \Psi_2 \big( \Phi(t, r) \big) \cdot b \big( \Phi(t, r) \big), \quad \forall (t, r) \in (-\delta, \delta)^2$$

which implies that  $\nabla \Psi_2 \cdot b = 0$  in O. We have just obtained the equalities (2.8), which concludes the proof of Proposition 2.4.

Now, consider a vector-valued U = (u, v) satisfying the regularity condition (2.1). The classical way to define the weak Jacobian of U is to use the distributional formula

$$\operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) := \operatorname{div}\left(u\,\nabla v^{\perp}\right) \quad \text{on } \Omega, \tag{2.9}$$

for which it is enough to define  $u \nabla v^{\perp}$  as a suitable distribution on  $\Omega$ . By the well-known properties of the distributions, we have only to define  $u \nabla v^{\perp}$  locally in  $\mathscr{D}'(\Omega)$ . For this purpose, we may use the decomposition given by (2.5) both for u and v. Take for the function S one of the representatives given by Lemma 2.1. Then, using that  $\hat{u}$  is continuous, that S is BV and that  $\tilde{u}$  is a Borel function, we deduce that u is integrable with respect to the vector-valued measure  $\nabla v$ . Therefore, we could define  $u \nabla v^{\perp}$  as

$$\langle u \nabla v^{\perp}, \zeta \rangle = \int_{\Omega} u \zeta \cdot d(\nabla v^{\perp}) \quad \text{for } \zeta \in C_c^{\infty}(\Omega)^2.$$
 (2.10)

But, as above mentioned the previous integral depends a priori on the choice of the function S, which could make the definition (2.10) inappropriate.

Let us prove that div  $(u \nabla v^{\perp})$  does not actually depend on the choice of S. To this end, consider the function  $S_m \in C^{\infty}(\mathbb{R})$  (recall Remark 2.2) for  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ , defined in Lemma 2.1. We then have

$$\operatorname{div}\left(\left(\hat{u}+S_m(\Psi_2)\right)\nabla v^{\perp}\right) = \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla v^{\perp}\right) + S'_m(\Psi_2)\,\nabla\Psi_2\cdot\left(\nabla\hat{v}^{\perp}+\nabla\tilde{v}^{\perp}\right),$$

However, since by (2.8)  $\nabla \Psi_2$  is parallel to  $b^{\perp}$  and  $\nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} \cdot b^{\perp} = \nabla \tilde{v} \cdot b = 0$ , we deduce that for any  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ ,

$$div \left( \left( \hat{u} + S_m(\Psi_2) \right) \nabla v^{\perp} \right)$$
  
= div  $\left( \hat{u} \nabla v^{\perp} \right) + S'_m(\Psi_2) \nabla \Psi_2 \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp}$   
= div  $\left( \hat{u} \nabla v^{\perp} \right) - div \left( \hat{v} \nabla (S_m(\Psi_2))^{\perp} \right)$   
= div  $\left( \hat{u} \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} \right) + div \left( \hat{u} \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} \right) - div \left( \hat{v} \nabla (S_m(\Psi_2))^{\perp} \right).$  (2.11)

Hence, passing to the limit as  $m \to \infty$  in the distributional sense owing to the properties (2.2) of the sequence  $(S_m)_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$  together with decomposition (2.5), we obtain that

$$\operatorname{div}\left(u\,\nabla v^{\perp}\right) = \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla \hat{v}^{\perp}\right) + \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp}\right) - \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{v}\,\nabla \tilde{u}^{\perp}\right).$$
(2.12)

Due to the continuity of  $\hat{u}$  and  $\hat{v}$ , the right-hand side of (2.12) is well defined in  $\mathscr{D}'(O)$ , and indeed does not depend on S.

Then, taking into account the existence of two measures  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  on O such that

$$\nabla \tilde{u} = b^{\perp} \mu \quad \text{and} \quad \nabla \tilde{v} = b^{\perp} \nu \quad \text{in } \mathscr{M}(O),$$
 (2.13)

and using the approximation of  $\hat{u} = S(\Psi_2)$  by  $S_m(\Psi_2)$  as in (2.11), respectively for  $\hat{v}$ , we also get the equalities

$$\begin{cases} \operatorname{div} \left( \hat{v} \, \nabla \tilde{u}^{\perp} \right) = \left( \nabla \hat{v} \cdot b \right) \mu = \left( \nabla v \cdot b \right) \mu, \\ \operatorname{div} \left( \hat{u} \, \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} \right) = \left( \nabla \hat{u} \cdot b \right) \nu = \left( \nabla u \cdot b \right) \nu. \end{cases}$$

Putting these equalities in (2.12) we thus get the alternative expression of the weak Jacobian in  $\mathscr{D}'(O)$ ,

$$\operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) = \operatorname{div}\left(u\,\nabla v^{\perp}\right) = \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla\hat{v}^{\perp}\right) + \left(\nabla u\cdot b\right)\nu - \left(\nabla v\cdot b\right)\mu \quad (2.14)$$

The other issue that is related naturally to the weak determinant, is to give a sense to the strong determinant for any vector field U = (u, v)in  $BV(\Omega)^2$ , which is formally defined by

$$\ll \det(\nabla U) := \nabla u \cdot \nabla v^{\perp} \gg.$$

Using the equalities  $\nabla \tilde{u} = b^{\perp} \mu$  and  $\nabla \tilde{v} = b^{\perp} \nu$  as above, we are led to the formal definition

The problem is now to give a sense to  $\nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp}$ , which can be formally defined by

$$\ll \nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} = \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u} \,\nabla \hat{v}^{\perp}\right) \gg.$$

For example, a sufficient condition to justify the previous definition is to assume that  $\nabla u \cdot b$  belongs to  $C^1(\Omega)$ , which by (2.6) (see the proof of Theorem 2.6 below) implies that  $\hat{u} \in C^1(\Omega)$ .

To conclude, we have just justified the following definitions of Det and det for BV functions.

**Definition 2.5.** Let U = (u, v) be a vector-valued function satisfying condition (2.1).

Then, the weak Jacobian Det may be defined in the distributional sense on  $\Omega$  by

$$\operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) = \operatorname{div}\left(u\,\nabla v^{\perp}\right) := \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla \hat{v}^{\perp}\right) + \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp}\right) - \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{v}\,\nabla \tilde{u}^{\perp}\right)$$
(2.16)

where the pair  $(\hat{u}, \tilde{u})$ , respectively  $(\hat{v}, \tilde{v})$ , satisfies the local decomposition  $u = \hat{u} + \tilde{u}$ , respectively  $v = \hat{v} + \tilde{v}$ , provided by Proposition 2.4. This definition can be also written (2.14) in terms of the measures  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  given by (2.13).

Moreover, if one of the two functions  $\nabla u \cdot b$  or  $\nabla v \cdot b$  belongs to  $C^1(\Omega)$ , the strong Jacobian det may be also defined in the distributional sense on  $\Omega$  by

$$\det(\nabla U) := \nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} + \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp}\right) - \operatorname{div}\left(\hat{v}\,\nabla \tilde{u}^{\perp}\right).$$
(2.17)

This definition can be also written (2.15) in terms of the measures  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  given by (2.13).

Now, we can state the main result of the paper.

**Theorem 2.6.** Let  $\Omega$  be a non-empty bounded open set of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , and let b be a non vanishing vector field in  $C^1(\Omega)^2$ .

Then, according to Definition 2.16 any vector-valued function U = (u, v)with regularity (2.1) satisfies the implication

Moreover, any vector-valued function U = (u, v) in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2$  satisfies the implication

 $\overbrace{\operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) = \operatorname{det}(\nabla U) = \nabla u \cdot \nabla v^{\perp} \in L^{1}_{\operatorname{loc}}(\Omega) \quad a.e. \ in \ \Omega.}$ 

Proof of Theorem 2.6. We use the notations of Proposition 2.4 taking a neighborhood  $O \Subset \Omega$  of some point  $x_0$ . Assume for example that  $f := \nabla u \cdot b \in C^1(\Omega)$ . Then, the definition (2.7) of  $\hat{u}$  yields for any  $(t,r) \in (-\delta, \delta)^2$ ,

$$\begin{cases} \partial_t \left( \hat{u} (\Phi(t, r)) \right) = f (\Phi(t, r)) \\ \partial_r \left( \hat{u} (\Phi(t, r)) \right) = \int_0^t \nabla f (\Phi(s, r)) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s, r) \, ds, \end{cases}$$
(2.20)

which implies that  $\hat{u} \in C^1(O)$  (recall that  $O \Subset \Omega$ ). Hence, we deduce the equality

$$\operatorname{div}\left(\hat{u}\,\nabla\hat{v}^{\perp}\right) = \nabla\hat{u}\cdot\nabla\hat{v}^{\perp} \quad \text{in } O, \qquad (2.21)$$

where  $\nabla \hat{v}$  is a vector-valued measure in  $\mathcal{M}(O)^2$ . Therefore, implication (2.18) is an immediate consequence of the definition (2.16) of the weak Jacobian  $\text{Det}(\nabla U)$  and of the definition (2.17) of the strong Jacobian  $\text{det}(\nabla U)$  under the continuity condition (2.1) satisfied by  $\nabla U$ .

On the other hand, when the vector-valued U = (u, v) is in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2$ and satisfies the left-hand side of implication (2.19), the formulas (2.20) applied to  $\hat{v}$  with  $\nabla v \cdot b \in C^1(\Omega)$ , imply that  $\hat{v}$  belongs to  $C^1(O)$ . Hence, equality (2.21) holds in  $C^0(O) \subset L^1_{\text{loc}}(O)$ . Finally, comparing (2.16) to (2.17) and using that  $(\hat{u}, \hat{v}) \in C^1(O)^2$  with  $(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v}) \in W^{1,1}(O)^2$ , we obtain that

$$Det(\nabla U) = det(\nabla U)$$
  
=  $\nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} + div(\hat{u} \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp}) - div(\hat{v} \nabla \tilde{u}^{\perp})$   
=  $\nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} + \nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} + \nabla \tilde{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} \in L^{1}_{loc}(O).$  (2.22)

Moreover, due to the second equality of (2.8) and to the fact that the vector field b is non vanishing, we get that

$$\nabla \tilde{u} \cdot \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} = 0 \quad \text{a.e. in } \Omega,$$

which implies that a.e. in  $\Omega$ ,

$$\operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) = \operatorname{det}(\nabla U) = \nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} + \nabla \hat{u} \cdot \nabla \tilde{v}^{\perp} + \nabla \tilde{u} \cdot \nabla \hat{v}^{\perp} = \nabla u \cdot \nabla v^{\perp}.$$

This combined (2.19) and the arbitrariness of the open sets  $O \subseteq \Omega$ , yields the right-hand side of (2.19). The proof of Theorem 2.6 is thus complete.

**Remark 2.7.** We can replace in condition (2.18) and (2.19) the  $C^1$ -regularity of the function  $f := \nabla u \cdot b$  (or/and  $\nabla v \cdot b$ ) by the  $C^1$ -regularity

outside a discrete set A on which  $\nabla f$  may blow-up. Without loss of generality we can assume that A is a unit set of  $\Omega$ .

More precisely, assume that there exist  $x_0 := \Phi(s_0, r_0)$  in  $O, \sigma_0 > 0$ (which will be chosen later with respect to  $\varepsilon_0$ ) and a non-negative nonincreasing function  $h \in L^1(0, \sigma_0)$  satisfying

$$\begin{cases} f \in C^{0}(\Omega) \cap C^{1}(\Omega \setminus \{x_{0}\}) \\ |\nabla f(x)| \leq C h(|x - x_{0}|), \quad \forall x \in B(x_{0}, \varepsilon_{0}). \end{cases}$$
(2.23)

Let us prove that the function  $\hat{u}$  defined by (2.6) is in  $C^1(B(x_0, \varepsilon_0))$ under condition (2.23). Recalling (2.20) we have

$$\begin{cases} \partial_t \left( \hat{u} (\Phi(t, r)) \right) = f (\Phi(t, r)) \\ \partial_r \left( \hat{u} (\Phi(t, r)) \right) = \int_0^t \nabla f (\Phi(s, r)) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s, r) \, ds, \end{cases}$$
(2.24)

for any  $(t,r) \in (-\delta, \delta) \times (-\delta, \delta) \setminus \{r_0\}$ . Since  $|\det(\nabla \Phi)| = |\det(\partial_s \Phi, \partial_r \Phi)|$ is bounded from below by a positive constant in any compact set of  $(-\delta, \delta)^2$ , by virtue of the one-order Taylor-Young expansion at the point  $(s_0, r_0)$ , there exists  $\alpha_0 > 0$  such that for  $\varepsilon_0$  small enough and for any  $(s, r) \in \Phi^{-1}(B(x_0, \varepsilon_0))$ , we get that

$$\begin{aligned} |\Phi(s,r) - x_0| \\ &= \left| \partial_s \Phi(s_0,r_0) \left( s - s_0 \right) + \partial_r \Phi(s_0,r_0) \left( r - r_0 \right) + o\left( |s - s_0| + |r - r_0| \right) \right| \\ &\geq \alpha_0 \left( |s - s_0| + |r - r_0| \right). \end{aligned}$$

It follows from (2.23) and from the decrease of h, the existence of a constant C > 0 such that for any  $(s, r) \in \Phi^{-1}(B(x_0, \varepsilon_0)), r \neq r_0$ ,

$$\left|\nabla f\left(\Phi(s,r)\right) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s,r)\right| \le C h\left(\alpha_0 \left(|s-s_0|+|r-r_0|\right)\right) \le C h\left(\alpha_0 \left|s-s_0|\right),$$

which (choosing  $\sigma_0$  be such that  $\alpha_0 |s - s_0| < \sigma_0$ ) implies the domination condition

$$\left| \mathbb{1}_{[0,t]}(s) \nabla f(\Phi(s,r)) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s,r) \right| \le C h(|s-s_0|) \in L^1(-\sigma_0,\sigma_0),$$

for any  $(s, r) \in \Phi^{-1}(B(x_0, \varepsilon_0))$ ,  $r \neq r_0$ . By the Lebesgue theorem applied to the second integral of (2.24) parametrized by the pair (t, r), it follows that

$$\lim_{(t,r)\to(s_0,r_0)} \partial_r \left( \hat{u}(\Phi(t,r)) \right)$$
  
= 
$$\lim_{(t,r)\to(s_0,r_0)} \left( \operatorname{sgn}(s_0) \int_{-\delta}^{\delta} \mathbb{1}_{[0,t]}(s) \nabla f(\Phi(s,r)) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s,r) \, ds \right)$$
  
= 
$$\int_{0}^{s_0} \nabla f(\Phi(s,r_0)) \cdot \partial_r \Phi(s,r_0) \, ds.$$

Moreover, the continuity of f in  $\Omega$  yields immediately

$$\lim_{(t,r)\to(s_0,r_0)}\partial_t\left(\hat{u}\big(\Phi(t,r)\big)\right) = f\big(\Phi(s_0,r_0)\big).$$

Therefore, the function  $\hat{u}$  belongs to  $C^1(B(x_0, \varepsilon_0))^2$ .

## 3 Examples

The following example shows that Ball's conjecture cannot be extended from mappings in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)^2$  to mappings in  $BV(\Omega)^2$ .

**Example 3.1.** Let  $\Omega := (-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})^2$  and let b the vector field defined by

$$b(x) := \nabla w(x) \text{ where } w(x) := x_1 - \cos(2\pi x_2) \text{ for } x \in \Omega, \qquad (3.1)$$

which has been used in [7, Example 2.12].

The Borel measure defined by

$$\mu(dx) := dx_1 \otimes \delta_0(dx_2)$$

is invariant for the flow X associated with b (3.1). Indeed, we have for any vector-valued function  $\varphi \in C_c^1(\Omega)$ ,

$$\int_{\Omega} \nabla \varphi(x) \cdot b(x) \,\mu(dx)$$
  
= 
$$\int_{\Omega} \left( \partial_{x_1} \varphi(x) + 2\pi \,\sin(2\pi \, x_2) \,\partial_{x_2} \varphi(x) \right) \left( dx_1 \times \delta_0(dx_2) \right)$$
  
= 
$$\int_{-\frac{1}{2}}^{\frac{1}{2}} \partial_{x_1} \varphi(x_1, 0) \, dx_1 = 0,$$

or equivalently,  $\mu b$  is divergence free in  $\Omega$ . Then, any function u which agrees a.e. in  $\Omega$  with the characteristic function  $(x \mapsto \mathbb{1}_{\mathbb{R}_+}(x_2))$  whose support is  $(-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}) \cap [0, \frac{1}{2})$  in  $\Omega$ , satisfies

$$\mu b = \mu e^1 = \nabla u^\perp \quad \text{on } \Omega. \tag{3.2}$$

Indeed, on the one hand, we have for any vector-valued function  $\zeta$  in  $C^1_c(\Omega)^2,$ 

$$\int_{\Omega} \zeta(x) \cdot b(x) \,\mu(dx) = \int_{\Omega} \left( \zeta_1(x) + 2\pi \,\sin(2\pi \,x_2) \,\zeta_2(x) \right) \left( dx_1 \times \delta_0(dx_2) \right)$$
$$= \int_{-\frac{1}{2}}^{\frac{1}{2}} \zeta_1(x_1, 0) \, dx_1 = \int_{\Omega} \zeta(x) \cdot e^1 \,\mu(dx),$$

and on the other hand, integrating by parts we get that

$$\int_{\Omega} \zeta(x) \cdot d(\nabla u^{\perp})(dx) = \int_{\Omega} \operatorname{div} (\zeta^{\perp})(x) u(x) dx$$
$$= \int_{-\frac{1}{2}}^{\frac{1}{2}} \int_{0}^{\frac{1}{2}} \left( \partial_{x_{1}} \zeta_{2}(x) - \partial_{x_{2}} \zeta_{1}(x) \right) dx_{1} dx_{2}$$
$$= \int_{-\frac{1}{2}}^{\frac{1}{2}} \zeta_{1}(x_{1}, 0) dx_{1} = \int_{\Omega} \zeta(x) \cdot e^{1} \mu(dx).$$

Since by (3.2) we have  $\nabla u \cdot b = 0$ , the vector-valued function U satisfies the assumptions of Theorem 2.6. Hence, from formula (2.16) we deduce that

$$\operatorname{Det}(DU) = \operatorname{div}\left(u\,\nabla u^{\perp}\right) = 0 \quad \text{in } \mathscr{D}'(\Omega). \tag{3.3}$$

However, the formal identity

$$\ll \det(\nabla U) := \nabla u \cdot \nabla u^{\perp} = 0 \$$

has no sense since the product of measures  $\mu \times \mu$  is not defined.

Note that a more regular function  $\tilde{u}$  which is solution, similarly to u, to equation  $b \cdot \nabla \tilde{u} = 0$  in  $\Omega$  (whose existence is proved generally by Proposition 2.4) is given explicitly by

$$\tilde{u}(x) := \arctan\left(e^{4\pi^2 x_1} \tan(\pi x_2)\right) \text{ for } x \in \Omega.$$

Finally, formula (3.3) can be directly deduced from (3.2) by

$$u \nabla u^{\perp} = u \mu e^1 = \mu e^1$$
 and  $\operatorname{div}(\mu e^1) = \partial_{x_1} \mu = 0$  in  $\mathscr{D}'(\Omega)$ .

The next example illustrates Theorem 2.6 with functions in  $W^{1,1}(\Omega)$ .

**Example 3.2.** Let  $\Omega := B(0_{\mathbb{R}^2}, \frac{1}{2})$ , let  $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ , let b the vector field and let g, u, v be the functions defined for  $x \in \Omega$ , by

$$b(x) := x_1 e^1 - \alpha (x_2 + 2) e^2,$$
  

$$g(x) := |x_1|^{\alpha - 2} x_1,$$
  

$$\begin{cases} u(x) := \int_{\frac{1}{2}}^{|x|} \frac{dr}{\ln r} \\ v(x) := |x_1|^{\alpha} (x_2 + 2) \end{cases}$$
(3.4)

Hence, we have for any  $x \in \Omega$ ,

$$U := (u, v) \in C^{1}(\Omega) \times W^{1,1}(\Omega) \text{ and } g \in L^{1}(\Omega),$$
  

$$g(x) b(x) = |x_{1}|^{\alpha} e^{1} - \alpha |x_{1}|^{\alpha-2} x_{1} (x_{2}+2) e^{2} = \nabla v(x)^{\perp} \text{ for } x_{1} \neq 0,$$
  

$$(\nabla u \cdot b)(x) = \frac{x_{1}^{2} - \alpha x_{2}(x_{2}+2)}{|x| (\ln |x|)^{2}},$$
  

$$\left| (\nabla (\nabla u \cdot b))(x) \right| \leq \frac{C}{|x| (\ln |x|)^{2}},$$
  

$$h(r) := \frac{C}{r (\ln r)^{2}} \text{ is in } L^{1}(0_{\mathbb{R}^{2}}, \frac{1}{2}).$$

It follows that the function  $\nabla u \cdot b$  satisfies condition (2.23) rather the left-hand side of (2.19). Moreover, we have  $\nabla v \cdot b = 0$ . Therefore, by virtue of the implication (2.19) combined with Remark 2.7 we obtain that a.e. in  $\Omega$ ,

$$Det(DU) = det(DU) = \frac{x_1 \left( |x_1|^{\alpha} - \alpha |x_1|^{\alpha-2} x_2(x_2+2) \right)}{|x| (\ln |x|)^2} \in L^{\frac{1}{1-\alpha}}(\Omega).$$

However, for any  $p \in (1, 2)$ , the function v does not belong to  $W^{1,p}(\Omega)$  when  $\alpha := 1 - 1/p$ . Finally, the present example cannot be derived from the result of Müller [25].

## 4 Minimization of a polyconvex energy under constraint

Let  $\Omega$  be a  $C^1$ -regular bounded open set of  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . Let B be a non-empty compact set of  $\left(C^1(\overline{\Omega})^2, \|\cdot\|_{W^{1,\infty}(\Omega)^2}\right)$  such that

$$\exists \beta \in (0,\infty), \ \forall b \in B, \quad |b| \ge \beta \ \text{ in } \Omega, \tag{4.1}$$

and which contains the constant vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  satisfying (4.1). Moreover, let B be a non-empty compact set of  $(C^0(\bar{\Omega})^2, \|\cdot\|_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)^2})$ , and let **b** be a compact set of  $(C^1(\bar{\Omega}), \|\cdot\|_{W^{1,\infty}(\Omega)})$ .

Now, define the set  $\mathscr{B}_{b,B,B}$  of the admissible vector-field displacements, which only depends on the sets b, B, B, by

$$\mathscr{B}_{\mathbf{b},\mathbf{B},B} := \left\{ U = (u,v) \in BV(\Omega)^2 : \left| \begin{array}{c} b \in B \\ \nabla U \, b \in \mathbf{B} \\ \nabla u \cdot b \in \mathbf{b} \text{ or } \nabla v \cdot b \in \mathbf{b} \end{array} \right\}.$$
(4.2)

Let  $\psi: \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$  be a convex function which satisfies the coerciveness and the boundedness properties

$$\exists \alpha \in (0,1), \ \exists p \in (1,\infty), \ \forall t \in \mathbb{R}, \quad \alpha |t|^p \le \psi(t) \le \frac{|t|^p + 1}{\alpha}.$$
(4.3)

Then, define the functional

$$\mathscr{F}(U) := \int_{\Omega} |\nabla U| \, dx + \int_{\Omega} \psi \big( \det(\nabla U) \big) \, dx \quad \text{for } U \in \mathscr{B}_{\mathbf{b}, \mathbf{B}, B}, \qquad (4.4)$$

where  $\det(\nabla U)$  is the strong (distributional) Jacobian defined by (2.17).

**Theorem 4.1.** There exist  $\overline{U} \in \mathscr{B}_{b,B,B}$  and  $\overline{b} \in B$  such that

$$\mathscr{F}(\bar{U}) = \inf \left\{ \mathscr{F}(U), \ U \in \mathscr{B}_{\mathbf{b},\mathbf{B},B} \right\}$$
with
$$(4.5)$$

$$\bar{U}\ \bar{b} \in \mathbf{B} \ and \ \left( \nabla u \cdot b \in \mathbf{b} \ or \ \nabla v \cdot b \in \mathbf{b} \right),$$

where the strong (distributional) Jacobian det  $(\nabla \overline{U})$  belongs to  $L^p(\Omega)$ .

**Remark 4.2.** Note that by definition (4.1) and implication (2.18) we have

$$\det(\nabla U) = \operatorname{Det}(\nabla U) \quad \text{for any } U \in \mathscr{B}_{\mathsf{b},\mathsf{B},B},$$

which is generally a distribution on  $\Omega$ . Theorem 4.1 shows that the functional  $\mathscr{F}$  defined by (4.4) is lower-semi continuous with respect to the  $BV(\Omega)^2$ -norm under the compact constraints (4.1) satisfied by the admissible set  $\mathscr{B}_{\mathbf{b},\mathbf{B},B}$  (4.1). However, the  $L^p$  a priori estimate on det $(\nabla U)$  in  $\mathscr{F}(U)$  implies that the distribution  $Det(\nabla \overline{U})$  belongs actually to  $L^p(\Omega)$ .

**Remark 4.3.** By virtue of Ascoli's theorem, if any function in **b** and each coordinate of any vector-valued *B* belong to  $C^2(\overline{\Omega})$ , and satisfy for some constant  $C \in (0, \infty)$  the boundedness condition

$$\|f\|_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)} + \|\nabla f\|_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)^{2}} + \|\nabla^{2}f\|_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)^{2\times 2}} \le C,$$

then **b** and *B* are compact sets respectively of  $C^1(\overline{\Omega})$  and  $C^1(\overline{\Omega})^2$ . Similarly, if each coordinate of any vector-valued in **B** belongs to  $C^1(\overline{\Omega})$ , and satisfies for some constant  $C \in (0, \infty)$  the boundedness condition

$$||f||_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)} + ||\nabla f||_{L^{\infty}(\Omega)^2} \le C,$$

then B is a compact set of  $C^0(\overline{\Omega})^2$ .

Proof of Theorem 4.1. First of all, note that the infimum non negative energy  $\mathscr{F}(\bar{U})$  is finite, since  $U := \varepsilon$  Id for  $\varepsilon \in (0, 1)$  small enough, is an admissible vector-field displacement in  $\mathscr{B}_{b,B,B}$  (4.2), with for example the admissible constant vector field  $b := \beta e^1$ .

Let  $U_n = (u_n, v_n) \in BV(\Omega)^2$  be a minimizing sequence of  $\mathscr{F}$  satisfying  $\nabla U_n \ b_n \in \mathsf{B}$  for some vector field  $b_n \in B$ , and for example (up to extract a subsequence)  $\nabla u_n \cdot b_n \in \mathsf{b}$ . It is clear that  $U_n$  is bounded in  $BV(\Omega)^2$ and det $(DU_n)$  is bounded in  $L^p(\Omega)$ . Then, using (4.3), there exist two subsequences of  $U_n, b_n$ , still denoted by  $U_n, b_n$ , a vector-valued function  $\overline{U} = (\overline{u}, \overline{v}) \in BV(\Omega)^2$ , a vector field  $\overline{b} \in B$  with  $\nabla \overline{U} \ \overline{b} \in \mathsf{B}$  and  $\nabla \overline{u} \cdot \overline{b} \in \mathsf{b}$ , and  $\theta \in L^p(\Omega)$  such that the following convergences hold

$$\nabla U_n \rightharpoonup \nabla U \text{ in } \mathscr{M}(\Omega)^{2 \times 2} *, \begin{cases} b_n \rightarrow \bar{b} & \text{in } C^1(\bar{\Omega})^2 \\ \nabla U_n \ b_n \rightarrow \nabla \bar{U} \ \bar{b} & \text{in } C^0(\bar{\Omega})^2 \\ \nabla u_n \cdot b_n \rightarrow \nabla \bar{u} \cdot \bar{b} & \text{in } C^1(\bar{\Omega}), \\ \det(\nabla U_n) \rightharpoonup \theta & \text{in } L^p(\Omega). \end{cases}$$
(4.6)

Adapting *e.g.* the proof of [26, Theorem 5.4] (see also [2, Theorem 5.4]) thanks to the lower semicontinuity of the variation measure (see, *e.g.*, [15, Section 5.2.1]) and to the convexity of the function  $\psi$ , and using the three strong convergences in (4.6), we get that

$$|\nabla \bar{U}|(\Omega) + \int_{\Omega} \psi(\theta) \, dx \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \mathscr{F}(U_n) = \mathscr{F}(\bar{U})$$
with
$$(4.7)$$

 $\nabla \overline{U} \ \overline{b} \in \mathbf{B}$  and  $\nabla u \cdot b \in \mathbf{b}$ .

Moreover, by virtue of Proposition 2.4 combined with the three strong convergences in (4.6), the sequences  $\hat{u}_n$ ,  $\tilde{u}_n$  and  $\hat{v}_n$ ,  $\tilde{v}_n$  respectively associated with the sequences  $u_n = \hat{u}_n + \tilde{u}_n$  and  $v_n = \hat{v}_n + \tilde{v}_n$ , satisfy the following convergences (up to extract new subsequences)

$$(\hat{u}_n, \hat{v}_n) \to (\hat{u}, \hat{v})$$
 in  $C^1(\bar{\Omega})^2$ ,  $(\nabla \tilde{u}_n, \nabla \tilde{v}_n) \rightharpoonup (\nabla \tilde{u}, \nabla \tilde{v})$  in  $\mathscr{M}(\Omega)^{2 \times 2} *$ ,

which, taking into account the definition (2.17) of det and the weak convergence of  $\det(\nabla U_n)$  in (4.6), imply that

$$\det(\nabla U_n) \rightharpoonup \det(\nabla \overline{U}) = \theta \quad \text{in } \mathscr{D}'(\Omega).$$

Therefore, putting this in (4.7) we obtain the desired equality (4.5), which concludes the proof of Theorem 4.1.

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