

# The challenge of the Mediterranean Railway Corridor: restructuring the French-Spanish borderlands.

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Budapest, 2019 April 25<sup>th</sup>

PANEL 2 – Cross-Border Planning

## Structure of the Presentation

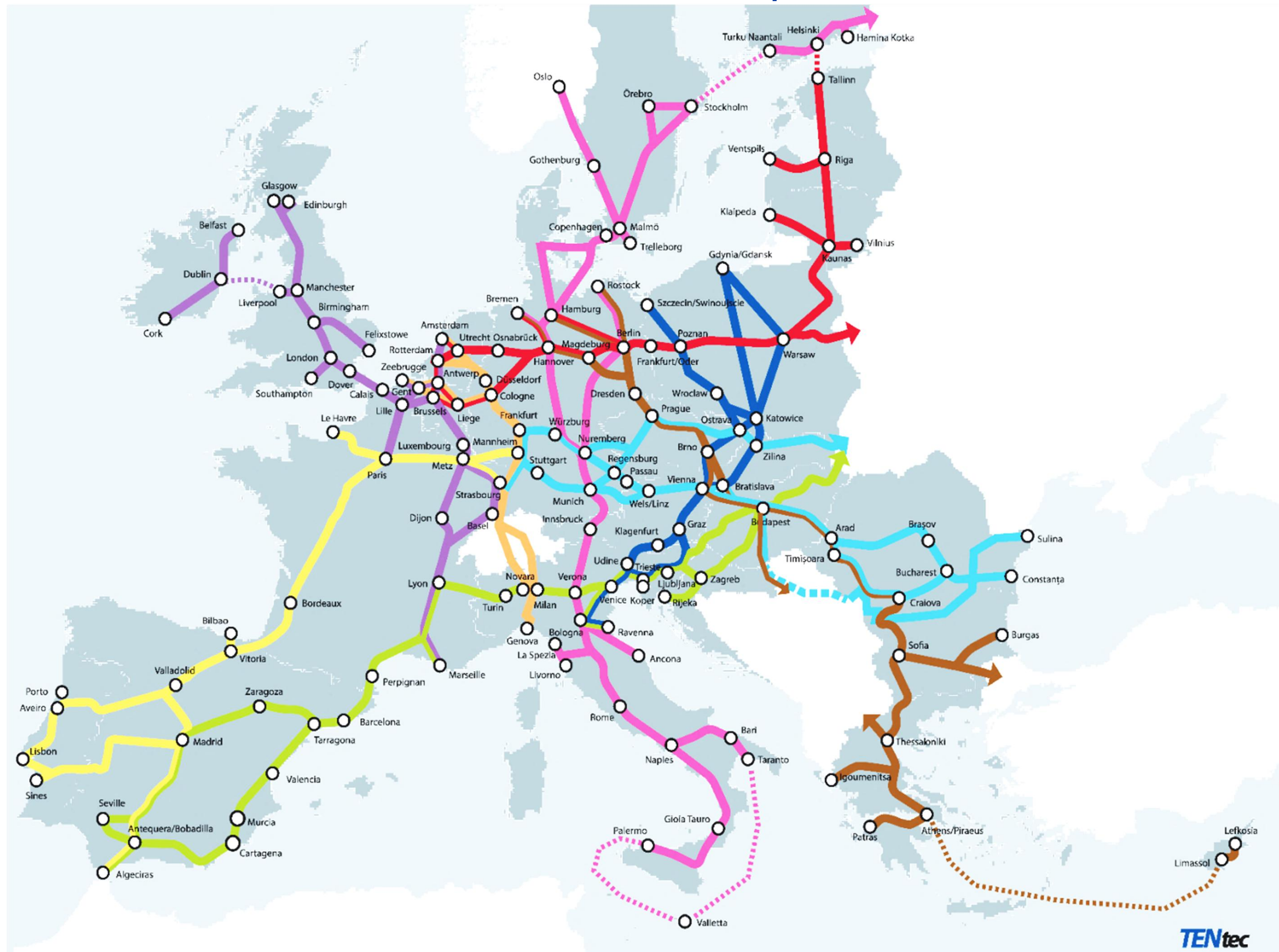
- The Office of the Mediterranean Corridor: structures and goals
- The Ten-T Corridors and their territorial impact on EU Borderlands
- Restructuring the Spanish-French Eastern Borderlands.
  - a) Current Scenario: Few Winners and Many Losers
  - b) Cross-Border Approach: towards a Long Term Win-Win Strategy

# The Office of the Mediterranean Corridor in Spain: structures and goals

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Establishment:</b>          | August 2018  |
| <b><u>Commissioner:</u></b>    | Prof. Josep Vicent Boira (Univ. Valencia, Geographer)  |
| <b><u>Team:</u></b>            | 12 members   |
| <b><u>Location:</u></b>        | Valencia (7), Barcelona (4), Zaragoza (1)  |
| <b><u>Main objectives:</u></b> | Coordinate and push for the development of the Med Corridor, following and assessing the current and future works  |
| <b><u>Pedagogic goal</u> →</b> | Promote the MED C. discourse in press and media, stressing on the positive benefits (economic, environmental, social).<br><br>Listen to the stakeholders and report their instances to the decision-makers<br>(Spanish Ministry, ADIF, Presidency) |



# The Ten-T Corridors and their territorial impact on EU Borderlands



## Ten-T Corridors (Reg. 1315/2013) (Reg. 1316/2013- CEF)

1. Baltic – Adriatic

2. North Sea – Baltic

3. Mediterranean

4. Orient/East Med

5. Scandinavian – Mediterranean

6. Rhine – Alpine

7. Atlantic

8. North Sea – Mediterranean

9. Rhine – Danube



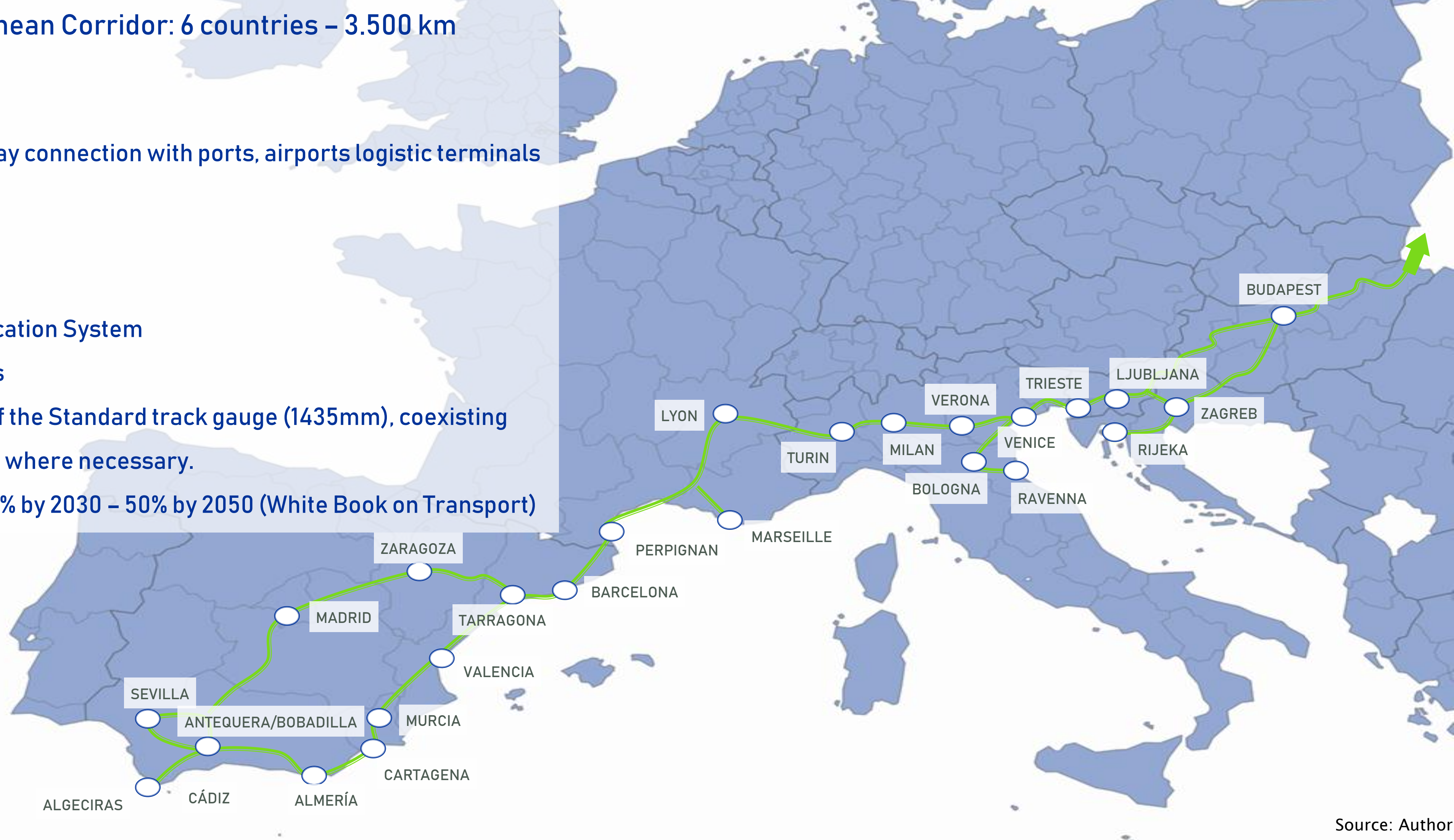
# The Mediterranean Corridor: 6 countries – 3.500 km

## Intermodal integration

- Improve railway connection with ports, airports logistic terminals and industries

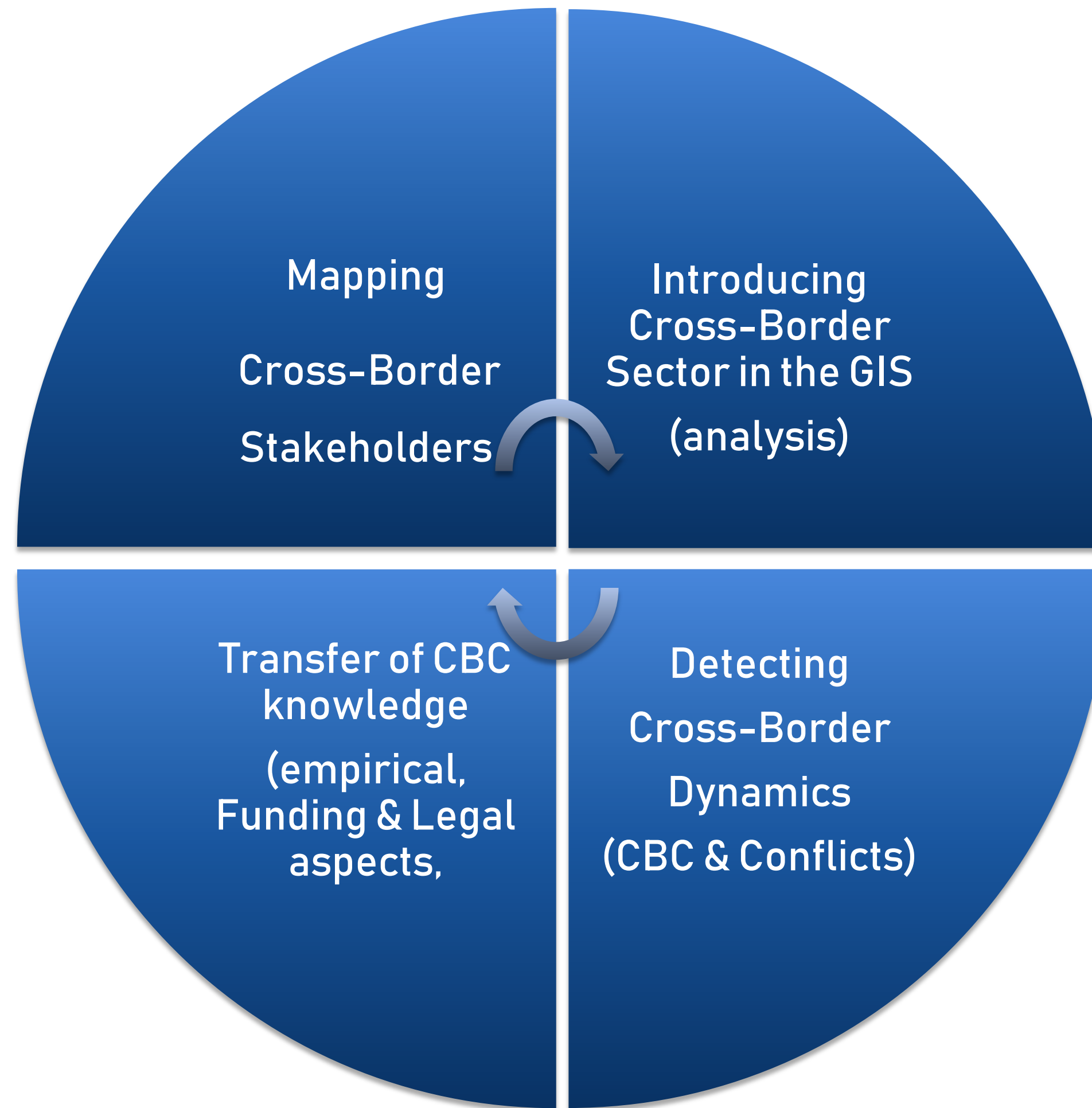
## Interoperability

- Trains > 750 m
- ERTMS Communication System
- Freight > 22,5 Tons
- Implementation of the Standard track gauge (1435mm), coexisting with other gauges where necessary.
- Railway traffic: 30% by 2030 – 50% by 2050 (White Book on Transport)



Source: Author

# Cross-Border Approach in the Office for the Mediterranean Corridor (previously not considered)

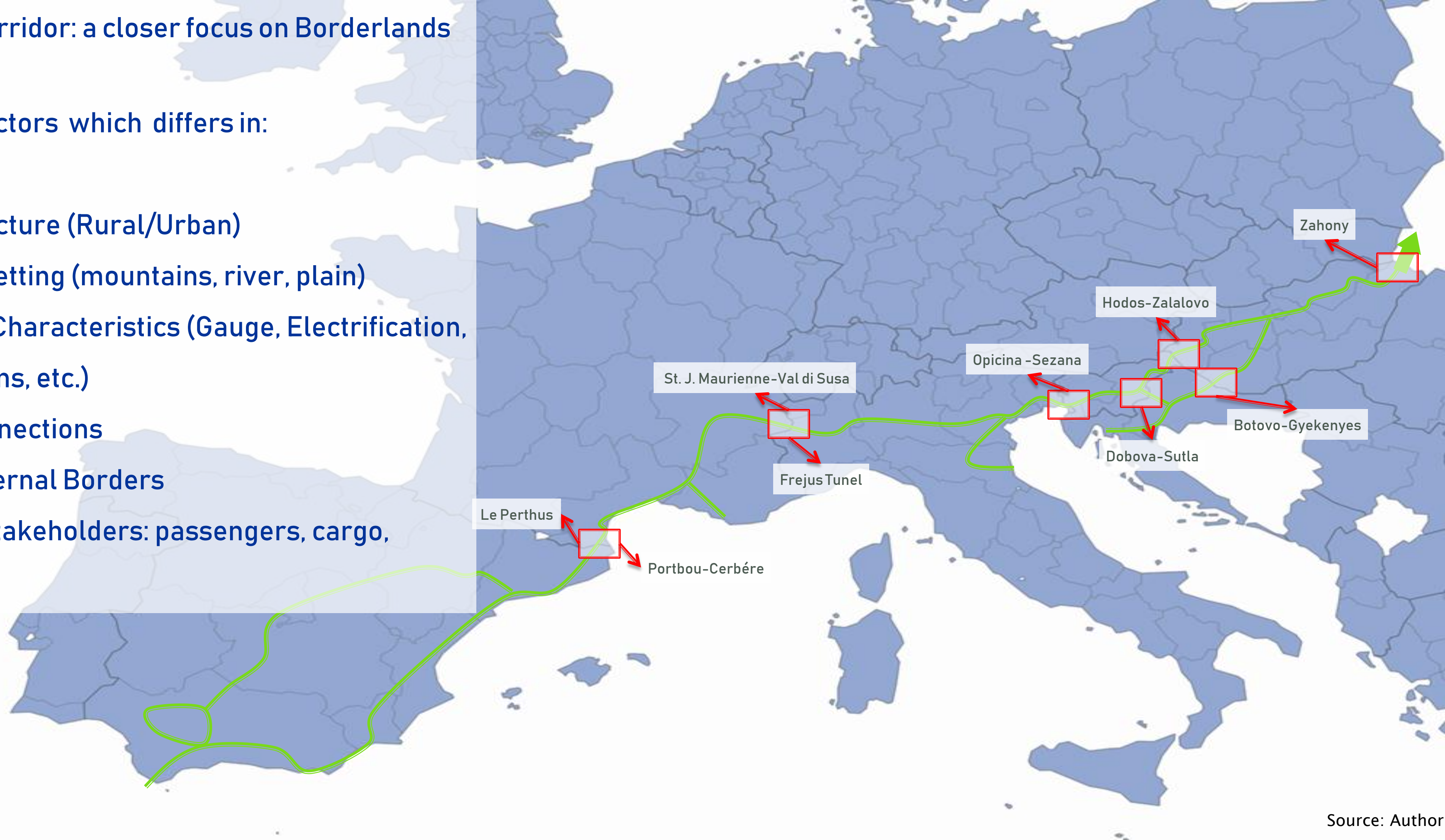




# The Mediterranean Corridor: a closer focus on Borderlands

□ 7 Cross Border Sectors which differs in:

- Territorial Structure (Rural/Urban)
- Geographical setting (mountains, river, plain)
- Infrastructure Characteristics (Gauge, Electrification, Security Systems, etc.)
- New Vs Old connections
- Internal VS External Borders
- Multiplicity of stakeholders: passengers, cargo, logistics, etc.



Source: Author



# Mediterranean Corridor: focusing on Borderlands

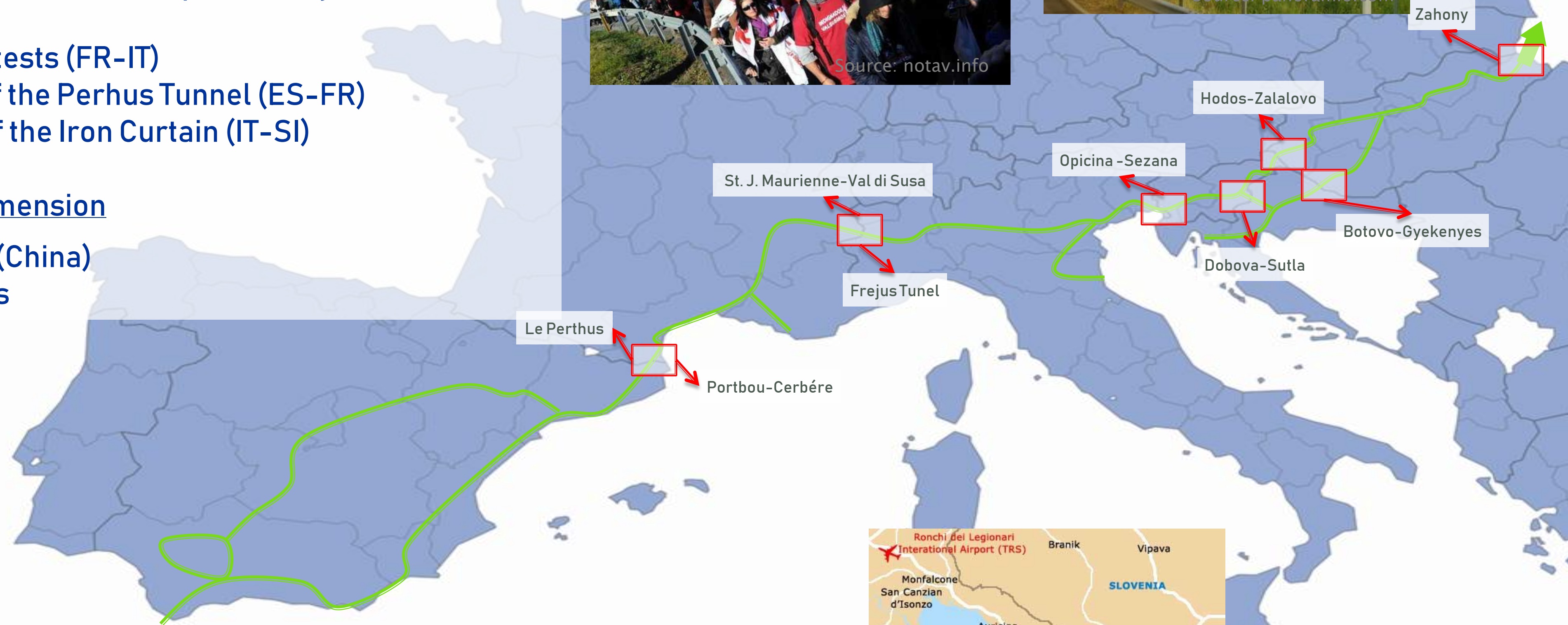
Corridors Vs Borderlands → Flows Vs Places

Generating conflicts and cooperation dynamics

- Val di Susa protests (FR-IT)
- Construction of the Perhus Tunnel (ES-FR)
- The Phantom of the Iron Curtain (IT-SI)

## Geopolitical Dimension

- New Silk Road (China)
- Ukrainian Crisis



Source: Author

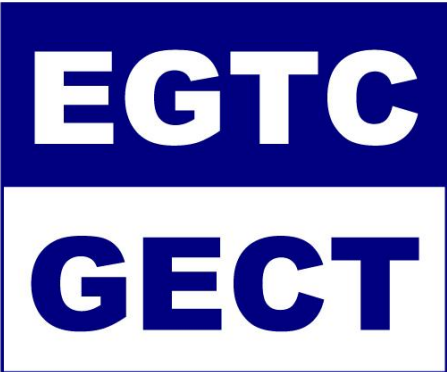


Borderland → Conceived as ‘Active Territories’

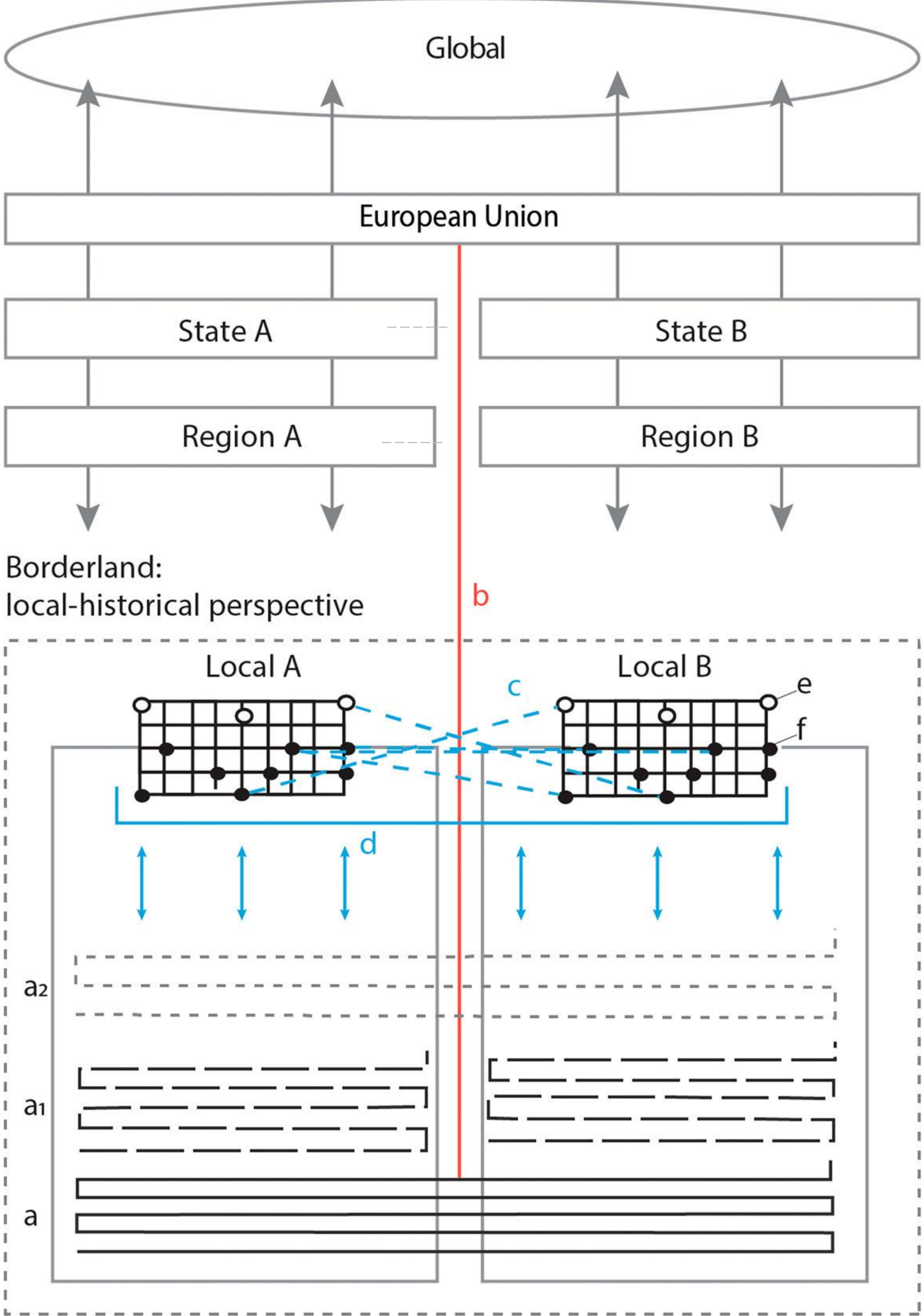
Cross-Border Cooperation generates new cycles of Cross-Border Territorialization

- Local and Regional actors initiate well intentioned and innovative actions  
→ adapting and filtering external stimuli (economic, cultural, political, etc.) to avoid an irreversible alteration of the territorial capital → CB Networks : local key players (public, private) (e)

Synergies between bottom-up / top-down initiatives generate multiple and multi-scalar cross-border dynamics → Cross-Border Local Development



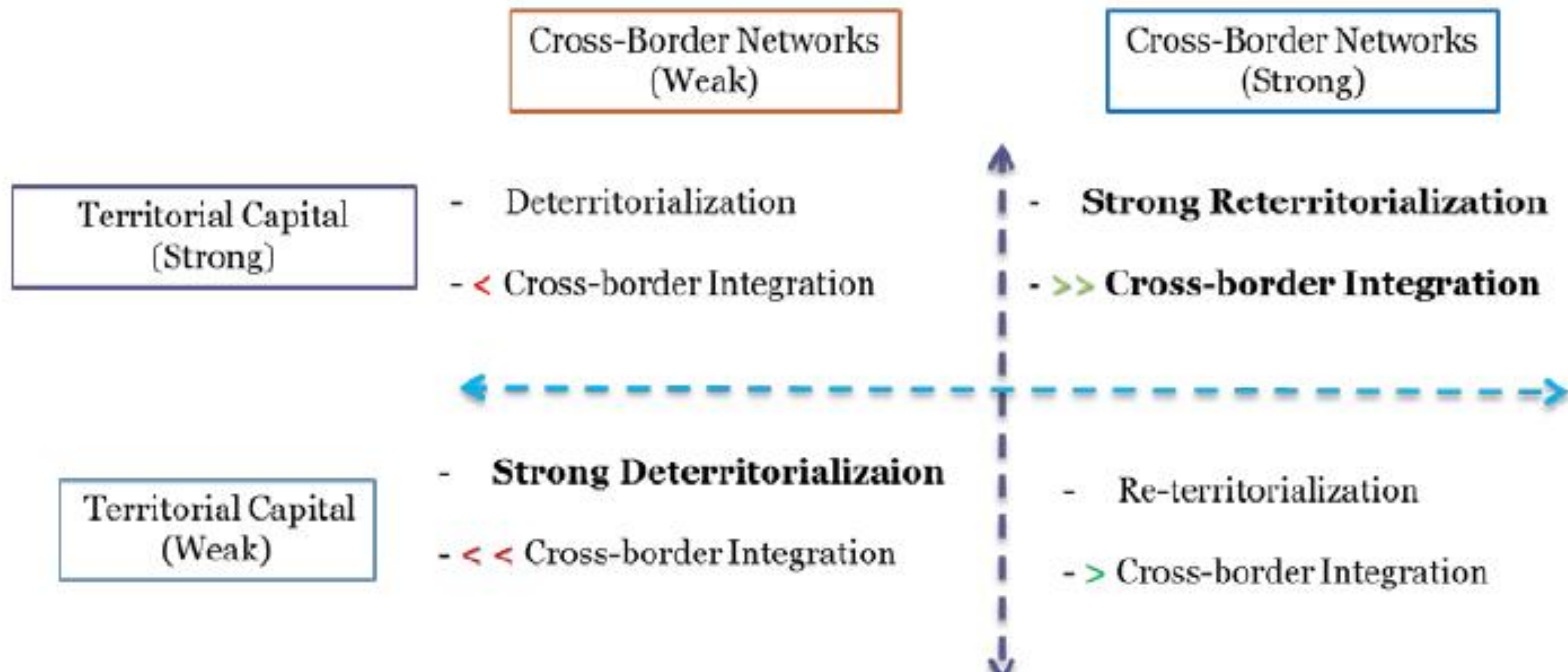
Source: Durà et al (2018)



Source: Berzi (2017)







Source: Berzi (2017)



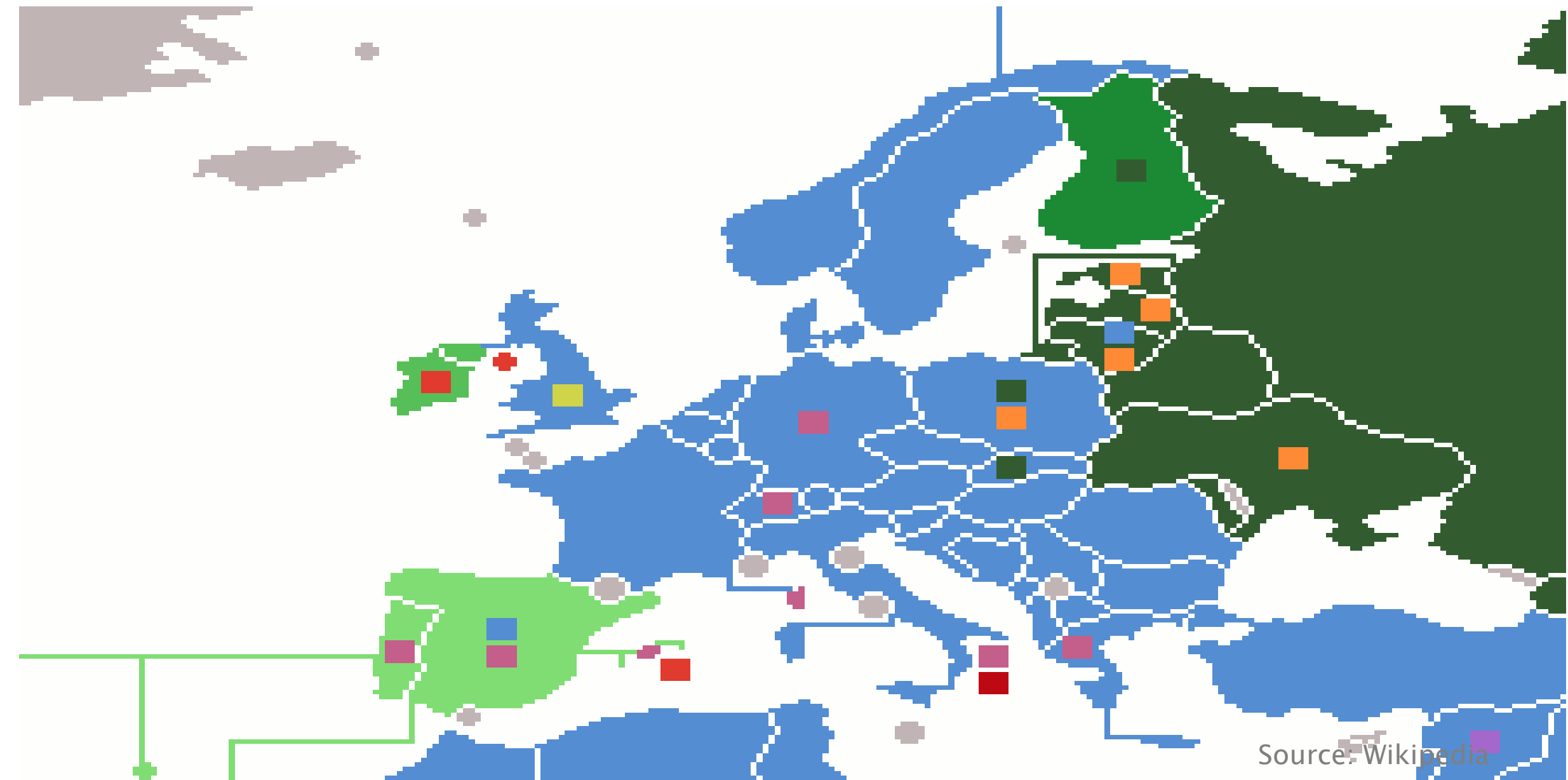
# Restructuring the Spanish-French Eastern Borderlands

The Pyrenees as Bottleneck: a thick border → Iberian track gauge VS Standard track gauge (and the 3<sup>rd</sup> track solution)



## The development of Railway Infrastructures (XIX–XX cent)

| Pyrenees Sector | France           | Spain     |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------|
| Eastern         | Cerbère          | Portbou   |
|                 | La Tour de Carol | Puigcerdà |
| Central         | Pau              | Canfranc  |
| Western         | Hendaye          | Irun      |







## High density of railway infrastructures

### Conventional Railway Line

- Girona-Portbou
- Cerbère-Perpignan

### High-Speed Line

- Barcelona-Figueres
- Perthus Tunnes (2010)
- Figueres-Perpignan (2013)

### ● Railway Terminal:

- Portbou
- Cerbère
- Saint Charles Perpignan [1984]  
(Fruit & Vegetables)
- Le Boulou (Multimodal) [1979]
- Vilamalla Logistic Centre (forthcoming)

Winners & Losers



## Current Scenario: Winners (few) & Losers (many)

### PORTBOU & CERBÈRE

- XIX Cent. Railway infrastructures
- Asymmetry generated the Complementarities

- Mutual Support and Informal Cooperation

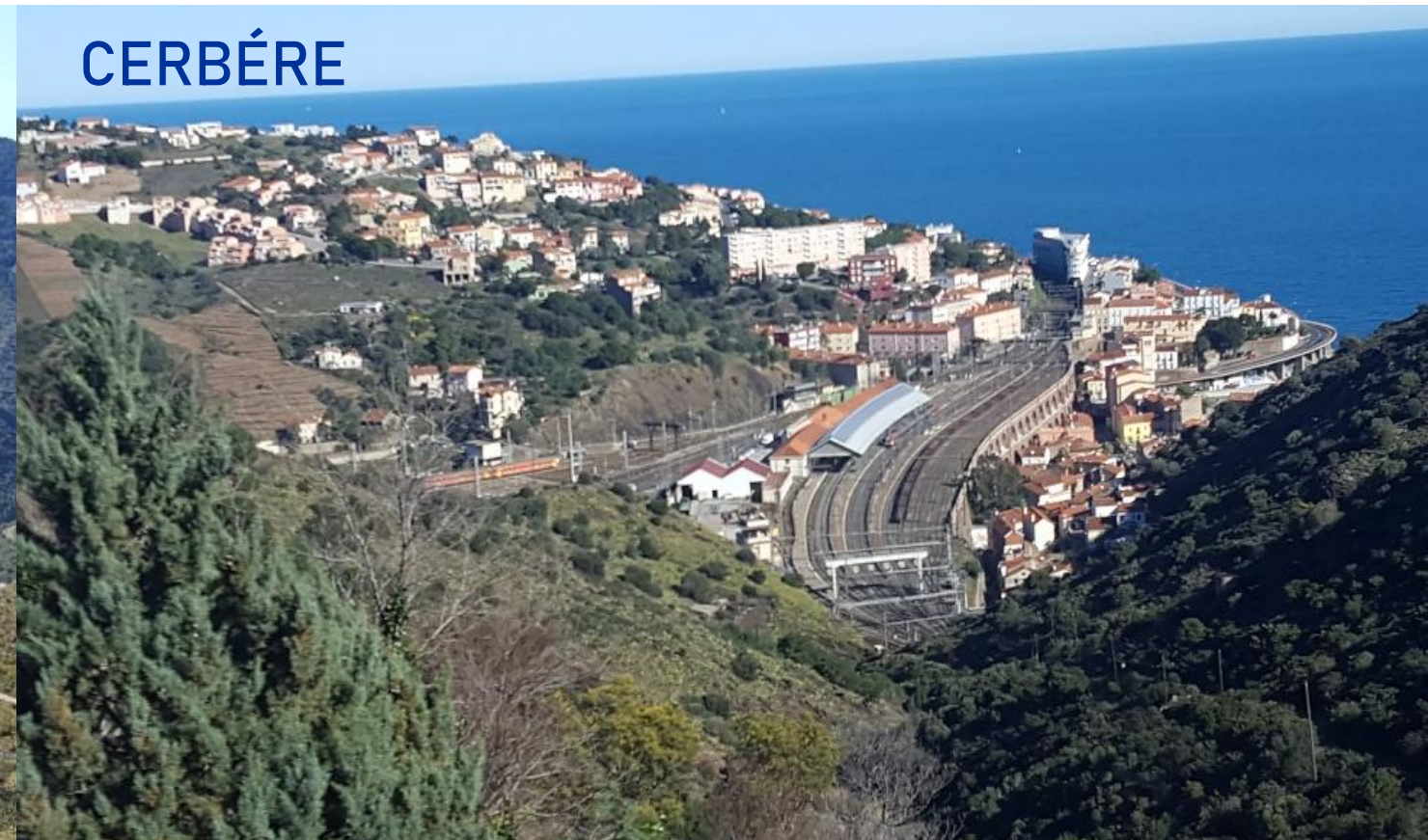
Cross-border alliance (vs Perthus Tunel)

< Freight Trains = > Competition with Perthus Line

- Local Deputies: **threat of 3<sup>rd</sup> track** implementation  
= negative impact in local economy
- Urgency of reinventing local socioeconomic development through CBC



PORTBOU



CERBÈRE



Source: Author

→ Euroregional entities support is absent (EPM Euroregion) or irrelevant (Eurodistrict)

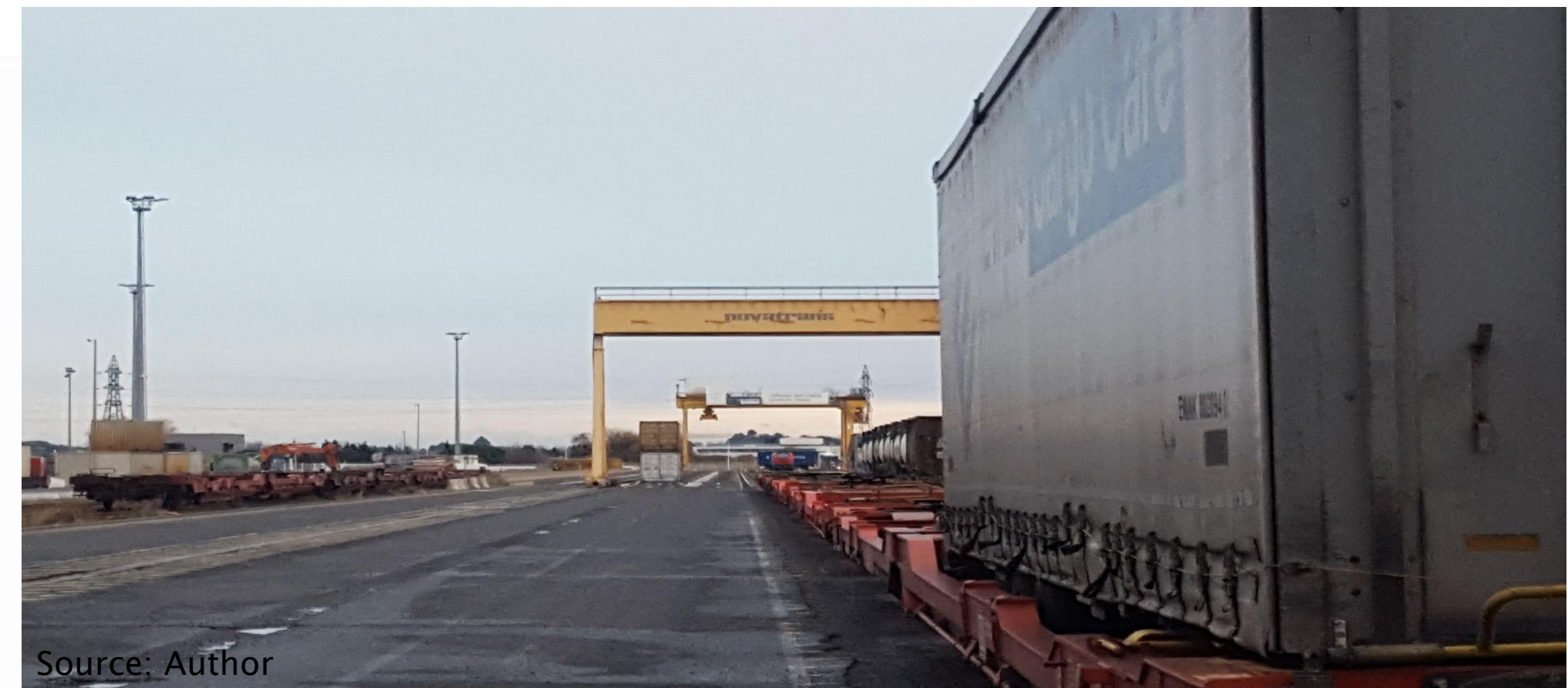




Saint-Charles

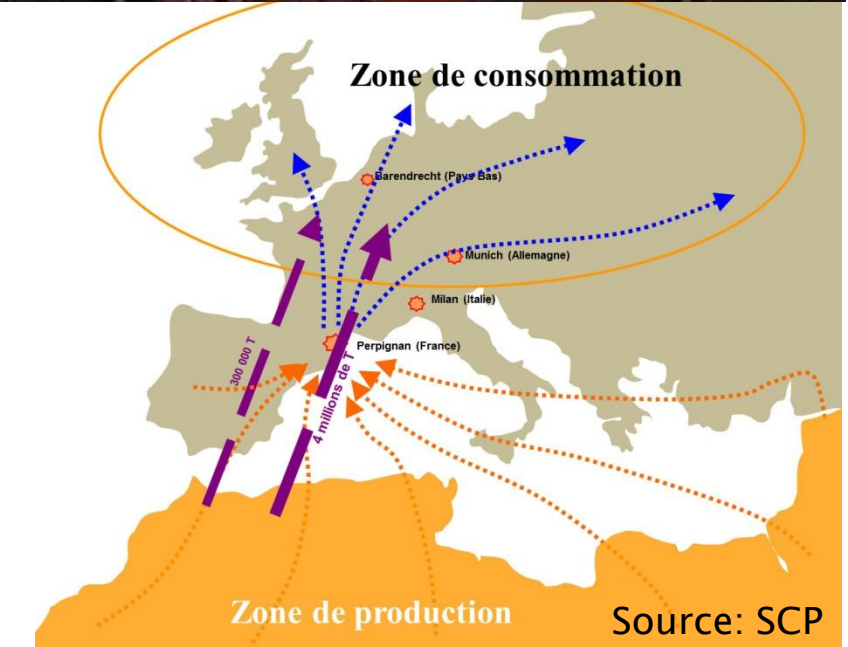


INTERNATIONAL  
FRUITS & LÉGUMES - PERPIGNAN - FRANCE



Source: Author

- 1.8M tons/years fruits and vegetables (to Paris)
  - Bad connection with the High-Speed line
  - Catalan Logistic Terminal (regional competitive perspective)
  - Ambitious enlargement plan, but high risk not to be strategic and marginal added value to the Med Corridor
  - Both are threatened by the recent Rolling highway (semi-trailers)
- Joint Interreg Project 'Trails' (1,35M€) promoting railway services with Europe (Our Office did not know!)



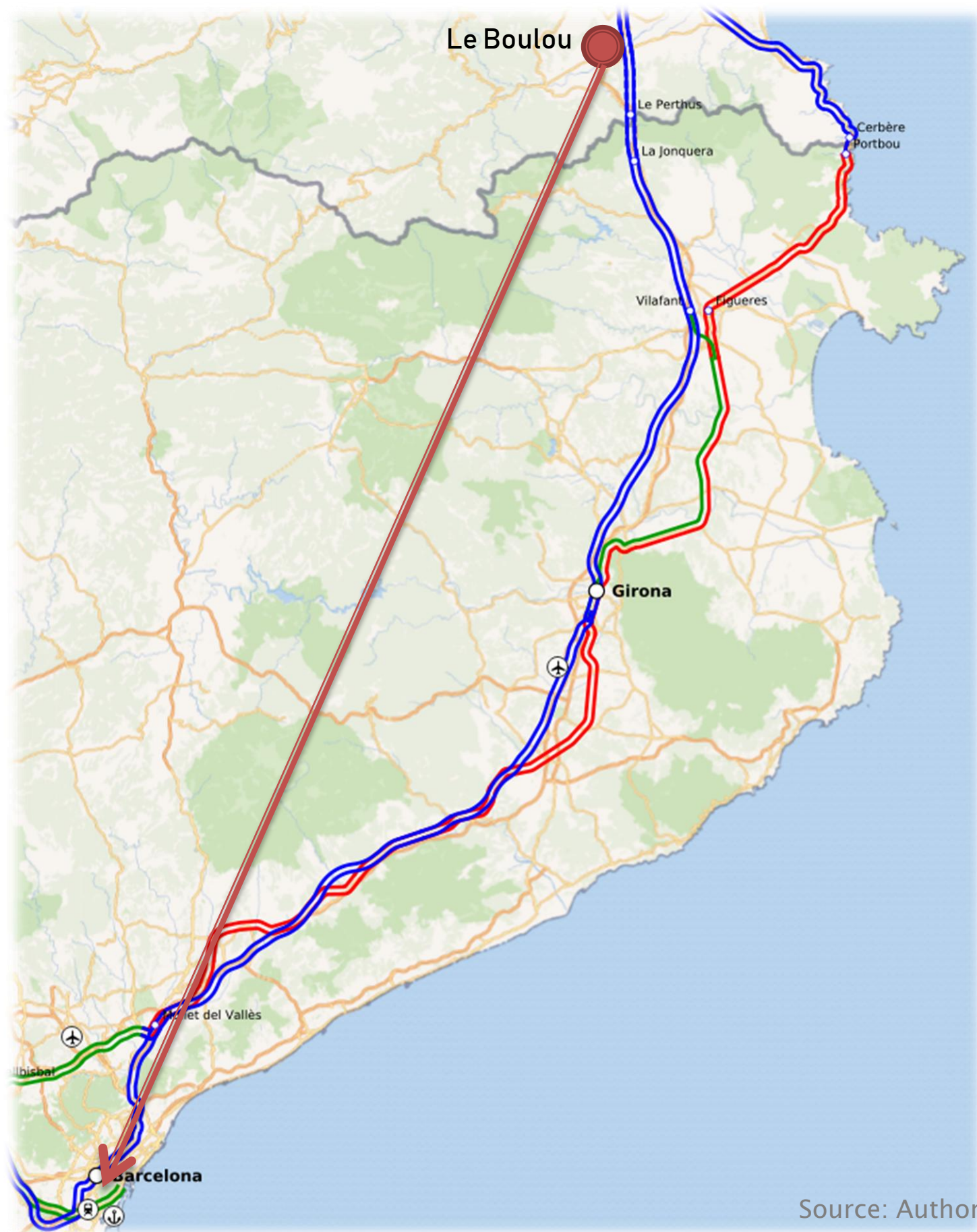
Source: SCP

**TRAILS** TRANSNATIONAL  
INTERMODAL  
LINKS TOWARDS  
SUSTAINABILITY

**Interreg** POCTEFA

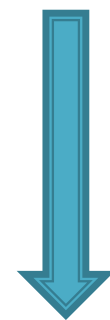
UNIÓN EUROPEA  
UNION EUROPÉENNE





• Innovative multimodal solution for semi-trailers , intercepting south-north flows (via La Jonquera).

•2007: Le Boulou-Bettembourg (LUX) Rolling Highway



• 2019: Barcelona Port – Bettembourg Competitive to road transport.

Fist Rolling highway in Spain

## AN INNOVATIVE RAIL SERVICE FOR ROAD STAKEHOLDERS

Up to 5 round trips/week

### ACCEPTED UNITS:




\* for Antwerp, containers only are accepted

### MULTI-PRODUCTS: Fruits & vegetables, automotive, retail...



### CO2 SAVED:

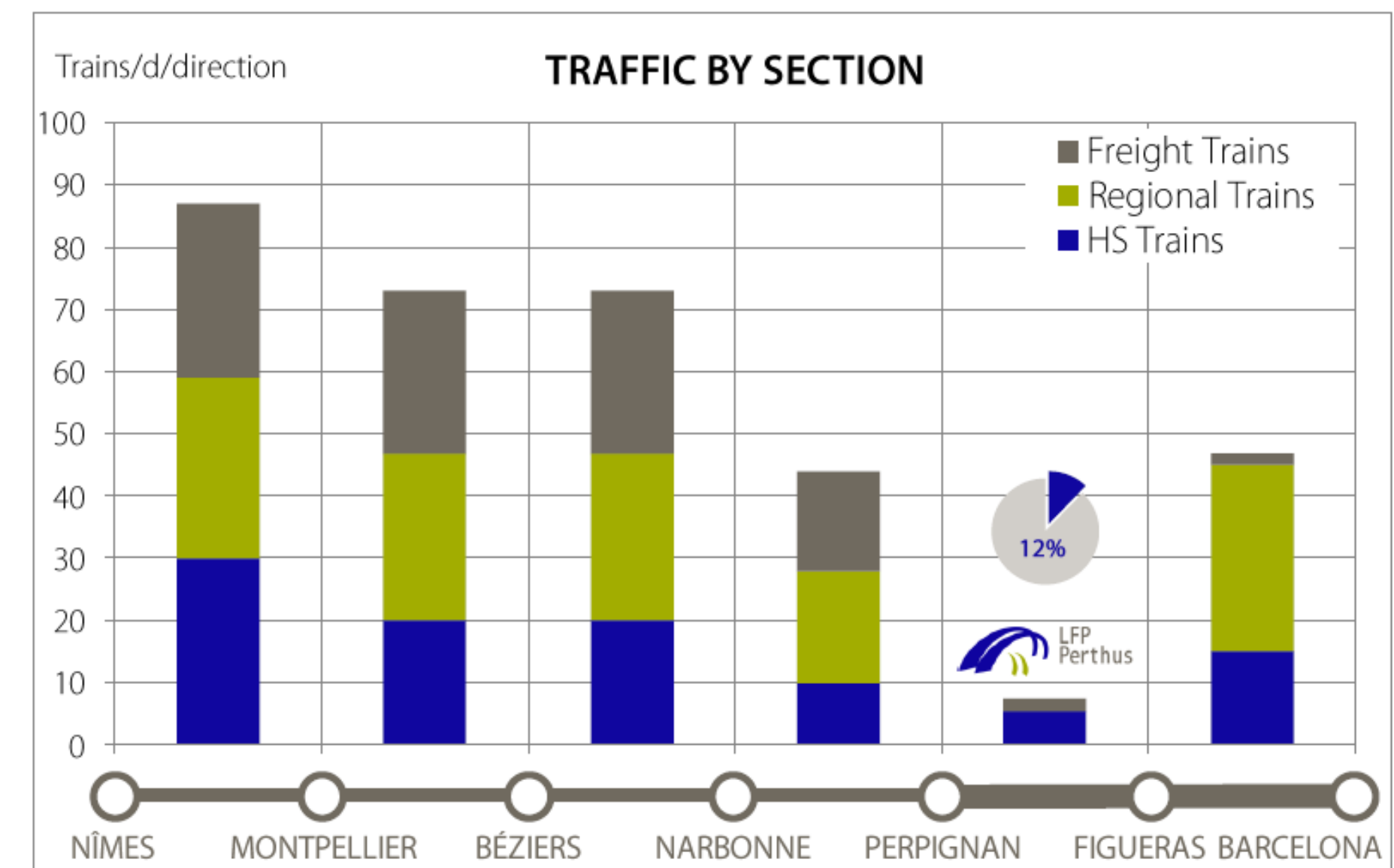
 1 ton of CO2 saved per trailer per trip  
90% of greenhouse gases reduction compared to road transport



Source: VIIA







## Underexploited infrastructures

2016: Liquidation of Private Management Company (TP Ferro) → New Public French-Spanish management

- Lack of railway material and railway infrastructure Northern and Southern
- Freight: High demand from European operators to enter in the Spanish market

## Benefit from the new Rolling Highway in Barcelona Port

- Passengers: TGV timetable not suitable for cross-border commuters

Lack of regional and IC cross-border connection

→ Catalonia and Occitanie Gov. Proposal: Improve CB Railway Transport (2020)



Source: El punt Avui, 29.01.2019





## Current Scenario: Few Winners & Many Losers

### Winners

Le Perthus Tunnel: > frequencies (Rolling Highway from Bcn Port)

-Urban Nodes: > CB passengers transports

### Losers

Many Railway Terminals could face a severe loss in term of economic activities, inducing a negative socioeconomic impact at local and regional scale.

- Portbou

- Cerbère

- Saint Charles Perpignan

- Le Boulou (Relocated in the Port of Barcelona)

- Vilamalla Logistic Centre



## Cross-Border Approach: Towards a Long Term Win-Win Strategy

1. Looking for a Integrated Cross-Border Logistic Strategy
2. Active CB Entities more committed in the MED Corridor
3. Smarter strategy to coordinate INTERREG and CEF instruments

Le Perthus Tunnel: > frequencies + CB Intercity/Regional trains

-Urban Nodes: > CB mobility & < CO2 emissions

> Safety on the road & < Trucks Traffic

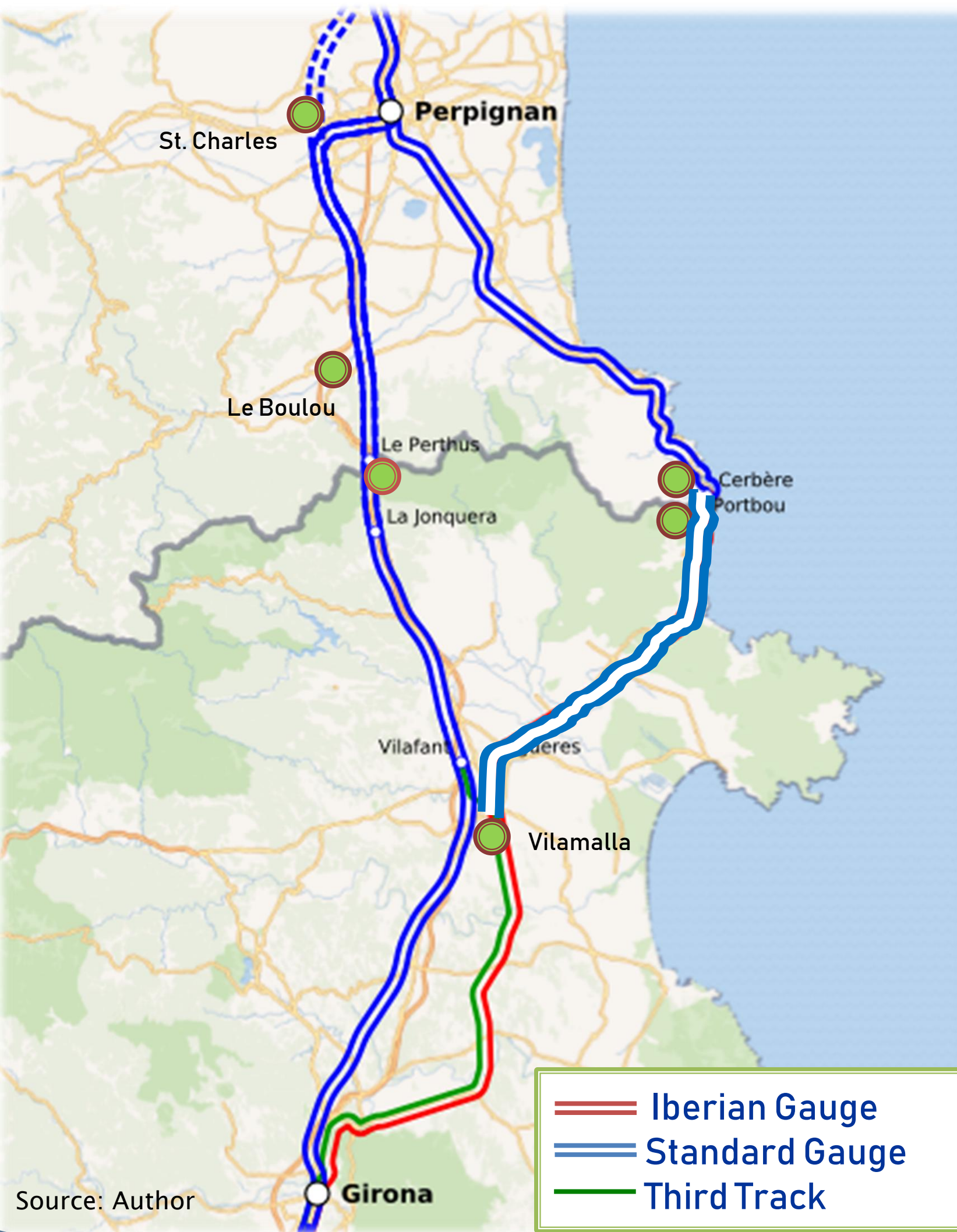
Railway Terminal: towards a Cross-Border complementarity and reconversion

- Example of Portbou & Cerbère:

→ New Railway Training Centre (reconversion of R. Infrastructure)

→ Local economy reconversion (Slow Tourism strategy, unique territory, > attractiveness)

→ Future European Cross-Border Mechanism instrument to improve railway management





## REMARKS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Despite the existence of operational railway infrastructure, many bottlenecks and impediments persist in the cross-border sectors of the MED Corridor.
- The implementation of the Corridors often generates Local and Regional Cross-Border dynamics to 'survive'.
- The lack of Integrated Cross-Border approach generates Winners & Losers → Corridors are perceived as negative territorial impact (Turin-Lyon, Portbou-Cerbere, etc.)
- Active Cross-Border entities should seriously consider the MED Corridor in their strategy.
- The urgency of specific Cross-Border Strategy for the Spanish-French Sector suggests that a wider initiative to the whole MED Corridor is necessary.

# Thank you for your attention

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