


Benelux-ITEM Workshop on Cross- border railway connections

Brussels, 24th of June 2025



COOPERATION
WITHOUT
BORDERS



ITEM *10 years
of expertise*
Cross-border



Maastricht University

www.benelux.int / @beneluxunion



Introduction

- By Anouk BOLLEN (Director of ITEM)
- By Jan MOLEMA (Director at Benelux Union)

Introduction

- By Martin UNFRIED (ITEM) and Pim MERTENS (ITEM)



Institute for Transnational and Euregional Cross border Cooperation and Mobility / ITEM

Cross-border knowledge for policy and practice



Status Quo cross-border rail

Missing Links

- EU Cross-border infrastructure TEN-T: transnational \neq cross-border
- Strong national fragmentation

Governance

- Importance of cooperation: positive relation,
- Best practice cases in local cooperation
- Governance: EU \neq Cross-border Regions

Challenge

- Governance with national strategies
- Ownership non-high-speed cross-border connections



ITEM
Cross-border



Maastricht University

EU Legislation: Ticketing & Booking

No European Single Railway Area

- Many administrative, operational, legal and political differences
- Safety systems as example: too late, too slow, too reluctant?

Upcoming: Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation


- A fix to purchasing trips and passenger rights? Push to information (data exchange: information/booking/compensation)
- But won't fix all cross-border realities

Benelux/Germany/France strategy

- Excellent start, window of opportunity
- Ownership for a Benelux vision and ambition
- Connect national cross-border rail strategies, also with euregional level



Session 1: Improving international and cross-border train travel – obstacles and initiatives



COOPERATION
WITHOUT
BORDERS



ITEM 10 years
of expertise
Cross-border



Maastricht University

Presentation by

- Mr. Arthur **KAMMINGA** of ALLRAIL, *The Alliance of Passenger Rail New Entrants*



The future of cross-border rail in the Benelux

24 June 2025

AGENDA

- Principles of the European rail market
- What does this mean for the Benelux?
- Market appetite to operate cross-border trains
- What could be the right policy for the Benelux countries?

ABOUT ALLRAIL

- Alliance of Rail New Entrants.
- Established in May 2017 and based in Brussels.
- Non-profit association of independent passenger rail companies (operators and ticket vendors).
- Recognized by European Commission as representative body for rail operators (together with incumbents' CER).
- **ALLRAIL members:**



Arthur Kamminga
Benelux Representative

arthur.kamminga@allrail.eu



Principles of the European rail market

- Single European rail market
- Rail market is part of the “common market”
 - Member States need to respect the rules of the EU common market!
- Default situation: open market, competition, level playing field, open access
- Public Service Obligations (PSOs a.k.a. “concessions”) need to be justified
 - two main criteria: PSO must be **necessary** and **proportional**
 - investigate which train services could be delivered in absence of PSO (“market analysis”)
- Direct awards no longer allowed since 25 December 2023 (unless in exceptional situations)



What does this mean for the Benelux?

- Most international and intercity train services are (or: *should be*) profitable → open access
- Regional train services mostly unprofitable → to be European tendered
- Netherlands targeted for highly suspicious direct award to NS:
 - Dutch court decided to ask prejudicial questions to *European Court of Justice*
 - European Commission started infringement procedure
- Belgium and Luxembourg are not targeted yet

Market appetite to operate cross-border trains

- Existing open access: Eurostar, Ouigo, ICE International, European Sleeper
- High speed competition by Qbuzz (Trenitalia) and Heurotrain announced
- Classic intercity by Arriva and GoVolta
- FlixTrain? Regiojet?
- NS, NMBS/SNCB, CFL, SNCF, Deutsche Bahn?



Op de nieuwe verbinding zullen ICE-treinen rijden van de Duitse spoorwegaatschappij Deutsche Bahn © EPA

Antwerpen, Zaventem en Leuven krijgen hogesnelheidstrein naar Duitsland

Er zijn plannen voor een nieuwe hogesnelheidstreinverbinding met Duitsland. Die zou vertrekken in Antwerpen, en via het station van Brussels Airport in Zaventem, Leuven en Luik rijden naar de Duitse steden Aken en Keulen. Dat blijkt uit een aanvraag die werd ingediend bij de regulator, het Federaal Agentschap voor Regulering van Transport.

Lien Verlinden 17-06-25, 10:35 Laatste update: 17-06-25, 15:47 Bron: Belga

What could be the right policy for the Benelux countries (1)

- Benelux countries should actually think about their rail market
 - What train services do we want? What can the market deliver without PSOs?
 - Facilitate growth by pro-actively investments in rail infrastructure
 - Low **track access charges** and fair **capacity allocation** are the key to success
- Is a jointly operated cross-border train really a “cooperation”? Or is it “avoiding competition” by geographically dividing the market?
 - Agreements on setting supply and prices are problematic (cartel behaviour)
 - Why can't NS operate on their own to Brussels, or NMBS/SNCB to Roosendaal?
 - NMBS/SNCB is *forced* to continue cooperation with NS by Dutch government (eliminate potential competitor?)
- Open access could potentially **double** the Benelux intercity market



What could be the right policy for the Benelux countries (2)

- Technical differences are suboptimal but not why rail is behind
- Main obstacle is **market regulation** (+ close ties between incumbents and politics & bureaucrats)
- Let go nationalism and protectionism, have an **open** and **international** mindset
- Use market mechanisms to let the citizens enjoy **more train offer** and **lower prices**
- If there is demand and operators can make a living, train services will come automatically
 - Keep infrastructure charges low, it will avoid / reduce subsidizing train operations
 - Subsidies via infrastructure (lower track access fees) benefit all (i.e. Belgian discount for night trains)
 - Allocation of track capacity should be fair
- Concessions are no longer the right policy instrument to regulate the rail market

Thank you for your attention



Arthur Kamminga

Benelux Representative

arthur.kamminga@allrail.eu

Presentation by

- Ms. Marlies **PEETERS** of the European Commission (DG REGIO):
Obstacles to attractive cross-border rail services – recent studies and experiences



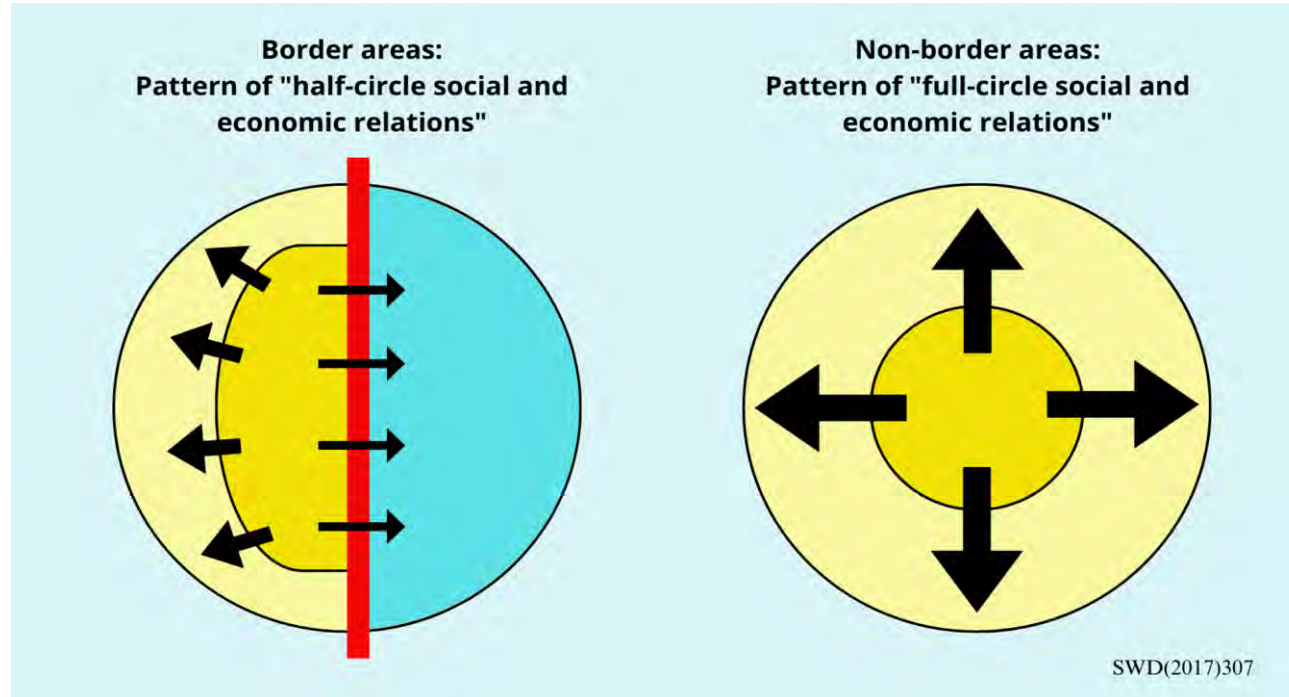
Obstacles to railservices - studies and experiences from EC

Benelux – ITEM workshop on cross-border rail
connections

Marlies Peeters, DG REGIO D.2

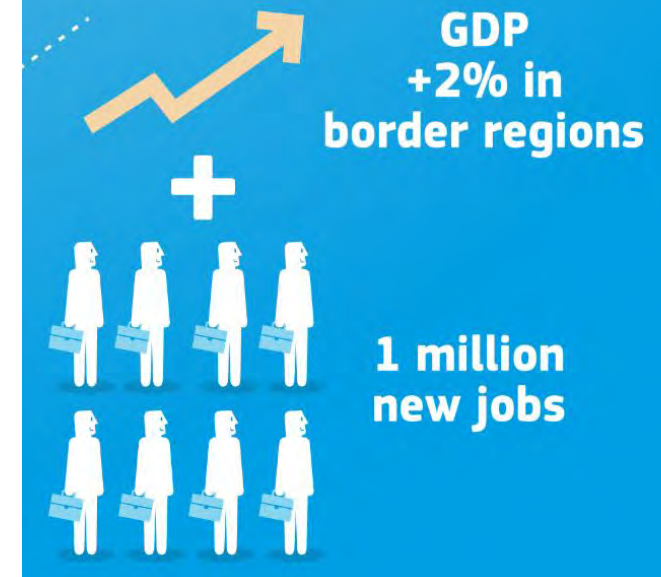
24 June 2025

Importance of cross-border interactions



**30% EU
population**

Removing only **one fifth**
of all obstacles could lead to:



Cross-border transport

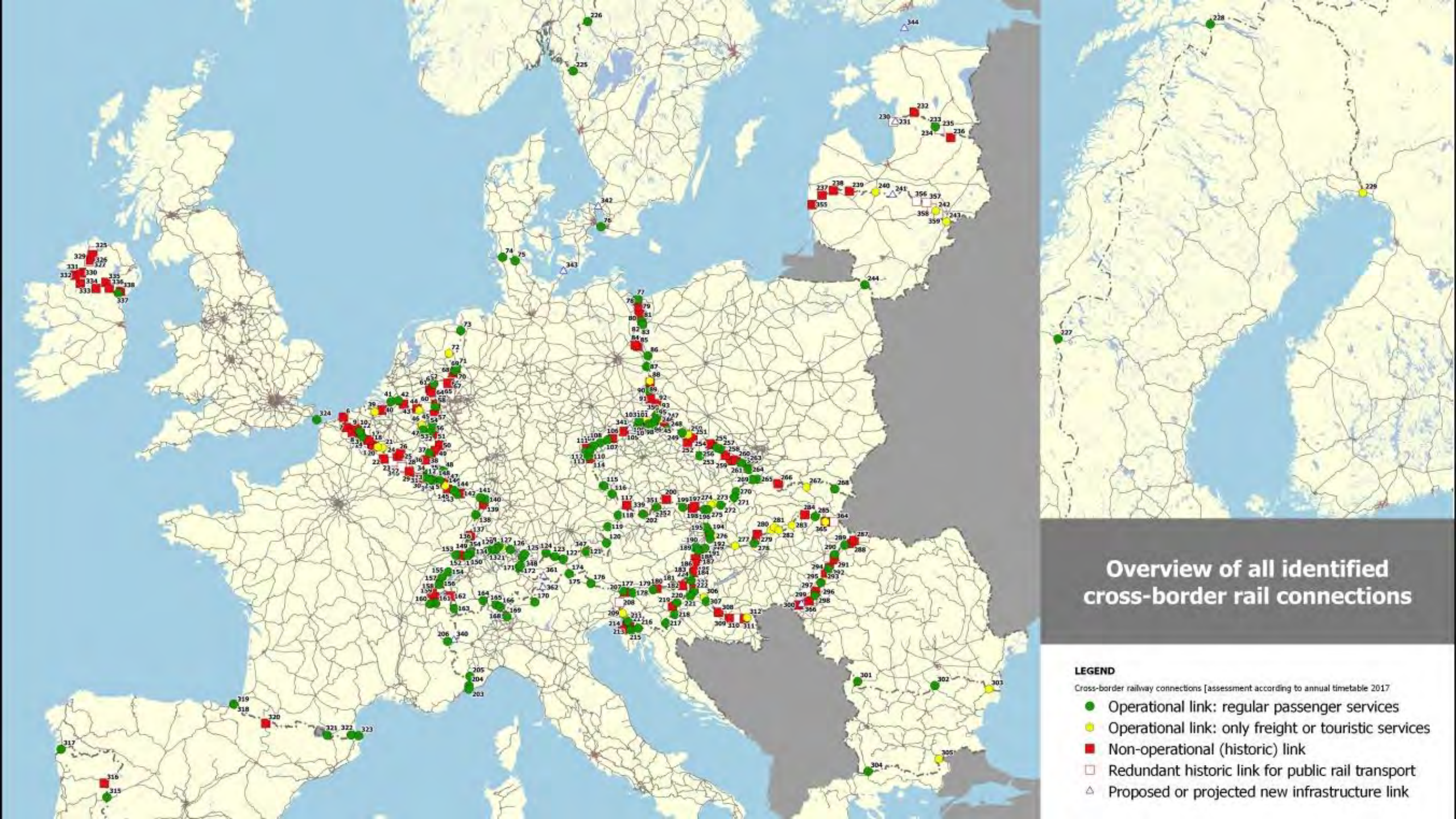
- Importance for cross-border interactions
- Challenges are numerous
- Administrative and legal obstacles
- ✓ Transport is one of the three most common cross-border obstacles (transport, healthcare and employment)
- ✓ Missing links, information to users and complementarity, legal and technical conditions on both sides of the border, etc.

Studies and publications

- *Comprehensive analysis of the existing cross-border rail transport connections and missing links on the internal EU borders (2018)*
- Study on providing public transport in cross-border regions - mapping of existing services and legal obstacles (2022) (report - toolbox, interactive map and case-studies, incl. rail)
- Studies and publications DG REGIO Border Focal Point
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/cooperation/european-territorial/border-focal-point_en
- *Cross-border missing rail links - where do we stand? (tendering 2025)*

Study “Missing rail links” (1)

- Railway infrastructure - 365 cross-border rail links
- 176 missing or promising links
 - of which 119 are missing links (non-operational infrastructure)
 - of which 57 are promising links (not fully exploited or freight only links)
 - of which 33 are within the TEN-T Core Network (Corridors) or the Comprehensive Network
- Factsheet on each cross-border rail connection (annex 3)



Overview of all identified cross-border rail connections

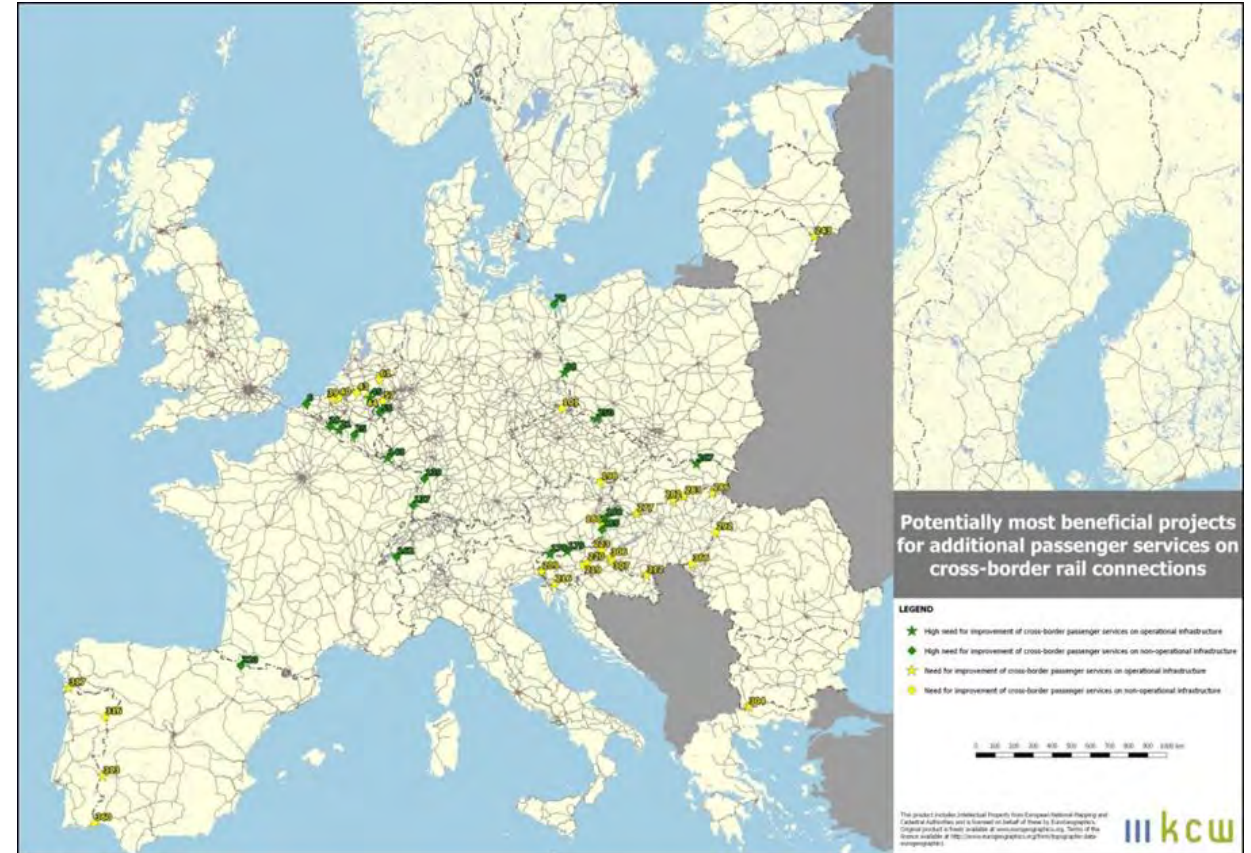
LEGEND

Cross-border railway connections [assessment according to annual timetable 2017]

- Operational link: regular passenger services
- Operational link: only freight or touristic services
- Non-operational (historic) link
- Redundant historic link for public rail transport
- △ Proposed or projected new infrastructure link

Study “Missing rail links” (2)

- cross-border rail connections for which competent authorities gave positive feedback during the stakeholder consultation
- **48 connections = potentially most beneficial projects.** These have the potential to
 - enhance cross-border labour mobility
 - improve connectivity of TEN-T corridors
 - alleviate structural spatial deficits
 - promote sustainable mobility
- **24 of these 48 connections outside of the TEN-T networks**



Cross-border missing rail links – where do we stand? (tendering 2025)

- Based on the list of the “48 most promising cross-border transport connections”
 - State of play
 - Reassessment of the methodology – re-elaborate list of most promising links
 - Provision of geo-localization data
- Extending study to Western Balkans

ACROSS Data hub



REGIO and JRC initiative - launched end of 2024

Data hub for EU border regions

Centralising all themes of cross-border interactions in a single place

Ensuring sustained availability of existing information

Fostering for stronger uptake of knowledge production on cross-border

To support stakeholders working on cross-border regions with accessible, understandable and comparable data.

The platform



<https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/across>



My border region




Map view


Urban Data Platform Plus

OverviewDashboardsARDECOStrategiesSDGsAnalysesTools

Home > Data hub for EU border regions


Data hub for EU border regions





Why EU border regions matter

The EU includes **40 internal land borders**, with the adjacent regions covering about **one third of the EU's population and GDP**. Despite European integration, national borders still limit full socio-economic integration between neighbouring border regions. Studying, training, working, receiving healthcare and doing business across borders are all daily activities that should be possible regardless of administrative national frontiers. Collecting harmonised data on cross-border interaction is essential to inform decision-making, as [recommended by the European Commission](#).




Data and analysis for cross-border regions

The Data hub for EU border regions collects **harmonised geospatial data on EU cross-border interactions** and robust **socio-economic indicators**, useful to compare border regions and support research in border studies. It covers a variety of domains including **public transport, public services, healthcare, cross-border governance, border obstacles and solutions**. Its user-friendly, interactive platform offers a variety of map and chart views to help users explore and analyse the data at different scales and across different themes. The data hub is an initiative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and Joint Research Centre (JRC).


Policy context and methodology >

Discover EU cross-border interactions and dynamics



My border region

Browse data and indicators on your cross-border regions



Map view

Explore cross-border trends across the European Union

Funding via Interreg

Interreg supports a wide variety of themes (policy priorities): Smarter Europe, “Greener Europe”, a more connected Europe etc.

-> Interreg as catalyst for larger / innovative cooperation transport projects

Interreg Specific Objective 1 “Better cooperation governance” to facilitate cross border cooperation / governance

[Projects and documents - Keep.eu](#)

Some examples: EMR Connect (Interreg Euregio Meuse-Rhine), Value4Sea and Grön Jyllandskorridor (Interreg Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak)

Legal instrument BRIDGEforEU

- BRIDGEforEU – to facilitate identifying and resolving cross-border obstacles
- Member States encouraged to establish Cross-Border Coordination Points
- Member States can use the Cross-Border Facilitation Tool, a voluntary standard procedure designed to solve administrative and legal obstacles.
- [Regulation \(EU\) 2025/925 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 May 2025 on a Border Regions' instrument for development and growth](#)

Technical support via b-solutions

2021

- Launched by DG REGIO in 2018, managed by AEBR
- Addresses legal and administrative obstacles hindering cross-border cooperation in the EU
- Supports local actors in border regions to address obstacles of a legal and/or administrative nature through experts' support

Thematics on recurrent obstacles in 3 areas:

- CB public services
- CB labour market
 - Green deal



➤ Cases on cross-border public transport

Thank you



@EUinmyRegion



ec.europa.eu/info/region

Marlies.Peeters@ec.europa.eu

© European Union 2023

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.



Presentation by

- Mr. David **SCHOENMAEKERS** of the Belgian Federal Service for Mobility and Transport: the Belgian national railway strategy



FPS **MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT**
GD **SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY AND RAIL POLICY**



Cross-border railway transport - strategy in Belgium

24th June 2025



Contents

1. Policy Context & Strategic Vision
2. Public service contract SNCB
3. Focus on cross-border
4. Case – “Tri-Country Train”
5. Challenges



1. Policy Context & Strategic Vision



- **“Rail Vision 2040”** – approved by the Federal Council of Ministers on May 6, 2022 = ambitious, integrated multi-annual plan to make Belgium’s rail system sustainable, efficient, and intermodal by 2040
- Four main axes
 - Rail at the service of more passengers and more enterprises
 - Rail at the service of customers
 - Making rail more sustainable
 - Rail supporting an integrated mobility approach
- Modal shift => increase rail transport
 - Passengers: from 8% → 15% modal share by 2040
 - Freight: from 12% → 20% modal share by 2040
- Frequency and Reliability
 - Urban areas: one train every 15 minutes
 - Rural network: one train every 30 minutes
 - Smooth connections: shorter transfer times, improved connections between trains and buses/trams, with integrated, region-wide timetables
- Cross-border rail traffic & Brussels as an international hub - Brussels as a central European hub with high-quality connections to other capitals; aim = strengthen competition with air travel





1. Policy Context & Strategic Vision



- Intermodality & Multimodality
 - Stations optimally integrated with other modes of transport (bus, tram, metro, shared bicycle systems, and Mobility-as-a-Service platforms)
 - Rail-centric spatial planning around key hubs and stations
 - Easily accessible, multimodal hubs
 - A uniform and simple fare structure to ensure seamless transfers and a smooth travel experience
- Infrastructure for Freight & Intermodal Corridors
 - Expansion of capacity for freight transport
 - Support for European rail corridors through stronger terminals and improved routes
 - Tailored infrastructure for logistics hubs and industrial connections
- Action Plan "Freight" (approved by the Federal Council of Ministers on April 27, 2023)
 - Goal = double freight volume by 2030 via 26 targeted actions involving infrastructure upgrades, market regulation, and collaboration among logistics stakeholders
- Sustainability & Greening
 - Objective: 100% green energy on the rail network; reduced pollution, biodiverse rail zones, and circular processes in operations by SNCB and Infrabel
- Governance, Planning & Investment Policy
 - Cooperation between the government, SNCB, Infrabel, regional authorities and stakeholders
 - Annual monitoring and a phased roadmap (2022+, 2030, 2040)
 - Binding agreements (public service contracts, performance contracts, multi-annual investment plans)



1. Policy Context & Strategic Vision



- **Federal coalition agreement** led by Prime Minister De Wever was reached on January 31, 2025, by the five parties of the so-called Arizona coalition: N-VA, Vooruit, CD&V, MR and Les Engagés
- Focus on rail and cross-border
 - Modal shift ambition
 - ✓ Taking steps toward carbon-neutral mobility
 - ✓ crucial for safeguarding our prosperity
 - ✓ Working on a (European) cross-border infrastructure agenda
 - Interoperability across borders
 - Promote European cooperation in the field of rail transport in order to achieve more and better European train connections, both for freight and passenger transport
 - ✓ European strategy that ensures the train becomes a viable alternative to air travel
 - ✓ Improve the international high-speed rail connection between the TGV hubs and Zaventem Airport
 - ✓ Remove technical and regulatory barriers to the development of night trains, promote competition or the creation of new lines on high-speed rail networks
 - ✓ Take into account the impact on domestic rail traffic
 - Negotiations on realization 3RX / Iron Rhine restarted both politically within Belgium and with the neighboring countries and regions involved and at the administrative level
 - Take necessary measures, in consultation with the regional governments, to make combined products such as combo tickets possible. Combined use of trains, buses, trams, and other potential modes of transport



1. Policy Context & Strategic Vision



- Federal Minister for Mobility, Jean-Luc Crucke => **“Orientation note 2025-2029” + “Policy note 2025”**
 - Work closely with European partners to achieve the established objectives for more sustainable mobility, in particular by strengthening international rail connections with our neighboring countries and the rest of the EU
 - Implement the letter of intent signed in October 2023 with Luxembourg, as well as the agreements made during the Thalassa Summit in April 2022 regarding rail connections with the Netherlands. Explore possibilities regarding (update) letter of intent with France and Germany
 - European cooperation in the field of rail transport is not limited to connections with our neighboring countries. Given our position in the European rail network, such cooperation is necessary on a broader scale and is vital for our ports, which serve markets all across Europe
 - Strengthen cooperation in order to expand and improve European rail connections, both for freight and passenger transport
 - Continue efforts to enhance cooperation on rail freight corridors and the international passenger transport platform (IRP)
 - Play an active role in the European consultation forums with the Member States, the European Union Agency for Railways, and the European Commission
 - Continue an approach focused on facilitating military transport by rail between our ports, military bases, and neighboring countries.
 - Contribute to the European Commission's initiative “Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation” in order to increase attractiveness of international train travel for the consumer (traveler) + strengthen government's objective of introducing more competition in international rail in Belgium
 - Align with EU green deal, multimodal integration, digitalization, connectivity



2. Public service contract SNCB



- Public service contract (PSC) between the Belgian federal government and SNCB
- Legal and operational foundation for passenger rail services in Belgium
- Based on the EU Regulation 1370/2007 on public passenger transport by rail and by road, it defines the rights and obligations for providing public passenger transport under public funding
- Public service contract within the meaning of Regulation 1370/2007 and a management contract within the meaning of the Law of 21 March 1991 (concerning the Reform of Certain Economic Public Enterprises)
- Current PSC was signed in December 2022 and runs for 10 years (2023–2032)



2. Public service contract SNCB



- Main objectives SNCB:
 - increasing rail's modal share
 - improving punctuality and service frequency
 - modernizing rolling stock
 - ensuring better accessibility
 - and supporting sustainability goals
- SNCB receives an annual subsidy for fulfilling these obligations, monitored through performance indicators and regular evaluations
- SNCB organizes its Reference Offer within the framework of a Transport Plan based on five service categories:
 - IC (Inter City): Long-distance trains connecting city centers, making a number of stops along the route
 - S (Suburban): Suburban trains providing stopping services on the main axes in and around the cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Liège and Charleroi
 - L (Local): Non-suburban stopping trains
 - P (Peak Hour): Trains providing occasional service reinforcement due to increased demand at specific times of the day, requiring added capacity and/or frequency
 - T/EXT (Tourist/Extra) or equivalent: Trains deployed to handle temporary peaks in passenger demand to tourist destinations



3. Focus on Cross-border

- Article 15 of the PSC regarding “Cross-border offer of the public service obligation”
- SNCB ensures cross-border services to the following stations beyond the Belgian border (subsidized):
 - **Germany:** Aachen (via the border point Hergenrath-Frontière);
 - **France:** Lille and Maubeuge
 - via Blandin-Frontière for the Tournai–Lille line
 - via Mouscron-Frontière for the Kortrijk–Lille line
 - via Erquelinnes-Frontière for the line to Maubeuge
 - **Grand Duchy of Luxembourg:** Luxembourg
 - via Gouvy-Frontière for the Liège–Luxembourg line
 - via Sterpenich-Frontière for the Arlon–Luxembourg line
 - via Athus-Frontière for the Athus–Luxembourg line
 - **The Netherlands:** Maastricht, Roosendaal and Breda
 - via Visé-Frontière for the Maastricht line
 - via Essen-Grens for the Roosendaal line
 - via Meer-Grens for the Breda line





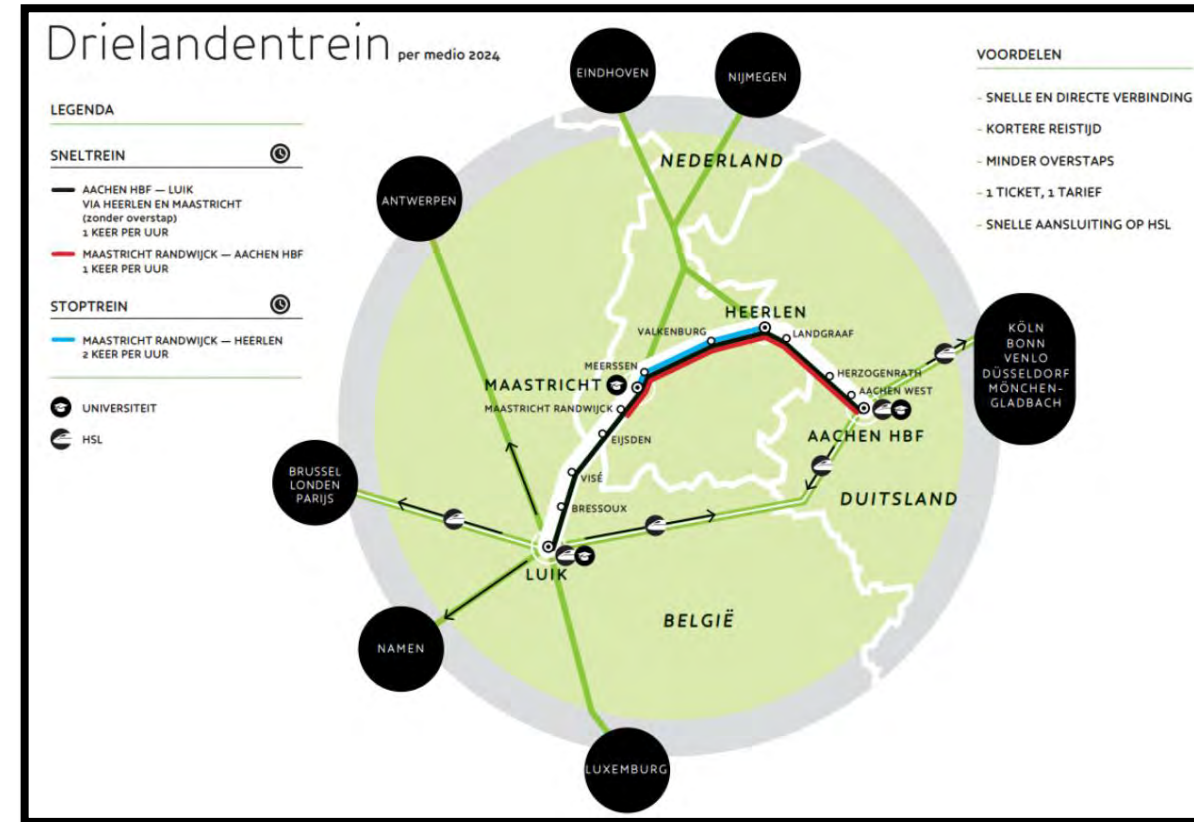
3. Focus on Cross-border

- In Belgium, operators who want to run open access rail services can do that by applying for infrastructure access from Infrabel, securing the required licenses and certificates, and operating commercially viable services in the open market
- Non-subsidized International Train Services in Belgium:
 - **Eurostar** - High-speed trains connecting Brussels with Paris, Amsterdam, London and Cologne. Operates commercially without direct Belgian subsidies
 - **ICE (InterCity Express)** - German high-speed trains running routes such as Brussels–Aachen–Cologne–Frankfurt, operating without Belgian subsidies
 - **NS International** - Cross-border trains linking Brussels with Amsterdam and parts of Germany. Operated commercially without subsidies from Belgium
 - **Other Cross-Border Intercity Services** - Certain intercity and regional trains connecting Belgium with neighboring countries (Luxembourg, The Netherlands, France) on a commercial basis, without specific Belgian subsidies
- + **Night trains** crossing or stopping in Belgium (e.g. Nightjet, European Sleeper)
 - Belgium supports the project led by European Sleeper for the Brussels–Barcelona connection, by providing assistance in contacts with the authorities and in finding solutions for potential routes, through its infrastructure manager Infrabel.
 - Support for night trains (from July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024) for the Belgian part of the route, covering both the track access charge and the energy cost.



4. Case “Tri-Country train”

- Successful cross-border collaboration between Belgium (Liège), The Netherlands (Maastricht) and Germany (Aachen)
- Overcoming technical, regulatory, and infrastructural challenges => deliver seamless rail connectivity (start train service: 30th June 2024)
- Two trains per hour between Maastricht and Aachen, with one of those continuing onward to Liège each hour
- Multinational governance: Belgian, Dutch, and German transport ministries coordinated with SNCB, NS, and Arriva from planning to launch
- Rolling stock adaptations: Trains upgraded to ETCS and compatible with differing electrification systems in each country
- Staffing jointly organized: Belgian railway staff serves Liège–Maastricht; Dutch staff handles Maastricht–Aachen





5. Challenges



1. Technical Interoperability

- Different signalling and safety systems (e.g. ETCS vs. national systems)
- Varying voltage standards
- Need for multi-system rolling stock

2. Operational Coordination

- Staffing across borders (language, training, certification)
- Differences in driver licenses and working time rules
- Timetable alignment between national operators
- Managing temporary capacity restrictions

3. Regulatory and Legal Barriers

- Divergent safety regulations and vehicle authorization procedures
- Complex multi-country approval processes for rolling stock
- National rules on crew qualifications and access charges

4. Infrastructure Bottlenecks

- Lack of investment in border-region stations or connections
- Prioritization of domestic over international routes

5. Ticketing and Passenger Experience

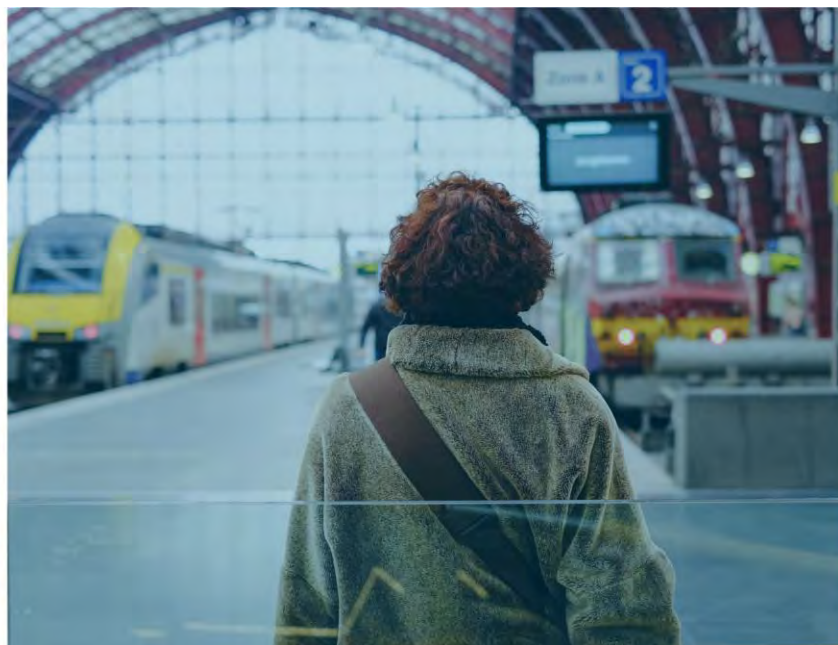
- No integrated ticketing or pricing across countries
- Limited access to travel information in multiple languages
- Lower visibility of international options on national platforms

6. Governance and Financing

- Fragmented responsibility (national vs. regional vs. EU level)
- Complex coordination between public authorities
- Limited long-term funding for cross-border operations



FPS **MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT**
GD **SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY AND RAIL POLICY**



Thank you for your attention!



| www.mobilit.belgium.be



COFFEE BREAK



COOPERATION
WITHOUT
BORDERS



ITEM *10 years
of expertise*
Cross-border



Maastricht University

Session 2: Ticketing: Best practice for cross-border train travel and how to move forward?



COOPERATION
WITHOUT
BORDERS



ITEM 10 years
of expertise
Cross-border



Maastricht University

Presentation by

- Mr. Gil **GEORGES** for the Luxembourg Ministry of Mobility and Public Works, with a focus on the effects of free public transport in Luxembourg



BENELUX – ITEM WORKSHOP ON CROSS-BORDER RAILWAY CONNECTIONS

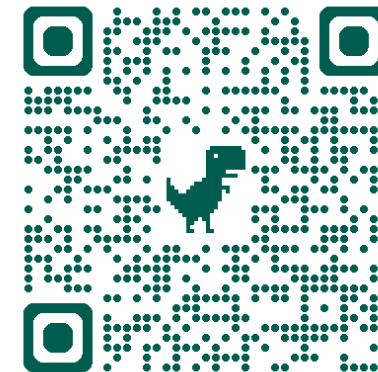
How to tackle cross-border obstacles in order to make train travel across borders more consumer-friendly ?



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Mobilité
et des Travaux publics

PNM 2035

Plan national
de mobilité



Download as PDF in FR, DE, or EN from:
<https://transports.public.lu/fr/planifier/strategie/pnm-2035.html>



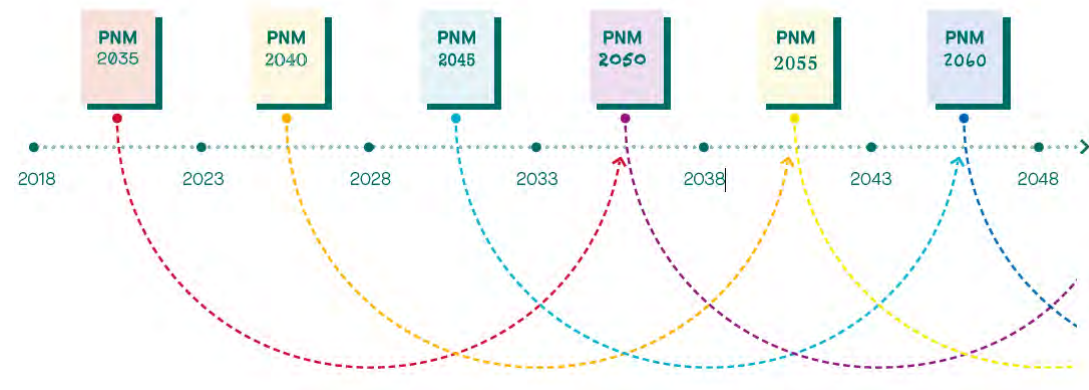
Infrastruktur
effikass notzen



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Mobilité
et des Travaux publics



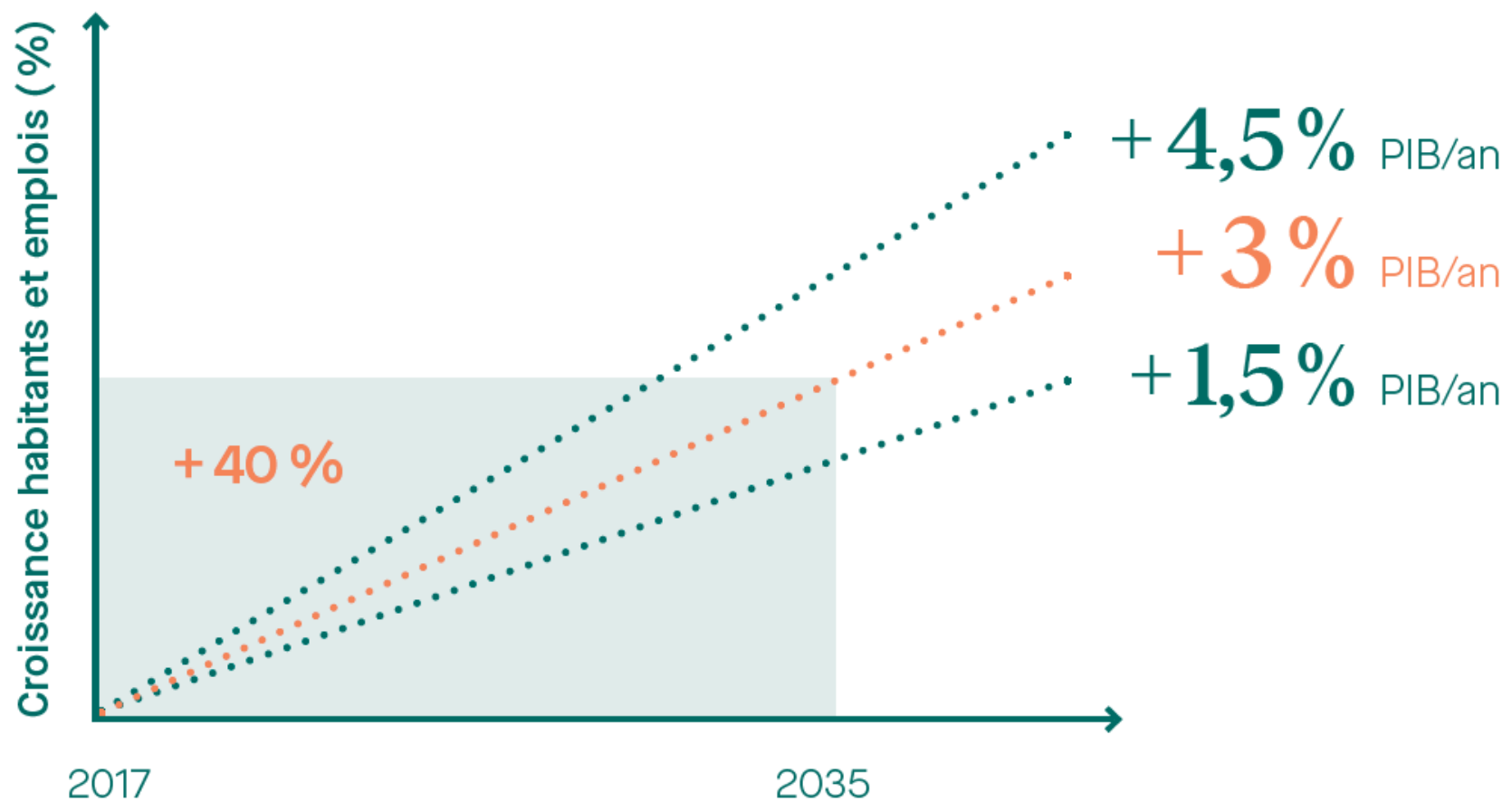
- Collect data
- Focus on measures that have the most impact
- Embrace local specificities - no one-fits-all solutions
- It's not a policy for or against a particular mode of transport
- The mobility plan is a continued process



Anticipating future mobility demand

Growth scenrio « medium » by STATEC : + 40% in 2035, compared to 2017.*

PNM 2035 — Plan national de mobilité



Understanding mobility needs in Luxembourg

PNM 2035 — Plan national de mobilité

3 agglomerations :

- Ville de Luxembourg et sa Ceinture suburbaine
- Esch & Belval et Sud urbain
- Nordstad

2 rural regions :

- Rural Sud, orienté vers Luxembourg-ville
- Rural Nord, orienté également vers la Nordstad

3 cross-border regions :

- en France
- en Belgique
- en Allemagne



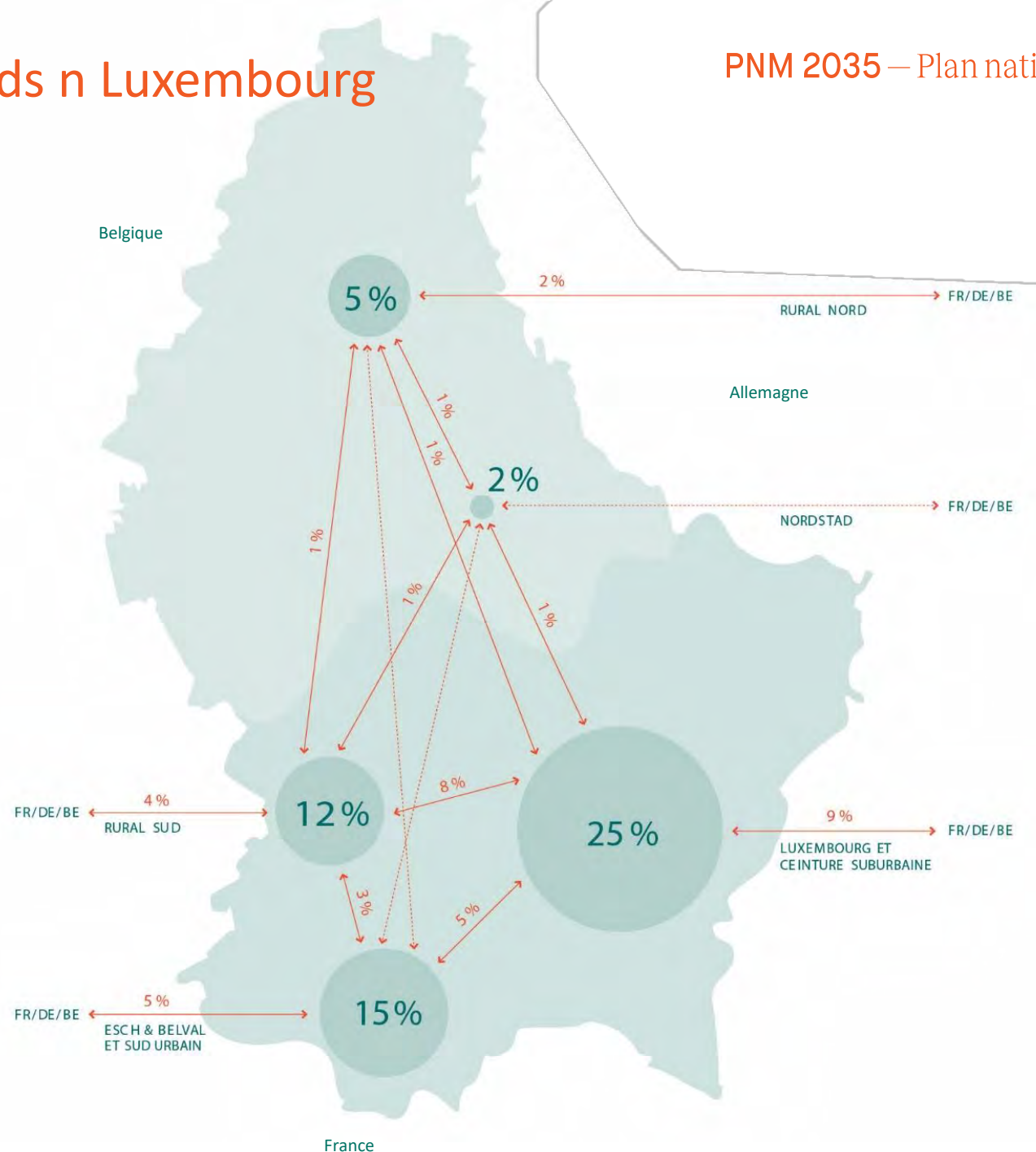
Voir p. 10-13

Understanding mobility needs in Luxembourg

PNM 2035 — Plan national de mobilité



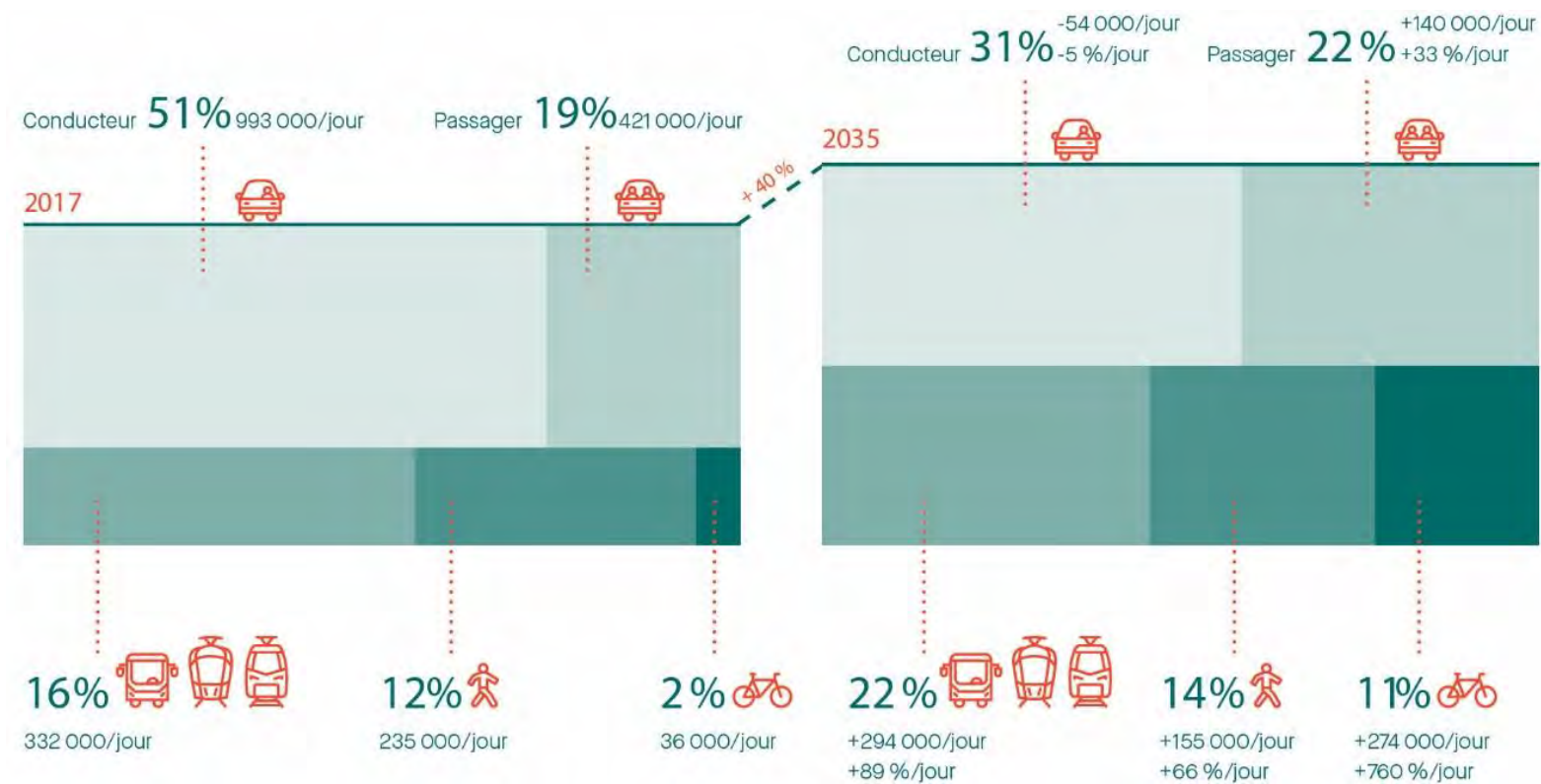
Contrary to percentage figures shown on the map on the right, values up top do not add up since e.g. a cross-border trip may also be in relation with the agglomeration of the city of Luxembourg



Voir p. 10-13

Mode split targets for 2035

Intended outcome: enable 40% more trips with fewer cars compared to 2017.



Plus les déplacements seront courts et en milieu urbain, moins ils devront être effectués en voiture.



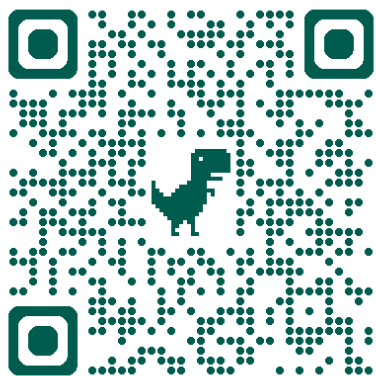
#MOBILITÉ GRATUITE AU LUXEMBOURG

#ItsABigDay
01/03/2020

www.freemobility.lu



Grabs the attention



FAQ on fare-free public transport

<https://transports.public.lu/fr/support/faq/mobilite-gratuite-en.html>



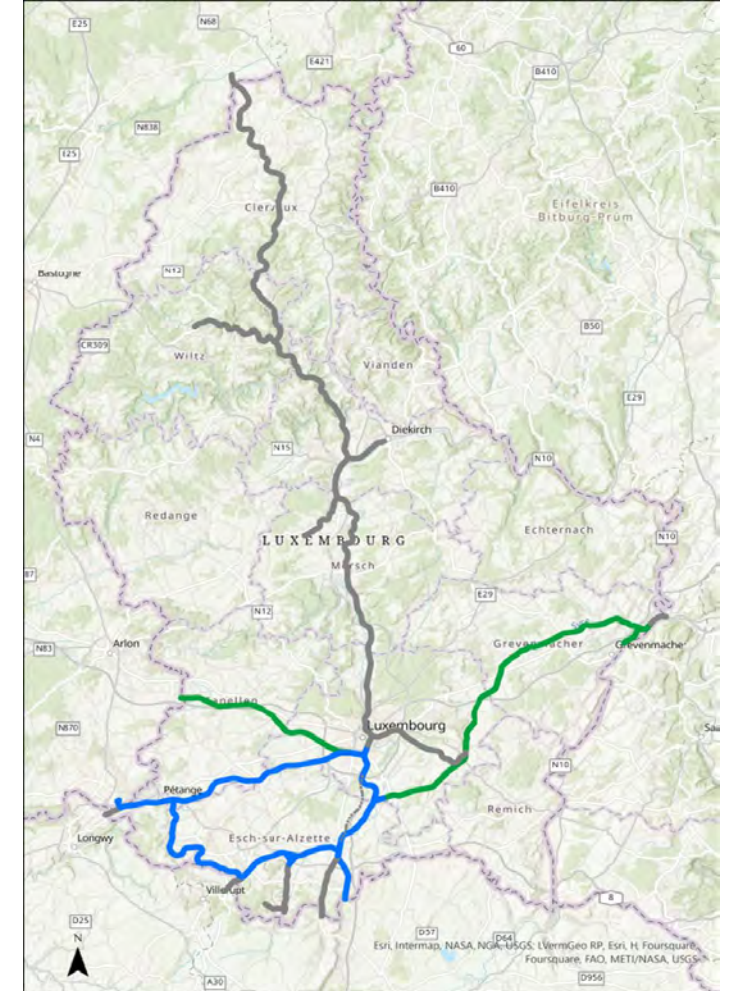
Grabs the passengers

Huge investments in the quality of the public transport offer



Key figures of a small national railway network:

- Line length: 270 km
- Track length: 630 km
- Track switches: 1170
- Density of track switches: 1.86/track km
- Electrification: 97%
- ETCS Level 1 Full Supervision: 100% GSM-R: 100%
- Trains/working day > 1000
- Train km/year: +/- 8,000,000

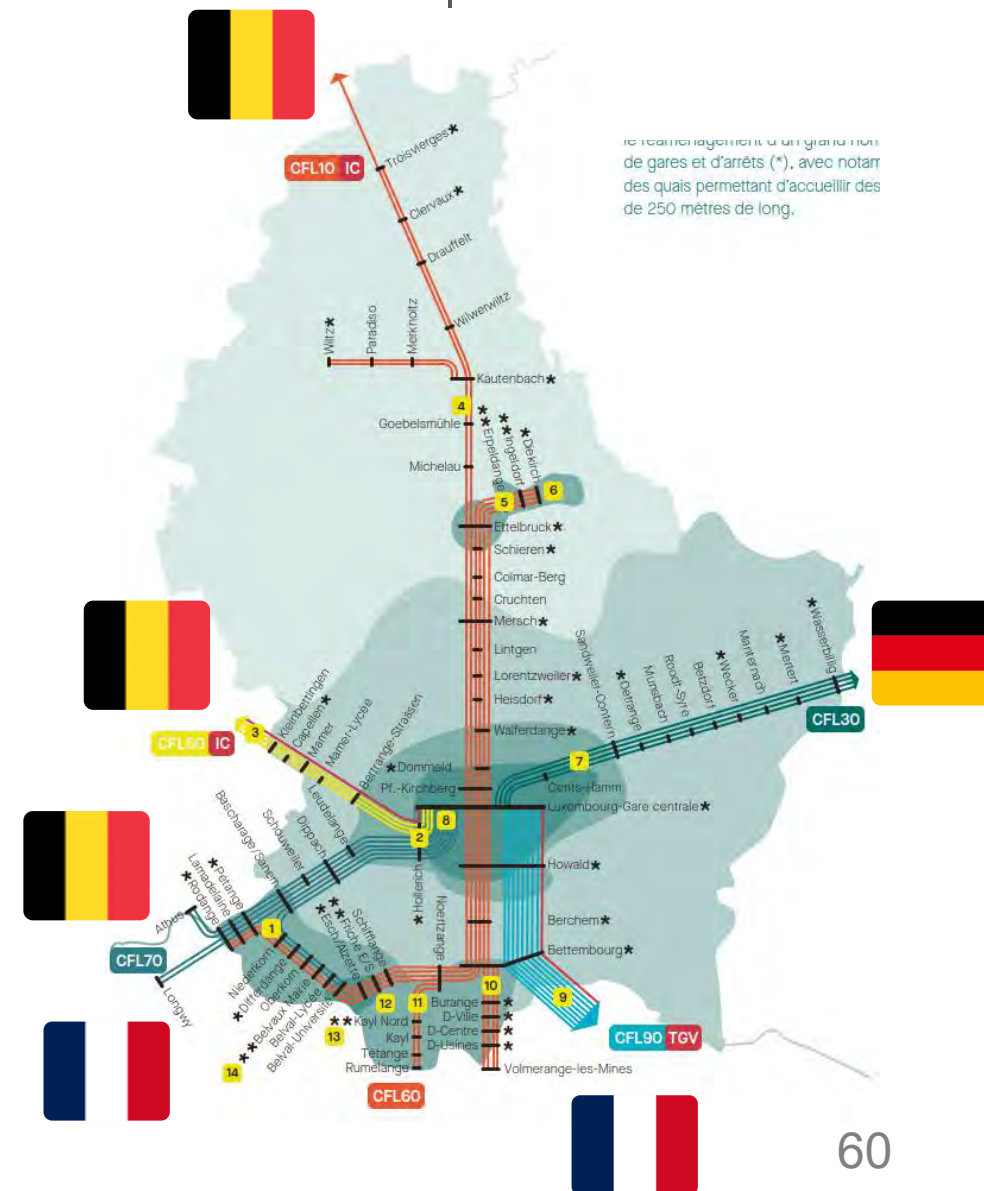


State of Play in Luxembourg



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

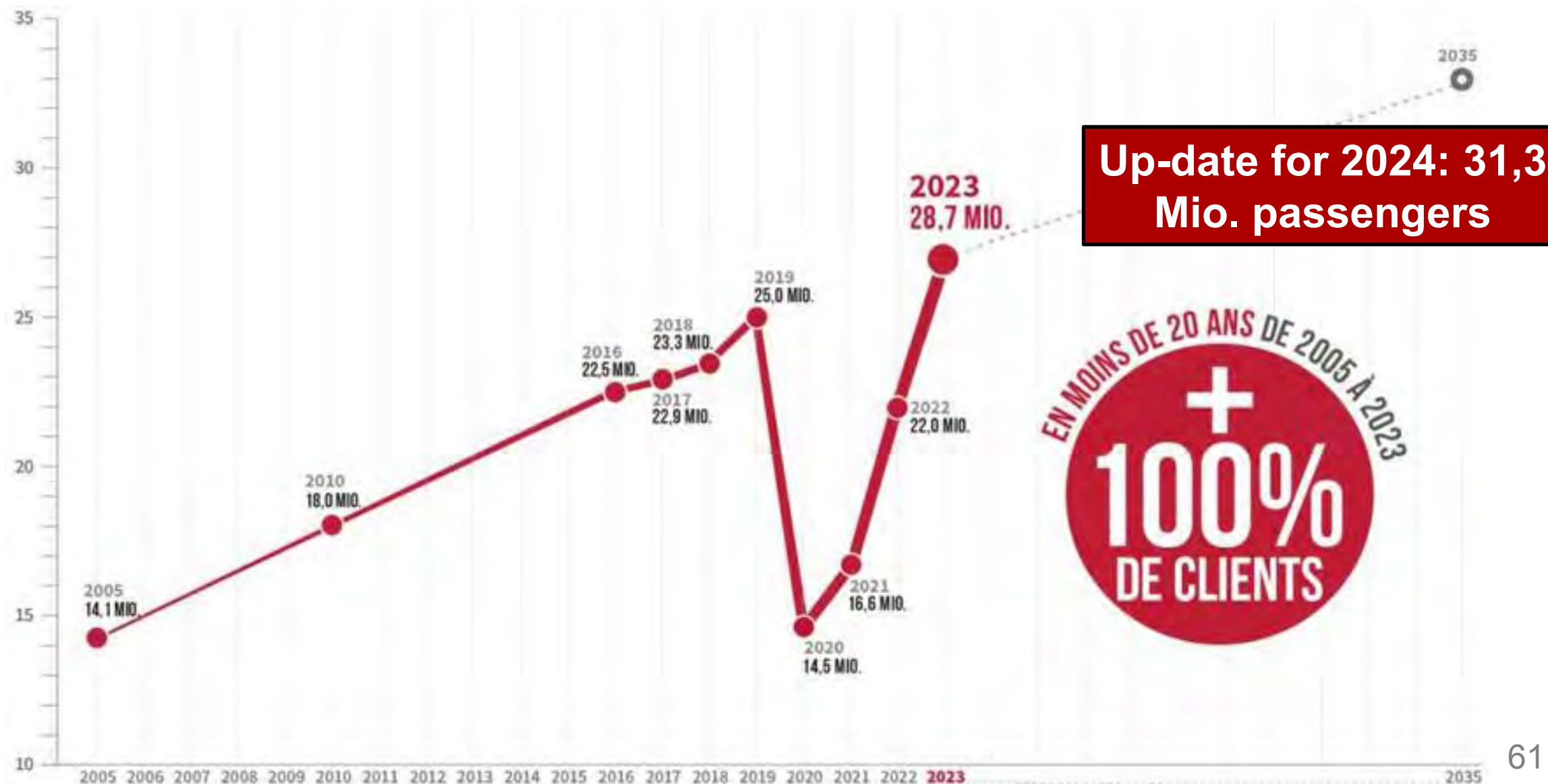
- 41% of all our trains are cross-border
 - BE: Liège, Arlon/Namur/Brussels & Athus
 - DE: Trier/Koblenz/Köln/Düsseldorf
 - FR: Thionville/Metz/Nancy & Longwy + TGV to Paris and Strasbourg - Montpellier
- Passengers/working day: 90,000
- Freight corridor: North Sea-Mediterranean
- Completely free public transport inside the country



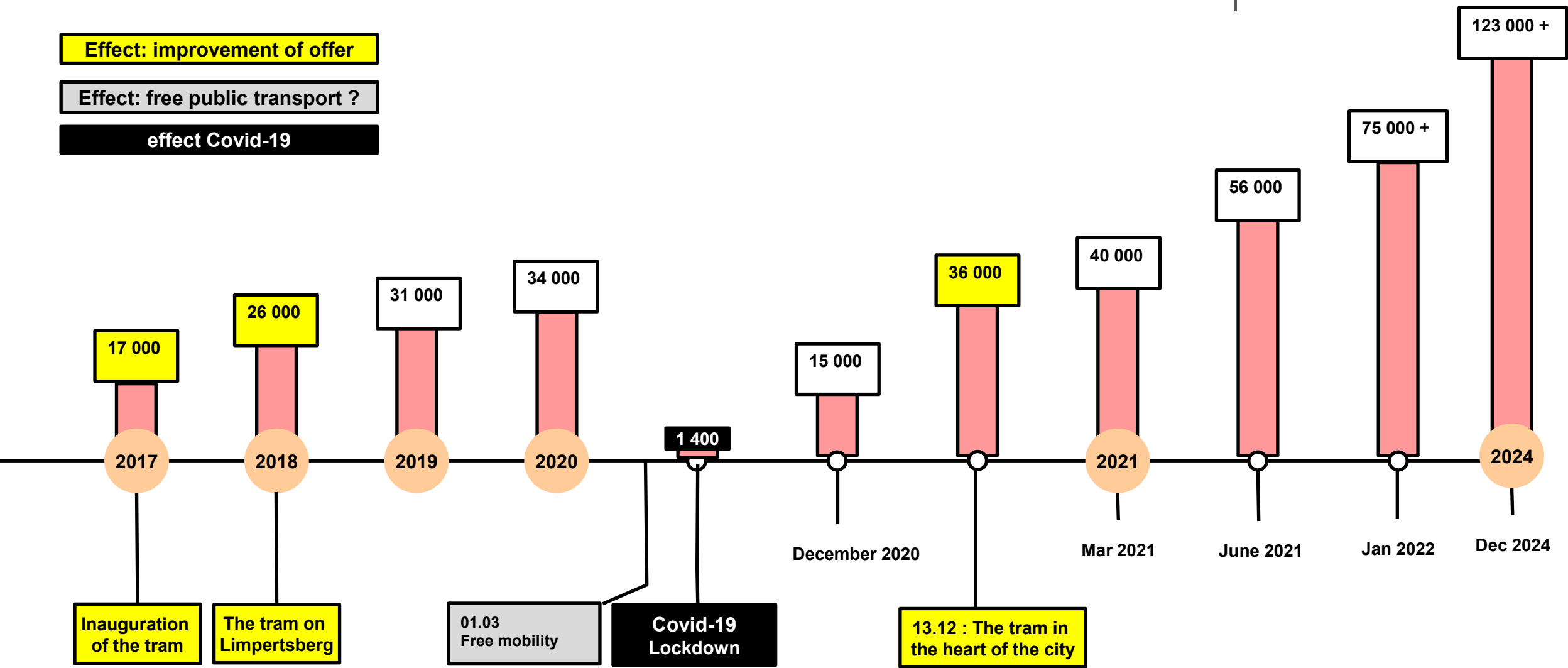
Development of passenger figures



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG



LUXTRAM: average daily passenger counts 2017-2024



Network development



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

Already implemented network-wide modernisations :

- Standardisation of the 25kV 50Hz power system
- Reinforcement of the railway power feeds
- Network-wide ETCS L1 FS incl. border crossing points
- Network-wide operations control center
- Network-wide automatic passenger information system
- Network-wide GSM-R



Major projects under construction:

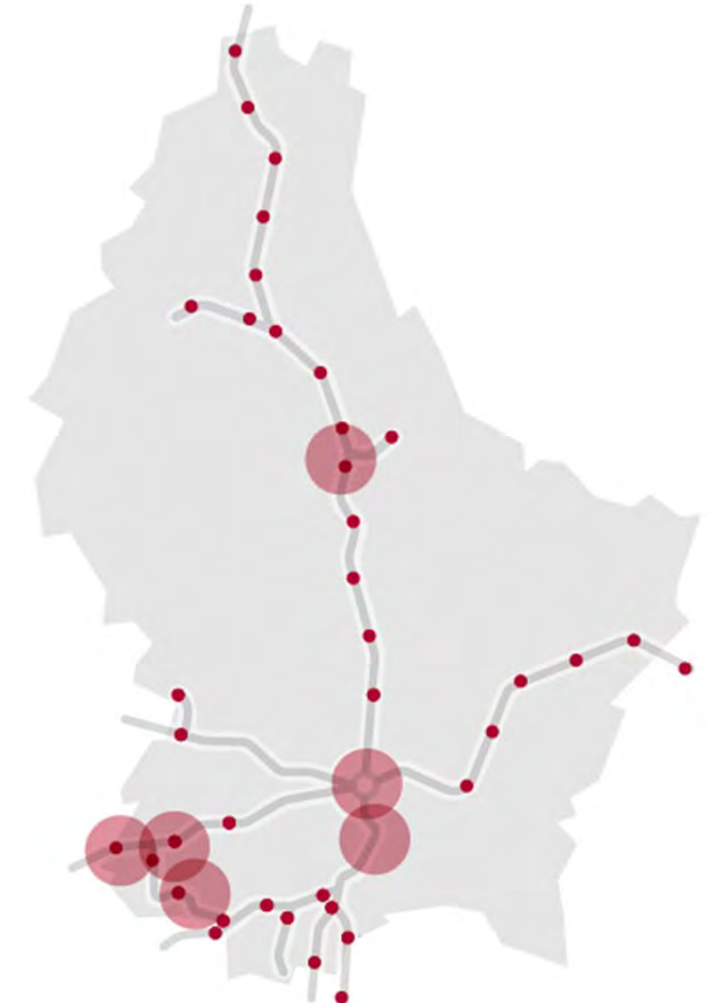
- Modernisation of Luxembourg railway station
- New Luxembourg-Bettembourg line
- Modernisation of Bettembourg station
- Howald multimodal hub





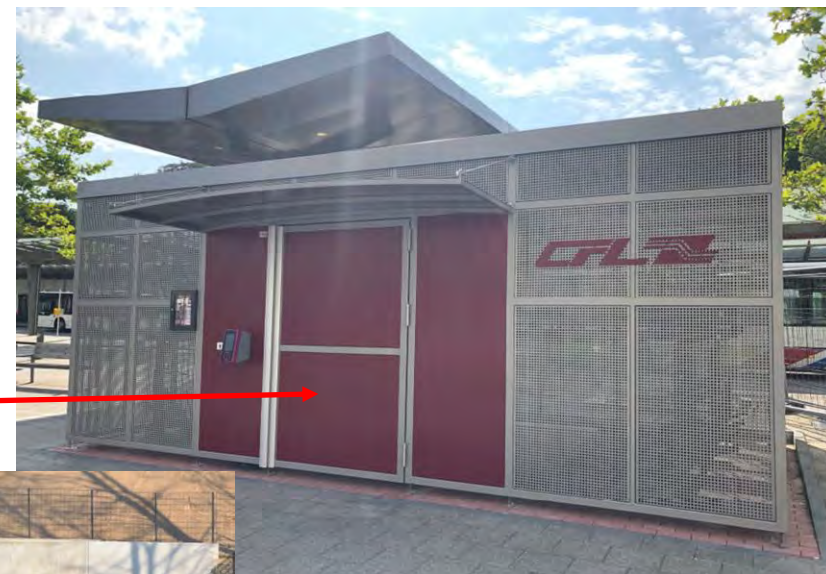
Network targets for 2028+ :

- Offer-orientated timetable concept
- Required infrastructure is derived from the timetable concept
- Identification of bottlenecks on the lines, in the switch fields and in the platform areas
- Derivation of projects relating to block densification, unbundling of routes in the station approach and construction of additional platform edges
- Upgrading all usable platform lengths to 250 m



Holistic modernisation of railway stations and new construction of stops as multimodal hubs, taking into account the entire mobility chain:

- Railway infrastructure
- Bus stations
- P+R car parks
- Secured bicycle parking spaces
- Car sharing offer
- Pfaffenthal-Kirchberg cable car



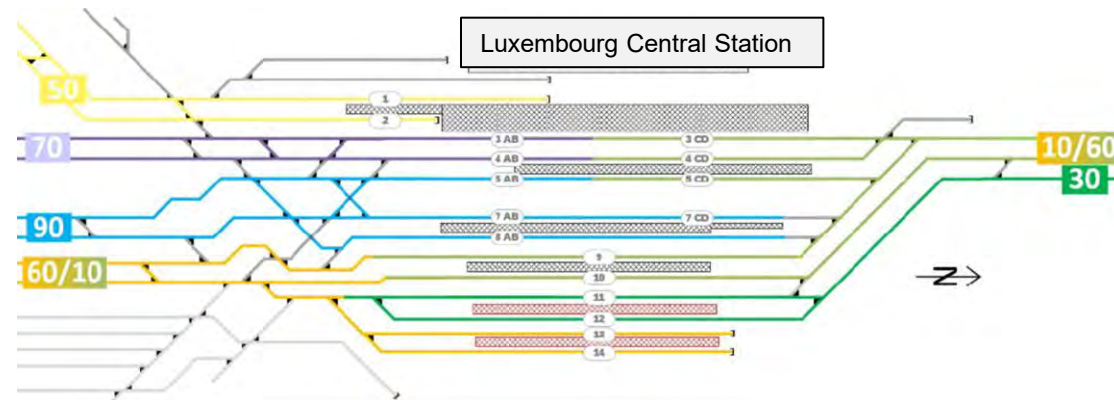
Examples of network development



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

Modernisation of Luxembourg Central Station:

- 4 additional platform edges (11-14)
- Unbundling of the access routes



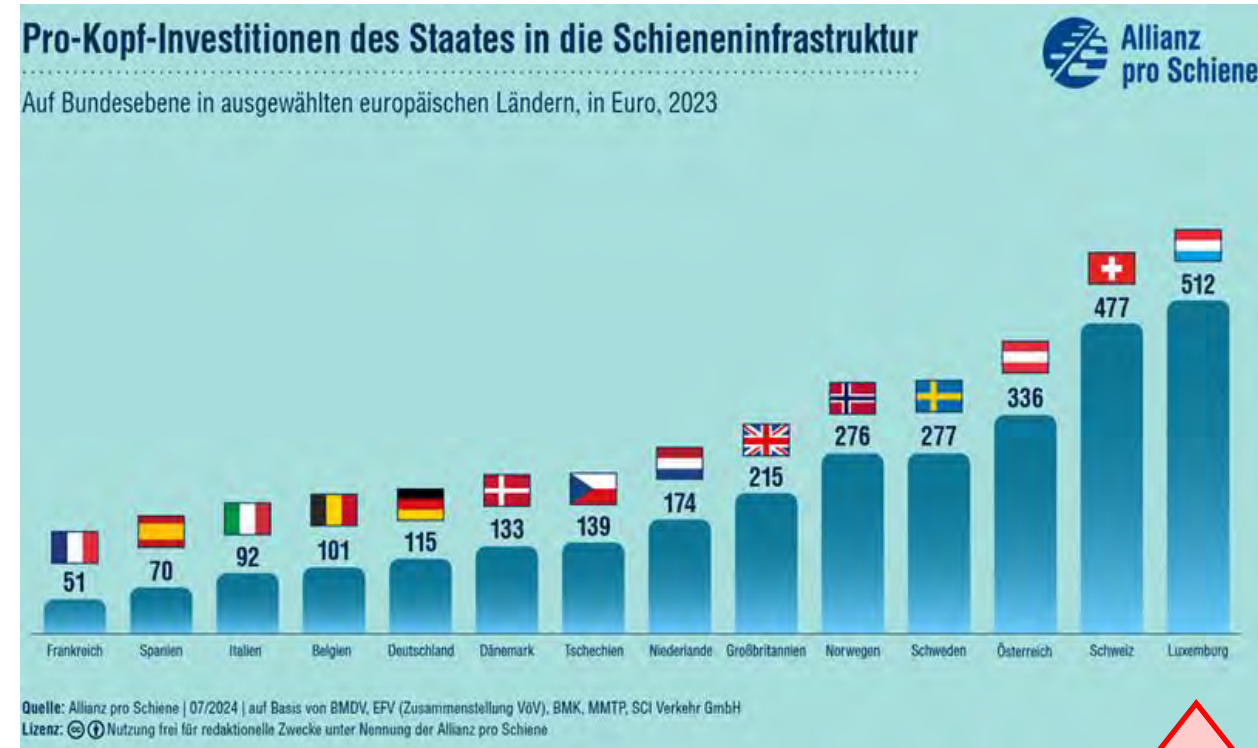
Multimodal hub Rodange (border LU-BE-FR):

- Opening April 2023
- Car park 1,600 parking spaces
- Bus station
- Bicycle parking spaces
- Car sharing offer
- High impact on BE&FR-LU cross-border traffic





- The railway infrastructure is financed both for running costs and for investments from the state railway fund.
- Investments are approved annually on the basis of a flexible 10-year plan.
- New projects costing € 30 million or more are submitted to the parliament for review once a year at the design planning stage.
- Projects over € 60 million in the implementation planning stage must be approved in addition to the annual budget planning via a special financing law.
- Sustained high per capita investment in railway infrastructure in 2023: € 512 / inhabitant.





Cable car Pfaffenthal-Kirchberg:

- Opening in December 2017
- Double system
- Height difference: 38.7 m
- Journey time: 63 s
- Cabin capacity: 168 passengers/coach
- Capacity utilisation: 8,000-9,000 passengers/working day



Arch bridge OA14 on the new Luxembourg-Bettembourg motorway line:

- Crossing of the 2x3-lane Luxembourg - Metz (F) motorway at a 19.5° angle
- Span width 200 m
- Curved in plan






Northern line Luxembourg-Troisvierges:

Digital interlocking with central ETCS L1 control and reduced signalling

- Opening: 1st section in August 2022 & 2nd section in September 2024















- Regular coordination between national railway infrastructure managers & railway undertakings 
- Regular coordination between national ministries of transportation:
 - f.ex. GT ferroviaire BE-LU → Belgian-Luxembourgish railway working group at ministry-level that is gathering twice a year  
- Importance of interoperability:
 - promoting the interconnection and interoperability of the national rail networks as well as access to these networks
 - implementing any measures that may prove necessary in the field of harmonisation of technical standards (TSI)



Future ambitions for cross-border trains



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

- Raise the frequency of Luxembourg-Köln/Düsseldorf trains 
- Create a direct connection from Luxembourg to Saarbrücken and Mannheim 
- Improve the connection between Luxembourg and Brussels 
- Raise the number of trains between Luxembourg and Thionville/Metz 
- Study how to reinforce direct connections from Luxembourg to Strasbourg, Frankfurt, Basel and potentially Zurich   
- Analyse the potential of night trains from Luxembourg to the south of France, Spain and Italy   



Thank you for your attention!



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Mobilité
et des Travaux publics

Presentation by

- Ms. Hanna **KROLL** from Aachener Verkehrsverbund (AVV) on better ticketing and better long-term governance in cross-border public transportation

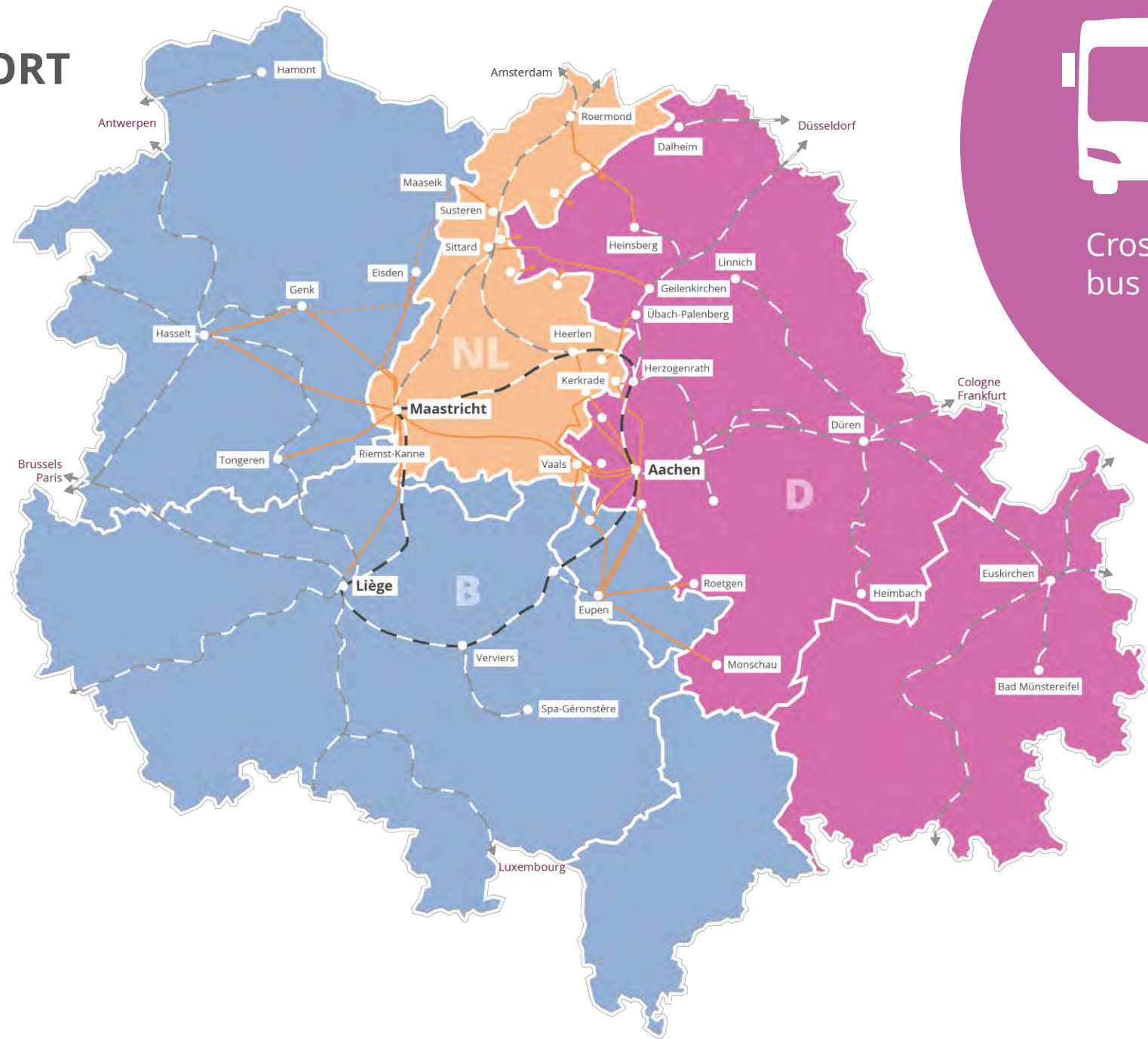
Cross-border public transport: best practices

Hanna Kroll

AACHEN AND THE EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE



PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THE EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE



26

Cross-border
bus lines



3

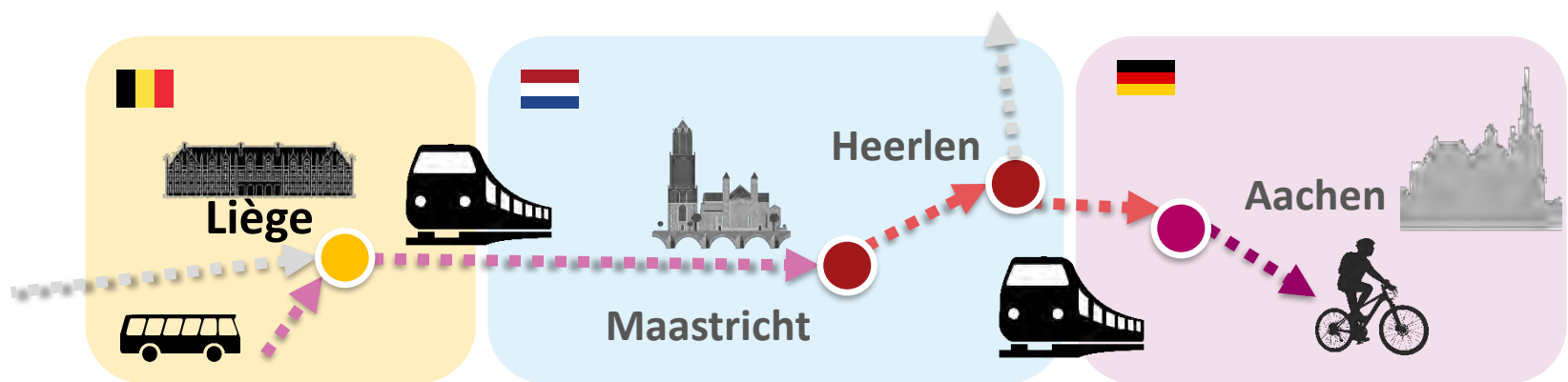
Cross-border
train services

— Rail transport

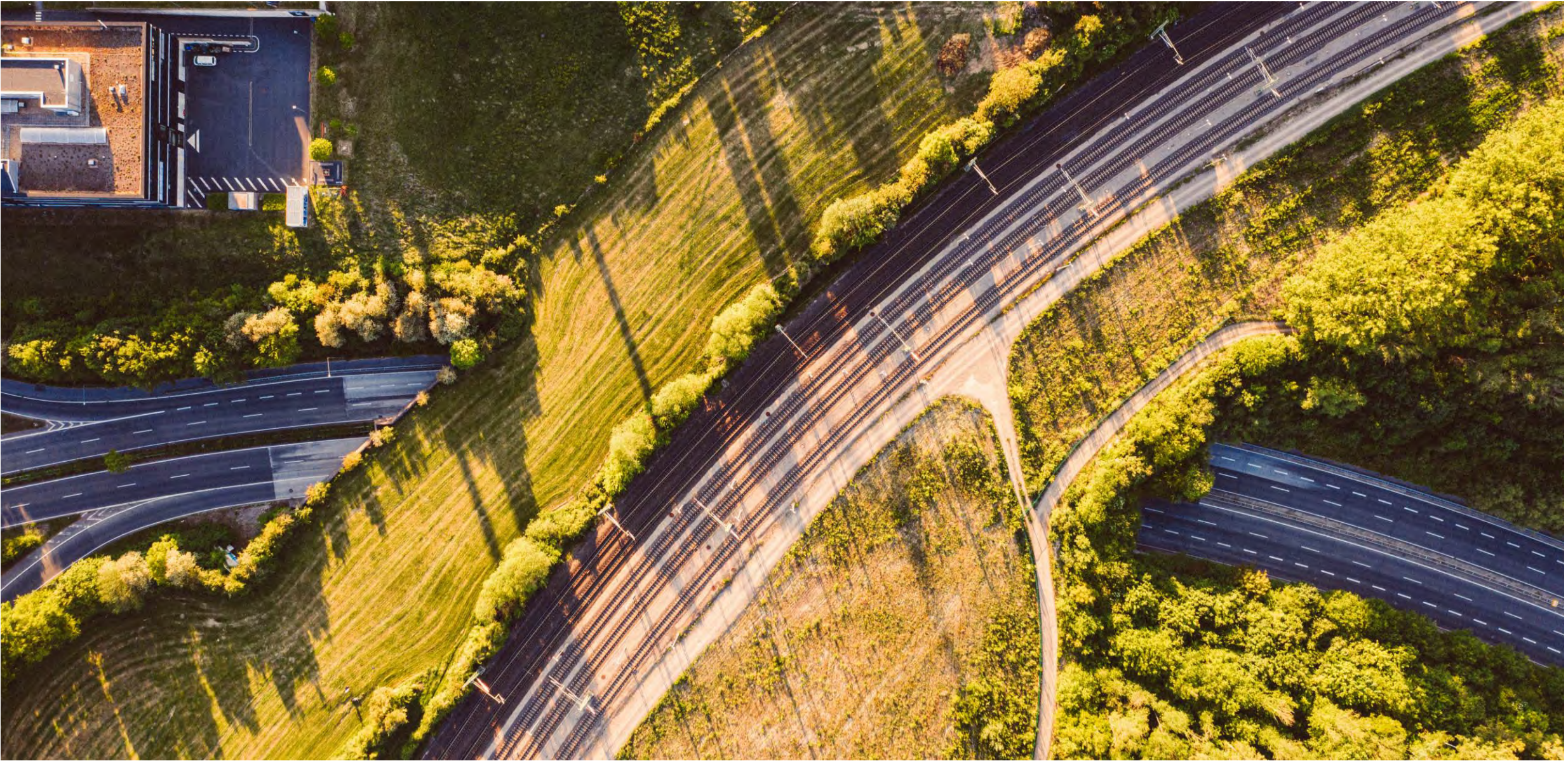


Bus transport

STATUS QUO: INDIVIDUAL PAYMENT METHODS



EASY CONNECT



BACKGROUND & FUNDING



**Ministerium für Umwelt,
Naturschutz und Verkehr
des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen**



Contracting authority: Provincie Limburg
Programme: MaaS Pilot
Supplier: Arriva Nederland

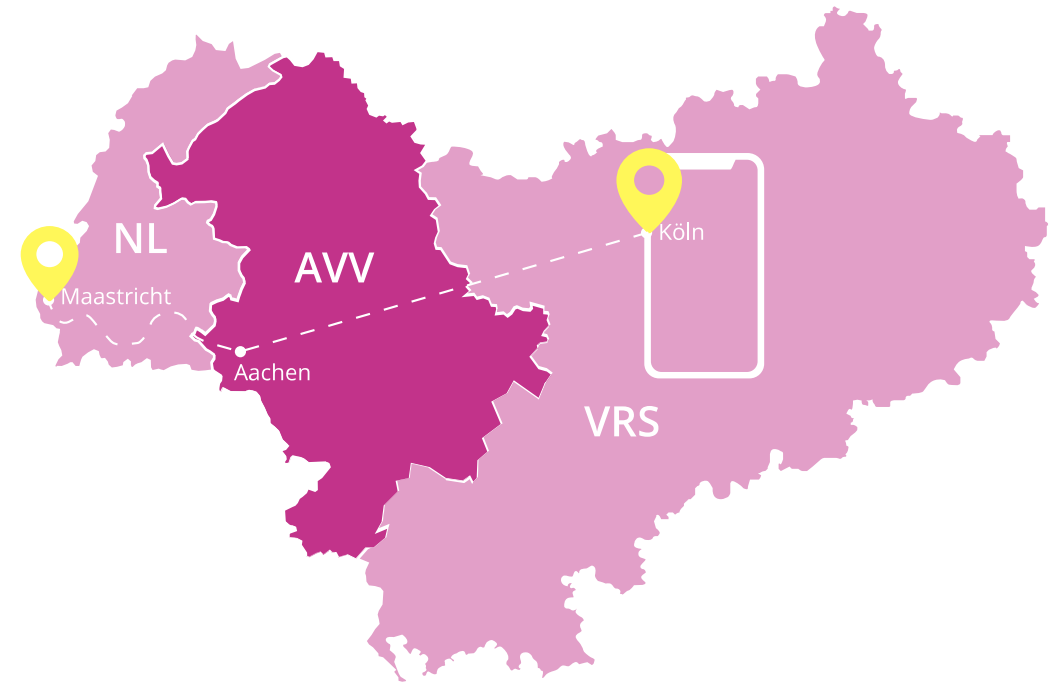
Federal ministry for transport – MUNV NRW
Digitalisierungsoffensive NRW
Aachener Verkehrsverbund (AVV)

EASY CONNECT: CROSS-BORDER INTEROPERABILITY

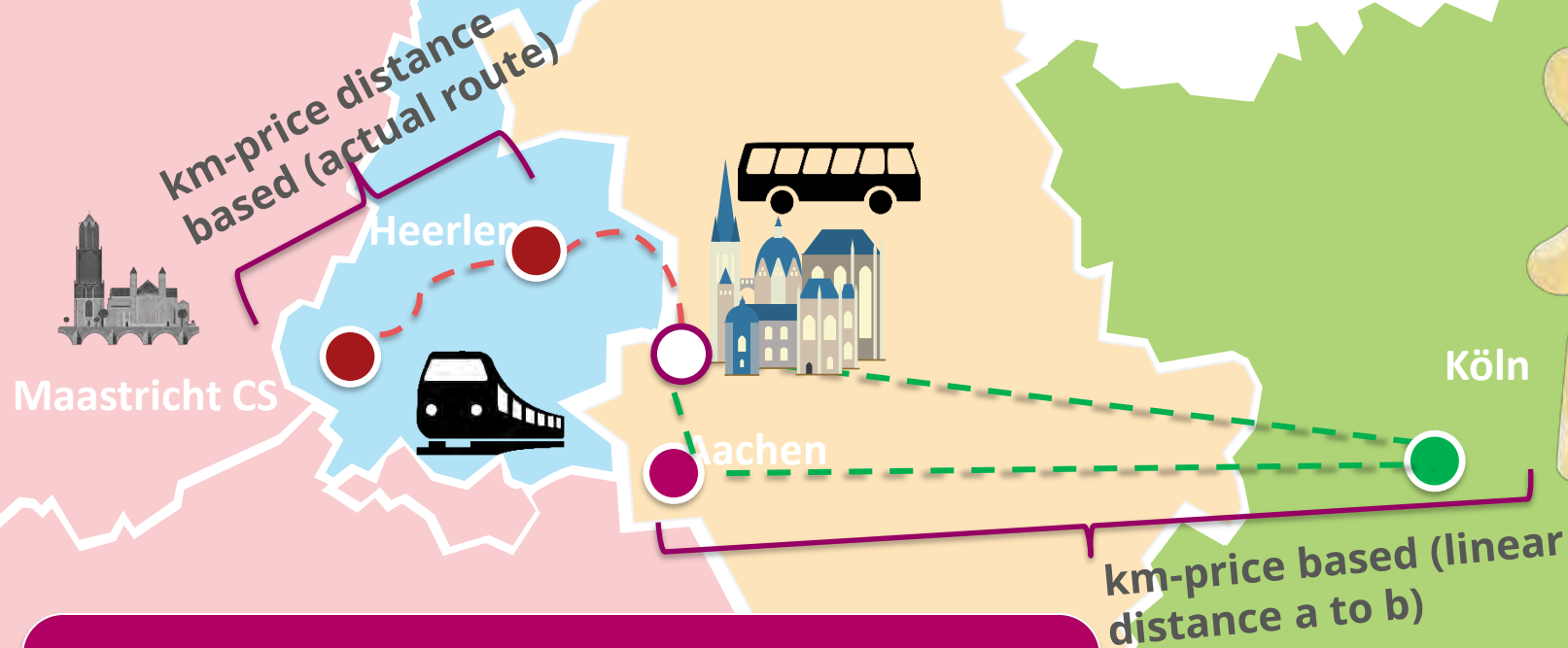
Two countries

One app

One price



EASY CONNECT: PILOT PHASE 2

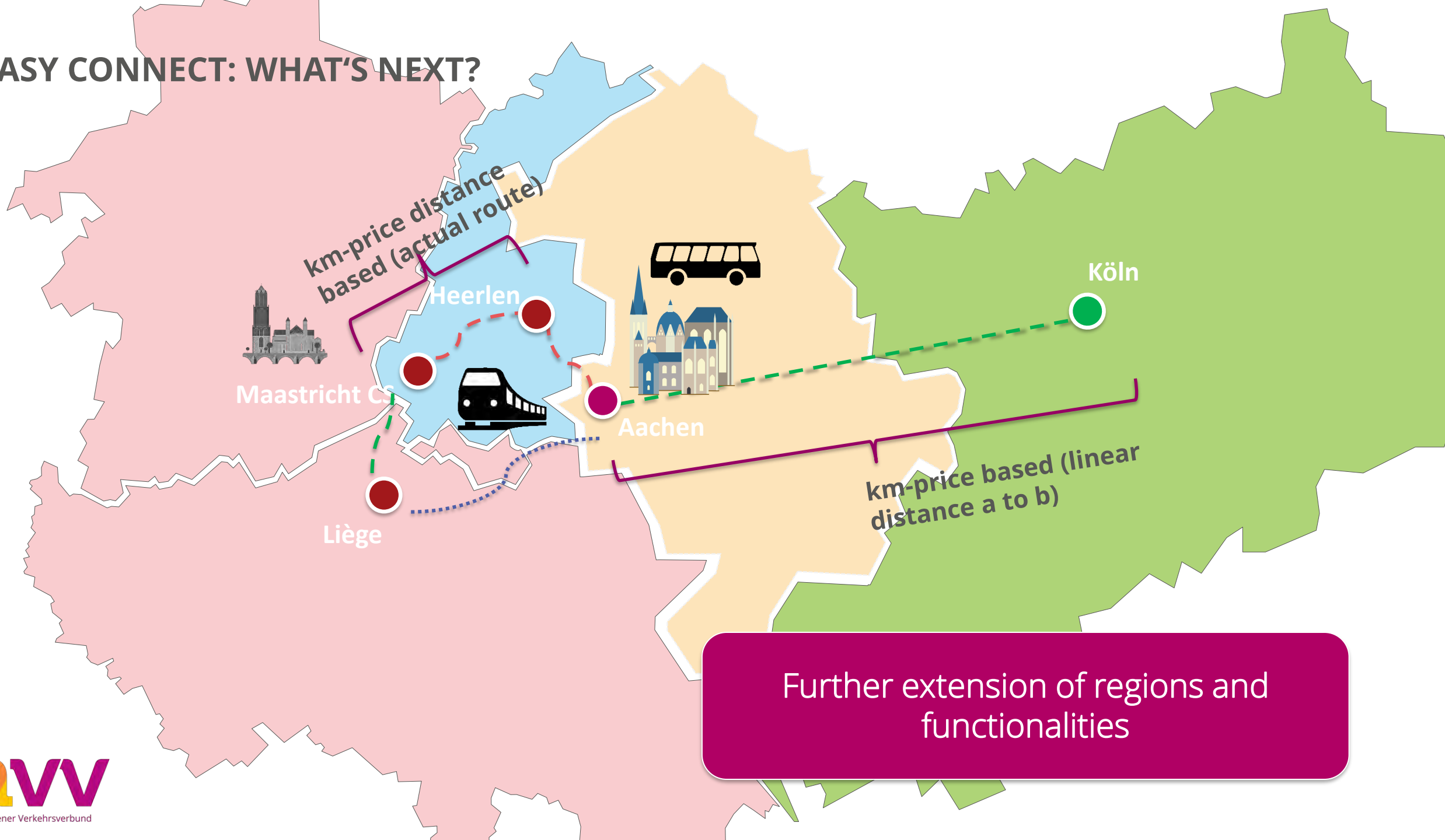


Check-In / Check-Out (gps based)
Maastricht – Aachen – Cologne

Live (since October 2024)

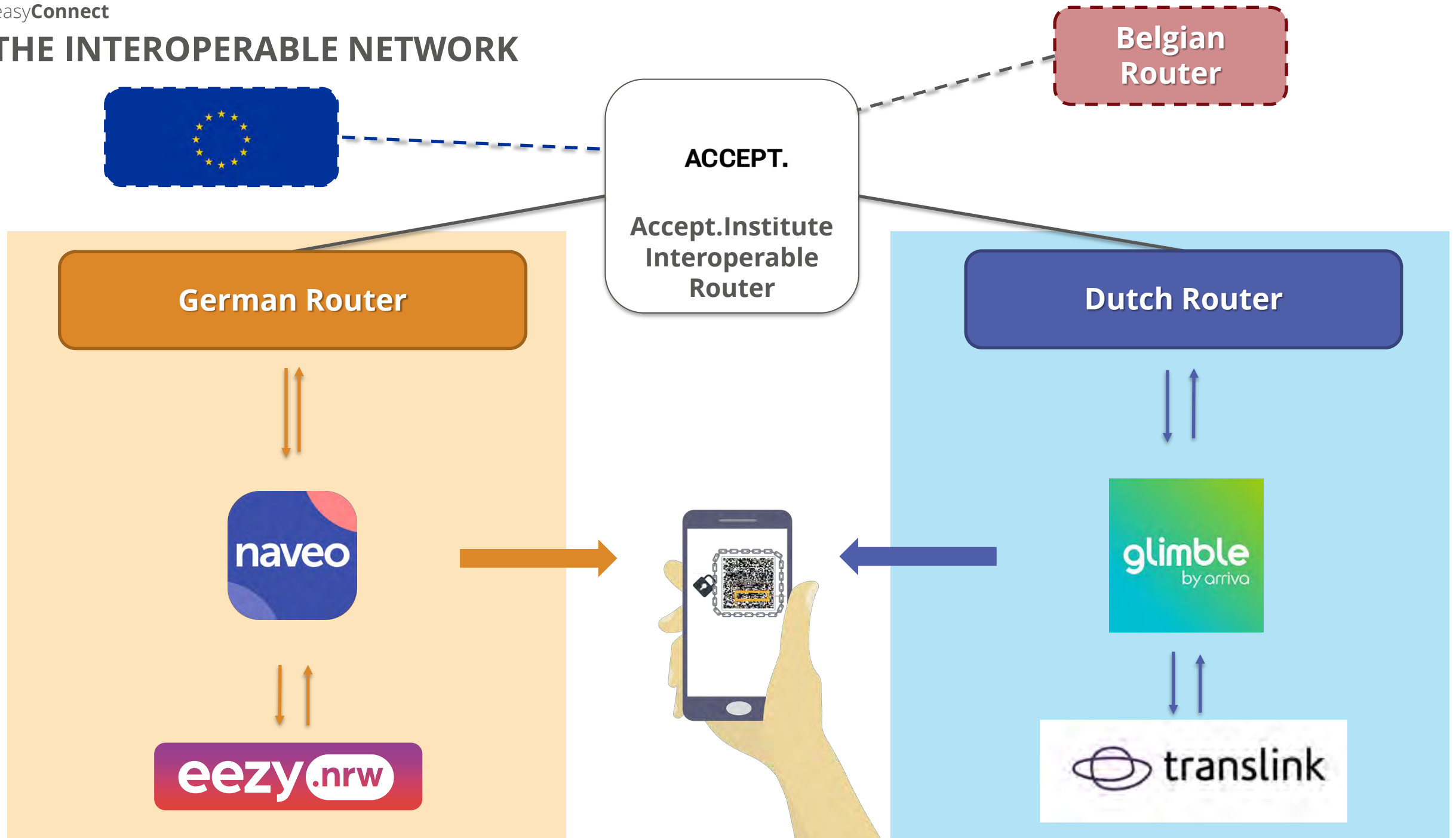


EASY CONNECT: WHAT'S NEXT?

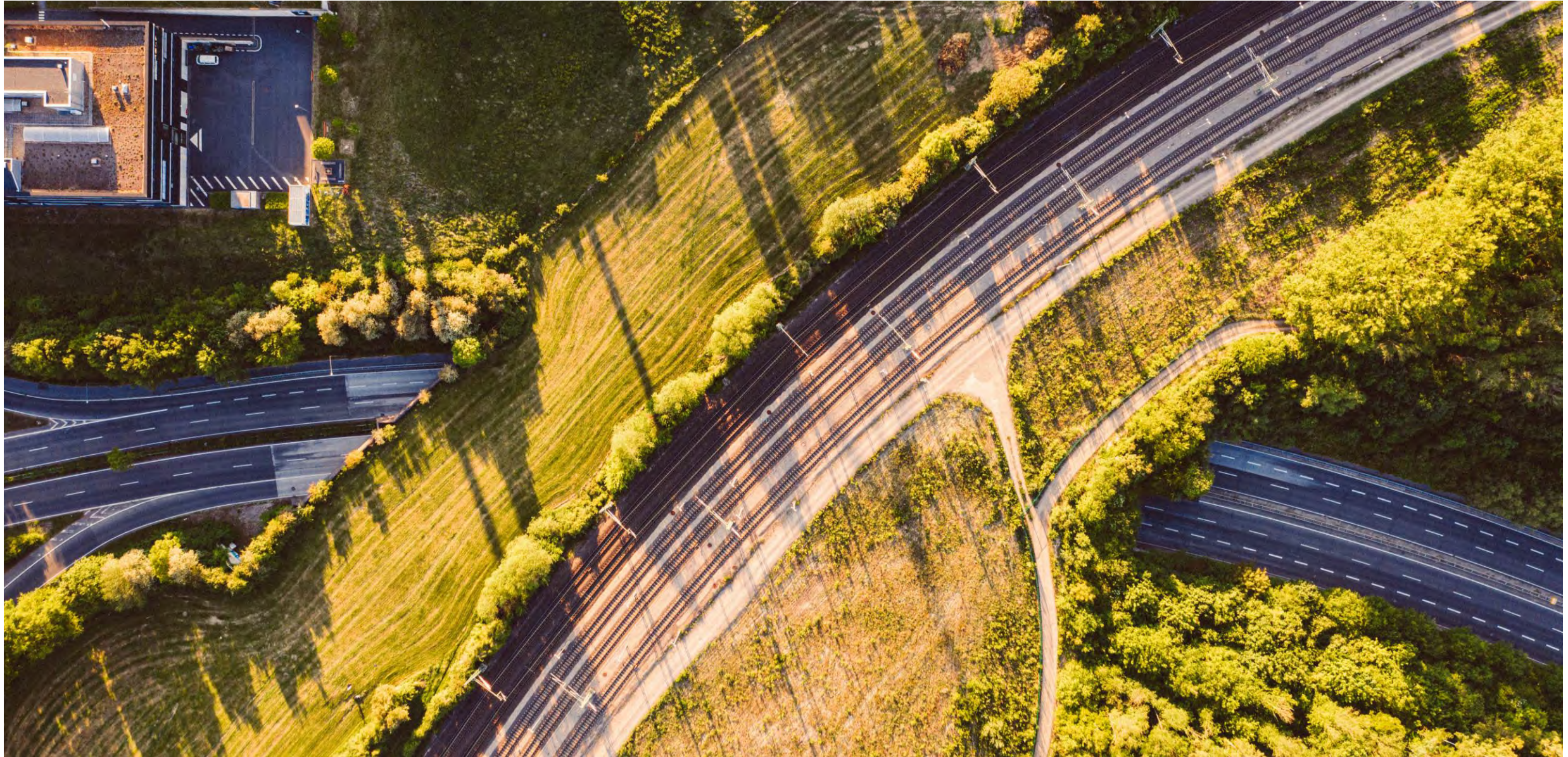


Further extension of regions and functionalities

THE INTEROPERABLE NETWORK



INTERREG MEUSE-RHINE: „TRANSIT“



PROJECT CONSORTIUM

Lead-Partner



Germany



Netherlands



Belgium



GOALS

SUSTAINABLE STRENGTHENING OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

- Sustainable expansion of governance structures
- Anchoring of competences

STRENGTHENING CROSS- BORDER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- More attractive and convenient use
- Environmentally friendly commuter mobility
- Low-barrier information systems



TRANSIT: OVERVIEW OF WORK PACKAGES

01

BETTER GOVERNANCE
IN THE AREA OF CROSS-
BORDER MOBILITY



02

STRENGTHENING
CROSS-BORDER
CONNECTIONS



04

MONITORING
AND EVALUATION



03

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS



Thank you.
Danke. Merci.
Bedankt.

Presentation by

- Ms. Anouk **DE REEDER** of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Works: the Dutch national railway strategy



Ministerie van Infrastructuur
en Waterstaat

International rail policy NL

The passenger's experience

Benelux Event 23-6-2025

Anouk de Reeder



Vision – international rail

- › Next step after 'Werkprogramma internationaal spoor' (2022)
- › Note: "Vision" might not be the best title anymore due to the fall of the cabinet; the content now leans more toward a factual analysis.
- › Future direction depends on the incoming government. In this document, we describe:
 - The importance of international rail
 - The obstacles
 - Actions already taken
 - Potential future actions (short term, mid term, long term)
- › Planned publication: Q3 this year
- › 'My' subject: experience of the international train passengers



Challenges for international rail passengers

- › Ticketing: complex, fragmented, multiple carriers.
- › Passenger rights are unclear or uncertain in practice
- › Real-time travel information—especially during disruptions—is often lacking.



Our challenges as Government

- Many issues cannot be resolved at the national level
- European legislation is slow and complex
- Rail passenger rights (Regulation 2021/782) remain unclear in how they impact passengers in daily practice

Eurobarometer survey

The Eurobarometer ticketing study that was conducted last Autumn and published this Spring 2025 supports a statement calling for urgent legislative action on ticketing. The survey showed that almost 60% of EU citizens polled never or rarely combine rail journeys with different operators. The survey is showing that 23% of passengers couldn't find a suitable combination, that 18% didn't want to buy separate tickets and risk being stranded, 11% said that they didn't know where to look and a further 9% stated that they could not buy all their tickets in one place. The survey covered regional, long-distance, and international travel, including specific questions on train travel.

national data:

re of Public

the data is limited.

(Source: IRP 5th progress report)



Next steps (policy)

1. **Upcoming** legislation MDMS and SDBTR.

- Play an active role in shaping upcoming legislation
- Important: ensure it benefits passengers and remains workable for operators.

2. **Existing** legislation.

- Discuss with the supervisory authority (ILT) regarding enforcement of passenger rights (2021/782).
- Key issues: reporting, obligations, and challenges in through-ticketing.
- June 2026: implementation study; results of regulation

3. Put this topic on the agenda in relevant forums, including IRP, Benelux and European discussions.

4. Learn from practice: MaaS-pilot



'Highlights' in regulation 2021/782 (RPPR)

- New regulation process: process is lengthy -> existing regulation to leverage: **Regulation 2021/782 (rail passenger rights regulation)**
 - **Art. 12:** Rail operators must make "all reasonable efforts" to offer **through-tickets** and cooperate
 - Ambiguity around what constitutes "reasonable efforts"
 - CER's journey continuation agreement may count, but places high responsibility on passengers:
 - Passengers must present delay confirmation from delayed operator (could be automated with current tech)
 - Onward travel must be with the same operator and route, even if faster alternatives exist
 - Automatic Journey Continuation (AJC) is not a passenger right; requires staff approval at interchange
 - **Art. 18:** Operators must offer 3 options during delays/cancellations:
 - Refund, alternative route, or travel later.
 - No definition of **how** this should be offered
 - **Art. 29:** Reporting obligations exist, but reports are limited and difficult to access



Thank you!

- › Planning international rail vision: Q3 this year
- › Exact future direction depends on new coalition
- › Anouk.de.reeder@minienw.nl

Closing remarks

- by Prof. Dr. Anouk **BOLLEN**, director of ITEM and Frans **WEEKERS**, Secretary-General Benelux

Thank you!

