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COMUNICAZIONE E TRASPORTI
IN EUROPA TRA E EST E OVEST

17 Aprile 2025, Torino

L’impianto della rete dei trasporti a livello europeo

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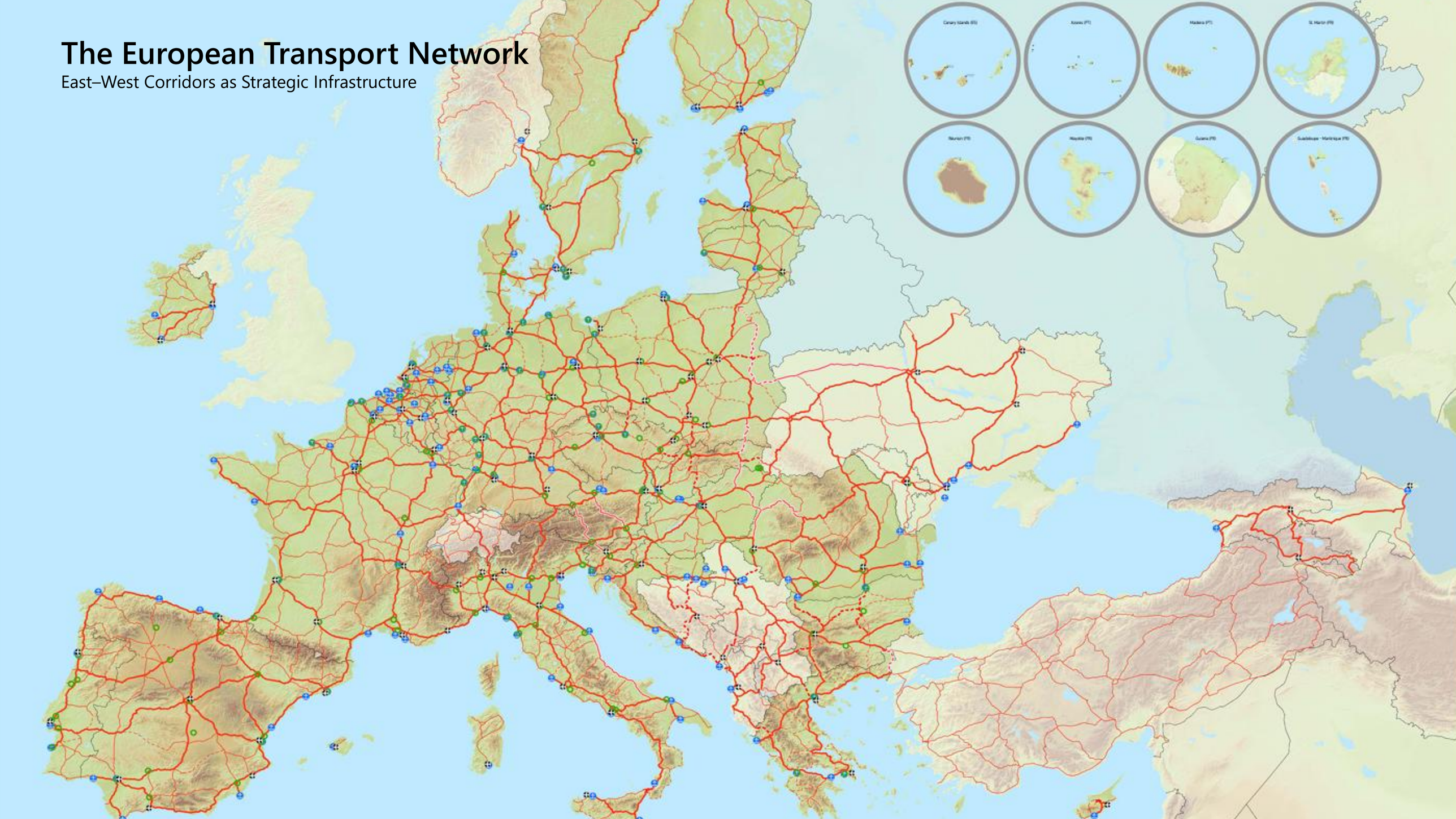
The European Transport Network

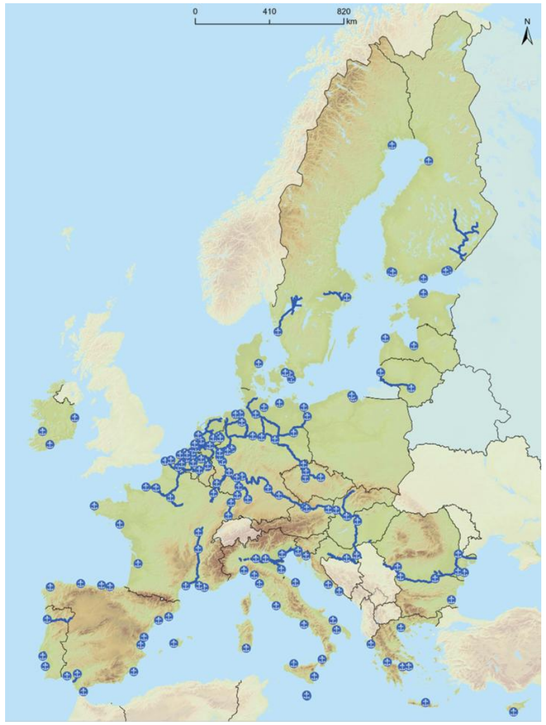
East–West Corridors as Strategic Infrastructure



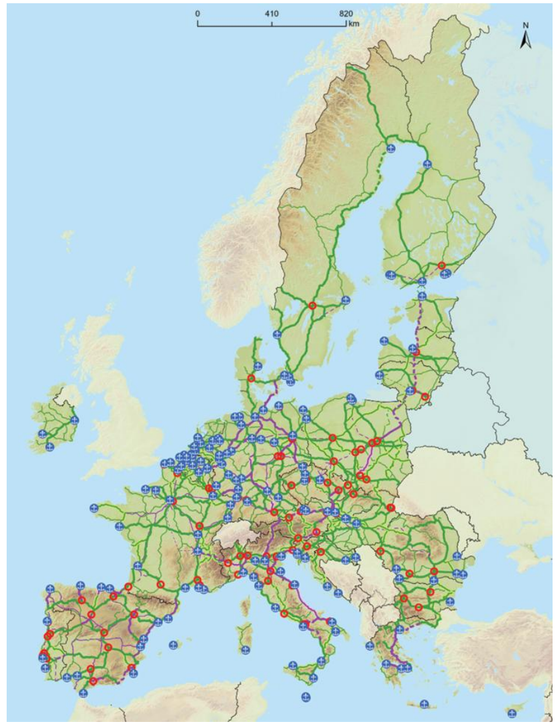
Europe is connected

But not yet continuous

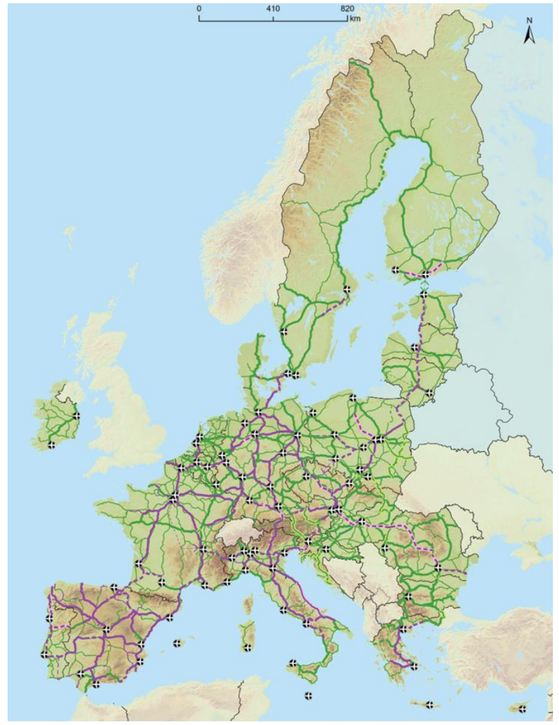
Connectivity does not automatically translate into continuity



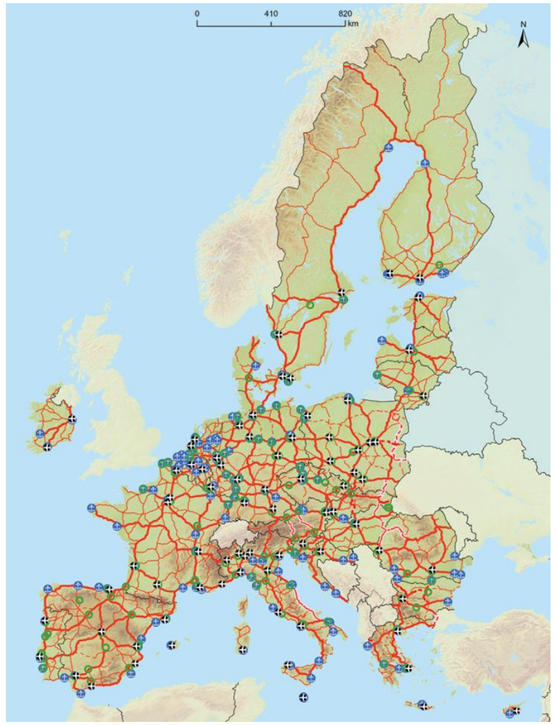
Inland waterways



Rail Freight



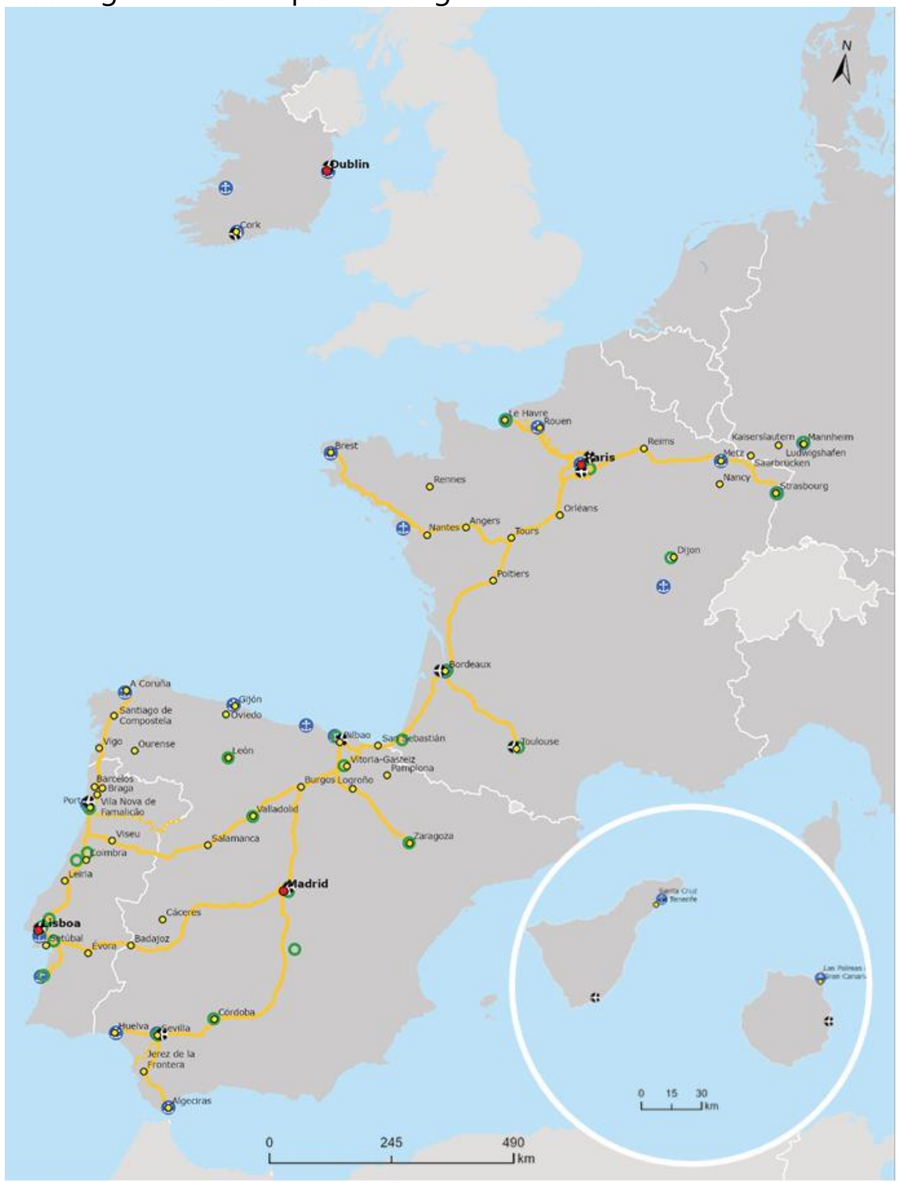
Rail Passengers



Roads

The structural gap

A single market requires a single network



Cross-border bottlenecks

Fragmented standards

Operational gaps

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The TEN-T Framework

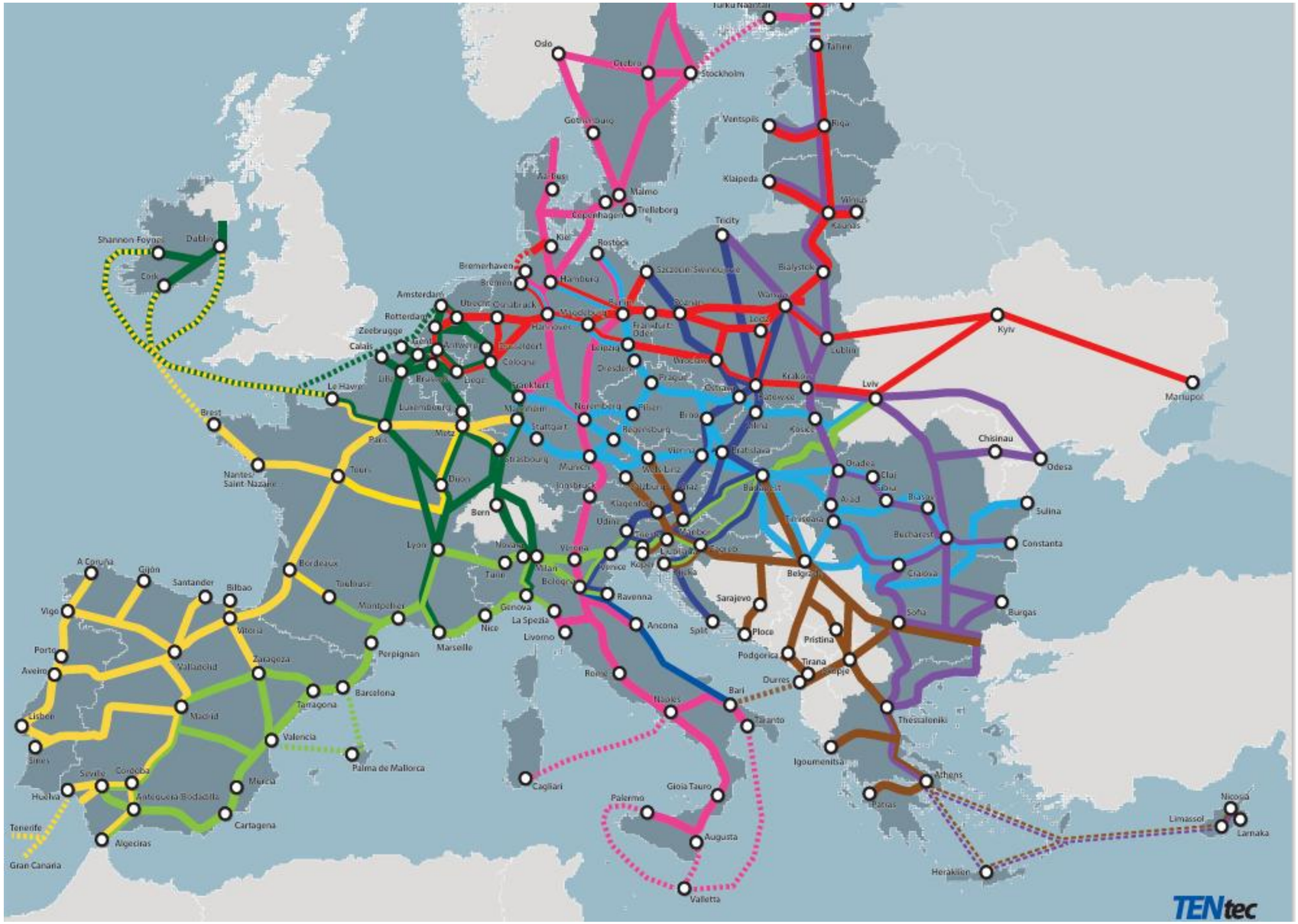
TEN-T: structuring the European network

9 Core Corridors

2030 → Core

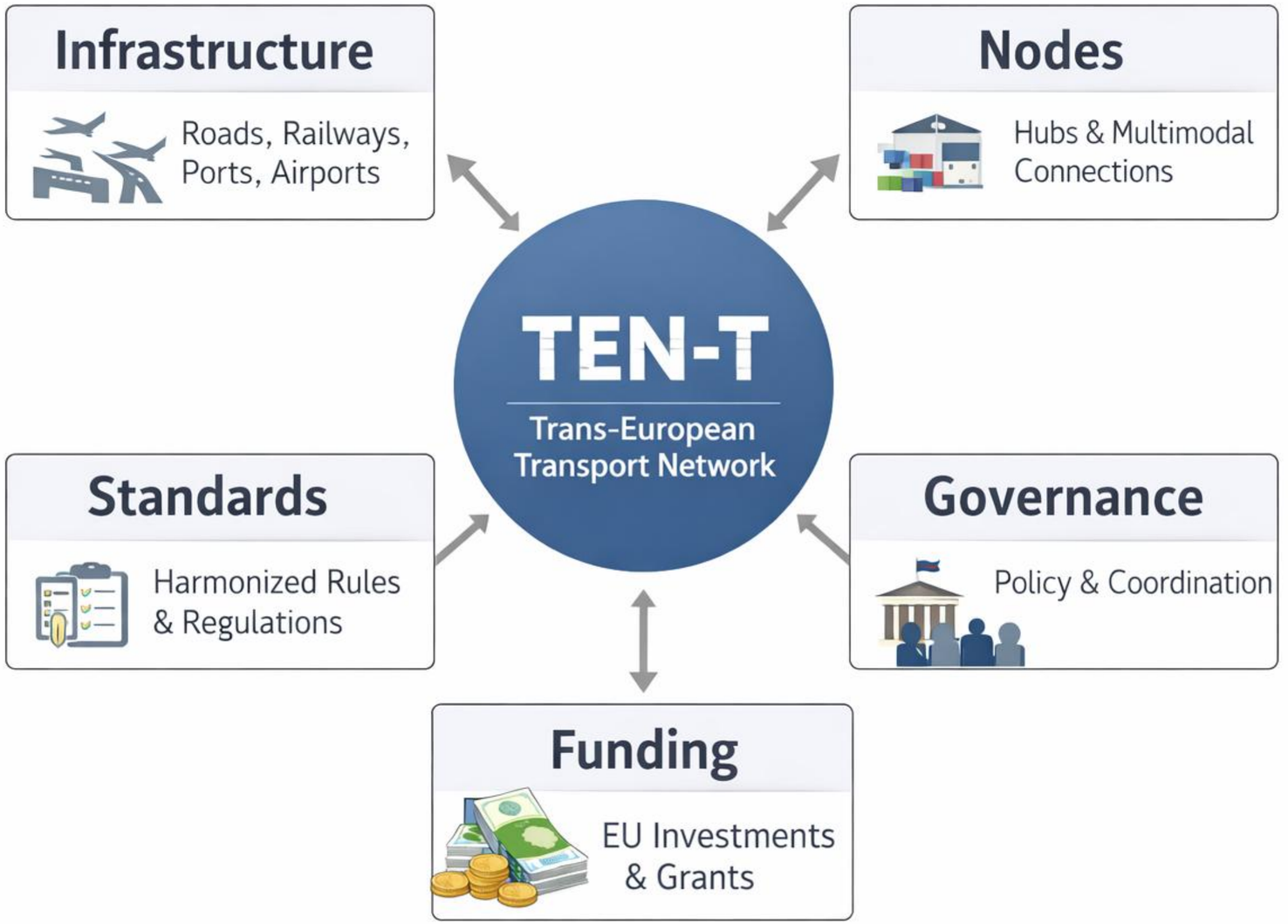
2040 → Extended Core

2050 → Comprehensive



What is a corridor?

From infrastructure to systems



East-West reinterpreted

A functional perspective, not a formal category

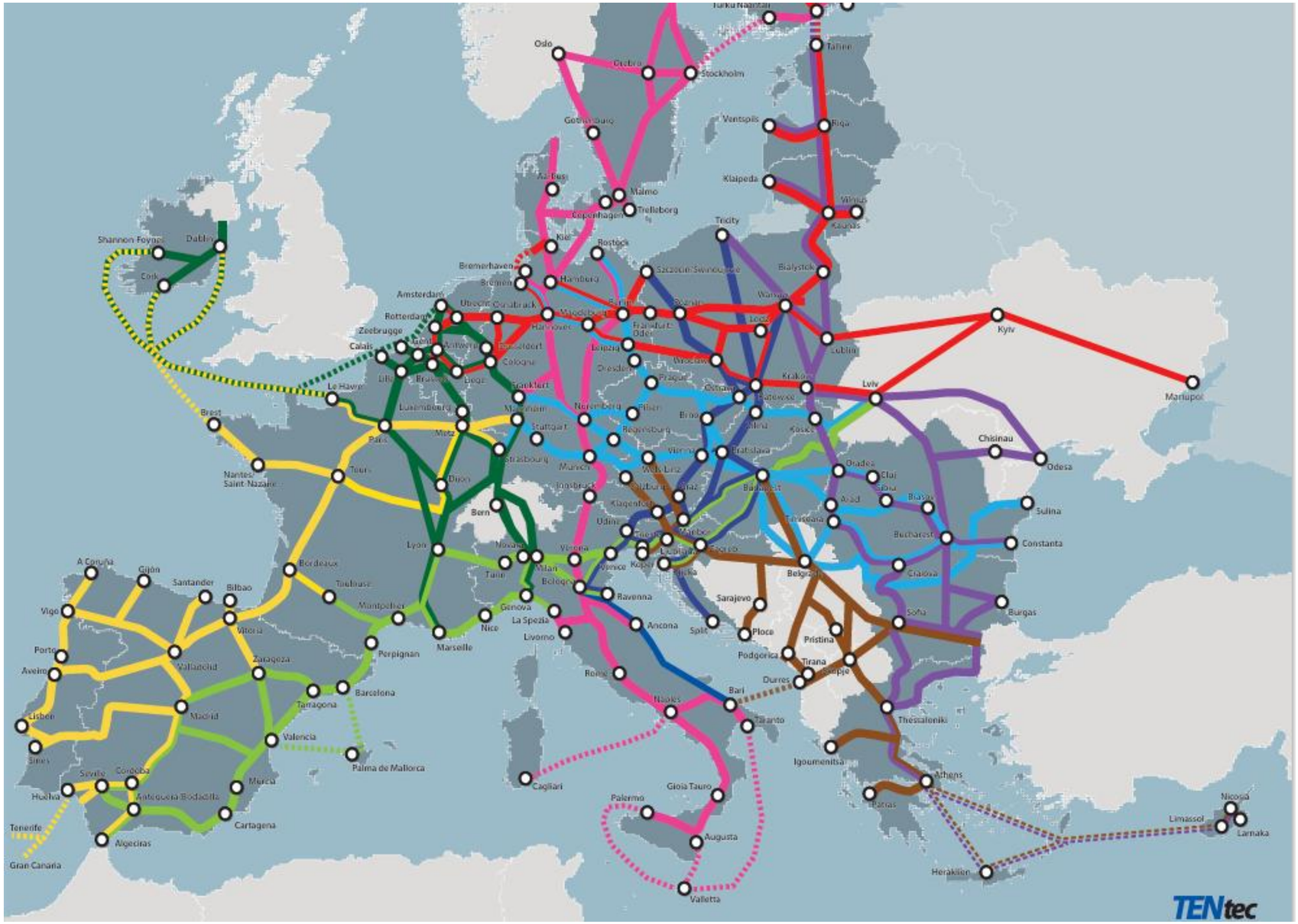
Atlantic

Mediterranean

North Sea
Baltic

Baltic Sea
Black Sea
Aegean Sea

Rhine
Danube



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Continuity

Continuity defines performance

Rail travel speed: By 2040, passenger railway lines on the core and extended core network must support trains traveling at speeds of 160 km/h or faster.

European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS): The single European signalling system will be deployed across the entire TEN-T network, enhancing rail safety and efficiency. National systems will be phased out.

Airport connectivity: Major airports with over 12 million passengers annually must be connected by long-distance rail, making rail a competitive alternative to domestic feeder flights.

Freight terminals: The number and capacity of transhipment terminals will be expanded to meet traffic demands. This includes accommodating 740-meter long trains, promoting the shift to sustainable transport modes, and boosting Europe's combined transport sector.

Urban mobility: All major cities along the TEN-T network will develop sustainable urban mobility plans to promote zero and low-emission mobility.

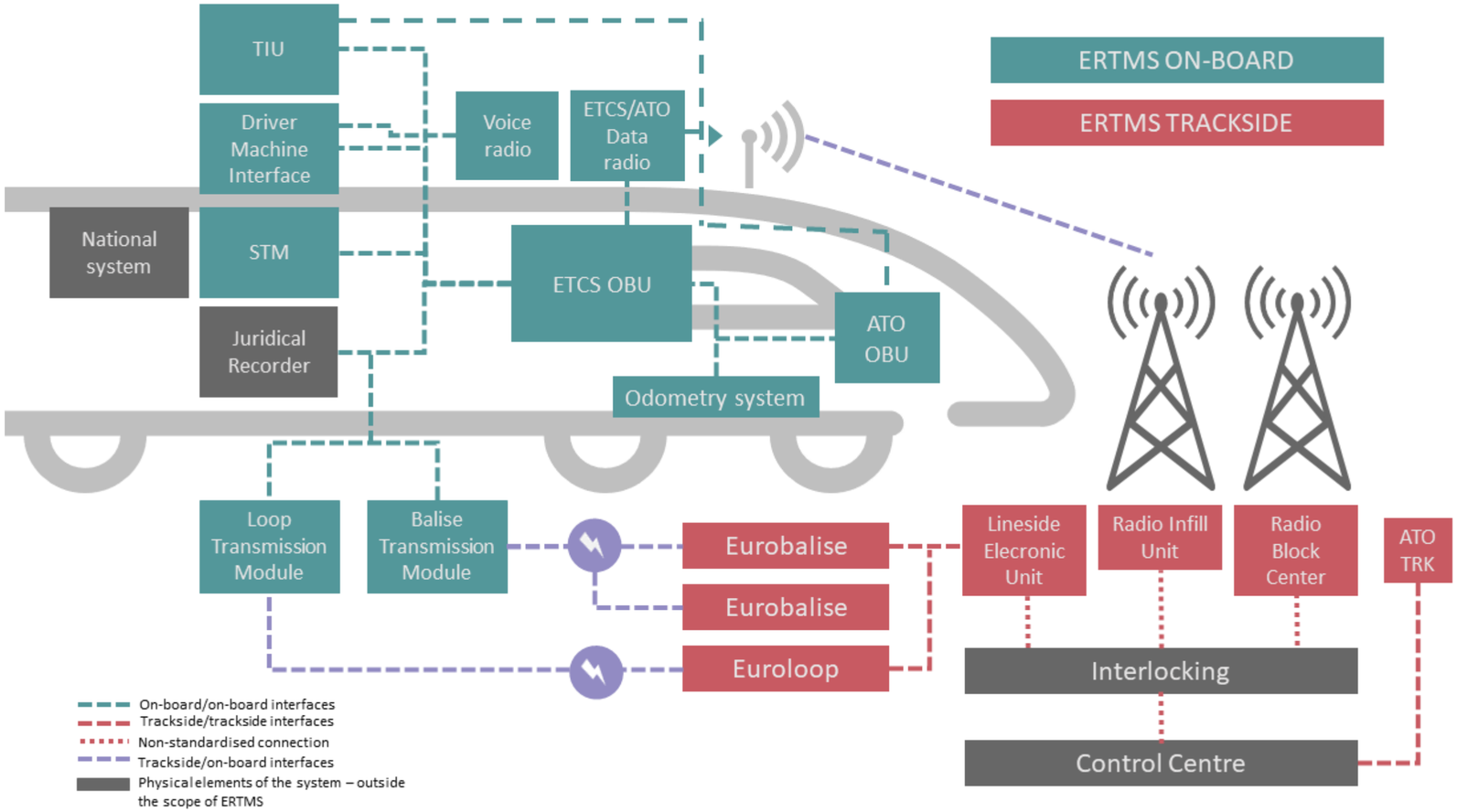
Alternative fuels: The TEN-T is the basis for the deployment of recharging points and refuelling points for alternative fuels, such as hydrogen. It complements the requirements of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation for urban nodes and terminals.

Interoperability

Interoperability is the real infrastructure

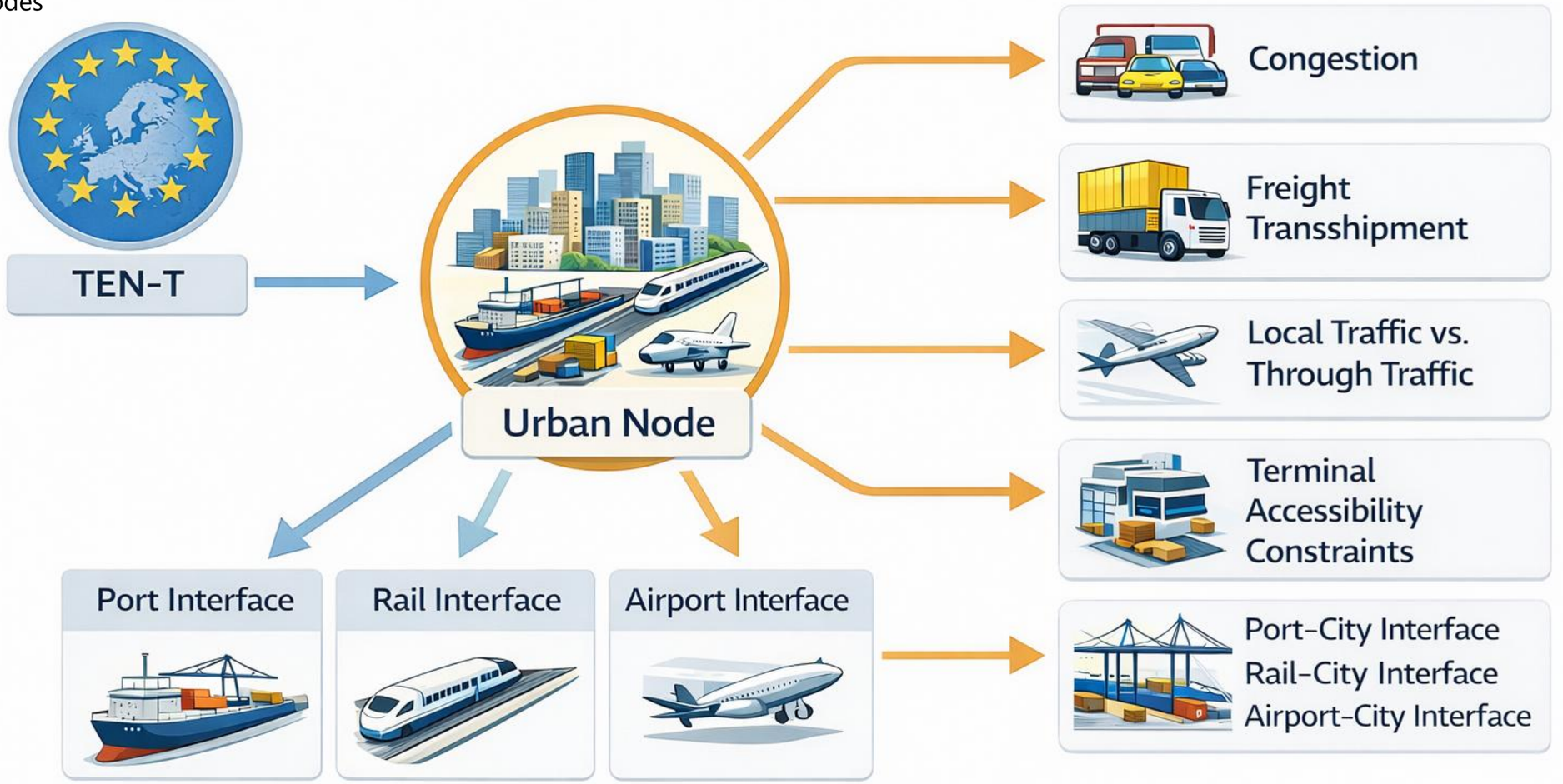
The European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) is the single European railway signalling system, designed to replace more than 20 different national systems.

The real European corridor does not exist if trains can cross borders, but standards cannot.



Nodes

Corridors depend on nodes



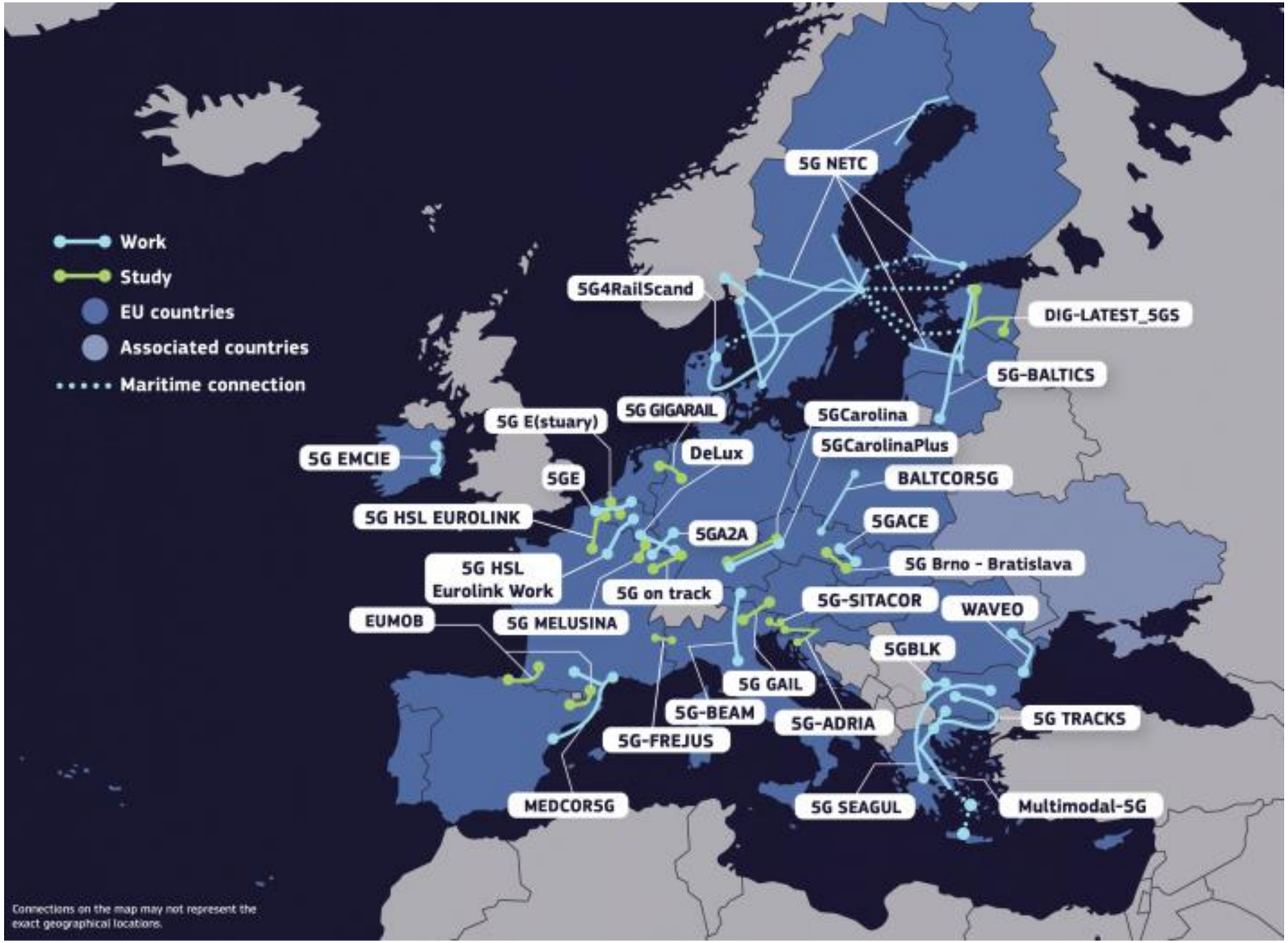
The shift

From connectivity to resilience

Geopolitics & Resilience
- Economic security
- Supply chain robustness
- Eastward connectivity

Dual Use Infrastructure
- Civil + military mobility
- Strategic redundancy
- EU defence readiness

Digital Corridors
- 5G cross-border corridors
- Data continuity
- Smart operations & automation



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Delivery

Bridging vision and implementation

For the **2021–2027** period, the budget of the CEF Transport is **€25.81 billion**, of which **€11.29 billion** is allocated to cohesion countries. (cinea.ec.europa.eu)

In January 2025, CINEA recalled that **more than 80% of the allocated CEF Transport funding** contributes to the Union's **climate objectives**. (cinea.ec.europa.eu)

In July 2025, the Commission announced the selection of **94 projects** for nearly **€2.8 billion**, reaffirming that these investments help better connect European regions and cities from north to south and from east to west. (cinea.ec.europa.eu)

Without the CEF, the logic of a European network would be significantly weaker, as many cross-border projects generate European-level benefits but entail national costs that are difficult to bear individually.

Conclusion

From connections to continuity

Interoperability
The challenge is not only to build infrastructure, but to ensure it operates as part of a single, integrated network.

Cross-border delivery
The most structural bottlenecks are often located along cross-border sections: Lyon–Turin, Madrid–Lisbon, Montpellier–Perpignan, Rail Baltica, Germany–Czechia links, and many other continuity segments.

Ports and hinterland
The Atlantic and Mediterranean corridors clearly demonstrate that corridors cannot function effectively if ports lack strong inland connections.
Official documents consistently emphasize last-mile rail connectivity and port–hinterland integration.

Resilience and security
The North Sea–Baltic, Baltic–Black Sea–Aegean, and Rhine–Danube corridors highlight how the network has increasingly become a tool for economic and geopolitical security, particularly in relation to connectivity with Ukraine and other strategic eastern regions.

Governance and funding
Each corridor is supported by a European Coordinator, corridor work plans, stakeholder forums, and strong reliance on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)..

Conclusion

Challenges

European vision vs national delivery
The network is European, but construction, permitting processes, and a significant share of investment remain at the national level.
This creates delays, misalignments, and diverging priorities across Member States.
This dynamic is clearly reflected in corridor governance structures, work plans, and the role of European Coordinators.

Political corridor vs operational corridor
A corridor may formally exist on the map but still not be fully operational due to incompatible standards, bottlenecks, insufficient terminal capacity, weak urban nodes, incomplete ERTMS deployment.

Decarbonisation vs delivery timelines
The European Commission promotes corridors as a key tool to shift traffic towards rail and more sustainable modes.
However, major cross-border infrastructure projects require years, often decades, to be completed.
As a result, climate ambitions must contend with long delivery timelines.

European interest vs local impacts
Ports, terminals, new lines, freight bypasses, and urban access improvements are driven by strong macro-level logic.
However, they can generate local conflicts and resistance.
While not always explicitly framed in political terms in official documents, this tension is consistent with the EU's increasing focus on urban nodes, SUMPs, and multimodal integration.

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