

Urban hubs and rural towns development in the light of new global and European transport routes



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Riga 1 December 2016

Does transport matter?

- Areas with good access to locations of materials and markets will be more competitive and successful than remote and rural regions, as measured by GDP.
- 750,000 jobs can be accessed in Riga area within 60 minutes drive.



However...

- Does this just reflect historical agglomeration benefits? The infrastructure is provided to connect economically successful places.
- So, what is cause and what is effect?



Impact of new transport infrastructure

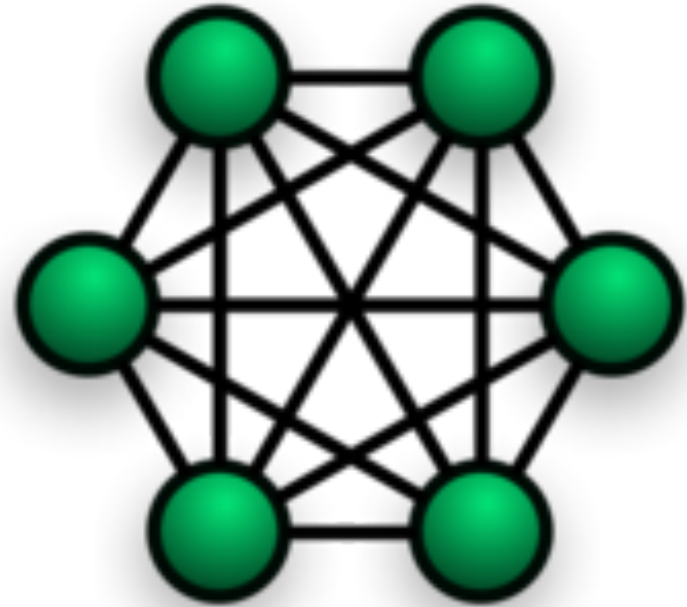
- Difficult to establish.
- Seems to have marginal benefit in areas already economically strong.
- More likely to have significant benefits in areas previously lacking good accessibility.



Different types of transport routes



Networks and Hubs



Tunnels, Secondary Networks and Interchanges



A new connection can boost places on the network, but further disadvantage those not connected



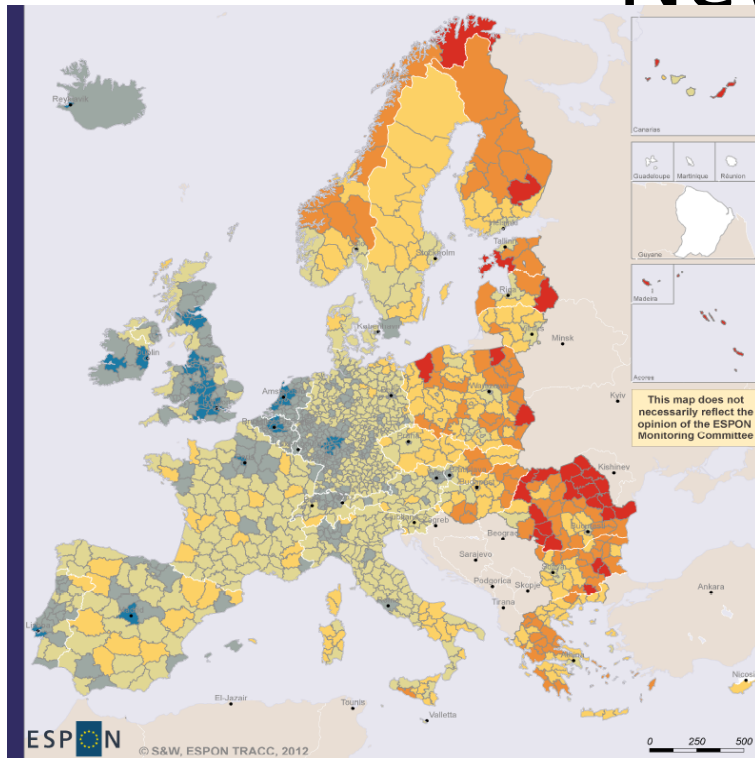
Coordination, frequency, quality, reliability, cost.

Transport connections operate in both directions

- A new motorway or rail connections between a rural region and a big city creates a bigger market for the rural products.
- The same transport connection exposes rural businesses to wider competition.



Global accessibility: Travel time to New York

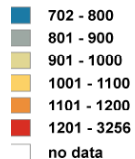


ESPON
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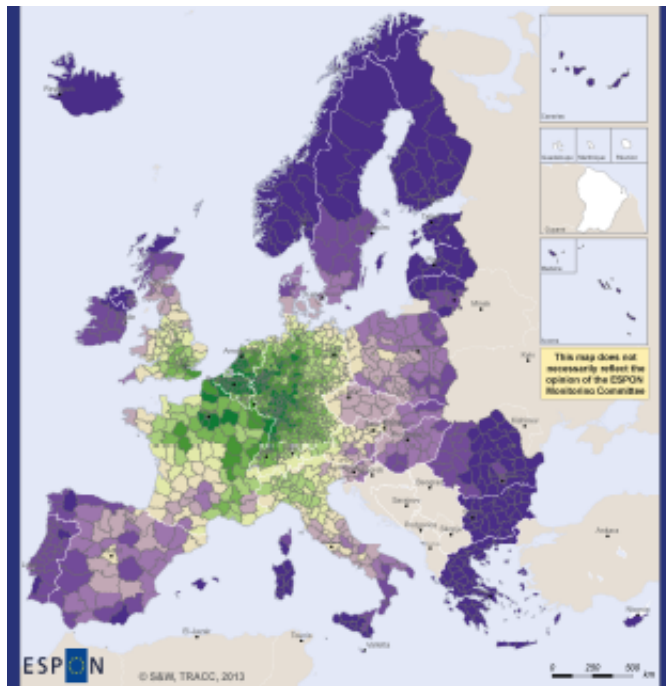
Regional level: I
Source: RRG GIS D
S&W Flight I
Origin of data: S&W Accessibility mod
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative box.

Travel Time to New York, intermodal (minutes)

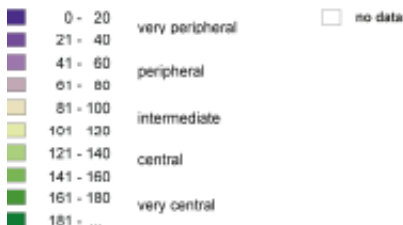


- Western European regions with good access to airports.
- Eastern European, Northern Periphery and rural regions have poor accessibility.

European accessibility potential by rail

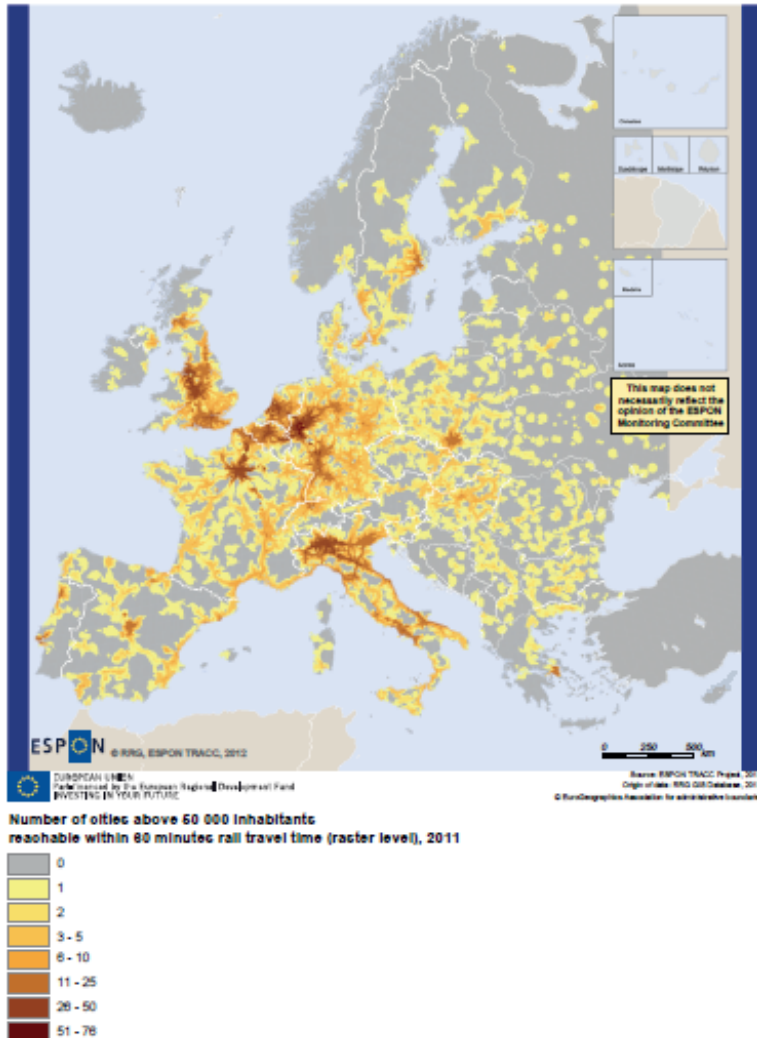


Accessibility potential, rail (ESPON = 100)
2011



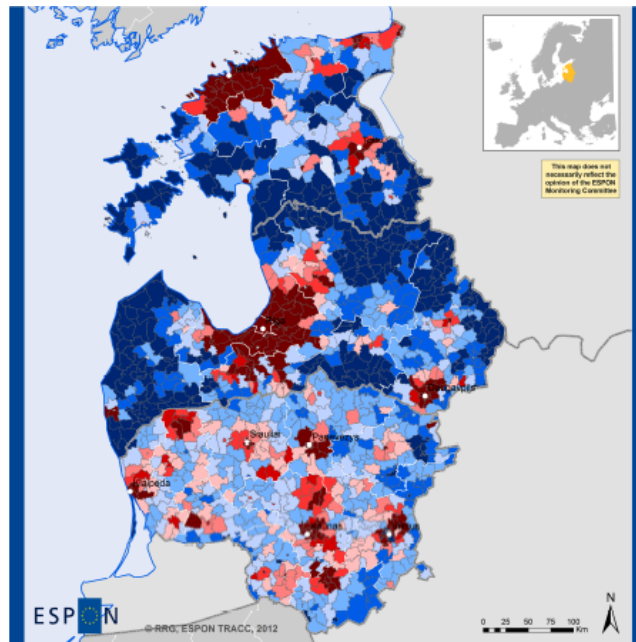
- Accessibility measures take account of the mass of people/ economic opportunities that can be reached.
- Core / periphery picture.

Cities >50,000 reachable in 60 minutes by rail



- Many regions in the BSR have no cities of >50,000 that can be reached in < 60 minutes by rail.
- Cities > 50,000 are likely to provide a full range of public and private services and functions.

Potential accessibility to medical doctors by public transport



Baltic States Case Study (2011)
Potential accessibility to basic health care by public transport (municipalities)



- Accessibility index, combining number of doctors and travel times.
- Red = good; blue = poor.
- Lithuania has more provision of doctors in rural areas.

[https://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/TRACC/FR/TRACC FR Volume3 PartF.pdf](https://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/TRACC/FR/TRACC_FR_Volume3_PartF.pdf)

New global transport routes – the Arctic

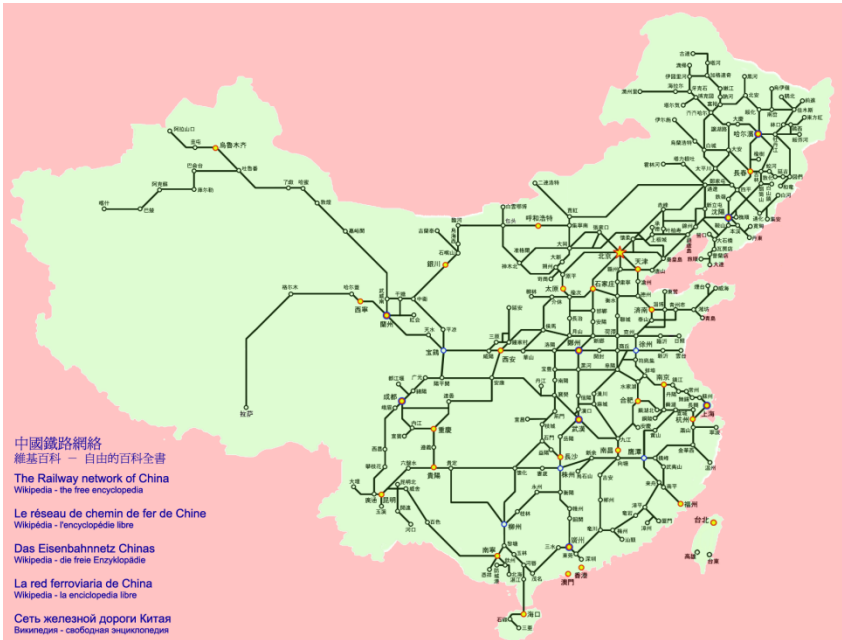


Depends on:

- Global warming;
- Fuel as % of shipping costs continuing to rise;
- Investment in land-side transport infrastructure.
- Mediterranean ports would be the losers.

New land routes to Asia?

- Trade with Asia is increasing.
- Currently maritime transport dominates.
- Rail links possible, probably focused on Czech Republic, Poland and Germany, or via Turkey.
- Gauge difference between China and Russia.



China's rail network: links to Europe via the north-west and Kazakhstan.

New European transport routes



... to a network
EU 27 Core Network
to be completed in 2030



Directorate-General
for Mobility
and Transport



EU Transport White Paper 2011

An efficient core network for multimodal
intercity travel and transport



The word “rural” does not appear in the White
Paper.

Urban Hubs

- Urban hubs are the likely winners.
- Urban hubs will need to manage congestion and help the switch to public transport.
- EU level territorial cohesion.

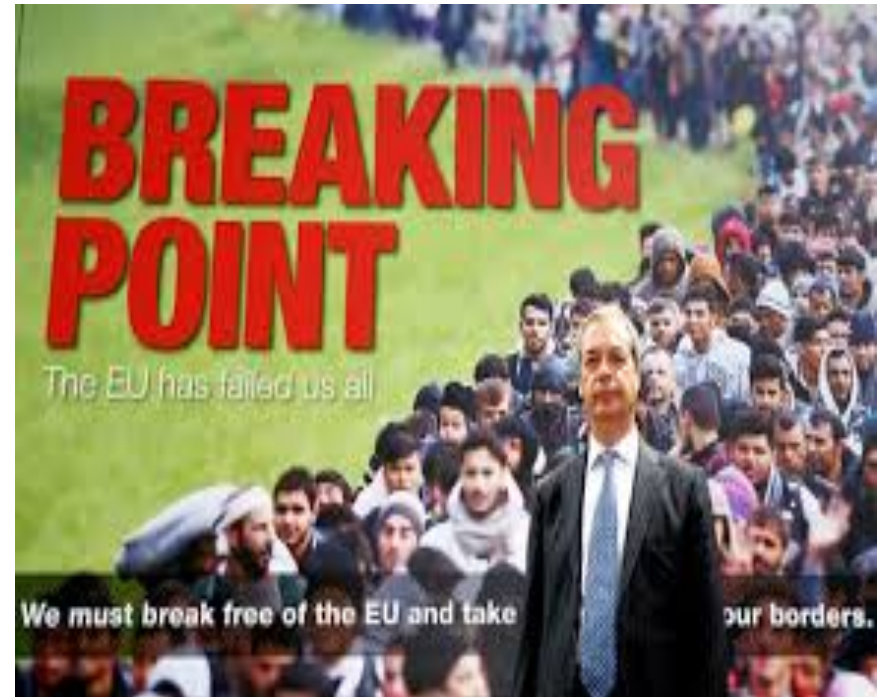


Rural towns and regions

- Improve secondary networks, support rural towns.
- Business and human capital investment to gain from transport.
- Accessibility will decline if population and services continue to fall.
- National level territorial inequalities widen.



What next?



Will the new nationalist politics invest in new transport infrastructure in the regions where people have been “left behind”?