

ENVISIONING REGIONAL MOBILITY SCENARIOS IN EUROPE. A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN GREECE AND BELGIUM

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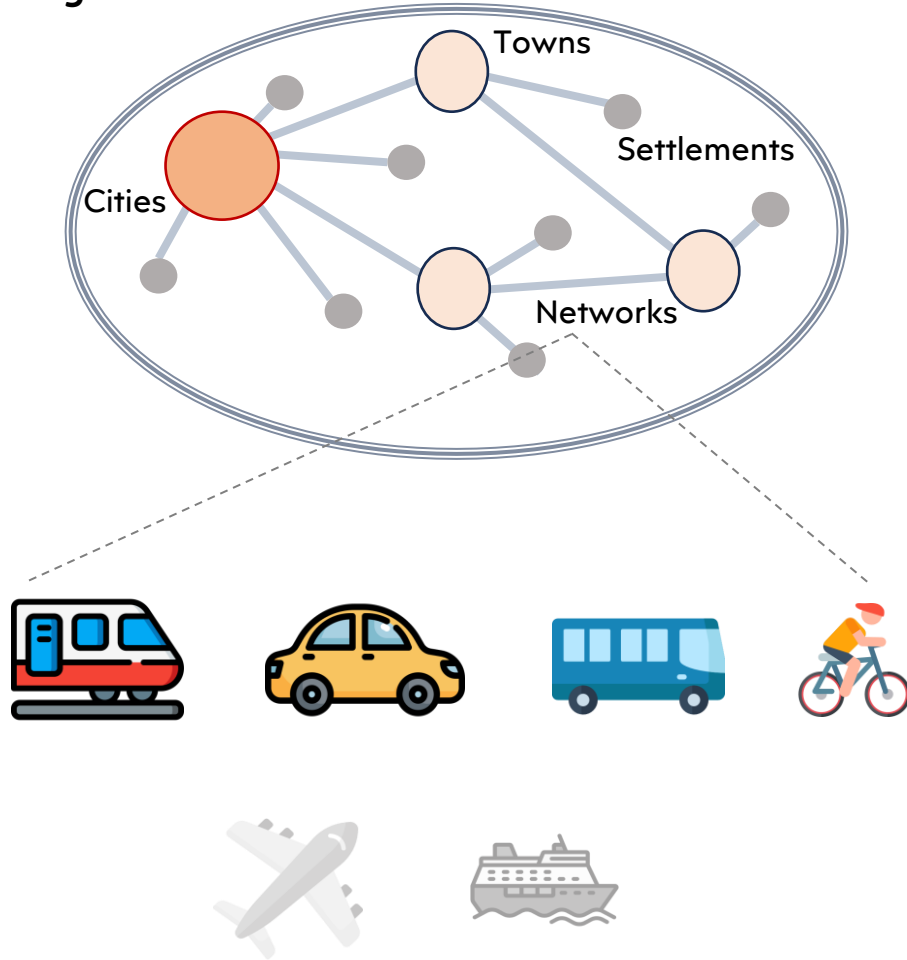


November 2024

Setting the scene



Regional area



Focusing on Europe



Source: <https://open.lib.umn.edu/worldgeography/chapter/2-3-regions-of-western-europe/>

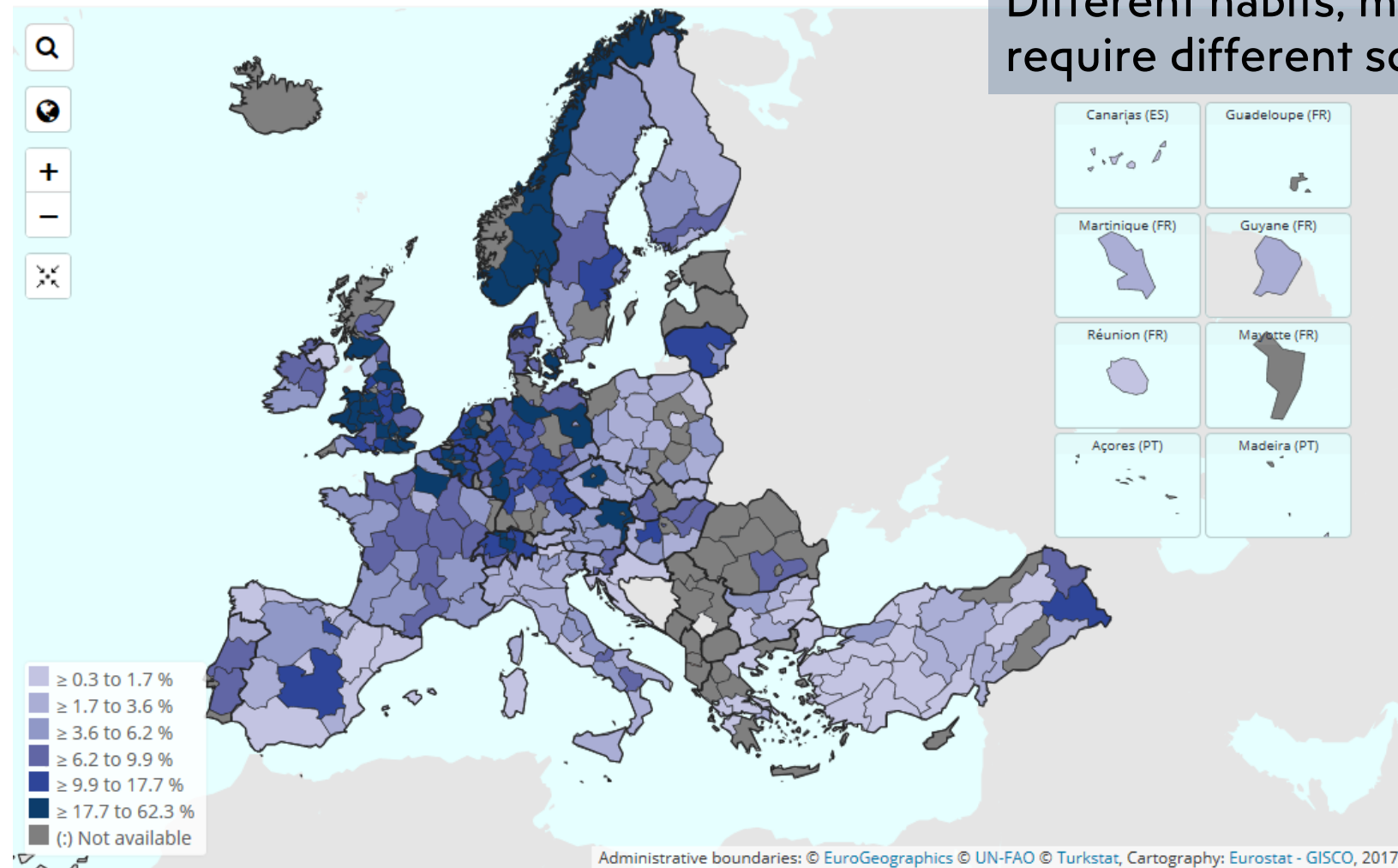
What are the formal planning scenarios for future regional mobility?

Setting the scene



Employed persons commuting to another region within their country, 2018

(% of employed aged 20 to 64)



Different habits, may require different scenarios!

Includes data with low reliability for some regions.

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/estat_regio/items/626125



1) Regional mobility/transport

Regional mobility or transport refers to the movement across and within regional areas, connecting urban, suburban, and rural areas

2) Transport accessibility

Transport accessibility measures the ease with which people can reach essential destinations (e.g., workplaces, schools, healthcare facilities) within a given area or time-space

3) Transport equity

Transport equity ensures that all individuals or social groups, regardless of socioeconomic status, geographic location, or ability, have fair access to transportation options and related benefits

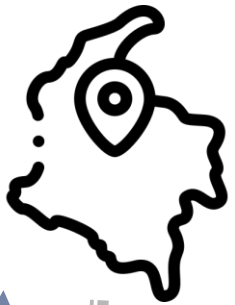
4) Formal policy framework

A formal policy document is an official, structured record that outlines specific rules, guidelines, or action plans for an organisation or government body

Conceptual framework



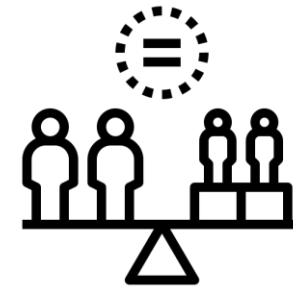
Regional mobility



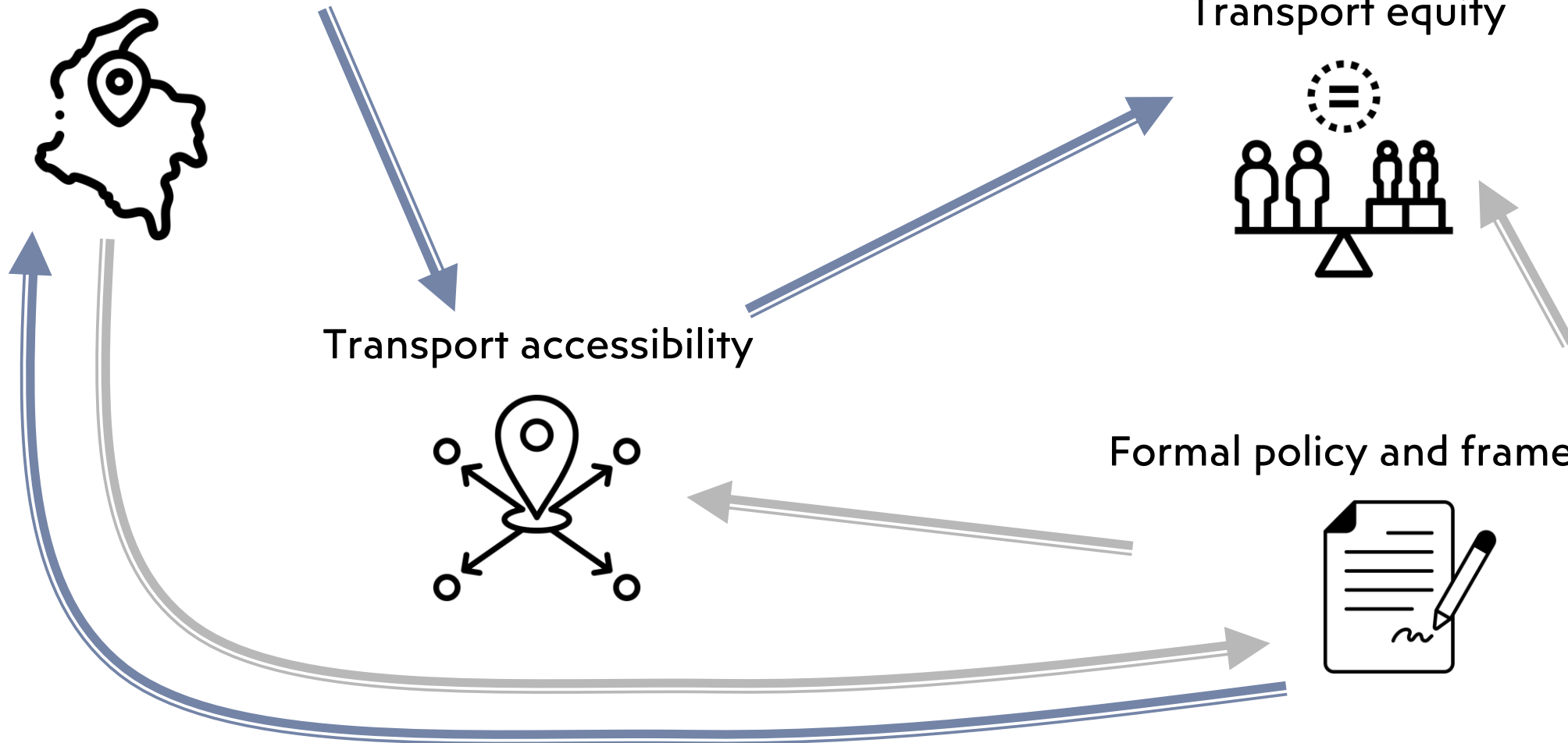
Transport accessibility



Transport equity



Formal policy and framework



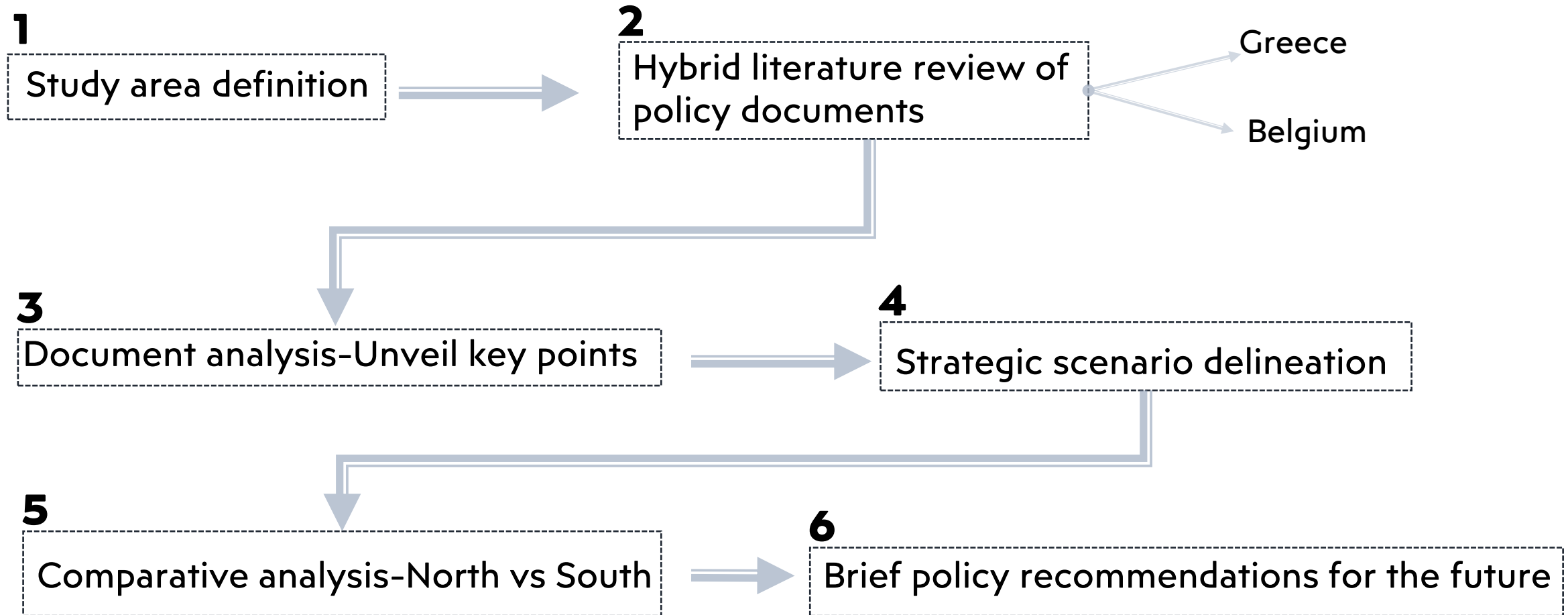


Main objective

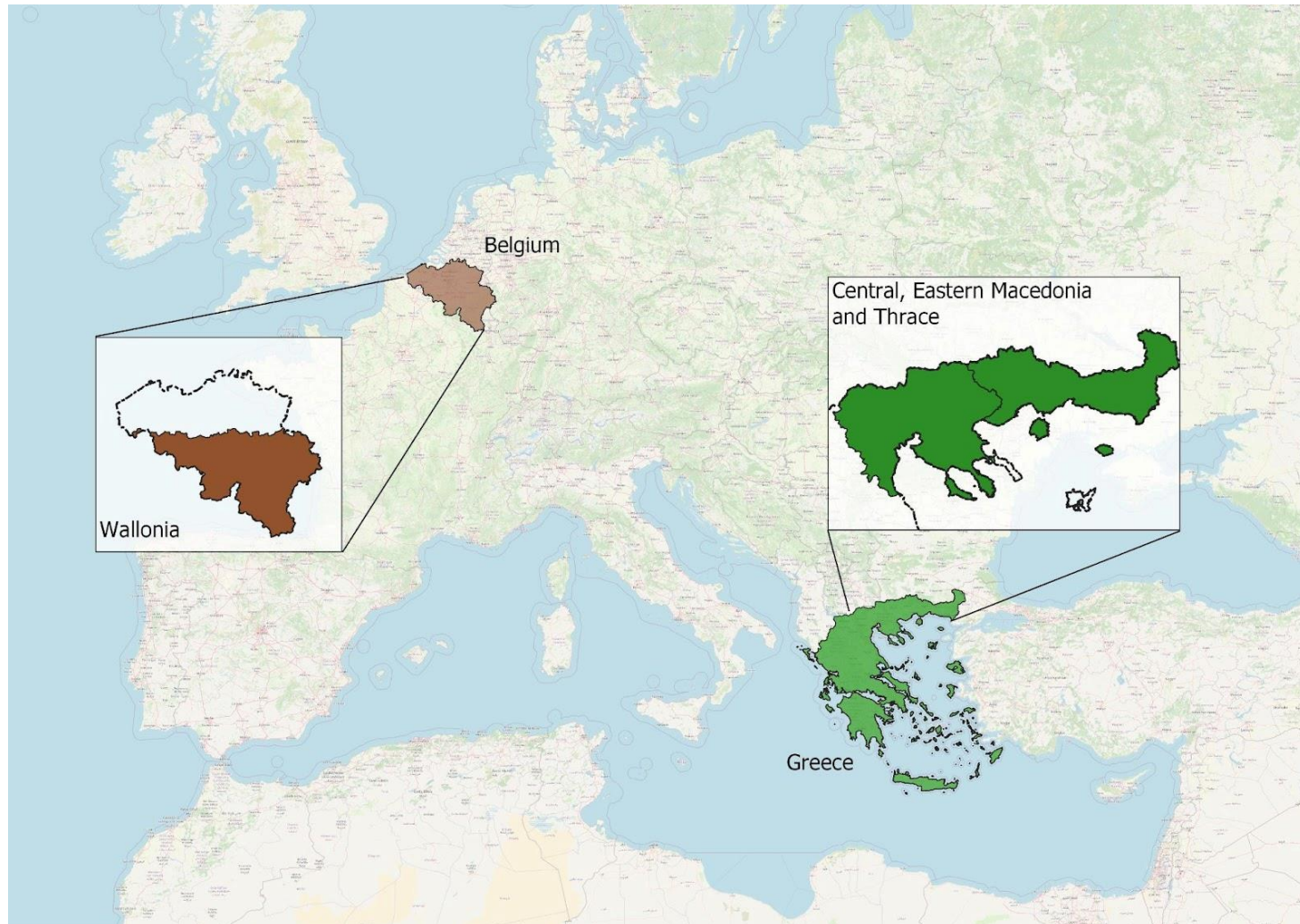
- Delineation of regional mobility scenarios/pathways
- Identification of how formal planning framework addresses regional accessibility and equity within the European Union (EU)
- Brief policy suggestions for the future


Approach

- Formal document analysis
- Comparative analysis between Greece and Belgium



Western vs Southern Europe






- **Belgium, Region of Wallonia** 
- Western Europe
- Population: 3 681 575 residents
- Area: 16 844 km²
- Capital: Namur
- Multimodal transport system
- **Greece, Decentralised administration of Macedonia and Thrace** 
- Southern Europe
- Population: 2 490 290 residents
- Area: 32 968 km²
- Capital: Thessaloniki
- Car-oriented transport system



Research protocol






Policy documents should:

-  Delineate scenarios, vision or targets for the future
-  Envision strategies for 2024 at least or later (long term perspective)
-  Refer to national or regional scale



Identify how they address:

-  Regional transport
-  Accessibility
-  Equity



1

General Regional
Plan of Greece

2

Regional Plan of Central
Macedonia Region

3

Regional Plan of
Eastern Macedonia
and Thrace Region

4

National Transport
Plan for Greece

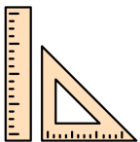


- Balanced development
- Reduce regional inequalities
- Multi-centrality
- Accessibility enhancement

- Strengthen region's range and influence
- Reduce rural and transport inequalities
- Improve international connections
- Accessibility has a profound role
- Sustainable mobility

- Balanced development
- Accessibility of remote areas
- Reduce regional inequalities
- Integration into international networks
- Sustainable mobility
- Social cohesion

- Accessible and inclusive transport system
- Sustain economic growth
- Improvement of transport connectivity
- Road safety
- Cross-border connectivity
- Transport effectiveness



National

Regional

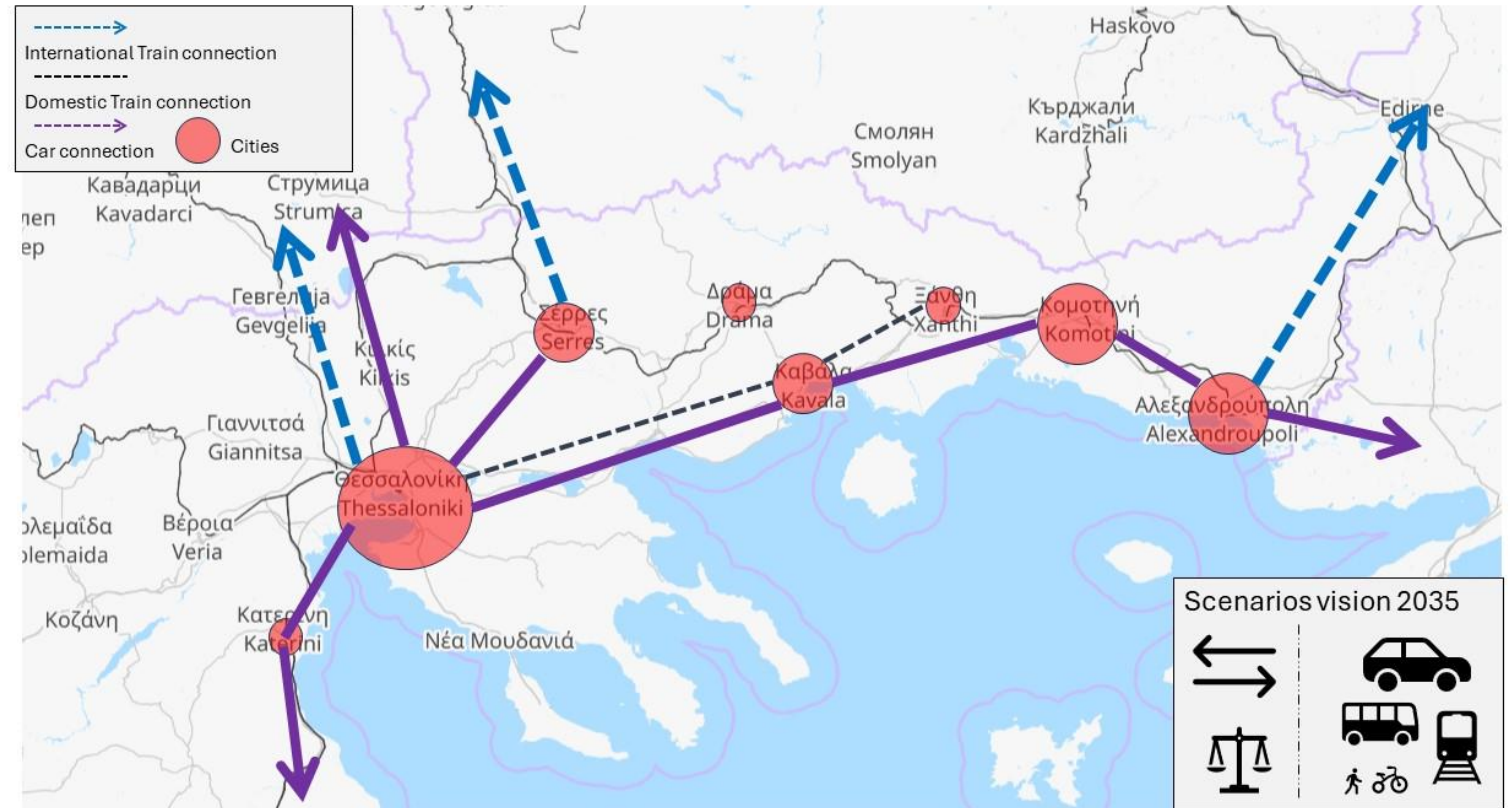
Regional



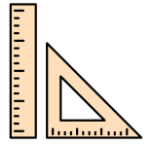
National

- Strategic plans
- Long-term perspective
- Accessibility has a central role, while equity is slightly referenced
- Motorway improvement
- Support of railway
- International connections and regional development
- Active mobility neglected



Visualisation of key elements

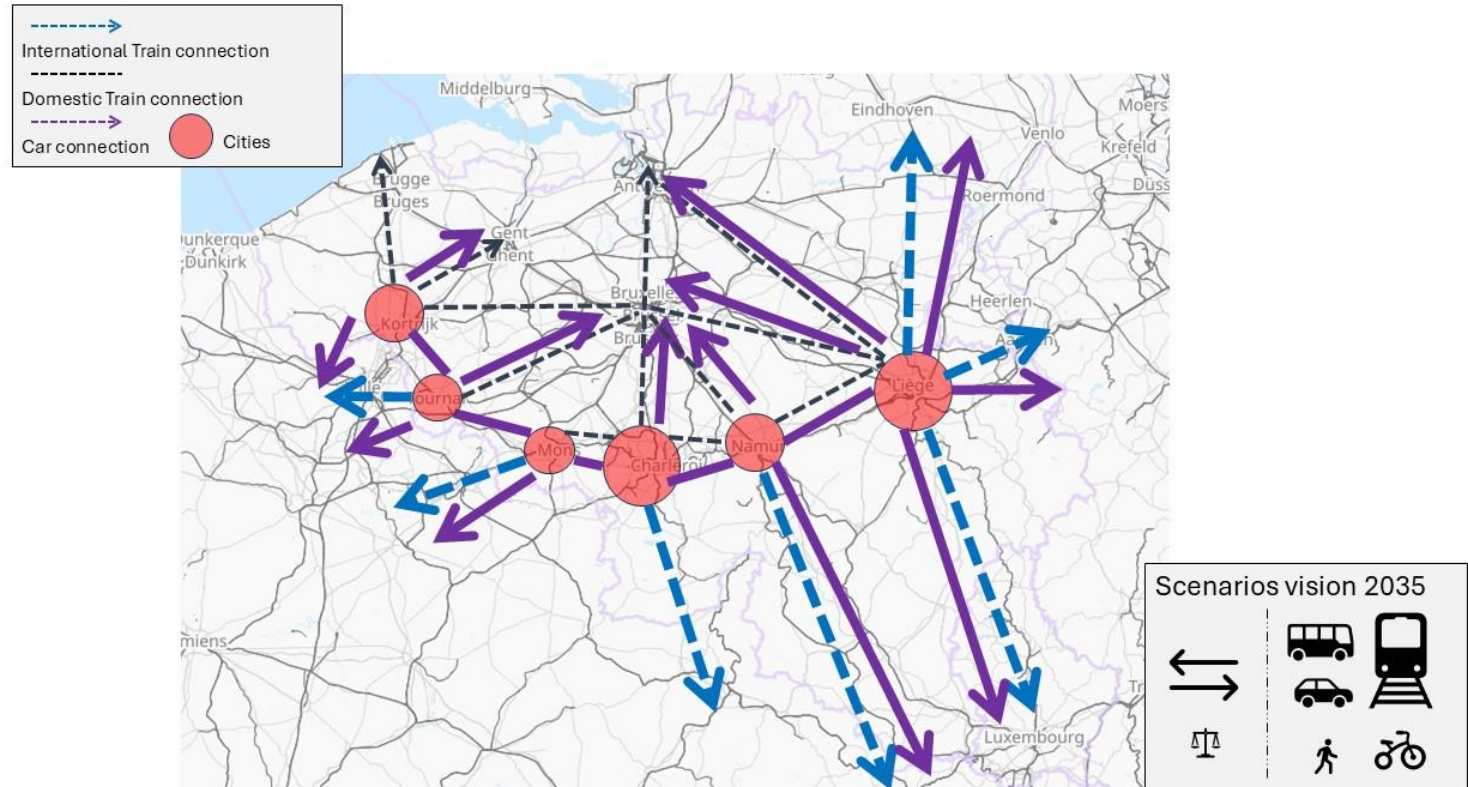


	<p>1</p> <p>FAST regional mobilité vision</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Plan Mobilité et Infrastructures 2021-2026</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Plan d'action Wallonie Cyclable 2030</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Plan fédéral sécurité routière 2021-2025</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Vision Rail Belgium 2040</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility for all • Environmental protection • Modal shift goals. Improvement of sustainable modes, while reducing car use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More space for PT and active modes • Real modal shift • Renovation and maintenance of existing networks and infrastructures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase of modal share of cycling • Multiple activities to promote cycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of road safety • Reduction of traffic injuries and deaths • A multitude of measures to be taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail as part of a global approach to mobility • More sustainable rail • Reliable services • Increase of rail modal share
	<p>Regional</p>	<p>Regional</p>	<p>Regional</p>	<p>Federal</p>	<p>Federal</p>

- Specific objectives
- Actionable goals
- Mid and long-term perspective
- Accessibility and equity are not truly mentioned
- Great support of railway
- Road safety concerns addressed
- Active mobility (especially cycling) emphasised



Visualisation of key elements





- Strategic approach
- Broader visions
- Rail and motorways at the forefront
- Accessibility and equity referenced



- Specific endeavours
- Actionable goals
- Truly multimodal transport system
- Accessibility and equity are absent



Indicative tailor-made solutions and knowledge exchange



Strengths

- Strategic planning
- Accessibility
- Slight equity reference
- Regional development

Weaknesses

- Car-oriented
- Limited emphasis to active mobility
- Non-specific objectives



Strengths

- Multimodal transport system
- Promotion of active mobility
- Actionable goals

Weaknesses

- Narrow-minded planning
- Accessibility and equity are missing

Policy card for Greece (Macedonia and Thrace)

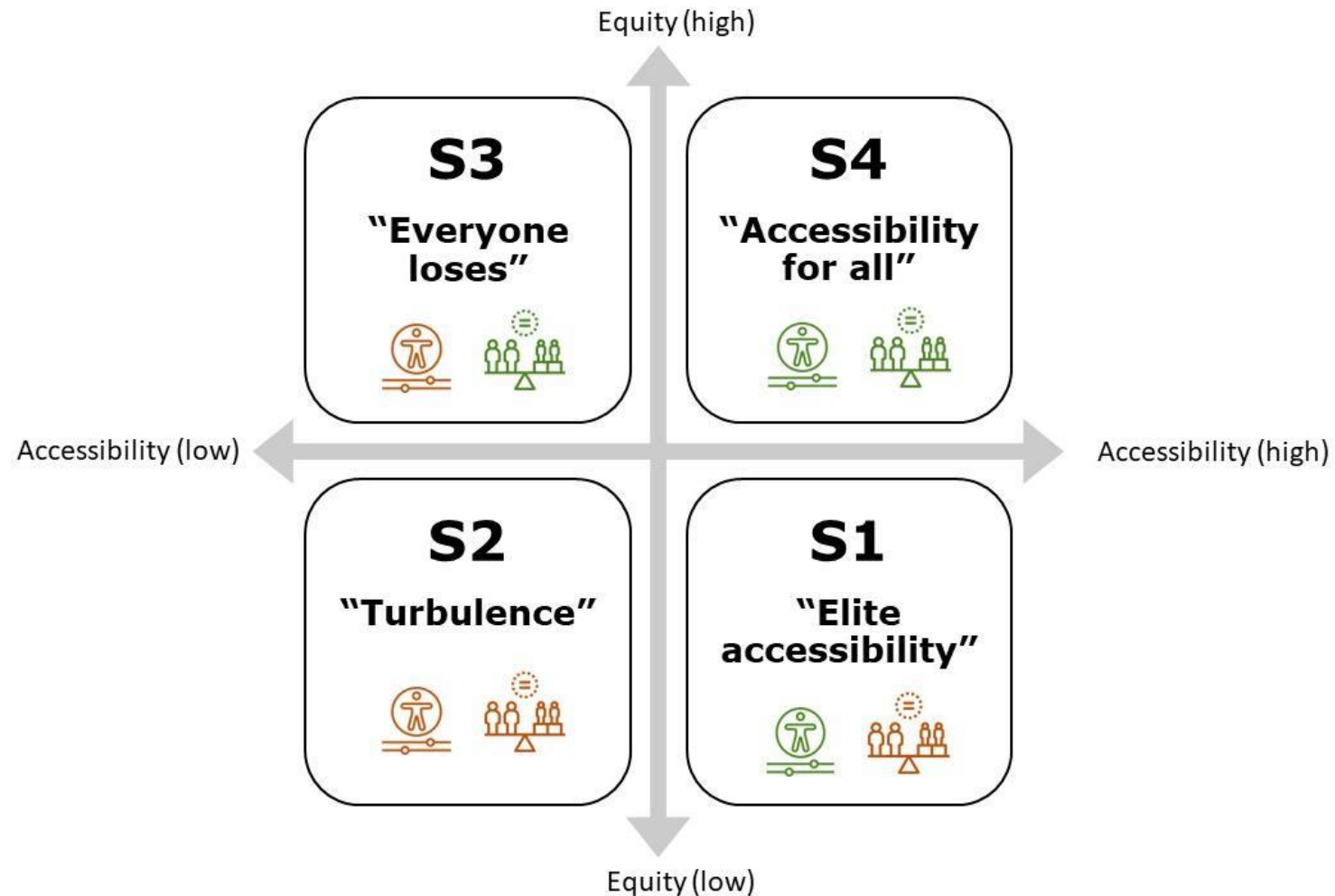
“Formal framework should retain strategic and long-term perspective; while giving more emphasis to active mobility. Plus, accessibility and equity should be at the forefront, being controlled though with specific indicators”

Policy card for Belgium (Wallonia)

“Belgium practices should envision broader perspectives, thus complementing the actionable goals of today. Multimodality should continue playing a major role, while interest should be invested on accessibility and equity purposes”



Both regions should start envisioning “truly” strategic scenarios





Main findings

- Formal policy directions in both countries share overarching similarities
 - they both have a formal planning framework on regional mobility
 - sustainable mobility and especially promotion of railways, plays a key role
- However, notable differences are identified as well:
 - Belgium tends to articulate specific goals for regional mobility, while Greece has developed broader strategic plans with a visionary scope
 - Policy documents in Greece make slight references to accessibility and equity, whereas these concepts are notably absent in the Belgian plans.
- Both Belgium and Greece, and especially the studied regional areas, should formulate a solid planning framework, incorporating strategic scenarios and some main actionable goals

Contribution

- This collaborative work fosters the understanding of the policy framework and how it addresses accessibility and equity issues
- The research is a *valuable opportunity for cross-learning*. Each country may benefit from the other's approach to create an integrated vision for an accessible and equitable regional mobility landscape
- The preliminary outcomes could be useful for *shaping policy decisions and strategic planning in the EU level*

Limitation and further research

- *Work in progress*. Only formal scenarios are addressed without formulating new ones
- Policy suggestions are quite general yet, responding to key problems
- New endeavours should develop new strategic scenarios based on participatory approaches
- Policy suggestions should be more specific and divided into proper categories
- More countries and regions should be investigated

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