

The Panopticon reloaded

A critical analysis of performance management systems in the Trans-European Transport Network policy

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Outline of the presentation

- Intro to global megaprojects
- Theoretical approach to the study of megaprojects
- Empirics: TEN-T policy and Lyon-Turin megaproject
- Key findings and conclusions

Global Megaprojects

- Large-scale projects that involve (Flyvbjerg, 2014):
 - multiple countries and stakeholders
 - high investment expenditures of one billion US dollars or more
 - Deep impact on environment, economy and society
- A means selected by decision-makers (usually governments) to address a set of public policy problems (Alberti, 2019)

Post-pandemic policy agenda

- Next Generation EU
 - economic recovery package to support member states adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
 - a 2021–2027 long-term budget of €1.8 trillion to fund megaprojects with ecological and digital applications
- Covid relief plan in US (\$1.9 trillion)
- China will expedite the rollout of 102 infrastructure megaprojects earmarked for the 2021–25 development plan



URBANIZATION



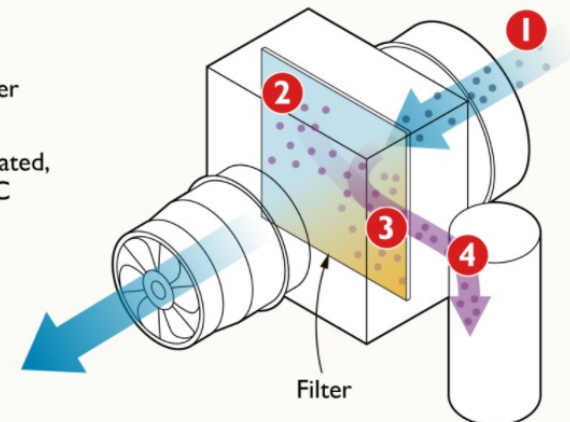
CLIMATE
CHANGE

Direct Air Capture (DAC) megaprojects

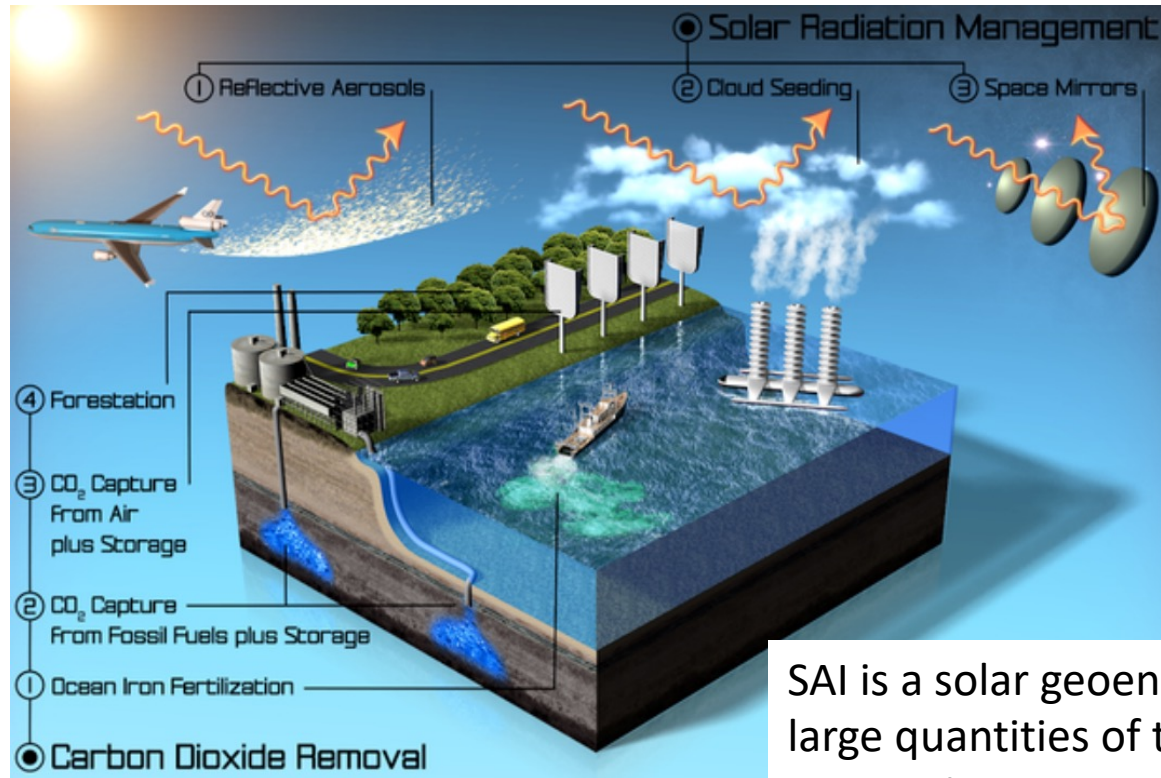


DAC can provide an impactful, engineered approach to combat climate change by removing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air

- 1 Air is sucked in
- 2 CO₂ binds to a filter
- 3 Once filter is saturated, it is heated to 100C
- 4 CO₂ is released and collected

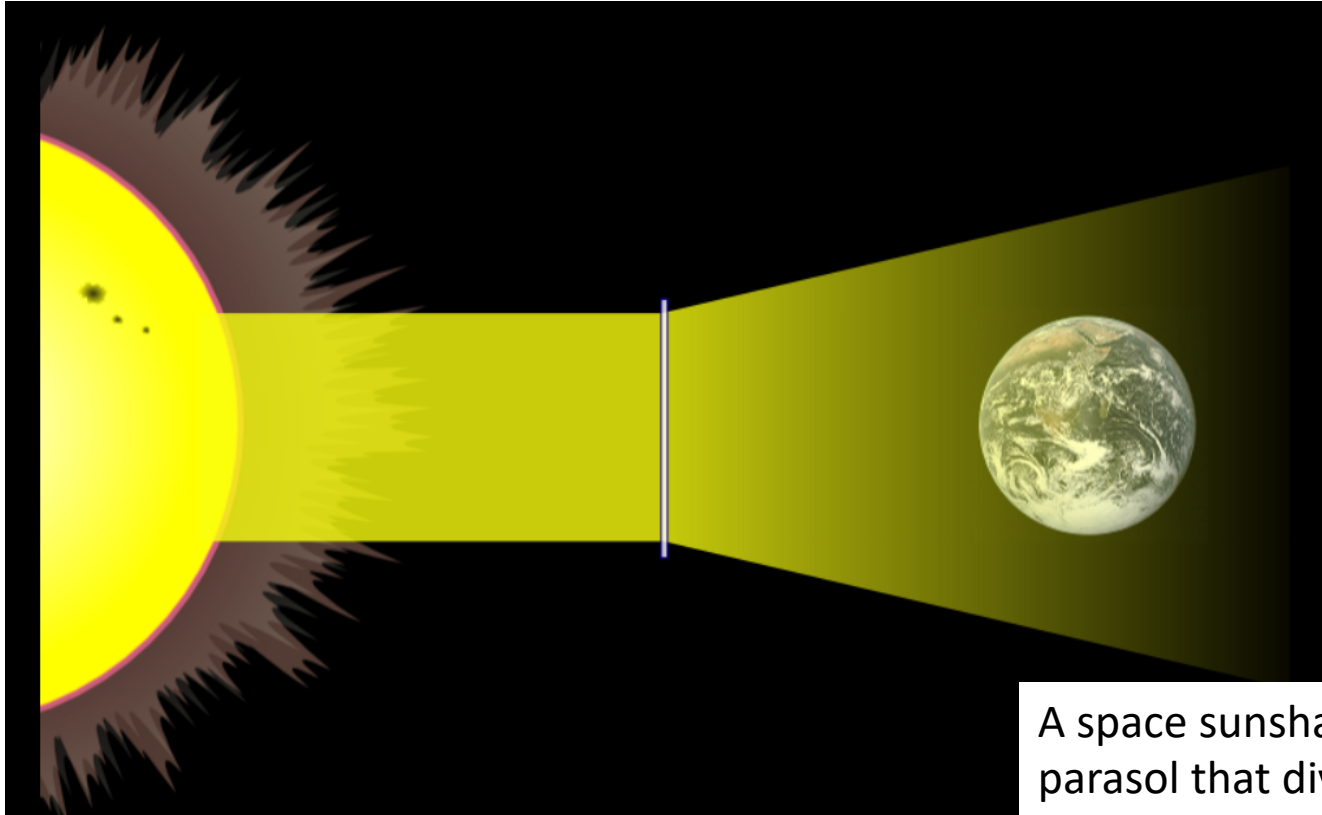


Stratospheric Aerosol Injection (SAI) megaprojects



SAI is a solar geoengineering proposal to spray large quantities of tiny reflective particles into the stratosphere, an upper layer of the Earth's atmosphere, in order to cool the planet by reflecting sunlight back into space

Space sunshade megaprojects



A space sunshade or sunshield is a parasol that diverts or otherwise reduces some of the sun's radiation, preventing it from hitting a spacecraft or planet and thereby reducing its insolation, which results in reduced heating (global warming mitigation)

Local stakeholders oppositions



- Social movements delay, block or permanently disable megaprojects (McAdam et al., 2010)
- Conflict-ridden dynamics derive from the fact that :
 - megaprojects provide value addition and jobs (Söderlund et al., 2017), while...
 - ... at the same time displace people and disrupt local ecosystems (Gellert & Lynch, 2003)



Power and conflict in megaprojects



Ninan & Sergeeva (2022a, 2022b)
Esposito & Terlizzi (2023)



Promoters

(i.e. governments,
financial institutions,
constructors and project
management firms)

...interested in supporting the
completion

Protesters

(i.e. local communities,
social movements and civil
society organizations)

...interested in derailing the
megaproject



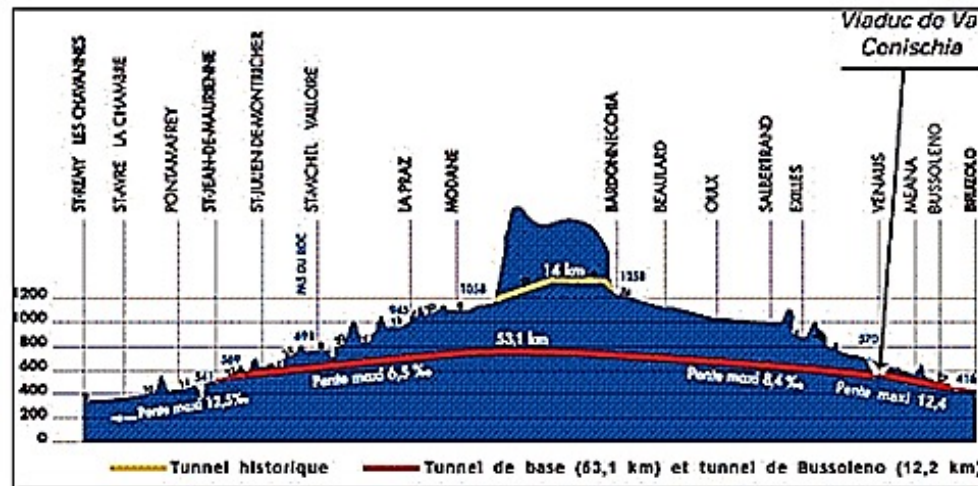
PMSs as power instruments

- Performance Management Systems (PMSs) are widely used to instil governability in megaprojects within an environment of conflicting interests (Ingram 1994)
- Little is known about how PMSs are used by megaproject promoters to exert power in megaproject organizations and to shape the collective behaviour of megaproject participants (Sargiacomo et al. 2022).
- RQs: *How do PMS allow exerting power in megaproject organization and shaping the collective behaviour of megaproject participants?*

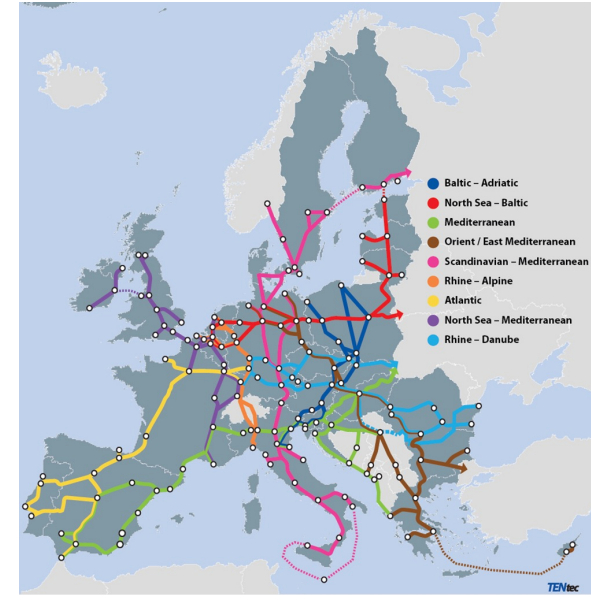
ABDUCTIVE APPROACH: LYON-TURIN CASE STUDY

- Lyon-Turin (LT) is a planned **High-Speed Railway (HSR)** line that will **cross the Alps** and link the Italian and French HSR networks (Cost €25 billion)

- LT will replace the “historical line” by constructing 57.5 km **base tunnel** (€8 billion) between Susa Valley (IT) and Maurienne (FR)
- Improved **transport capacity** and **speed** for freight and passengers
- Reduction of the **gradient line** from the 1200m height of the “historical line” to 400m

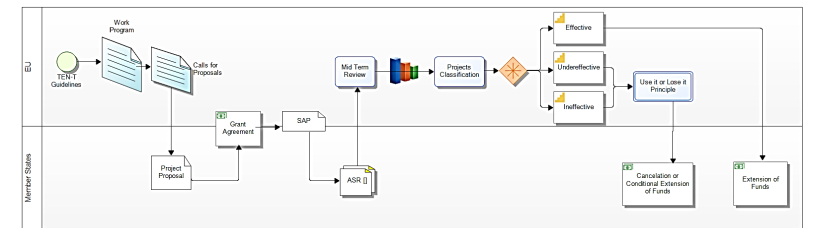
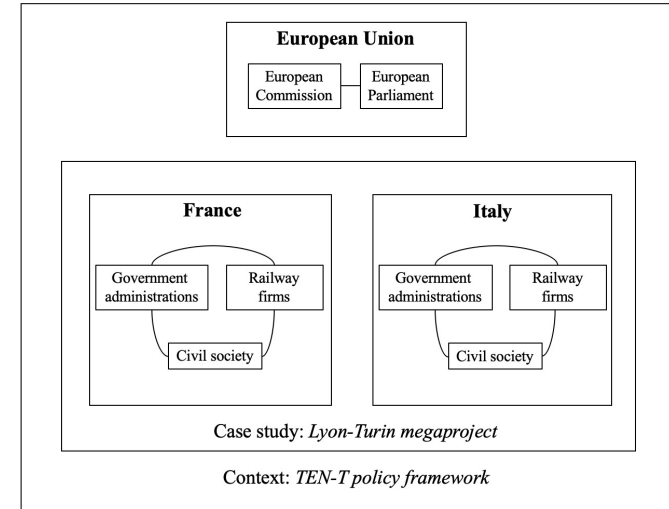
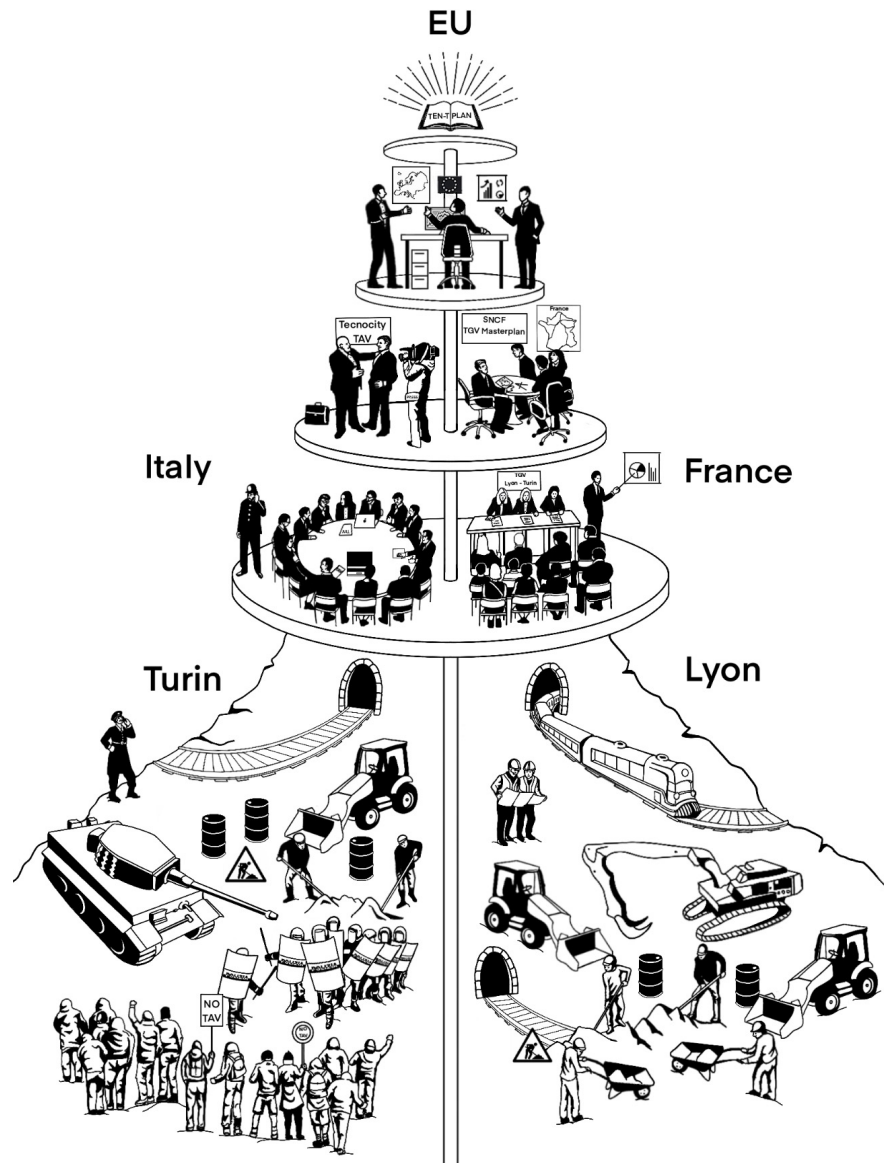


Source: LTF. Retrieved from Sutto (2009: 75)



Note: the nine TEN-T core network corridors are based on the CEF and TEN-T Regulations (1315/2013 & 1315/2013); they have been created as a coordination instrument to facilitate the completion of major parts of the core network of strategic importance.
Source: European Commission, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, TEN-T Information System

- The **construction** of the base tunnel - initially planned to start between 2014 and 2015 - **delayed** by social movement



Foucault's panoptic schema as explanatory theory

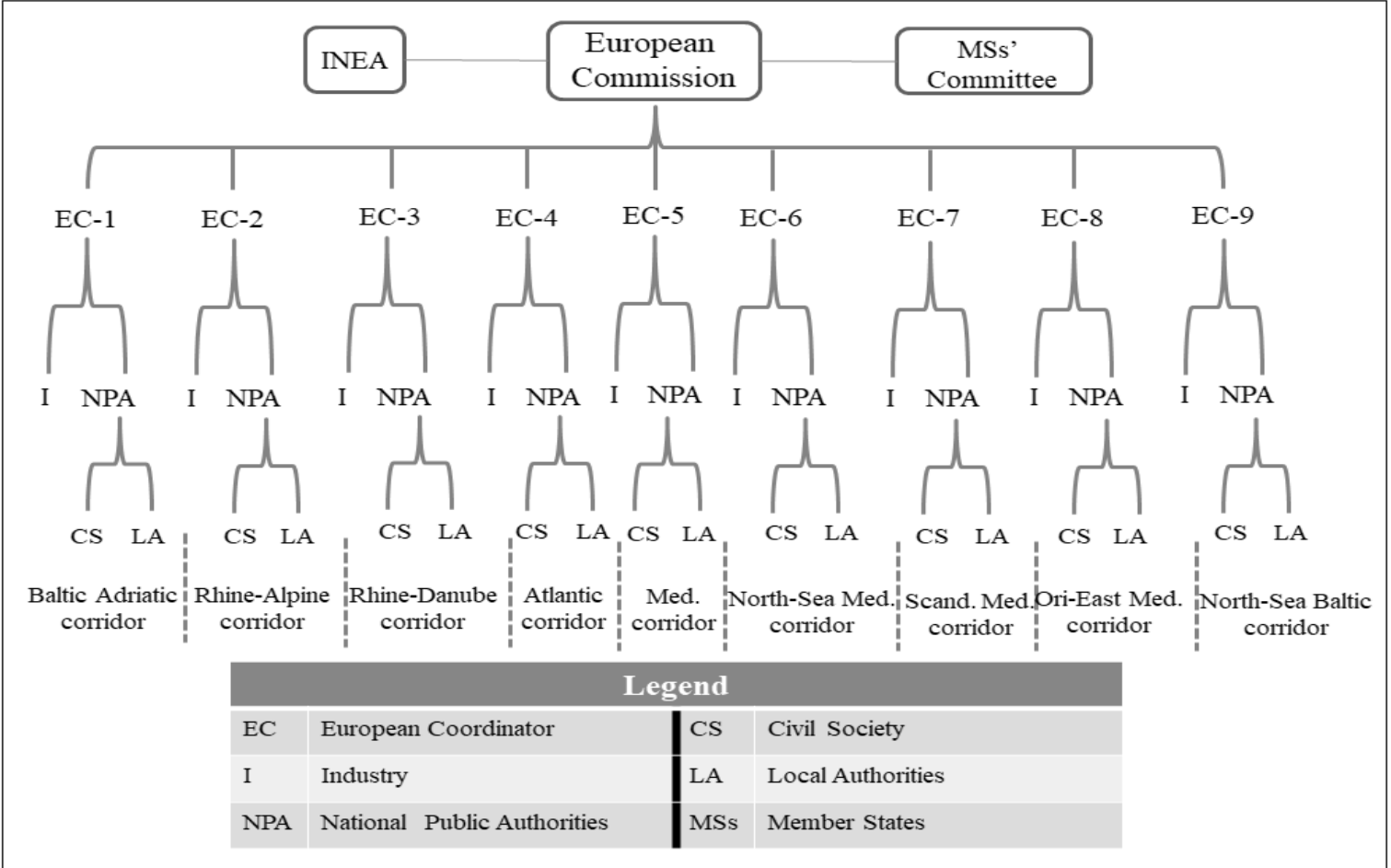
- Foucauldian panoptic schema (Berdayes, 2002):
 1. **Hierarchical observation** – megaproject participants are placed under the supervision of nested tiers of managerial personnel
 2. **Examination** – performance statistics and charts allow management to inspect and overhaul all megaproject participants
 3. **Normalizing judgment** - sanctioning participants' departures from correct behavior by means of performance rules that set the minimum of acceptable behavior

Interviews

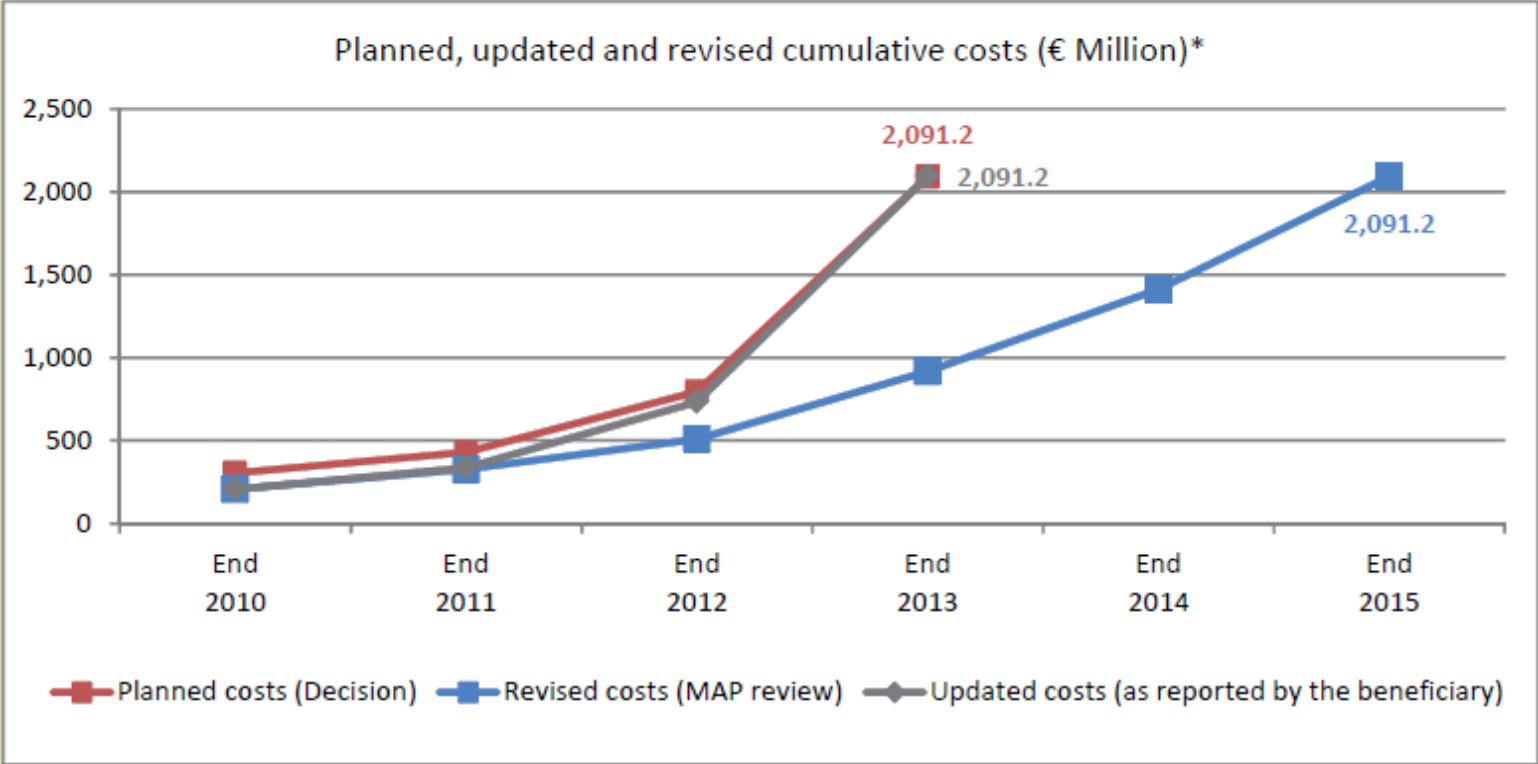
Table 2. Overview of interviewees

ACTOR GROUPS	ORGANIZATIONS	N° INTERVIEWS		
Supra-governmental actors	European railway lobbies			7
	European Parliament			8
	European Commission			4
	Executive agency			2
Governmental actors	National administrations	<i>France</i> 4	<i>Italy</i> 4	8
	Sub-national administrations	5	11	16
Business actors	Railway firms	3	2	5
Civil society actors	Organized groups of citizens in the surroundings of Lyon and Turin	10	19	29

Hierarchical observation



Examination



- a) aggregation of annual data retrieved from action status reports; and, subsequently,
- b) search for deviations from mid-term objectives scheduled in the strategic action plan

Normalization

- Mid-term review classifies megaproject promoters' performance as:
 - (1) Effective – execution of tasks complies with planned objectives,
 - (2) Ineffective – execution of tasks is late compared to planned objectives and delays will hamper the timely accomplishment of the megaproject
 - (3) Under-effective – execution of tasks is late compared to planned objectives but delays will not hamper the timely accomplishment of the megaproject if corrective measures are applied by governmental and business actors.
- While promoters whose performance is deemed effective are allowed to continue receiving funding, those deemed under-effective or ineffective undergo respectively total or partial cancellation of funds.
- To align with the EU's performance requirements, the Italian government appeal to military powers to restrain local dissent and comply with authorities' funding conditions

Conflict and power in megaprojects

➤ The Panopticon reloaded

- Adaptation to open institutional systems such as TEN-T megaprojects
- PMS power instruments:
 - to organize power relations among societal actors (i.e. governments, local communities, firms) and
 - to shape their collective behaviour - based on three primary principles of panoptical control: (1) hierarchical observation, (2) examination and (3) normalization

➤ Standing against the Panopticon

- As power flows from the top down to achieve the performance targets of the TEN-T plan,...
- ...it can also flow from the bottom up in order to hijack the achievement planned performance targets

Thank you !