

EuroLink: capacity concepts for a better European rail network for passengers and freight in 2035-2050

RailNetEurope



UPDATE TO ABCR, 6 OCTOBER 2026



Why EuroLink?

- Significant growth in long-distance and cross-border rail. Rail can deliver better quality, better connectivity and bigger contribution to sustainable mobility in Europe.
- More attention to cross-border transport needed.
 - Optimal capacity supply for our (end) customers, both for passenger and freight.
 - Alignment of long-term national capacity strategies of ministries and IMs.
 - Reap full potential of infrastructure investments.
- Look beyond Advance Capacity Planning time horizon. Bigger steps forward need more preparation time and degree of freedom (rolling stock, infrastructure, network planning).
- Borderless co-operation and pre-planning:
 - More is possible on the existing and expected rail networks,
 - Without losing eye on national and regional.
 - Where demand exceeds supply, we can find new solutions and smart targeted investments.

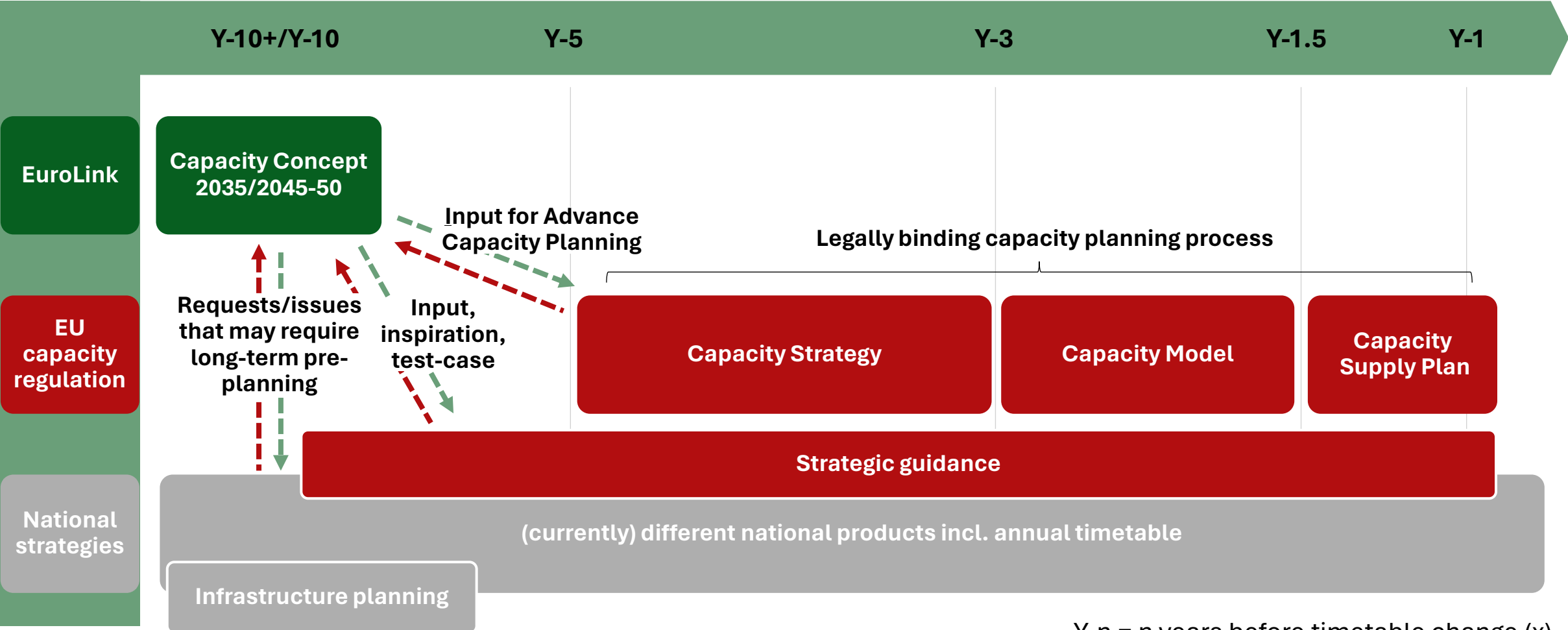
- **0-6 years ahead**
- **For 2030/2031**
- **Formal process**
- **All segments**



- **+7 to 25 years**
- **For 2035 and 2045/2050**
- **Informal pre-harmonization**
- **Focus on cross-border and long distance**



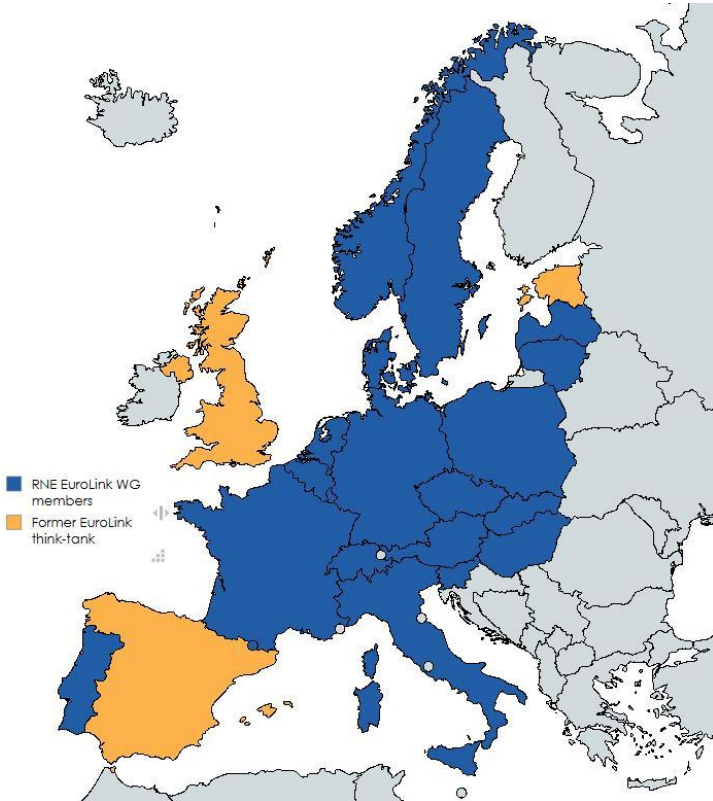
EuroLink matches national products and the products of the EU capacity regulation. Pre-aligned reference input (not blueprint).



Y-n = n years before timetable change (x)

What does EuroLink do?

EuroLink is a working group of RNE (since January 2025)



Mission Statement of WG EuroLink:

- **Integrate existing national** strategic planning frameworks with an approach of **European added value**.
- Showcase **European benefits** of national infrastructure investments and thus boost commitment to infrastructure funding.
- Enable RNE and its Members to fulfil **challenges from EU** institutions / legislation.

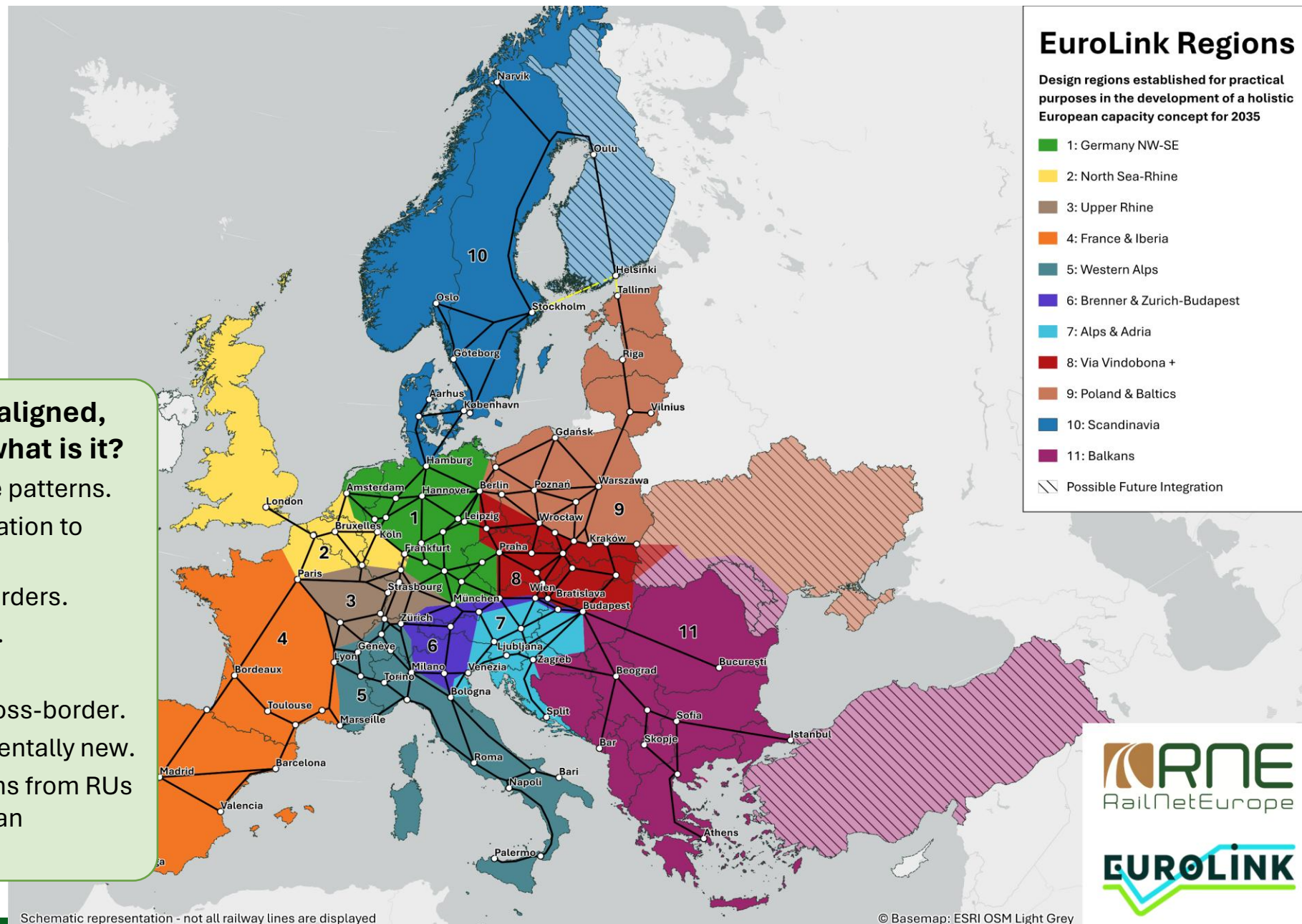
Two products/scopes:

- **“Capacity Concept 2035”** for optimal use of expected infrastructure in this reference year (on-going, expected in 2027).
- **“Capacity Concept 2045-2050”** which will include long term policy objectives and infrastructure specifications (to start in 2027).

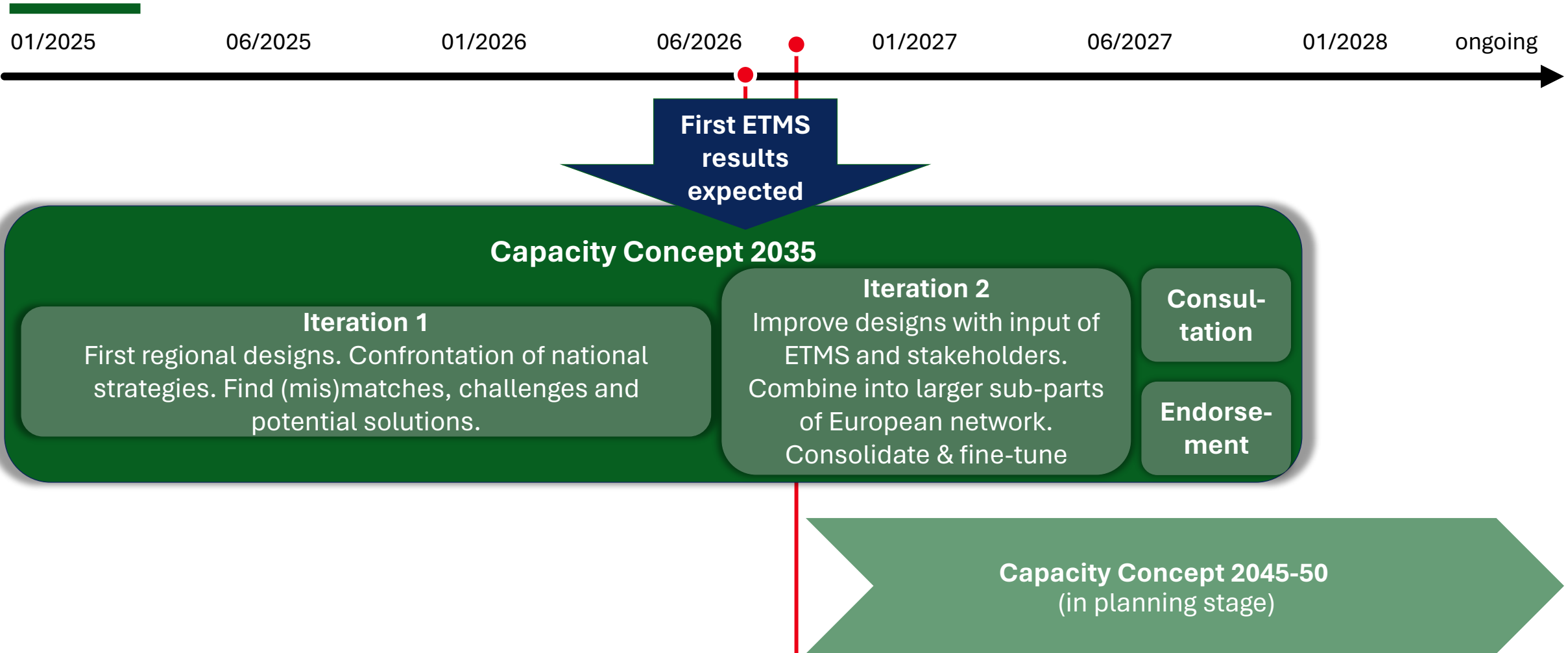
Design Regions

Capacity concepts offer pre-aligned, quality reference input. But what is it?

- Timetable for 1-2-4 hourly base patterns.
- Catalogue train slots, not allocation to specific applicants.
- Origin – destination without borders.
- Existing plans as starting-point.
- Passenger and freight.
- Focus on long-distance and cross-border.
- Infrastructure planned and potentially new.
- Market-based with contributions from RUs and stakeholders. Link to European Transport Market Study (ETMS).



EuroLink’s current timeline and framework



ETMS = European Transport Market Study

Build plans that work in practice

Collaboration with you as foremost stakeholders

- We need plans that work in practice. Therefore we need your help and contributions for:
 - Better quality design.
 - Support for capacity concepts
 - Build case for better rail.
- Collaboration so far:
 - Several exploratory meetings with ERFA, AllRail and FTE for overall project.
 - Per region participation of RU umbrella organizations, a number of individual RU members plus national MoTs and stakeholders.
- In coming period, further opportunities to partner up:
 - Standing invitation to umbrella associations for EuroLink plenary event, live in Bruxelles 24-25 November.
 - Per region online events on 2nd iteration 2035 design in coming 6 months:
 - Two online meetings: briefing (re-connect and update, 1hr) and stakeholder session (results of 2nd iteration and dialogue, 2hr) → invitations to follow here in ABCR, via RNE website and via individual IMs.
 - Deep-dive for ETMS (in preparation).

What do we need?

- Feedback on concrete design ideas, are we aligned with market needs?

Can we build more intensive contact per region?

- Please help us to get connected to your RU members, i.e. by extending invitations to upcoming events.

Questions or suggestions?

Contact



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