

# France: Mobility, Transport and Development Issues

Case Study of an improvement project: the Lorraine High Speed train station

1) The Lorraine train station is situated on the East European high-speed main line. It opened in 2007 between the cities of Metz and Nancy and is situated in rolling countryside. Since it is not well connected to these cities or the local railway network the value of this project is being increasingly questioned to the point where another train station is being proposed.



Translations

## The East European TGV

Route of high-speed train line  
Major cities served by the line  
Journey times from Paris  
Proximity to a national border

## Lorraine-TGV, a new station

Lorraine high-speed train line station  
Other new high-speed train line station on the line

## 2) Aerial photograph of the Lorraine-TGV train station

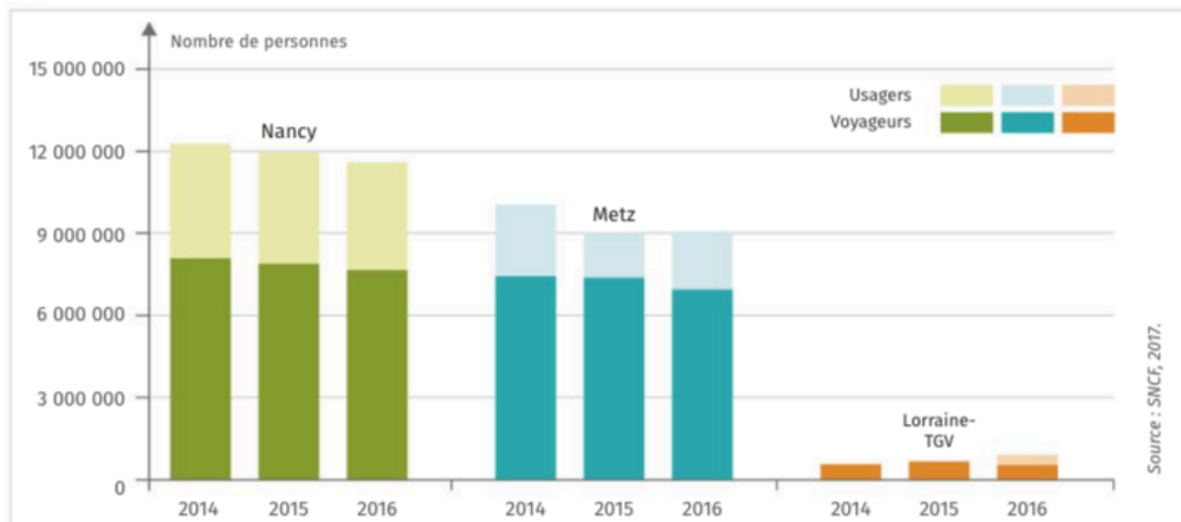


### 3) A low-cost offer

The low cost TGV train system is now opening at a second Parisian station on 7th July, the Gare de l'Est. Travellers can now reach the east of France from the centre of Paris in less than two hours and get to the stations as Strasbourg, Metz, Nancy, Colmar, Champagne-Ardenne-TGV and Lorraine-TGV.

This is a new stage in the deployment of the OUIGO reservation system intended to attract 10 million new passengers for a total of 26 million passengers annually which will represent 25% of high-speed train traffic in 2020. The price for adults is just 14€ for a one-way trip from Paris to Metz/Nancy/Lorraine-TGV.

### 4) A level of usage that does not match up to expectations



### 5) A beetroot station

The term beetroot station 'gare betterave' was first coined to describe a station poorly connected to the rest of the rail network in the middle of the countryside in reference to the TGV station at Haute-Picardie, a beetroot-growing region.

You have arrived at the Lorraine-TGV station. Welcome to the middle of a field where, since 2007, high-speed trains have been stopping at the little village of Louvigny (Moselle), with 840 inhabitants. Passengers have no choice but to either drive or take a bus to reach the closest cities, Metz and Nancy, some 30 km away.

'Stopping at a town centre station takes between 15 and 20 minutes' according to Julie Taldir, head of the public relations unit at the SNCF. 'This includes the time to leave the main line to join the local network and decelerate then speed up again...'

The creation of such stations on the urban fringe is a response to political considerations. In Lorraine, this solution meant the SNCF could have the most direct route possible between Paris and Strasbourg without any deviations. The 'SNCF played on the rivalry between Nancy and Metz' explained Valérie Facchinetti-Mannone 'there is no interest for the station to be located there in view of the population which it serves...'

Matthieu Dehlinger 'Travelling in stations lost in the countryside' France TV, 2015.

Towards the creation of a new high-speed station in Lorraine?

### 6) A degraded service

'Metz has never seemed so far away from Strasbourg' despaired Pascal Debout. This teacher goes three times each week to the Law faculty at Strasbourg where he teaches English. However the journeys are becoming more and more complicated. 'We have less trains and fewer direct connections since the imposition of a new timetable' he deplored. 'Whereas we used to have three connections, now there is only one...'

SNCF in the Grand-Est, Le Point, 2016

### 7) A problem of interconnections

The public and members of local councils will appeal for a new train station to the President of the Grand-East region, Jean Rottner (LR) this Thursday, 27 September 2018. He can decide whether or not to build this new station to connect the local TER service with the TGV. For Jean Rottner, the priority is to have a reliable daily train service.

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### 8) Vandières, a future high-speed train station?



Translations

#### Territorial organisation

LGV route  
Motorway  
Other rail tracks

#### From one station to another?

Lorraine TGV station  
Commune of Vandières  
Proposed future station

## Exercises

1. What is the journey time from Paris to Strasbourg? What might be the consequences of this high speed line on the places situated between these two cities (Doc.1)?
2. What is the impact of low cost offers on travellers? (Doc.3)?
3. Justify the title of this document by comparing the figures it represents (Doc.4).
4. Explain why the Lorraine-TGV station has been described as a 'beetroot station'. To what extent is this description justified (Doc. 5)?
5. What factors account for the situation of this station (Doc. 1, 2 and 5)?
6. Show that the presence of a transport infrastructure does not necessarily equate to good connections (Doc.6).
7. What advantages would situating the new station at Vandières offer (Doc. 8)?