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*Artículo original*

## **Andorra: Actual Nodal Context of Tourism between France and Spain**

*Andorra: Contexto nodal actual del turismo entre  
Francia y España*

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**Abstract.** The problem of mobility in the context of tourism require an analysis of different offerings found in destinations worldwide. Not only proposals involving the compatibility of transportation, the cities' environment, but also to respond to the enhancement of the activity. This manuscript proposes a paradigm examination of the relationship between government and private cooperation in transportation as part of the phenomenon of tourism present in border sharing destinations. Currently, one of the major needs a visitor has, once settled in a destination, is how to transport themselves from their place of origin to the chosen destination and within it. Nowadays, there are several means to arrive at the Andorra region, which are in the border region of Cataluña, Midi-Pyrenee and Languedoc-Roussillon, by car, plane, train and bus. Nonetheless, Andorra, in the look of being competitive as a destination, tailored the use of media according to visitor's economic status, tastes and preferences. In this sense, the relations of cooperation and ties between public and private actors involved in tourism and transportation are being determined.

**Keywords:** Region, Cross-border, Transport, Tourism, Competitiveness

**Resumen.** El problema de movilidad en el contexto del turismo, requiere un análisis de distintas ofertas que se encuentran en destinos a nivel mundial. No solo propuestas que involucran la compatibilidad del transporte, el ambiente de las ciudades, sino también para darle respuesta al mejoramiento de la actividad. Este manuscrito propone el análisis de un paradigma de la relación entre la cooperación de gobierno y el sector privado en el transporte como parte del fenómeno que el turismo trae a los destinos con frontera compartida. Hoy en día, una de las grandes necesidades que un visitante tiene, una vez instalado en el lugar destino, es cómo transportarse del punto de origen hacia y dentro del destino escogido. Hoy existen varias maneras de llegar a la región de Andorra, la cual se encuentra en la región fronteriza de Cataluña, Midi-Pyrenee y Languedoc-Roussillon, por automóvil, avión, tren y autobús. Sin embargo, Andorra, buscando ser un destino competitivo, usó a la medida los medios de acuerdo al estatus económico, gustos y preferencias del visitante. En este sentido, la relación de cooperación y nexos entre los actores públicos y privados involucrados en turismo y transporte están siendo determinantes.

**Palabras clave:** Regional, transfronterizo, turismo, competitividad

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## **1. Introduction**

The paper addresses a key problem of communication and transport in the isolated, but dynamic, upper Eastern Pyrenees region, including Andorra which is positioned as one of the axes on the territorial border dynamics in a rural high mountainous area that forms an alternate corridor to the Perthus tunnel to connect to two major economic and industrial centers of southern Europe - Toulouse and Barcelona.

While tourism is the set of relationships and phenomenon produced by the movement and stopovers of people outside their place of residence, those shifts and continuities, are not motivated by a lucrative major, permanent or temporary activity (Acerenza, 1984:22) With this focus, [...] the recreational component associated with tourism, is extremely difficult to separate tourism industry from travel industry. Both depend upon the same infrastructure and types of accommodations and services (Seassoms & Henderson, 1999:122)

Thus: "Since the mid-twentieth century, tourism has become one of the fastest growing economic activities in the world. Among the factors behind this growth may be mentioned the increase of leisure and free time, reduced costs of communication and transportation, and the overall population growth "(Lazzari, Molina, Fernandez, Chiodi, Chelmiki, Chiodi & Eriz, 2010: 55).

But Medaglia & Silveira say: "Today the world has become accustomed to tourism and many countries that were once exotic destinations now offer their products to traditional and more demanding markets while others do emerging markets" and continue saying: "the new global tourism scenario is forcing the market to change their models as a way of ensuring their own survival" (See, 2009: 531 to 542). Besides that: "Tourism development in many countries has benefitted from international structural funding" (Sharpley, 1999:164)

## **2. Background**

The problem of mobility in the context of tourism require an analysis of different offerings found in destinations worldwide, not only those offerings involving the compatibility of transportation, the cities' environment, but also those that address the enhancement of tourist activity. Today, there are different ways, ranging from automobile, plane, train, bus and boat within the chosen target

destination that meet the needs of tourists, using city transports, collective or public, including such modes as taxi, bus, metro, rental car or walking. The selection of the mode lies in the visitors' economic acquisitive power, tastes and preferences.

The communication and transportation systems are fields of study that have received little analysis; hence, there is insufficient literature as an object of study, so one can expect this to be strengthened by the contribution of empirical examination and theories. Thus, "[...] the possibilities of providing increased accessibility improvements and transport techniques, new patterns of consumption and leisure time, the dominance of consumption as a key element of leisure, and the diversification of entertainment content, condition frequency of travel destinations urban tourism "(Gomez et al, 2005:19).

However, as the increase in tourism has been led largely by the development of the means of transportation and by the resultant adaptation need to a demand that is increasingly sophisticated, where tourists are always in search of good prices and quality in their travels. As such, tourism is always set in an area provided with a transportation network or an area likely to implement it (OMT, 1998:109-110).

Is to remark, that what was a vast global distribution network of all kinds of tourism products and services is now in a derived crisis from lowering air transportation commission rates, the pressure of big tour operators, and also in the sense of lowering commissions, and finally by the advent of the internet, which has meant a jump in the number of these intermediary companies. Survival is thus dependent on specialization and so-called niche markets (Moragues, 2006:53).

A competitive region envisions the physical, technological, social, environmental and institutional environment needed to attract and develop the economic activities that create wealth and employment. The cities, in our countryside tourist destinations, are key areas for the promotion and creation of competitive conditions and factors (Gonzalez, 2009: 113)

Most companies do not have sufficient information to understand their business in depth. An infrastructure centered on the flow of information, the digital nervous system, will help one understand the business and act more effectively (see Gates, 2000). With the use of different means of transport as a tool for visitors to explore a destination, the coverage of tourism development expands, allowing greater accessibility and facilitating the detection of probable routes and services. This urban

phenomenon, which advocates emblematic costly investments in cultural infrastructure and urban planning, we know as 'new heritage' (Marchena & Repiso, 1999:6)

The inadequacy of a road system is particularly evident today in a society in which has imposed mechanized transportation, automobile in particular. However, in another times, albeit with much less intensity, the system was suffering from traffic problems shooting through the narrow streets of the historic quarters (Gutiérrez, 1998:242). The deployment of best options for pedestrians, as well for vehicles, is the challenge in these destinations, and to the extent that those roads have improved, the problem of good options for both the local community and visitors getting around is being resolved.

There is no largely populated city in the world where they have solved the problem of public transport buses. Cities such as London, Madrid, Paris, Berlin, Hong Kong, Barcelona, New York, Tokyo, and many others, where the sprawl of urban populations have Metro networks or urban trains exceeding 200, 300 and even 400 kilometers per hour. That is to say, "in cities that have good public transportation systems, most of the demand is served by Metro lines or similar technologies (commuter rail, light rail or trams), with the bus being the minority alternative " (Sort, 2006: 12).

Transforming the burden on the transportation modes has been a long-time requirement for all conveyances, always needing to respond the logical method of visitor's distribution. This, then, requires a more efficient but cheap, accessible, flexible and transportation system that provides some alternatives. This is accomplished through the segmentation of transport chains, so that several modes can be: rail, ship, road and air - in this case, between Andorra, Catalonia and Midi-Pyrenees.

The need to develop a range of transportation and communication services is noted in two ways: first, in the communication between towns near the border through the improvement of existing modes that are in in poor condition or the creation of new modes and secondly, in the development of future border crossing points that are complementary with the current ones. (European Territorial Cooperation, 2007:22).

As noted by Medaglia & Silveira (2009: 542), "The new global tourism scenario is forcing the market to change their models as a way to ensure its own survival." In general, therefore, if microstates want to increase their export earnings in order to maintain and improve their standard of living, there may indeed be no alternatives to tourism for economic alternatives to tourism for some of them if they

lack other resources. Consequently, the task should be to lessen the negative impacts and to increase the positive impacts of tourism - or folly avoids if possible (Wilkinson, 1989:161).

Its importance lies in that there is full cooperation and insight of its scope in transportation and tourism, so that raises several questions, such as: Into what degree is the railroad in the region of Catalonia Midi-Pyrenees and Languedoc-Roussillon, an option of transportation for tourists to Andorra?, How do the level of cross-border cooperation between government agencies and private French-Spanish influence the transport of Andorra?, Moreover, is local transportation a viable option for visitors on their way to Andorra, Catalonia, Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon?

With coverage of transportation thanks to cross border cooperation, the responsibility of both public and private stakeholders is extended into tourism development in a region, allowing not only greater access to the destination, but the expansion of routes and services, such as Andorra, Catalonia, Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon. Allowing contextual analysis of the conditions for their deployment, their quantification and recognition of barriers that suppress the demand for visitations, as well its socio-economic and socio-political repercussions.

### **3. Nature of transportation in the region of influence of Andorra**

Mass transit systems actually provide the possibility of a choice between alternative modes of transportation. However, for the region of Andorra, Catalonia, Midi-Pyrénées and Languedoc-Roussillon, there are not enough border crossing points.

Accessibility between the area's north and south is based on the two crossing points of road and rail on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coast. The central zone has no border crossing point of similar quality throughout the year. In the wintertime, several crossing points remain inaccessible. This situation causes, on one hand; continuing congestion in the steps of coastline, especially freight traffic, and on the other, the isolation of the center, without extensive communication possibilities with the north or even with the coastline. The difficulties of accessibility to the central level add significantly difficulty to cooperation because they reduce the possibility of establishing contacts and meetings as well as the ability to implement joint solutions (European Territorial Cooperation, 2007:21).

The Pyrenees and the Principality of Andorra, shares borders with France and Spain. The border with France is shared with two French regions (Midi-Pyrenees and Languedoc-Roussillon, and in the south the Spanish border connects with the autonomous region of Catalonia. Thus provides a real transportation study of tourism when used for mobility visitor destination. Because,

[...], it is essential to continue efforts in communications "limited cross-border interest", especially in the central area. In the field of air transport, the small number of direct flights between various regional capitals characterizes the current situation. This situation is worse between settlements lying on one side and the other of the Pyrenees because of the physical barrier of the mountain. (European Territorial Cooperation, 2007:22).

An example of this is the short distance (less than 400 km between Toulouse and Barcelona, the two most distant cities), and the low demand for air transport. Despite several attempts to operate flights between Toulouse and Barcelona, via its subsidiary Iberia Regional Air Nostrum since June 2010, these initiatives have not been successful (See [www.ladepeche.fr/article/2010/06/25/862260](http://www.ladepeche.fr/article/2010/06/25/862260)).

The cross-border planning, "understood as local-level planning local or municipal, faces several challenges especially in the institutional area, where local governments have serious legal restrictions, as the constitutions of both countries prohibit state and local governments from conducting treaties with foreign governments "(Peña, 2003: 10).

## **2.1. Frontier, competitiveness and tourist destination**

"Tourism activity, however, should not increase unless more effort is taken to mitigate local growth problem. Destination areas should adopt or refine themes and events that reflect their history, lifestyles, and geographic setting, with promotion of local attractions being subject to resident endorsement "(Wilkinson, 1989:172). Thus, during the 1970s, scholars, planners and other representatives of the tourism industry sought new formulas for travel to be more respectful of the environment and of local communities, as well as established with investors. (De Esteban, 2008:68). Development of "cultural tourism and the city in general are strategic tools to overcome these structural problems" (Marchena & Repiso, 1999:9).

Thus far, the border seam has replaced the traditional cut border, which has been allowing the addressing of trans-boundary situations in terms of planning and regional development in the border

regions, whose territories recorded larger units, as is the case with the euro regions. However, this is not in itself a new level of local or regional government, but a place where there is an exchange between public and private actors in one or more countries (See, Cazorla & Romani, 2008).

It is true that planning is the key challenge for the development of tourism. Whether it be it in the scope of destination marketing or in the scope of the town, planning is the only way to achieve real and lasting gains for all tourism stakeholders, from tourists to locals. (Medaglia & Silveira, 2009: 537).

The strategies and actions for transport, mobility and accessibility should always be placed within the broader perspective [...] transport is a necessary condition for the development of activities by the population and economic agents and on the other hand, the actions that can be addressed in housing rehabilitation and revitalization of economic activity in historic directly impact on transport demand (Gutiérrez, 1998:244)

## **2.1. Competitiveness and destination**

Tourists' cognitions (including attributions) influence behavior. As tourists continue to experience tourism continue to experience tourism activities, they will evaluate the outcome in terms of internal (personal) factors and external (situation) factors. If they attribute the outcome to internal factors, then logically they encourage themselves to improve their abilities and increase their efforts to achieve a more positive outcome. (Jackson, White & Schmierer, 1996:808).

The destination and its various attractions are intimately connected with the supply of transportation such as [...] Sevilla cultural tourism is interdependent of urban and metropolitan development. Although the structural obstacles (such as deficiencies in aviation or the challenges of cultural resource management and planning) are largely exogenous to tourism policy and must be resolved in the context of sustainable development Andalusian metropolis [...] (Marchena & Repiso, 1999:9)

It requires planning of tourism activity based on the reflection of emotion, beliefs and opinions received by individuals, so that it gives them satisfaction in their journey, and then it is not required to push visitors to the attractions, on the contrary they may be led by their own interests (Rosentraub & Mijin, 2009).



Competitiveness considerations allow the exploration of the advantages offered by globalization. Martin (2000:406) provides a quick view of this relationship in tourism. For this, the following is considered:

- i. Production: Use the entire productive capacity; Economies of scale, competitive advantages in the factors of production (labor, energy resources, raw materials) and optimal Rationalization of production.
- ii. Marketing: Access to a wider market, sales stability, proximity to the customer; image enhancement (internal and external); removing cultural barriers and elimination of protectionist barriers, eliminating the cost of international transport, and reaction to the competition
- iii. Finance: Risk diversification; compensation results, access to financing, and international tax planning.
- iv. Human Resources: Learning, and experiences transplantable domestic market.

Whether as glocal or transnational strategy (see Figure 1): "Tourism can become an important and dynamic engine for development, but it also represents a challenge for all stakeholders to seek solutions to the problems that can arise and to direct and guide the development of tourism "(flange; Monterubbianes & Zapata-Aguirre, 2011:292) Because:

“Tourism on its present international scale could not occur without the existence of a large and sophisticated ‘industry’ which enables people to be tourists. That is, without the provision of accommodation, transport entertainment and other facilities, and the without the existence of businesses that organize, package and sell tourist experience or provide essential support, such as insurances or provide essential support, such as insurance or financial services, the majority of people would be unable to participate in tourism.” (Sharpley, 1999:30)

In the field of tourism destinations, competitiveness involves ponder to weigh up and create description and evaluation practices in order to assess the profitability generated by tourism in a given territory (Narvaez & Fernandez, 2009:103).

Figure 1. **Internationalization Strategies**

Source: Martin, 2000:407.

### 3.3. *Andorra border Cooperation*

A geographical approach enables a better understanding of the territorial dynamics that generate and condition transports. Cross-border cooperation must be explored as a whole from the infrastructure development in the Midi-Pyrenees Region, Andorra and la Seu de Urgell airport in Spanish territory.

Located in the center of the continental Euro region Pyrénées-Méditerranée (Midi-Pyrenees, Languedoc-Roussillon, Catalonia, Balearic Islands), "Andorra" is an important focal point of tourist movement linked to tourism shopping and skiing. The Principality's economic model requires constant improvement of its communication infrastructure to better connect Andorra with the main lines of communication that support spatial dynamics of the Euro region (E9, Toulouse-Barcelona-Puigcerdà: A9-AP7, Montpellier-Barcelona-Tarragona).

In order to become a major destination of the Pyrenees, Andorra invested massively, beginning in the 80's, in the construction and development of a large tourist infrastructure to enhance the quality and the quantity of its tourist offerings (Caldea, Supermarkets, Granvalira, Funicamp, etc.) aiming to amortize these investments. The strategy of Andorra, as a country, focuses on the seduction, capture and retention of most tourist markets, ensuring that people spend at least one night and do not go to the Principality only for a few hours to buy (mostly) liqueurs, spirits and tobacco.

The government of Andorra states: "the tourist rate increased until 2004, reaching 11.67 million and from that peak then started to descend, and currently stands at around 10 million visitors a year" ([www.estadistica.ad](http://www.estadistica.ad)). Moreover, Andorra as a country, participated in the development and implementation of various projects for improvements in the communication infrastructures in the Eastern Pyrenees (airport Seu d'Urgell, completed highway between Toulouse and Barcelona by Puigcerdà). The Principality is now isolated by the strong economic and financial crisis that has hit Catalonia and Spain hard, causing the suspension of projects or a significant decrease in credits.

In times of crisis, Andorra suffers from being an entertainment center located outside of the major areas of economic activity in the Euro region Pyrénées-Méditerranée. This highlights the country's heavy dependence on the economies of neighboring countries and European cohesion funds. European cross-border cooperation through coherence funds financed by the European Union, has tended to rebalance territorial disparities in order to support the competitive development of the rural peripheries of the continent. The European Spatial Development Policy aims to further a bigger economic and social cohesion and more balanced competitiveness of the European territory. In a structured Europe from its powerful urban centers, the rethink of the management of territories from concepts capable of ensuring the survival and revitalization of the suburbs and rural areas is evident.

If Andorra opted for a model of tourism quality and quantity during the 80s and 90s, the country is now moving towards a more sustainable model of tourism by protecting, maintaining and valuing its cultural and natural heritage by way of sustainable development and the integration of its rural territories in line with European cross-border cooperation policies. As stressed by Xavier Jordana Rossell, then Minister of Urban and Regional Planning from Andorra, to open discussions at the Symposium "The accessibility and attractiveness of rural and landlocked areas". ([www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/Publications/ATEP-87\\_bil.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/Publications/ATEP-87_bil.pdf)) that took place on the 25th and 26th of October 2007 in Andorra-la-Vella, "the landscape, land use and the environment are fundamental concepts today, required in any society that has chosen a model of sustainable development", further explaining that "Parliamentary activity of these last years, attached great importance to those questions. Under the Constitution of 1983, several laws relating to cultural heritage, spatial planning and the proper treatment of wastes generated were adopted"

Lately, numerous meetings and official events have been organized in Andorra in relation to sustainable development at the border or international cooperation to emphasize the change of position with the goal of making the Principality a recognized actor in sustainable tourism in southern Europe.

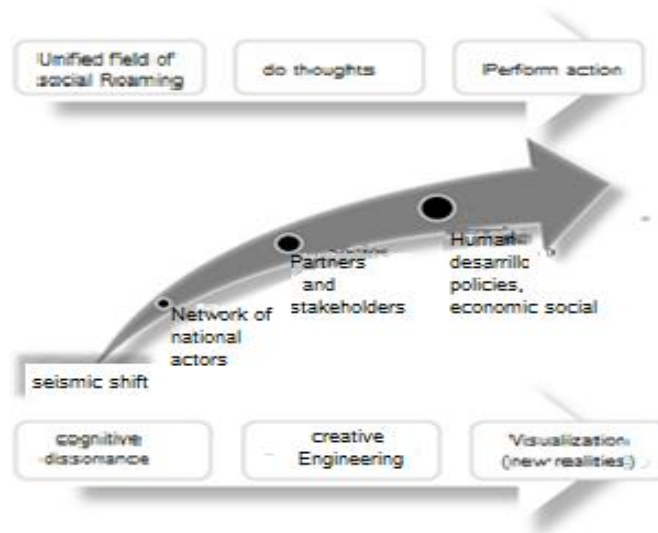
Currently, a wide variety of landscapes and monuments contribute to making the European Pyrénées-Méditerranée region a global destination in which sustainable development ambitions aim to unite the regions and interests of actors under the protection of the environment and the conservation of rich heritage. These universal issues contribute to limit the maximal competition logic that exists between the integrated tourist territories of the Euroregion (beaches, resorts, accommodation).

#### **4. Border tourism**

"In the discourse of globalization, borders have been considered to be marginal sites; however, borders are now one of the most important spaces in the world" (Delgado, 2010). Transit areas along the border. So being for only hours from a place does not mean being in a real contact. In the case of Andorra, the nearby customer (essentially the most frequent) goes up to Andorra for shopping or to spend a day, dropping by more than traveling. "One of the elements that make up our reality is precisely the interaction, bond or relationship that occurs between individuals and groups, and at this point seems to have its rationale ARS". (Gualda, 2005) "[...] that is defining the hybridization is a good starting point for understanding the cultural context that permeates the images border." (Delgado, 2010)

Given the possibilities of integration of tourism destinations in the border considering the phenomenon of globalization, the influence of quality and competitive building networks with systems approach (see Figure 2), and the potential for tourist destinations under one brand in the border region (Cuevas, 2011). Moreover, Understanding the mechanisms that facilitate the flows between neighbouring countries enables the identification of barriers and / or developmental possibilities that may otherwise have been overlooked. Moreover, inefficiencies may be identified and remedial action initiated. (Prideaux, 2005: 796). In this sense, the [...]a development model must recognize that while tourism growth hinges on a destination's locational attributes, and forces generated wholly Within it, also it depends on a multitude of factors transcending political boundaries, such as the interaction of local and international agents of tourism development, as well as the nature of tourism demand (Ioannides, 1989:713).

Figure 2. **Acceleration forces of creative tourism and changing the dimensions space – time (new constellations and social realities)**



Source: Molina (2011:50-51)

The seismic shift in the network, involves partners and socioeconomic development. This requires,

[...] the expansion of cross-border tourism phenomenological view, not only with cultural resources, property, infrastructure, and from the perspective of the actors and stakeholders is due to the combination of the criteria of collaboration and community structure border. In this context, it is interesting to analyze how the combination of different variables favors or affect the interaction between the actors and stakeholders, for it contributes network analysis with the observation of structural grade and composition of the relations between them (Cuevas, Carmona & Zizaldra en Cuevas-Contreras & Palafox Muñoz, 2012).

Because: "Creative tourism is based on collaboration, in living in balance with nature, respecting the culture, people, groups, looking for the human, economic and social" (Molina, 2011:50). Thus, there is a reliance on resilience as its core strategy, which consists of building capacity, increasing the flexibility and autonomy of the community and individuals.

## 5. Principality of Andorra and Tourism

The Principality of Andorra is located in the upper area of the eastern Pyrenees, between the French regions of Midi-Pyrenees and Languedoc-Roussillon, and the autonomous Region of Catalonia, Andorra is a mountain (altitude 1997 meters) accessible only by road. The Principality is accessible through the tunnel d'Envalira about 2100 meters long coming from France or by Sant Julia de Loria south coming from Spain. The border of Sant Julia is the lowest point of the Principality at about 870 meters.

### 5.1. Socio-economic evolution of Andorra

A rural and geographically isolated country, the Principality of Andorra lived essentially within an agro-forestry-pastoral economy until the 50s (see Figure 3). The country is divided into seven parishes: Andorra la Vella, Canillo, Encamp, La Massana, Escaldes, Ordino, and Sant Julia de Loria.

Figure 3. Andorra Population by Parish

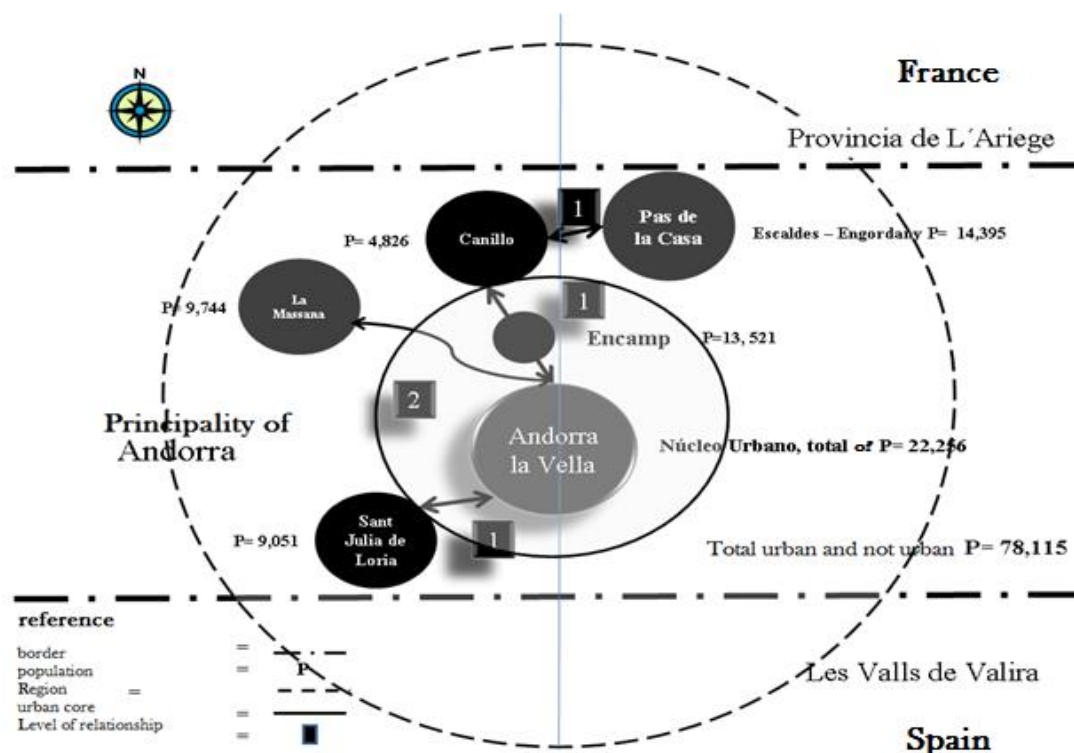


Source: Authors' calculations based Censos parroquials dels Comuns, Sèries amb periodicitat mensual 2011 [online] [www.estadistica.ad](http://www.estadistica.ad). Asked in October 2012.

The launch, in 1957, of the first ski lifts at the border point of Pas de la Casa (Encamp Parish), began development of winter tourism (skiing) and shopping (Comas d'Argemir, 2002).

Since the 1950s, Andorra demonstrated brilliant economic development from the sale of imported goods without taxes, attracting more and more tourists from France and Spain. With the development of tourism began a real estate boom that accelerated the development of the fields of Andorra. This transformation of Andorran society generated a significant growth in local standard of living and strengthened the country's dependence on tourism and trade.

Figure 4. Core of the principality of Andorra and level of interaction



Source: Authors' calculations based Censos parroquials dels Comuns, Sèries amb periodicitat mensual 2011 [online] [www.estadistica.ad](http://www.estadistica.ad). Asked in October 2012.

Tourism in Andorra is becoming increasingly diversified. While trade contributes 18% to the Interim Product (GDP), reported hospitality industry only 7.9% to GDP, accounting for 25.9% of totals GDP (See, Andorra Xifres, 2011). In 2011 alone, nine million visitors, tourists and hikers visited the country. "The main purpose of visit is shopping (50%) and entertainment (27%)" (Government of Andorra, 2012:6).

## 5.2. Andorra and its approaches

This bill, limited in scope, since it carries an exchange of territory between France and the Principality of Andorra surfaces 15,595 m<sup>2</sup> respectively, nevertheless, will by its adoption, improve clearly the road link between the two countries (see Table 1), which is undergoing a single lane, saturated summer and winter dangerous, because of its altitude. (Roujas, 2001).

Table 1. **Border Crossings car to Andorra by Spain and France**

Cruces	2009	Variation	2010	Variation	2011	2012 Acumulado (1o. al 9o mes)
Automobile's	4,055,152	+40,366	4,095,518	-22,394	4,073,124	3,041,462

Source: Authors and Ministeri de Justícia i Interior / Departament de Protecció Civil i Gestió d'Emergències, 2011 [on line] [www.estadistica.ad/](http://www.estadistica.ad/) Asked in October 2012.

Cross-border cooperation must be examined from the joint development of infrastructure in the Midi-Pyrenees, Languedoc-Roussillon, Andorra and the airport in Spanish territory, in Seo de Urgel. A geographical approach will demonstrate better the territorial dynamics that generate and conditions of the transport (see Table 2).



Table 2. Visitors coming to Andorra by Spain and France

Tourism	2006	Variation	2007	Variation	2008	2009 Accumulated (1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> months)
Visitants	10.736.722	-2,8%	10.743.201	0,1%	10.193.749	2.837.646

Source: Authors and Ministeri de Justícia i Interior / Departament de Protecció Civil i Gestió d'Emergències, 2011 [on line] [www.estadistica.ad/](http://www.estadistica.ad/) Asked in October 2012.

With the fast development of tourism and trade, tourism traffic shifted rapidly towards Andorra, highlighting the need of better communication infrastructure.

Certainly, several projects in the development of communication infrastructures have been carried out these last 10 years in the area of Andorra (Tunnel du Puymorens 1994; Tunnel d'Envalira 2002), and yet this does consider the details of traffic, the tunnel now many projects are left now slowed or stalled by the lack of resources linked to the economic and financial crisis in Europe.

### 5.2.1. Tunnel d' Envalira, E9, French border

With the need to build a faster and more secure access to the country from France, avoiding the Port d'Envalira (2407 meters, the highest in the Pyrenees) and the tourist development and border of Pas de la Casa, it was decided to build the tunnel of Envalira in 1998, which opened in September 2002. (Timothy, Guia & Berthet, 2012).

Via the west opening of the tunnel, the Envalira tunnel is accessible through a detour of the main road to Andorra number 2 (see Table 3). The diversion is located at km 23, about 300 meters before the turn off to the ski slopes of Grau Roig. The east mouth of the tunnel, is accessible by French Route Nationale No. 22 from the roundabout, which connects the viaduct over the River Ariège, this is the toll plaza and the control building and Offices the Concessionaire.

With the tunnel, distances shortened and also did times, now it's possible to access the communities in the principality quickly:

Table 3. Distances and times from the tunnel

Community	Distance/ kilometers	Time/ Minutes
Andorra la Vella	26,9	32
Canillo	15,5	18
Encamp	19,7	24
La Massana	30.2	39
Escaldes-Engordany	24,2	30
Ordino	32.9	44
Sant Julia de Loria	33	46

Source: Authors' calculations based on Globalvia – Túnel d'Envalira [on line]

[www.tuneldenalira.com](http://www.tuneldenalira.com) / Asked in October 2012.

The Valira Valley, Andorra's real backbone, is now better connected to the high French Ariège valley which houses the Pas de la Casa, and beyond with the E9 European road linking the cities of Toulouse in France in Barcelona (Catalonia). Extending this road motorway between Tarascon-sur-Ariege and the Catalan city of Berga (two-way stretch), was designed to allow more trade between Toulouse and Barcelona without going through the border point of Perthus, in the region of Languedoc-Roussillon. The Principality of Andorra is interested in the improvement of the E9 to be able to connect to two major industrial cities which constitute the two major sources of proximity tourism for Andorra.

The works of the E9 splitting between Tarascon-sur-Ariege and l'Hospitalet-près-l'Andorre, are challenged with the decline of the French state appropriations for the improvement of this road. The road that bypasses the two villages of Tarascon-sur-Ariege or / and d'Ax-les-Thermes has already fallen years behind [construction], despite heavy daily traffic through the villages Andorra and Midi-Pyrenees.

### 5.2.2. Train Station l'Hospitalet

This station is located in the province of l'Ariège about 7km from the Pas de la Casa, is the main rail access to the principality of Andorra from Toulouse ([www.ter-sncf.com](http://www.ter-sncf.com), 2012) or from

Barcelona with transfer in Latour-de -Carol. Lately, the Conseil Régional Midi-Pyrenees has invested 31 million euros for the maintenance of railway Toulouse-Latour-de-Carol ([www.ariegenews.com](http://www.ariegenews.com), 2012). In Catalonia, a plan for renovation and maintenance of the railway line Barcelona-Latour-de-Carol has reduced travel time in about 43 minutes between Barcelona and Puigcerdà (<http://premsa.gencat.cat/>, 2012) .

### *5.2.2. N145-Sant Julia de Loria, Spanish border*

Even though a large portion of the tourist flow in and out of Andorra goes throughby the border point of Sant Julia de Loria, the Spanish state road N145 which unites this point with the Catalan town of La Seu d'Urgell suffers from its poor condition, by chronic lack of credits allocated to its improvement or maintenance. ([www.elperiodicdandorra](http://www.elperiodicdandorra.com), 2012).

### *5.2.3. Airport / airfield Seu d'Urgell*

Opened two years ago (2010), this airport was renovated and rearranged to accommodate regional jets to serve the principality ([www.aeroportlaseu.cat](http://www.aeroportlaseu.cat)). The traffic generated also remains limited. Tour operators are still flying to Toulouse-Blagnac, or Barcelona-el Prat or Girona to take tourists to Andorra. The new airport of Lleida l'Alguaire ([www.aeroportlleida.cat](http://www.aeroportlleida.cat), 2012) which was built to serve of the ski resorts in the Pyrenees, does not have the expected traffic. The defection of Pyrenair ([www.lavanguardia.com/](http://www.lavanguardia.com/), 2012) and several airlines (Vueling and Ryanair) for lack of traffic, has not allowed this airport to become a factor in the tourism flow generated to Andorra.

Seven roads connect the communities of the Principality of Andorra (See Figure 5), three communities are linked by this road system, in which only one of them has a railway station in the French area and a nearby airport in the Spanish area.

### 5.2.3. Bus transboundary

According to Table 4, several companies connect to the stations or the airports of Toulouse, Barcelona, Girona and Lleida the Principality of Andorra ([www.frogbus.com](http://www.frogbus.com), [www.andorrabus.com](http://www.andorrabus.com), [www.andorradirectbus.es](http://www.andorradirectbus.es)) regularly.

Table 4. Table of distances from Andorra

Community	Country	Distance (km)	Transport
La Seu d'Urgel	Spain	10	
Lleida	Spain	141	<i>Plane/Train</i>
Barcelona	Spain	208	<i>Plane/Train</i>
Madrid	Spain	613	<i>Plane/Train</i>
L'Hospitalet	France	15	<i>Train</i>
Foix	France	76	<i>Plane/Train</i>
Perpignan	France	128	<i>Plane/Train</i>
Toulouse	France	185	<i>Plane/Train</i>
Paris	France	861	<i>Plane/Train</i>

Source: Authors' calculations based on the official Andorra Tourism Website  
[on line] [www.andorra.ad](http://www.andorra.ad) / Asked in October 2012.

In connection with the above bus routes to the Principality of Andorra, Frogbus, founded by two Irishmen Shannon, J. & Whatmore, A. (2012, Personal interview, June in Perpignan, France) began operating a line from Perpignan to Girona center and Girona airport, operating now routes Barcelona-Andorra, Andorra-Girona airport, and Toulouse-Andorra.

The offer has been compensated (see Table 5) for at least five communities from whence leave buses that target Andorra with companies like Novatel, Alsina Graells, Directbus, La Hispano, among others.

Table 5. Bus routes to Andorra

Community	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<b>A. Barcelona aeropuerto del Prat</b>	A.1.Novatel. www.andorraybus.com. Servicio diario (excepto 20/12 y 01/01).	A.2.Directbus. www.andorradirectbus.es	
<b>B. Barcelona Ciutat</b>	B.1.Alsina Graells (Grupo ALSA)/ North Station. (<> Arc de Triomf). Daily service by various routes. www.alsa.es	B.2.Directbus. Estación de Sants (<> Sants) www.andorradirectbus.es	
<b>C. Lleida (estación: c/ Saracibar, 2 – Av. Madrid)</b>	C.1.Alsina Graells (Grupo Alsa)/ -(AVE)—www.alsa.es. Bus Station Lleida to Andorra	C.2.Viatges Montmantell— <a href="http://www.montmantell.com">www.montmantell.com</a> . Daily service. Home service (Andorra, Escaldes, Sant Julià y Encamp + suplemento)	C.3.Seu D'Urgell- Andorra - La Hispano Andorrana
	C.4.La Seu D'Urgell - Puigcerdà (RENFE) - Alsina Graells (GrupoALSA)/www.alsa.es. Check schedules and prices in the company.	C.5.Viatges Soldevila. www.viatges-soldevila.com	
<b>D. Tarragona</b>	D.1.ViatgesMontmantell <a href="http://www.montmantell.com">www.montmantell.com</a> . Por Tárrega, Montblanc, Valls, Aeropuerto de Reus, Tarragona, Salou, Cambrils, Miami Playa y Hospitalet del Infante.	D.2.La Hispano Igualadina – Diario por Salou, Valls, Montblanc y Ponts	D.3.Reus To Airport/ Daily service <a href="http://www.reustransport.cat">www.reustransport.cat</a>
<b>E. Girona – Aeropuerto Girona / Costa Brava</b>	E.1.Andorra – Vic - Airport Girona/Costa Brava –bus station Girona. NovateLwww.andorraybus.com. Daily service (except 25/12 y 01/01)		

Source: Authors and the official Andorra Tourism Website

[on line] [www.andorra.ad](http://www.andorra.ad) / Asked in October 2012.

Thus, in the current regional structure of tourism in the Principality of Andorra, the decisions and events that emerged from France and Spain are weighty. Clave & Gonzalez (2007:35) argue "[...] the mobility and movement are fundamental concepts to understanding tourism as well as communication and transportation systems that make it possible" (see Figure 5). Go on to argue:

The tourist mobility is not capricious but responds to some flows organized according to the preferences of demand that result in the development of tourist areas or tourist spaces. Although from the technical point of view shifts can be carried on over long distances, [...] much of these flows structured relations of geographical proximity, resulting primarily regional movements (Clave & Gonzalez, 2007: 35-36).



## 6. Conclusion

Tourism and trade upcome the two cornerstones of the current primary internal economy of Andorra. The geographical approach has allowed an understanding of the territorial dynamics generated and conditioned by transportation. An example of this, is Frogbus ([www.frogbus.com](http://www.frogbus.com)) connecting Andorra with the Girona, Barcelona and Toulouse airports. The leaders of this society, two very active Irishmen, say they do not see themselves as actors in cross-border transportation, but as economic actors responding to a demand. Given this response they were told that they were directly within the structure of the euro area regional tourism and fully participant inborder dynamics. Then they explained how public institutions did not play the same role with them according to whether they be the Perpignan, Toulouse, Girona or Barcelona administrations. So, for them, the relationship with institutional stakeholders (Generalitat de Catalunya, Conseil Régional Midi-Pyrénées et Languedoc-Roussillon, Conseil Général des Pyrénées-Orientales) is question of love and hate. They were questioned about their relationship with Andorra, at the institutional level.

The principality's tourist activity is not based on the traditional attractions but rather relies on the economic and legal advantages that the country offers to visitors, while in Spain the current economic context [current] of lack of public subsidieshas almost suspended any traffic at the recent opened Lleida-Alguaire (Lérida) airport. So the chance of traffic to the principality from Lleida-Alguaire declined considerably, remaining alive thanks to Thomas Cook Tour Operator flights on weekends during the ski season.

On the other hand, Barcelona airport by its intense work activity is the main aerial hub by which to reach Andorra. While on the north side of the Pyrenées, Toulouse airport is an important base for many English tour operators, but there also the operating costs are rising. So as aresult of the economic crisis, airport charges are rising around Andorra and this will impact all tourist flows to the "Country of the Pyrenees".

Also held up was the motorway project, the Ax-les-Thermes Cadi tunnel, which is the last missing link in the Toulouse-Barcelona shortest and direct axis along by highway in the Pyrenees. Andorra participated in the financing of this project, but for now it remains on hold. The solution lies in the influence and decisions taken from the greater urban centers of the Pyrénées-Mediterranée Euroregion, Montpellier, Toulouse and Barcelona.

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