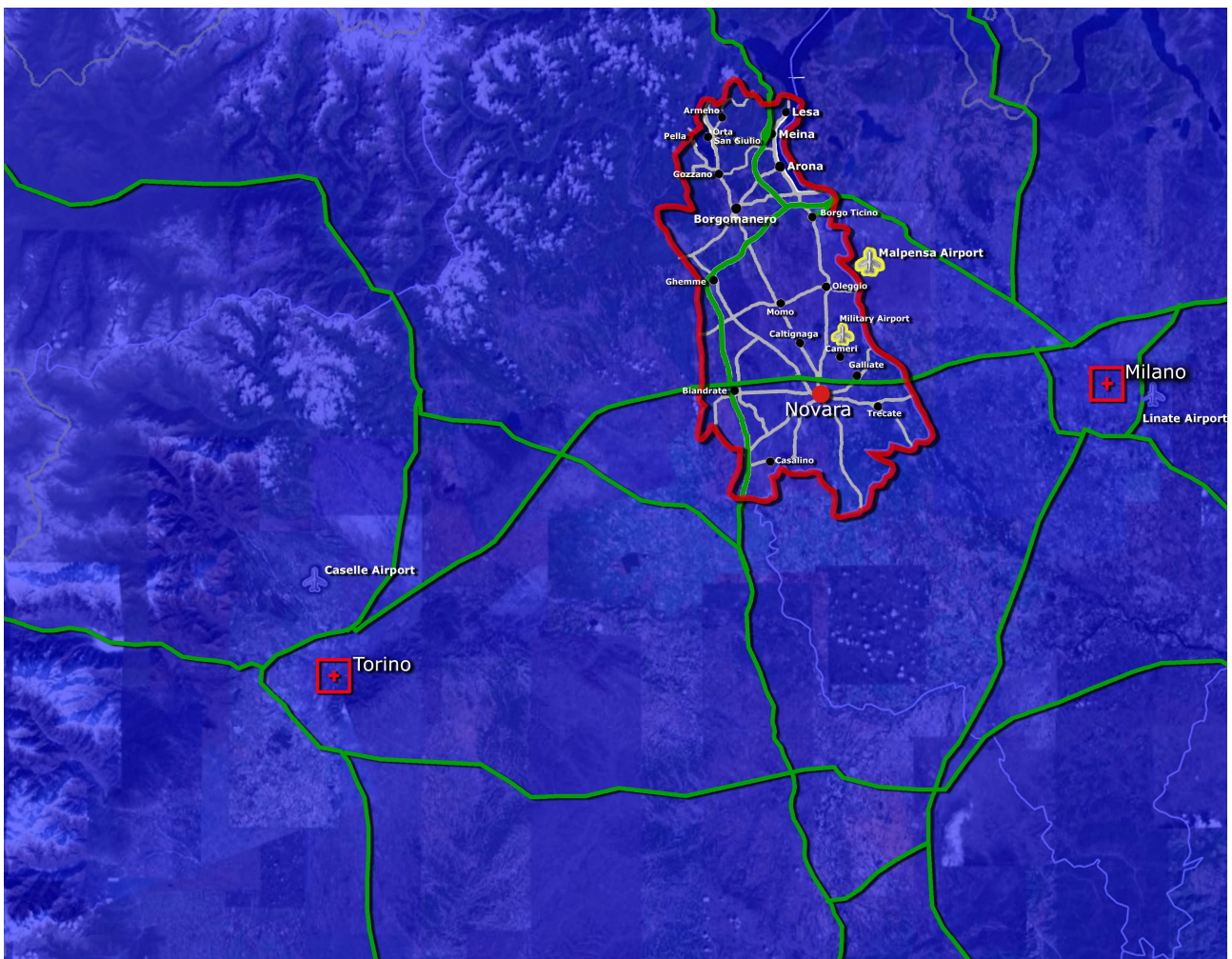


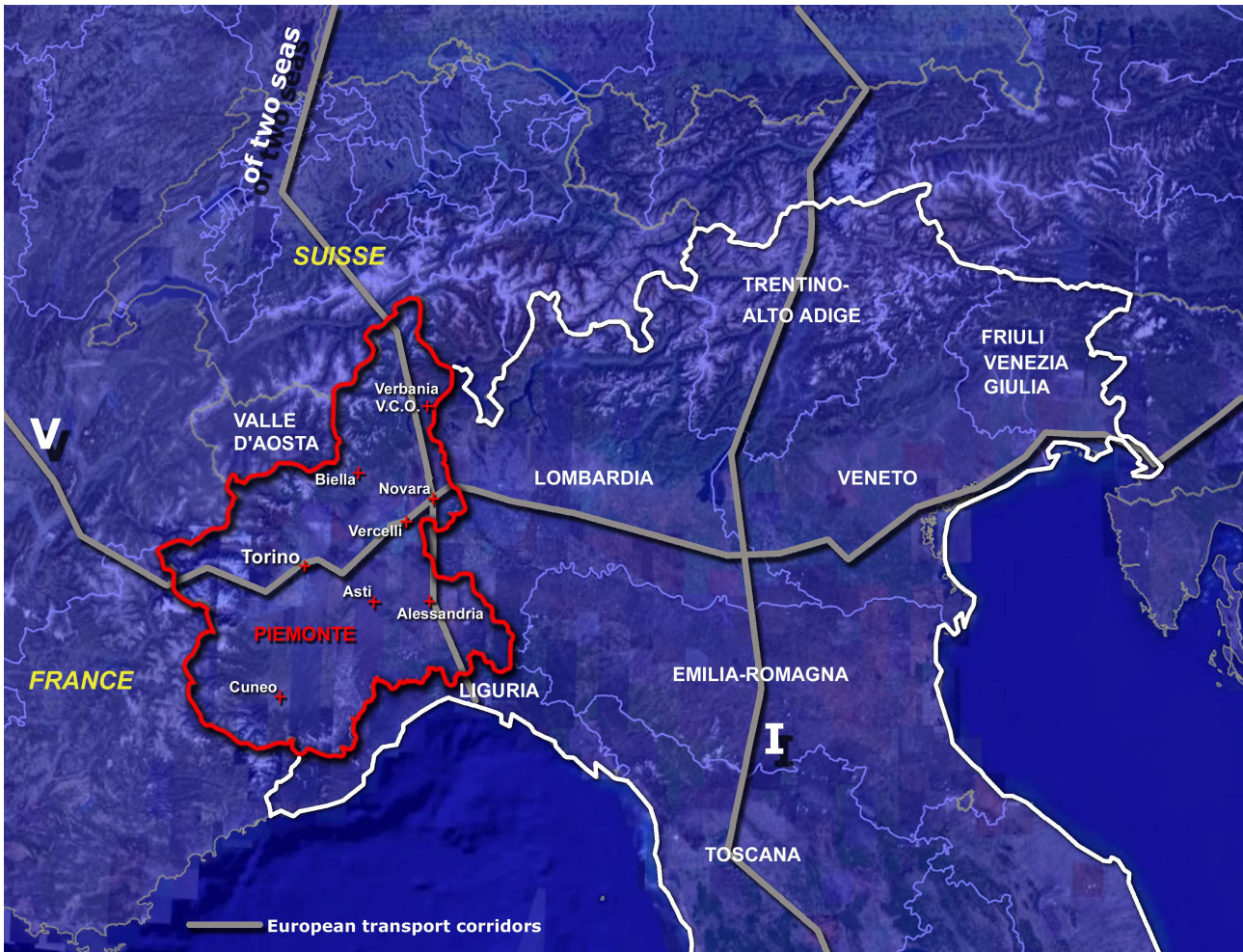
4.2.1 The local context

The local area of Novara, localized between the metropolitan region of Milan and Turin, is traditionally considered a “border land”: too far from Turin to play a role as Piedmont's development area, too close to Milan to have a specific geographical identity since it is considered a part of Milan's periphery. This geographic location entails a high price in terms of identity - Novara's destiny was too closely linked to that of Milan's - but, at the same time, enabled this area to become one of the most important industrial region of the North-West of Italy in diverse sectors: such as publishing (De Agostini), food-production (Pavesi) and the chemical industry (Donegani, Alcoa, etc.).



The intense development of Novara's industrial sector and its proximity to Milan's urban centre has greatly influenced Novara's growth in terms of structure and land consumption. In the years of great urban expansion (from post-war to around the 70's) the settlement growth has felt the affect of these two factors, jumping from less than 70,000 to 100,000 inhabitants in the span of twenty years with considerable soil consumption. The phenomenon will continue for at least a decade until the current settlement of the city in the shape of a star, thus defining due to a not very coherent and badly controlled urban expansion that has developed along the main transport roads which connected the city center with the agricultural zone, with the rural reality very near to the city.




With the spread of globalisation and the crisis of traditional economies since the '90s, Novara was involved in a deep transformation process of territorial and economical structure, forcing the local actors to think in a more autonomous way. In particular the geographic location between the two high capacity European railroad corridors, North-South (Antwerp-Genoa) and East-West (Lisbon-Kyiv), and the proximity with Malpensa Intercontinental Airport (with all the joined rail and road connections) allowed the region to play a new role in central European areas.



From a social-occupational point of view you must record, like the rest of in the entire Northwest Italian sector, first and foremost an increase in the age of the resident population. The phenomenon is only in part balanced by the generational replacement due to the EU (Eastern European countries) and non-European (primarily central North African and Asian) immigration that in spite of everything allows the city to maintain a near constant number of its own inhabitants, attested by a little more than 100,000 together. This has brought a significant change in the requested services and the necessity of services of the people that precisely in the area have immediate repercussions. On one hand the requests of services oriented towards a more adult population are on the rise and on the other hand there is the need for investment in the education and integration of diverse social classes, beginning with the youngest.

Another important dynamic regards the occupational and professional scenario of the last ten years. The decline of the traditional industrial sector has brought vast movements with significant transfers of workers

from the manufacturing sector to the tertiary sector, quaternary sector and services. In fact, there has been a rapid absorption in the tertiary sector and of autonomous professions for manpower coming out from the productive structures. This has contributed also to a re-structuring of the city's social structure with the destination of foreign labor with low professional specialization. The occupational increase in the sectors of research and training is interesting instead, given to the openness and development of more university disciplines. In this case, however, the staff has already a strong commuting nature that has repercussion on the flows of cars and trains.

Flag:		Flag:		Flag:	
					
Piedmont Region		Province of Novara		Municipality of Novara	
Regional Capital:	Torino	Provincial Capital:	Novara		
Surface (kmq) :	25.400	Surface (kmq) :	1.339	Surface (kmq) :	103
Population (n°persons):	4.350.167	Population (n°persons):	356.720	Population (n°persons) :	102.791
Population Density (n°persons/ kmq) :	171,27	Population Density (n°persons/ kmq) :	264,20	Population Density (n°persons/ kmq) :	990
Provincial Administrations (number):	8				
Municipal Districts (number):	1.206	Municipal Districts (number):	88		
				Districts (number):	13
				Altitude (metres above sea level) :	162
				Latitude:	45°27' 0" N
				Longitude:	8°37' 0" E