

# **Introduzione all'utilizzo di FPGA in esperimenti di Fisica**

**Introduzione alle Tecniche di Trigger e Data Acquisition in Esperimenti di Fisica**

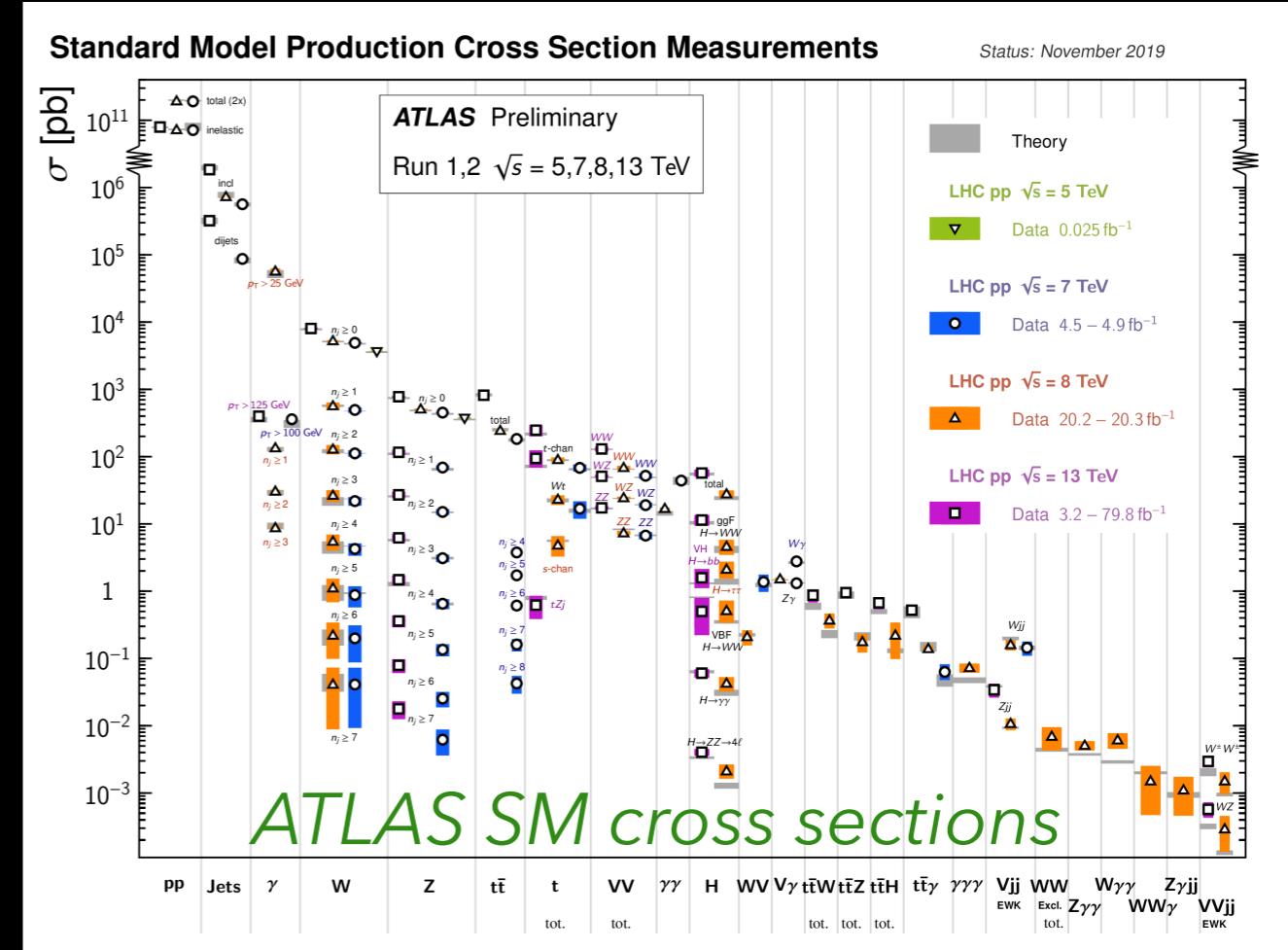
**Napoli, 9 ottobre 2023**

Riccardo Vari - INFN Roma

# Trigger systems for High Energy Physics experiments

# HEP event rate in a collider

- LHC nominal luminosity:  
 $10^{34} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$
- LHC proton-proton **inelastic** cross section:  $\sim 90 \text{ mb}$
- Cross section for most of the SM processes:  $\sim 1 \text{ fb}$
- LHC inelastic event rate at nominal luminosity: luminosity  $\times$  cross section =  $10^{34} \times 90 \times 10^{-3} \times 10^{-24} = 900 \text{ million/s}$
- SM events rate:  $10^{34} \times 1 \times 10^{-15} \times 10^{-24} = 10^{-5} = 1 \text{ every 2.8 hours}$

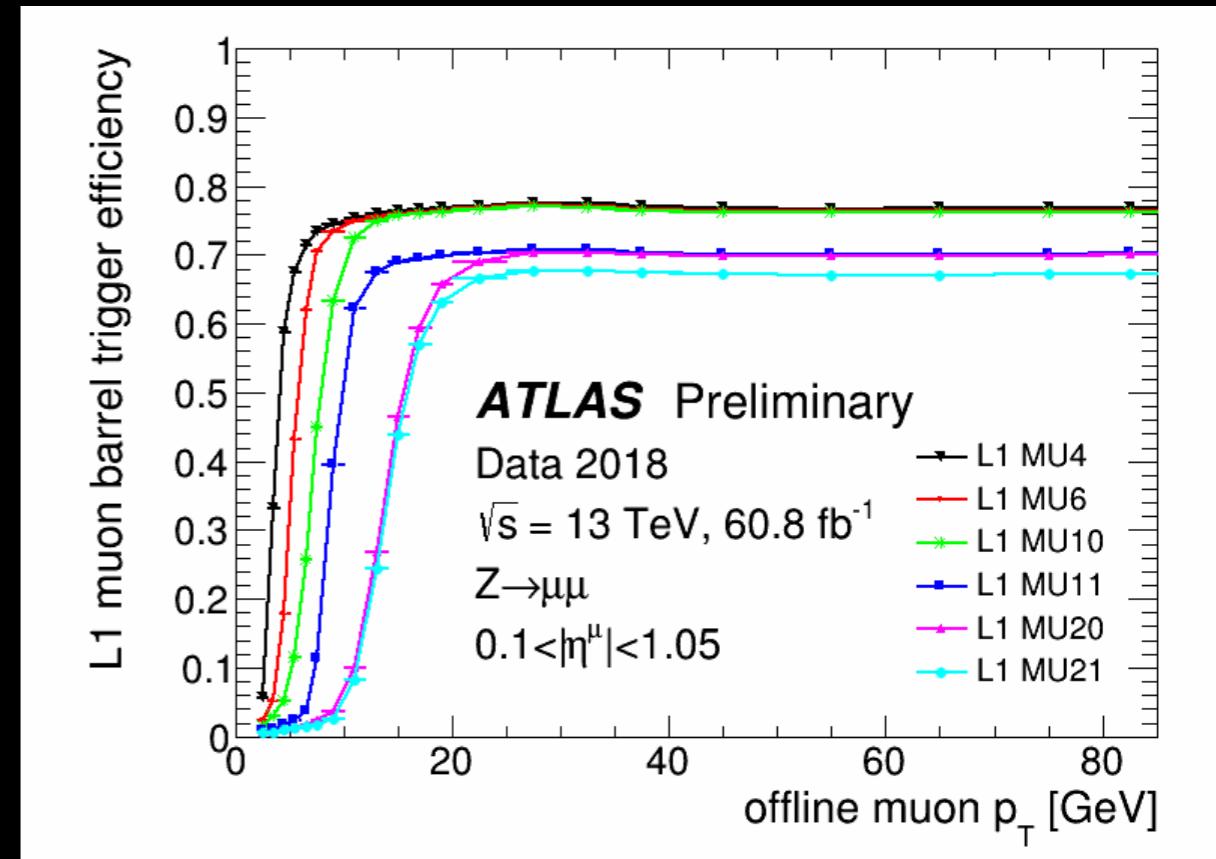


# HEP data rate

- LHC experiments:
  - Data size for a typical event up to ~MB per Bunch Crossing (ATLAS, CMS)
  - Total data rate before selection: ~TB/s
- Two possibilities:
  - Record all the produced event (if you can, then select and study them offline)
  - Record only the interesting events using a real-time system
- A trigger system allows to distinguish interesting signals from background, and to select rare events
- Trigger-able events in HEP: electrons, gamma, muons, jets, ...
  - Trigger conditions: geometrical, energy or  $p_T$  cut, topological selection, ...
- Data flow: Beam Crossing → Detector → Trigger → Data Acquisition → Storage

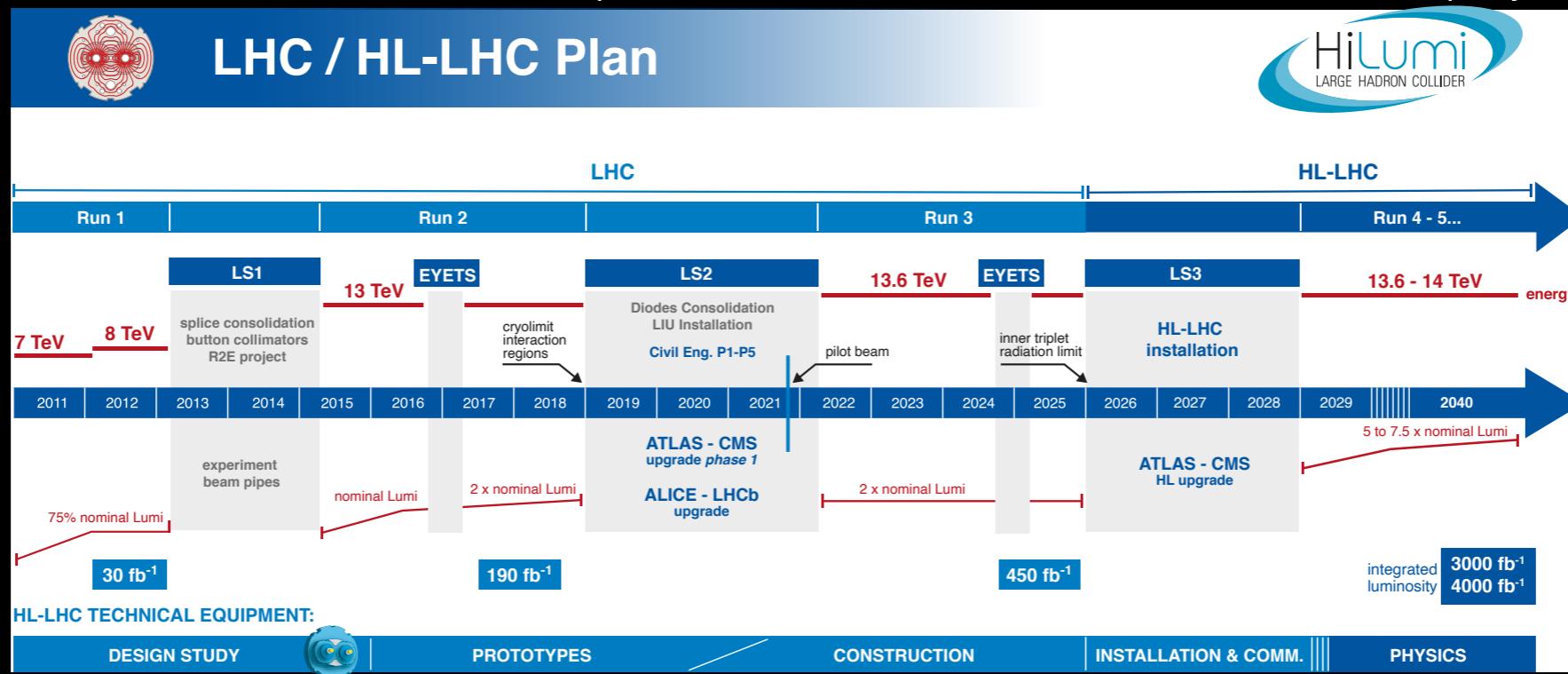
# HEP Trigger Parameters

- Collision frequency: 40 MHz for LHC (multiple events originated at each collision)
- Event size:  $\sim 1$  MB for ATLAS or CMS
- Data acquisition write bandwidth:  $\sim 1$  kHz for ATLAS/CMS
- Latency: time needed to take the hardware trigger decision (few  $\mu$ s for ATLAS/CMS)
- Efficiency: % of accepted interesting events (turn-on curve)
- Rejection: % of rejected not-interesting events
- Dead-time: % of time the trigger system cannot process events (for failures, out-of-memory states, ...). Dead-time causes inefficiency
- Synchronisation: keeping track of the event identifier during the full triggering process. Loss of sync causes inefficiency



# The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN

<https://hilumilhc.web.cern.ch/content/hl-lhc-project>

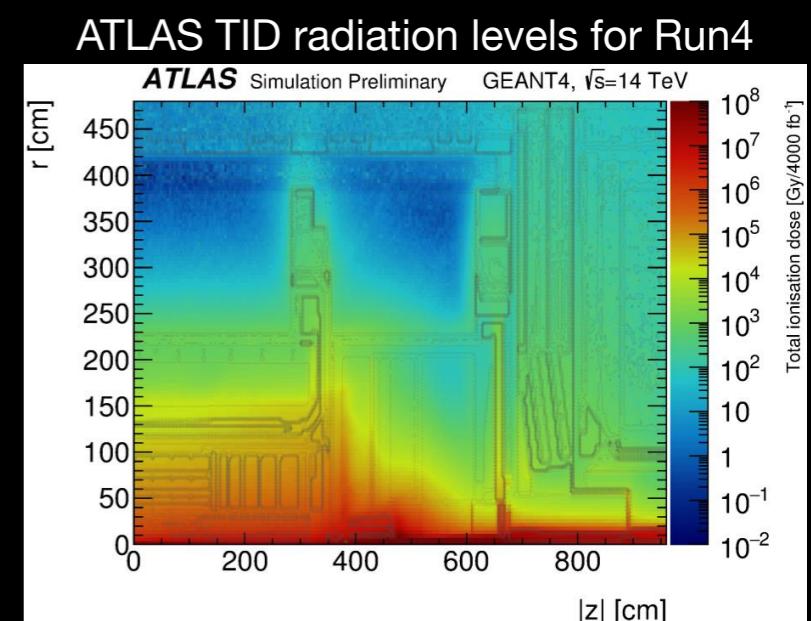
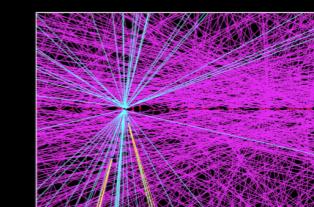
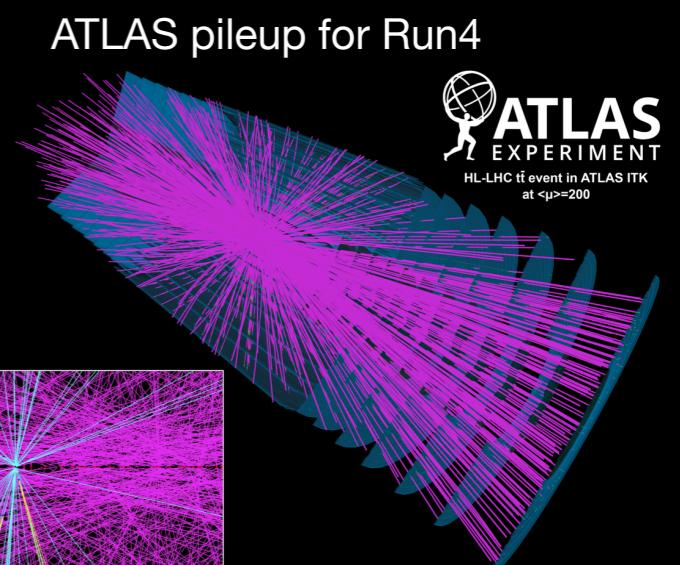


- 27 km p-p circular accelerator
- 2835 + 2835 bunches in the LHC ring
- $10^{11}$  protons/bunch
- 40 MHz collision rate
- Most of the interesting events are rare
- Readout channels: ~90 millions (ATLAS and CMS), ~1 million (LHCb and ALICE)

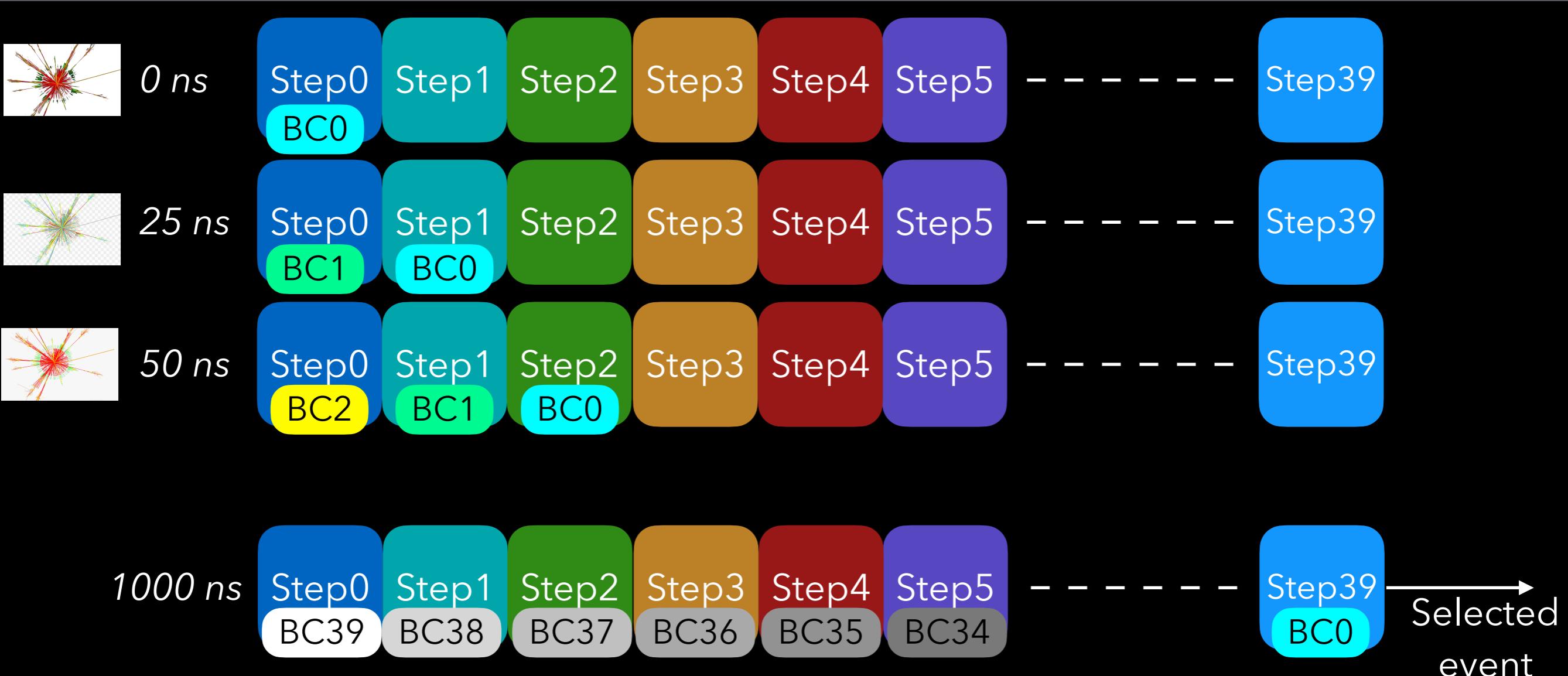


# Increasing luminosity impact on LHC experiments

- High luminosity is needed to achieve physics goals
- The experiment has to stand the Run4 foreseen peak luminosity of  $7.5 \times 10^{34} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$ 
  - high **pile-up** ~200 collisions/crossing for Run4
  - high **radiation levels**, up to ~ $10^{16} \text{ neq/cm}^2$ , 10 MGy
- Requirements:
  - maintain good **physics performances** in the challenging environment
  - keep acceptable **trigger rate** for low  $p_T$  threshold
  - mitigate pile-up up to high  $\eta$



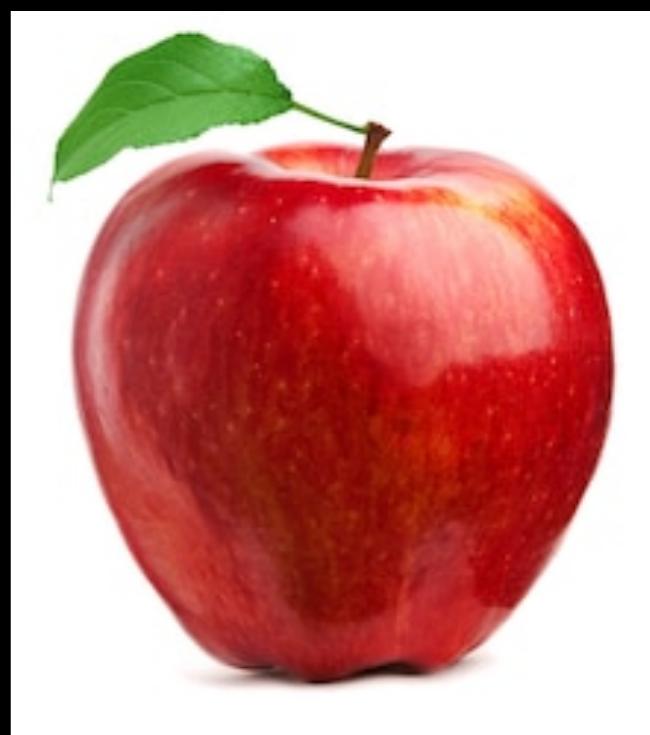
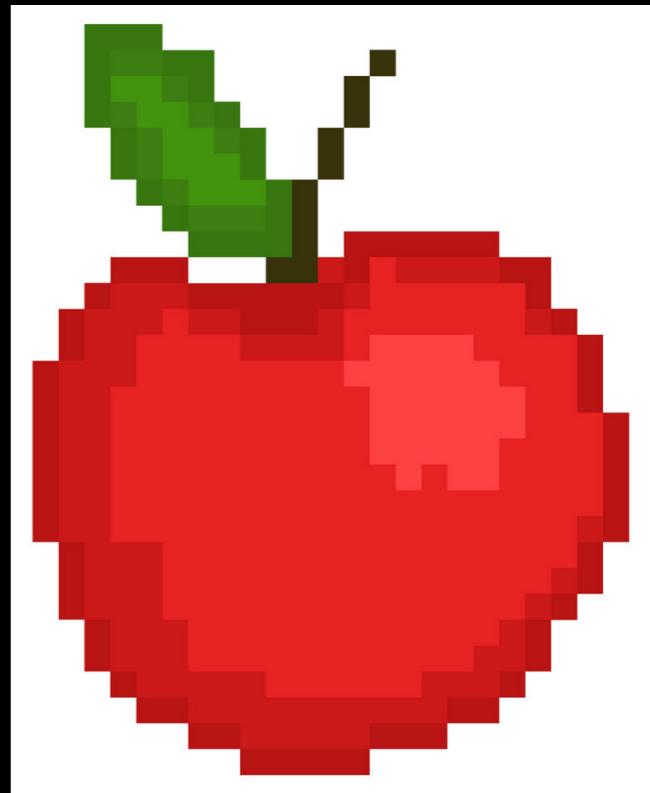
# Pipeline processing in HEP trigger



- One collision every Bunch Crossing (25 ns)
- BC $n$  represents the data of the  $n^{\text{th}}$  Bunch Crossing
- Each step is a different operation made on the BC data to perform the trigger
- Selection process in this example takes 40 steps
- In this example trigger processing rate 40 MHz (1  $\mu$ s trigger latency)

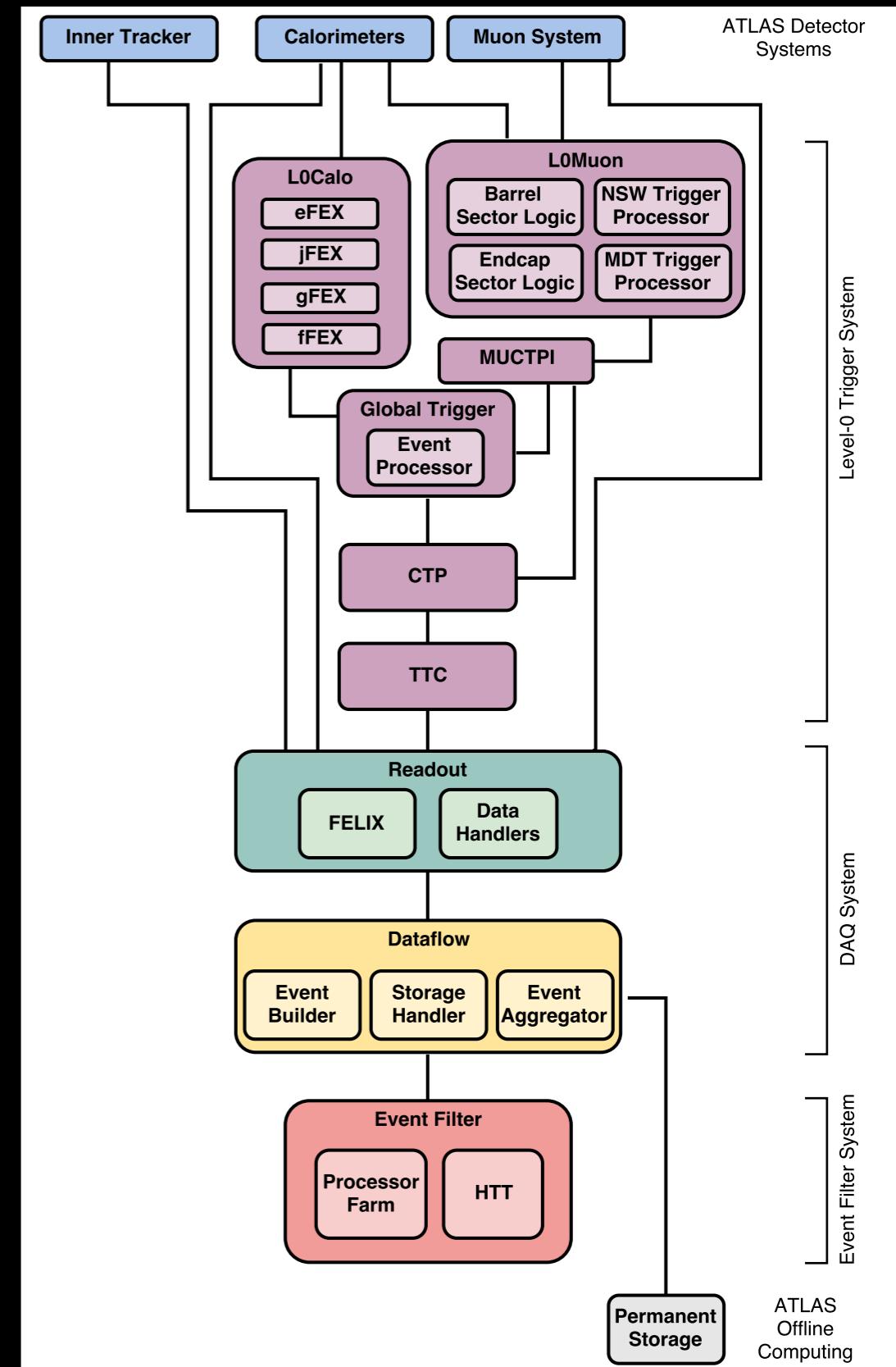
# ATLAS Run3 trigger system

- The Level-1 trigger:
  - hardware system, custom-made electronics
  - Low granularity: works on a subset of information from the calorimeter and muon detectors
  - Low latency: decision  $\sim 2.5\mu\text{s}$  after the collision
  - Pipeline storage: the selected event is retrieved from pipelined buffers
  - Maximum output event rate: 100 kHz
- The High Level Trigger (HLT):
  - Software based trigger, farm of CPUs
  - Refines the selection of the Level-1 trigger
  - Detailed analysis of the detectors full granular information
  - Maximum output event rate: 1 kHz
  - The reconstructed events are passed to the data storage system for offline analysis



# ATLAS Run4 Trigger and DAQ

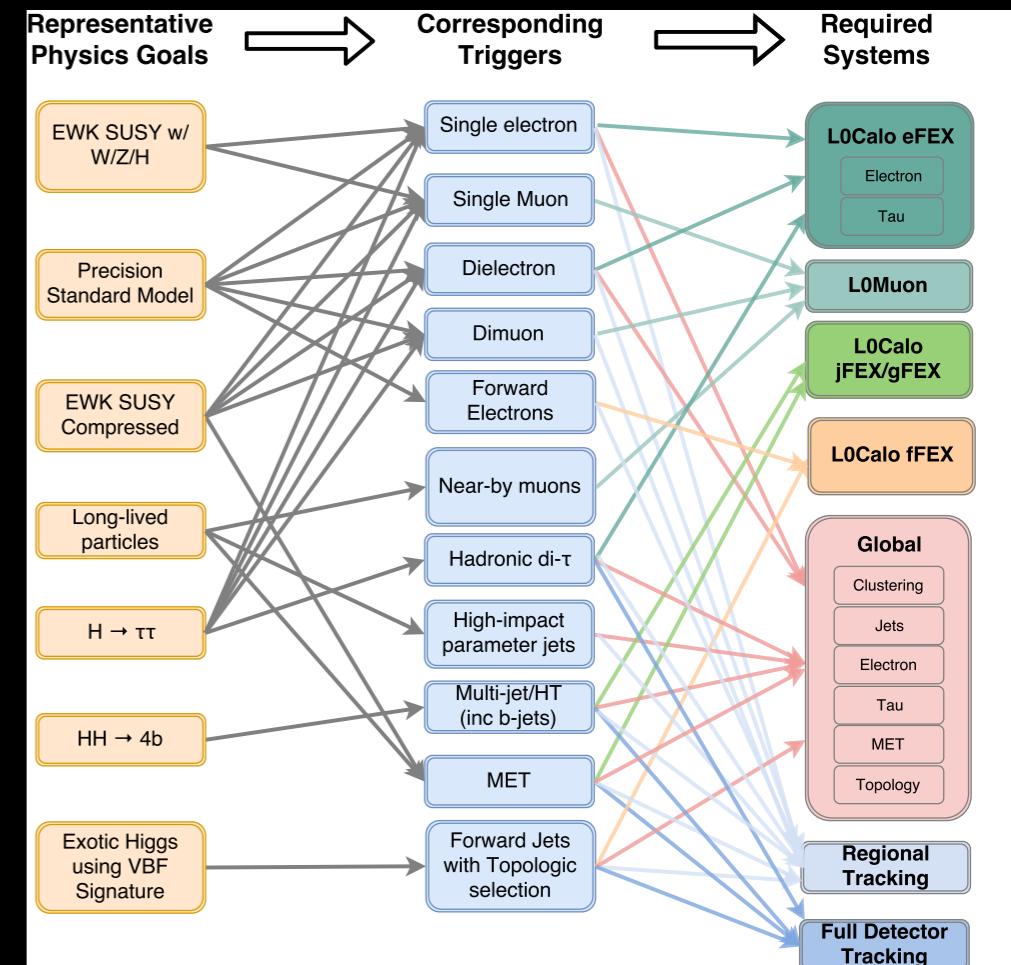
- Calorimeters and muons front-end full granularity readout at 40 MHz
- Level-0 hardware trigger with an output rate of 1 MHz, Level-0 readout latency is 10  $\mu$ s
- Global event processor replaces the Run3 L1Topo and integrates topological functions with additional selection algorithms using information from muons and calorimeters
- Detectors readout based on FELIX system
- FPGA-based boards off-detector, on-detector where possible
- Possible hardware accelerator system for tracking at the Event Filter
- Goal of better e,  $\gamma$ ,  $\tau$ , jet identification and measurement, at hardware and software trigger levels and offline
- Event Filter output rate up to 10 kHz



# ATLAS Run4 TDAQ parameters

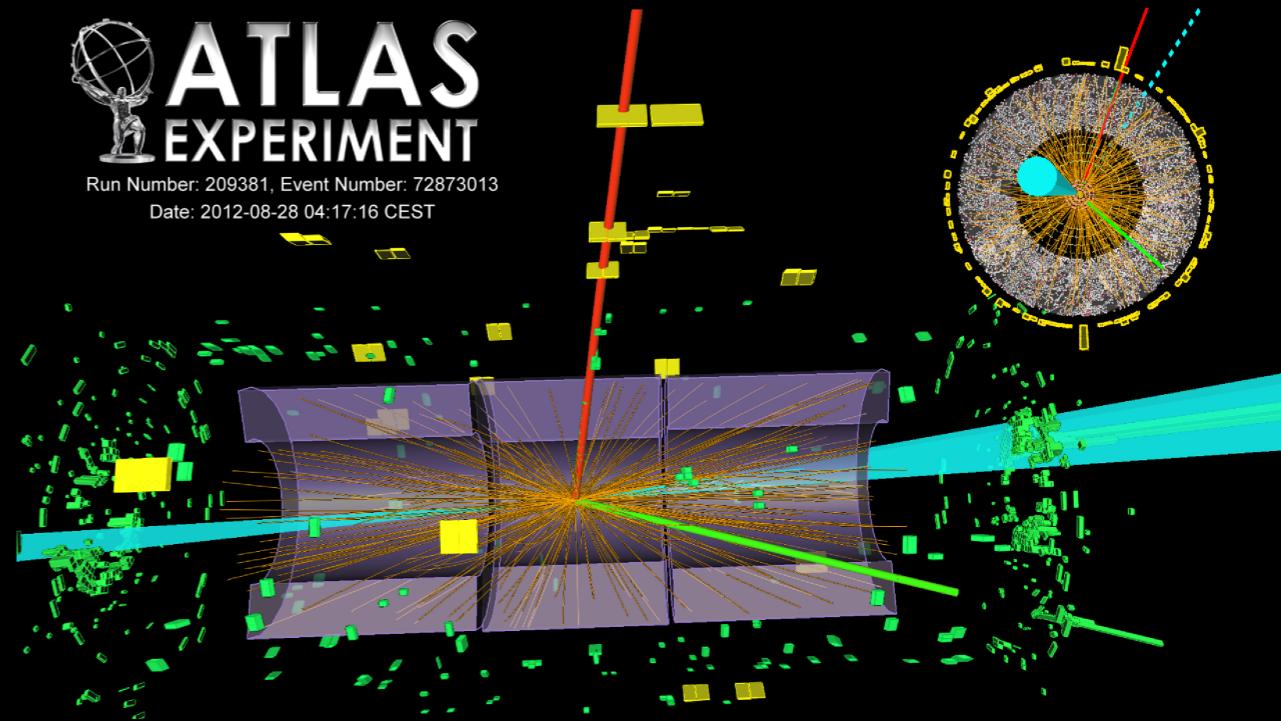
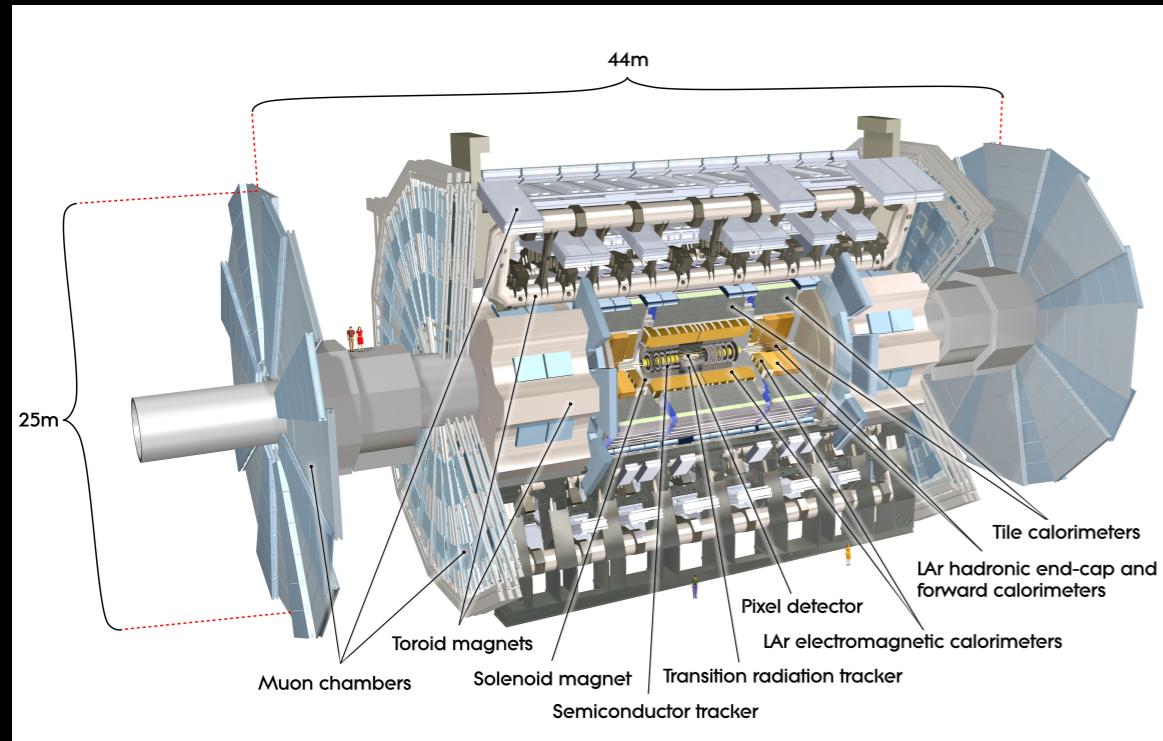
- About 100 million detector channels
- L0 output rate: 1 MHz
- L0 latency: 10  $\mu$ s
- HLT output rate: 10 kHz
- Expected event size ~4.5 MB
- HLT out ~40 GB/s
- L0 hardware: ATCA FPGA-based boards, each board equipped with hundreds of ~10 Gb/s links, SoC FPGA for slow control and monitoring
- Readout hardware: new FELIX board with double PCIe bandwidth (PCIe gen4), 25 Gb/s links
- HLT hardware: CPU-based farm with thousands of servers, each one equipped with 25 Gb/s links
  - hardware accelerators (heterogeneous CPU/GPU/FPGA commodity processors) to reduce the number of servers and to reduce power consumption

## Flow of the physics goals through the hardware systems

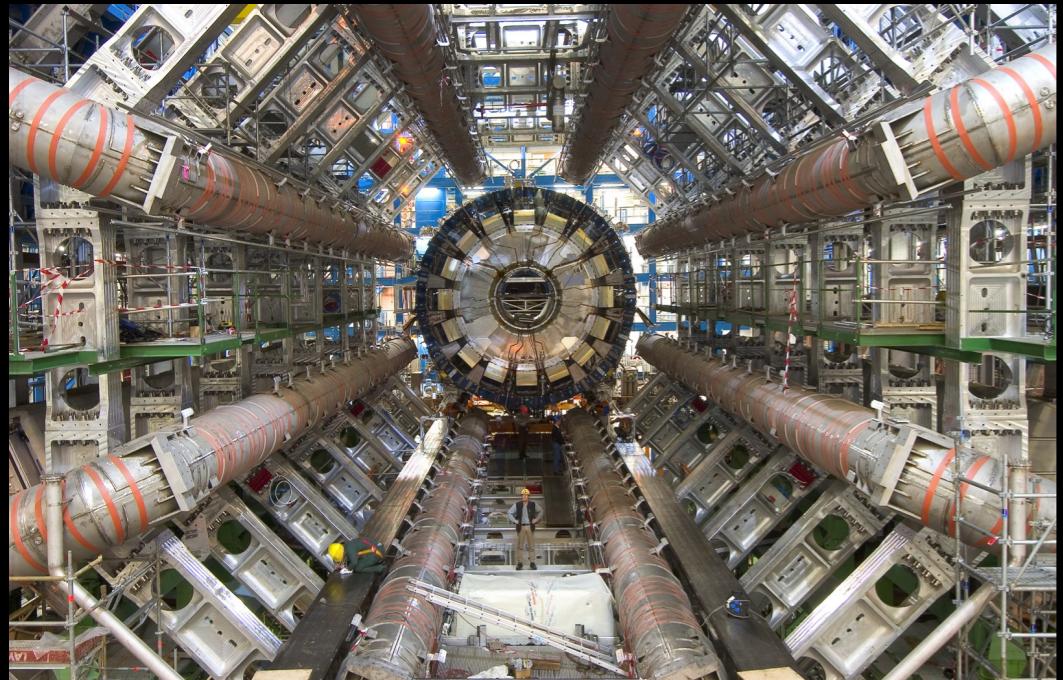


FELIX readout prototype board



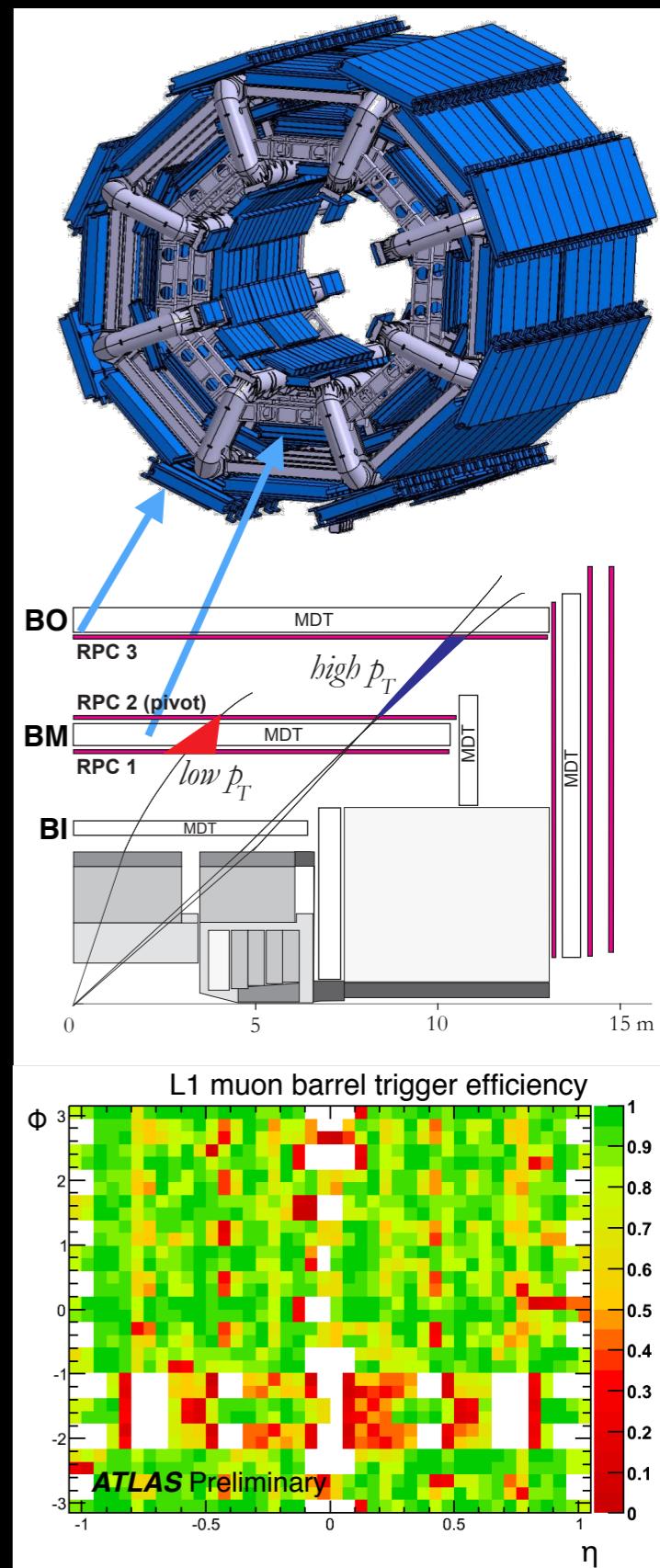


# The First Level Muon Trigger in the Barrel region of the ATLAS experiment



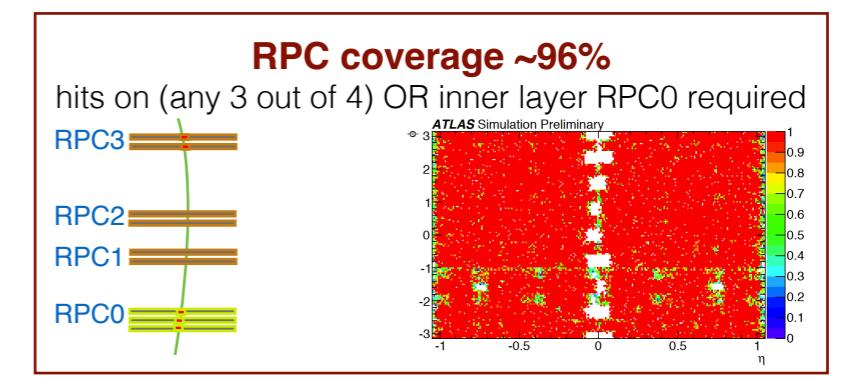
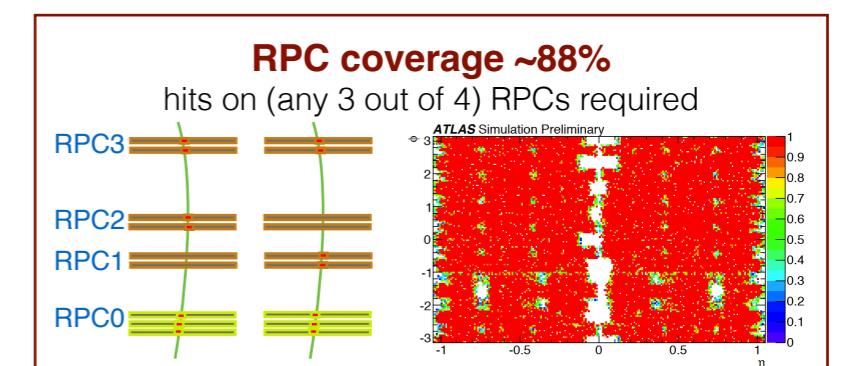
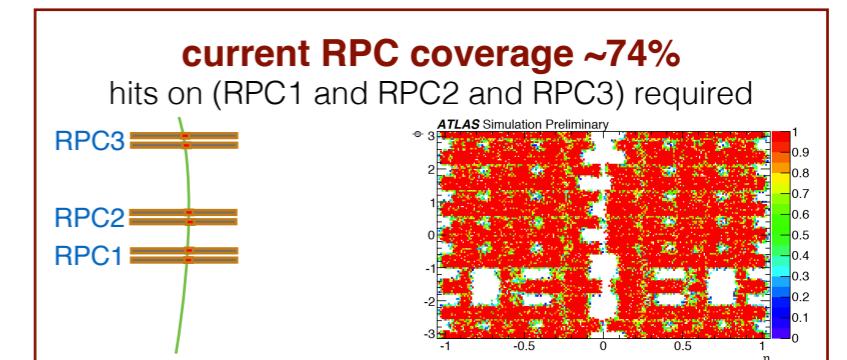
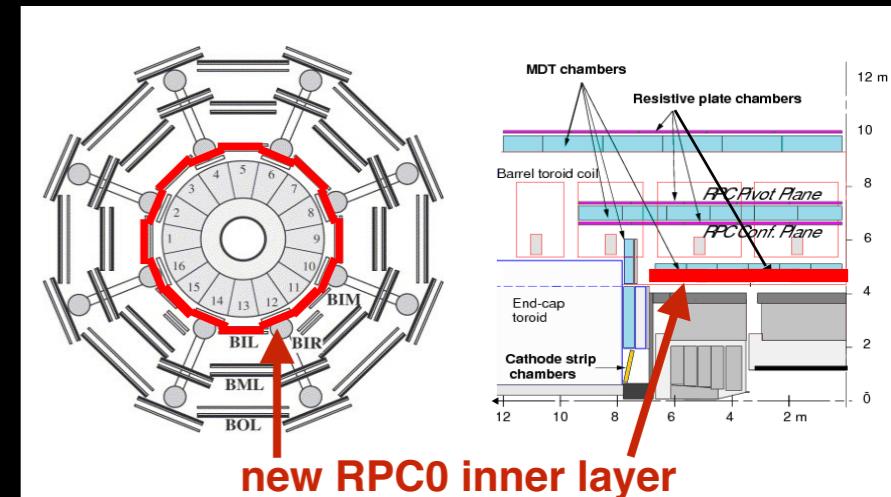
# Run3 Level-1 muon trigger in the barrel region

- Muon detector: Resistive Plate Chamber (RPC). A hit signal is generated when a muon crosses the detector gas gap
- Every 25 ns the trigger system looks for muon **hit coincidences** of three concentric RPC stations
- **Low- $p_T$**  trigger ( $< 10 \text{ GeV}$ ) makes use of the two BM stations
- **High- $p_T$**  trigger ( $> 10 \text{ GeV}$ ) requires an additional confirmation on the BO station
- RPC **detector coverage** is limited to **74%** because of the ATLAS mechanical support structures (toroid ribs in small sectors of BM, toroid feet in the lower part of the barrel)

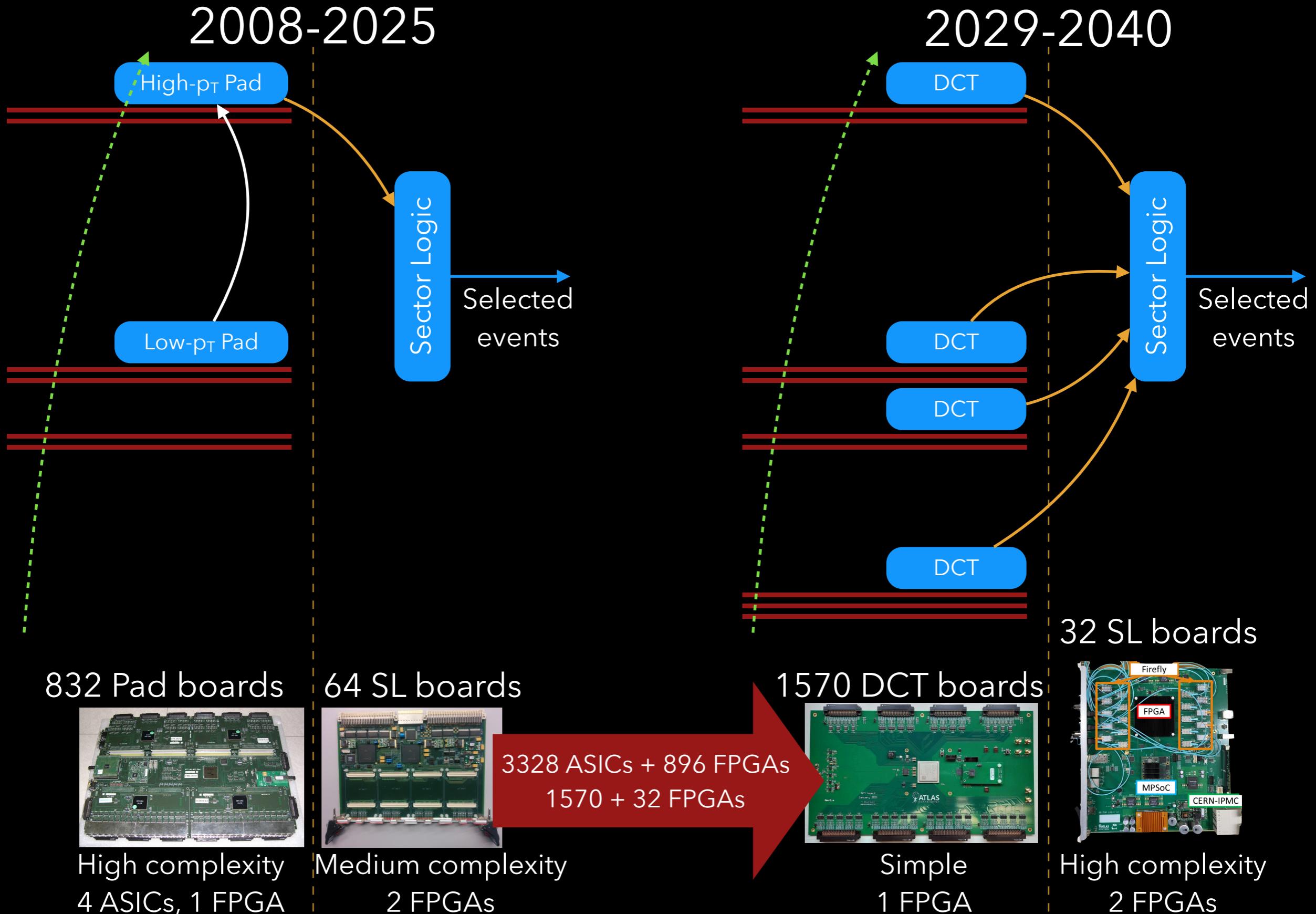


# Run4 Level-0 Muon Trigger in the Barrel Region

- ATLAS Run4 upgrade: 2026-2028
- LHC Run-4: 2029-...
- Install additional RPC layer in the Barrel **inner region** to increase the current detector coverage
- Perform the trigger coincidence logic in **9 RPC layers**
- Trigger coverage can increase from  $\sim 74\%$  to  $\sim 96\%$



# Barrel Muon trigger electronics upgrade



# AI Level-0 muon trigger for ATLAS experiment

slide from S.Giagu

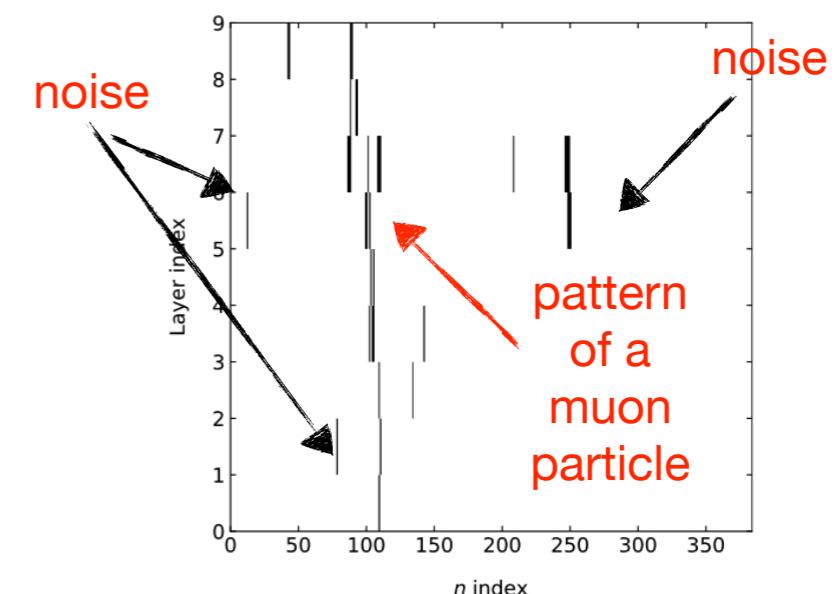
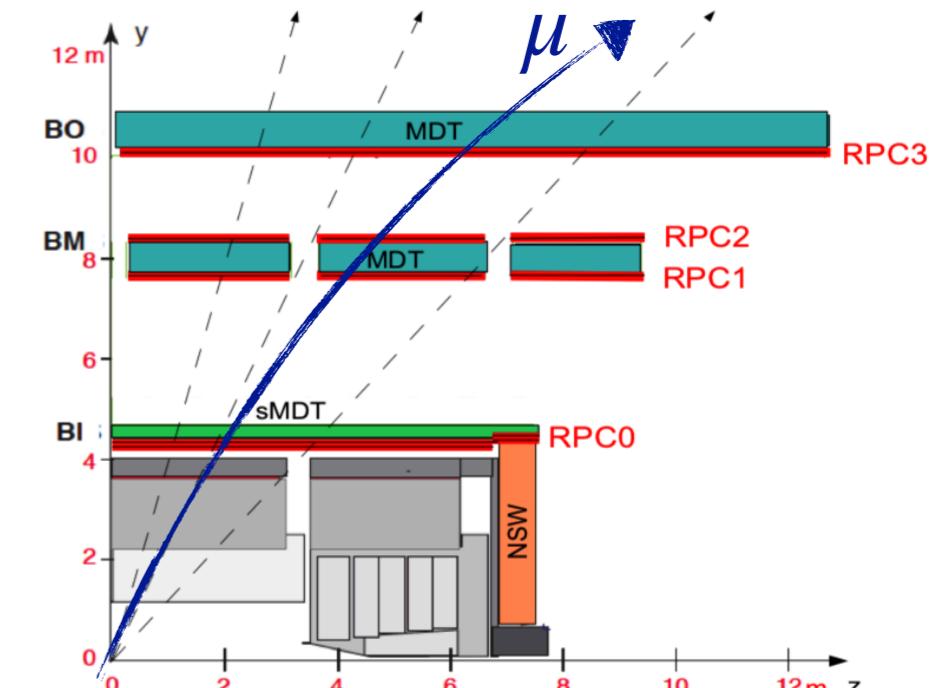
## ULTRAFAST CNN ON FPGAS FOR THE ATLAS LEVEL-0 RPC MUON TRIGGER @HL-LHC

**Goal:** accurately reconstruct the momentum and angle of the muon track from the RPC detector hit information **in less than 400ns** (3 orders of magnitude faster than fastest AI models on CPUs and GPUs)

Latency and FPGA resource occupancy are in a trade-off relationship, while AI model performance strongly depends on the neural network scale



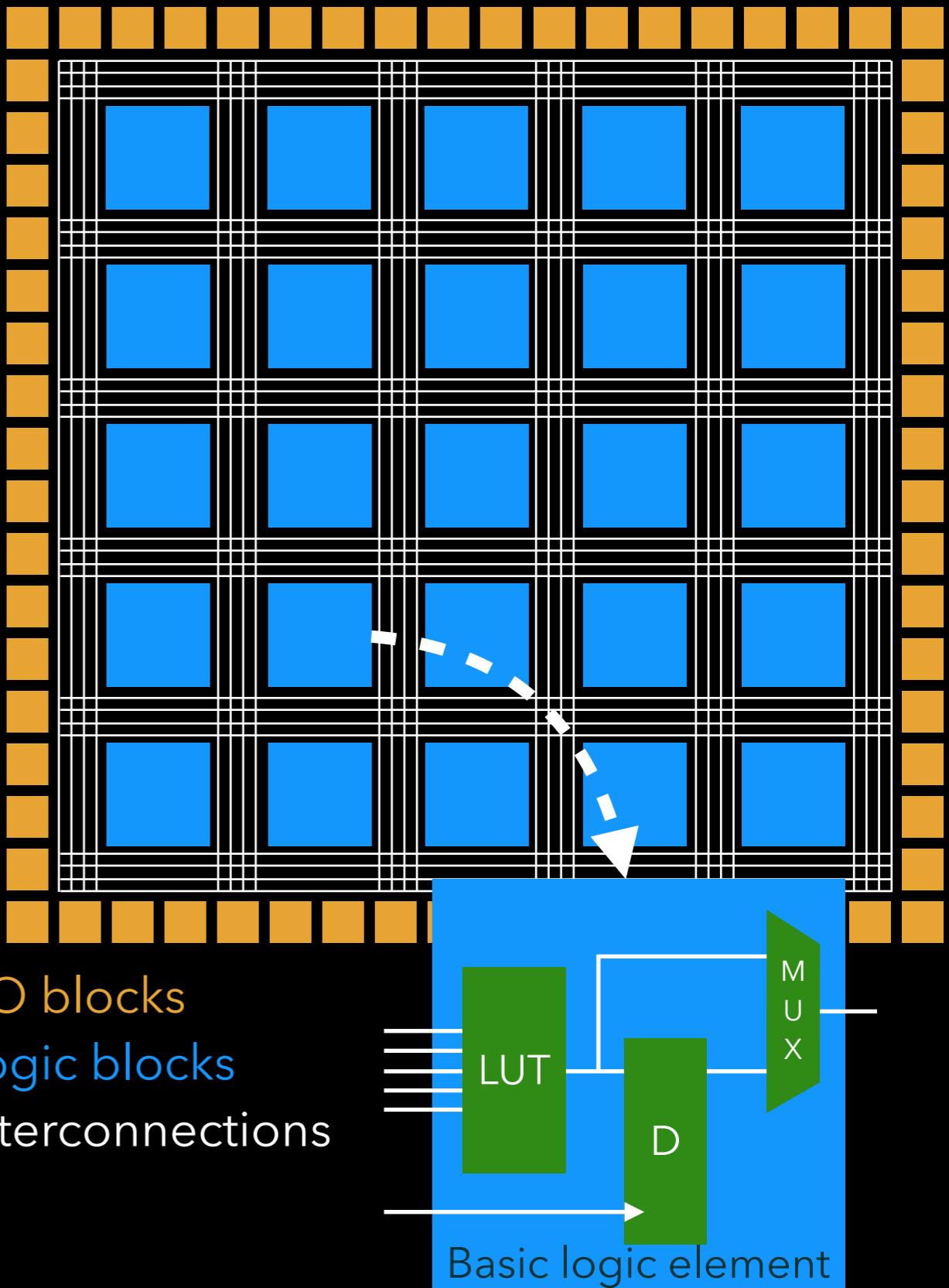
**Strategy:** muon identification and reconstruction via **Convolutional Neural Network** + multi-stage **AI model compression** and simplification based on **aggressive quantisation** and **knowledge transfer techniques** to avoid degradation of physics performances



# FPGAs

# What is an FPGA?

- Field Programmable Gate Array:
  - Field programmable: can be programmed by the user
  - Gate array: matrix of logic gates
- The internal logic is programmable:
  - Programmable I/O blocks
  - Matrix of user programmable logic blocks
  - Programmable network connecting the logic blocks
  - Clock trees
- One logic block is made of:
  - Combinatorial logic (LUT-RAM)
  - Sequential logic (flip-flops)
- Can contain several specific function blocks



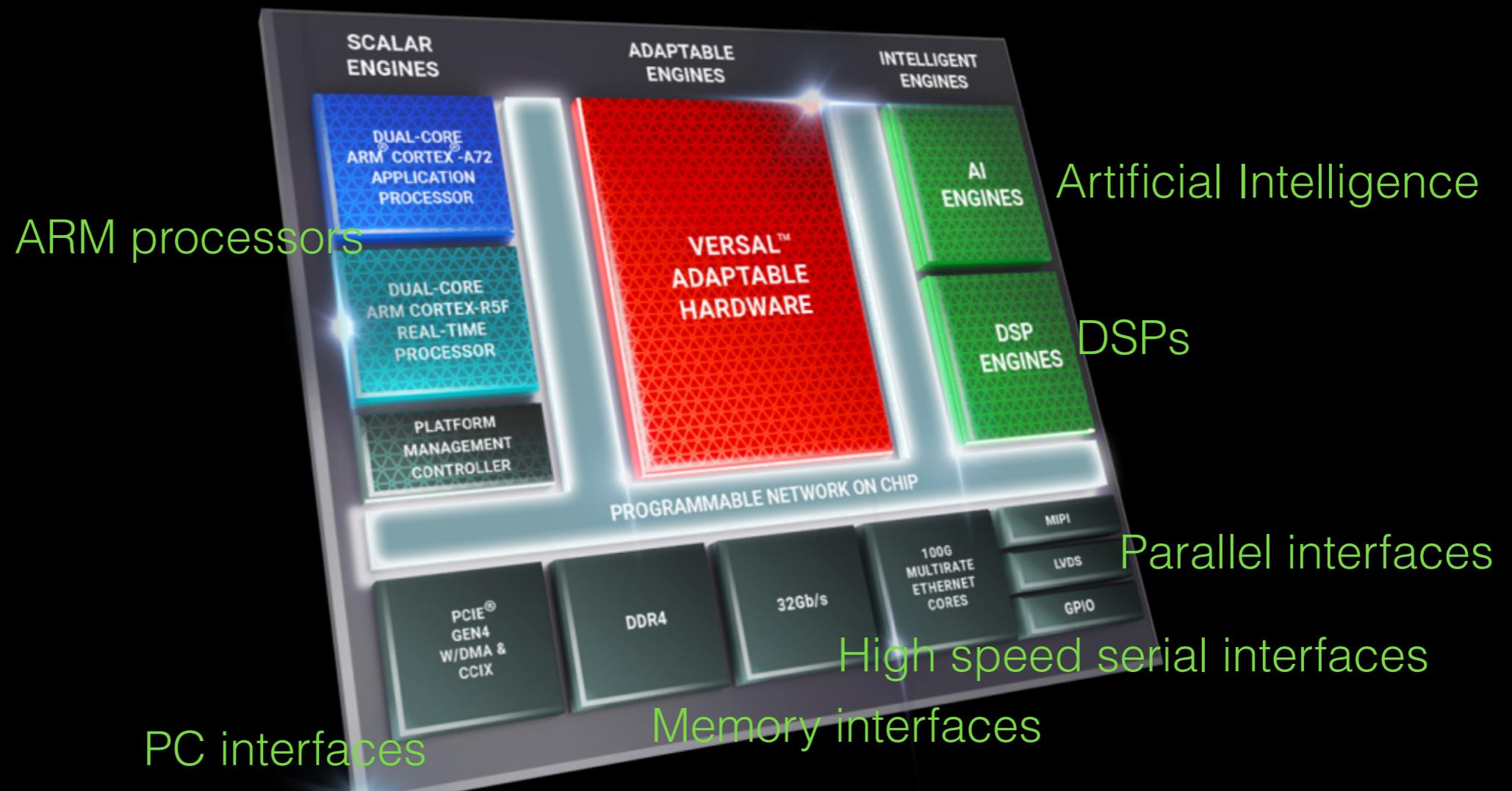
# What's inside an FPGA?

- I/O standard blocks (~100 to ~1000 IOs, input/output speed up to ~1Gb/s)
- I/O serialiser/deserialiser blocks (0 to ~100, transmission speed 1 Gb/s to 30 Gb/s)
- Programmable logic blocks (~10k to ~5M)
- DSP (Digital Signal Processing) blocks (~10 to ~15k)
- Clock multipliers and clock generators blocks (a few)
- RAM (~100 kB to ~500 MB)
- Memory interface controllers
- Ethernet interface
- PCI interface
- Analog functions (ADC)
- ARM processors (up to quad-core)
- Artificial Intelligence engines
- ...



# Example of a (complex) FPGA

AMD-Xilinx Versal ACAP (Adaptive Compute Acceleration Platform)



# FPGA technology

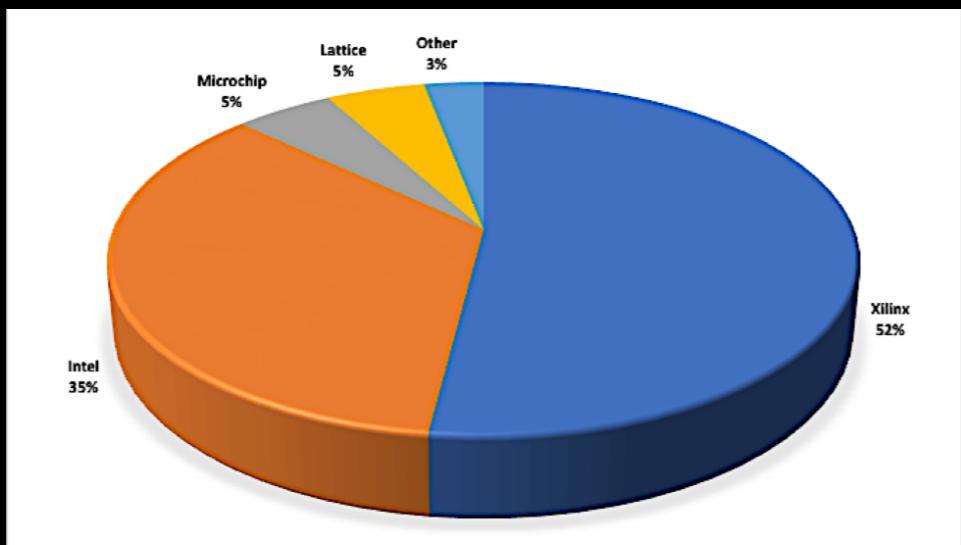
- Different possible ways to implement the FPGA programmable logic:
  - SRAM, antifuse, flash, EEPROM, ...
  - SRAM technology is currently the most commonly used
- Chip transistor size (CMOS technology):
  - FPGA (AMD-Xilinx): from 28 nm (lower cost) down to 7 nm (more expensive)
  - CPU: 10 nm Intel, 7nm AMD, 3nm Apple (TSMC manufacturing company)
  - GPU: 12 nm (Nvidia)

# Why FPGA for HEP trigger?

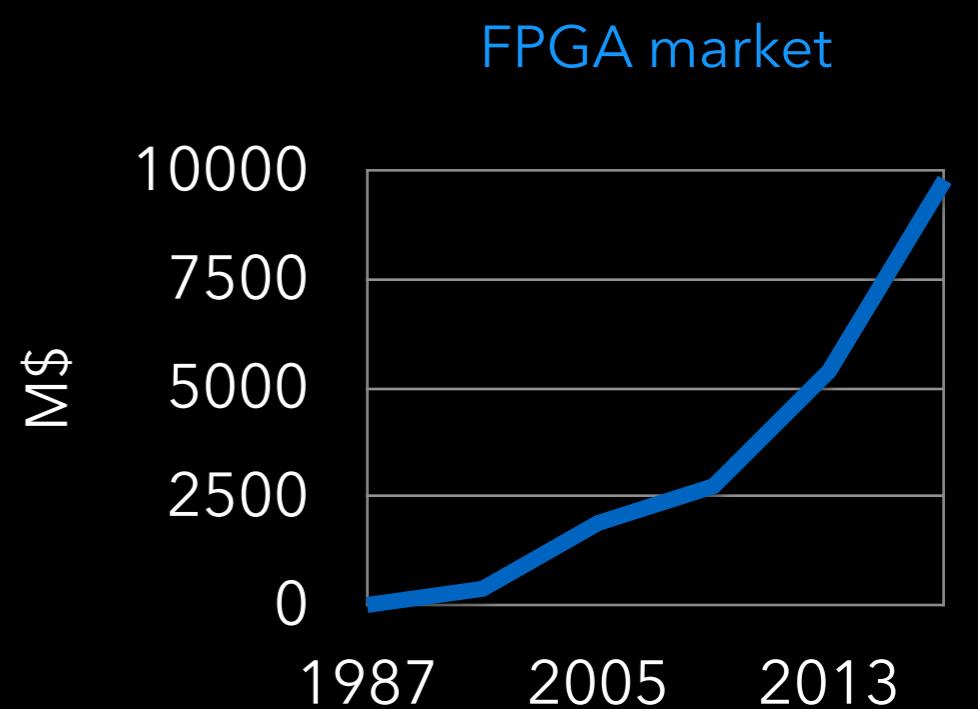
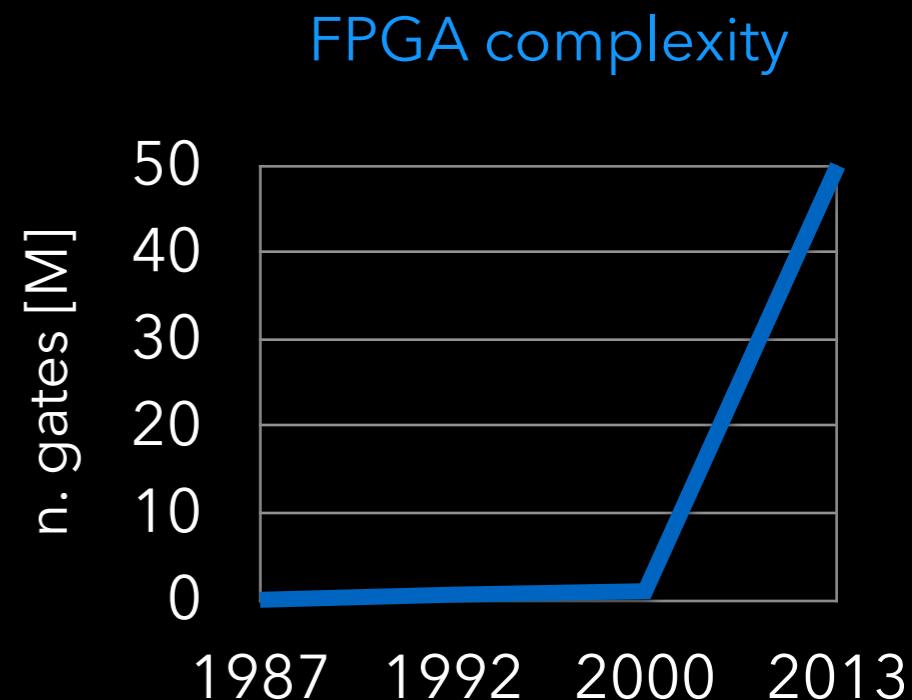
- HEP experiments are using FPGA since many years
- Future hardware-based trigger systems are more and more FPGA based:
  - High number of **I/O transceivers** ( $>50$  Gb/s), used to receive the incoming detector data (many channels)
  - High level of **complexity**, allow to perform complex algorithms in real time and low latency
  - High level of **flexibility**: peak finding, pattern recognition, track finding, clustering/energy summing, sorting, topological algorithms, control system, fast signal merging, neural networks and Artificial Intelligence based algorithms
  - **Upgradable** logic, very useful to change/upgrade the algorithms and to adapt to new physics requirements

# Main FPGA companies

FPGA  
market shares  
in 2019



- AMD (SRAM technology, ex-Xilinx acquired by AMD in 2017 for 35 billion\$)
- Intel (SRAM technology, ex-Altera acquired by Intel in 2015 for 17 billion\$)
- Microchip (anti-fuse and flash, low power low cost)
- Lattice (SRAM and flash, low power mixed signals)



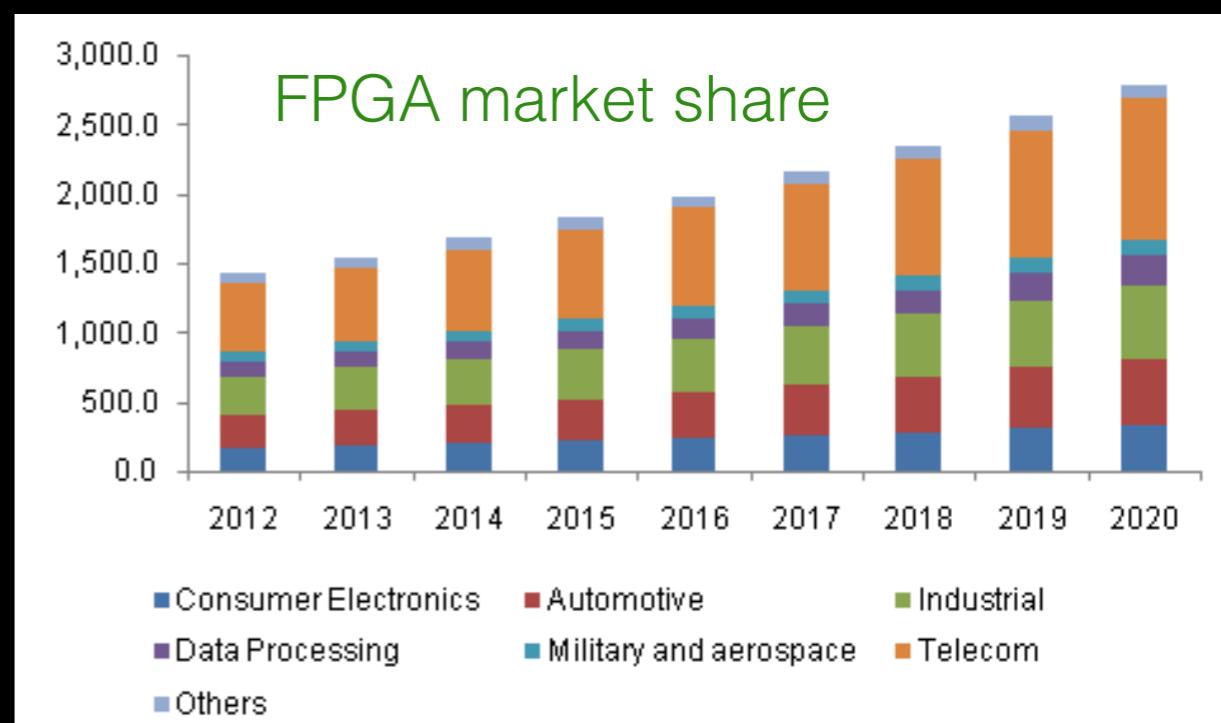
# FPGA vs. ASIC

	FPGA	ASIC
Internal circuitry	Reconfigurable	Permanent
Learning curve	Easy 😊	Difficult 😞
Development time	Small 😊	High 😞
Power consumption	Less optimised 😞	Very optimised 😊
Maximum clock frequency	Lower 😞	High 😊
Analog logic	Limited	Not limited
Suitable for upgradable applications	Yes 😊	No 😞
Cost	Small for few devices	Small for many devices

- FPGA vs CPU:
  - CPU: software instructions are executed in **sequence**, parallelism achievable with **multiple cores**
  - **FPGA**: intrinsically **parallel**, many concurrent process run independently
    - Some FPGA models host multi core processors for maximum **flexibility**

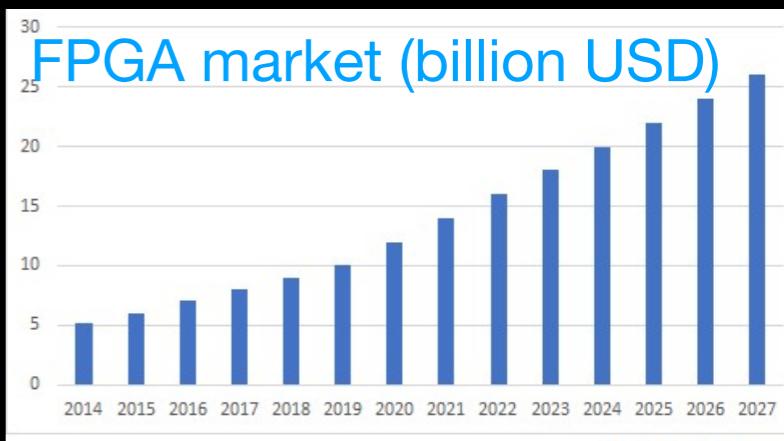
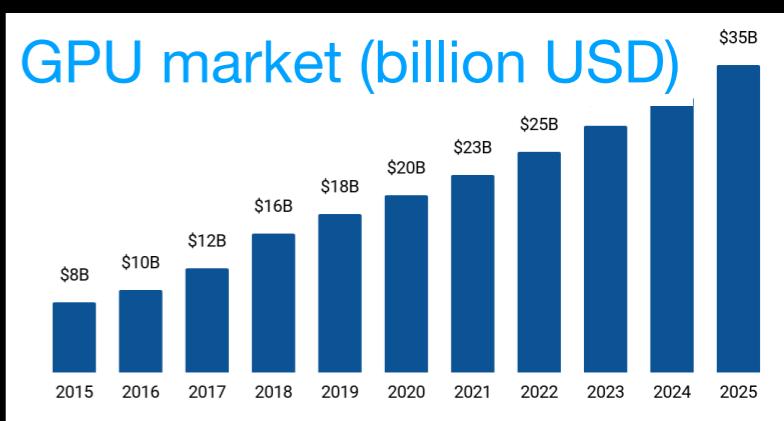
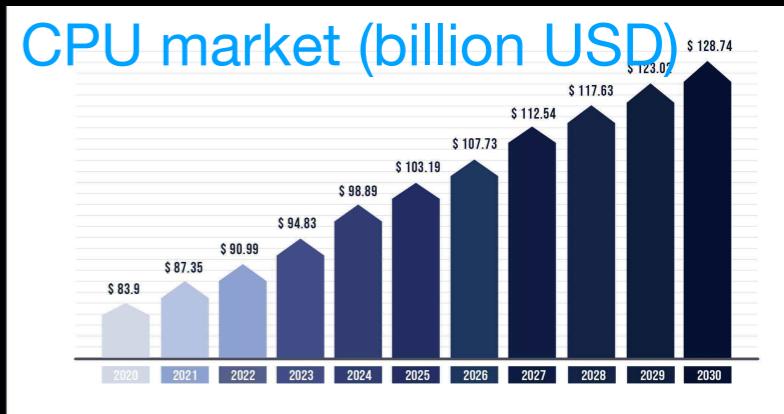
# FPGA possible applications

- Data Centres: video and image processing, speech recognition, cryptography, computational storage, database and data analytics, financial technology, high performance computing, network acceleration
- Communications: 5G wireless, wired and wireless communications
- Industry: aerospace, automotive, broadcast, consumer electronics, emulation, prototyping, medical, test and measurement
- Compute acceleration
- Artificial intelligence acceleration
- High Energy Physics
- ...



# HEP and FPGA summary

- HEP trigger systems need to face increasing **detector data bandwidths** and challenging **event selection** requests (~Tb/s detector data down to ~Mb/s permanent storage)
- Moving complexity to off-detector electronics, keep detector front-end electronics as simple as possible, raw data sent to the off-detector trigger system
- First level trigger systems mostly (not always) based on **FPGA** boards:
  - high flexibility, high IO bandwidth
  - different algorithms can run on the same board, algorithms can adapt/evolve over time
- Higher level trigger systems mostly based on **CPU** farms with hardware accelerators (**GPU** or **FPGA**)
  - hardware accelerators allow to reduce the number of servers and power
  - high performance network needed for servers interconnectivity
  - FPGAs/GPUs hardware/software moving towards **AI**



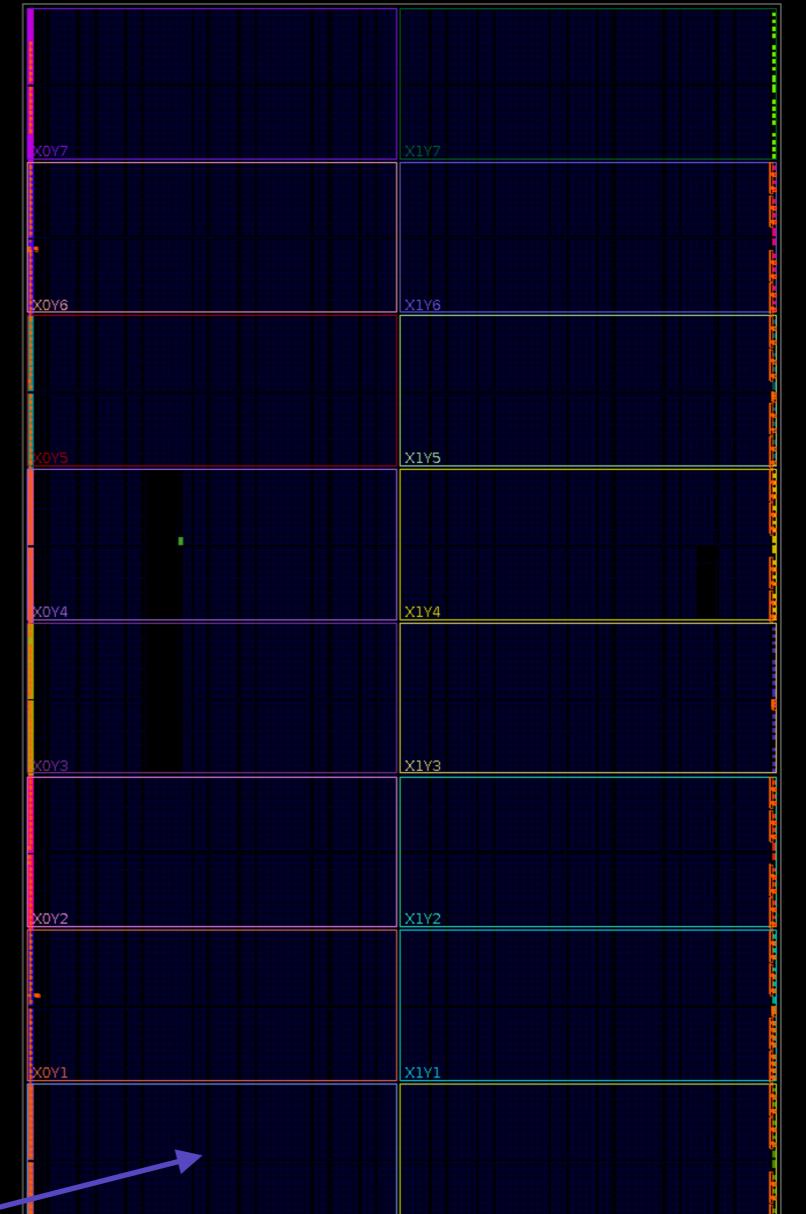
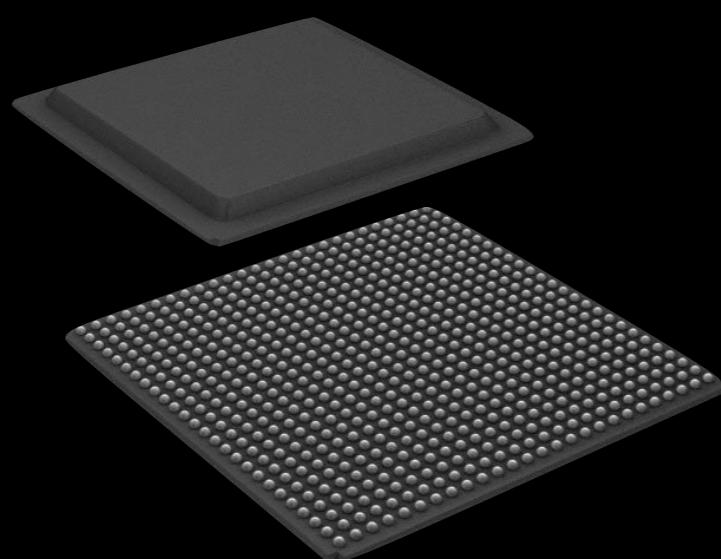
Intel acquired Altera FPGA company in 2015 for 17 billion\$

AMD acquired Xilinx FPGA company in 2017 for 35 billion\$

FPGA implementation workflow  
example with AMD-Xilinx Vivado software

# FPGA inside look

- Many different FPGA models on the market with programmable logic, some with processor cores and AI engines logic
- Let's look at the [AMD-Xilinx Kintex-7 family](#), medium complexity FPGA family, no processors and no AI
- Package size:  $(2.3 \times 2.3) \text{ cm}^2$  to  $(3.5 \times 3.5) \text{ cm}^2$
- Medium cost FPGA (150€ to 5000€) depending on the device size, speed grade, working temperature range, voltage
- Biggest device has: ~500k logic cells (corresponding to millions of transistors), ~600k flip-flops, ~7MB distributed RAM, ~35 MB block RAM, ~2k DSP slices, 10 clock multipliers, 1 ADC, 1 PCI block module, 500 user I/O pins (max speed 1.3 Gb/s), 32 high speed transceiver (12.5 Gb/s)
- Higher performances FPGA families also available, with much more resources, and at a much higher cost (more than 50 k€)



Programmable logic

Standard I/O ports:  
Up to 500 I/O pins  
Max speed 1.2 Gb/s

Fast I/O ports:  
Up to 32 ports  
Max speed 12.5 Gb/s

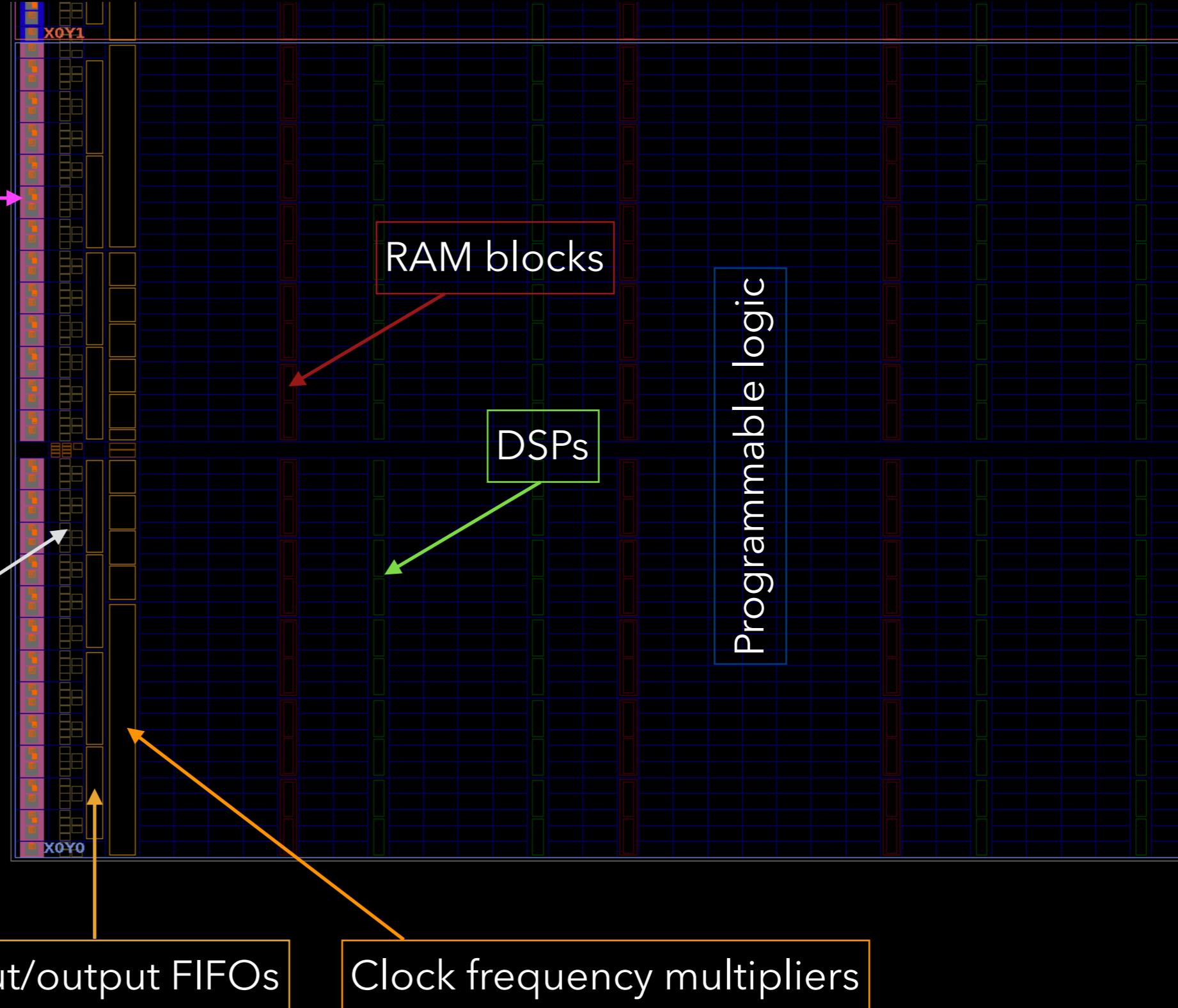
# FPGA internal blocks

Configurable I/O ports:

- Input or output
- Voltage level
- Differential or unipolar

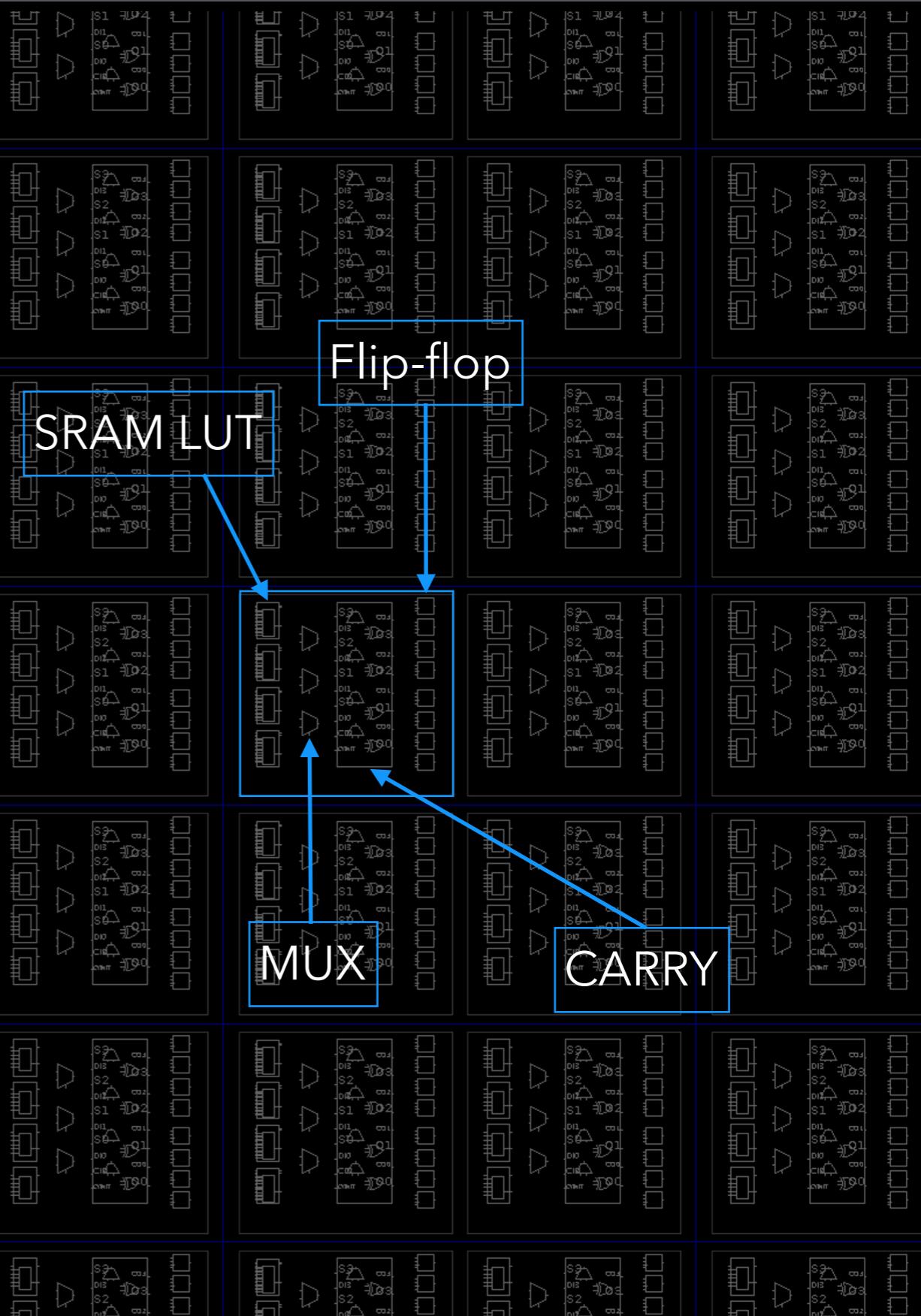
Configurable I/O logic:

- Input deserialiser
- Output serialiser
- Input/output delay



# Programmable logic blocks

- A programmable logic block of a Xilinx Kintex-7 FPGA is made of:
  - 4 SRAM LUT (5-bit address)
  - 3 MUXes (2 in 1 out)
  - 1 CARRY logic block (useful to perform arithmetics operations like adders, ...)
  - 8 flip-flops



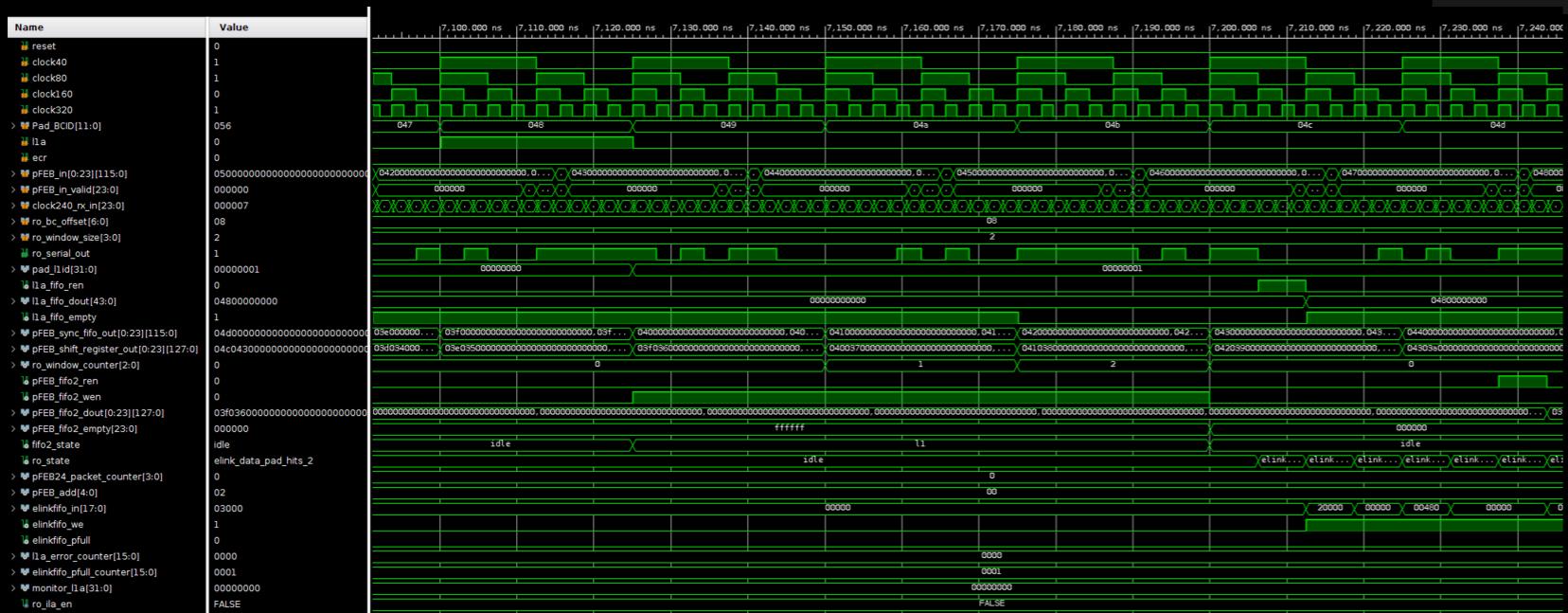
# Hardware Description Languages

- Describe the behaviour of electronic circuits, most commonly digital logic
- Main languages used: VHDL and Verilog
- Simulator programs allow to verify the correctness of the HDL logic
- Usage of C++ or similar languages lately possible (in combination with VHDL/Verilog or not), useful for FPGAs with embedded processors, CPU interfaces and AI cores

```
library ieee;
use ieee.std_logic_1164.all;
use ieee.std_logic_unsigned.all;

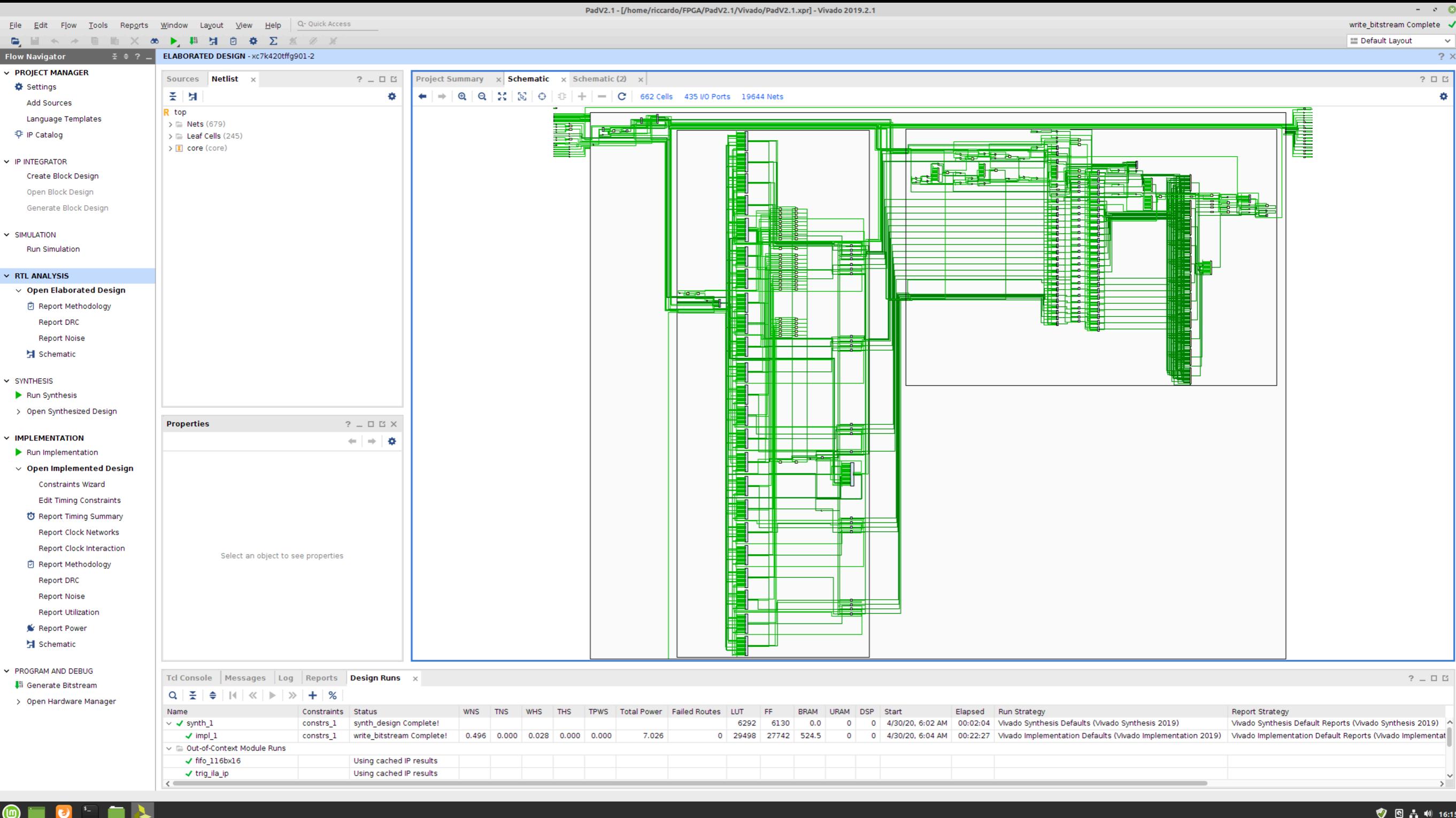
entity bcid_counter is
  port (
    reset : in std_logic;
    clock40 : in std_logic;
    BCID : out std_logic_vector(11 downto 0);
  );
end bcid_counter;

architecture RTL of bcid_counter is
begin
  counter_logic : process(clock40)
  begin
    if rising_edge(clock40) then
      if reset = '1' then
        BCID <= (others => '0');
      else
        BCID <= BCID + 1;
      end if;
    end if;
  end process;
end RTL;
```



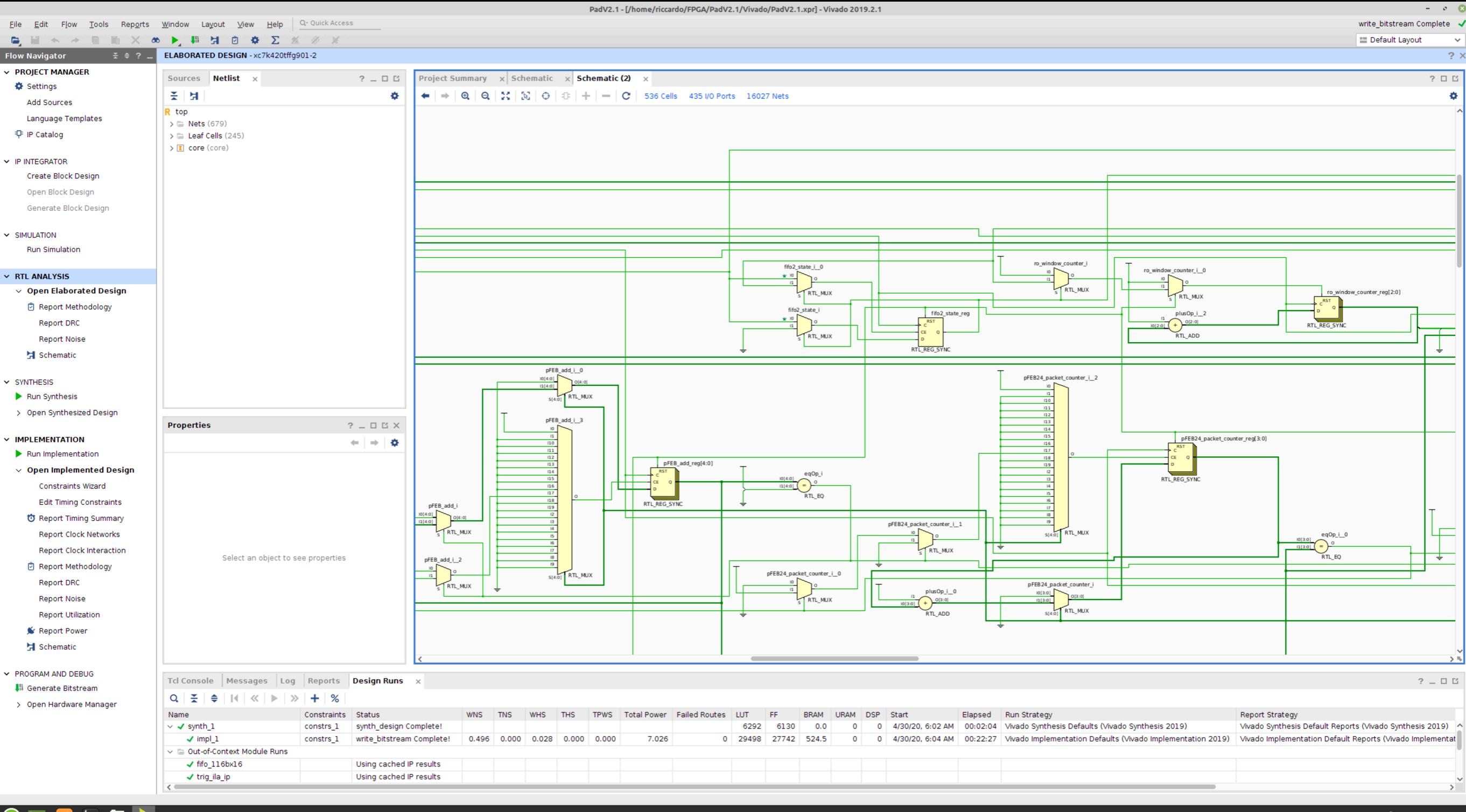
# RTL analysis

- Register Transfer Level analysis translates the HDL code into a digital circuit schema



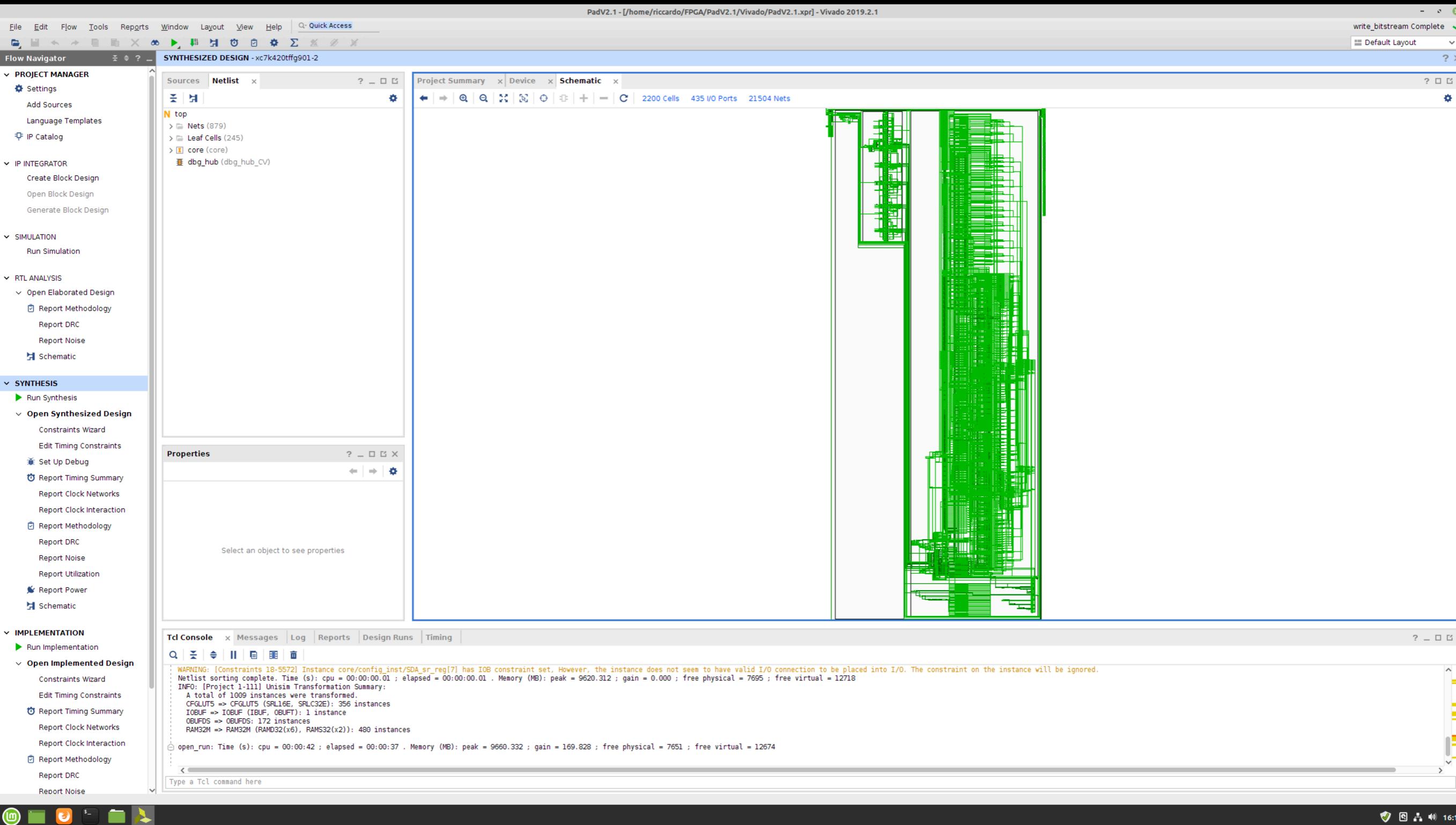
# RTL analysis logic elements

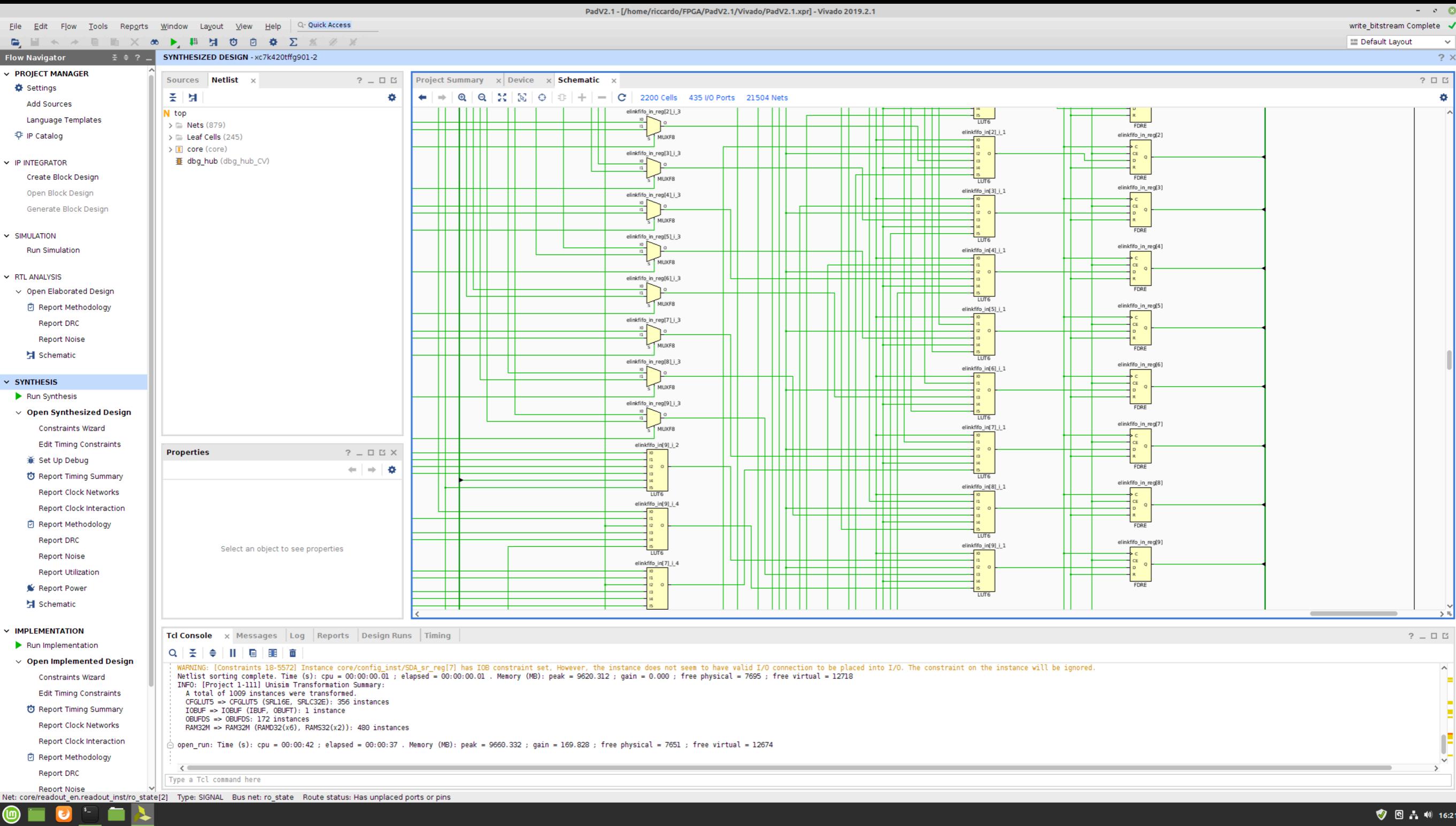
- Logic elements used are generic, independent from the FPGA chosen family



# Synthesis

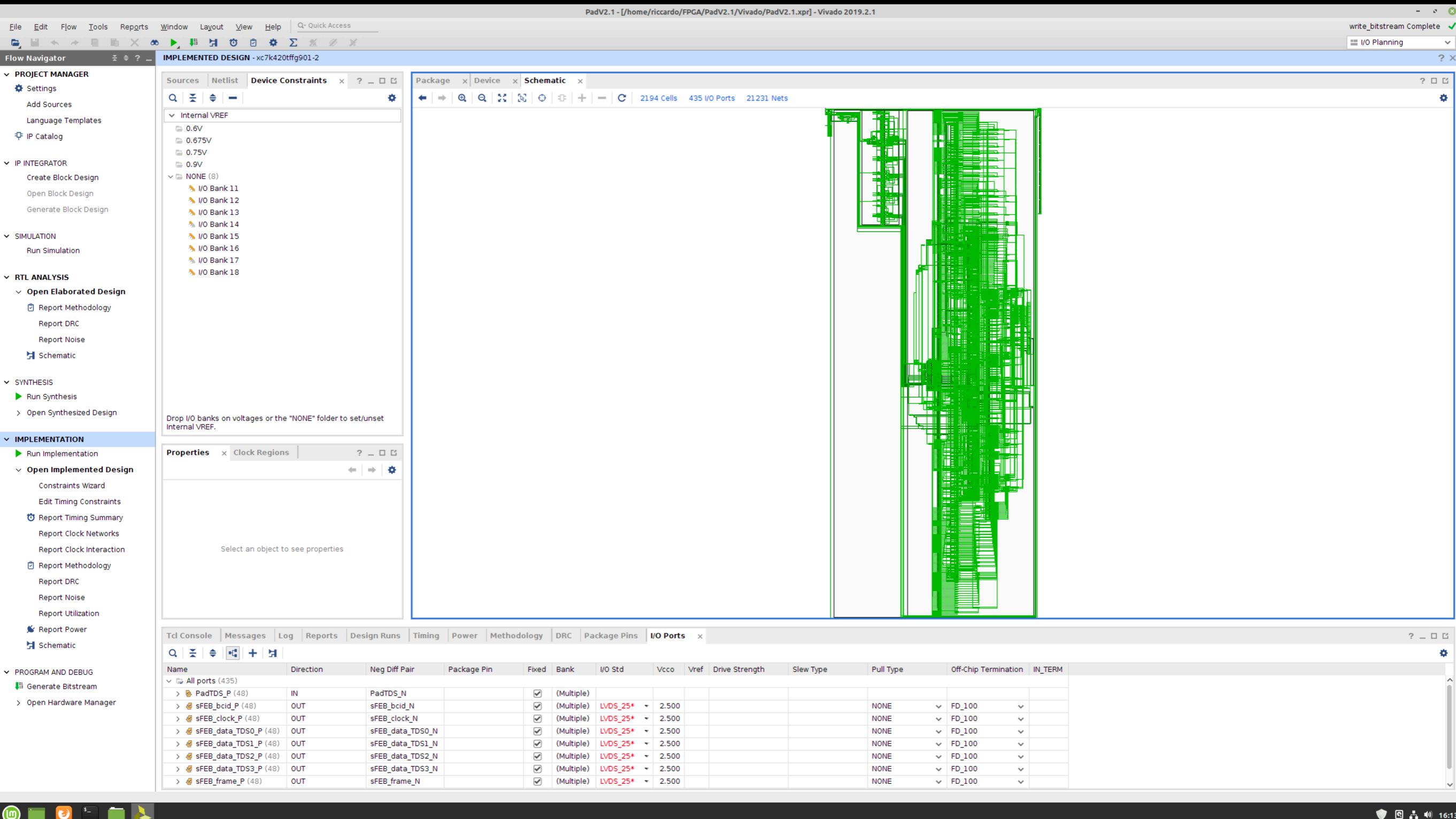
- Translates the analysed circuit into an equivalent circuit that uses the chosen FPGA logic blocks





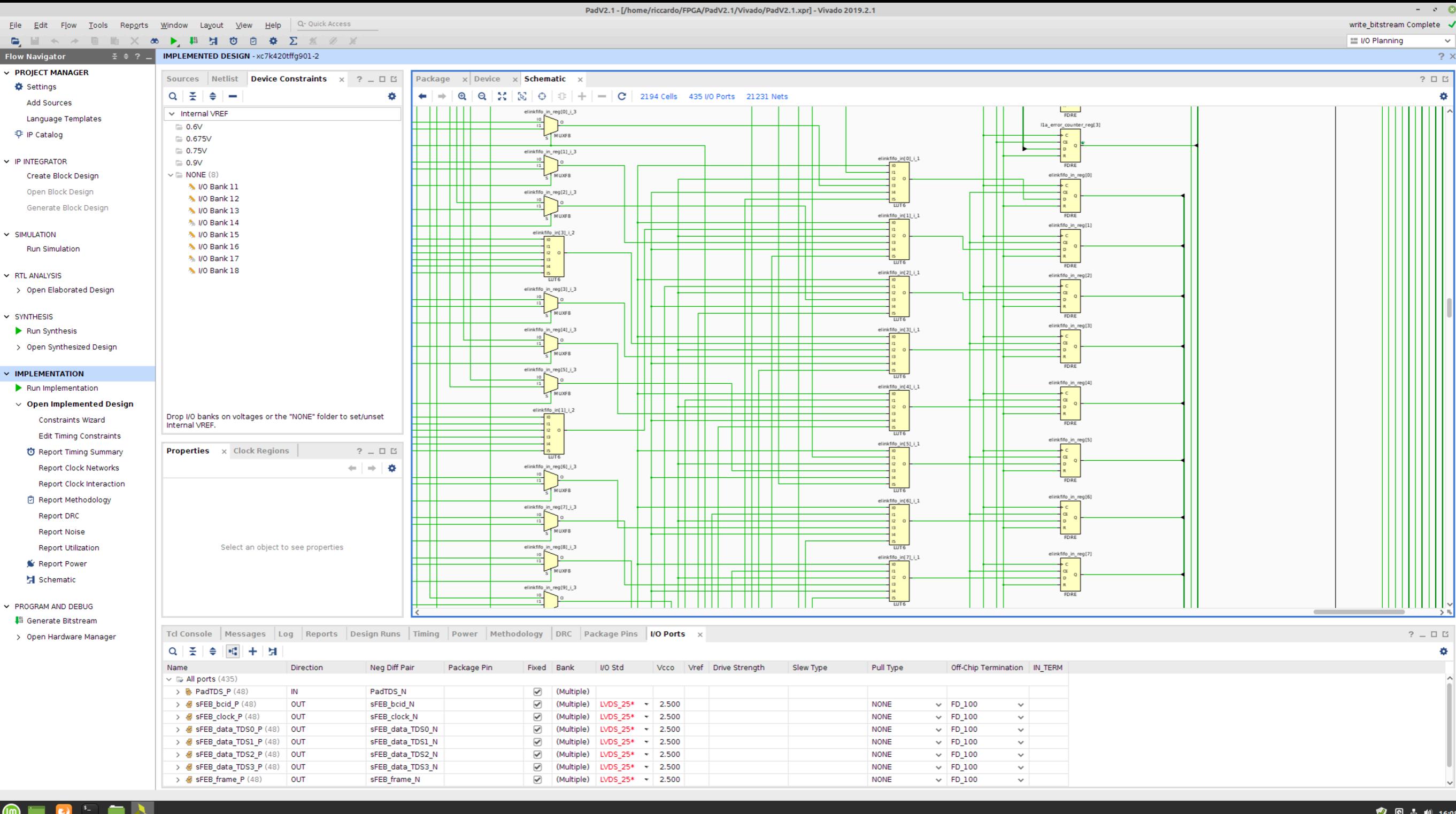
# Implementation

- Performs the final step: FPGA routing (logic block placement and interconnections) and checks the circuit timing. Logic can be changed/optimised during this process.



# Implementation result

- The circuit schema is changed if necessary, to achieve correct timing and taking into consideration the final cell placement.



# Implementation report

- A detailed report shows all implementation steps details and the FPGA resource usage (and the errors/warnings, if any) including timing results and power estimate.

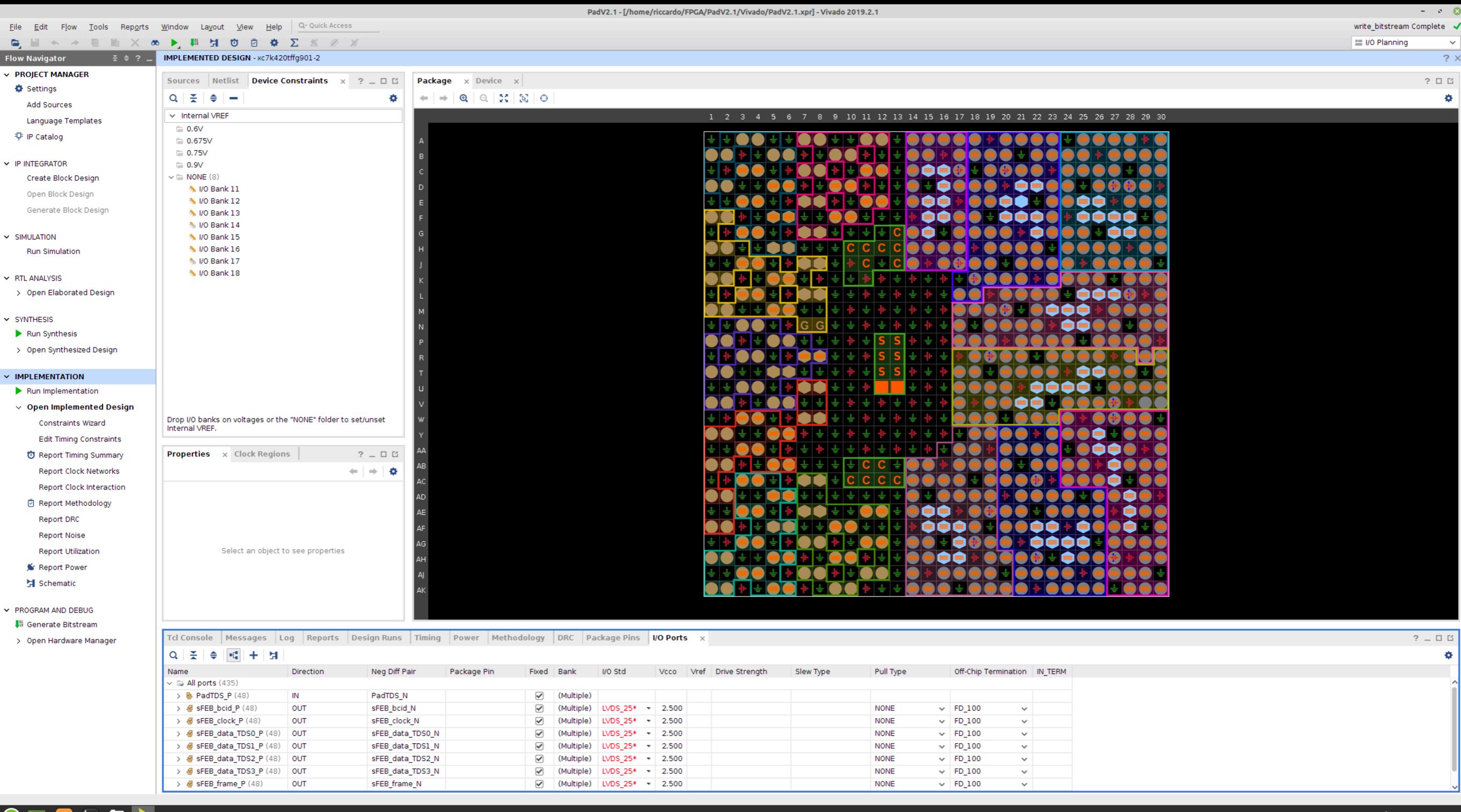
The screenshot shows the Vivado 2019.2.1 interface with the following details:

- Project Manager - PadV2.1**: The project name is PadV2.1, located at /media/psf/Home/cernbox/ATLAS/NSW/FPGA/PadV2.1/Vivado. The top module is top, and the target language is VHDL.
- Synthesis**: Status: Complete, Messages: 183 warnings, Part: xc7k420tffg901-2, Strategy: Vivado Synthesis Defaults, Report Strategy: Vivado Synthesis Default Reports, Incremental synthesis: None.
- Implementation**: Status: Complete, Messages: 21 critical warnings, 123 warnings, Part: xc7k420tffg901-2, Strategy: Vivado Implementation Defaults, Report Strategy: Vivado Implementation Default Reports, Incremental implementation: None.
- DRC Violations**: Summary: 50 warnings, Implemented DRC Report.
- Timing**: Worst Negative Slack (WNS): 0.496 ns, Total Negative Slack (TNS): 0 ns, Number of Failing Endpoints: 0, Total Number of Endpoints: 109281, Implemented Timing Report.
- Utilization**: A bar chart showing resource utilization percentages: LUT (11%), LUTRAM (14%), FF (5%), BRAM (63%), IO (92%), GT (86%), BUFG (25%), and MMC (25%).
- Power**: Total On-Chip Power: 7.026 W, Junction Temperature: 37.3 °C, Thermal Margin: 47.7 °C (25.8 W), Effective 8JA: 1.8 °C/W, Power supplied to off-chip devices: 0 W, Confidence level: Medium, Implemented Power Report.
- Design Runs**: A table showing the status of design runs:

Name	Constraints	Status	WNS	TNS	WHS	THS	TPWS	Total Power	Failed Routes	LUT	FF	BRAM	URAM	DSP	Start	Elapsed	Run Strategy	Report Strategy
synth_1	constrs_1	synth_design Complete!	0.496	0.000	0.028	0.000	0.000	7.026	0	6292	6130	0.0	0	0	4/30/20, 6:02 AM	00:02:04	Vivado Synthesis Defaults (Vivado Synthesis 2019)	Vivado Synthesis Default Reports (Vivado Synthesis 2019)
impl_1	constrs_1	write_bitstream Complete!	0.496	0.000	0.028	0.000	0.000	7.026	0	29498	27742	524.5	0	0	4/30/20, 6:04 AM	00:22:27	Vivado Implementation Defaults (Vivado Implementation 2019)	Vivado Implementation Default Reports (Vivado Implementation 2019)
Out-of-Context Module Runs																		
fifo_116bx16		Using cached IP results																
trig_ilc_ip		Using cached IP results																
fifo_128bx16		Using cached IP results																
shift register 128bx128		Using cached IP results																

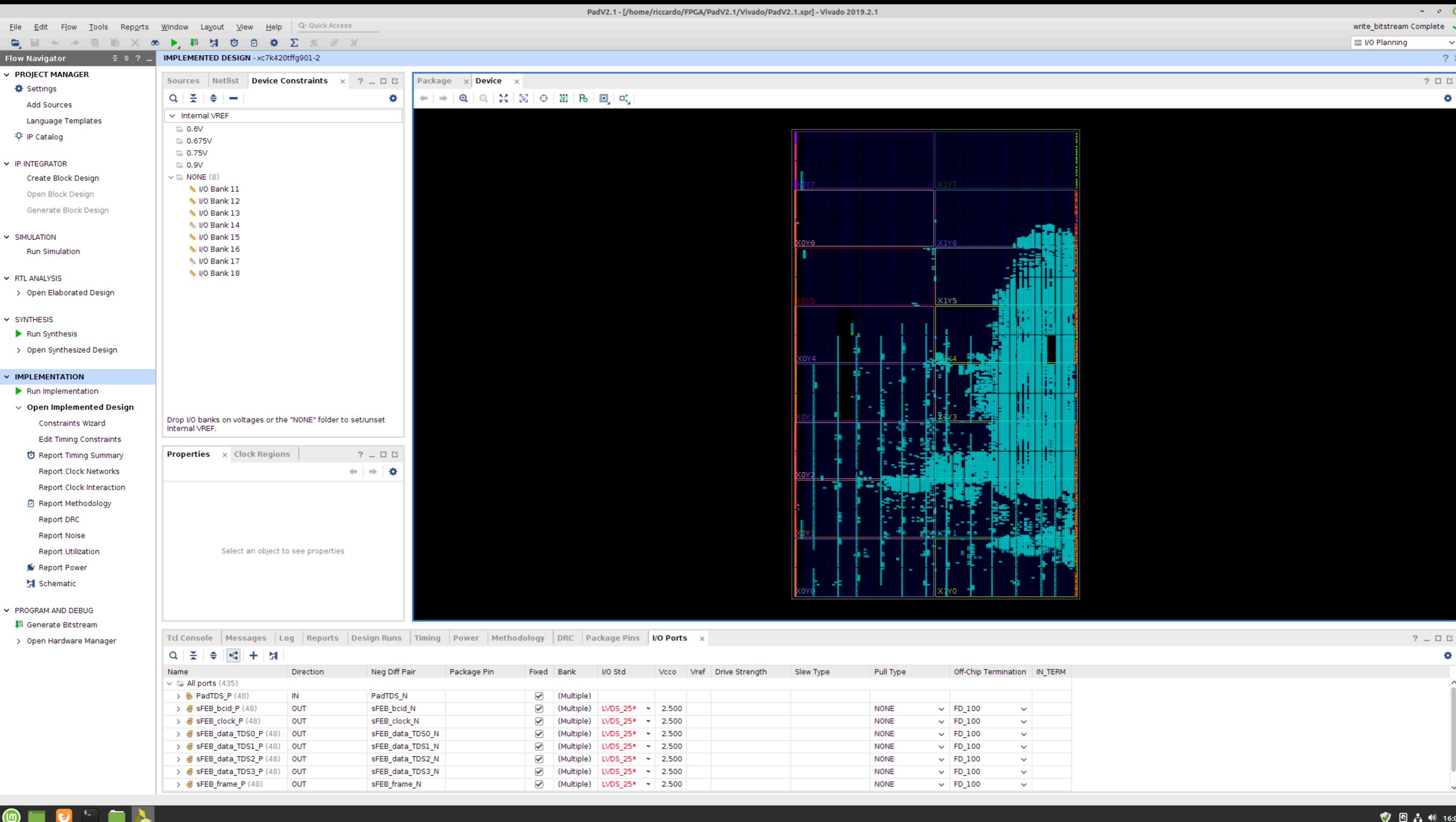
# Implemented design I/O

- I/O signals can be automatically or manually assigned to the FPGA pins (and their voltage logic levels).



# Implemented design placement & routing view

- Detailed view of the FPGA logic cells used



# Firmware file generation and FPGA programming

- If FPGA implementation was successful we can proceed with the **firmware file** generation
- Firmware file contains the FPGA programmable logic implementation represented by the used logic
- At power-up the FPGA does not have any logic, until the firmware file is **uploaded** into the FPGA configuration memory
- Firmware file can be uploaded from a computer via **USB/JTAG** or from an external **flash memory** at boot-up.

# Fine!