

URBAN RAIL TRANSPORT

Definition by the Urban Rail Platform

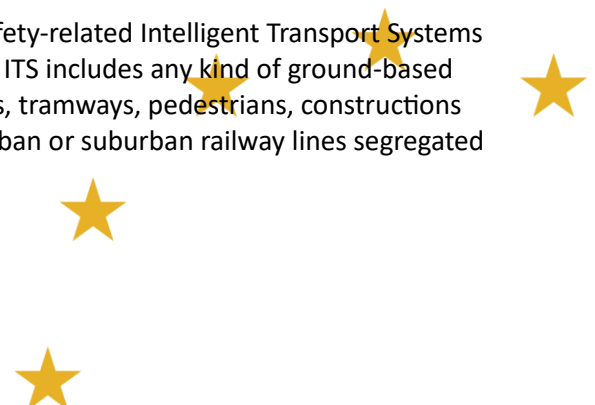
Very generally, urban rail transport services are operated under Public Service Obligations, based on Public Service Contract contracted by an infra-national government level such as region, Land, province, canton, voivodeship, group of municipalities..., as part of local public transport networks integrated in terms of services and fare policy, which require multimodal coordination approach. These urban rail transport services are operated on rail systems which status depends on the independence of their operating conditions from other traffic (road or rail or pedestrian)¹.

Urban rail systems are a set of rail guided systems intended for urban, and suburban transportation. This includes “non-conventional rail systems” as defined in EN 17343:2023 “Railway applications – General terms and definitions”.

As other urban and suburban collective public transport, they provide predominantly passenger transport services which principal purpose is to meet the transport needs of an urban centre or conurbation, including a cross-border conurbation, together with transport needs between such a centre or conurbation and surrounding areas.

Urban rail systems are usually different (specifications, governance...) from heavy rail systems which are commonly defined as conventional rail systems intended for intra- and interregional and/or international transportation. However, there are overlaps between “heavy rail” and “urban rail”; as a result, some urban rail systems intended for suburban transportation are classified as “heavy rail” systems, even though some require European interoperability, and some do not.

¹ A specific approach is that of the EU Spectrum legislation on safety-related Intelligent Transport Systems - ITS, for which ITS encompass Road ITS and Urban Rail ITS. Road ITS includes any kind of ground-based transportation systems, e.g., cars, trucks, bicycles, motor bicycles, tramways, pedestrians, constructions equipment, agricultural equipment, etc. Urban Rail ITS means urban or suburban railway lines segregated from road and pedestrian traffic.



ANNEX

The categories of urban rail transport systems are:

Metro system: *urban rail system typically operated on a dedicated infrastructure (including underground, elevated or surface sections) and independent from any other traffic (road, rail or pedestrian).*

Tram system: *urban rail system operated on infrastructure shared with road traffic (including pedestrian areas), or partially on separate infrastructure. For tram systems having sections segregated from road traffic the term Light Rail System (LRS) may be used.*

Other urban rail systems: *a variety of other rail systems intended for local, urban and suburban transportation, as long as they are guided by at least one rail, including e.g. some suburban/regional rail systems, and rubber-tyred metro systems.*

