Block 1: Introduction to urban infrastructures

5. The main analytical perspectives for approaching urban infrastructures

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Session overview

In this session, you will be introduced to the two main perspectives from which urban infrastructure systems can and should be analyzed in an intellectually coherent manner, namely:

● The public policy perspective
● The public economy perspective
The public policy perspective

**The services layers**

- Maximizing public services (within financial limits)
- The public policy perspective
- Political steering either via ownership (integrated municipal public enterprises) or via contract
- The goal is to provide public services in terms of:
  - accessibility
  - quality
  - affordability
  - equity

**The physical infrastructure layer**

- If the services cannot be self-financing, then public money (subsidies) will be paid to the operator

**Citizen-customer**

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The public economy perspective

- **Maximizing economic growth (welfare)**
- **Profitability (or at least cost-recovery) as a basic principle**

**The services layer**
- (Steering via) competition (in the market and/or for the market) and regulation
- Unbundling as a means

**The physical infrastructure layer**
- Subsidies only in case of market failure

- **Customer-citizen**

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Conclusion of block 1

- This first block has been an introduction to urban infrastructure systems
- We have seen their structure, their main dimensions and how to look at them from an intellectually coherent point of view
- In the next block, we will now address the question of management of these urban infrastructures