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**Institute for Transportation & Development Policy Launches First-Ever Global Rapid Transit Database**

**[Explore Database Here](https://www.itdp.org/publication/rapid-transit-database/)**

***ITDP’s open-source, online database includes all rapid light rail, metro rail, and bus rapid transit built globally since 1985 enabling objective comparisons between world cities and best practices with the ITDP-created metric RTR (Rapid Transit to Resident Ratio)***

New York, NY (June 9, 2021) — Last month, New York City became the first major US city to fully restart transit services with a return to the 24-hour Subway service. As cities around the world consider reopening and reinvesting in transit, the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) is launching a global database as a resource for governments, researchers, and transport advocates to set benchmarks and establish best practices.

With a click of a button, users are able to see how much rapid transit any given city worldwide offers its residents. “This is the first time anyone can easily access such an array of data about transit systems online,” explained ITDP Research Associate D. Taylor Reich (they/them), who manages the RTDB, “by literally putting everything on the map, we have given people an opportunity to actually see how their cities and countries compare.” The team at ITDP is pleased to offer a set of objective data at a time when data is often subjectively interpreted. “We have found that transparent, easily accessible data is crucial for informing the public as well as city planners and mayors,” continued Reich.  Jacob Mason (he/him), ITDP Director of Research and Impact and one of the developers of the RTDB, added, “Our mission is to improve sustainable transportation worldwide and knowledge is very much integral to this effort: if you don’t know what or how much transit exists or doesn’t exist, how can you improve it? I am also excited to see how rapid transit has changed over time, particularly in cities with high population growth.”

The database can be accessed at <http://www.itdp.org/rapid-transit-database>.

The Rapid Transit Database (RTDB), a robust index of all rapid transit throughout the world, has been developed by the Research & Impact team at ITDP using public data going back to 1985. Rapid transit is defined as any Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor, light rail (LRT) corridor, or heavy rail-based transit mode that runs on a dedicated right of way, has headways fewer than every 20 minutes between the hours of 6am and 10pm, and exists within a dedicated infrastructure. This definition is based on the BRT Standard’s definition of a BRT corridor. With data from 1985 to today, users have an opportunity to see and understand how transit has transformed over time and if transit development has kept up with population growth. While information about rapid transit in cities and countries worldwide has been updated and tracked for many years, in this new online format it will now be free and interactive.  Thanks to the researchers at the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP), this unique set of information will be annually updated and available in an open-source format for all to consult and study.

Some important features of the Rapid Transit Database include:

* A breakdown by type of rapid transit: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), light rail transit (LRT or tram), and metro (heavy rail). This breakdown provides a specificity that is crucial to understanding a city’s system as a whole, not just a set of corridors.
* All Data dating back to 1985 providing users with historical insights like cities have kept up rapid transit development with population growth.
* An opportunity to compare up to four locations, including comparing cities to countries; this gives users an opportunity to explore regional and global comparisons.
* The inclusion of the Resident to Rapid Transit Ratio (RTR) in all data. This ITDP developed metric compares urban populations to length of rapid transit, it provides insight into how vast a system might be in relation to its residents.

2020 was a year of much loss and disruption and a year when public transit was particularly challenged. Despite this, as seen on the RTDB, various corridors opened worldwide. Many of these were part of long-term plans and commitments made by national governments, demonstrating the value and importance of long-term commitments.

Check out the Rapid Transit Database [here](https://www.itdp.org/rapid-transit-database/).

The **Institute for Transportation and Development Policy** is a global nonprofit that works with cities around the world to design and implement high quality transport systems and policy solutions that make cities more livable, equitable, and sustainable.

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