

## A de Bruijn - Erdős theorem in metric spaces?

A corollary of the Sylvester-Gallai theorem asserts that every noncollinear set of  $n$  points in the plane determines at least  $n$  distinct lines; this theorem has been generalized by De Bruijn and Erdős (On a combinatorial problem, *Proc. Akad. Wet. Amsterdam* **51** (1948), 1277-1279). Chen and Chvátal (Problems related to a de Bruijn–Erdős theorem, *Discrete Appl. Math.* **156** (2008), 2101–2108) suggested another conceivable generalization:

*True or false? Every finite metric space  $(X, d)$   
where no line consists of the entire ground set  $X$   
determines at least  $|X|$  distinct lines.*

Here, the *line*  $\overline{uv}$  in a metric space is defined as the union of  $\{u, v\}$  and all the pins containing  $\{u, v\}$ , where a *pin* is any three-point set  $\{x, y, z\}$  such that  $d(x, y) + d(y, z) = d(x, z)$ .

### Additional references

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