

Office of Rail Transport

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Report on the state of railway safety in Poland in 2019

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Year 2019 was the safest year in railway transport since the President of the Office of Rail Transport (Pol. Urząd Transportu Kolejowego, UTK) started gathering data in this field. The decrease of accident factor by 13% (to 2,08) and the number of accidents by 13.5% in comparison to 2018 is a clear sign that the level of railway safety is rising. UTK has just published its "Report on the state of railway safety in Poland in 2019".

The report shows the full spectrum of the railway safety in Poland as of last year. The data confirm that railways are more and more a safer means of transport. The best proof of that is the decreasing accident factor, compared year-to-year.

525 accidents were accounted for in the railway network in 2019. This means a decrease by 82 in comparison to 2018. The biggest decline was noted with regard to accidents involving persons crossing railway tracks in unauthorised places (by 63) and incidents at railway crossings (by 16)

- Lower accident factor in the railway network is a cause for optimism. We owe that to joint activities of all stakeholders operating in that market. I am convinced that also one of the elements influencing the factor value are educational activities - sums up Mr. Ignacy Góra, Ph.D., the President of UTK.

The number of fatalities fell by 17%, and the number of seriously injured - by 42. Unfortunately one should be worried by the rising number of suicides and suicide attempts. Almost 3/4 of serious accidents involves the participation of a third party.

A critical issue for the railway market are still SPAD incidents (signal passed at danger, i.e. a train passing a "Stop" signal without the authority to do so). One should note the fact that 13% of such incidents were caused by train drivers with an experience of less than 12 months. This is a warning sign with regard to the system of their training and oversight. There were 111 such incidents noted in 2019, of those 104 on railway tracks and 7 at sidings.

- As a branch we should pay special attention to the training of new employees, what should allow for the curbing of SPAD incidents. I am certain that the creation of the Centre for the Examination and Monitoring of Train Drivers may partially remedy this situation - comments Mr. Góra.

Of significance for the railway safety are also joint initiatives undertaken by the President of UTK and the Minister of Infrastructure. In 2019 the preparations for the pilot programme regarding the safety measures on category D railway crossings, i.e. ones guarded only by the crossbuck and STOP signs have begun. Another important initiative has been the nomination of the President of UTK to coordinate the introduction of the ERTMS system to the Polish railway network and the creation of the ERTMS Users' Group. UTK has also been the organiser of the Railway Safety Forum and has continued its educational activities in the framework of the Railway Security Academy or "Railway Campaign ABC".

["The report on the state of railway safety in Poland in 2019"](#) (Polish version only) has been published on the UTK's website.

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