

Office of Rail Transport

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Rail transport in 2020

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In 2020 209.2 m passengers and 223.2 m tonnes of goods were transported by rail carriers. All sectors of Polish economy, including rail transport, were affected by the coronavirus pandemic and the global crisis caused by it. Transport results were lower by 126.7 m passengers and 13.2 m tonnes of goods than the parameters recorded in 2019.

PASSENGER TRANSPORT

In 2020 209.2 m passengers were transported by rail which is 37.7% less than in 2019. The transport performance was much lower and amounted to 12.7 bn pass-km – 42.6% less when compared to the previous year. Slightly lower fluctuations were recorded in the operational work – 160.2 m train-km in 2020 is a decrease by 6.3% as compared to 2019. The average distance travelled by a passenger in 2020 was 60.5 km and was 5 km (7.9%) shorter than the average distance recorded in 2019.

In December almost 13.3 m passengers chose the rail transport. This means a decrease by 52.4% as compared to 2019. The transport performance amounted to 783.4 m pass-km and the operational performance reached almost 14.5 m train-km. In December the drops were 54.7% and 2.5% respectively. The average distance travelled by a passenger in December 2020 was 59 km and was 3 km lower than in December 2019.

- Last year was a time of challenges and difficult decisions for the railway sector. January and February results allowed for a very optimistic forecasts of another year of dynamic growth in passenger transport. The demand in rail travel grew. However, the epidemic had a negative impact on transport results since March. From mid-March to June the largest drops in passenger transport were recorded, amounting to several dozen percent, similarly to the last months of 2020 - summarizes Ignacy Góra, the President of the Office of Rail Transport. - Holiday months and successive increases during that time have shown that passengers can return to travelling by rail. An opportunity offered by 2021, which is the European Year of Railways, must also be seized - he adds.

[Passenger transport data for 2020](#)

RAIL FREIGHT

In rail freight results in 2020 were also lower than in 2019, but the drops were not as significant as in passenger transport. The total weight of transported goods was slightly over 223 m tonnes which was a decrease in the transported weight by 13.2 m tonnes (5.6%) as compared to the previous year. The transport performance amounted to 52.2 bn tonne-km (6.6% less than in 2019) and the operational performance was 77.5 m train-km (5.9% less than in 2019). The average distance was almost 234 km, which is 2.6 km (1.1%) less than in the previous year.

In December 2020 19.8 m tonnes of goods were transported by rail – 2.3 m tonnes (13.2%) more than in December 2019. The transport performance and operational performance were also better by 515 m tonne-km (12.7%) and 0.7 m train-km (11.6%) respectively. The average distance was only 0.1 km shorter than in December 2019 and reached 232 km.

- Last year's global crisis unfortunately affected also the transport of goods. However, rail transport was still one of the most reliable means of transporting goods. Trains guaranteed free movement of goods in domestic, but even more importantly, international transport - emphasizes Ignacy Góra, the President of the Office of Rail Transport. - From mid-year successive increases were visible. It is especially worth noting that in November and December more goods were transported than in the same months in 2019. This shows the potential which, despite the crisis, still characterizes rail transport - he adds.

Basic operational parameters in passenger transport and freight for 2020, market shares of selected carriers and a comparison of new data for 2020 with previous years can be found in new study [Passenger transport and freight in 2020. An overview](#) (in Polish).

An additional study summarizing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the railway market in 2020 will be published in February. This study will cover data on the railway market in Poland and in selected European countries.

[Rail freight data for 2020](#)