

Office of Rail Transport

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Train checks during winter holidays

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During winter holidays inspectors of the Office of Rail Transport conduct intensive inspections of trains. From 17 January to 27 February they carried out more than 100 inspections. They pay particular attention to sanitary conditions, so that travelling during the pandemic is safe. According to gathered data, more than half of passengers positively assess sanitary conditions in trains during the pandemic.

In January winter holidays began in Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubuskie, Małopolskie, Świętokrzyskie and Wielkopolskie voivodeships. As a part of additional controls, the inspectors of the Office of Rail Transport checked a train of Koleje Małopolskie from Kraków to Skawina. *We are increasing the number of inspections carried out by inspectors of the Office of Rail Transport, so that each passenger can be sure that his journey by train will be safe and comfortable* - said Ignacy Góra, President of the Office of Rail Transport.

Last year, despite the coronavirus pandemic, passengers travelled by rail more willingly than in 2020. From January till November 2021 222.5 m passengers travelled by train, i.e. nearly 27 m more than in the same period in 2020. The travellers assess sanitary conditions in trains and at stations positively. In December 2021 the Office of Rail Transport conducted a questionnaire, which was completed by 1.5 thous. people travelling by rail. Almost 51% of the respondents assessed the sanitary safety in trains as good and very good and



almost 74% similarly rated it in case of rail stations.

The latest survey conducted by Office of Rail Transport shows that over 83% of passengers like to travel by rail. Over 50% of passengers consider rail transport as a competitive because of travel time and travel comfort. It is good news right after the end of the European Year of Rail - summed up Ignacy Góra, President of the Office of Rail Transport.

What are the checks like

The train inspections are unannounced and conducted before a train starts its journey or en route. During checks inspectors examine i.e. wheelsets and brakes, technical condition of doors, verify qualifications of train drivers and train crew. They also check the comfort of travelling and observance of passengers' rights. They inspect cleanliness of a train, toilets and their equipment, operation of heating and lighting, audio and visual information and whether a train route is displayed correctly.

In case of irregularities, the President of the Office of Rail Transport orders the rail carrier to remove them and to analyse them so that they do not repeat in the future. He may also decide that there was an infringement of regulations on rail transport safety and exclude a railway vehicle from use or limit its operation. If these infringements are not removed within the prescribed period, the rail carrier may face up to 5,000 EUR penalties for each day of delay.

Last year, during additional checks, rail inspectors checked 201 trains. Due to found irregularities, 57 decisions were issued which excluded vehicles from operation or limited their operation. Frequently recurring infringements are damaged doors, errors in documentation, incorrect tagging of vehicles and non-functioning passenger information system plates.



PASSENGER RIGHTS

If a rail carrier fails to ensure proper quality of travel service, passengers may submit a complaint and claim a refund of a part of the ticket price. The European law provides for compensation for delayed long-distance trains. For delays from one to two hours, it is 25% of the ticket price and for delays of more than two hours – half of the ticket price. However, compensation is only paid if it exceeds the equivalent of EUR 4.

You can file a complaint to the Office of Rail Transport. In 2021 the Office received 1,349 passenger inquiries, complaints and applications (30% more than in 2020). The number of received notifications is analogous to that recorded during 2018-2019, so at the level before the coronavirus pandemic.

WHERE TO FILE A COMPLAINT

Passengers who wish to make a complaint or claim should contact rail carrier in the first place. If the answer is not satisfactory, you can contact the Office of Rail Transport using the [online form](#) or send e-mail to pasazer@utk.gov.pl . The hotline 22 460 40 80 on passenger rights is open from Monday to Friday from 8:15 – 16:15.

The President of the Office of Rail Transport also accepts passenger applications about rail traffic safety. In these matters, you can contact us via *Bezpiecznik* application, using the [online form](#), e-mail to bezpieczenstwo@utk.gov.pl or calling 22 749 15 85.