

Office of Rail Transport

<https://utk.gov.pl/en/new/18544,Level-crossings-will-be-safer-thanks-to-new-regulations.html>
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Level crossings will be safer thanks to new regulations

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Public consultations on the new regulation on technical conditions for railway and road crossings are open. The proposed regulations take into account the postulates of the President of the Office of Rail Transport concerning, i.a., the introduction of modern methods of detecting obstacles at level crossings and the use of additional marking. The project is part of a series of actions undertaken recently to improve safety at level crossings.

Level crossings have been a critical points in rail traffic safety for years. On average, around 40% of all accidents on railway lines occur at crossings with roads. These incidents also account for around a third of all people killed and seriously injured.

The draft of a new regulation on technical conditions for level crossings prepared by the Ministry of Infrastructure has been created with the aim of improving safety. The most important proposed changes include:

- introduction of obligatory protection of category B crossings against bypassing closed gates by using traffic-calming islands, separating strips, concrete borders or separators;
- allowing the use of modern methods of detecting obstacles at crossings, e.g. by using radar technologies, thermal imaging or infrared sensors;
- allowing the use of variable message signs, slowing down (vibrating) lines, speed bumps or additional colouring of the road surface on the crossing;
- allowing the use of S-1 signalling device (light signal used at road crossings) at the level crossing.

Full content of the draft is available on the [Government Legislation Centre <https://legislacja.rcl.gov.pl/projekt/12356752/katalog/12856156#12856156>](https://legislacja.rcl.gov.pl/projekt/12356752/katalog/12856156#12856156) website. The planned date of entry into force of the regulation is 21 September 2022.

AMENDMENT TO THE MISDEMEANOUR CODE ALSO IMPROVES SAFETY

On 1 January an amendment to the Misdemeanour Code came into force. The changes introduced concern, i.a., an increase in the amount of fines for offences relating to the behaviour of users of level crossings:

- driving around lowered barriers or half-barriers,
- entering a crossing when lowering of barriers or half-barriers has started or their raising is not finished,
- entering a crossing when there is no possibility to leave a crossing,
- entering a crossing when a signal prohibits it (steady red, flashing red or two alternately flashing red signals).

The minimum fine rate for these offences is PLN 2,000. In the case of repeating the same offence within two years, the minimum fine rate will double - to PLN 4,000. In the proceedings, a police officer may impose a fine in the maximum amount of PLN 5,000 (PLN 6,000 in the case of a concurrence of offences), however, if a court decides on a fine, its amount may reach as much as PLN 30,000. The new fine rates are significantly higher than those in force until the end of 2021, when you could receive a fine of up to PLN 500.