

TRANSPORT SITUATION IN POLAND IN 2007

1. Traffic trends

In 2006 the cargo volume transported by all modes of transport amounted to 1480.3 million tones, i.e. 4.1% more the previous year, and transport performance amounted to 248.9 billion tonne-kilometers, i.e. 9.1% more than in 2005. Volume of cargo transported by all modes of transport, except of inland navigation, has increased.

The sectoral structure of cargo transport in Poland is advantageous as compared with the EU average values. The railway transported 291.4 million tones of cargo in total, i.e. 8.1% more than in 2005, and the transport performance increased by 7.3%. With cargo transport performance measured in tonne-kilometers Polish railways sector ranks the second among 25 EU MS, with the first place for Germany and the third for France (with 13% share in the total EU transport). Generally, growth of railway cargo transport was caused by an increased transport of the majority of product group, including brown coal, briquettes and coke, iron ores, cement, lime and other building materials. In 2006 an increase in railway passenger service was observed for the first time for many years – 265.3 million passengers were transported, i.e. 2.8% more than the previous year.

Over the past few decades a disadvantageous upset of balance among the transports sectors both in the cargo and passenger service areas are observed in the EU Member States. This is associated with a dramatically raising share of road cargo transport. As in the whole Europe, the share of this means of cargo transport has sharply risen also in Poland– since 2000 road transport share in the total transport performance has increased from about 50% to over 60%. In 2006 the road transport delivered as much as 1113.9 million tones of cargo. A drop in the number of coach passengers (by 3.9%) is also disadvantageous.

Over the recent decades the number of motorcars has dramatically increased in Europe. According to EUROSTAT data their number has doubled over the period of the past 25 years. A similar situation occurs in Poland with some delay. The number of registered motorcars has increased from 5.3 million in 1990 to 12.3 million in 2005, i.e. by 135%. Despite such an increase in the motorcar number the ownership index is still lower than in the EU-15 and amounts to 323 motor-cars/1000 inhabitants (for EU-25 this index was 476 cars/1000 inhabitants in 2004).

According to the forecasts the number of motorcars will increase by 40–60% by 2020 and will reach a level of 17–19.5 million. Between 1995 and 2005 the average traffic level on the international roads in Poland increased from 8.5 thousand to 13.5 thousand of vehicles and it is certain that it will keep growing as the number of vehicles does.

It is worth mentioning that the number of air passengers in the international traffic has grown almost four times over the last 15 years, and only during the last five years the number of international flight passengers in the Polish airports has doubled. This was mainly associated with the opening of the Polish air space for budget airlines which won a considerable share in the international passenger traffic. It is doubtless that such quick growth will not last over a long period of time, nevertheless it is necessary to set about extending the airport infrastructure, including passenger service facilities in the first place.

By 2020 a strong increase in transport demand is expected in connection with high economic growth forecasts and a considerable increase in Polish foreign trade volume. The most important forecasts concerning the demand for transport include the following:

- an annual increase in road cargo transport by 1.6-2.1% with already existing high volume of cargo transport amounting to 1,080 million tonnes;

- an annual increase in rail cargo transport by of 1.6-2.1% with the already existing cargo transport of 269 million tonnes The 2020 transport demand forecasts show that without energetic activities undertaken to change this tendency the road transport share in the general cargo transport structure will be increasing to the disadvantage of other transport sectors, including railways. Both sectors will have a similar annual growth dynamics, however, with the four times higher volume of transported cargo the road transport share in the transport structure will grow;
- high increase of road transport demand in Polish foreign trade sector - increase by 150-190%. The relevant rail transport will increase by 31-39%;
- an increase in transshipment in the Polish sea ports by 75-95%;
- an increase in the number of motor-cars by 40-60%;
- an increase in the number of air passengers by 170-230%;
- a decrease in the number of urban transport passengers by 2-3%;
- a decrease in the railway passenger service (by 15-25%) and coach service (by 10-20%) with a simultaneous increase in individual transport (by 50%75%) and domestic airline transport (by 60-85%).

2. Obstacles to the development of transport

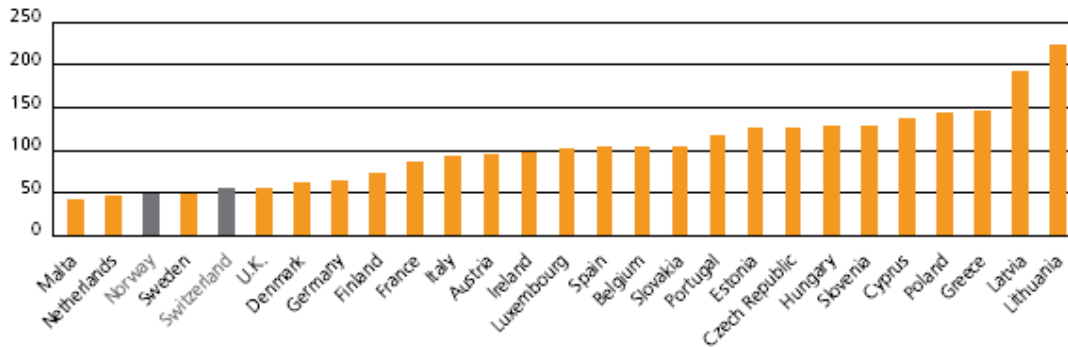
Road transport:

Main problems concerning the construction and modernisation of road network:

- Slow process of land acquisition for road construction due mainly to lengthy multi-instance legal procedures;
- Increased cost of construction works;
- Problems with employment of an adequate number of construction workers and associated fast increase of wages in the building industry;
- Local community protests against the location of main roads (protests of those who are interested in attracting road investment projects and those who oppose a specific location because of bothersome neighbourhood);
- Problems faced in the case of roads which are to run through the protected areas (including those under NATURA-2000 programme).

Poor level of traffic safety constitutes a hindrance to the development of transport. The main factors behind it are dangerous behaviour of drivers, inadequate and unsafe road infrastructure and old vehicle fleets. Legislation in some areas including roads fails to keep pace with modern developments and the apparatus of control and enforcement of rules is ineffective. Polish roads are among the most dangerous in the whole European Union and road users run much higher risk than in other countries as shown on the figure below.

Road deaths per million population. Source: 1st road safety PIN report, European Transport Safety Council



Railway transport:

- Insufficient financial resources for railway investment projects in the previous period – extensive shortages in the basic railway infrastructure, high degree of wear and tear of a considerable portion of the means of transport which need replacement investments;
- The limited existing potential of the companies dedicated to railways designing and building due to a slow investment progress in the previous years;
- The need to implement a very wide range of works within a limited period of time;
- The need to meet high environmental standards both at the designing and implementation stage;
- Problems associated with the railways sector need for advanced technologies which were hardly available so far.

Intermodal transport

- lack of an appropriate technical base (container terminals, logistic centres and specialist rolling stock);
- Insufficient service quality characterised by too long travel time, frequent delays, lack of consignments tracking system and, in the case of international transport, too long train stops on the border resulting from complicated phytosanitary and veterinary procedures;
- Low price competitiveness of rail transport.

Urban transport

- Bad condition of urban means of transport (railway and bus transport);
- Bad condition of tramcar lines;
- Too slow introduction of measures aimed at giving priority to mass transport;
- Slow process of construction of bicycle lanes.

Inland waterway transport

- Obsolete fleet;
- High level of under use of the fleet;
- Bad technical condition of inland waterways;
- Underinvestment of the inland waterway transport sector.

3. Best practices in transport and infrastructure regulation

Best practices in addressing transport problems through regulation:

Infrastructure investment:

- Law simplification: (Public Procurement Law, Environmental Protection Law, Act on Nature Protection);
- Shortening the time of investment project preparation (Act on particular rules for preparation and implementation of investment projects in public road sector);
- Solving the problems associated with the fact that many investment projects are located on the NATURA 2000 areas (detailed inventory of the NATURA 2000 areas which should be protected, obligation to elaborate alternative locations of the transport projects, possibility of compensatory measures where the project located on the NATURA 2000 area is of great public and economic importance or may affect human health and life);
- Institutional and staff strengthening of the major Beneficiaries of EU aid, i.e. GDDKiA, PKP PLK, in order to ensure effective implementation of the EU funds absorption;
- Strengthening dialogue with the European Commission by initiating and maintaining frequent working contacts aimed at the acceleration of the procedure of acceptance and circulation of transport applications for co-financing with the EU funds.

Road safety:

Since mid 2004 road safety audit is carried out in new roads projects on the national road network. The National Roads Fund is used to finance the construction and upgrading of the national road network. In 2007 the National Roads Administration started a road safety program. Since 2005 the Ministry of Infrastructure has been implementing the Regional Black Spot Treatment Program, which aims at increasing the level of safety and promoting good practice in infrastructure safety on local roads in cooperation with local administrations.

On the E road network in 2007 127 km of new roads have been built and 323 km of roads were rebuilt or renovated.

In budget of Ministry of Transport for 2007 the following expenditures were expected:

1. on railways
 - modernization, building and rebuilding of national railways – 804 204,1 thous. zlotys (1Euro \cong 3,8 zlotys);
 - building and modernization of rail borderline terminals for goods handling - 12 307,1 thous. Zlotys.
2. on national roads
 - investments of road infrastructure - 4 598 811, 5 thous. Zlotys.

The total amount of assets concerning expenditure on infrastructure scheduled in State Budget 2007 is 5,4 billion zlotys. The share of expenditure on infrastructure in GDP amounts to 0,48%. GDP in 2007 is estimated for 1 106 billion zlotys.