

Freight and passenger transport in the 1st quarter of 2026

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Freight transport stagnation intensified, reaching the lowest volume of goods transported in the last seven years.

In Q1, freight transport volumes dropped by over 9% year-on-year and transport performance by 6%, with declines across all freight modes. Passenger transport still rose year-on-year but at the slowest pace in the last four and a half years. The growth was due to a higher number of passengers transported by road. Yet, for the first time in five years, passenger transport performance declined.

The volume of goods transported by freight transport in Slovakia in the first quarter of 2026¹⁾ reached 40.8 million tonnes, marking the lowest value recorded since 2019. The year-on-year decline amounted to 9.3 %, representing the second sharpest decrease in freight transport observed over the past two years. The downturn was reflected across all transport modes. Road freight transport reported an 8.3 % year-on-year decrease in transported goods, while rail freight transport dropped by 4 %. Other freight transport activities, including inland waterway, air and pipeline transport as well as warehousing and supporting services, experienced the most pronounced decline, dropping by nearly 32 % year-on-year.

Freight transport performance, which mainly reflects transport distance, reached 8.8 billion tonne-kilometres (tkm) in the first quarter of 2026, representing a year-on-year decrease of 6 %. Lower year-on-year values persisted for the fifth consecutive quarter. In road freight transport, tonne-kilometres dropped by 5.1%, mainly due to a decrease of more than 46 % in transport distances in non-public transport. Rail freight transport performance decreased by 8.3 %.

Passenger numbers in passenger transport rose at a slower pace

In the first quarter of 2026, **passenger transport** services carried 189.2 million passengers²⁾, increasing by 1.8% year-on-year. However, the year-on-year growth rate was the lowest since the fourth quarter of 2021. The overall development was mainly driven by the higher number of passengers using road passenger transport, including both urban public transport and suburban and long-distance bus transport. Urban public transport carried almost 129 million passengers, which was 2.4% more than in the corresponding period of the previous year. Passenger numbers also rose in suburban and long-distance road transport, where 38.2 million passengers were transported, representing a year-on-year growth by 1.6%.

In contrast, rail transport recorded a lower number of passengers carried. In the first quarter, it was used by 17.7 million passengers, representing a year-on-year decline of 2.6%. This marked the third consecutive quarter of lower rail passenger numbers.

Passenger transport performance, which also takes transport distances into account, reached a total of 2.6 billion passenger-kilometres in the first quarter of 2026, decreasing by 2.2% year-on-year. For the first time since the first quarter of

2021, passenger transport recorded a decline in transport performance. This development was mainly due to a 1.5% decrease in passenger-kilometres in road transport, with urban public transport showing a more significant drop of 10.1%. Rail transport performance also dropped by 2.1%.

- 1) Data for the 1st quarter of 2025 have been revised and refined based on the results of the weekly survey in road freight transport
- 2) Number of passengers in passenger transport indicators represents the number of completed journeys

Data source: DATAcube. database

Quarterly data:

- Freight transport - volume of goods transported and performances - quarterly data [\[do1803qs\]](#)
- Passenger transport - the transport of persons and performances - quarterly data [\[do1804qs\]](#)

Monthly data:

Monthly data are published in the public DATAcube database. in chapter 4.4 Transport and postal services in data cubes:

- Freight transport - volume of goods transported and performances - monthly [\[do1801ms\]](#)
- Passenger transport - the transport of persons and performances - monthly [\[do1802ms\]](#)

Outputs on the topic of transport:

From 2024, the Statistical Office of the SR publishes informative reports with textual interpretations on the development of performance and volume indicators in passenger and freight transport to quarterly cumulative data, always 50 days after the end of the reference period.

Indicators of passenger and freight transport are created from data from the monthly statistical survey [Dop 1-12](#), which are filled in by **public transport enterprises** (their main activity is transportation and storage SK NACE 49 – 53) with the number of 20 or more employees exhaustively and small businesses (up to 20 employees) on a selective basis with imputations to the entire population of enterprises. For other enterprises, **non-public transport enterprises** (their main activity is other than transport, i.e. other than SK NACE 49 – 53, but they carry out freight transport as a secondary activity), monthly data are estimated and quarterly adjusted and revised for the previous three months on the basis of a summary from weekly sample statistical survey in road freight transport.

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