2025

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HŽ INFRASTRUKTURA

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Annual safety report

Public edition

Mihanovićeva 12
10 000 Zagreb

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1. Foreword



Railway transport is by far the safest form of land transport. This can also be attributed to the safety management system implemented at HŽ Infrastruktura, established on a demanding legal framework and carried out to maintain the safety of the railway system at its current level while continuously improving it. A significant contribution to this comes from efforts to prevent incidents, as well as from the intensive modernisation of the Croatian railway network.

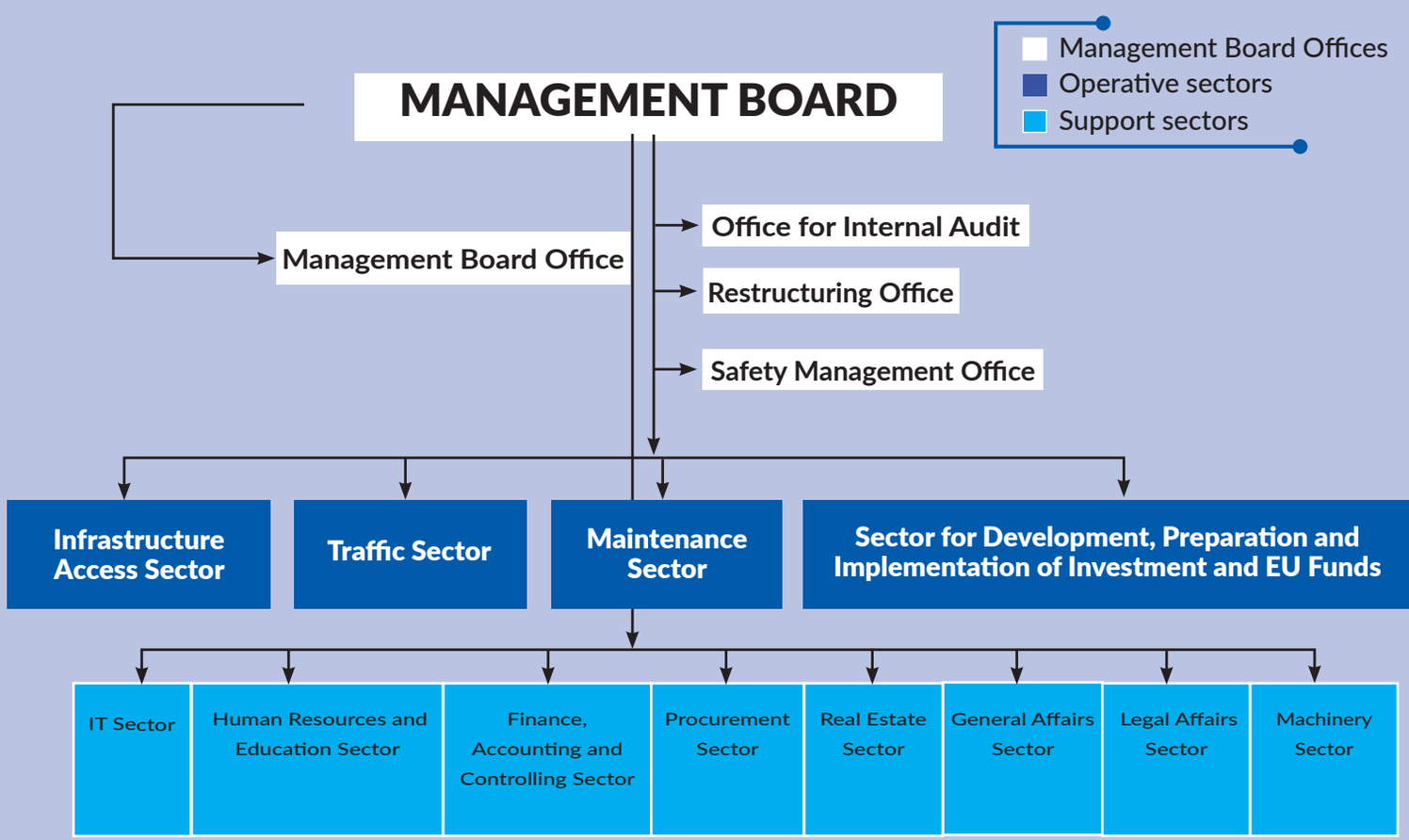
At the moment, more is being invested in railways than ever before in the history of the Republic of Croatia, and the plan is to spend around six billion euros by 2035 on improving the quality of the railway network. This is why this decade is often referred to as the "decade of railways". There is hardly a kilometre of track in Croatia that is not in some phase of development, be it completed works, works in progress, tenders, or documentation preparation. The largest share of EU funding is being invested in the main corridor lines, from Rijeka via Zagreb to Hungary, and from Slovenia via Zagreb to Serbia. More information about the project can be found at the Modernisation with EU funding link. In addition, never before have local and regional lines received as much investment as they do now, with the Government of the Republic of Croatia securing €900 million from part of a loan from the European Investment Bank. As the European Union aims for railways to become the backbone of Europe's mobility network in the near future, being the most energy-efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport, each of our modernisation projects is also a step towards achieving that goal.

In planning interventions, particular emphasis is placed on increasing the level of protection at level crossings, as these are critical points where rail and road traffic intersect. Unfortunately, in 2025, out of 53 serious accidents and incidents on our rail network, 15 occurred precisely at level crossings, resulting in four fatalities. I would like to emphasize that three of these fatal accidents occurred at level crossings protected by signalling and safety devices. The conclusion that emerges is that a high level of protection does not guarantee complete safety for users, especially those in road traffic, if the users themselves do not comply with traffic rules and signalling.

In addition, citizens are often unaware of the dangers that threaten the railway system or simply ignore them, which is why tragic deaths caused by careless movement within railway areas are common. For example, the electric lines above railway wagons carry a voltage of 25,000 V. A high-voltage electric shock can occur even when a person is up to two meters away from any parts of the contact network that are under voltage. In order to raise public awareness of the dangers resulting from non-compliance with traffic regulations and reckless behaviour within railway areas, HŽ Infrastruktura has been conducting the educational and preventive campaign "The Train is Always Faster" for the 26th consecutive year. In addition to road vehicle drivers, the campaign is particularly focused on younger generations. Finally, we should all be aware of our own responsibility in traffic. Greater awareness certainly leads to a change in behaviour and, consequently, to fewer deaths on and around railway infrastructure.

President of the Management Board of
HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o.
Damir Lončarić, M. Sc. Civ. Eng.

2. Basic information about HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o.



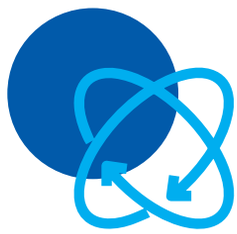
Organisation chart of HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o.

HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. is a limited liability company wholly owned by the Republic of Croatia and operates as the railway infrastructure manager in Croatia. The railway network extends over 2,617 kilometres, with 38.7 percent of lines electrified and 10.9 percent double-track lines.

On the network of HŽ Infrastruktura, as of December 31, 2025, there were 113 tunnels, 552 bridges, 550 stations and stops, and 1,429 level crossings.

On December 31, 2025, HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. employed 5,248 workers.

3. Safety in 2025



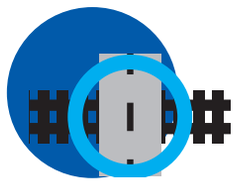
In 2024, there were 13 serious accidents, six more than in 2024. Seven of these accidents involved rolling stock colliding with individuals who were recklessly crossing the tracks or using them in unauthorized areas, while four serious accidents occurred at level crossings. One serious accident was caused by a special-purpose vehicle, and one by electric shock.

In 2025, there were 40 accidents, representing a 31 percent decrease from the five-year average. Eleven of these accidents involved incidents at level crossings (LCs). Two occurred at LCs secured with signalling and interlocking devices and nine at LCs secured with road traffic signs. In addition, 12 accidents are the result of collisions with moving rolling stock, and two are the result of electric shock.

A total of 13 deaths occurred, which is six more than in 2024. Four people were killed at LCs, while seven individuals were struck by trains while walking along the tracks or crossing the railway at unauthorised locations. One person died as a consequence of an electric shock. Compared to the five-year average, the number of seriously injured persons decreased by one. In 2025, 15 suicides and four suicide attempts were recorded.

In 2025, out of 53 serious accidents and incidents, 15 occurred at level crossings, which remain critical black spots in terms of the location of incidents resulting in fatalities and serious injuries. It is important to highlight that, of the four serious accidents at level crossings, as many as three occurred at crossings equipped with signalling and interlocking devices. This continues to indicate a significant lack of discipline among other road users, particularly drivers of road vehicles and pedestrians. The next most frequent category of incidents involves collisions between moving railway vehicles and individuals recklessly crossing or walking along the tracks in unauthorised areas. In 2025, there were 19 such incidents. On this occasion, we once again warn all individuals to use only designated crossing points when crossing railway tracks, and to avoid lingering or moving within railway lines or track areas, as this exposes them to direct danger from oncoming trains, often resulting in severe, and most frequently fatal, consequences.

4. Level Crossings and Pedestrian Crossings



A level crossing (LC) is a point where a railway or industrial track intersects with a road at the same level, making it a high-risk spot for all traffic participants. It may also include an intersection of a railway line with a pedestrian footway, bicycle lane, or other paths meant to be crossed by people, animals, vehicles, or machines. An intersection of a railway line and another road must be constructed to ensure safe traffic flow on both the railway and the other transport route, guaranteeing the safety of all traffic participants.

On the railway network of HŽ Infrastruktura, all level crossings and pedestrian crossings (PCs) are marked with appropriate technical protection. The safety level of protection complies with national plans for developing and maintaining LCs and is established by legal regulations that specify the necessary security level for each LC and PC.

4.1. Number and Protection of LCs and PCs in Croatia

LCs and PCs protected by RS (PBM) + visibility triangle	LCs and PCs protected by an automatic or mechanical device			TOTAL LC + PC
	Mechanical barriers with manual lifting	L + A + HB	L + A (PBM)	
784	**22**	**497**	**126**	**1429**

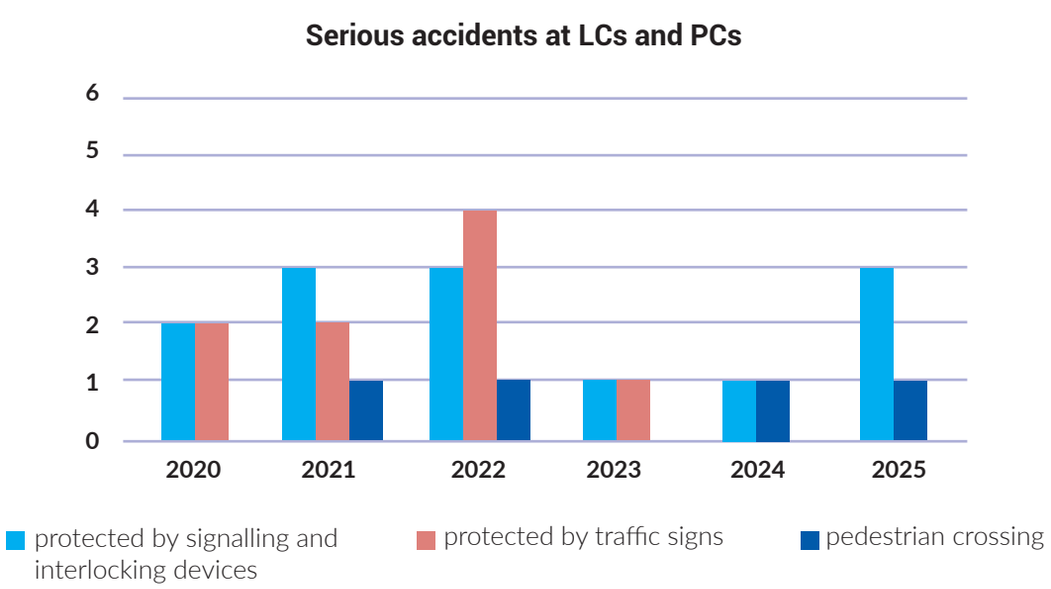
RS (PBM) + visibility triangle – road signs and visibility triangle (pass-by boundary markers at pedestrian crossings)
L + A + HB – light-acoustic signals and half-barriers
L + A (PBM) – light-acoustic signals (next to pedestrian crossings and pass-by boundary markers)

4.2. Analysis of incidents at LCs and PCs

SERIOUS ACCIDENTS		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
At LCs	protected by signalling and interlocking devices	2	3	3	1	1	3
	protected by traffic signs	2	2	4	1	0	0
	pedestrian crossing	0	1	1	0	1	1
Serious accidents total:		**4**	**6**	**8**	**2**	**2**	**4**

A serious accident is an irregular event in railway traffic in which at least one person has died, and/or five or more people have been seriously injured, and/or material damage exceeds two million euros.

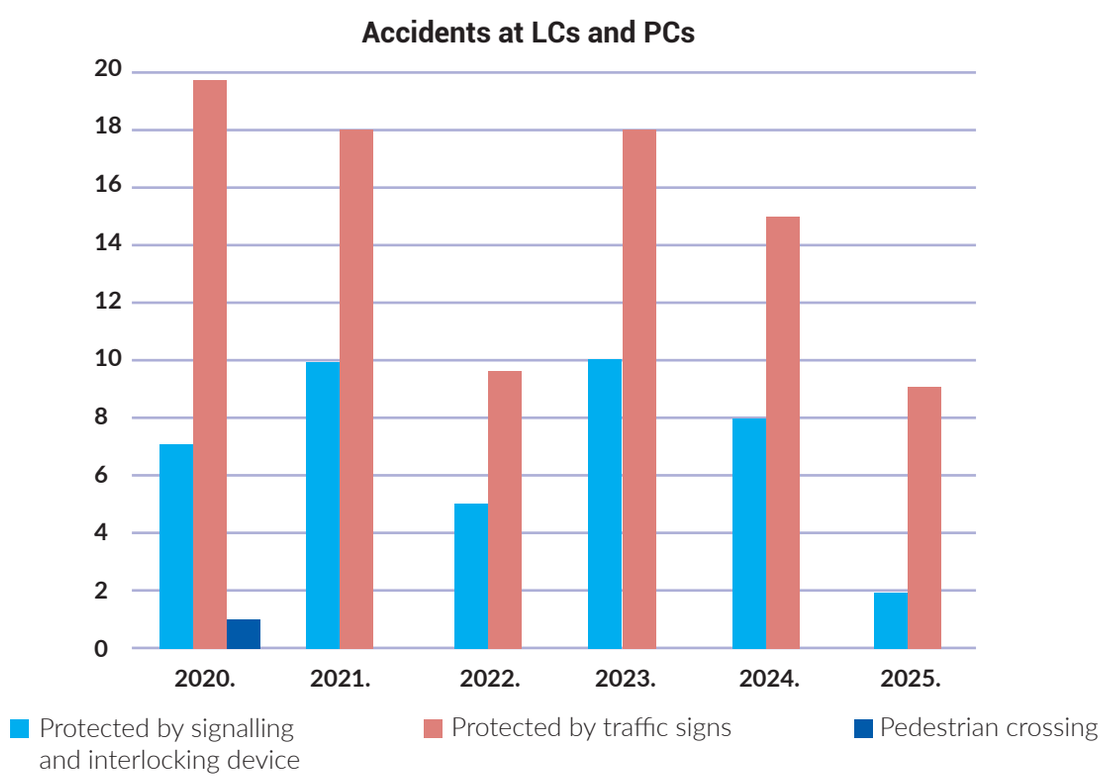
In 2025 four serious accidents happened at level crossings: three at a crossing protected by signalling and interlocking devices, and one at a pedestrian crossing with a bypass barrier. Compared to 2024, the number of serious accidents is higher by two.



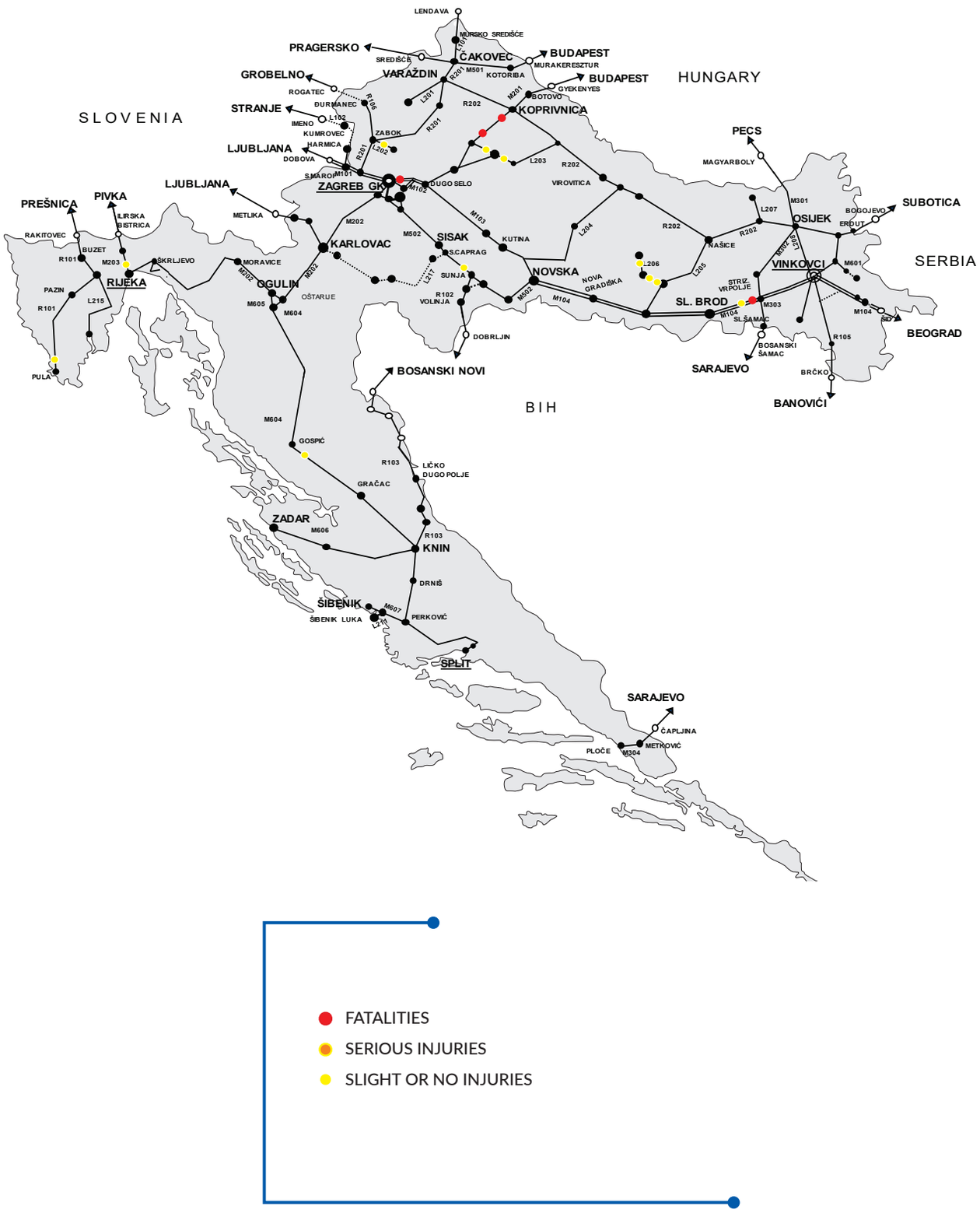
ACCIDENTS		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
At LCs	protected by signalling and interlocking devices	7	10	5	10	8	2
	protected by traffic signs	19	18	9	18	15	9
	pedestrian crossing	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total accidents:		**27**	**28**	**14**	**28**	**23**	**11**

An **accident** is an irregular event in railway traffic with harmful consequences such as serious bodily injuries to up to four persons and material damage that can be estimated at a value of up to two million euros.

In 2025, there were **11 accidents at level crossings**, including two at crossings protected by signalling and interlocking devices and nine at crossings with traffic signs. Compared to the five-year average, the number of accidents at level crossings decreased by 58 percent.



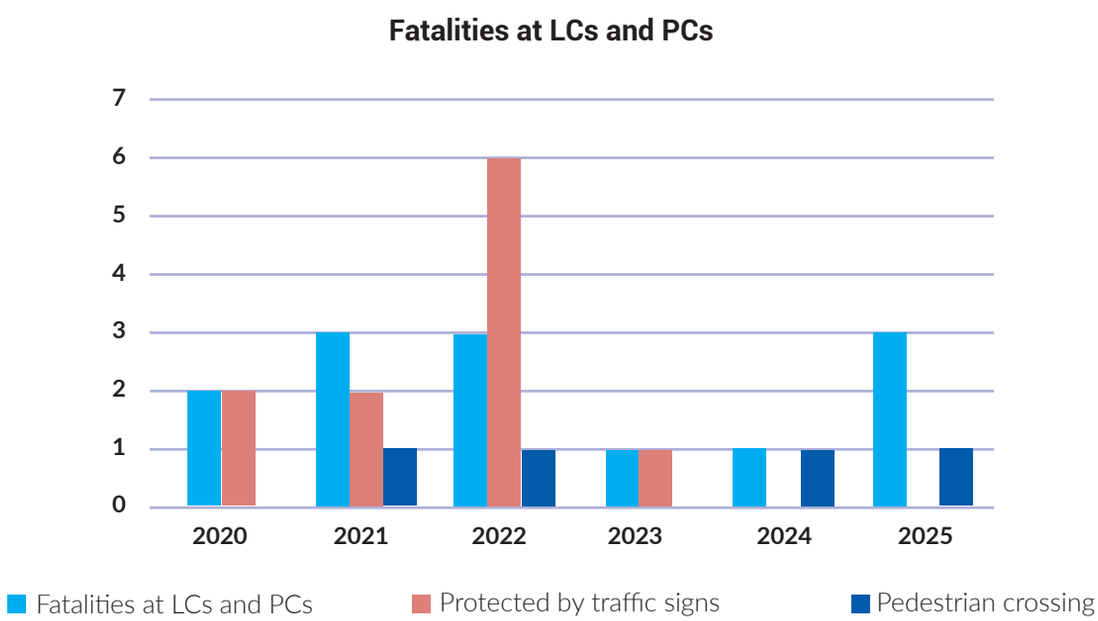
Serious accidents and accidents at level crossings in 2025



4.3. Analysis of Consequences of Incidents at LCs and PCs

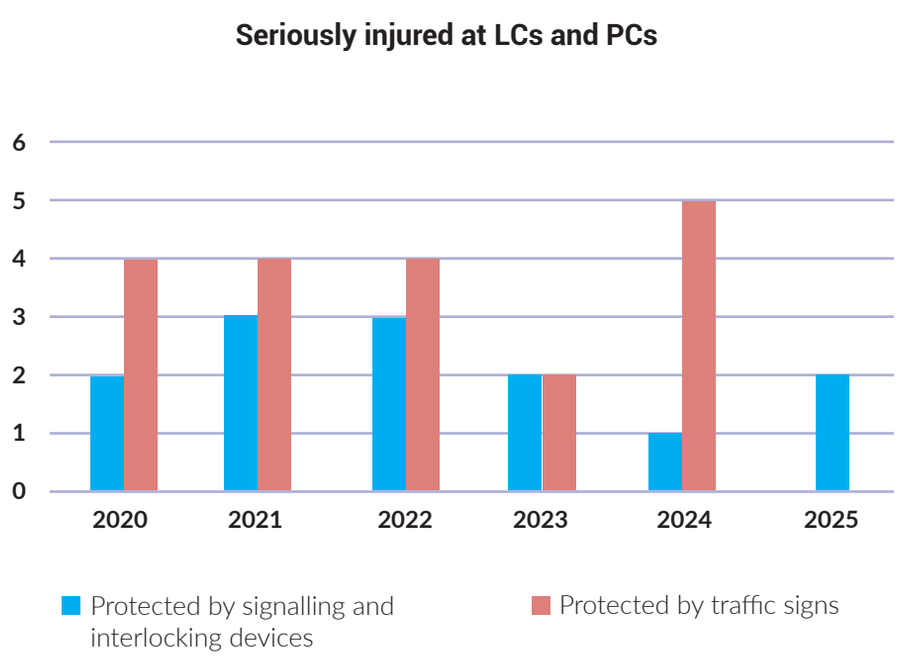
FATALITIES		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
At LCs	protected by signalling and interlocking devices	2	3	3	1	1	3
	protected by traffic signs	2	2	6	1	0	0
	pedestrian crossing	0	1	1	0	1	1
Total fatalities:		**4**	**6**	**10**	**2**	**2**	**4**

In 2025, **four people died** in railway accidents at level crossings, two road vehicle drivers and two pedestrians.



SERIOUSLY INJURED		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
At LCs	protected by signalling and interlocking devices	2	3	0	2	1	2
	protected by traffic signs	4	4	2	2	5	0
	pedestrian crossing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total seriously injured:		**6**	**7**	**2**	**4**	**6**	**2**

In 2025, t**wo people were seriously injured** in railway accidents at level crossings: one passenger and one train driver.



4.4. Overview of Characteristic Accidents at Level Crossings

1

On March 10, 2025, at 2.48 pm, between the stations Zagreb Main Station and Zagreb West Station, at level crossing “Republike Austrije” at km 426+357, secured by a barrier and a crossing guard, a minor pedestrian ran under a train and was fatally injured. The delay of 21 passenger trains was a total of 501 minutes. The pedestrian was responsible for the accident.

2

On March 7, 2025, at 7.21 am, between the stations Koprivnica and Bregi, at pedestrian crossing at km 204+747, secured by a bypassing barrier, a minor pedestrian ran under a train. Three passenger trains were delayed by 346 minutes. The pedestrian was responsible for the accident.

3

On March 20, 2025, at 12.35 pm, between stations Dugo Selo and Vrbovec, at level crossing at km 452+068, secured by light and sound signals, a road vehicle got under the wheels of a passenger train. The driver of the road vehicle died, and the passenger was seriously injured. The delay of 17 passenger trains was 1223 minutes. The driver of the road vehicle was responsible for the accident.

4

On July 1, 2025, at 12.01 pm, between stations Andrijevci and Garčin, at level crossing at km 198+582, secured by light and sound signals, a road freight vehicle got under the wheels of a train. The delay of 38 passenger trains was 1706 minutes, 13 freight trains were 14 945 minutes delayed, and two passenger trains were cancelled. The driver of the road freight vehicle was responsible for the accident.

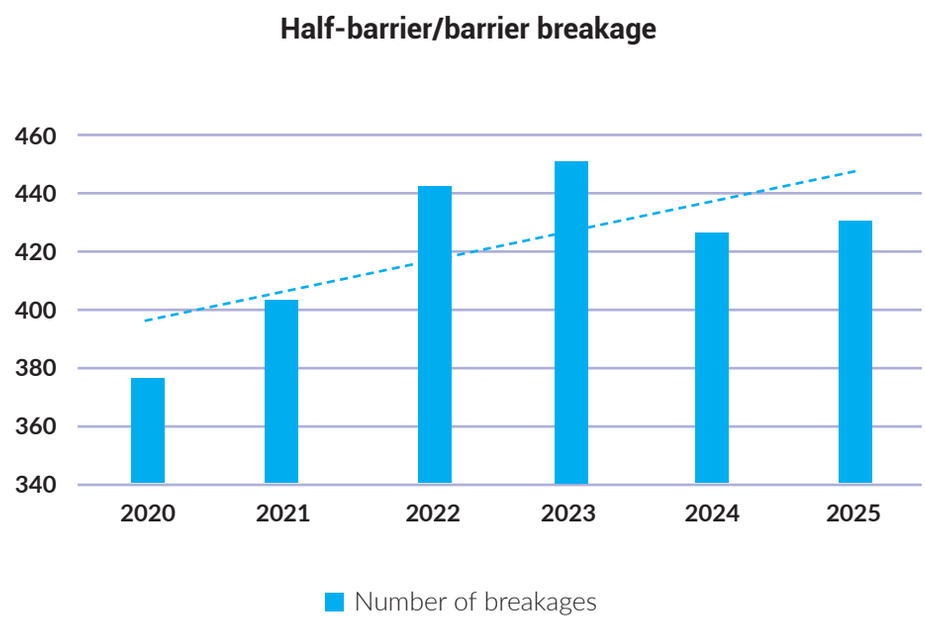
5

On April 21, 2025, at 7.50 pm, between stations Vodnjan and Pula, at level crossing at km 118+861, secured by traffic signs, a road vehicle got under the wheels of a passenger train. The driver and two passengers in the road vehicle were slightly injured. Two passenger trains were delayed by 101 minutes. The driver of the road vehicle was responsible for the accident.

4.5. Half-Barrier/Barrier Breakage

HALF-BARRIER/BARRIER BREAKAGE	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of breakages	378	402	442	452	426	431

In 2025, there were **431 incidents of half-barrier or barrier breakages** at level crossings. Since half-barriers or barriers at level crossings were broken immediately before the train for which they were lowered passed, each breakage could have potentially caused an accident. Material damages to HŽ Infrastruktura due to half-barrier breakages in 2025 were estimated at EUR 95 thousand.



4.6. The Programme to Address the Issue of Level Crossings and Pedestrian Crossings for the 2023-2027 Period

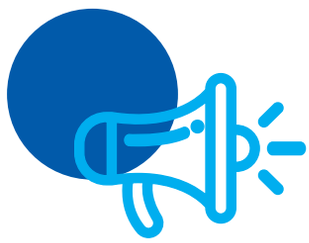
Addressing the safety issues at level crossings and pedestrian crossings over railway lines (LCs and PCs) was established as a key measure in the Transport Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia 2017– 2030, aimed at enhancing the safety of railway and road traffic. The Programme to Address the Issue of Level Crossings and Pedestrian Crossings for the 2023-2027 Period outlines a list of priorities to address the issue of LCs and PCs along railway lines. It includes crossings that are currently being addressed, those that are part of project applications with secured funding, as well as crossings not covered by existing investment programmes, and require financing. The goal of the Programme is to improve safety levels at LCs and PCs by implementing additional measures to enhance the safety of rail and road traffic.

Objectives of the Programme include establishing a priority list for LCs and PCs, which are not considered finally addressed, with a timeline for resolution; determining the appropriate method for each LC and PC, whether by grade separation, cancellation with or without redirection, securing with devices, or modifying or complementing existing securing methods; and identifying further measures to enhance safety.

The estimated financial resources required for implementing these projects amount to EUR 41,117,171.00, and are planned to be sourced from EU funds, the state budget, credits, and other resources of HŽ Infrastruktura, as the manager of the infrastructure. Follow this link to view the full document: https://mmpi.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/PROMET/Promet%204_23/PROGRAM%20RJESAVANJA%20ZCP-A%20I%20PP-A%20ZA%202023-2027%2017-4_23.pdf.

In 2025, HŽ Infrastruktura completed the project of Procurement and Installation of safety equipment at 49 level crossings and one pedestrian crossing across the railway at 50 locations across the Croatian rail network. In addition, by the end of 2025, 44 upgraded level crossings were put into operation as part of the Level Crossing Safety and Modernisation Project, while the level of protection was increased at seven level crossings through a separate project aimed at modernising 27 level crossings.

5. Other incidents



5.1. Harm to Unauthorised Persons Outside LCs and PCs

Between 2020 and 2025, a series of serious accidents and incidents occurred, caused by reckless behaviour by unauthorized persons crossing or moving near the tracks in prohibited areas. These incidents resulted in fatalities, serious injuries, train delays, and material damages.

UNAUTHORISED PERSONS OUTSIDE OF LCs	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Serious accident	5	4	5	4	4	7
Incident	8	5	68	4	7	12
Collisions total:	**13**	**10**	**13**	**8**	**11**	**19**

UNAUTHORISED PERSONS OUTSIDE OF LCs	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fatalities	5	4	5	4	4	7
Serious injuries	6	4	6	4	2	7
Suspended traffic (h)	26	26	21	13	19	31
Train delays (min)	6027	2795	2882	1822	3417	3271
Trains cancelled	**15**	**7**	**11**	**2**	**12**	**20**

In 2025, there were **19 incidents involving trains or railway vehicles striking people** who were crossing or walking near the tracks in areas where it is prohibited. In these collisions, seven people died and seven were seriously injured.

Characteristic Events

1

On January 18, 2025, at 4.23 pm, between stations Unešić and Žitnić, a male person died under the wheels of a train. Four trains were delayed for 377 minutes. The person who died caused the accident.

2

On January 28, 2025, at 9.42 am, between stations Savski Marof and Harmica, a male person died under the wheels of a train. Fourteen trains were cancelled. The person who died caused the accident.

3

On February 28, 2025, at 9.10 am, a male person died under the wheels of a train at Darda station. Four trains were delayed for 138 minutes, and two were cancelled. The person who died caused the accident.

4

On April 29, 2025, at 5.00 am, a male person died under the wheels of a train at Nova Gradiška station. Three trains were delayed for 264 minutes, and one train was cancelled. The person who died caused the accident.

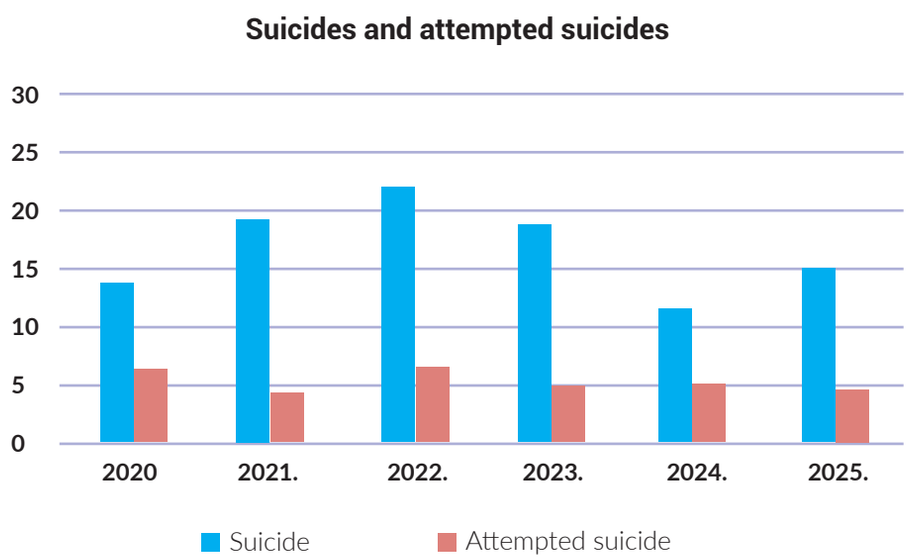
5

On September 24, 2025, at 11.12 am, between stations Bizovac and Osijek, a female person died under the wheels of a train. One train was delayed for 151 minutes, and one was cancelled. The person who died caused the accident.

5.2. Suicides and attempted suicides

EVENT TYPE	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Suicide	13	19	22	18	12	15
Attempted suicide	7	4	7	5	5	4

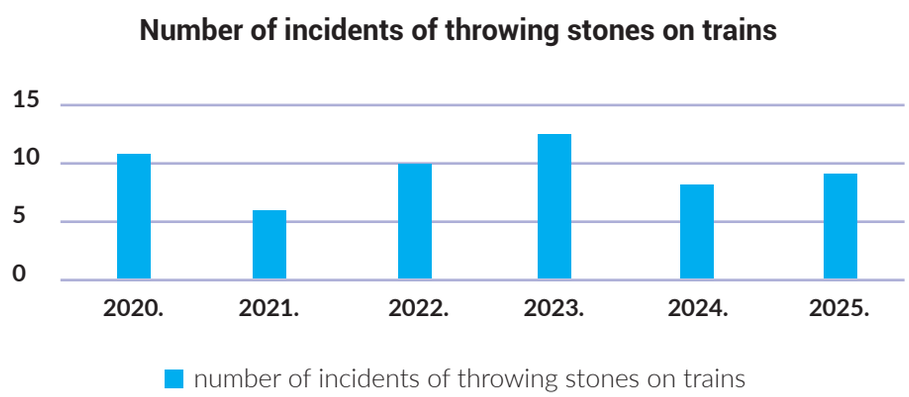
In 2025, there were **15 suicides and four attempted suicides** by jumping under a train.



CONSEQUENCES	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fatalities	13	19	22	18	12	15
Seriously injured	6	2	7	3	5	3
Suspended traffic (h)	5	45	32	26	26	48
Train delays (min)	9332	10745	8576	5230	4882	5336
Trains cancelled	27	20	17	8	12	30

5.3. Incidents as a Result of Throwing Stones on Trains

EVENT TYPE	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Throwing stones on trains	11	7	10	13	8	9



CONSEQUENCES	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Seriously injured	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slightly injured	0	0	1	0	0	0
Suspended traffic (h)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Train delays (min)	252	227	143	119	119	145
Trains cancelled	0	0	0	0	0	3
Material damages (EUR thousand)	14	14	13	18	15	13

The Ordinance on the Internal Order (Official Gazette of HŽ Infrastruktura no.10/24) forbids throwing objects at railway vehicles and cargo.

Throwing objects on trains is a dangerous act that endangers passengers, railway staff, and property. From 2020 to 2025, one person suffered minor injuries from throwing stones on trains. In 2025, such acts caused damages worth EUR 13,000, and train delays added up to 145 minutes. The perpetrators have not yet been identified.

The highest number of cases of throwing stones at trains was recorded on the route between Zagreb Borongaj and Sesvete, eight out of a total of nine cases.

Characteristic events

1

On 20 January 2025, at 6.10 pm, unknown individuals threw stones at a passenger train between stations Zagreb Borongaj and Sesvete, resulting in material damage to the train worth EUR 1,000.

2

On 20 January 2025, at 9.57 pm, unknown individuals threw stones at a passenger train between stations Dugo Selo and Novska, resulting in material damage to the train worth EUR 1,000.

3

On 13 July 2025, at 8.56 pm, unknown individuals threw stones at a passenger train between stations Zagreb Borongaj and Sesvete, resulting in material damage to the train worth EUR 2,000

4

On 24 July 2025, at 0.31 am, unknown individuals threw stones at a passenger train between stations Zagreb Borongaj and Sesvete, resulting in material damage to the train worth EUR 303.

5

On 18 August 2025, at 6.45 pm, unknown individuals threw stones at a passenger train between stations Zagreb Borongaj and Sesvete, resulting in material damage to the train worth EUR 2,000.

5.4. Incidents involving high-voltage electric shock

In addition to the previously mentioned incidents caused by the reckless behaviour of unauthorized individuals who crossed the line or moved along it in prohibited areas, it is important to highlight incidents involving high-voltage electric shock. While these incidents do not represent a significant proportion of the total, they are specifically addressed in this report due to their severe consequences.

ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY ENTERING THE DANGER ZONE OF THE OVERHEAD CONTACT LINE	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of accidents	1	3	3	4	0	3

CONSEQUENCES	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fatalities	1	0	2	0	0	1
Severely injured	0	3	1	5	0	2

An electric shock occurred in 13 out of 14 recorded incidents from 2020 to 2025 due to unauthorized individuals climbing onto wagons. In one case, the accident involved a user entering the danger zone while crossing the level crossing with a construction machine. These incidents resulted in four fatalities and serious injuries to 11 others. Two of the fatalities, and nine of the seriously injured were under the age of 18. This data is alarming and necessitates more extensive social action from schools, parents, and other social factors, such as police. Representatives of HŽ Infrastruktura have been visiting schools for a number of years and conduct campaigns to inform and educate students about the consequences of electric shock.

Characteristic events

1

On 6 April 2025 at 6.41 pm, a male individual was severely injured from an electric shock, after entering the danger zone and climbing onto a freight wagon at station Nova Gradiška.

2

On 20 May 2025 at 8.48 am, a worker was severely injured when he was crossing the level crossing with a working machine with a raised crane at station Ogulinski Hreljin. He entered the danger zone and suffered severe injuries from an electric shock.

3

On 8 November 2025 at 8.18 pm, a male individual suffered serious injuries from an electric shock when he entered the danger zone and climbed onto a freight wagon at station Rijeka Brajdica.

Since incidents caused by electric shock invariably result in severe injuries or even worse outcomes, it is important to once again highlight a number of important facts regarding the consequences of an electric shock.

All components of the overhead contact line that are typically under voltage, along with its all neutral (ungrounded) components, ARE ALWAYS UNDER VOLTAGE!

It is prohibited to touch any components of the catenary, cantilevers and components on various sides of the insulator in the overhead contact line, as well as of the other conductors!



It is prohibited to approach contact line poles or track rails where abnormal phenomena, such as sparking, shimmering, crackling, or sizzling, are observed or heard!

It is prohibited to approach within five meters or touch broken power lines, bypass lines or catenaries, as well as their other components that have fallen to the ground or are hanging above the ground!

It is prohibited to enter the danger area or to approach the components of the overhead contact line under voltage at a distance less than two meters!

There is a common misconception among the public that an incident resulting in an electric shock must involve touching the catenary of the overhead contact line under voltage. However, the reality is that the area which is off-limits for safety reasons extends to an area at the distance of two meters from all parts of the overhead contact line that are under voltage.

5.5. Signs indicating prohibition, warnings, and informational messages on the lines of HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o.

In its operations as an infrastructure manager, concerning maintaining internal order, protecting railway infrastructure and providing necessary warnings to unauthorized persons, third parties and passengers regarding prohibited actions and dangers on the railways it manages, HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. is required to establish the types and designs of signs indicating prohibited actions and warnings about hazards on the lines under its jurisdiction, and to install these signs in designated locations.

This obligation is grounded in various applicable regulations as follows:

- Railway System Safety and Interoperability Act (Official Gazette No. 63/20)
- Defence Act (Official Gazette Nos. 73/13, 75/15, 27/16, 110/17, 30/18, 70/19, 155/23, and 136/25)
- Rulebook on Technical Requirements for Railway Power Infrastructure Subsystem (Rulebook HŽI-404, Official Gazette of HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. 2/25)
- Rulebook on Technical Requirements for Railway Traffic Safety (Rulebook RH-600, Official Gazette No. 128/08)
- Rulebook on the Internal Order of the Railway System (Rulebook HŽI-652, Official Gazette of HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. 10/24)
- Rulebook on Safety Signs (Official Gazette Nos. 91/15, 102/15, and 61/16)

SIGNS PROHIBITING CROSSING THE RAILWAY/TRACKS AND WALKING ON THE TRACKS



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

The prohibition signs depicted in the first seven pictures are positioned at designated locations on the open railway, within stations, and at stops. Their purpose is to alert individuals who intend to cross the railway line or track, or to walk along the railway without proper authorisation, that such actions are prohibited for their own safety and for the safety of the railway system. Bilingual signs in Croatian and English are installed as supplementary signs (signs in Figures 2 and 3) at stations and stops where international passenger trains halt, or at stations situated in tourist areas. The signs illustrated in Figures 5, 6, and 7 serve to complement those in Figures 1, 2, and 3, specifically at stations and stops designated for city and suburban passenger transport, at stations where international passenger trains halt, and at stations located in tourist regions.

SIGNS PROHIBITING ACCESS TO THE OBJECTS AND UNAUTHORIZED FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY OF SUCH OBJECTS



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

The prohibition signs depicted in Figures 8 and 9 are used to mark the objects important for the defence of the Republic of Croatia, with prohibited access to unauthorized individuals AND prohibited filming and photography of such objects. The prohibition sign depicted in Figure 10 is used to designate the facilities, premises and areas where access to unemployed persons is prohibited (specific railway facilities).

WARNING SIGN INDICATING APPROACHING TRAIN HAZARD



Figure 11

The warning sign depicted in Figure 11 is installed at stations and stops to alert railway workers, passengers, and third parties, that they are in an area where heightened awareness of movement is necessary due to the risk of approaching trains or other railway vehicles (this involves movement in the areas such as platforms and landscaped spaces within the station or stop area).

WARNING SIGNS INDICATING ELECTRIC SHOCK HAZARD



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

The warning signs depicted in Figures 12 to 15 are used to alert individuals to the risks of electric shock. The warning sign depicted in Figure 12 is positioned on the protective gate before the level crossings on electrified tracks and targets drivers of road motor vehicles, particularly those operating freight vehicles. This sign is also used to designate railway power plants and related facilities. The warning sign in Figure 13 is installed to the disconnector drive housings and connection cabinets, while the signs depicted in Figures 14 and 15 are attached to the overhead contact line poles.

WARNING SIGN INDICATING ELECTRIC SHOCK HAZARD AND PROHIBITION OF CLIMBING ONTO WAGONS AND OVERHEAD CONTACT LINE POLES



Figure 16

The warning sign depicted in Figure 16 indicates danger and prohibits unauthorized persons from taking the actions shown or explained on the sign. The sign is positioned in the area of electrified stations or stops where wagons are parked on the tracks above which the voltage in the overhead contact line is switched on and where unauthorized climbing onto wagons and overhead contact line poles has been recorded.

SIGN INDICATING PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP NOTIFICATION



Figure 17

The information sign depicted in Figure 17 is placed in the areas where frequent cases of suicide or suicide attempts have been recorded, with the aim of preventing their occurrence, or in order to provide timely psychological assistance.

The railway system is recognised as one of the safest modes of transport for passengers and goods. However, with its infrastructure, subsystems, and railway vehicles it can pose dangers to third parties and unauthorised individuals, as well as to passengers who fail to adhere to the rules governing permitted movement and behaviour within railway areas. These signs are installed to prevent accidents and provide information regarding prohibited actions, while also warning of various hazards present throughout the railway area. It is in everyone's best interest to observe these prohibitions, warnings, and notices.

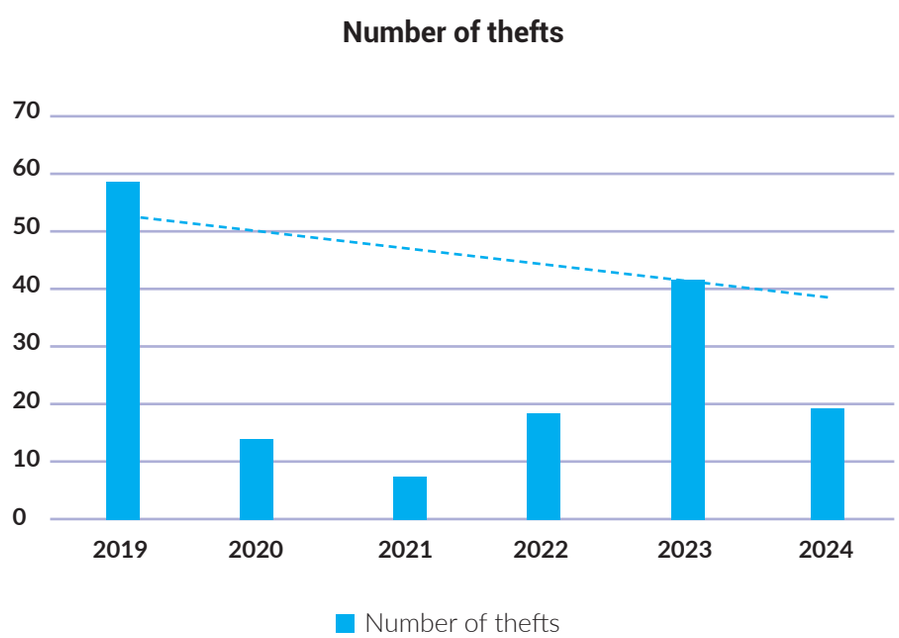
6. Theft of railway property in the area of the Republic of Croatia

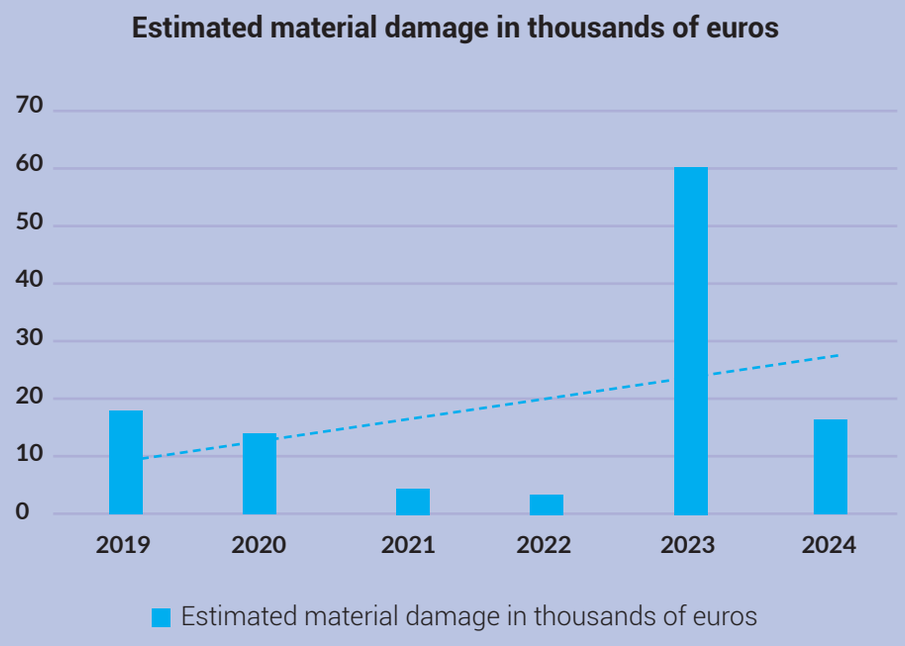
THEFTS	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of thefts	13	7	18	41	19	2
Estimated material damage in thousands of euros	13	4	3	60	16	0

A total of 100 thefts were recorded from 2020 to 2025, with two thefts in 2025. All thefts that occurred in 2025 involved stealing copper cables.

The estimated material damage incurred from 2020 to 2025 is EUR 96 thousand.

In addition to the material damage, thefts lead to significant traffic disruptions and delays in train services.

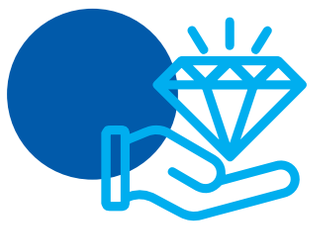



Estimated material damage in thousands of euros
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
Estimated material damage in thousands of euros

Locations with the highest theft rate in 2025



7. Public education



7.1.“Train is Always Faster“ and ILCAD

In 2000, Croatian Railways launched an educational and preventive campaign titled “Train is Always Faster,” which originally targeted solely children. The campaign’s purpose was to educate children about appropriate behaviour around railway tracks, the dangers of playing in these areas, and the proper way to cross tracks. However, recognising that most casualties at level crossings involve drivers, HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. subsequently developed a dedicated campaign targeting road vehicle drivers as part of the campaign. Despite investments made to enhance safety at level crossings, accidents continue to occur, with negligence on the part of road vehicle drivers being the cause in up to 98 percent of cases. According to the current signalling system, a train always has the right of way. Consequently, it is only accurate to say that a road vehicle has either crashed with the train, or even hit the train, rather than the other way around.

Unfortunately, in recent years, there has also been an increase in the number of accidents caused by the use of mobile phones and/or headphones while crossing tracks. This issue predominantly involves young people, such as high-school and university students. Therefore, a portion of the promotional activities within the campaign specifically targets this population group.

Education goals

When they obtain a driver’s license, drivers also learn all the rules of crossing tracks safely. However, accidents still occur at intersections between roads and railways. When it comes to working with drivers, the campaign aimed at drivers seeks to raise awareness of personal responsibility and highlight the importance of respecting traffic signs and regulations. Attentive and cautious participation in traffic is the principal prerequisite for safety.

During warning campaigns at level crossings, in the police talking the drivers and their assistance, the efforts are made to highlight the significance of driving carefully, and the various distractions that can greatly diminish their concentration level on the road. One major issue today is certainly the use of headphones and mobile phones while crossing tracks, whether for talking, texting, or browsing the internet. Additionally, haste and impatience can also be the cause of accidents.

For children, the campaign titled “Train is Always Faster” is implemented in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, and has in recent years expanded to various events organized by other institutions and associations etc. to target as many children as possible. The goal of the workshops is to educate children about the risks and rules of conduct at crossings and to assess if they have understood:

- that level crossings are safe when used according to the rules
- that there are three basic types of risks:
- fault of a traffic participant
    - deliberate disregard for traffic signs
    - seduced concentration levels (e.g., when using headphones or a mobile phone in traffic).

Also, during the workshops, efforts are made to:

- warn about other undesirable and dangerous behaviours, such as playing on and along the tracks, climbing onto wagons, or throwing stones at trains.
- warn about potential technical failures; although very rare, these failures can occur in the equipment at level crossings, so caution is always necessary.
- warn children, in an age-appropriate manner, about the consequences of crossing level crossings improperly.
- encourage children to share their newly acquired knowledge about the dangers of crossing level crossings with family and friends, and in this way reiterate to themselves what they have learned, along with spreading the message that caution is essential.

Since 2011, the educational and preventive campaign "Train is Always Faster" has been part of the international ILCAD campaign. This is an English acronym for International Level Crossing Awareness Day. Since all railways in the world have problems with safety and accidents at level crossings, the goal of this international campaign is to draw attention to the importance of one's own responsibility and raise awareness of the dangers at level crossings. Accordingly, joining the "Train is Always Faster" campaign with ILCAD was a completely logical move.

The International Level Crossing Awareness Day in 2025 was observed at the level crossing in the Zagreb settlement of Sveta Klara. On this occasion, HŽ Infrastruktura conducted the educational and preventive campaign titled "Train is Always Faster." In collaboration with the Zagrebačka County Police Administration, police engaged with road traffic participants to discuss the dangers of crossing tracks and the importance of adhering to traffic rules, signs, and signals.

Particularly important groups of children included in the "Train is Always Faster" campaign include:

- children living near railway
- children crossing railway tracks daily on their way to school
- children who, starting their secondary school, travel more frequently on their own and cross railway tracks and city roads.

Course of the workshop

The course of the workshop primarily depends on the interaction with the children, as well as their engagement, experiences, and age. The basic plan for work with the children includes:

Presentation of the HŽ Infrastruktura teams

- A brief overview of the development of the railway and its impact on economic growth
- An introduction to railway professions
- Explaining and defining the term “level crossing”
- Asking questions such as:
  - How do you get to school? (e.g. on foot, by bike)
  - Do you need to cross the road on your way to school?
  - Do you need to cross the railway on your way to school?
  - What is the safe way to cross the road or railway?
  - Where is the safest place to cross the railway?
- Students are instructed to respect traffic signs and safety.
- Special attention is given to dangerous and undesirable behaviours, including:
  - climbing onto wagons and the consequences of electric shock
  - climbing on the supporting structures of the overhead contact line
  - playing on or alongside the tracks
  - moving on or directly along the tracks
  - throwing objects, such as stones, at trains
  - wearing headphones and using mobile phones while in traffic.

During 2025, the “Train is Always Faster” campaign was implemented in 23 schools, reaching a total of 2,975 children and young people. To raise awareness about the dangers of electric shock, ongoing cooperation with the Croatian Society for Burn Injuries of the Croatian Medical Association continued.

Through debate workshops, students are encouraged to express their critical viewpoints and express creative solutions on how to reduce instances of destructive behaviour among their peers. The primary goal is to raise awareness about the condition and deterioration of public spaces and to discourage approval of destructive behaviours. It is also crucial to heighten their awareness that everyone can contribute to the preservation and enhancement of public spaces and that their own example can positively influence those around them.

7.2. Non-institutional education

HŽ Infrastruktura is also active in the local communities (outside the institutions), by participating in events aimed at children and young people. For instance, it took part in educational and preventive activities during the “Futsal Tournament Sopot” and the “Hakl na taksiju” event in Gajnice. Additionally, street artist Jure Ereš was commissioned to paint a mural in the pedestrian underpass at Zagreb Main Station. The walls of this underpass now feature graffiti related to the “Train is Always Faster” campaign, its mascot, the frog Andrew, and various symbols representing the city of Zagreb. To protect and preserve railway infrastructure from vandalism, HŽ Infrastruktura also participated in the cultural and artistic event “Piece of Zagreb” in October 2025. This event gathered 28 artists from across Croatia, who painted the pillars of the “Svetice” railway overpass with graffiti and murals. In this way these areas have become designated legal spaces for free painting of the street artists. Through these activities, HŽ Infrastruktura additionally reached approximately 450 children. In 2025, approximately 140 different edu-

cational activities were conducted as part of the “Train is Always Faster” campaign, engaging around 3,500 participants. New educational and preventive materials were developed, such as a sponge-made model of a level crossing, designed for workshops and playrooms for children. This model was also featured at the “200 Years of Railways in the World” exhibition, serving as a training ground for education and play for children as the exhibition visitors. To enhance the visibility of the “Train is Always Faster” campaign, all existing and new communication channels were utilised. This included advertising and publishing articles related to safety on various online platforms, as well as participating in community events that were attended by children and young people. Additionally, a series of previously produced feature and animated videos were distributed across all available media. These educational videos are permanently available on HŽ Infrastruktura You Tube Channel i and on the website Cross Tracks Safely.

7.3. Safety and media

HŽ Infrastruktura, as the manager of railway infrastructure operating as a public good in general use, is committed to a development policy grounded in social responsibility towards the community as well. Consequently, it makes significant efforts to highlight safety issues within the railway belt through all available media. It is beyond dispute that the media are increasingly crowded with advertisements and content competing for the attention of readers and viewers, and that educational and preventive content regarding the safety of traffic participants—particularly within the railway infrastructure belt—often go unnoticed. Unfortunately, the issue of safety at level crossings, as well as the hazards present in railway zones, tends to receive the biggest attention only once an accident happens.

In 2025, a total of 436 media outlets published 3,112 articles and features with HŽ Infrastruktura d.o.o. as the main subject. Among these, portals accounted for 76 percent (361), the press for 13 percent (42 newspaper titles), and TV and radio for five percent (12 TV programs and 22 radio stations). Compared to 2024, the observed media published 22.28 percent more articles and features in 2025. These articles discuss sometimes directly but more frequently indirectly also the enhancement of railway traffic safety.

In 2025, the topics regarding HŽ Infrastruktura predominantly covered the investments in railway infrastructure (overhauls and reconstructions). This was followed by topics concerning EU funding, with a strong emphasis on the major infrastructure projects, such as the reconstruction of the existing track and the construction of a second track on the sections Dugo Selo – Križevci and Križevci – Koprivnica – state border. Additionally, topics related to the lowland railway and the project Dugo Selo – Novska (phases 1, 2, and 3) received significant media attention. There was also a considerable number of press releases in which HŽ Infrastruktura was the primary subject, particularly in relation to the campaign “Train is Always Faster,” which accounted for nearly 2.7 percent of the total press releases (source: MediaNet d.o.o. – Presscut).

From the above we can conclude that the media is well-acquainted with the educational and preventive campaigns of HŽ Infrastruktura and that the media effectively communicates their key messages, which in addition to the texts, we also enrich by visual displays that warn about the dangers and potential consequences of prohibited actions. If interested, you can find more information about educational content on the HŽ Infrastruktura website under the links Electric Shock Danger, Cross Tracks Safely and the official HŽ Infrastruktura YouTube Channel .

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