

Railway passenger transport decreased slightly at the beginning of 2009

After a period of sustained growth, rail transport performance in passenger-kilometres started to be affected by the economic crisis at the beginning of 2009. Rail passenger transport nevertheless remained less affected than rail freight transport (see Eurostat's dissemination database [rail_go_typeall](#) and [rail_go_quartal](#)).

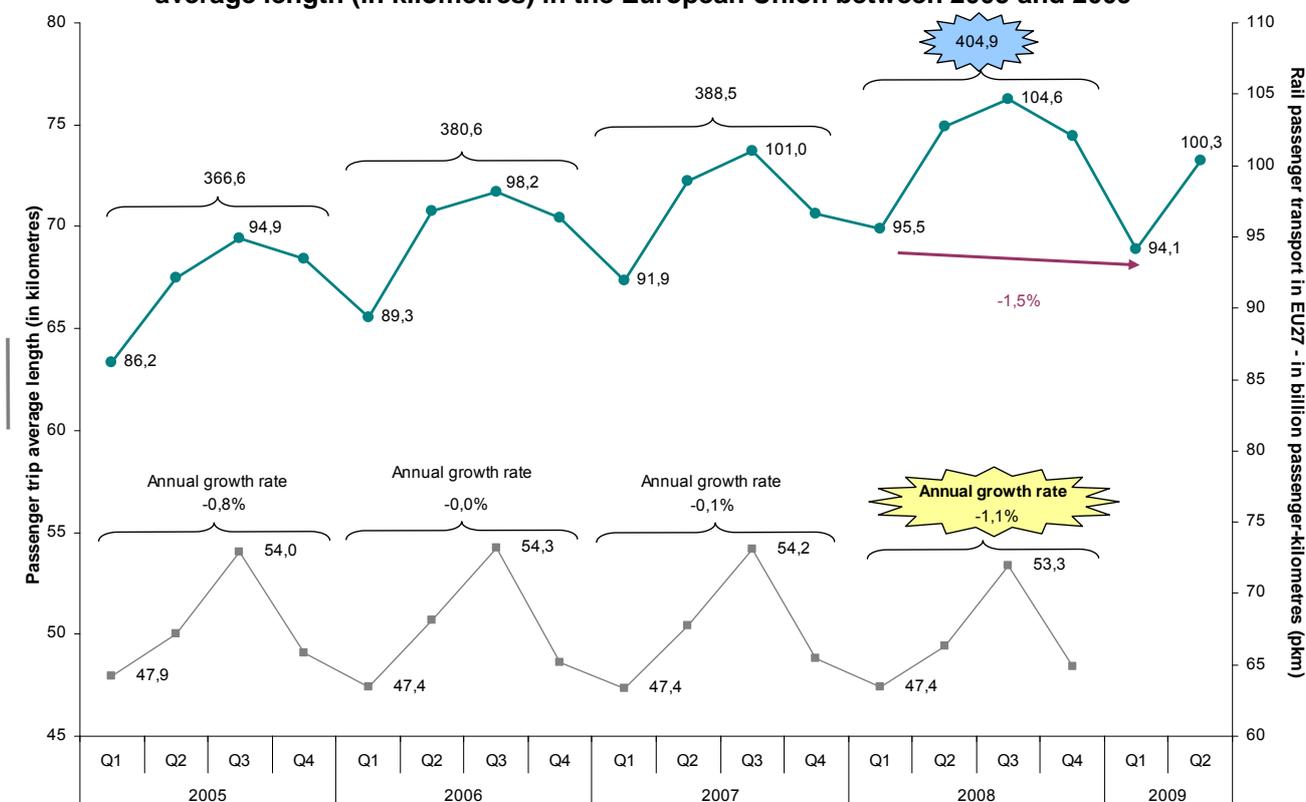
In 2008, 405 billion passenger-kilometres* were registered in the European Union (excluding Bulgaria), a 4.2% growth compared to 2007. This was higher than the average annual growth of

3.1% observed at EU level over the period 2004-2008.

During the first quarter of 2009, the number of passenger-kilometres started to decrease, with a loss of 1.5% compared to the same quarter in 2008.

After a period of stability, passenger use of railway transport changed slightly during the second quarter of 2008. The average length of passenger trip, which had stayed very constant between 2005 and 2007, dropped by 2% from the second quarter of 2007 to the same quarter in 2008 (53.3 kilometres in 2008 against 54.2 in 2007).

Graph 1: Quarterly evolution of the number of passenger-kilometres and the passenger trip average length (in kilometres) in the European Union between 2005 and 2009*



* The publication is based on detailed reporting data only; see methodological notes for details. Data from Bulgaria not included until 2008 due to confidentiality issues.

Source: Eurostat ([rail_pa_quartal](#))

Passenger transport performance decreased at the beginning of 2009

The development of passenger transport performance (expressed in passenger-kilometres) varies from country to country, and different patterns apply at EU level over the period considered (Graph 2). Although quarterly transport performance in the EU was higher throughout 2008 than in 2007, huge contrasts appear when focusing on the development at country level.

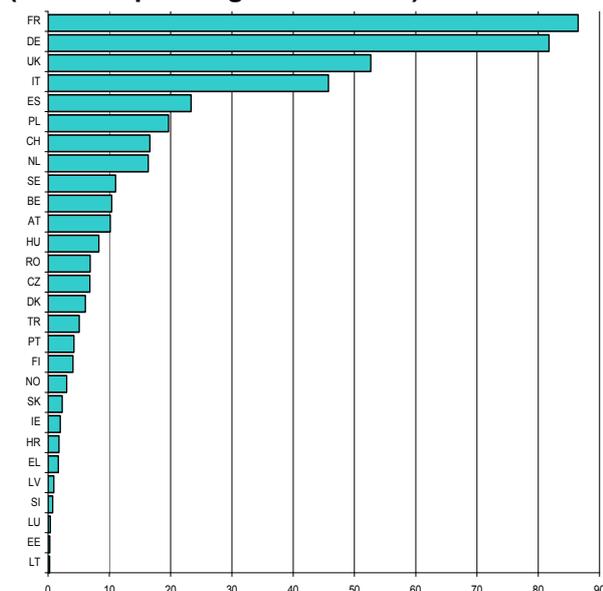
Focusing on growth in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, Hungary and Greece each recorded the largest decrease among the Member States for three of the eight quarters considered. For Hungary this can mainly be explained by a decision taken by Hungary in March 2007 as part of a broader economic restriction package to suspend the service on 14 regional lines (representing a total length of 474 kilometres).

Concerning Greece, comparing the first, third and fourth quarters in 2008 with the corresponding quarters in 2007 shows that this country recorded the largest decrease (-8.0% for the first quarter, -20.7% for the third quarter and -19.8% for the fourth quarter).

In contrast, Spain registered three of the four largest quarterly growths between 2007 and 2008, with the extension of the high-speed service from Madrid to Barcelona in 2008 being responsible for most of this significant increase.

The impressive growth observed for Ireland during the second quarter of 2007 is due to the increased frequency of service on the Cork-Dublin line (one

Graph 3: Rail passenger transport in 2008* (in billion passenger-kilometres)

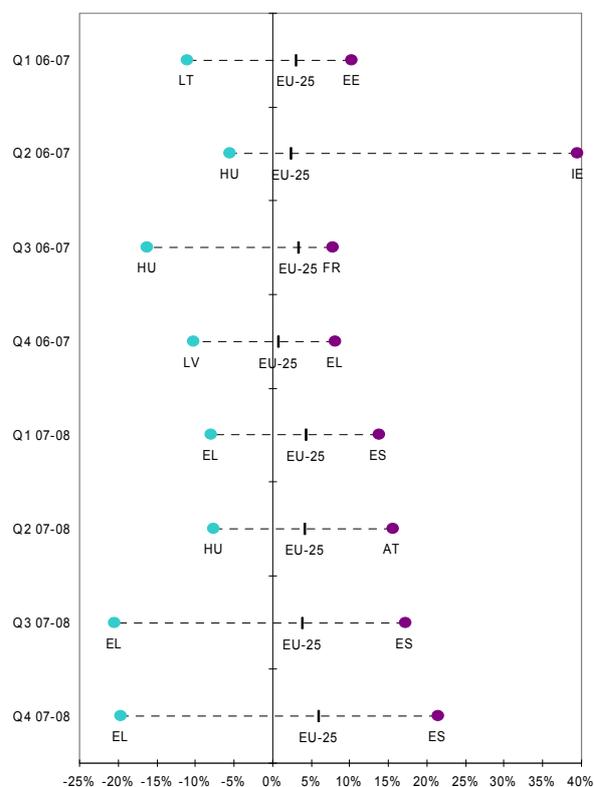


BG: data under confidentiality clause.

*Annual figures based on the sum of the quarterly data

Source: Eurostat ([rail_pa_quartal](#))

Graph 2: National disparities in the evolution of rail passenger transport between the same quarter (2006/2007 and 2007/2008 evolutions, based on passenger-kilometre figures)



Source: Eurostat ([rail_pa_quartal](#))

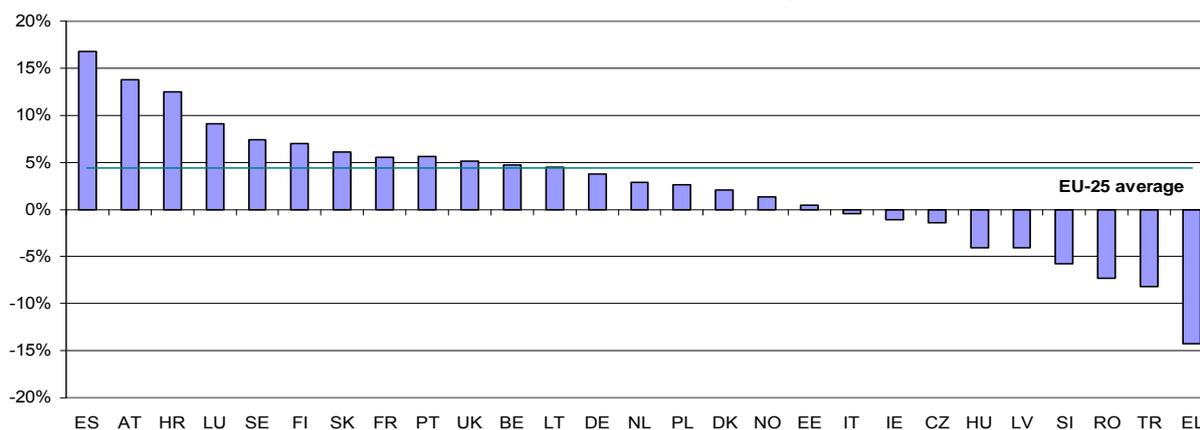
of the principal and longest routes in the country) and the modernisation of the fleet operating this route.

Passenger transport performance is especially concentrated within a limited number of EU countries (France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy - see Graph 3). Meanwhile, considering transport performance in relation to the total length of the railway network drastically modifies the top countries: the Netherlands is by far the country with the highest transport performance per kilometre of railway lines (with 5.7 million passenger-kilometres per kilometre of line), ahead of the United Kingdom (3.3) and Belgium (3.1).

A large majority of the reporting countries recorded increases in rail passenger performance between 2007 and 2008. Within the top-10 Member States in terms of number of passenger-kilometres, only Italy registered a decrease between 2007 and 2008 (-0.5%).

In 2008, the third quarter was the busiest at EU level in terms of passenger performance (see Table 1). This has to be seen in connection with the summer holiday period, particularly in countries with high railway transport volumes.

Graph 4: Growth* in rail transport by country (based on passenger-kilometres), 2007 to 2008



* Annual figures based on the sum of quarterly data

Source: Eurostat ([rail_pa_quartal](#))

However, on examining the individual country profiles, it should be noted that the peak quarter is different for most of the Member States. For 9 countries, the peak quarter is actually the fourth quarter, and for 5 Member States, it is the second quarter.

Focusing on annual changes, the impact of the economic crisis is clearly reflected in the figures available for the beginning of 2009, with 16 Member States showing a reduction in the number of passenger-kilometres between the first quarter of 2008 and the same quarter of 2009 (out of the 22

Member States for which this information is available). The strongest declines were registered in Romania (-12%) and in Ireland (-11%).

Regarding the Candidate countries, Croatia recorded a 1.3% growth between the first quarters of 2008 and 2009 respectively while Turkey registered a decline of 4.5% over the same period. Among EFTA countries, Switzerland recorded a constant increase in passenger transport while Norway registered declines for each of the three first quarters of 2009.

Table 1: Quarterly rail passenger transport in 2008 and 2009 (in million passenger-kilometres)

	2008					2009		
	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter	Annual	1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter
Belgium	2 542	2 647	2 481	2 731	10 401	2 592	2 682	2 452
Bulgaria	c	c	c	c	c	494	550	586
Czech Republic	1 557	1 734	1 701	1 811	6 803	1 547	1 697	1 637
Denmark	1 428	1 521	1 547	1 596	6 091	1 400	1 509	1 527
Germany	18 983	20 198	21 480	21 101	81 762	19 398	19 919	:
Estonia	63	71	74	66	274	59	63	65
Ireland	441	607	476	451	1 976	391	517	:
Greece	407	437	425	388	1 657	:	:	:
Spain	5 411	6 018	5 984	5 924	23 337	5 354	5 950	5 763
France	20 352	22 084	22 343	21 737	86 516	20 019	22 282	21 971
Italy	11 090	11 848	11 672	11 157	45 767	10 641	11 766	:
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	207	240	272	222	941	191	198	194
Lithuania	52	60	82	64	258	53	57	:
Luxembourg	88	90	77	90	345	91	84	:
Hungary	1 906	2 109	2 167	2 102	8 284	1 870	:	2 024
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	3 846	4 186	3 932	4 379	16 342	3 815	4 152	4 007
Austria	2 378	2 592	2 552	2 638	10 159	2 336	2 433	2 635
Poland	4 508	4 956	5 631	4 563	19 657	4 177	4 645	5 170
Portugal	1 003	1 062	1 108	1 039	4 212	983	1 058	1 086
Romania	1 531	1 715	2 065	1 566	6 877	1 344	1 532	1 769
Slovenia	189	194	194	188	765	194	191	190
Slovakia	537	574	585	601	2 296	517	577	569
Finland	1 024	958	1 021	1 050	4 054	973	931	978
Sweden	2 668	2 782	2 673	2 894	11 017	2 679	2 702	2 609
United Kingdom	12 787	13 398	13 407	13 083	52 675	:	:	:
EU-25	93 466	100 365	101 884	99 875	395 590	92 500	:	:
EU-27	:	:	:	:	:	94 338	:	:
Croatia	428	448	435	458	1 769	433	454	414
Turkey	1 269	1 340	1 287	1 201	5 097	1 211	1 384	1 384
Norway	718	731	803	779	3 031	705	716	739
Switzerland	3 952	4 169	4 231	4 278	16 631	4 296	4 310	4 454

Detailed reporting only, see methodological notes for details. Estimates in italics.

Source: Eurostat ([rail_pa_quartal](#))

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data availability

The figures presented in this publication have been extracted from Eurostat's rail transport database 10th of January 2010. It includes rail transport statistics from the Member States, collected according to the [Regulation n°91/2003](#). The transport of passengers by metro, tram and/or light rail is excluded. The data presented are included in Eurostat's dissemination database (reference tables are provided under each table and graph).

Country Specific Notes

Country Characteristics of data availability

BG	Data up to 2008 are confidential
CY	No railways transport
MT	No railways transport
SI	Before 2008, transit passengers are included in quarterly statistics on total passenger transport
SE	Transit data are included in the total transport figures.
LI	Quarterly data not available; Liechtenstein provides rail transport data under simplified reporting only.

Methodology

The publication is based on quarterly data collected under the so-called 'detailed' reporting. It is due to long deadline (14 months) for providing final annual passenger data to Eurostat. As a consequence, all the annual figures presented in the tables and graphs are derived from quarterly data as well.

For data availability and comparability reasons, 'simplified' reporting is not included in the elements. Simplified reporting is an alternative to the normal detailed reporting for undertakings whose total transport performance is less than 200 million passenger-kilometres during the reference year.

Unlike detailed reporting, only total transport is available from simplified reporting.

As a consequence, for countries which use simplified reporting as an alternative for small railway undertakings, quarterly and annual data presented in this publication are underestimated ('smaller' undertakings are not included). However this is not the case for the following countries: BE, CZ, DE, EE, IE, EL, FR, LV, LT, LU, PL, PT, SI, SK, FI, SE, UK, HR, TR, CH (since 2005) and HU (since 2007).

Definitions of various kinds of rail transport

All the definitions used are taken from the Regulation 1192/2003.

Total rail transport

Total rail transport includes national and international transport, where international transport covers passengers embarked and disembarked in the reporting country. Transit is not covered by the scope of the data collection.

Passenger-kilometres by rail

Unit of measure of passenger transport which represents the transport of one passenger by rail over a distance of one kilometre. Only the distance on the national territory of the reporting country is taken into account.

Passenger average trip length on national territory

The passenger-km performance was divided by the number of passengers. It is expressed in kilometres.

Symbols

:	not available
-	not applicable
0	actual zero or very negligible transport
c	confidential data

This publication was prepared with the assistance of Mathieu Erzar and Cedric Messina.

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on "Transport statistics"

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/data/database>

Select "railway transport"

More information about "Transport statistics"

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/transport/introduction>

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