

Cuba introduces new freight service on passenger trains



With the new modality, freight transport by rail will be accessible to a larger group for the first time (source: [Granma](#)/AI-scaled)

Cuba's Ministry of Transport (Mitrans) has introduced a new service for transporting goods on national passenger trains, which is available to both individuals and legal entities. According to the ministry, the service is intended to expand logistics capabilities and stimulate domestic trade between the private and public sectors.

The new service covers the most important national railway lines and allows for the transport of volumes between one and six tons under the modality of "accompanied freight." This means that customers must accompany their cargo and travel on the same day that the transport takes place.

According to the [official announcement](#), the range of approved products includes parcels, luggage, electronic devices, and various goods. All shipments must meet strict safety and packaging requirements.

For means of transport such as bicycles, scooters, or motorcycles, loading with batteries installed or fuel in the tanks is prohibited in accordance with applicable safety standards, as specified by Mitrans.

The fee is 14.98 Cuban pesos (approx. 11 euro cents according to the official exchange rate) per kilometer traveled from the point of origin to the destination. An additional surcharge of five percent is applied for exclusive use of the service. Transporting goods between Havana and Santiago de Cuba (approx. 850 kilometers) would thus cost around 12,700 pesos, which corresponds to approx. 100 euros according to the official exchange rate and 25 euros according to the unofficial exchange rate.

Rail transport in Cuba is an important means of freight transport, but faces several challenges. Transport Minister Eduardo Rodríguez Dávila reported in 2024 that despite

some progress in passenger transport, the lack of resources has affected the quality and stability of rail transport.

One of the main problems is the availability of locomotives and wagons. Of the 20 locomotives needed, only 14 were operational on average in 2024, leading to delays and irregularities in timetables. Similarly, only 63 percent of the planned railcars were in operation due to unresolved technical problems and a lack of foreign currency for their maintenance, Rodríguez emphasized.

Despite these limitations, passenger transport revenues reached 107.75 percent of the value planned for 2024. According to the minister, this increase is due to greater efficiency in ticket sales and growing demand for trains as a transport option, as they are the most affordable alternative for the population. ([Cubaheute](#))