Activity Report of Správcu zálohového systému for the First Half of 2025

SPRÁVCA ZÁLOHOVÉHO SYSTÉMU

SPRÁVCA ZÁLOHOVÉHO SYSTÉMU n.o.
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Slovensko zálohuje













DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

One of our top priorities this year is to keep the return rate of deposit beverage containers above 90%, as required by Slovak and European legislation.



Photo Credit: Marek Mucha

Dear Readers and Supporters of the Deposit Return System,

Another half-year of Slovakia's deposit return system is behind us. With this Activity Report, we'd like to give you a concise overview of what we've achieved in that time and how we're progressing towards our 2025 goals.

One of our top priorities this year is to keep the return rate of deposit beverage containers above 90%, as required by Slovak and European legislation. Most of our activities are geared towards that goal.

This means working to improve the quality, efficiency, and gradual modernisation of deposit processes. Together with producers and retailers, who are key players in the system, we're looking at ways to digitalise individual processes and make them simpler to use. To improve communication and access to system information for both partners and consumers, we've set up a call centre.

We also made significant progress in the first half of 2025 in tackling unauthorised returns of containers and reducing attempts to abuse the system. We've been working intensively on fraud prevention since 2023, when we began systematically introducing measures to detect and prevent unauthorised return attempts. In doing so, we're protecting not only the system itself, but also its key stakeholders – especially producers.

We're also committed to maintaining quality standards at collection points, continuing to expand the collection network through both standard and alternative collection points, and improving processes
for collecting, transporting, storing, and processing deposit beverage containers. By modifying the bags we use for transporting containers, we cut plastic consumption by 100 tonnes. Further streamlining in logistics saved us over 300,000 kilometres in travel, reducing diesel use by nearly 60,000 litres. We opened a new interim warehouse in the village of Vlkanová and moved the previous one from Žirany to Lužianky, near Nitra. This relocation has not only increased efficiency but also improved working conditions for our staff.

Last but not least, we continue to engage with the public about the importance of deposit return in everyday life, and we run environmental education activities, particularly for younger generations.

We've built a very productive and working relationship with the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, with which we're again running many projects in 2025 aimed at educating primary school pupils. We likewise devote considerable effort to communicating with, and providing guidance to, municipalities on the opportunities offered by the deposit return system when establishing alternative collection points at festivals, cultural, sporting or other events they organise, with the proceeds from deposit beverage containers collected in this way going to a public-benefit or charitable purpose.

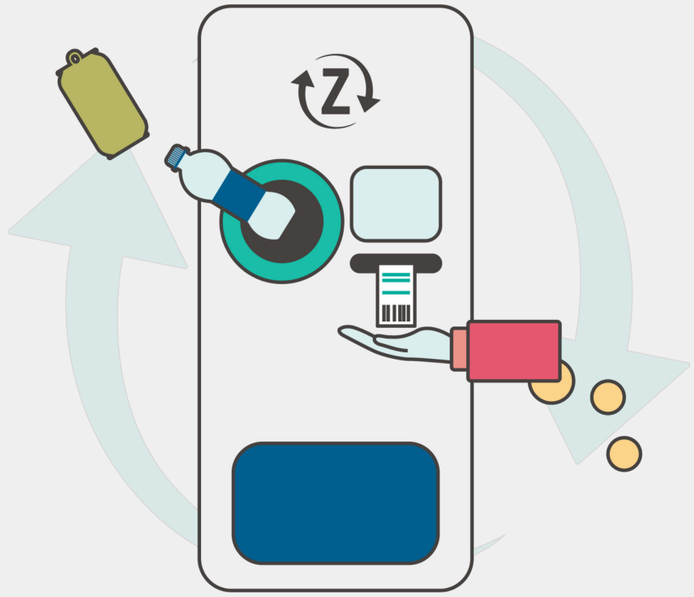
I consider the signing of memoranda of cooperation with two important partners to be significant events in the first half of 2025. The first was with the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia, giving us the opportunity to use the deposit return system during church events. The second was with the National Institute for Education and Youth, with the aim of further strengthening environmental awareness among pupils at primary and secondary schools, especially regarding deposit beverage containers, and highlighting the role of education as a driver of behavioural change in young people. This includes a project to create teaching materials and worksheets for younger pupils, which we've already begun.
This half-year also saw the successful launch of the European Deposit Return Systems Association. In January 2025, by agreement with our partners (representatives of deposit return systems from 17 European countries), we had the honour of officially registering the association here in Slovakia, and we are currently chairing it. The activities we carry out within the association, whether through cooperation or sharing valuable experience, will help to move deposit return schemes forwards both here in Slovakia and across Europe.
And in closing? The first half of 2025 is over, and there's still a lot to do if we're to deliver on the plans and goals we set for the year. But I'm confident that, thanks to the tremendous effort of our staff and the highly professional and constructive cooperation of our partners in Slovakia's deposit return system, we'll achieve them. My thanks to everyone in advance.

JUDr. Marián Áč

General Director
Správca zálohového systému n.o.

SPRÁVCA ZÁLOHOVÉHO SYSTÉMU

Why use the deposit return system?



The deposit return system for beverage containers is one of the **most effective ways** to **reduce litter** and **conserve natural resources.** Thanks to the deposit return system, every bottle or can returned is transformed from potential waste into a valuable secondary raw material that can be reused to produce new packaging.

The deposit return system helps to:

- **keep the environment cleaner:** it significantly reduces the amount of litter from beverage containers;
- **collect more material of higher quality for recycling:** the deposit return system collects more material, and that material is of a higher quality;
- **conserve natural resources:** every bottle or can returned helps to save the natural resources that would otherwise be needed to make new packaging, by reusing the material;
- **support the circular economy:** the material used to make a deposit bottle or can is repeatedly reused to produce new beverage containers. This process, where the same material is continually put back into circulation, is called circularity.

YOUR SEVEN-STEP GUIDE TO THE DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM

The deposit return system works on the principle of the circular economy, closing the material loop “from bottle to bottle” and “from can to can”, thereby conserving natural resources.

1. Do not crush or discard beverage containers – return them through the deposit return system.

2. Look for the deposit return symbol “Z – ZÁLOHOVANÉ” near the EAN code on beverage packaging.

3. When you buy a drink in a deposit beverage container, you pay a deposit for the container.

4. Do not crush deposit beverage containers; return them with the cap on to a collection point. Non-deposit containers should still go into the yellow recycling bin, as before.



5. For each deposit beverage container with a legible EAN code, you will get your deposit back, always at the collection point where you return the containers.

6. Collected deposit beverage containers are recycled and used to make new beverage containers, again and again.

7. The deposit return system is the only proven way to collect 90 % or more of beverage containers.

Overview of the deposit return system in the first half of 2025



PRODUCERS AND IMPORTERS OF BEVERAGES

AS AT 30 JUNE 2025, SPRÁVCA RECORDED

437 **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING PRODUCERS**

A TOTAL OF

6 139 **ACTIVE EAN CODES**

WERE REGISTERED AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

AS AT 30 JUNE 2025, MORE THAN

560 million

DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE SLOVAK MARKET IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR

In the first half of 2025, Správca introduced a number of optimisation measures aimed at improving the efficiency of the deposit return system and simplifying processes for partners. One significant change was the reduction of the fee for the collection and processing of waste from deposit beverage containers marked with an international (I-EAN) barcode. These are products sold under the same barcode both in Slovakia and in other countries. The level of producers' fees is regularly reviewed and adjusted to reflect the current situation and expected developments, ensuring the system operates efficiently and sustainably.

As of 1 January 2025, a clarified procedure for ending the validity of a deposit beverage container also came into effect. Responsibility for placing packaging on the Slovak market and for withdrawing it from the market rests entirely with the producer. The producer must notify Správca of the withdrawal of a product from the market by submitting a request in the system that includes the date of withdrawal.

From 1 January 2025, legislation requires producers to place on the Slovak market PET beverage bottles containing at least 25% recycled PET plastic, calculated as a proportion of the total volume of PET packaging they place on the market. Under section 7(1)(v) of Act No 302/2019 on the deposit return system for single-use beverage containers and amending certain other acts, Správca must submit to the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic an annual report on the recycled plastic content in single-use deposit beverage containers for each producer, no later than 30 April of the following calendar year.

To help all parties meet this new obligation effectively, Správca held several working meetings with producers' representative organisations, including a specialist webinar for the producers themselves. The result of this joint coordination is a clear document containing frequently asked questions and answers, which serves as a practical guide for producers. At the same time, a technical solution for submitting annual reports on recycled content was prepared and implemented. This is integrated directly into Správca's registration portal.

The launch of the call centre in the first half of 2025 was another step towards simplifying system operation for producers and retailers. Callers select the topic of their call from a menu, and the system automatically connects them to the relevant Správca employee responsible for that area. This improves both access to information and communication with the system.

Správca continues to systematically modernise the deposit return system to further improve efficiency. A priority for the coming period is to increase the level of digitalisation in EAN code registration and to simplify verification procedures, which will enhance partner convenience and reduce administrative burdens.

Of the registered EAN codes:

56 % were national EAN codes

44 % were international EAN codes

Of the containers placed on the market:

56 % WERE BEVERAGES IN PLASTIC BOTTLES

44 % WERE BEVERAGES IN CANS



Breakdown of beverage types placed on the market in the first half of 2025:

29%	BOTTLED WATER
9%	ENERGY DRINKS
28%	SOFT DRINKS
1%	OTHER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS
2%	FRUIT JUICES
30,5%	BEER
0,5%	WINE

RETAILERS AND COLLECTION POINTS

AS AT 30 JUNE 2025, SPRÁVCA RECORDED

407

ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING DISTRIBUTORS

THERE WERE

3 554

COLLECTION POINTS AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

Breakdown of collection points:

2021	**2 000**
2022	**2 993**
2023	**3 269**
2024	**3 435**
01 – 06/ 2025	**3 554**

As at 30 June 2025, the collection network had

2 803

reverse vending machines

VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING COLLECTION POINTS:

66 %

COLLECTION POINTS WITH AUTOMATED COLLECTION:

71 %

MANDATORY COLLECTION POINTS:

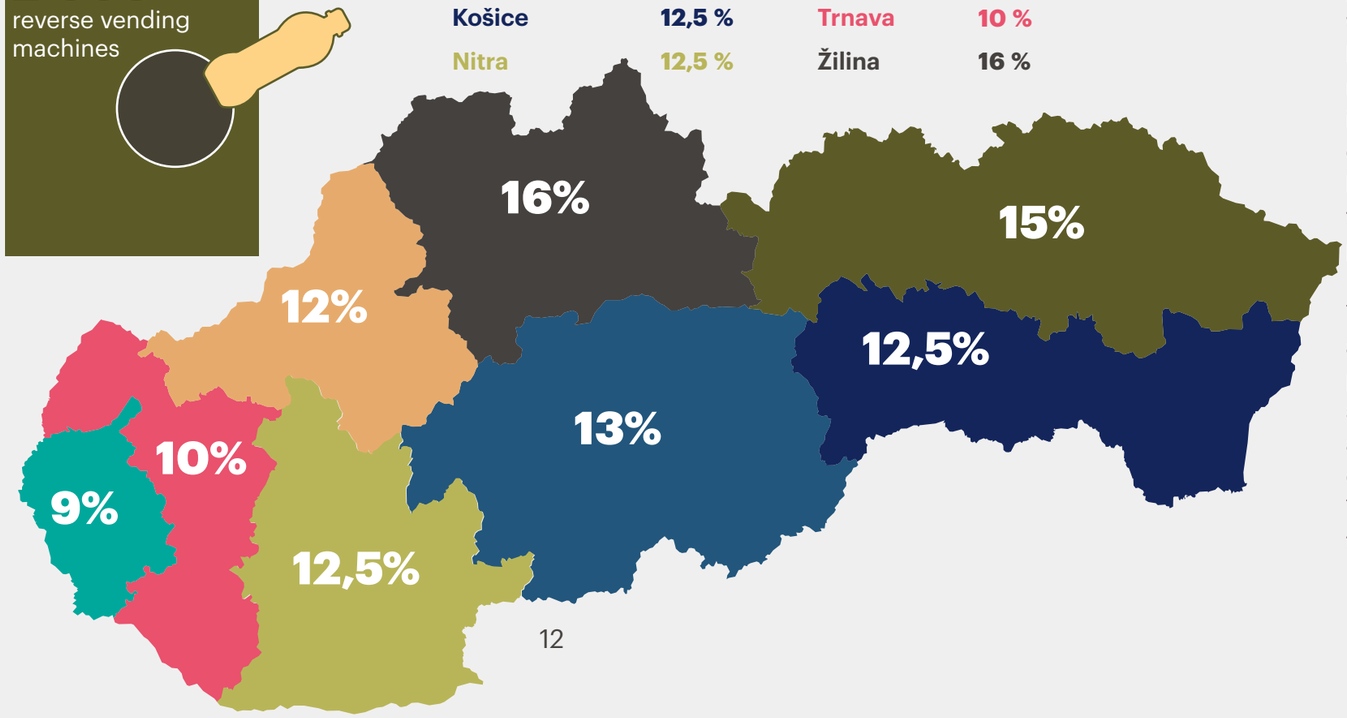
34 %

COLLECTION POINTS WITH MANUAL COLLECTION:

29 %

Proportion of collection points by region:

Banská Bystrica	13 %	Prešov	15 %
Bratislava	9 %	Trenčín	12 %
Košice	12,5 %	Trnava	10 %
Nitra	12,5 %	Žilina	16 %



In the first half of 2025, Správca implemented a number of changes to improve the efficiency of the deposit return system and ensure its smooth operation. Drawing on experience and data from previous periods, Správca made adjustments to contractual documentation, technological solutions, and logistics processes.

As of 1 January 2025, amended versions of the appendices to contracts with distributors came into effect, improving the set-up of the system:

In order to protect the system, control procedures for verifying distributors' compliance were adjusted.
Správca modified the mechanism for determining the handling fee for 2025 and subsequent years, to ensure greater predictability and transparency for distributors. Seasonal variations were taken into account in the segmentation of collections from collection points, enabling the system to respond more effectively to operational needs and to manage periods of increased demand.

In the area of technological innovation, the focus was on further development of Správca's registration portal, an important digital platform for recording and managing collection points. In the first half of 2025, a function was introduced allowing the type of bin in an RVM at a collection point to be changed. This reflects market availability, where retailers can increase the machine's capacity in their back-office area. In connection with this, new Tomra EasyPac devices for MultiPac solutions also had to be implemented in Správca's registration portal.

These improvements have simplified processes and enhanced the management of collection points. Within Slovakia's deposit return system, new types of RVMs are naturally being added, which retailers can purchase. Správca continuously tests and verifies new equipment. These measures represent concrete steps towards a more efficient, responsive, and accessible deposit return system, combining high-quality services with environmental responsibility. Správca will continue to modernise the system in the coming months.

The launch of the call centre in the first half of 2025 was another step towards simplifying system operation for producers and retailers. Callers select the topic of their call from a menu, and the system automatically connects them to the relevant Správca employee responsible for that area. This improves both access to information and communication with the system.

In cooperation with retailers and the Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted of Slovakia, a project was launched to promote inclusive deposit return. QR codes with audio manuals for blind and partially sighted users were introduced to make it easier to use RVMs. These are now available on around 2,400 devices (15 types) across Slovakia. This is an important step towards ensuring that deposit return is accessible and easy for all consumers, without distinction. Manuals will gradually be added for the remaining RVMs in the collection network in Slovakia.

Ensuring the cleanliness and quality of collection points for consumers remains a challenge. Although RVMs and their surroundings are owned by retailers, Správca actively addresses this issue, having issued a care manual for collection points, maintaining ongoing communication with retailers, and introducing incentive measures such as promoting correct bag sealing through the setting of standards. Most recently, we have been preparing a competition for collection points offering consumers a comfortable deposit return experience, as a way to recognise the responsible approach and daily work of shop staff.



Collection points can also be established in places other than grocery shops. Since the launch of the system, Správca has been looking for alternative collection solutions that make it easier for consumers to return deposit plastic bottles or beverage cans. Unlike a standard collection point, the consumer does not receive the deposit back. These are usually locations with high footfall where a large number of deposit beverage containers is likely to accumulate and where they can be returned to the system without paying the deposit back to the consumer. Such collection is suitable for creating collections for charitable purposes.

As at 30 June 2025, there were around 50 year-round alternative collection points across Slovakia, including:



ALTERNATIVE COLLECTION METHODS

Consumers can return deposit beverage containers at more than 3,550 shops – collection points. To ensure the needs of the Slovak population are fully met when using the deposit return system, Správca is also seeking other ways to return empty beverage containers outside standard retail outlets.

In the first half of 2025, Správca continued to develop the network of year-round alternative collection points, which allow the public to return deposit beverage containers outside regular retail outlets and at any time of year. These sites are particularly important in areas with high visitor numbers or higher consumption of drinks in plastic bottles and cans. The common feature of alternative collection points is that they help to increase the return rate of containers to the system, reduce litter from beverage containers, and support public-benefit or charitable causes. A visitor places the container in a collection bin and voluntarily forgoes the deposit in favour of a purpose defined by the operator of the collection point.

In the first half of 2025, the network gained new partners such as the Slovak Basketball Association and the Slovak Football Association. Deposit return in national parks was strengthened by eight new locations. We also value the initiatives of municipalities that use the collection of deposit beverage containers for public-benefit purposes, such as Tuhár, Divín, Tomášovce, Podrečany, and Budiná.

In the first half of 2025, a total of more than 328,745 containers were collected at alternative collection points. This result reflects the growing importance of alternative solutions, which expand collection opportunities beyond standard collection points in shops and contribute to a more accessible and flexible system for consumers. The highest numbers of collected containers were recorded at sites with high visitor numbers, particularly sports events, recreational areas, and busy tourist locations where beverage consumption is naturally higher.

In the first half of 2025, more than **328 745** **deposit containers were collected at alternative collecion points**



In the first six months of 2025, Správca also focused on supporting deposit return at seasonal alternative collection points, which are an important tool for collecting deposit beverage containers during events. This type of collection point is mainly set up for cultural and sports events and festivals, where beverage container consumption rises sharply over a short period.

Sports events that took part in the deposit return scheme included Bikefest Kálnica, the Slávia sports complex, the APEX Golf Club Báč charity golf tournament, the Superfinal of the 2025 School Sports Competitions in Banská Bystrica, as well as the European Swimming Championships for Under-23s and Juniors in Šamorín.





Festivals and large cultural events also provide a unique opportunity to promote deposit return and sustainable behaviour. Thanks to the presence of collection points directly on site at some of Slovakia's largest festivals, tens of thousands of visitors will be able to return deposit beverage containers during the summer season. Collection will be provided through mobile collection bins, with trained temporary staff equipped with special backpacks also moving around the venue. In addition to supporting the collection of deposit beverage containers, Správca also focuses on communicating the benefits of deposit return and encouraging the public to adopt a responsible approach to waste.



"The deposit return helps not only to protect nature in areas with high tourist traffic, but also to support specific public-benefit projects in our municipality, including Štrbské Pleso."

Michal Sýkora, Mayor of Štrba

Through these activities, the availability of the deposit return system is being extended beyond standard collection points in shops. The introduction of alternative solutions for collecting deposit beverage containers directly at events also contributes to higher return rates and to meeting the environmental and legal objectives of the system.

Správca's aim is to continue finding ways to collect deposit beverage containers away from shops, and to encourage other organisations, municipalities, and institutions to take part in this form of supporting the deposit return system. Alternative collection points are an effective complement to the standard collection network and help to make the deposit return system more accessible for everyone.

DEPOSITS IN THE SUMMER MONTHS AND TOURIST SEASON

The summer months are a time when the deposit return system sees increased beverage consumption, as well as more opportunities for containers to be returned correctly. During this period, Správca strengthens its activities to ensure that deposit beverage containers do not end up as litter or in containers for sorted waste, but are **returned to the system.**

In 2025, Správca launched the "summer deposit season" symbolically in Prešov, in cooperation with the Sun Park municipal swimming pool. This project showed how the collection of deposit beverage containers can work effectively not only at swimming pools, but also at sports facilities and in tourist areas. Similar initiatives will also be supported during the summer season at festivals and cultural events, such as Vrbovské vetry, Východná, Pohoda, Grape, and LOVESTREAM.

An important part of supporting the deposit return system in summer is also expanding the network of special collection bins in national parks and high-traffic tourist locations. A significant step has been cooperation with the municipality of Štrba, which made it possible to expand the network of collection points at Štrbské Pleso – one of the most visited areas in the High Tatras. New collection bins have been placed in locations with high tourist traffic, with the proceeds from deposit beverage containers used to support public-benefit projects in the municipality. Since 2023, Správca has set up 25 alternative collection points in national parks and tourist attractions in Slovakia, all of which actively help to reduce litter in the natural environment.

In this way, even during the summer months, Správca has promoted responsible behaviour among visitors, contributing to the protection of nature and the cleanliness of public spaces. It also continues to provide methodological support to municipalities, non-profit organisations, and operators, so that the deposit return system is accessible wherever high visitor numbers mean there is a need to maintain a clean environment.





Where can you use the deposit return system in summer?

National parks – 25 locations

We started in 2023 with 13 sites, before adding 4 in 2024 and a further 8 in 2025

- TANAP obec Štrba – Štrbské Pleso, Odbočka na kolibu Patria
- TANAP obec Štrba – Štrbské Pleso, Poštová
- TANAP obec Štrba – Štrbské Pleso, K vodopádom 106
- TANAP obec Štrba – Štrbské Pleso, Odbočka pri Heliose
- TANAP Horská ubytovňa Hrebienok
- TANAP Lyžiarske stredisko Tatranská Lomnica
- TANAP Bachledova dolina
- NAPANT Donovaly
- NAPANT Jánska Dolina
- NAPANT Trangoška – Chata Zázvor
- NAPANT Hiadeľské sedlo
- NAPANT Demänovská dolina
- NAPANT Kráľova hoľa
- NP Slovenský raj Autocamping Podlesok
- NP Slovenský raj Dedinky – Ekocentrum
- NP Slovenský raj Dobšinská ľadová jaskyňa parkovisko
- NP Slovenský kras Jaskyňa Domica
- NP Slovenský kras Gombasecká jaskyňa
- NP Slovenský kras Zádielska chata – Bôrka
- PIENAP Červený Kláštor Pieniny
- NP Poloniny Nová Sedlica
- NP Poloniny Nová Sedlica – Grófske chyžky
- NP Veľká Fatra Ľubochnianska dolina
- NP Veľká Fatra Gaderská dolina
- NP Veľká Fatra Hotel Kráľova studňa







Festivals

- Pohoda festival
- Grape
- LOVESTREAM
- Uprising
- Festival Východná
- Vrbovské vetry
- Ekofest Trnava
- Festival SKALY
- Hontianska Paráda
- Atmosféra

Castles and palaces

- Beckov

Swimming pools

- STaRZ – Bratislavské kúpaliská
- Sun Park Prešov

Sports events

- Superfinal of the 2025 School Sports Competitions in Banská Bystrica
- European Swimming Championships for Under-23s
- Golf Tournament Báč
- Bikefest Kálnica

Spas

- Sliač

Cultural events

- Beckovské slávnosti
- Dni obce Bystrá
- Víno pod hviezdami

Caves

- NP Slovenský raj Dobšinská ľadová cave
- NP Slovenský raj cave Domica
- NP Slovenský raj Gombasecká cave
- NAPANT Stanišovská cave

Local government authorities

- Tuhár initiated collections in surrounding municipalities, including Divín, Tomášovce, Podrečany, and Budiná. Správca provided 10 collection bins
- Skalité – collection in cooperation with the Parish of
- Štrba

DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM AND LOCAL

This is the second year in which the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia (ZMOS), by signing a Memorandum of Cooperation, has become an important partner of Správca zálohového systému in fulfilling its mission to reduce litter in our municipalities and the surrounding countryside.





The key points of the cooperation agreed by both partners include:

- activities aimed at promoting the deposit return system at the level of municipalities;
- professional cooperation in educational activities focused on preventing litter in municipalities, and on encouraging responsible attitudes to the environment;
- joint activities making use of the deposit return system to support public-benefit, charitable, and environmental projects in member municipalities;
- organising and participating in joint specialist events with the aim of motivating the people of Slovakia to adopt consumer behaviour that supports the deposit return system;
- cooperation in educating children and students on deposit return and environmental protection;
- collaboration and coordination on media outputs concerning deposit return in relation to member municipalities and the public.

All these points are being actively pursued. This cooperation is of great importance for Slovakia's deposit return system, translating into specific actions and tangible results.

In recent months, ZMOS has become a key partner in raising public awareness of deposit beverage containers, particularly through Správca's educational projects aimed at young people. The educational and entertainment project Deposit Return School, launched in cooperation with ZMOS, has already visited towns such as Partizánske, Zvolen, and Trebišov. More than 2,500 primary school children from across Slovakia took part in the first half of 2025.

Educational projects coordinated with local authorities also include excursions for pupils from all over Slovakia to the sorting centre in Kočovce.

Správca also actively assists and advises municipalities on launching deposit return schemes at municipal and community public, cultural, or sports events. It advises them on how deposit return system can be provided at swimming pools, sports facilities, and tourist sites managed by municipalities. In all cases, the proceeds from the deposit beverage containers collected in this way are used for a public-benefit or charitable purpose defined by the local authority. This is already working well in municipalities such as Skalité, Čachtice, Beckov, Tuhár, and Štrba.

Special mention should also be made of Správca's active participation in the 37th Congress of the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, held at the end of May 2025
at Incheba Expo in Bratislava. Marián Áč, General Director of Správca zálohového systému, addressed the delegates, and Správca's information and presentation stand proved highly popular. During the event, dozens of mayors and municipal leaders visited the stand to learn about opportunities for implementing deposit return schemes in their municipalities.

To ensure that Správca's activities aimed at informing and educating the public
about the deposit return system are as effective as possible, it will continue to strengthen cooperation with the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia, one of the most influential organisations affecting the daily lives of our fellow citizens. Cooperation between Správca zálohového systému and ZMOS is key to successfully engaging people across Slovakia in the deposit return system.





PROCESSING OF COLLECTED PACKAGING

In the first half of 2025, Správca zálohového systému significantly strengthened its logistics infrastructure by opening two new interim warehouses (in Vlkanová and in Lužianky). These strategic steps have helped to optimise transport routes, make the processing of collected packaging more efficient, and reduce the environmental burden.



In the first half of 2025, Správca focused on maintaining the high efficiency of logistics and processing of collected packaging. The sorting centre in Kočovce, which is a key part of the entire system, processed almost 9,400 tonnes of plastic bottles and more than 3,200 tonnes of cans.

The interim warehouse in Vlkanová has expanded Správca's network of interim warehouses in central Slovakia. It handles material collected from more than 451 collection points and is expected to save over 170,000 kilometres of travel per year. Modern technical equipment, including a weighbridge and multiple entry gates, ensures smoother operation of the vehicle fleet, better management during periods of increased collection, and improved working conditions for employees.



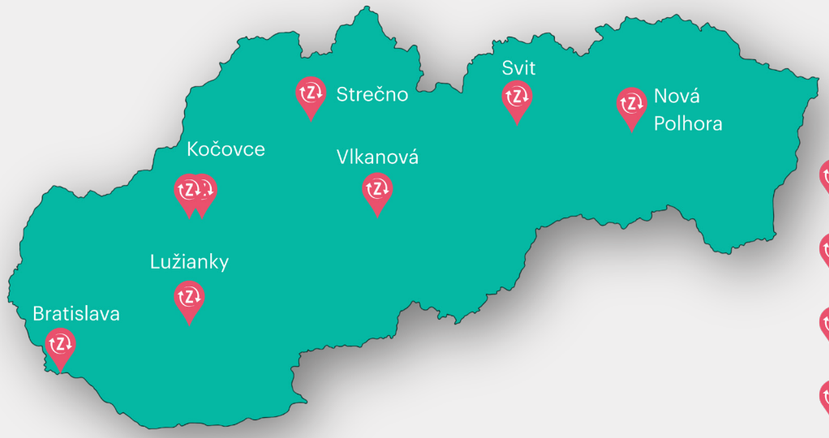
Správca has also opened a modern interim warehouse in Lužianky, replacing the previous facility in Žirany. This interim warehouse receives material from almost 500 collection points. his strategic relocation is expected to achieve an annual saving of approximately 28,000 kilometres. The interim warehouse improves the quality of material storage, as the material is kept in covered premises, which reduces the risk of contamination and increases the efficiency of further processing. The facilities also provide better working conditions, including reduced manual handling and greater comfort for employees.

Both new interim warehouses have helped to keep the return rate of deposit beverage containers in Slovakia at a high level, around 90%. Investment in logistics infrastructure is therefore a concrete step towards the long-term sustainable and efficient operation of the deposit return system.



During this period, Správca also actively optimised transport routes and collection processes, contributing to cost savings, a reduced carbon footprint, and more efficient use of vehicle capacity. Efforts were focused on minimising trips and improving sorting so as to ensure high-quality material ready for recycling and to meet the demanding environmental objectives of the circular economy. Overall, the system has confirmed its ability to respond flexibly to current operational needs and to continue reducing litter in Slovakia.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUR INTERIM WAREHOUSES AND SORTING CENTRE?



AS OF THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, SPRÁVCA OPERATES:

- **5** INTERNAL INTERIM WAREHOUSES — **IN KOČOVCE, NOVÁ POLHORA, LUŽIANKY, VLKANOVÁ, AND STREČNO**
- **1** EXTERNAL INTERIM WAREHOUSE — **IN BRATISLAVA**
- **1** EXTERNAL TRANSSHIPMENT — **IN SVIT**
- **1** SORTING CENTRE IN KOČOVCE – RAKOĽUBY

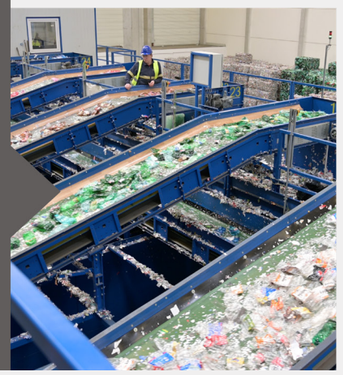
INTERIM WAREHOUSE

Serves as a temporary facility where collected packaging from collection points is stored before being transported to the sorting centre. Returned containers from consumers are taken from the collection point to the interim warehouse according to efficiently planned collection routes. In the interim warehouses, the containers are checked and counted, then compacted into bales and transported in compressed form to the sorting centre.



SORTING CENTRE

Checks, records, and processes material received from individual interim warehouses or directly from collection points. At the sorting centre, collected plastic bottles are sorted into five colour streams (clear, blue, green, light mix, and dark mix). Cans are sorted by material into steel and aluminium. The final product of the processing in the sorting centre is compacted bales, which are sent to recyclers.



LOGISTICS THE HEART OF THE SYSTEM

It is not only the optimisation of the network of interim warehouses and the sorting centre that can significantly affect the efficiency of transporting material from collected deposit beverage containers. Reducing the number of kilometres driven is one of the main ways to make transport more efficient, cutting both costs and the carbon footprint.

That the transport system is now more efficient, and that route optimisation is delivering real results, is confirmed by data for **primary logistics – transport between interim warehouses and the sorting centre.** This recorded a year-on-year reduction by more than 133,000 kilometres, representing a **48.18%** decrease compared to the same period in 2024 (a drop from 276,000 km to 142,000 km).

Secondary logistics, which involves **transporting collected packaging from collection points to interim warehouses,** recorded a year-on-year reduction in distance travelled by approximately **175,000 kilometres.** This represents an **8.04%** efficiency improvement compared to the first half of 2024, when the total distance driven fell from **2.18 million to 2.01 million kilometres.**

The savings in kilometres driven were achieved mainly through:

- more efficient route and trip planning;
- optimising the use of vehicles and their capacity;
- two new interim warehouses; and
- the implementation of new digital tools to support logistics (for example, using the baler located at the Vlkanová interim warehouse allows for more efficient transport of compressed material).

In addition to direct savings in kilometres and fuel consumption, these steps also reduce emissions and operating costs. The system continues to maintain high efficiency in the collection of containers and the quality of sorting for further processing.

Logistics is the area with the greatest potential for achieving savings within system optimisation. In the first half of 2025, it was once again confirmed that streamlining logistics processes makes a significant contribution to sustainability and to reducing costs. In the period ahead, the aim is to involve digitalisation and automation even more intensively, particularly in the area of secondary logistics.

Another important element in the digitalisation of logistics processes is Správca zálohového systému's use of the Driver app as a key tool for monitoring the transport of material and supporting drivers in their daily work. This is a practical digital tool that tracks the flow of material during collection – from the moment collection point staff hand over sealed bags, through their receipt by the driver, to delivery at the interim warehouse or sorting centre.

The application has been designed to be as simple, intuitive, and user-friendly as possible, even for drivers without prior experience of digital technology. The Driver app significantly streamlines logistics processes, improves communication between drivers and dispatch, and contributes to higher quality in the collection of containers within the deposit return system.

Its practical features include, in particular:

- Recording the condition of bags – the driver can add a note to each bag, record any damage, or attach a photo, ensuring accurate internal documentation and easier communication with supervisors.
- Navigation and contact support for the collection point – for each location, the app automatically displays contact details (such as a telephone number) and allows quick opening of Google Maps with exact GPS coordinates for simple, efficient navigation.

DIGITALISATION OF LOGISTICS: DRIVER APP



SPRÁVCA AS AN EMPLOYER



Over the course of the year, the Human Resources Department focused on ensuring the smooth running of personnel and payroll administration, as well as supporting the stable operation of the organisation. A major step forward was the implementation of an in-house payroll software system, which has significantly improved payroll processing efficiency and provided better oversight of the entire process.

For the summer season, the department successfully secured sufficient staffing capacity to meet increased operational needs. For the first time, Správca zálohového systému participated as an employer at two job fairs – Profesia Days and Kariéra EXPO – helping to raise brand awareness.

There was also a focus on team development and building corporate culture. A team-building activity was organised for production managers to strengthen collaboration and communication, while administrative staff took part in a separate team-building programme aimed at fostering relationships and improving team dynamics.

In the coming period, the Human Resources Department will continue to respond actively to the needs of individual operations, support employee development, and contribute to achieving the organisation's strategic objectives.





EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND SHARING OF EXPERIENCE WITH FOREIGN PARTNERS

In January 2025, Správca zálohového systému, together with 16 other European deposit return system operators, founded the European Deposit Return Systems Association. Its purpose is to promote cooperation between deposit return systems, share knowledge and experience among members, represent their interests, and raise awareness about deposit return. Representatives of each member organisation exchange expertise and work together to find effective solutions to deposit return challenges in seven working groups, covering areas from logistics to marketing, and from IT to European legislative requirements. The Association maintains active communication with the European Commission and continues to attract interest from other deposit return system operators wishing to join. As at 30 June 2025, three new associate members had joined: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Singapore, and the Faroe Islands. The Association is based in Bratislava, and its president is Marián Áč, the General Director of Správca zálohového systému.

In March 2025, Mr Áč spoke at the prestigious 32nd Packaging Waste & Sustainability Forum in Brussels. During a panel discussion entitled "Navigating the Challenges of Implementing Deposit Refund Schemes (DRS) and Digital DRS Across the EU", he presented the results and experience of Slovakia's deposit return system, which has quickly established itself as one of the most effective in Europe. Správca's participation in this international forum strengthened cooperation between European deposit return systems and confirmed Slovakia's important role in shaping sustainable solutions in the circular economy.







The first half of 2025 also brought a steady flow of visitors from abroad. They came in search of inspiration for their own solutions, to compare their plans, and to learn from Slovakia's experience in launching, fine-tuning, and meeting the legal targets of a deposit return system, as well as in education and public engagement. Every foreign delegation leaves Správca with a piece of Slovak deposit return know-how and becomes not only a promoter of our solutions and experience abroad, but also a carrier of our good reputation internationally. It should be noted that without the support of the Slovak public, deposit return system partners, local authorities, and constitutional institutions, Slovakia's deposit return system would have far less resonance abroad. It is encouraging that the system enjoys high public support at home and earns respect from partners abroad.

In the first half of 2025, Správca welcomed two delegations from Poland, both of which were keen to gain a detailed understanding of how the Slovak deposit return system operates. The visits focused particularly on the practical aspects of logistics, the operation of the sorting centre, and the technological solutions for packaging registration. The meetings provided opportunities to exchange know-how and strengthened professional ties within the Central European region.

In the first half of 2025, Správca also presented the deposit return system at the following webinars and conferences:

- **Circular Economy 2025, Bratislava**
- LOGRIDE 2025, Ostrava
- Packaging Waste and Sustainability Forum, Brussels
- WTF Summit 2025, Prague

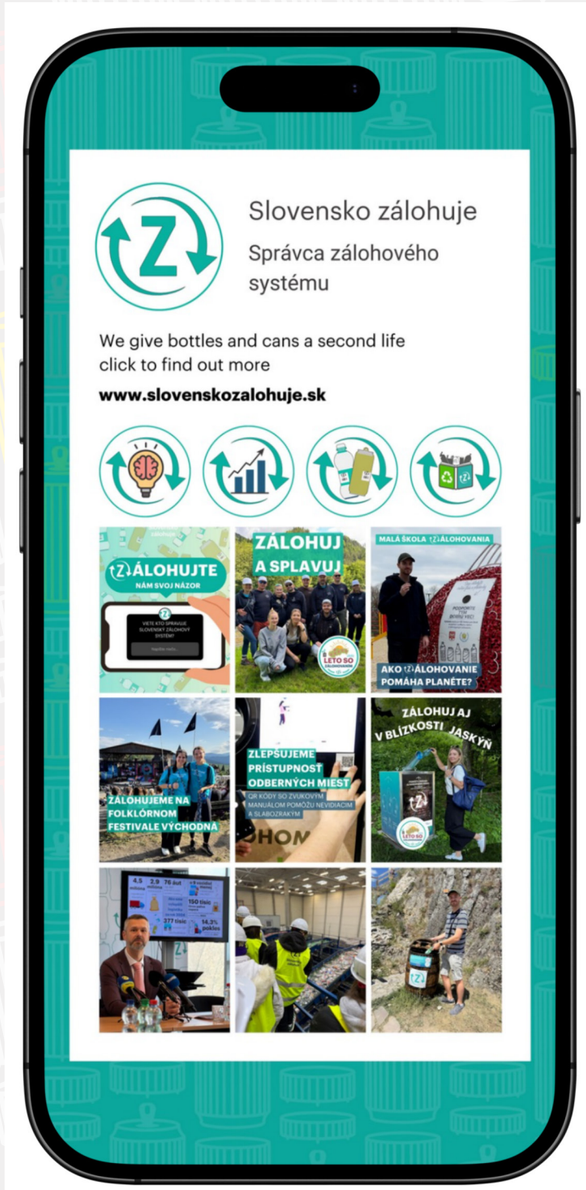
PUBLIC AWARENESS

For many Slovaks, returning beverage containers through the deposit return system has already become part of everyday life. We return bottles and cans without much thought – to a reverse vending machine, to a shop, or sometimes while on a trip or at a festival. Although the system runs reliably, it is important for it to remain visible, easy to understand, and accessible to everyone. That was precisely the focus of Správca zálohového systému in the first half of 2025 – communication designed with an emphasis on practical situations where deposit return happens.

Instead of large advertising campaigns, a series of smaller but well-planned activities was launched. Správca concentrated on when and where the most empty deposit beverage containers are collected – during holidays, trips, in nature, in schools, and at festivals – and tailored its communication to those moments and places. And that is where the communication was directed.

In the first half of 2025, Správca managed to:

- expand the network of collection bins in **national parks**;
- establish strategic **cooperation with the municipality of Štrba,** thereby extending deposit return accessibility to the important **Štrbské Pleso** location;
- promote inclusion and system accessibility by launching a project for **blind and visually impaired** people – **QR Codes with Audio Navigation** on around **2,400 reverse vending machines;**
- introduce **methodological materials and worksheets for secondary-school teachers and students** to support education on **environmental awareness**, deposit return, and the circular economy;
- **sign a memorandum with the National Institute for Education and Youth** (NIVaM), marking an important step in Správca's long-term efforts to foster environmental awareness among young people and systematically integrate deposit return into the curricula of primary and secondary schools;
- **sign a cooperation memorandum with the Conference of Bishops of Slovakia** (KBS), opening up new ways to communicate the deposit return message effectively within Christian communities, pilgrimage sites, and church events.





All these activities were united by a simple idea – deposit return should be for everyone, everywhere, whether in school, in the mountains, or in a small village shop.

The Slovensko zálohuje brand relies mainly on digital channels in 2025, enabling fast, effective communication with the public. The content is designed not only to inform, but also to motivate and inspire.

On Facebook and Instagram, the "Small Deposit Return School" video series runs continuously, explaining various topics connected with the deposit return system.

As part of thematic communication reflecting the summer season of increased drink consumption, an Easter competition encouraged people to return deposit beverage containers and reminded them about the deposit return system. Over the summer, a series of posts will highlight places where people should think about returning their bottles and cans – such as at swimming pools, in the mountains, when visiting a castle, going on a river trip, or camping.

The infrastructure and behind-the-scenes operation of the deposit return system, and the processes that make it work, are also important. Although the average consumer does not see them, each returned container is supported by a large logistics system and the efficient processing of collected packaging in interim warehouses and at the sorting centre. In 2025, these aspects received greater attention in public communications.

Deposit return is not only a technical system; it is a habit that keeps Slovakia cleaner. The Slovensko zálohuje brand has a clear aim – to be present whenever we open a drink.

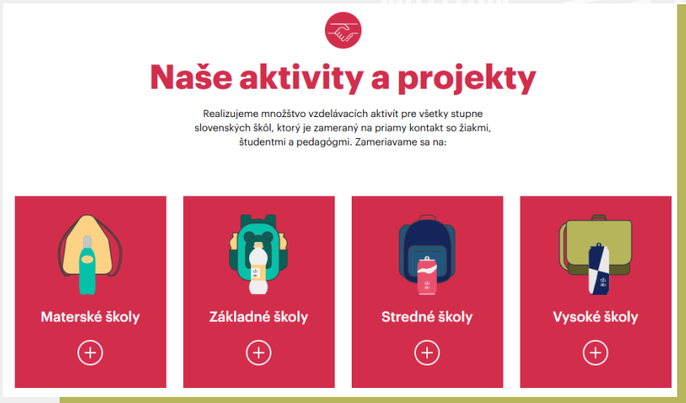


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EDUCATION

Educating young people about deposit return system, sustainable lifestyles, and the circular economy is one of our long-term strategic priorities. We believe that environmental and economic awareness is most effectively developed through high-quality educational content tailored to different age groups.



Methodological materials for secondary schools

At the turn of 2025, working with education specialists, we completed methodological materials for secondary-school teachers and students. These are designed to explain the practical significance of deposit return for everyday life, environmental protection, and sustainability. They are linked to existing school subjects and curricula, and include worksheets that can be used directly in lessons. The materials can be applied in civic education, ethics, Slovak language and literature, mathematics, and environmental studies.

They promote critical thinking, reading comprehension, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement.

In June 2025, in cooperation with the National Institute for Education and Youth (NIVaM), with which we signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, we set out to ensure that deposit return becomes a natural part of teaching in Slovak primary and secondary schools. We thank NIVaM's Director General, Romana Kánovská, for her many valuable suggestions and for creating space for active collaboration. The first tangible step will be to promote the methodological materials and worksheets for secondary-school teachers and students.

In the coming half-year, Správca will begin developing teaching materials for primary-school teachers and pupils.

Škola zálohovania a triedenia



In 2024, together with the Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia (ZMOS) and the producer responsibility organisation NATUR-PACK, we launched the Škola zálohovania a triedenia. This initiative gives primary-school pupils the opportunity not only to learn the principles of deposit return and waste sorting, but also to understand their benefits for a cleaner environment, its protection, and the circular economy. In the past six months, Škola zálohovania a triedenia has visited Zvolen, Trebišov, and Bratislava-Ružinov. The project has been well-received by schools and engages pupils through an attractive, interactive format. In the second half of 2025, we plan to add a new dimension – interactive theatre performances for pre-school children and pupils in the first and second years of primary school – as well as a new partner, the producer responsibility organisation ENVI-PAK. We are looking forward to this cooperation.





Odpad je poklad

We have an ongoing educational partnership with the eco-musical Odpad je pokla, which introduces older primary-school pupils and secondary-school students to deposit return system, sorting, and waste prevention. In 2025, Odpad je poklad was successfully staged during Ekofest in Trnava, and in Turčianske Teplice, Považská Bystrica, and Nitra.



"We worked on these materials for a long time and made sure they were prepared in a modern way – not focused on memorising facts, but instead encouraging pupils to think, be creative, and discuss the deposit return system and all its related topics. The main theme is deposit return for beverage containers, but it also overlaps with ecology and the circular economy."

Marián Áč, General Director, Správca zálohového systému

Sorting centre excursions

Excursions to our sorting centre are continuing to grow in popularity, attracting increasing interest from pupils and students. We are pleased to organise them in cooperation with the municipality of Kočovce and its Environmental Centre. In the past six months, the sorting centre in Kočovce welcomed students from the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra; pupils from the Primary School on Odborárska Street in Nové Mesto nad Váhom, the Primary School in Štrba, and the Radovan Kaufman Primary School in Partizánske; and students from the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. In the next six months, we are preparing visits for pupils from primary schools in Bardejov, Bošáca, Bratislava, Trebišov, Zvolen, and Gbely, as well as from the Albert Einstein Grammar School in Bratislava. These excursions give pupils and students a detailed look at deposit return, environmental protection, and the circular economy, and allow them to see first-hand part of the process of handling returned bottles and cans.









Cooperation with the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava

In 2024, we agreed with the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava to support a research project on deposit return.

Our aim is not only to improve the recovery of returned bottles and cans, but also to gradually strengthen Slovakia's scientific and research capacity in this field.



Activities for the youngest children

In 2025, we are continuing our efforts to reach the youngest audiences through events such as Miro Jaroš's Disco Tour with Lipánek and the popular Spievankovo – Letíme k vám! format. We are also preparing a series of Spievankovo events in nursery schools to present deposit return in an age-appropriate way. In addition, we are developing a colouring book to visually illustrate the bottle's journey from production to return and reuse.



















MEETING RETURN TARGETS

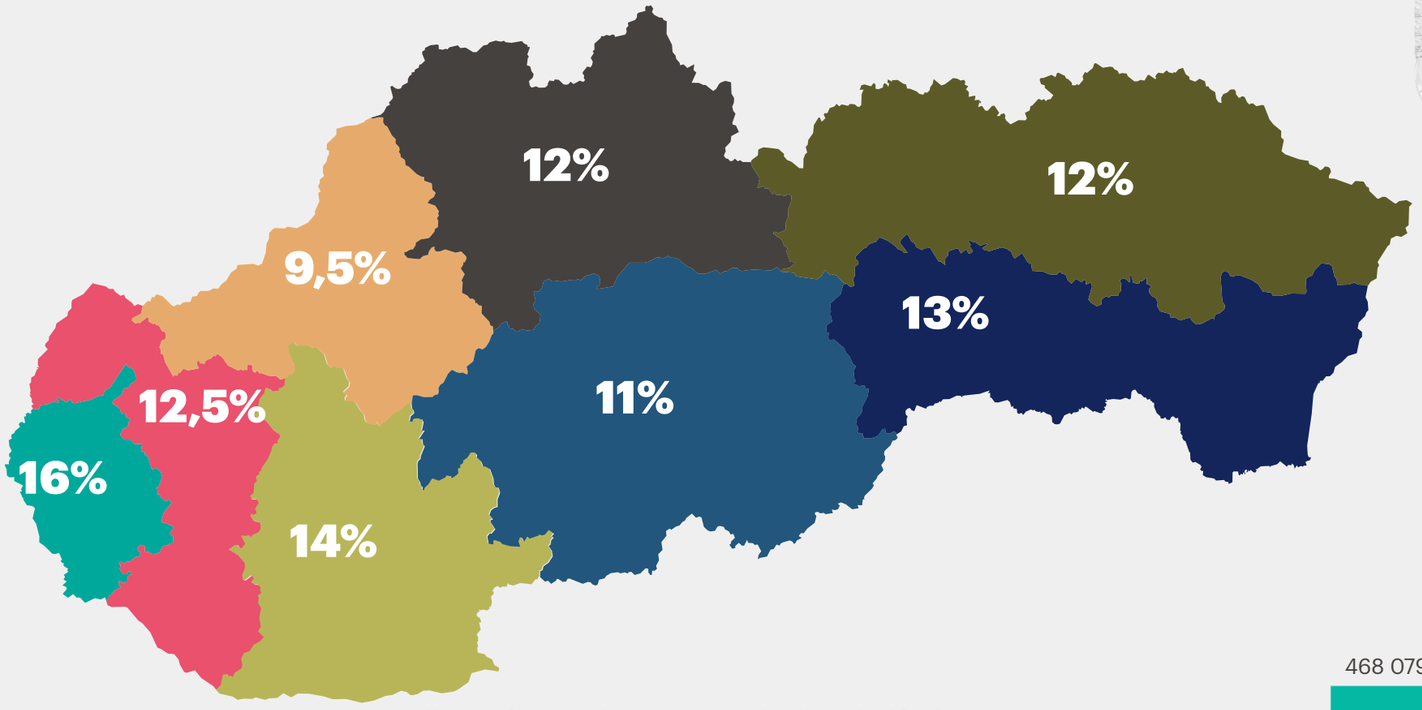
IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025

519 936 764

DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS WERE COLLECTED

57 % DEPOSIT PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES

43 % DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CANS



How many were collected in each region in the first half of 2025?

Banská Bystrica	56 795 453	Prešov	61 708 152
Bratislava	82 296 451	Trenčín	50 623 658
Košice	68 036 575	Trnava	65 661 407
Nitra	73 070 508	Žilina	61 744 560

FROM THE LAUNCH OF THE DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM UP TO 30 JUNE 2025, MORE THAN

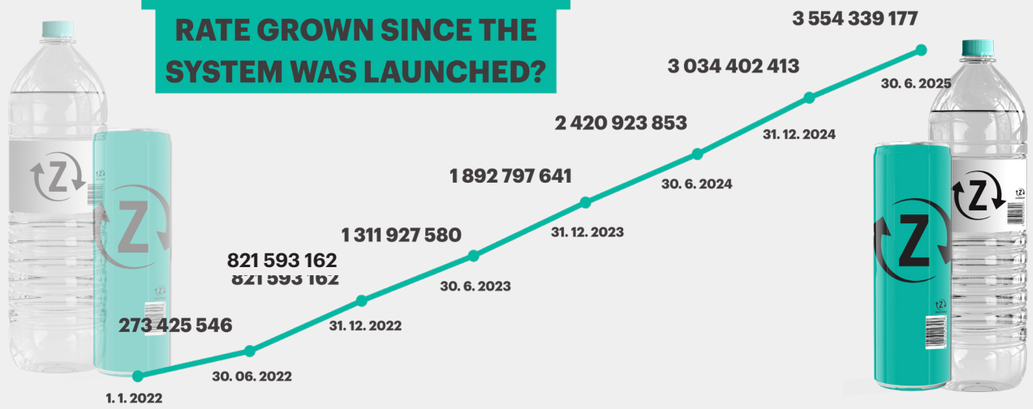
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DEPOSIT PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES AND CANS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED

57 % DEPOSIT PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES

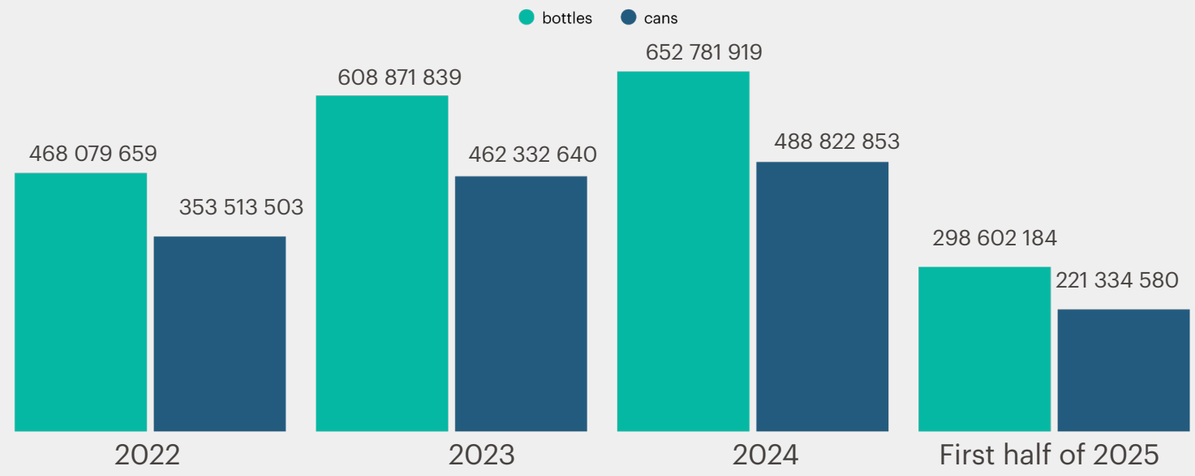
43 % DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CANS

HOW HAS THE COLLECTION RATE GROWN SINCE THE SYSTEM WAS LAUNCHED?



THE RETURN RATE FOR DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025 WAS OVER **92%**

COMPARISON of the number of deposit plastic beverage bottles and cans collected each year since the system was



DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM CHALLENGES FOR 2025



One of the main priorities for Správca zálohového systému in the second half of 2025 will be **maintaining the high return rate for deposit beverage containers,** achieved through active cooperation with all partners involved. A key factor here remains the accessibility of the system for consumers – in other words, a simple, convenient, and as-close-as-possible location for returning a deposit beverage container.

Slovakia currently has almost **3,600** collection points, around **71%** of which are shops with reverse vending machines. Správca is also continuing to expand its network of alternative collection points where containers can be r**eturned away from conventional shops** – particularly at high-footfall locations such as sports venues, festivals, swimming pools, national parks, schools, hospitals, and cultural landmarks. **As at 30 June 2025, more than 328,000 containers had been collected at these alternative locations**, confirming their importance in improving return rates and system accessibility.

Another focus for Správca, working with retailers, is to **improve the quality and cleanliness of collection points.** While reverse vending machines and their surroundings are the responsibility of the retailer, Správca provides support – issuing a **manual for maintaining collection points, communicating with shop operators, and introducing motivational measures** such as guidelines on correctly sealing collection bags. A new initiative is a **competition for the best-quality collection point,** recognising good practice and the daily efforts of shop staff.

Logistics optimisation also continues – the collection of containers from collection points, their transport to interim warehouses, and on to the sorting centre must be efficient to prevent build-up in shops while minimising the distance travelled. **Investment in new interim warehouses**, the use of digital tools (such as the Driver app), and **improved route planning all contribute to the sustainable operation of the entire deposit return system.**

In cooperation with producers, Správca is **developing digital solutions** – including more intuitive forms, faster verification of containers, and easier reporting of mandatory data on recycled content. The aim is to **reduce the administrative burden and support the more efficient participation of producers in the system.** At the same time, it is important to continuously refine deposit return processes to ensure reliability while protecting producers. Preventing potential fraud therefore remains a key priority for Správca.

Public education is another essential area. Správca focuses particularly on young people – through the **Škola zálohovania a triedenia project, excursions to the sorting centre in Kočovce, and cooperation with schools and local authorities.** In 2025, Správca partnered with the **National Institute for Education and Youth** (NIVAM) to produce special **teaching materials for secondary-school teachers and pupils**, integrating the topic of deposit return into the curriculum. These initiatives bring sustainability into the classroom, helping to shape environmentally responsible behaviour in future generations. This work will continue in the second half of 2025, with the preparation of teaching materials and worksheets for primary-school teachers and pupils, and new formats for the Deposit Return and Sorting School.

Promotion and public awareness activities also continue in various communities – through **churches**, **local authorities**, and at **cultural** and **sports events.** Deposit return is not just a technical system; it is a social habit that helps to keep Slovakia clean.















WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES AND CANS?

The deposit return system helps to combat littering of plastic beverage bottles and cans in nature.

CIRCULARITY OF MATERIALS

The deposit return system follows the principle of the circular economy, closing the material loop “bottle to bottle” and “can to can”, helping to conserve natural resources.



1 DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO COLLECT MORE HIGH-QUALITY MATERIAL FOR RECYCLING.



2 WITHIN A CIRCULAR ECONOMY, MATERIALS ARE USED AGAIN AND AGAIN TO PRODUCE NEW BOTTLES AND CANS.



3 BY REUSING MATERIALS ALREADY IN CIRCULATION, WE HELP TO CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES.

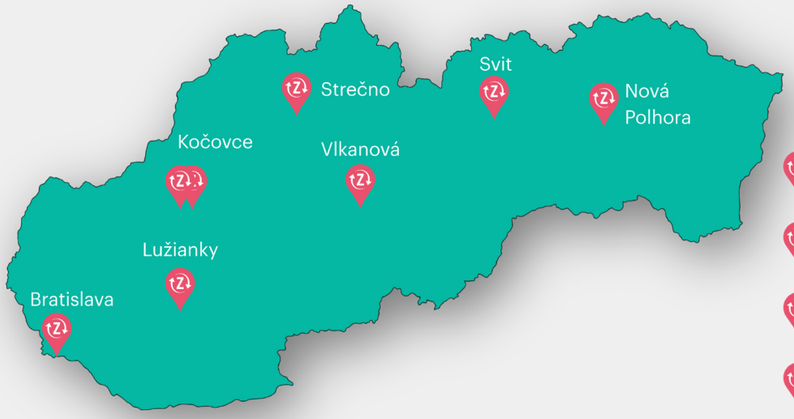


4 DEPOSIT RETURN SYSTEM HELPS TO FIGHT LITTER, PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT.

SPRÁVCA
ZÁLOHOVÉHO
SYSTÉMU

SPRÁVCA ZÁLOHOVÉHO SYSTÉMU n.o.
slovenskozalohuje.sk

WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUR INTERIM WAREHOUSES AND SORTING CENTRE?



AS OF THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, SPRÁVCA OPERATES:

- **5** INTERNAL INTERIM WAREHOUSES — **IN KOČOVCE, NOVÁ POLHORA, LUŽIANKY, VLKANOVÁ, AND STREČNO**
- **1** EXTERNAL INTERIM WAREHOUSE — **IN BRATISLAVA**
- **1** EXTERNAL TRANSSHIPMENT — **IN SVIT**
- **1** SORTING CENTRE IN KOČOVCE – RAKOĽUBY

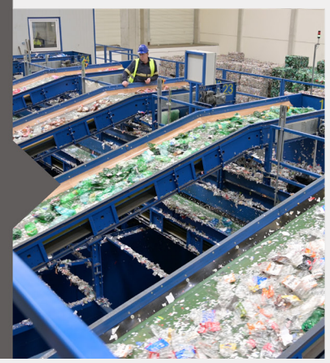
INTERIM WAREHOUSE

Serves as a temporary facility where collected packaging from collection points is stored before being transported to the sorting centre. Returned containers from consumers are taken from the collection point to the interim warehouse according to efficiently planned collection routes. In the interim warehouses, the containers are checked and counted, then compacted into bales and transported in compressed form to the sorting centre.



SORTING CENTRE

Checks, records, and processes material received from individual interim warehouses or directly from collection points. At the sorting centre, collected plastic bottles are sorted into five colour streams (clear, blue, green, light mix, and dark mix). Cans are sorted by material into steel and aluminium. The final product of the processing in the sorting centre is compacted bales, which are sent to recyclers.



IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, THE SORTING CENTRE PROCESSED ALMOST

9 400 tonnes

OF PLASTIC BOTTLE MATERIAL AND MORE THAN

3 200 tonnes

OF CAN MATERIAL.

HOW DID WE IMPROVE LOGISTICS YEAR ON YEAR?



Primary logistics

Year-on-year reduction in kilometres driven

133,000

kilometres

reduction by

48,18 %

compared to the same period last year

drop from 276,000 km to 142,000 km.



Secondary logistics

Year-on-year reduction in kilometres driven

175,000

kilometres

efficiency improvement of

8,04 %

compared to the same period last year

drop from 2.18 million km to 2.01 million km

AS AT 30 JUNE 2025, SPRÁVCA RECORDED

407

ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING DISTRIBUTORS

THERE WERE

3 554

COLLECTION POINTS AS AT 30 JUNE 2025



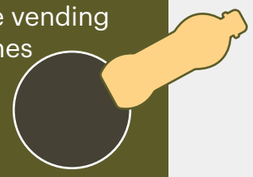
Breakdown of collection points:

2021	*2 000*
2022	*2 993*
2023	*3 269*
2024	*3 435*
01 – 06/ 2025	*3 554*

As at 30 June 2025, the collection network had

2 803

reverse vending machines



VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING COLLECTION POINTS:

66 %

COLLECTION POINTS WITH AUTOMATED COLLECTION:

71 %

MANDATORY COLLECTION POINTS:

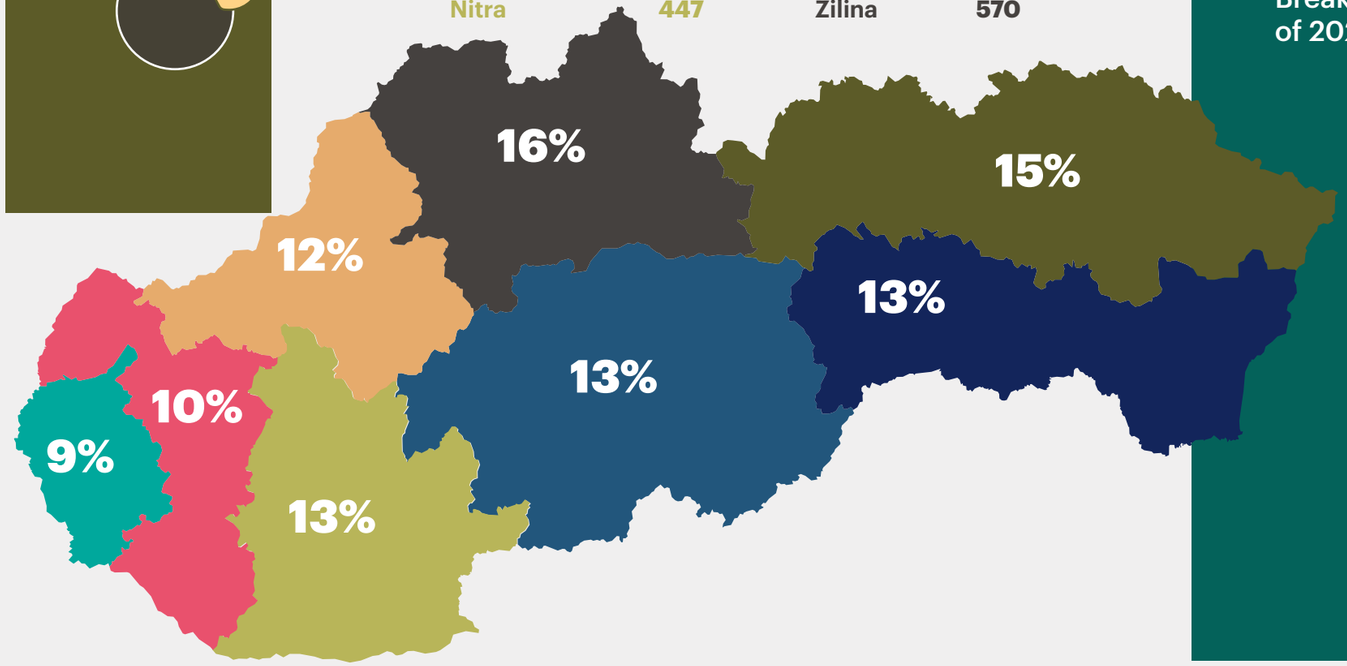
34 %

COLLECTION POINTS WITH MANUAL COLLECTION:

29 %

Proportion of collection points by region:

Banská Bystrica	465	Prešov	538
Bratislava	315	Trenčín	423
Košice	450	Trnava	346
Nitra	447	Žilina	570



AS AT 30 JUNE 2025, SPRÁVCA RECORDED

437 **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING PRODUCERS**

IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, MORE THAN

519 milion

DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS COLLECTED FOR THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR.

A TOTAL OF

6 139 **ACTIVE EAN CODES**

WERE REGISTERED AS 30 JUNE 2025

IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025, MORE THAN

560 milion

DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS WERE PLACED ON THE SLOVAK MARKET.

Of the EAN codes registered in the first half of 2025:

64 %



were national EAN codes

36 %



were international EAN codes

Of the packaging placed on the market in the first half of 2025:

56 % **WERE BEVERAGES IN PLASTIC BOTTLES**

44 % **WERE BEVERAGES IN CANS**



Breakdown of beverage types placed on the market in the first half of 2025:

29%	BOTTLED WATER
9%	ENERGY DRINKS
28%	SOFT DRINKS
1%	OTHER ALCOHOLIC DRINKS
2%	FRUIT JUICES
30,5%	BEER
0,5%	WINE

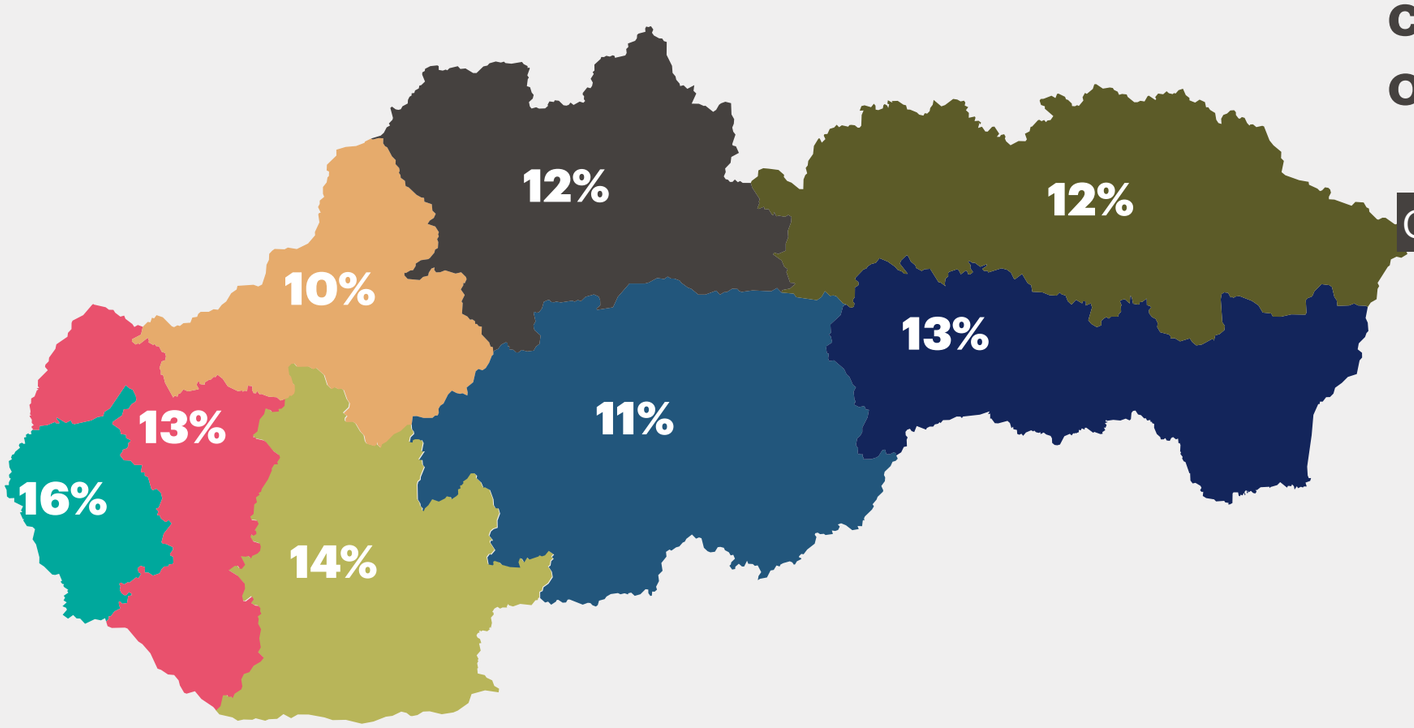
IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025

519 936 784

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Nitra	73 070 508	Žilina	61 744 560

FROM THE LAUNCH OF THE SYSTEM UNTIL 30 JUNE 2025, MORE THAN

3 554 339 177

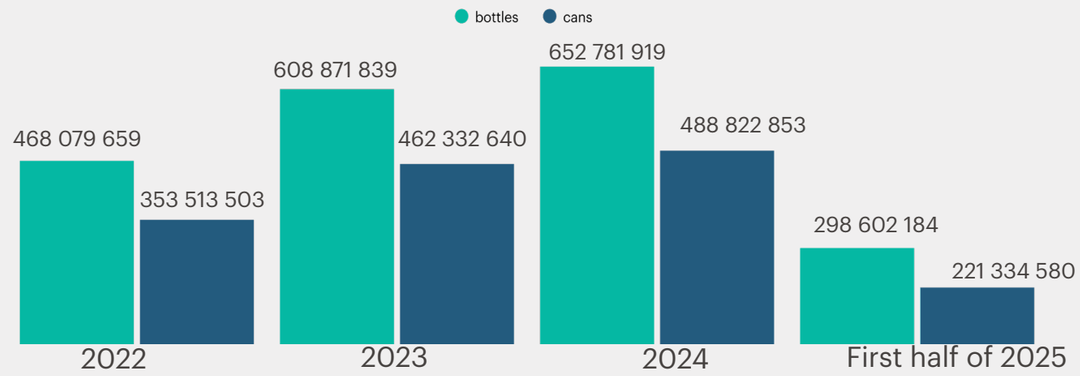
DEPOSIT PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES AND CANS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED

57 % DEPOSIT PLASTIC BEVERAGE BOTTLES

43 % DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CANS

THE RETURN RATE FOR DEPOSIT BEVERAGE CONTAINERS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2025 WAS OVER 92%

COMPARISON of the number of deposit plastic beverage bottles and cans collected each year since the system was introduced.



HOW HAS THE COLLECTION RATE GROWN SINCE THE SYSTEM WAS LAUNCHED?

