

Air cargo traffic recovers to pre-pandemic levels

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Air freight traffic has returned to pre-pandemic levels, the International Air Transport Association said Tuesday, but passenger traffic slumped further in January.

IATA [global demand](#) as measured in tonnes of cargo shipped per kilometre was up 1.1 percent compared to January 2019 and rose by three percent from December 2020.

Capacity is down nearly 20 percent from January 2019 and fell five percent from December 2020, however, as [airlines](#) have taken out of service passenger jets that also transport cargo.

But for [passenger traffic](#), which generates some 85 percent of revenues for airlines, the situation has gone "from bad to worse", said IATA, which represents most airlines.

Passenger traffic, measured as revenue per passenger kilometre, was down by 72 percent in January from the same month last year.

That is worse than the 69.7 percent annual drop registered in December.

Airlines lost out on \$510 billion in revenue in 2020, IATA said last month, but it hopes for a strong recovery in traffic in the second half of this year as countries roll out their vaccination campaigns.

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