

Airline traffic to fall by two-thirds this year: IATA

29 September 2020



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Global airlines have revised traffic forecasts lower, sector federation IATA said Tuesday, warning that hundreds of thousands of jobs are at risk without more state aid.

The International Air Transport Association downgraded its 2020 [traffic](#) forecast following a "dismal end to the [summer travel season](#)" in the [northern hemisphere](#) and now expects it to be 66 percent below the level in 2019, a statement said.

IATA's previous forecast was for a drop of 63 percent, but that was before government reimposed [travel restrictions](#) in August and the outlook faltered for the rest of the year, it added.

The association, which represents 290 airlines, said that August traffic, which it measures in revenue passenger kilometres or RPKs, plunged by 75.3 percent from the same period in 2019.

A resurgence in coronavirus cases since then and more government restrictions to deal with them, has prevented a strong rebound.

"A much slower improvement is now expected," the statement added.

"Absent additional government relief measures and a reopening of borders, hundreds of thousands of airline jobs will disappear," said chief executive Alexandre de Juniac.

He called for a international programme of COVID-19 tests prior to a flight's departure to give governments the confidence to open borders and passengers confidence to board planes again.

A breakdown of the industry data indicated that domestic flights were attracting more passengers than international services, though in countries such as Australia and Japan, even domestic flights were way down.

The IATA has estimated that global traffic will not reach pre-pandemic levels before 2024, and that the sector will earn \$419 million less this year owing to the pandemic.

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APA citation: Airline traffic to fall by two-thirds this year: IATA (2020, September 29) retrieved 13 June 2021 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-09-airline-traffic-fall-two-thirds-year.html>

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