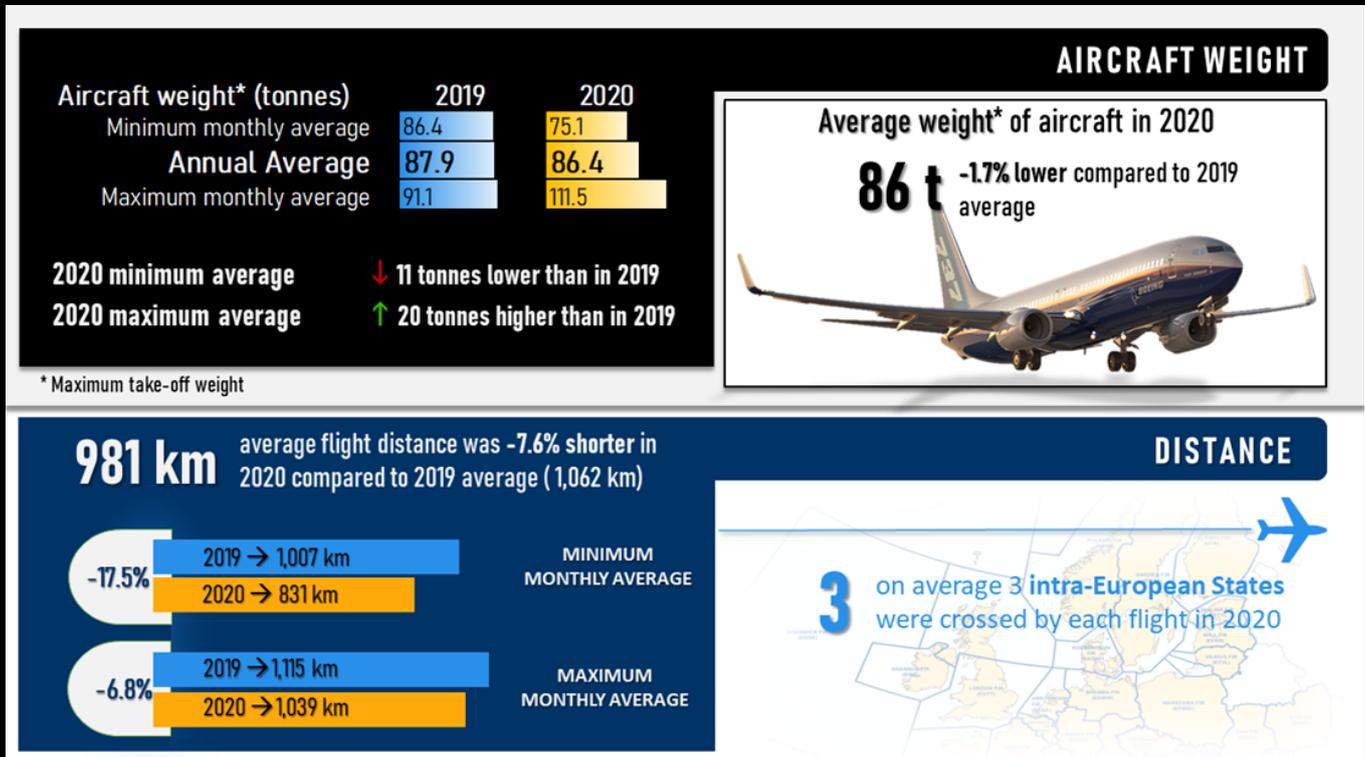


# EUROCONTROL Data Snapshot

In 2020 the average flight was shorter and performed by smaller aircraft with huge variation over the year.



22 April 2021



The average flight in 2020 was 7.6% shorter than 2019, but the average flight weight fluctuated from month to month quite dramatically compared with the relatively steady levels in 2019.

The average distance flown in 2020, at 981 km or roughly Brussels-Bratislava, was lower than 2019 and reached the deepest decrease to 831 km in June. During summer 2020 the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions led to an increase again to slightly above 1,000 km in August. Nevertheless, the monthly average distance per flight was lower compared to the previous year for the whole period from March 2020 until the end of the year, due to limited number of international passenger flights and higher share of domestic flights in 2019. In both 2020 and 2019 the average number of States crossed by flights within the EUROCONTROL area was around 3.

However, flight weights fluctuated in line with the phases of the pandemic. Travel restrictions implemented by many States almost eliminated aviation from the global passenger transportation network at the end of first quarter of 2020, but raised the importance of fast-tracking the transport of medical devices and equipment during the first months of the pandemic (see our [previous snapshot](#) exploring the market share of cargo flights in 2020). This increased the demand for cargo flights performed by large aircraft, resulting in a peak of 112 tonnes in the second quarter of 2020.

In subsequent months, as mostly intra-European passenger traffic returned, the average flight weight decreased quickly, reaching a low of 75 tonnes in July 2020, as passenger flights recovered, but tended to be performed using smaller aircraft due to still low passenger numbers. Airlines opted for smaller or more fuel-efficient types (Embraer, ATR, Airbus 220, 320neo and 350), although Boeing 737s and Airbus 320s remained popular. More on the manufacturers' shares in 2020 [here](#). The 86 tonne average for 2020 is similar to that of an older-style Boeing 737-900ER.

Technical Bits: Underlying flight data sourced from EUROCONTROL Central Route Charges Office (CRCO). The weight is understood here as a maximum take-off weight (MTOW) of the aircraft as used for the calculation of route charges. As CRCO does not collect route charges on behalf of Israel, Morocco and Ukraine, they are not covered by the snapshot.

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