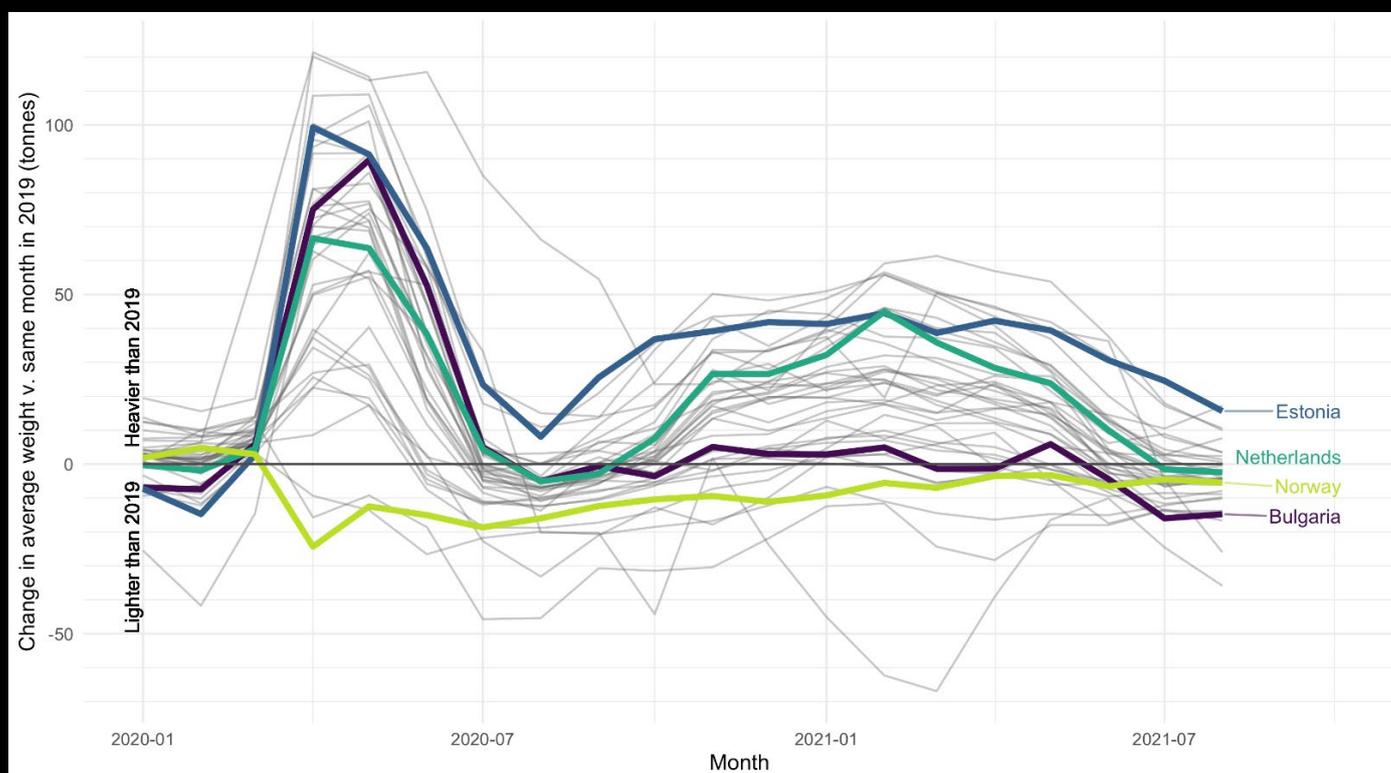


EUROCONTROL Data Snapshot

Most countries saw heavier aircraft during COVID19. This is returning to normal, but that reduces ATC revenue even further.



21 September 2021



In a [recent snapshot](#) we explored how flights have recovered at different rates in different countries. Another source of variation is in the types of aircraft seen, which is represented in this chart by changes in average weight. These weight changes tell a story about the balance between long-haul and short-haul, and between cargo and passenger flights.

Heavier aircraft also mean higher revenues for air navigation service providers. Weights were very high between March and June 2020 (see spike in chart). This partly made up for the revenues lost due to cuts in flights, although in most cases it only marginally reduced the financial impact due to the substantial decline in flights. In early 2021, many countries saw average aircraft weights 20-50 tonnes higher than in the same period in 2019. (In normal times, a change of around 2 tonnes between one year and another would be more usual.) Now that weight gain is coming to an end.

Estonia has seen large weight gains for much of 2021, with its Baltic neighbours in a similar position. This reflects the continuing strength of cargo overflights (25% above August 2019), compared to total flights (*down* by 50%). So this shows both the strength of long-haul cargo (to Russia and to North and East Asia), and the rarity of passenger flights to the same destination. With the Summer's traffic recovery, the weight gain has diminished.

In contrast, Bulgaria and some of its neighbours have seen little increase in weight compared to 2019. Flows of long-haul, heavy aircraft to the Middle East and South-East Asia, especially from the UK, are weak. And still, in the last months, average weights have declined, cancelling out some of the revenue benefits from the recovery in flight numbers.

Norway has been seen in several snapshots as an outlier, with its strong domestic flows. This is reflected also in the average aircraft being lighter for most of the period (few of the heavy long-haul aircraft, relatively more lighter, short-haul aircraft). Finally in the chart, the Netherlands stands for the many countries which had much heavier aircraft last winter, but where the mix of aircraft is closer to normal this Summer.

Technical Bits: Monthly updates on flights, weight and distance, as they relate to revenue of air navigation service providers are available in the [CRCO Dashboard](#).

