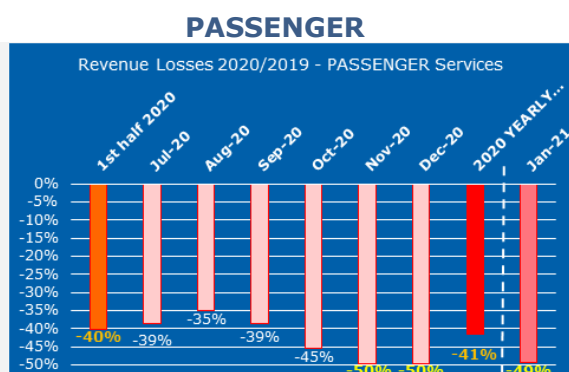


COVID 19 economic impact: a difficult start to 2021 for railways

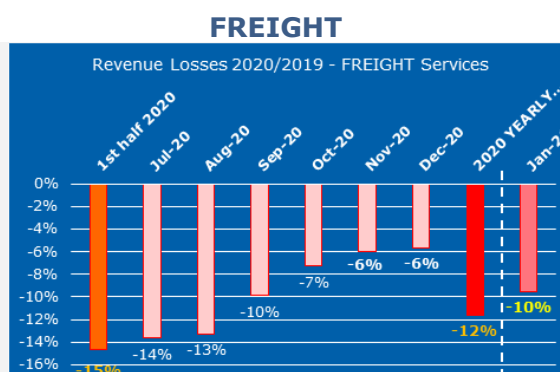
The latest data collection carried out by the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) among its members confirms earlier reporting of heavy COVID-related losses for the railways over 2020 in Europe. Figures for January 2021 do not show any signs of improvement so far either for passenger or freight services.

Railways in the European Union (EU27) lost **€26 billion** in revenues overall (passenger services and freight services) over the whole of 2020 compared to 2019. Passenger services were more affected than freight, but the pandemic is taking its toll across the board.

Rail PASSENGER 2020 losses (EU27)	Rail FREIGHT 2020 losses (EU27)
-24 billion €	-2 billion €
-41%	-12%



After a small relief in summer 2020, passenger losses got worse in autumn (-45% in October), reaching record heights in November- December 2020 (-50%). The bad results of end 2020 carried over into **January 2021: -49%** compared to the same month in 2019 with losses of **€555 million/week**.



After some improvement during the 2nd half of 2020, 2021 shows an increase of freight losses after relative stability in the last 2 months of 2020: **-10% in January 2021** compared to the same month of 2019 with losses of **€30 million/week**.

In 2020, the losses ranged from -3% to -32% among freight operators, while the variation among passenger operators has been huge: -3% to -91%. The situation has been particularly hard on international long-distance passenger services (-80% to -100%), and especially on companies specialising in cross-border services (like Eurostar and Thalys) and on the Eurail products (Eurail and InterRail).

Looking to the months ahead, early indications based on the January 2021 figures do not yet reveal any signs of improvement. The downward trend observed since October 2020 continues on the passenger side, while the upswing in freight results at the end of 2020 has gone into decline.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said: *"Since the beginning of the pandemic, railways have been second to none in keeping passengers and freight moving. But the pandemic took an unprecedented toll on their economic viability. As the capacity of the railways to support both recovery and sustainability is widely recognised, it is all the more urgent that political decision makers provide an adequate level of support to railway operators to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19. This is indispensable for the sector's recovery and future growth, allowing rail to fulfil its role as the backbone of smart and sustainable mobility."*

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DISCLAIMER - The figures contained in this document have been calculated by extrapolation of the data provided to CER by its members. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this document, CER cannot be held responsible for any errors contained therein.

About CER

The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) brings together around 70 railway undertakings, their national associations as well as infrastructure managers and vehicle leasing companies. The membership is made up of long-established bodies, new entrants and both private and public enterprises, representing 73% of the rail network length, 76% of the rail freight business and about 92% of rail passenger operations in EU, EFTA and EU accession countries. CER represents the interests of its members towards EU policymakers and transport stakeholders, advocating rail as the backbone of a competitive and sustainable transport system in Europe. For more information, visit www.cer.be or follow us on Twitter [@CER_railways](https://twitter.com/CER_railways) or [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cer).