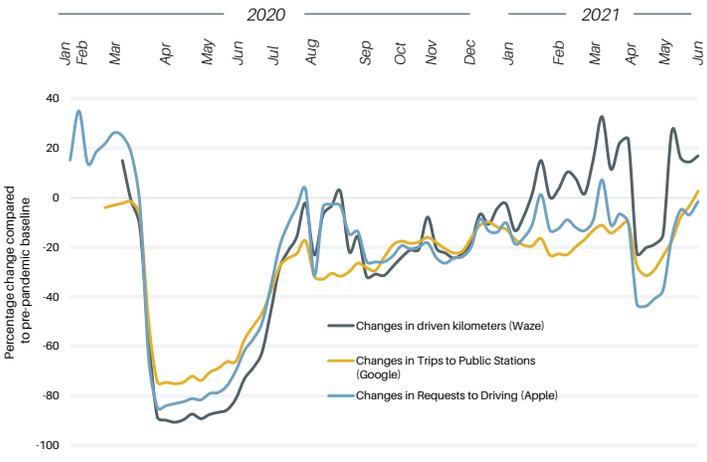


Sustainable Low Carbon Transport in COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Strategies: A Joint Analysis by IsDB and SLOCAT for Member Countries

COVID-19 Pandemic Trends and Impacts in the Transport Sector

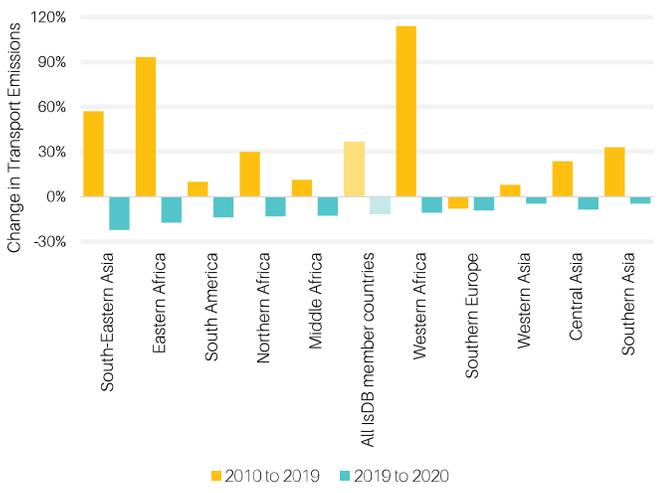

Passenger mobility in Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) member countries registered a sharp decline in 2020 and 2021. April 2020 saw a 49% reduction in retail and recreation trips and a 53% reduction in public transport station trips. Trips to public transport stations returned to pre-pandemic levels by May 2021.

Changes in mobility behaviour in Morocco¹




Transport CO₂ emissions in IsDB member countries declined in 2020, reversing years of growth. Transport CO₂ emissions grew 37% from 2010 to 2019, while in 2020, emissions declined 11.4% compared to 2019. The greatest drop (12.6%) was recorded in low-income IsDB member countries.

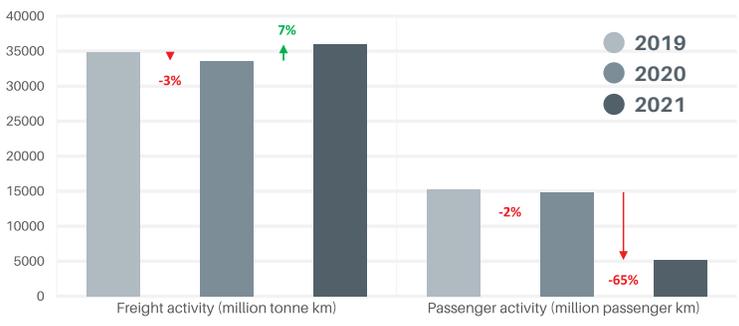
Transport CO₂ Emissions Development (2010 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020)²




Rail freight remained resilient throughout 2020 and 2021, delivering essential goods to areas of critical need. For instance, freight rail activity in **Iran** has continued to grow during the pandemic, while passenger rail activity has dropped significantly.

Iran's Bostan Abad-Tabriz project has capacity for 2 million tonnes of freight a year to complete the east-west corridor.

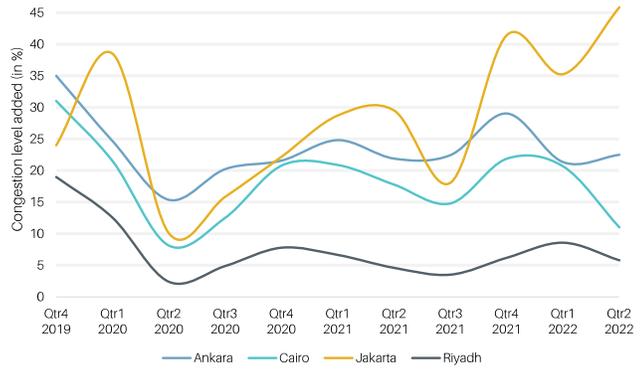
Freight and passenger rail activity in Iran³




Impacts of pandemic travel behaviour include temporarily decreasing congestion and improved air quality in 2020. Roads saw less vehicle congestion during the first lockdown in major cities in IsDB member countries. Air quality had significantly improved in 2020; however, urban air pollution returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2021.

Ankara, Cairo, Jakarta and Riyadh have seen travel congestion return to levels equal to or greater than early 2020 levels.⁴

Development of congestion levels in selected cities




Transport fares have been rising since 2020: The average fare paid by commuters for an urban bus journey in **Nigeria** increased 160% in 2022.⁵ Similarly, in **Bangladesh** and **Tajikistan**, daily commuters now pay for city buses respectively 27% and 50% more than back in 2020.⁶

Transport Policy Responses to Drive COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery

Short-term policy responses



 COVID-19 safety measures and awareness raising can accelerate recovery of public transport ridership.

Safety measures such as masks and physical distancing are essential to increase customer confidence in public transport.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, has operated more buses at higher frequency to reduce crowding while maintaining high levels of service.⁷

More investments in hygiene and maintenance are needed to restore public transport ridership. Increasing public awareness that public transport is safe and healthy is a policy imperative.

Audiovisual communication in stations and trains in Casablanca, Morocco ensures that passengers are aware of safety guidelines for safe operation of public transport.⁸

 Urban mobility policies and regulations ensuring inclusive access for all transport users must be scaled up.

Appropriate regulations, policies and guidelines must be adopted to harness urban transport options.

In Jakarta, Indonesia, pandemic pop-up bike lanes and bike parking became central to a subsequent regulation to accelerate the city's vision to achieve a bike-friendly city.⁹

Inclusiveness, collective enforcement strategies and governance policies for urban mobility are essential to rebuilding public transport ridership.

In Cairo, Egypt, the local government has supported bus companies by restructuring loan agreements and service fees to maintain the viability of public transport operations.



 Countries must set electrification targets, and phase-out targets for sales of internal combustion engine road vehicles.

Current e-mobility targets in IsDB countries¹⁰

Afghanistan  (2030) 10% of new light and heavy duty vehicles powered by electricity/ alternative fuels

Brunei Darussalam  (2025) 50% increase in hybrid vehicles and electric vehicles

Indonesia  (2040) Sell only electric-powered motorcycles
(2050) Sell only electric-powered cars

Turkey  (2030) 1 million electric vehicles in operation

Uzbekistan  (2035) 30% share of electric vehicles





Long-term investment strategies



A shift toward infrastructure and digitalisation prioritising efficient, clean and sustainable modes is needed to optimise passenger and freight transport activity.

New infrastructure is needed to **increase rail freight capacity**.

Saudi Arabia's rail freight network is projected to expand by 8,000 km and double capacity, adopting modern technology and setting new environmental standards in operating licences.¹¹

Transport investments should be coupled with **parallel investments in renewable energy**.

Karachi, Pakistan's Green Bus Rapid Transit fleet of 200 zero-emissions vehicles is powered by bio-methane produced from water buffalo excrement.¹²

In 2022, Morocco's high-speed trains started to run on wind energy in line with plans by Morocco's national railway operator to switch 50% of its overall energy consumption to green energy by 2023.¹³



Capacity building initiatives and South-South cooperation should target the enhancement of efficiency and innovation for socioeconomic development and resilience.

Cross-border transport activities and regional integration can increase benefits of capital intensive investment.

The 256.5 km long Bereket-Etrek Railway project contributes to socioeconomic development and integration between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran.¹⁴

Enhanced cooperation between countries to share **know-how, best practices and lessons learnt** on policy implementation and can improve outcomes of transport investments.

A rural road construction pilot project in Senegal using technology developed in Malaysia, is an example of South-South transfer of expertise and technology funded by IsDB.¹⁵



© Yalla Let's Bike



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Investments in future transport infrastructure and services must address social needs and priorities.

Needs of marginalised groups must be central to transport planning efforts.

"Yalla Let's Bike" was launched in 2014 by female cyclists in Syria determined to change the status quo and break the social stigma of bicycling.¹⁶

Gender mainstreaming for women and girls a focus of pandemic recovery strategies in the transport sector.

The rail company Renfe is recruiting 30 women workers to operate high-speed trains between Mecca and Medina, Saudi Arabia, and has received 28,000 applications.¹⁷



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Islamic Development Bank Contributions to Pandemic Recovery

 IsDB COVID-19 pandemic recovery and resilience efforts can increase focus on sustainable, low carbon transport.

IsDB can increase focus on low-carbon passenger transport and sustainable supply chains within **COVID-19 pandemic recovery funding efforts**.¹⁸

*Global supply chain disruptions slowed economic recovery of import-dependent countries. IsDB is supporting the import of fuel and food commodities in member countries such as **Guinea** and **Maldives**.*

IsDB can increase focus on sustainable transport in **the Bank's resilience index for pandemic recovery**, as a means of supporting economic resilience.¹⁹

*In **Uzbekistan**, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant challenges, including putting strains on health services, shocks to the labour force, and economic disruption associated with lockdowns.*

IsDB can continue **regionally-focused discussions** on COVID-19 pandemic recovery at the forthcoming Africa and Asia-Pacific Regional Climate Weeks and other strategic regional fora.

*The **United Arab Emirates** hosted the first MENA Climate Week in 2022. IsDB led or contributed to several sessions which discussed opportunities for shifting towards more sustainable and low carbon transport modes.*²⁰



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 IsDB transport investments can contribute to regional and international efforts towards resilience to global shocks.

IsDB can work with **transport industry associations** (e.g. International Association of Public Transport, International Union of Railways) to increase the resilience of new transport investments.

*IsDB support to projects, such as the high-speed rail in **Morocco** and **Turkey**, sends valuable signals to the railway industry to scale up activities in those regions.*

IsDB can link **transport investments with the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework** through the UN Office of Disaster Risk Reduction.

***Indonesia** hosted the 7th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, an avenue to share recent approaches to reducing disaster risk.*²¹

IsDB can contribute to discussions on post-pandemic **resilience and loss and damage at COP27 and COP28**.

*As the host of COP27, **Egypt** is advancing the work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation with a view to securing a safe and resilient future and further amplifying Africa's voice.*²²

About the Project



The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the SLOCAT Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport are engaged in a multi-year collaboration to provide data and analysis, capacity-building, and advocacy on transport and climate change to IsDB member countries. At the [2022 Middle East and North Africa Climate Week](#), SLOCAT and IsDB delivered a think tank session which discussed how social and economic recovery and resilience can be accelerated through increased investment in public, shared and active transport. The outcomes of the session have informed this issue brief, which illustrates impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on mobility in IsDB sub-regions and the role of sustainable transport towards a green, equitable and resilient recovery.

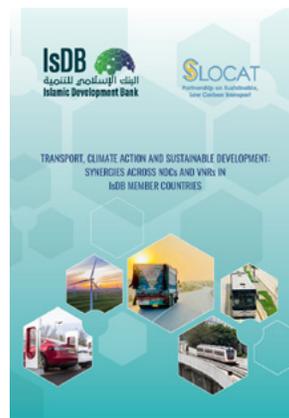
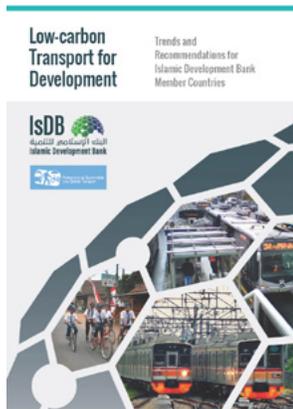


Additional IsDB-SLOCAT knowledge products

Low-Carbon Transport for Development: Trends and Recommendations

Transport, Climate Action and Sustainable Development: Synergies across NDCs and VNRS

Good Practices on Transport for Climate Action and Sustainable Development



www.slocat.net/isdb-slocat-sustainable-transport

Endnotes

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