

African airline passenger traffic surges 84.5% in October

The International Air Transport Association (Iata) has announced that the recovery in air travel continued in October. "Traditionally, by October we are into the slower autumn travel season in the Northern Hemisphere, so it is highly reassuring to see demand and forward bookings continuing to be so strong. It bodes well for the coming winter season and the ongoing recovery," says Willie Walsh, Iata's director general.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Total traffic in October 2022 (measured in revenue passenger kilometres or RPKs) rose by 44.6% compared to October 2021. Globally, traffic is now at 74.2% of October 2019 levels. Domestic traffic for October 2022 slipped 0.8% compared to the year-ago period as stringent Covid-related travel restrictions in China dampened global figures, while total October 2022 domestic traffic was at 77.9% of the October 2019 level. Domestic forward bookings remain at around 70% of pre-pandemic levels.

International traffic climbed by 102.4% versus October 2021. October 2022 international RPKs reached 72.1% of October 2019 levels with all markets recording strong growth, led by Asia-Pacific. Forward bookings for international travel increased to around 75% of pre-pandemic levels, following the re-openings announced by multiple Asian economies.

International passenger markets

Asia-Pacific airlines had a 440.4% rise in October traffic compared to October 2021, easily the strongest year-over-year rate among the regions, but off a very low 2021 base. Capacity rose 165.6% and the load factor climbed 39.5 percentage points to 77.7%.

European carriers' October traffic climbed 60.8% versus October 2021. Capacity increased by 34.7%, and the load factor rose 13.8 percentage points to 84.8%, the second highest among the regions.

Middle Eastern airlines saw a 114.7% traffic rise in October compared to October 2021. Capacity increased 55.7% versus the year-ago period, and the load factor climbed 21.8 percentage points to 79.5%.

North American carriers reported a 106.8% traffic rise in October versus the 2021 period. Capacity increased by 54.1%, and the load factor climbed 21.4 percentage points to 83.8%.

Latin American airlines posted an 85.3% traffic rise compared to the same month in 2021. October capacity climbed 66.6% and the load factor increased 8.7 percentage points to 86.0%, the highest among the regions.

African airlines' traffic rose 84.5% in October versus a year ago. October 2022 capacity was up 46.9% and load factor climbed 14.5 percentage points to 71.3%, the lowest among regions.

Domestic passenger markets

Australia almost tripled its October domestic traffic from last year (+292.9%); traffic now stands at 15.8% below pre-pandemic levels.

China's domestic RPKs fell 58.7% in October and are now 69.4% below October 2019 levels.

"People are enjoying the freedom to travel, and businesses recognize the importance of air transport to their success. A recent survey of European business leaders doing business across borders showed that 84% could not imagine doing so without access to air transport networks and 89% believed being close to an airport with global connections gave them a competitive advantage.

"Governments need to pay attention to the message that air travel is fundamental to how we live and work. That reality should drive policies to enable aviation to operate as efficiently as possible while supporting the industry's 2050 Net Zero emission goals with meaningful incentives to encourage the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuels," says Walsh.

[October's passenger market analysis.](#)

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