

# Air travel growth continues in February

Despite uncertain economic signals, demand for air travel continues to be strong globally in February, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. "The industry is now just about 15% below 2019 levels of demand, and that gap is narrowing each month," says Willie Walsh, the International Air Transport Association's (Iata) director general.



Source: ty\_yang via [Pixabay](#)

Total traffic in February 2023 (measured in revenue passenger kilometres or RPKs) rose 55.5% compared to February 2022. Globally, traffic is now at 84.9% of February 2019 levels. Domestic traffic for February rose 25.2% compared to the year-ago period. Total February 2023 domestic traffic was 97.2% of the February 2019 level.

International traffic climbed 89.7% versus February 2022, with all markets recording strong growth, led again by carriers in the Asia-Pacific region. International RPKs reached 77.5% of February 2019 levels.

## Air passenger market in detail – February 2023

	World share <sup>1</sup>	RPK	February 2023 (% year-on-year)		
			ASK	PLF (%-pt) <sup>2</sup>	PLF (level) <sup>3</sup>
<b>TOTAL MARKET</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>55.5%</b>	<b>35.7%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>77.8%</b>
Africa	2.1%	87.9%	62.3%	10.3%	75.6%
AsiaPacific	22.1%	105.4%	61.2%	17.1%	79.2%
Europe	30.7%	44.1%	27.9%	8.5%	75.2%
Latin America	6.4%	23.7%	21.1%	1.7%	81.1%
Middle East	9.8%	70.6%	37.6%	15.4%	79.8%
North America	28.9%	25.1%	19.0%	3.8%	77.1%

<sup>1</sup>% of industry RPKs in 2022

<sup>2</sup>Year-on-year change in load factor

<sup>3</sup>Load factor level

## International passenger markets

Asia-Pacific airlines had a 378.7% increase in February 2023 traffic compared to February 2022, maintaining the very positive momentum of the past few months since the lifting of travel restrictions in the region. Capacity rose 176.4% and the load factor increased 34.9 percentage points to 82.5%, the second highest among the regions.

European carriers posted a 47.9% traffic rise versus February 2022. Capacity climbed 29.7%, and load factor rose 9.1 percentage points to 73.7%, which was the lowest among the regions.

Middle Eastern airlines saw a 75.0% traffic increase compared to February a year ago. Capacity climbed 40.5% and load factor pushed up 15.8 percentage points to 80.0%.

North American carriers' traffic climbed 67.4% in February 2023 versus 2022. Capacity increased by 39.5%, and the load factor rose 12.8 percentage points to 76.6%.

Latin American airlines had a 44.1% traffic increase compared to the same month in 2022. February capacity climbed 34.0%, and the load factor rose 5.8 percentage points to 82.7%, the highest among the regions.

African airlines' traffic rose 90.7% in February 2023 versus a year ago. February capacity was up 61.7%, and the load factor climbed 11.4 percentage points to 75.0%.

## Domestic passenger markets

### Air passenger market in detail – February 2023

	World share <sup>1</sup>	February 2023 (% year-on-year)			
		RPK	ASK	PLF (%-pt) <sup>2</sup>	PLF (level) <sup>3</sup>
<b>Domestic</b>	<b>42.1%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>77.9%</b>
Dom Australia	1.0%	73.0%	38.9%	15.1%	76.7%
Domestic Brazil	1.5%	7.3%	8.3%	-0.8%	78.9%
Dom China P.R.	6.4%	38.3%	22.0%	8.9%	75.9%
Domestic India	2.0%	43.9%	50.4%	-3.7%	81.6%
Domestic Japan	1.2%	161.4%	33.8%	36.8%	75.5%
Domestic US	19.3%	10.6%	10.7%	0.0%	76.9%

<sup>1</sup>% of industry RPKs in 2022

<sup>2</sup>Year-on-year change in load factor

<sup>3</sup>Load factor level

Japan's domestic traffic surged 161.4% in February compared to a year ago and now stands at 89.9% of pre-pandemic levels.

US airlines' domestic demand rose 10.6% in February and was 0.7% ahead of February 2019 levels.

### Air passenger market overview – February 2023

	<b>World share <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>February 2023 (% ch vs the same month in 2019)</b>			
		RPK	ASK	PLF (%-pt) <sup>2</sup>	PLF (level) <sup>3</sup>
<b>TOTAL MARKET</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-15.1%</b>	<b>-12.0%</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>	<b>77.8%</b>
International	57.9%	-22.5%	-20.6%	-1.9%	77.7%
Domestic	42.1%	-2.8%	3.1%	-4.7%	77.9%

<sup>1</sup>% of industry RPKs in 2022      <sup>2</sup>Change in load factor      <sup>3</sup>Load factor level

"People are flying in ever greater numbers. We expect many travellers to take to the skies in many parts of the world. They should do so with confidence that airlines have been rebuilding resiliency that suffered owing to the pandemic. Other participants in the air travel value chain, including airports, air navigation service providers, and airport security staff, need to have the same commitment to ensuring our customers can enjoy smooth holiday travel," says Walsh.

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