

IATA: air travel increases by 67 percent in January



Capacity, measured in available seat kilometers (ASKs), increased by 35 percent year-over-year

The [International Air Transport Association](#) (IATA) announced that the recovery in air travel demand is continuing in 2023, based on January traffic results.

Total traffic in January 2023 (measured in revenue passenger kilometers or RPKs) rose 67 percent compared to January 2022. Globally, traffic is now at 84.2 percent of January 2019 levels.

In a March 8 press release, Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General said, "Air travel demand is off to a very healthy start in 2023. The rapid removal of COVID-19 restrictions for Chinese domestic and international travel bodes well for the continued strong industry recovery from the pandemic throughout the year. And, importantly, we have not seen the many economic and geopolitical uncertainties of the day dampening demand for travel."

Domestic traffic for January 2023 rose 32.7 percent compared to the year-ago period, helped by the lifting of the zero-COVID policy in China. Total January 2023 domestic traffic was at 97.4 percent of the January 2019 level.

International traffic climbed 104 percent versus January 2022 with all markets recording strong growth, led by carriers in the Asia-Pacific region. International RPKs reached 77 percent of January 2019 levels.

Asia-Pacific airlines posted a 376.3 percent increase in January traffic compared to January 2022, by far the strongest year-over-year rate among the regions, but off of a very low base when much of the region was still closed to travel. European carriers saw a 60.6 percent traffic rise versus January 2022. Middle Eastern airlines' January traffic rose 97.7 percent compared to January a year ago.

North American carriers reported an 82.4 percent traffic increase in January versus the 2022 period. Latin American airlines had a 46.8 percent traffic increase compared to the same month in 2022. African airlines' traffic rose 124.8 percent in January 2023 versus a year ago.

"With strong travel demand continuing through the traditionally slower winter season in the Northern Hemisphere, the stage is set for an even busier spring and summer. At a time when many are just beginning to enjoy their newly restored travel freedoms, it is especially disappointing to see the [Dutch government making plans to limit their movements](#) by unilaterally and unjustly reducing operations at Schiphol Airport," said Walsh.