



GLOBAL AVIATION MONITOR January 2026

Statistical Report of Global, European and German Air Transport



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The DLR Global Aviation Monitor

The Global Aviation Monitor is a statistical report series from the DLR Institute of Air Transport of the German Aerospace Center, which serves as a supplement to various statistics, such as those from the Federal Statistical Office or the German Airports Association (ADV).

It provides monthly reports on the supply of flights in Germany, Europe, and worldwide. The development of flights over the last fifteen months is presented in the form of a time series. Additionally, there is a monthly ranking of the largest airports and airlines in Germany, Europe, and worldwide, which are compared to the values of the previous year. The data is released during each month and represents the planned data for the current month.

This report fills a gap that is of interest to both airports and airlines in assessing their position on a global scale. It is of interest to policy-makers, administrators, industry stakeholders, and tourism offices to gauge the performance of their region. In the event of significant changes, it is worthwhile to examine closely what has caused them. Due to its monthly updates, the report can serve as a leading indicator for trends and developments.

The Institute of Air Transport provides further advanced forecasting capabilities. Combining established statistical techniques with innovative modelling approaches and a broad dataset, it delivers short-, medium-, and long-term forecasts on passenger and cargo traffic, airport capacity, fleet development, and route networks. These insights support strategic decision-making for stakeholders across the sector, reinforcing the institute's role in shaping future air transport planning at regional and global levels.



The report is being developed at the Air Transport Development department of the DLR Institute of Air Transport.

Global air traffic and emissions are projected to rise in the coming decades, driving the need for sustainable technological advancements. The department researches forecasting methods to anticipate demand and supply across different regions and aircraft types. These forecasts support strategic planning for infrastructure, connectivity, and environmental measures. By combining ecological, economic, and social factors, the department assesses new technologies and develops scenarios and roadmaps to guide the aviation sector towards climate-compatible growth.



Number of Monthly Departures in January 2026

Ranking by Airports Globally, for Europe & Germany

Global airport departures: limited growth

At only 18 of the world's 25 largest airports did departures increase in January 2026 compared with the previous year. The four largest airports are in North America, with Chicago leading worldwide at around 31,400 departures and rising traffic. European airports Istanbul and London Heathrow ranked 8th and 13th, while Asian airports held positions 5, 6, 7 and 9: Guangzhou, Shanghai Pudong, Tokyo Haneda and Delhi. Frankfurt ranked 35th globally. Chicago's strong growth is mainly driven by capacity increases at American Airlines and United Airlines.

This figure shows the twenty-five largest **airports worldwide**, measured in passenger flights.

Leading European hubs by passenger flights

The European airports with the highest number of passenger flights in January 2026 were Istanbul, London Heathrow, Amsterdam, Paris, Madrid and Frankfurt, each with more than 14,000 scheduled departures. Most of these airports showed an upward trend compared with the previous year.

This table shows the twenty-five largest **European airports**, measured in passenger flights.

Tab. 1: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in the world

Rank	Airport	01/2026	Growth rate
1	Chicago O'Hare International	31,365	8.4
2	Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Intl	30,870	1.3
3	Dallas/Fort Worth Intl	28,155	-3.0
4	Denver Intl	26,153	-1.0
5	Guangzhou	23,251	4.3
6	Shanghai Pudong International	21,773	-1.9
7	Tokyo Haneda	21,618	2.9
8	Istanbul	21,447	7.1
9	Delhi	20,885	5.6
10	Charlotte	20,345	-7.3
11	Los Angeles International	20,131	-2.4
12	Dubai	20,021	5.2
13	London Heathrow	19,436	-0.3
14	Beijing Capital	18,469	0.6
15	Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta	18,335	6.1
16	Phoenix Sky Harbor Intl	18,173	3.2
17	Shenzhen	17,963	0.1
18	Miami International	17,890	1.9
19	Kuala Lumpur International	17,853	5.3
20	Houston George Bush Intercontinental	17,461	1.1
21	Amsterdam	16,960	-3.5
22	Seoul Incheon International	16,958	2.4
23	New York J F Kennedy International	16,888	0.9
24	Orlando International	16,800	4.1
25	Paris Charles de Gaulle	16,666	2.5

Source: DLR

Tab. 2: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in Europe

Rank	Airport	01/2026	Growth rate
1	Istanbul	21,447	7.1
2	London Heathrow	19,436	-0.3
3	Amsterdam	16,960	-3.5
4	Paris Charles de Gaulle	16,666	2.5
5	Madrid Barajas	15,932	1.8
6	Frankfurt	14,705	3.1
7	Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen	11,918	11.0
8	Rome Fiumicino	11,484	-1.2
9	Barcelona	11,449	-0.6
10	Munich	10,389	-2.1
11	Zurich	8,842	2.4
12	Copenhagen	8,830	14.3
13	Dublin	8,811	14.1
14	Moscow Sheremetyevo International	8,565	-1.6
15	Lisbon	8,332	1.4
16	Athens Intl Eleftherios Venizelos	8,117	7.9
17	Paris Orly	7,993	13.4
18	London Gatwick	7,599	-5.4
19	Vienna	7,543	-3.5
20	Oslo	7,187	0.2
21	Warsaw	6,985	7.3
22	Milan Malpensa	6,710	6.1
23	Stockholm Arlanda	6,490	8.7
24	Manchester International	6,457	3.8
25	Helsinki	6,028	1.3

Source: DLR

Number of Monthly Departures in January 2026

Tab. 3: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in Germany

Rank	Airport	01/2026	Growth rate
1	Frankfurt	14,705	3.1
2	Munich	10,389	-2.1
3	Berlin	5,679	-4.7
4	Dusseldorf	4,571	2.1
5	Hamburg	3,596	-3.2
6	Stuttgart	2,170	-0.2
7	Cologne/Bonn	1,736	-5.2
8	Hanover	1,158	-1.9
9	Nuremberg	978	-6.9
10	Memmingen	746	0.1
11	Dortmund	613	-13.5
12	Bremen	543	-15.6
13	Hahn	408	-8.1
14	Karlsruhe/Baden Baden	389	10.2
15	Weeze	376	21.7
16	Leipzig/Halle	300	-25.9
17	Dresden	231	-11.2
18	Munster	172	10.3
19	Friedrichshafen	82	310.0
20	Paderborn	50	-24.2
21	Saarbrücken	37	-14.0
22	Luebeck	36	3500.0
23	Augsburg	28	----
24	Hamburg Finkenwerder	26	----
25	Westerland	18	63.6

Source: DLR

Mixed performance at German airports

Frankfurt remained Germany's largest airport with around 14,700 departures. Apart from Frankfurt and Dusseldorf, all major German airports recorded negative growth. Airports focused on low-cost carriers, such as Karlsruhe and Weeze, showed particularly strong growth, with Ryanair increasing frequencies at Weeze, for example to Tenerife and Thessaloniki. Smaller airports such as Paderborn saw declining departures. New services include Wizz Air's route from Friedrichshafen to Belgrade, additional domestic flights from Friedrichshafen to Dusseldorf, Berlin and Hamburg operated by Avanti Air with FlexFlight, and new Ryanair routes from Luebeck, including London and Mallorca.

Here, the twenty-five largest **German airports** are listed, measured in passenger flights.

Tab. 4: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in the world

Rank	Airline	01/2026	Growth rate
1	American Airlines	183,258	2.7
2	Delta Air Lines	142,072	2.6
3	United Airlines	139,599	3.1
4	Southwest Airlines	106,135	-1.3
5	China Eastern Airlines	71,589	-8.4
6	China Southern Airlines	71,157	-1.0
7	Ryanair	71,033	2.9
8	IndiGo Air	69,133	-0.6
9	LATAM Airlines	52,968	6.6
10	Air China	52,877	0.9
11	Alaska Airlines	35,578	2.4
12	Turkish Airlines	35,442	9.1
13	All Nippon Airways	34,684	6.3
14	easyJet	32,652	4.8
15	Air Canada	31,418	1.0
16	Japan Airlines International	26,215	-1.8
17	AVIANCA	24,601	3.7
18	Lufthansa German Airlines	24,582	-8.6
19	JetBlue Airways Corporation	24,555	1.1
20	Azul	24,473	-12.4
21	British Airways	24,195	-1.1
22	Hainan Airlines	23,515	-4.3
23	Air France	23,076	2.9
24	Gol Transportes Aereos	23,066	13.0
25	Qantas Airways	22,701	5.1

Source: DLR

Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

Airline rankings by global departures

Several major airlines worldwide increased their scheduled passenger flights in January 2026. American Airlines led with around 183,300 departures, while Lufthansa ranked 18th with approximately 24,600 departures and a declining trend. Year-on-year comparisons should consider factors such as school and public holidays, which can significantly affect monthly flight volumes.

This figure shows the **world's** twenty-five **largest airlines**, measured in passenger flights.

Number of Monthly Departures in January 2026

Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

Ryanair dominates the European market

Ryanair offered the highest number of flights in Europe in January 2026, with almost 68,500 departures, representing growth of 2.5% compared with the previous year. This is roughly twice as many flights as easyJet, which ranked second with around 31,100 departures.

The twenty-five **airlines in Europe** with the most passenger flights from European airports are listed here.

Changes in airline capacity in Germany

Lufthansa operated the largest number of flights in Germany with around 15,100 departures in January, followed by Eurowings with nearly 4,300 departures and Ryanair with approximately 3,100 departures. The decline at Lufthansa can partly be explained by capacity shifts to its new subsidiary, Lufthansa City Airlines. While Lufthansa is significantly reducing its own flight programme, including domestic feeder routes such as Berlin–Frankfurt, flight offerings by subsidiaries or partner airlines such as City Airlines and Brussels Airlines are increasing notably. easyJet is increasing frequencies in Hamburg and Munich and introducing new services from Frankfurt. Condor is expanding its operations in Berlin and Frankfurt.

This table ranks the twenty-five **airlines** that offer the most passenger flights in **Germany**.

Tab. 5: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in Europe from European airports

Rank	Airline	01/2026	Growth rate
1	Ryanair	68,477	2.5
2	easyJet	31,134	4.2
3	Turkish Airlines	28,871	7.7
4	Lufthansa German Airlines	22,280	-10.2
5	British Airways	20,927	-1.7
6	Air France	19,606	2.8
7	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	19,174	25.8
8	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	18,125	-4.2
9	Pegasus Airlines	18,002	10.4
10	Iberia	16,878	-0.2
11	Aeroflot Russian Airlines	15,897	-2.8
12	Vueling Airlines	14,734	-0.9
13	Wizz Air	12,809	19.9
14	Wizz Air Malta	11,952	9.0
15	Ajet	11,510	9.8
16	Wideroe's Flyveselskap	9,700	-3.2
17	Finnair	9,393	0.7
18	Swiss	8,903	-8.8
19	ITA Airways	8,740	-12.5
20	LOT - Polish Airlines	8,346	5.0
21	TAP Air Portugal	8,242	0.7
22	Aegean Airlines	7,623	9.2
23	Aer Lingus	7,341	3.2
24	Binter Canarias	7,215	12.8
25	Eurowings	7,196	-2.1

Source: DLR

Tab. 6: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in Germany from German airports

Rank	Airline	01/2026	Growth rate
1	Lufthansa German Airlines	15,146	-8.7
2	Eurowings	4,294	-2.7
3	Ryanair	3,080	-7.8
4	Condor Flugdienst	1,870	63.2
5	Air Dolomiti	1,693	1.0
6	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	1,204	-12.4
7	easyJet	1,067	21.1
8	Turkish Airlines	1,051	6.5
9	Lufthansa City Airlines	1,026	53.8
10	Pegasus Airlines	991	9.7
11	Austrian Airlines AG	968	-12.1
12	British Airways	944	-13.2
13	Wizz Air	925	24.2
14	SunExpress	868	-8.5
15	Air France	853	-2.1
16	Wizz Air Malta	759	4.8
17	Swiss	746	-8.8
18	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	697	50.5
19	Eurowings Discover	678	10.6
20	TUIfly	500	-1.8
21	Brussels Airlines	425	43.6
22	Iberia	421	0.7
23	United Airlines	415	11.0
24	LOT - Polish Airlines	401	-6.3
25	Aegean Airlines	389	-0.8

Source: DLR

Air Transport Development in January 2026

Development and Changes Globally and for Germany

Global and German Air Traffic Trends in January 2026

The following diagrams show the development of global and German flight capacity over the last fifteen months, both worldwide and in the individual region.

Fig. 1-2: Global passenger flight trends

In January 2026, the number of scheduled passenger flights worldwide increased by around 1.2% compared with the previous year, reaching a total of 3.1 million departures. The regions with the highest volumes are Asia, North America and Europe. Growth rates vary significantly by region, with the Middle East recording an increase of approximately 8.3%.

Fig. 3-4: Decline in German passenger traffic

In Germany, around 49,000 scheduled departures in passenger air traffic were expected in January 2026. This corresponds to a decline of 0.9% compared with the previous year. While flight offerings to the Middle East were expanding in January, capacity to Europe and South America was declining. Approximately 41,200 flights were scheduled to European destinations.

Fig. 1: Development of the global air transport supply

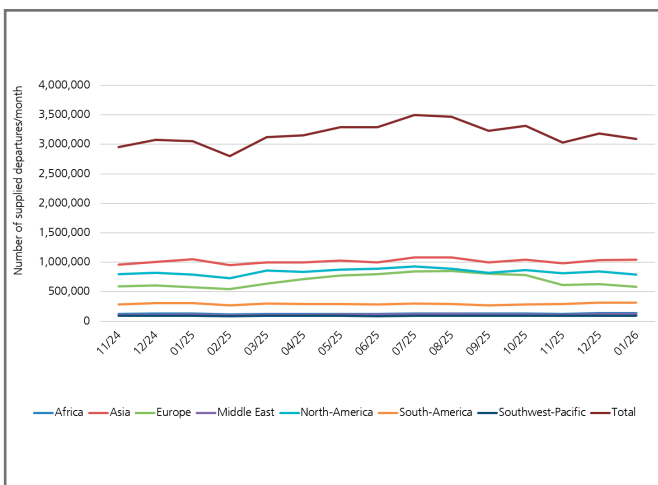


Fig. 2: Changes in the global air transport supply

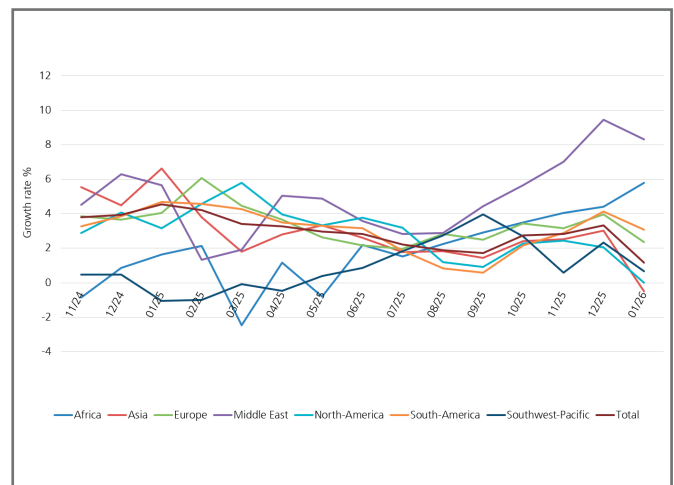


Fig. 3: Development of the German air transport supply

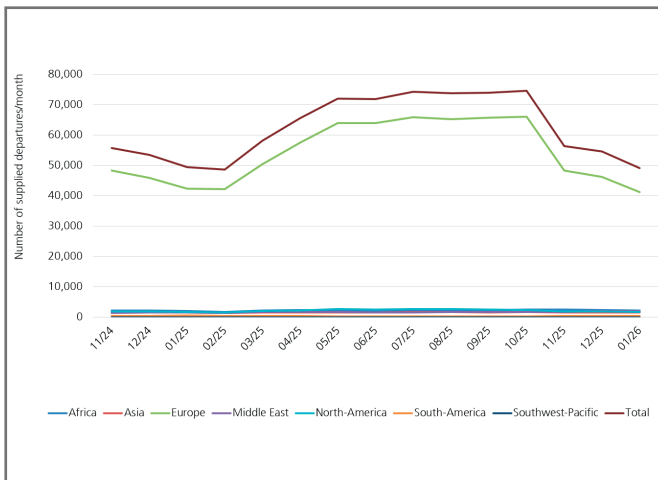
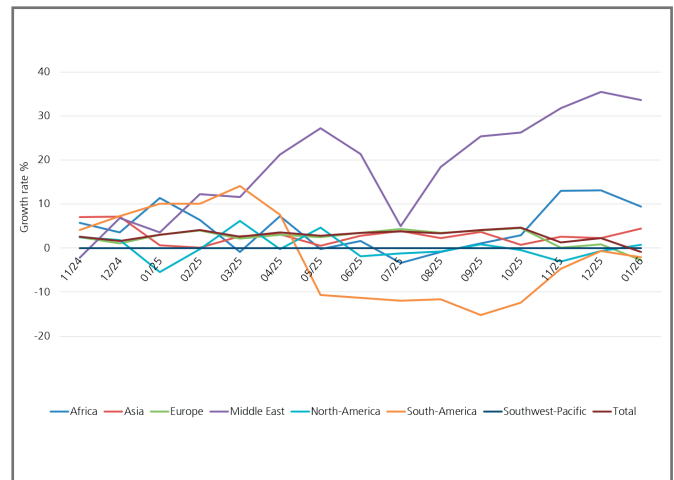


Fig. 4: Changes in the German air transport supply



Source: OAG 2024-2025, DLR 2024-2026

DLR Overview

The DLR is the research center of the Federal Republic of Germany for aerospace. We conduct research and development in aviation, space, energy, transportation, security, and digitalisation. The German Space Agency at DLR is responsible, on behalf of the Federal Government, for planning and implementing German space activities. Two DLR project agencies manage funding programmes and support knowledge transfer.

Climate, mobility, and technology are changing globally. The DLR utilises the expertise of its 54 institutes and facilities to develop solutions for these challenges. Our more than 11,000 employees have a common mission: we explore Earth and space and develop technologies for a sustainable future. In doing so, we contribute to strengthening Germany's knowledge and economic base.

DLR Institute of Air Transport

The DLR Institute of Air Transport researches the complex interactions within the air transport system. We develop future scenarios, conduct economic and business analyses, and model and simulate flight and fleet operations.

We forecast, shape, and evaluate air transport as part of the overall transport system to enhance climate compatibility and performance. To achieve this, we integrate ecological, economic, technological, and social aspects of air transport.

Within DLR, we consolidate expertise in analysing air transport markets and assessing the entire value chain. This positions us as a competent partner for industry, society, and policy makers.

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