

AIRLINE INDUSTRY CONTINUED TO RECOVER IN JULY



Commercial flights saw a strong increase at the beginning of the summer, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which estimates that global air traffic has returned to 74.6 percent of its pre-Covid crisis level. Domestic routes worldwide are doing particularly well.

As expected, the summer brought the airline industry back to life. The main airline association announced that **passenger transport in July returned to three-quarters of its level in the same month of 2019**, before the pandemic that ravaged the sector.

Global traffic, expressed in revenue passenger kilometers RPK, one of the industry's benchmarks, reached "74.6% of pre-crisis levels," the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said in a statement.

Domestic Flights as the Driving Force

This result, achieved in the midst of the crucial summer season, marks a marked acceleration from June when the sector recovered 70.8% of 2019 RPKs. IATA Director General Willie Walsh hailed the "strong" continuation of the recovery, noting that "some markets are approaching their pre-Covid levels."

Domestic routes are doing best, with 86.9% of 2019 RPKs in July compared to 81.4% in June, thanks to an upturn in traffic in China after a spring marked by travel restrictions.

While international connections remain behind, at 67.9% of the July 2019 level, they also show an increase compared to June (65%). their rate is mainly weighed down by the situation in Asia, where some countries have not yet fully reopened their borders.

Restless Summer

Confirmation of a general recovery of the airline industry is a "great signal as we enter the traditionally quieter fall and winter seasons in the Northern Hemisphere," added Willie Walsh.

The beginning of the summer was marked in Europe and the United States by multiple delays, bottlenecks and cancellations of flights due to staff shortages, whether baggage handlers, security guards or flight attendants. **The sector has also seen industrial action to increase wages and improve working conditions.**

However, IATA remains concerned about the high price of jet fuel, "a challenge for airlines", according to Willie Walsh. For its part, the air cargo sector was evolving in July at 3.5% below the 2019 level against a drop in orders, according to the associations. This part of air transport has flourished during the health crisis thanks to the reduction in capacity and the explosion in demand, which have pushed up prices.

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