

PASSENGER TRAFFIC AT EUROPEAN AIRPORTS GREW BY 12.1% IN THE THIRD QUARTER



Passenger traffic at European airports increased by 12.1% during the third quarter, compared to last year's period, as per the Airports Council International in Europe (ACI Europe) data. Despite rising airfares and inflationary pressures, the summer months showed a solid performance. Traffic saw a decline of only 3.1% compared to the pre-pandemic period, representing a significant improvement compared to the first half of the year (-7.7%). Moreover, some airports have achieved remarkable milestones. London Heathrow, Europe's busiest airport by passenger volume, has surpassed 2019 passenger numbers for the first time since the pandemic, and almost half (48%) of all European airports have already exceeded their 2019 volumes.

The Director General of ACI Europe, Olivier Jankovic, emphasized that the summer season has brought airports closer to full traffic recovery. Despite inflationary pressures and the effects of the war in Ukraine, demand has been high. Jankovic also noted that this situation puts more significant competitive pressure on airports. Unlike airlines, airports still need to adjust their rates to inflation, which affects their profitability.

Airports in the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EE), Switzerland, and the United Kingdom experienced a 4.2% decline in traffic compared to 2019. However, the rest of Europe saw a 2.9% increase in traffic during the same period. In terms of year-on-year growth, EU+ airports recorded a similar increase of 11.9% compared to Europe's overall growth of 13.1%.

Among EU+ airports, Luxembourg (+13.3%), Greece (+12.9%), Portugal (+11%), Malta (+6.5%), and Croatia (+6.4%) experienced the highest growth compared to 2019. On the other hand, due to the war in Ukraine and the closure of Russian airspace to EU airlines, Finland's airports (-32.8%) remained significantly below their 2019 levels.

Several EU+ countries remain behind their third-quarter 2019 levels. These include Slovenia (-26.1%), Sweden (-21.1%), Bulgaria (-19.6%), Germany (-18.3%), Latvia (-16.8%), and the Czech Republic (-15.6%). The report also included Israel's airports, where the recent conflict further reduced traffic by 0.1% from that of 2019.

Among the main European airports, London Heathrow saw a 22.9% increase compared to the previous year and exceeded 2019 levels by 4.4%. Istanbul's traffic grew 10.8% year-on-year and 14.1% above pre-pandemic traffic. Paris-Charles de Gaulle saw a growth of 9.5% year-on-year and a decrease of 12.2% compared to 2019, while Amsterdam-Schiphol saw a 13.6% increase year-on-year and a 10.9% decrease compared to the third quarter of 2019.

The airports in Valencia (+20.6%) and Málaga-Costa del Sol (+10.2%), located in Spain, saw the highest increase compared to the third quarter of 2019.

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