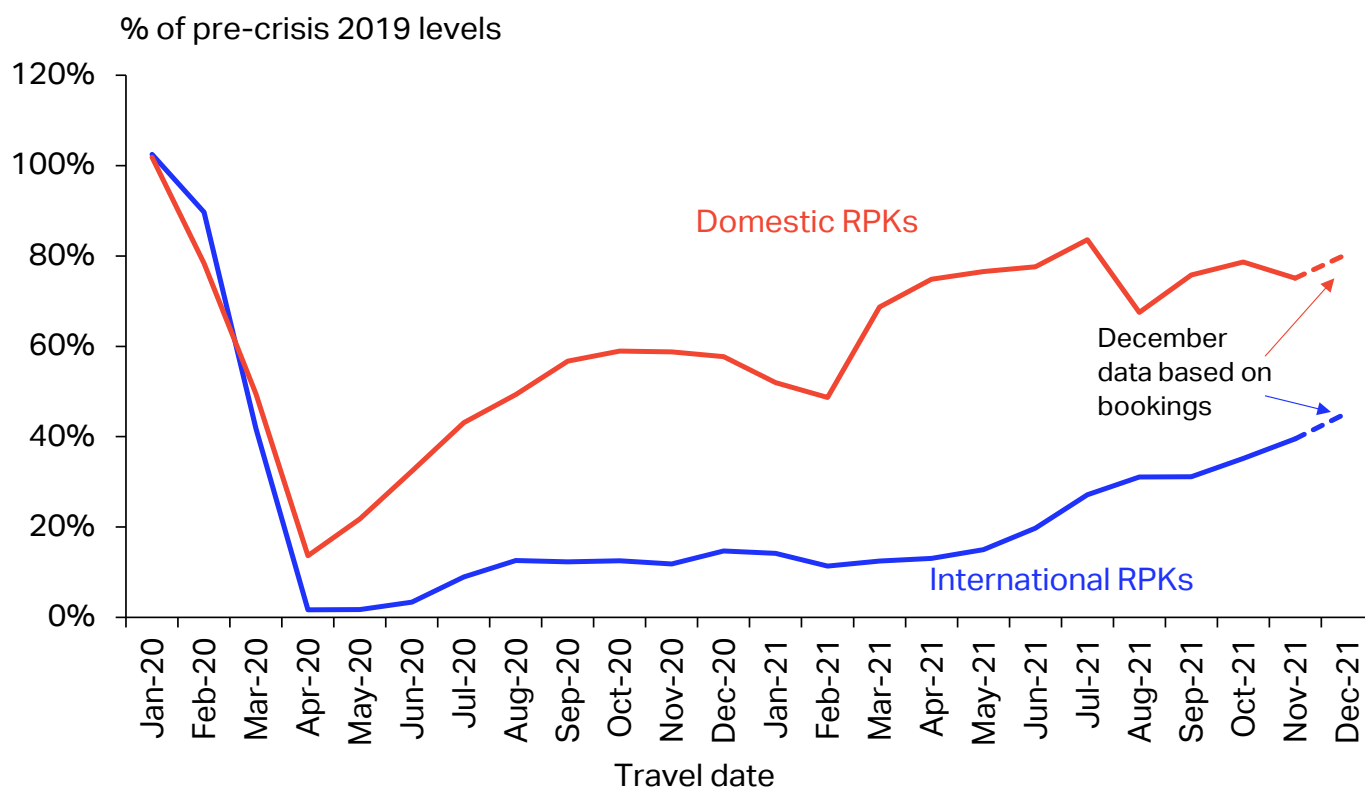




# IATA Economics' Chart of the Week

14 January 2022

## December passenger traffic likely to be resilient despite Omicron



Source: IATA Monthly Statistics and DDS ticketing data as of 4 Jan

- Actual air passenger traffic [numbers for November](#) show ongoing progress in the recovery. Awaiting the actual data for December, ticket sales already offer some interesting hints.
- Bookings made for travel during the month of December performed better than those for travel in November, at 51% and 46% of 2019 levels respectively. As the performance of bookings by travel month have been strongly correlated with that of actual RPKs since the start of the pandemic, it can be used to provide an estimate for actual RPKs in December. On that basis, it is likely that both international and domestic air travel continued to improve in December. This is despite the spread of the Omicron variant and the numerous cancellations it caused. Part of this disruption is accounted for in the chart, as bookings data used are net of refunds.
- This contrasts somewhat with the fall in new bookings announced by several carriers in recent weeks. In fact, IATA data for new bookings made for future travel indeed show a deterioration in late November, in particular for international travel. The discrepancy between both types of bookings means that people continued to travel in December – notably to visit friends and relatives – while cutting down on future air travel. As such, actual RPKs are likely to deteriorate in the near term, in particular in January.
- Looking further ahead, many airlines have reported strong demand for the Northern Hemisphere summer travel season, which is coherent with the numerous examples of resilient willingness to travel by air observed during the crisis. Furthermore, the [example of South Africa](#) points to demand for air travel picking up relatively fast once new infections recede.

Terms and Conditions for the use of this IATA Economics Report and its contents can be found here: [www.iata.org/economics-terms](http://www.iata.org/economics-terms)  
By using this IATA Economics Report and its contents in any manner, you agree that the IATA Economics Report Terms and Conditions apply to you and agree to abide by them. If you do not accept these Terms and Conditions, do not use this report.

IATA Economics  
[economics@iata.org](mailto:economics@iata.org)