

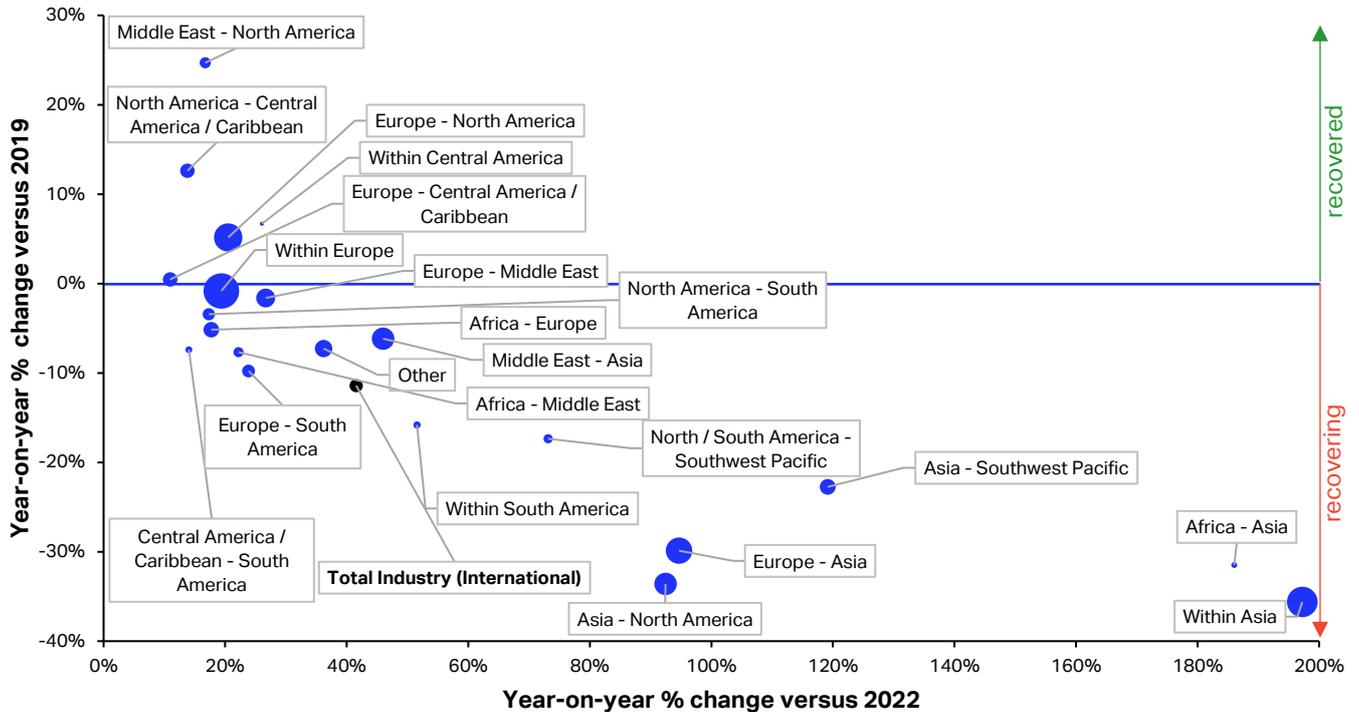


Chart of the Week

9 February 2024

International traffic grew in all major route areas in 2023

2023 International Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPKs) per route area



Note: The bubble size represents each route area's share of the global international air passenger traffic in 2019.
 Source: IATA Sustainability and Economics, IATA Monthly Statistics

- All major international route areas expanded in 2023 on year-on-year basis. International passenger traffic saw a significant resurgence, with global Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPKs) soaring by 42% over the previous year. This marked tremendous progress toward full recovery, reaching 89% of pre-pandemic levels despite the numerous challenges faced by airlines, such as labor shortages, supply chain constraints, high inflation, and geopolitical tensions. These positive aggregate developments nevertheless mask varied outcomes across different markets.
- The route areas below the horizontal blue line in the chart above fell short of the 2019 level in 2023. This includes international flows from and to Asia which nevertheless experienced the highest annual growth compared to 2022, showcasing the great momentum in the region since the reopening of key borders. Traffic within Asia surged by a stunning 197% in 2023, from 2022 while continuing to lag other major route areas in terms of post-pandemic recovery. Other traffic flows involving the Asia Pacific region saw similar developments because of the delayed lifting of travel restrictions.
- The route areas above the horizontal blue line have recovered to traffic levels exceeding those seen in 2019. Given the higher 2022 base for these areas, they recorded more modest growth rates in 2023, year-on-year. The route market between the Middle East and North America led the post-pandemic recovery, achieving 25% growth compared to 2019 levels, outperforming most international routes. Largely as a result of this stellar performance, the area posted one of the weakest growth rates from 2022, though this was still an impressive 16%. This general trend held true also for passenger traffic between Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East, all impacted by the higher base from 2022.

Terms and Conditions for the use of this IATA Economics Report and its contents can be found [here](#).
 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 Sustainability & Economics
economics@iata.org