

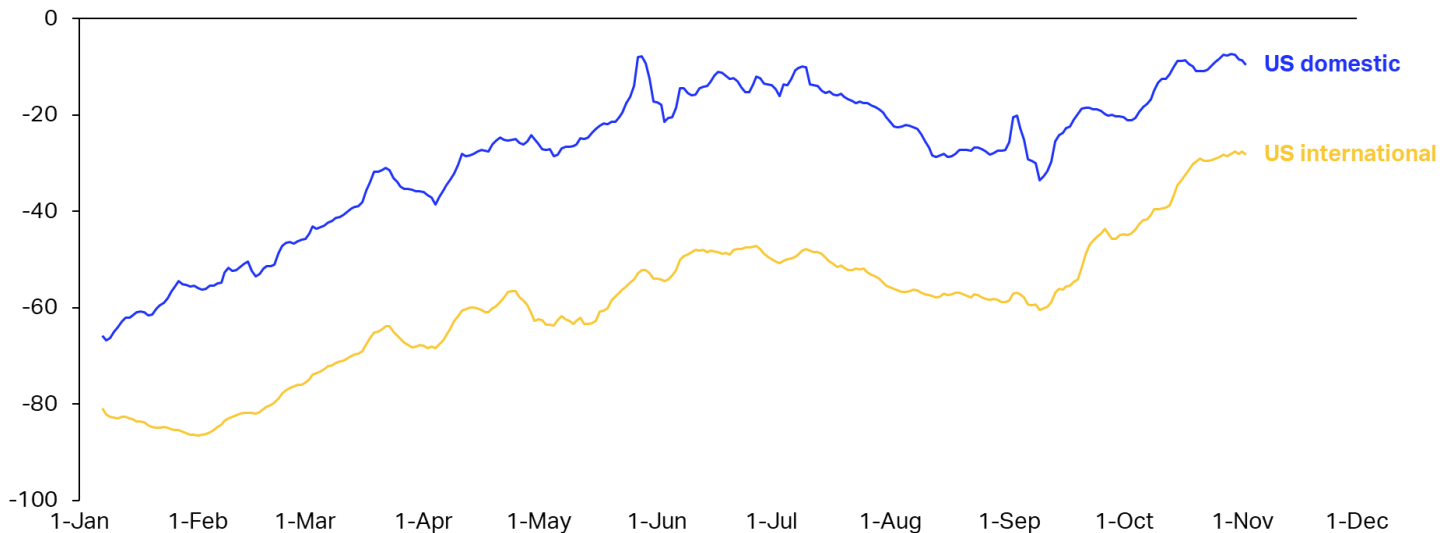


IATA Economics' Chart of the Week

12 November 2021

The surge in bookings as US borders reopen

% change in net ticket sales from the United States (7 days moving avg of bookings made in 2021 vs 2019)



Source: IATA Economics analysis based on data from DDS

- This week the US government lifted a travel ban that had been in place for nearly two years and reopened borders for vaccinated foreign travelers from 33 countries (accepting WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines). Passenger bookings data are now available showing the positive impact of this development.
- US international bookings have experienced a significant increase driven by the opening of borders, reaching 72% of the pre-crisis levels. This represents an increase of 16 percentage points over 6 weeks since the intention to ease restrictions was announced. The steep international recovery is associated mainly with bookings to Europe, the Americas (Canada and Mexico in particular) as well as certain parts of Asia highlighting once again strong pent-up demand for flying. Travellers from these regions accounted for roughly 71% of the total US traffic, and 75% of passenger revenues in 2019. This international reopening will help further boost the US market recovery which has already seen a strong domestic rebound with net ticket sales currently at 93% of 2019 levels for internal flights.
- For other regions, the impact of US border opening has so far had a less significant impact. The recovery in air travel is still influenced by factors such as the uneven vaccine distribution around the globe. For example, with only 10% of population in Africa being vaccinated, the region experienced almost no increase in ticket sales after the announcement. South America's ticket sales remain unchanged which can be attributed to relatively open border restrictions and high vaccination rates (it is worth noting that the majority of doses administered in South American countries are WHO approved vaccines).
- The opening of the US borders has acted as a catalyst for other countries to re-evaluate their policies and is expected to help support the direction of further easing of travel restrictions elsewhere.

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