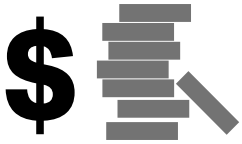
THE VALUE OF AVIATION BELGIUM

The economic impact of aviation in Belgium

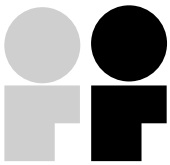
The aviation sector and its quantifiable economic effects made up 3.8% of Belgium's GDP and 3.8% of the country's employment in 2025. This covers the sector itself, its supply chain, employee spending, and international air transport-enabled tourism to Belgium.

GDP and employment created by aviation in Belgium in 2025



24
EUR billion

3.8%
of GDP



209.9
thousand jobs

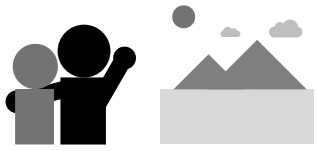
3.8%
of employment

Included economic impacts:
***Direct** – within aviation sector, **Indirect** – aviation supply chain,*
Induced** – employee spending, **International tourists arriving by air

Breakdown of GDP and employment created







Airlines	Airports, ANSPs, civil manufacturing	International tourists arriving by air
EUR 4.1 billion	EUR 14.6 billion	EUR 5.3 billion
36.4 thousand jobs	119 thousand jobs	54.5 thousand jobs

Source: Air Transport Action Group, 2026. Aviation Benefits Beyond Borders report based on data from Oxford Economics.
Note: Economic impacts are calculated using Oxford Economics' Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders methodology with inputs sourced from publicly available statistics and recognized industry datasets wherever possible, with modelling-based estimates applied where direct data are not available. Estimates do not include domestic tourism spending, nor the wider catalytic benefits of aviation on trade, investment, productivity gains, and enhanced connectivity, among others.
Note: Converted to local currency using average 2025 exchange rate: USD 1 = EUR 0.88

Air transport brings millions of people safely to global destinations

Around 16.5 million air passengers departed from Belgium in 2025, based on Origin-Destination(O-D) traffic, making Belgium the 42nd largest air passenger market globally.

Air travel from Belgium in 2025, Origin-Destination (O-D)

16.5
million
passenger departures

GROWTH

26.7%
10-year growth

7.2%
year-on-year growth

RANK

42nd
Global
No change since 2015

15th
in Europe
No change since 2015

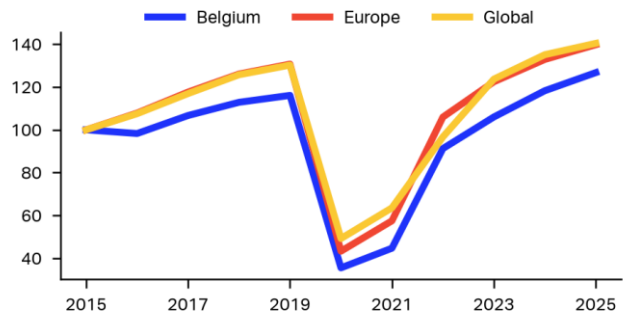
SHARE

0.4%
of global departures

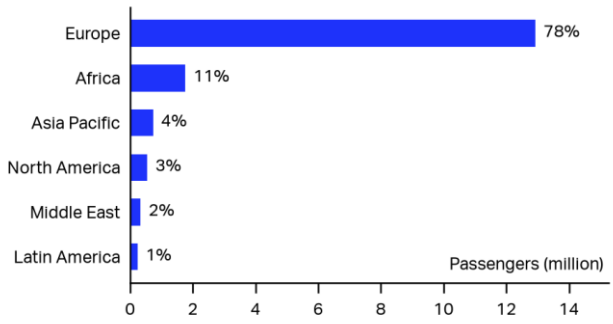
1.5%
of European departures

International: 16.5 million passenger departures, 26.9% 10Y growth, 7.2% YoY growth

Total passenger departures, O-D, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



International passenger departures by destination region, O-D, 2025



Top air travel markets
Inbound & outbound

1. Spain
2. Italy
3. Morocco
4. France
5. Portugal

Top origin cities
Inbound

1. Madrid
2. Milan
3. Manchester
4. Rome
5. Barcelona

Top destination cities
Outbound

1. Alicante
2. Malaga
3. Barcelona
4. Rome
5. Milan

Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using IATA DDS data.
Note: O-D (origin-destination) departures measures passengers beginning their journey in Belgium, to their final destination, excluding transfer and transit passengers.
Top air travel markets based on total O-D passenger traffic between Belgium and other markets in 2025. Top outbound and inbound cities are based on round-trip passenger journeys.
IATA DDS data are derived from ticketing and sales transactions using IATA methodologies and estimates; therefore, results may not exactly match officially reported traffic statistics.

Air transport directly connects Belgium to 78 different countries

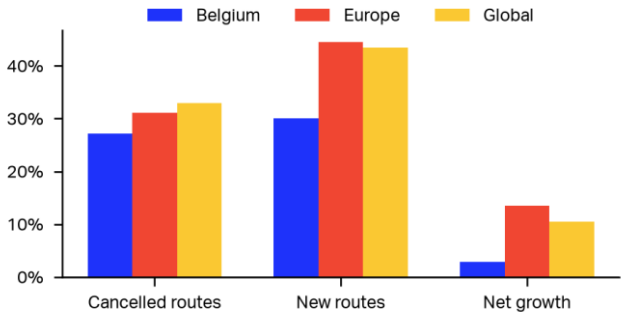
In 2025, there were 5 airports and 78 operating airlines in Belgium, providing a total of 359 regularly scheduled commercial passenger routes for Belgium, connecting to 78 countries with about 315 daily international departures.

Air Connectivity in Belgium

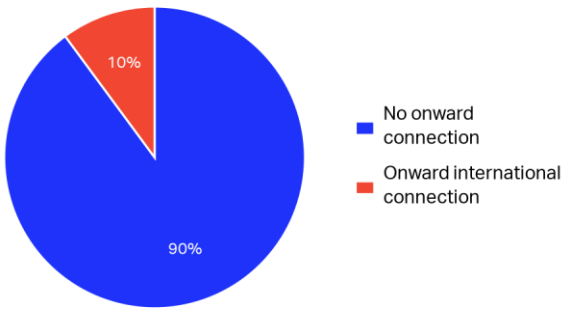


		Total		
		Available routes	Connected countries	Daily int. departures
2025	Total	359	78	315
	Global rank	33rd	14th	33rd
	Europe rank	16th	8th	16th
2015	Total	349	73	353
	Global rank	29th	11th	23rd
	Europe rank	15th	9th	10th

Route network change, 2015 to 2025, % of 2015



Onward connections of international arrivals, 2025

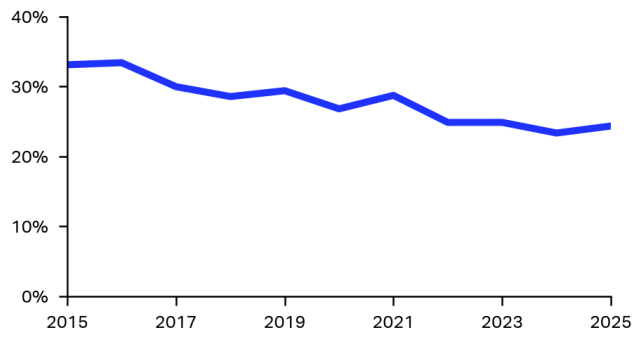


Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using OAG & IATA DDS data.
Note: Airport, airline, and route counts include only those with regularly scheduled passenger services from Belgium. Airports with fewer than 1,000 regularly scheduled seats in 2025 are excluded.

Air Cargo provides Belgium timely and safe access to global markets

Although air transport accounted for an estimated 1.1% of Belgium's traded goods by weight, it carried 24.4% of their total value.
Belgium's airports handled around 2 million tonnes of air cargo in 2025, ranking Belgium as the world's 15th largest air cargo handler market and the 5th largest in Europe.

Belgian air cargo, value, % of total, 2015-2025



Belgian air cargo, share of trade, 2025

1.1% of trade by weight

24.4% of trade by value

Air cargo handled in Belgium, 2025

2 million tonnes air cargo handled

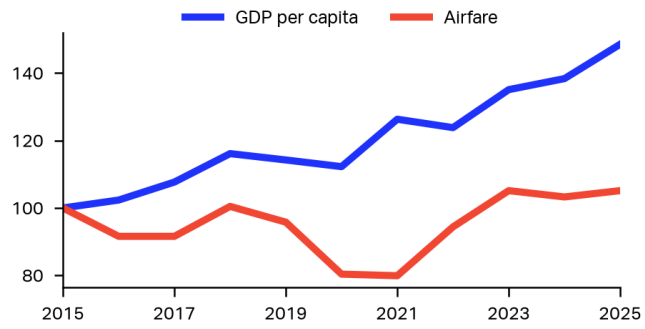
15th Globally 5th in Europe

Source: Airports Council International (ACI) for air cargo handled, Global Trade Tracker (GTT) for imports and exports by air.
Note: Belgium's trade by air includes imports and exportswith non-EU countries. It is based on the country's self reported customs data.

International air travel from Belgium has become more affordable over the past decade

Belgium's nominal GDP per capita increased by 48.6%, while the average nominal airfare for an international ticket from Belgium increased by 5.1%, over the past decade. Therefore, international air travel has become more affordable for local residents over this time period.

Nominal GDP per capita & average international fare, Belgium, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



Source: IATA DDS, World Bank. Nominal GDP per capita and fare developments measured in USD terms.