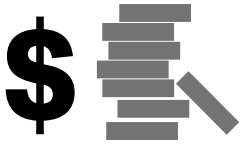
THE VALUE OF AVIATION
EL SALVADOR

The economic impact of aviation in El Salvador

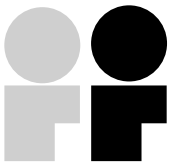
The aviation sector and its quantifiable economic effects made up 6.2% of El Salvador's GDP and 5.7% of the country's employment in 2025. This covers the sector itself, its supply chain, employee spending, and international air transport-enabled tourism to El Salvador.

GDP and employment created by aviation in El Salvador in 2025



2.3
USD billion

6.2%
of GDP



169.1
thousand jobs

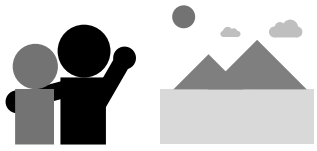
5.7%
of employment

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
USD 75.7 million	USD 215.7 million	USD 2 billion
6 thousand jobs	14.4 thousand jobs	148.6 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.

Air transport brings millions of people safely to global destinations

Around 2.1 million air passengers departed from El Salvador in 2025, based on Origin-Destination(O-D) traffic, making El Salvador the 102nd largest air passenger market globally.

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

2.1
million
passenger departures

GROWTH

118.0%
10-year growth

-6.1%
year-on-year growth

RANK

102nd
Global
▲ 1 since 2015

5th
in Central America
▲ 1 since 2015

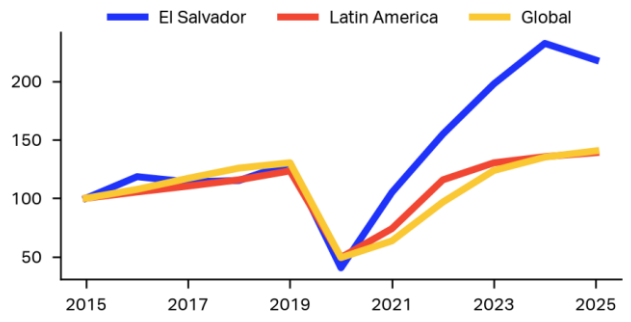
SHARE

0.05%
of global departures

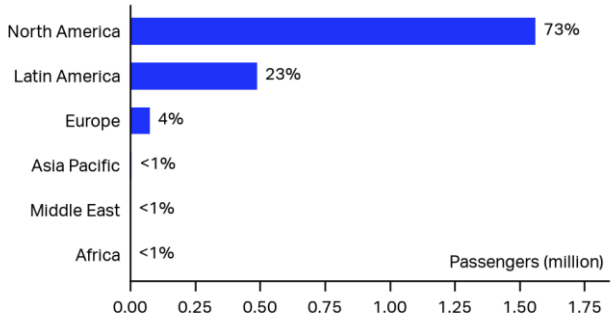
2.1%
of Central American departures

International: 2.1 million passenger departures, 118.0% 10Y growth, -6.1% 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. United States
2. Mexico
3. Colombia
4. Costa Rica
5. Panama

Top origin cities
Inbound

1. Washington
2. Los Angeles
3. New York
4. Houston
5. Fort Worth

Top destination cities
Outbound

1. Washington
2. Los Angeles
3. Panama City
4. Miami
5. Houston

Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using IATA DDS data.
Note: O-D (origin-destination) departures measures passengers beginning their journey in El Salvador, to their final destination, excluding transfer and transit passengers.
Top air travel markets based on total O-D passenger traffic between El Salvador 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 El Salvador to 13 different countries

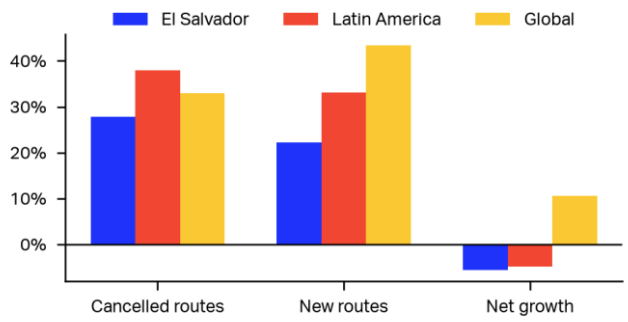
In 2025, there were 1 airports and 14 operating airlines in El Salvador, providing a total of 34 regularly scheduled commercial passenger routes for El Salvador, connecting to 13 countries with about 62 daily international departures.

Air Connectivity in El Salvador

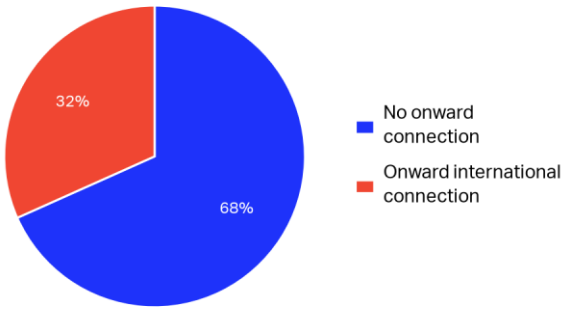


		Total		
		Available routes	Connected countries	Daily int. departures
2025	Total	34	13	62
	Global rank	141st	139th	87th
	C-America rank	7th	5th	4th
2015	Total	36	14	57
	Global rank	133rd	127th	80th
	C-America rank	6th	4th	4th

Route network change, 2015 to 2025, % of 2015



Onward connections of international arrivals, 2025

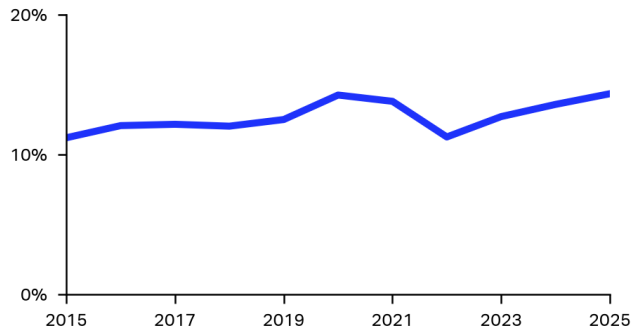


Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using OAG & IATA DDS data.
Note: Airport, airline, and route counts include only those with regularly scheduled passenger services from El Salvador. Airports with fewer than 1,000 regularly scheduled seats in 2025 are excluded.

Air Cargo provides El Salvador timely and safe access to global markets

Although air transport accounted for an estimated 0.2% of El Salvador's traded goods by weight, it carried 14.4% of their total value.
El Salvador's airports handled around 39.8 thousand tonnes of air cargo in 2025, ranking El Salvador as the world's 85th largest air cargo handler market and the 6th largest in Central America.

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



Salvadoran air cargo, share of trade, 2025

0.2% of trade by weight

14.4% of trade by value

Air cargo handled in El Salvador, 2025

39.8 thousand tonnes air cargo handled

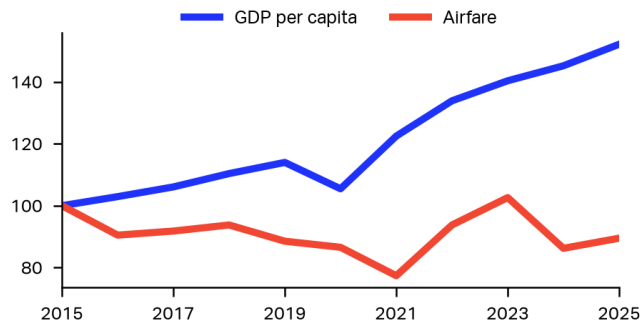
85th Globally 6th in C-America

Source: Airports Council International (ACI) for air cargo handled, Global Trade Tracker (GTT) for imports and exports by air.
Note: El Salvador's trade by air includes imports and exports. It is based on a sample of 50 countries that report their trade by means of transport in 2025, which represents around 40% of the total global goods trade.

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

El Salvador's nominal GDP per capita increased by 52.1%, while the average nominal airfare for an international ticket from El Salvador decreased by 10.5%, 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, El Salvador, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



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