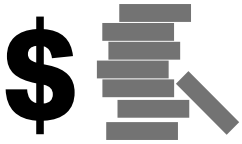
THE VALUE OF AVIATION KUWAIT

The economic impact of aviation in Kuwait

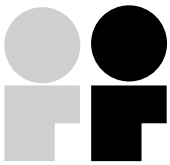
The aviation sector and its quantifiable economic effects made up 4.8% of Kuwait's GDP and 2.5% of the country's employment in 2025. This covers the sector itself, its supply chain, employee spending, and international air transport-enabled tourism to Kuwait.

GDP and employment created by aviation in Kuwait in 2025



7.5
USD billion

4.8%
of GDP



73
thousand jobs

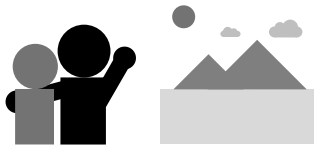
2.5%
of employment

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 3.1 billion	USD 3 billion	USD 1.5 billion
22.7 thousand jobs	27.2 thousand jobs	23.1 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: Average 2025 exchange rate: USD 1 = KWD 0.31

Air transport brings millions of people safely to global destinations

Around 6.8 million air passengers departed from Kuwait in 2025, based on Origin-Destination(O-D) traffic, making Kuwait the 63rd largest air passenger market globally.

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

6.8
million
passenger departures

GROWTH

40.4%
10-year growth

5.3%
year-on-year growth

RANK

63rd
Global
No change since 2015

6th
in Middle East
No change since 2015

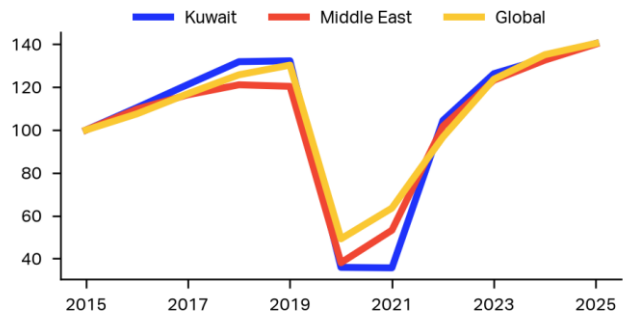
SHARE

0.2%
of global departures

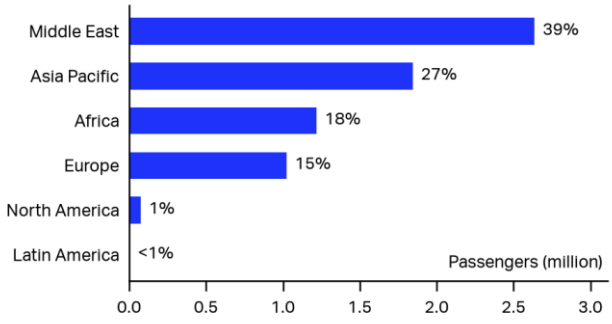
4.3%
of Middle Eastern departures

International: 6.8 million passenger departures, 40.4% 10Y growth, 5.3% 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. Egypt
2. India
3. Saudi Arabia
4. United Arab Emirates
5. Türkiye

Top origin cities
Inbound

1. Dubai
2. Cairo
3. Doha
4. Riyadh
5. Abu Dhabi

Top destination cities
Outbound

1. Dubai
2. Jeddah
3. Cairo
4. Istanbul
5. London

Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using IATA DDS data.
Note: O-D (origin-destination) departures measures passengers beginning their journey in Kuwait, to their final destination, excluding transfer and transit passengers.
Top air travel markets based on total O-D passenger traffic between Kuwait 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 Kuwait to 48 different countries

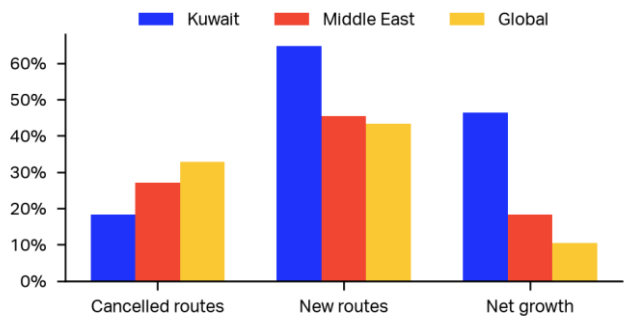
In 2025, there were 1 airports and 43 operating airlines in Kuwait, providing a total of 104 regularly scheduled commercial passenger routes for Kuwait, connecting to 48 countries with about 157 daily international departures.

Air Connectivity in Kuwait

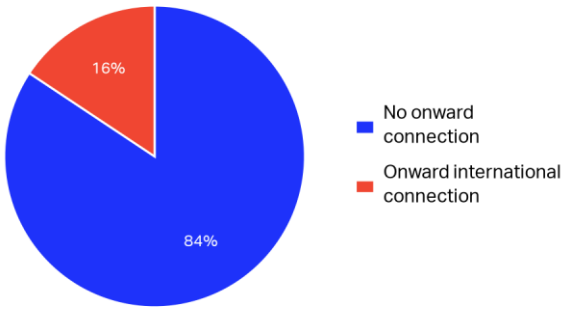


		Total		
		Available routes	Connected countries	Daily int. departures
2025	Total	104	48	157
	Global rank	84th	33rd	47th
	Middle East rank	8th	4th	4th
2015	Total	71	33	127
	Global rank	97th	55th	48th
	Middle East rank	8th	8th	4th

Route network change, 2015 to 2025, % of 2015



Onward connections of international arrivals, 2025

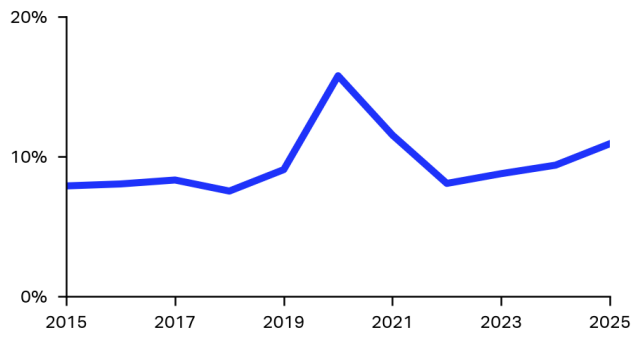


Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using OAG & IATA DDS data.
Note: Airport, airline, and route counts include only those with regularly scheduled passenger services from Kuwait. Airports with fewer than 1,000 regularly scheduled seats in 2025 are excluded.

Air Cargo provides Kuwait timely and safe access to global markets

Although air transport accounted for an estimated 0.2% of Kuwait's traded goods by weight, it carried 10.7% of their total value.
Kuwait's airports handled around 224 thousand tonnes of air cargo in 2025, ranking Kuwait as the world's 52nd largest air cargo handler market and the 7th largest in the Middle East.

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



Kuwaiti air cargo, share of trade, 2025

0.2%
of trade by weight

10.7%
of trade by value

Air cargo handled in Kuwait, 2025

224
thousand tonnes
air cargo handled

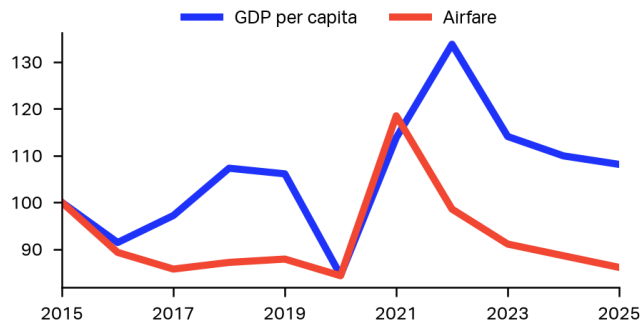
52nd
Globally
7th in Middle East

Source: Airports Council International (ACI) for air cargo handled, Global Trade Tracker (GTT) for imports and exports by air.
Note: Kuwait'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 Kuwait has become more affordable over the past decade

Kuwait's nominal GDP per capita increased by 8.1%, while the average nominal air fare for an international ticket from Kuwait decreased by 13.9%, 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, Kuwait, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



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