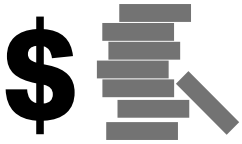
THE VALUE OF AVIATION MALDIVES

The economic impact of aviation in Maldives

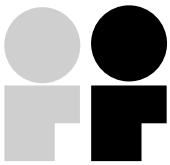
The aviation sector and its quantifiable economic effects made up 73.7% of Maldives' GDP and 91.2% of the country's employment in 2025. This covers the sector itself, its supply chain, employee spending, and international air transport-enabled tourism to Maldives.

GDP and employment created by aviation in Maldives in 2025



5.7
USD billion

73.7%
of GDP



248.4
thousand jobs

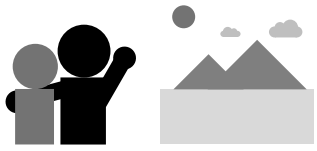
91.2%
of employment

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 357.9 million	USD 185 million	USD 5.2 billion
8.1 thousand jobs	6 thousand jobs	234.3 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 = MVR 15.42

Air transport brings millions of people safely to global destinations

Around 4.2 million air passengers departed from Maldives in 2025, based on Origin-Destination(O-D) traffic, making Maldives the 78th largest air passenger market globally.

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

4.2
million
passenger departures

GROWTH

63.5%
10-year growth

0.2%
year-on-year growth

RANK

78th
Global
▲ 2 since 2015

19th
in Asia
▲ 2 since 2015

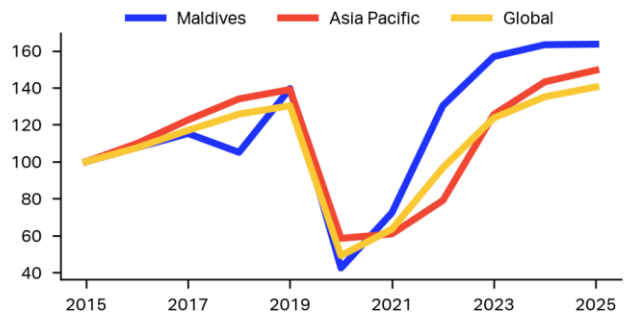
SHARE

0.1%
of global departures

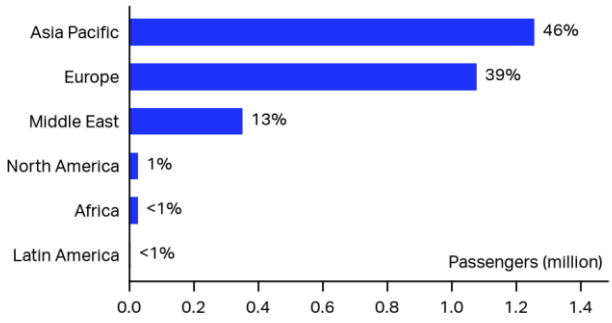
0.3%
of Asian departures

International: 2.7 million passenger departures, 82.3% 10Y growth, 7.3% YoY growth
Domestic: 1.4 million passenger departures, 36.1% 10Y growth, -11.4% YoY growth, % share of total market: 33.9%

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	Top origin cities Inbound	Top destination cities Outbound
1. India	1. Moscow	1. Colombo
2. United Arab Emirates	2. London	2. Dubai
3. Sri Lanka	3. Frankfurt	3. Bangkok
4. China	4. Dubai	4. Kochi
5. Russia	5. Milan	5. Kuala Lumpur

Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using IATA DDS data.
Note: O-D (origin-destination) departures measures passengers beginning their journey in Maldives, to their final destination, excluding transfer and transit passengers.
Top air travel markets based on total O-D passenger traffic between Maldives 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 Maldives to 26 different countries

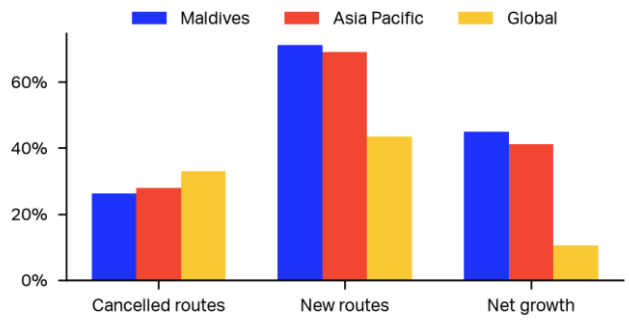
In 2025, there were 19 airports and 45 operating airlines in Maldives, providing a total of 116 regularly scheduled commercial passenger routes for Maldives, connecting to 26 countries with about 43 daily international departures.

Air Connectivity in Maldives

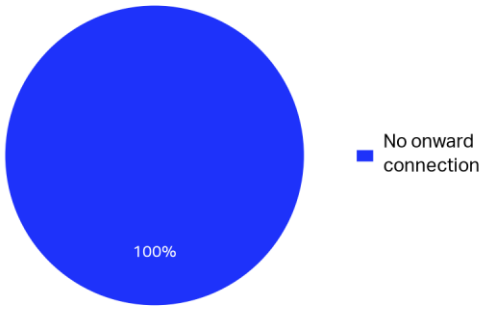


		Total		
		Available routes	Connected countries	Daily int. departures
2025	Total	116	26	43
	Global rank	76th	88th	98th
	Asia rank	17th	17th	21st
2015	Total	80	22	29
	Global rank	89th	91st	108th
	Asia rank	18th	17th	22nd

Route network change, 2015 to 2025, % of 2015



Onward connections of international arrivals, 2025

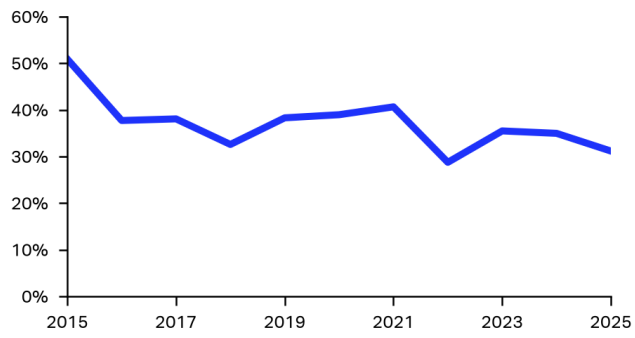


Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using OAG & IATA DDS data.
Note: Airport, airline, and route counts include only those with regularly scheduled passenger services from Maldives. Airports with fewer than 1,000 regularly scheduled seats in 2025 are excluded.

Air Cargo provides Maldives timely and safe access to global markets

Although air transport accounted for an estimated 66.5% of Maldives' traded goods by weight, it carried 59.3% of their total value.
Maldives' airports handled around 89.4 thousand tonnes of air cargo in 2025, ranking Maldives as the world's 71st largest air cargo handler market and the 20th largest in Asia.

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



Maldivian air cargo, share of trade, 2025

66.5%
of trade by weight

59.3%
of trade by value

Air cargo handled in Maldives, 2025

89.4
thousand tonnes
air cargo handled

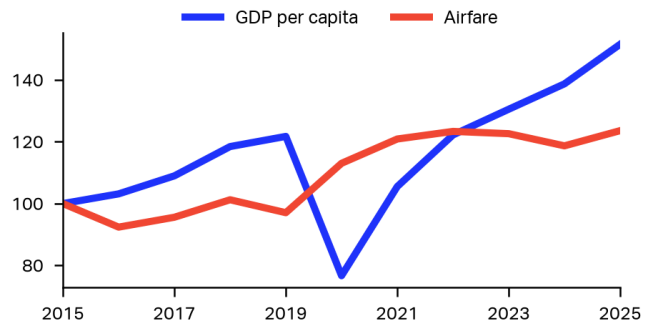
71st
Globally
20th in Asia

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

Maldives' nominal GDP per capita increased by 51.5%, while the average nominal airfare for an international ticket from Maldives increased by 23.6%, 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, Maldives, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



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