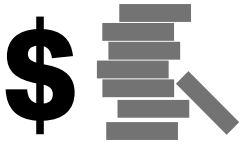
THE VALUE OF AVIATION NEW ZEALAND

The economic impact of aviation in New Zealand

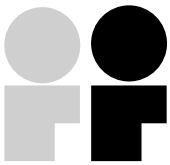
The aviation sector and its quantifiable economic effects made up 7.4% of New Zealand's GDP and 7.3% of the country's employment in 2025. This covers the sector itself, its supply chain, employee spending, and international air transport-enabled tourism to New Zealand.

GDP and employment created by aviation in New Zealand in 2025



19.5
USD billion

7.4%
of GDP



223.7
thousand jobs

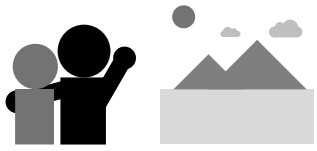
7.3%
of employment

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 4.5 billion	USD 6.6 billion	USD 8.4 billion
39 thousand jobs	78.2 thousand jobs	106.5 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: Average 2025 exchange rate: USD 1 = NZD 1.72

Air transport brings millions of people safely to global destinations

Around 16.8 million air passengers departed from New Zealand in 2025, based on Origin-Destination(O-D) traffic, making New Zealand the 40th largest air passenger market globally.

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

16.8
million
passenger departures

GROWTH

11.5%
10-year growth

1.6%
year-on-year growth

RANK

40th
Global
No change since 2015

2nd
in Southwest Pacific
No change since 2015

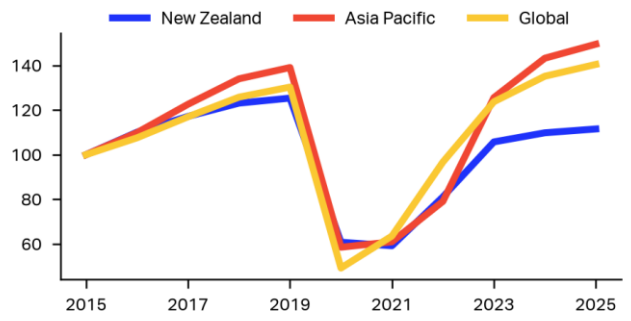
SHARE

0.4%
of global departures

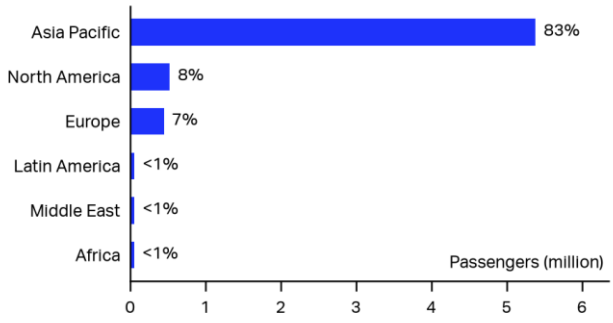
15.6%
of Southwest Pacific departures

International: 6.5 million passenger departures, 22.6% 10Y growth, 5.7% YoY growth
Domestic: 10.3 million passenger departures, 5.5% 10Y growth, -0.9% YoY growth, % share of total market: 61.2%

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. Australia	1. Sydney	1. Sydney
2. United States	2. Melbourne	2. Melbourne
3. China	3. Brisbane	3. Brisbane
4. Fiji	4. Perth	4. Nadi
5. United Kingdom	5. Tokyo	5. Gold Coast

Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using IATA DDS data.
Note: O-D (origin-destination) departures measures passengers beginning their journey in New Zealand, to their final destination, excluding transfer and transit passengers.
Top air travel markets based on total O-D passenger traffic between New Zealand 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 New Zealand to 25 different countries

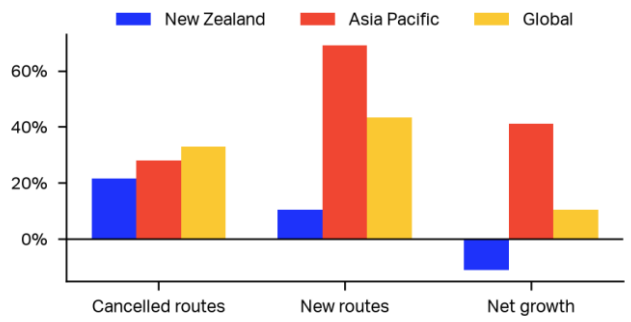
In 2025, there were 26 airports and 28 operating airlines in New Zealand, providing a total of 170 regularly scheduled commercial passenger routes for New Zealand, connecting to 25 countries with about 96 daily international departures.

Air Connectivity in New Zealand

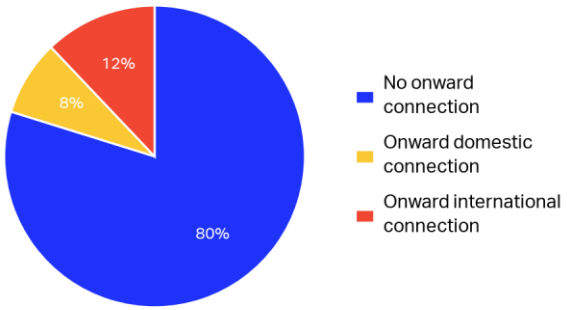


		Total		
		Available routes	Connected countries	Daily int. departures
2025	Total	170	25	96
	Global rank	59th	92nd	61st
	SW Pacific rank	3rd	2nd	2nd
2015	Total	191	27	88
	Global rank	52nd	75th	61st
	SW Pacific rank	3rd	2nd	2nd

Route network change, 2015 to 2025, % of 2015



Onward connections of international arrivals, 2025

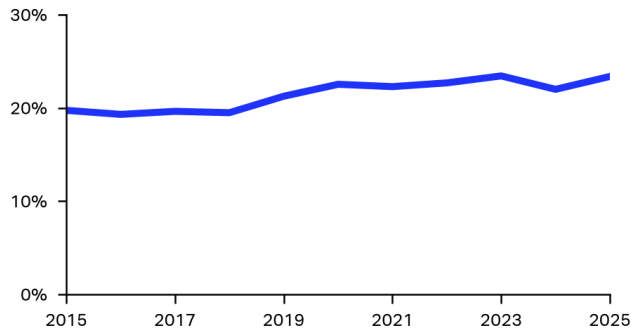


Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics using OAG & IATA DDS data.
Note: Airport, airline, and route counts include only those with regularly scheduled passenger services from New Zealand. Airports with fewer than 1,000 regularly scheduled seats in 2025 are excluded.

Air Cargo provides New Zealand timely and safe access to global markets

Although air transport accounted for an estimated 1.0% of New Zealand's traded goods by weight, it carried 24.0% of their total value.
New Zealand's airports handled around 231.1 thousand tonnes of air cargo in 2025, ranking New Zealand as the world's 50th largest air cargo handler market and the 2nd largest in Southwest Pacific.

New Zealand air cargo, value, % of total, 2015-2025



New Zealand air cargo, share of trade, 2025

1.0%
of trade by weight

24.0%
of trade by value

Air cargo handled in New Zealand, 2025

231.1
thousand tonnes
air cargo handled

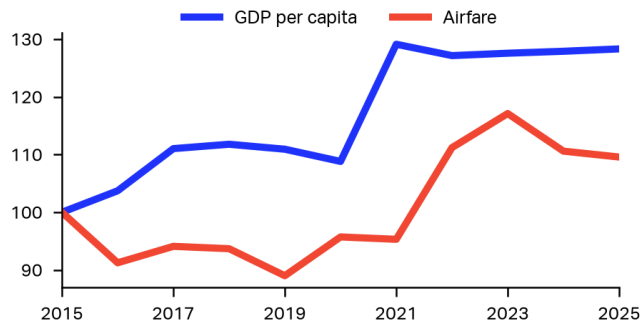
50th
Globally
2nd in SW Pacific

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

New Zealand's nominal GDP per capita increased by 28.3%, while the average nominal airfare for an international ticket from New Zealand increased by 9.6%, 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, New Zealand, 2015-2025, index 2015=100



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