The air transport sector makes a major contribution to Canada’s economy

It creates jobs...

Airlines, airport operators, airport on-site enterprises (restaurants and retail), aircraft manufacturers, and air navigation service providers employed 230,000 people in Canada in 2014. In addition, by buying goods and services from local suppliers the sector supported another 130,000 jobs. On top of this, the sector is estimated to have supported a further 47,000 jobs by paying wages to its employees; some or all of which are subsequently spent on consumer goods and services. Foreign tourists arriving by air to Canada, who spend their money in the local economy, are estimated to have supported an additional 170,000 jobs in 2014.

...and generates wealth

The air transport industry is estimated to have supported a $36.8 billion gross value added contribution to GDP in Canada in 2014. Spending by foreign tourists supported a further $12 billion gross value added contribution to the country’s GDP. This means that 2.7 percent of the country’s GDP is supported by the air transport sector and foreign tourists arriving by air.
Air transportation facilitates exports, foreign direct investment, and tourism

The ten most popular direct flight links:

1. United States
2. Mexico
3. United Kingdom
4. Cuba
5. Germany
6. China
7. France
8. Dominican Republic
9. Jamaica
10. Hong Kong

The scale of investment, exports, and inbound spending in Canada

Air transport brings tourists and investment into Canada, and helps businesses trade their goods and services around the world. In 2014, foreign tourists spent US $13.1 billion in Canada, supporting restaurants, hotels, transport providers, and others who cater to tourists. In addition, Canada exported US $570 billion worth of goods and services in 2014. Over time, the country has accumulated US $950 billion in foreign direct investment.
The air transport sector connects people around the world

The air transport sector’s ability to connect Canada to emerging countries and fast growing cities can help drive economic growth. There are 8 direct flight destinations among the ten fastest growing countries in the world as measured by GDP growth and 15 direct flight destinations among the 20 fastest growing countries. There are no direct weekly flights among the ten fastest growing cities in the world as measured by GDP growth but there are 73 direct weekly flights among the 100 fastest growing cities.¹

Arrivals by continent

Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe are the largest sources of arrivals to Canada after North America. In 2014, 9.1 million passengers arrived to Canada from Latin America and the Caribbean (11.4 percent of the total) and 8.8 million passengers arrived from Europe (11 percent).

¹ Fastest growing countries are Ranked by Oxford Economics’ forecasted real GDP growth 2015-2030, with a threshold of >US $100 million GDP. Fastest growing cities are ranked by Oxford Economics’ forecasted real GDP growth 2015-2030, with a minimum city size of 5 million.
Ease of travel, cost competitiveness, and infrastructure are vitally important

Survey evidence of infrastructure and ease of travel

Executives surveyed by the World Economic Forum suggest that Canada’s air transport infrastructure quality ranks 2nd out of 2 countries included in the survey in North America and 10th globally. Canada ranks 1st out of 2 in North America for visa openness and 2nd for cost competitiveness.

Key infrastructure facts about Canadian air transport

Around 2.2 million aircraft land or take off from Canada every year. The country has 2 airports that are in the top 100 in the world (ranked by passenger numbers). Lester B. Pearson Intl airport carried the most passengers - 37.9 million - in 2014.

Number of passengers travelling annually through the five busiest airports in the country (000s)

1. 37,900 Lester B. Pearson Intl
2. 19,400 Vancouver Intl
3. 15,000 Pierre E. Trudeau Intl
4. 14,900 Calgary Intl
5. 7,900 Edmonton Intl

Sources: IATA, Oxford Economics, International Monetary Fund, and national statistics.

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