



Latest air traffic forecasts illustrate encouraging recovery and higher growth in global air travel

For immediate release

Montréal, 19 May 2022 – ICAO’s latest analysis of global air traffic reveals clear signs of a strong global recovery in air traffic, characterized by increasing airline confidence and a range of regional air connectivity and air travel facilitation improvements.

The number of air passengers carried from January to April 2022 increased by 65% compared to the same period in 2021, while aircraft flight departures increased by 30%.

Airline seat capacity grew by 32% during the same period, and with continuing supportive conditions for increases in air travel demand expected, ICAO is projecting a stronger overall rate of recovery this year compared to last.

In terms of regional highlights, North America and Latin America/Caribbean domestic seat capacity has now recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and the same has been true in other large domestic markets such as India, Australia, Brazil and Mexico. Intra-Europe seat capacity, meanwhile, is also on a very positive trajectory.

By the end of 2022, total seat capacities within and between North America, Europe, the Middle East, South-West Asia, and the Latin America/Caribbean region are all expected to recover to, or closely approach, their pre-pandemic levels.

The pace of recovery in the Asia and Pacific and Africa regions continues to be more challenging, with a recovery of full seat capacity expected in Asia and Pacific by 2023-24, and in Africa by 2024-25.

“These recovery indicators are highly encouraging”, stressed ICAO Secretary General Juan Carlos Salazar, “and most especially with respect to the re-opened travel and tourism markets and other positive economic and sustainability benefits which inevitably result from expanded international seat capacity and air connectivity.”

“There is still much to be done, however, and I look forward to the point where we can announce the full recoveries of all world regions.”

ICAO’s ongoing efforts to work with governments and industry to reconnect the world is expected to get another boost this September, when the 41st ICAO Assembly will be held with in-person attendance of the civil aviation delegates from the UN agency’s 193 Member States.

“ICAO has established ‘Innovation’ and ‘Resilience’ as the co-themes for this year’s Assembly, and we expect some important decisions from States on how to prioritize current efforts to digitize a contactless travel experience, and to promote more of the latest innovations in aircraft design and propulsion now taking place,” Salazar underscored.

“It’s critical for economies everywhere that collaboration among governments and industry is reinforced, and that our global community builds on the current momentum for a full return to pre-

pandemic flight levels, while parallel environmental and digital transformation progress continues to be made.”



Resources for Editors

About ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a United Nations agency which helps 193 countries to cooperate together and share their skies to their mutual benefit.

Since it was established in 1944, ICAO's support and coordination has helped countries to diplomatically and technically realize a uniquely rapid and dependable network of global air mobility, connecting families, cultures, and businesses all over the world, and promoting sustainable growth and socio-economic prosperity wherever aircraft fly.

As it enters a new era of digitization, and of incredible new flight and propulsion innovations, air transport is relying more than ever on ICAO's expert support and technical and diplomatic guidance to help chart a new and exciting future for international flight. ICAO is innovating itself to answer this call, and expanding its partnerships among UN and technical stakeholders to deliver a strategic global vision and effective, sustainable solutions.

[ICAO's Unmanned Aviation 2022 Activities](#)

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