



# GLOBAL AVIATION MONITOR

## February 2026

Statistical Report of Global, European and German Air Transport



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# The DLR Global Aviation Monitor

The Global Aviation Monitor is a statistical report series from the DLR Institute of Air Transport of the German Aerospace Center, which serves as a supplement to various statistics, such as those from the Federal Statistical Office or the German Airports Association (ADV).

It provides monthly reports on the supply of flights in Germany, Europe, and worldwide. The development of flights over the last fifteen months is presented in the form of a time series. Additionally, there is a monthly ranking of the largest airports and airlines in Germany, Europe, and worldwide, which are compared to the values of the previous year. The data is released during each month and represents the planned data for the current month.

This report fills a gap that is of interest to both airports and airlines in assessing their position on a global scale. It is of interest to policy-makers, administrators, industry stakeholders, and tourism offices to gauge the performance of their region. In the event of significant changes, it is worthwhile to examine closely what has caused them. Due to its monthly updates, the report can serve as a leading indicator for trends and developments.

The Institute of Air Transport provides further advanced forecasting capabilities. Combining established statistical techniques with innovative modelling approaches and a broad dataset, it delivers short-, medium-, and long-term forecasts on passenger and cargo traffic, airport capacity, fleet development, and route networks. These insights support strategic decision-making for stakeholders across the sector, reinforcing the institute's role in shaping future air transport planning at regional and global levels.



**The report is being developed at the Air Transport Development department of the DLR Institute of Air Transport.**

Global air traffic and emissions are projected to rise in the coming decades, driving the need for sustainable technological advancements. The department researches forecasting methods to anticipate demand and supply across different regions and aircraft types. These forecasts support strategic planning for infrastructure, connectivity, and environmental measures. By combining ecological, economic, and social factors, the department assesses new technologies and develops scenarios and roadmaps to guide the aviation sector towards climate-compatible growth.



# Number of Monthly Departures in February 2026

## Ranking by Airports Globally, for Europe & Germany

### Growth at the World's Largest Airports

At 20 of the world's 25 largest airports, departures increased in February 2026 year on year. The four largest airports are located in North America, with Chicago ranking first at approx. 31,100 departures and continuing to record traffic growth. In 10th and 12th place are the European hubs Istanbul and London-Heathrow. Positions 5 to 8 are occupied by major Asian airports: Guangzhou, Shanghai Pudong, Tokyo-Haneda and Delhi. Frankfurt Airport ranks 36th globally. Chicago's strong growth is mainly driven by capacity increases at American Airlines and United Airlines.

This figure shows the twenty-five largest **airports worldwide**, measured in passenger flights.

### Istanbul and Heathrow Lead European Airport Rankings

In February 2026, the largest European airports by number of scheduled passenger departures are Istanbul, London Heathrow, Amsterdam, Paris and Madrid, each recording more than 14,000 scheduled departures. Frankfurt ranks sixth among European airports and shows a downward trend compared with the previous year.

This table shows the twenty-five largest **European airports**, measured in passenger flights.

Tab. 1: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in the world

Rank	Airport	02/2026	Growth rate
1	Chicago O'Hare International	31,112	16.5
2	Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Intl	28,834	1.5
3	Dallas/Fort Worth Intl	25,349	-3.4
4	Denver Intl	24,549	0.9
5	Guangzhou	22,065	17.6
6	Shanghai Pudong International	21,433	4.9
7	Tokyo Haneda	19,707	4.5
8	Delhi	19,243	6.9
9	Charlotte	18,678	-7.9
10	Istanbul	18,438	3.0
11	Los Angeles International	18,306	-1.6
12	London Heathrow	17,816	-0.6
13	Dubai	17,779	3.9
14	Phoenix Sky Harbor Intl	17,176	1.0
15	Beijing Capital	17,164	1.9
16	Kuala Lumpur International	16,611	11.3
17	Shenzhen	16,582	1.4
18	Chengdu Tianfu	16,443	2.1
19	Orlando International	15,962	4.2
20	Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta	15,941	7.4
21	Miami International	15,922	0.5
22	Houston George Bush Intercontinental	15,803	1.9
23	Amsterdam	15,737	-5.1
24	New York J F Kennedy International	15,429	0.1
25	Seoul Incheon International	15,427	4.3

Source: DLR

Tab. 2: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in Europe

Rank	Airport	02/2026	Growth rate
1	Istanbul	18,438	3.0
2	London Heathrow	17,816	-0.6
3	Amsterdam	15,737	-5.1
4	Paris Charles de Gaulle	15,407	1.0
5	Madrid Barajas	14,990	3.5
6	Frankfurt	13,801	-0.7
7	Barcelona	11,422	-0.8
8	Rome Fiumicino	10,714	-3.1
9	Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen	10,460	9.0
10	Munich	10,000	-3.4
11	Copenhagen	8,788	14.6
12	Zurich	8,492	3.4
13	London Gatwick	8,127	-4.8
14	Dublin	8,054	10.8
15	Lisbon	7,863	0.0
16	Moscow Sheremetyevo International	7,658	-0.4
17	Paris Orly	7,544	6.7
18	Athens Intl Eleftherios Venizelos	7,540	4.5
19	Vienna	7,406	-0.5
20	Oslo	6,979	-1.0
21	Milan Malpensa	6,837	3.6
22	Stockholm Arlanda	6,596	7.5
23	Manchester International	6,461	3.3
24	Warsaw	6,425	9.4
25	London Stansted	6,214	-1.7

Source: DLR

# Number of Monthly Departures in February 2026

Tab. 3: Number of monthly departures at the largest airports in Germany

Rank	Airport	02/2026	Growth rate
1	Frankfurt	13,801	-0.7
2	Munich	10,000	-3.4
3	Berlin	6,003	-2.2
4	Dusseldorf	4,416	0.3
5	Hamburg	3,575	-2.2
6	Stuttgart	2,078	-1.5
7	Cologne/Bonn	1,733	-7.7
8	Hanover	1,116	1.7
9	Nuremberg	938	-3.8
10	Memmingen	654	-6.8
11	Bremen	543	-13.0
12	Dortmund	522	-15.8
13	Hahn	421	-6.0
14	Karlsruhe/Baden Baden	407	17.6
15	Weeze	392	14.3
16	Leipzig/Halle	307	-14.2
17	Dresden	263	-6.1
18	Munster	160	-1.2
19	Friedrichshafen	85	372.2
20	Saarbrücken	56	-11.1
21	Paderborn	46	-35.2
22	Augsburg	32	0.0
23	Luebeck	32	----
24	Hamburg Finkenwerder	26	8.3
25	Westerland	23	53.3

Source: DLR

## Mixed Performance Across German Airports

Germany's largest airport remains Frankfurt, with around 13,800 departures. With the exception of Dusseldorf, all major German airports recorded negative growth. Low-cost-focused airports such as Karlsruhe and Weeze performed more strongly. Ryanair increased frequencies in Weeze, including services to Tangier and Thessaloniki. Smaller airports such as Paderborn saw declines. At Friedrichshafen, Wizz Air launched a new route to Belgrade, while Avanti Air, together with FlexFlight and marketed by Air Uniqon, introduced domestic services to Dusseldorf, Berlin and Hamburg. At Luebeck, Ryanair added new routes including London and Mallorca.

Here, the twenty-five largest **German airports** are listed, measured in passenger flights.

## Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

### Global Capacity Expands, Lufthansa Declines

Most major airlines worldwide increased their scheduled passenger departures in February 2026. American Airlines operated the highest volume, with approximately 171,100 departures. Lufthansa ranks 17th globally with around 23,800 departures, reflecting a downward trend. When comparing year-on-year data, factors such as holidays should be taken into account, as these can influence monthly flight schedules.

This figure shows the **world's** twenty-five **largest airlines**, measured in passenger flights.

Tab. 4: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in the world

Rank	Airline	02/2026	Growth rate
1	American Airlines	171,111	3.0
2	Delta Air Lines	132,313	3.5
3	United Airlines	128,234	3.3
4	Southwest Airlines	102,986	0.6
5	Ryanair	73,416	6.3
6	China Eastern Airlines	73,300	1.5
7	China Southern Airlines	70,455	8.4
8	IndiGo Air	61,823	-1.3
9	Air China	51,586	5.0
10	LATAM Airlines	46,860	5.3
11	easyJet	39,297	2.3
12	Alaska Airlines	32,263	2.9
13	All Nippon Airways	31,541	11.0
14	Turkish Airlines	30,741	5.3
15	Air Canada	28,661	2.6
16	JetBlue Airways Corporation	23,802	1.4
17	Lufthansa German Airlines	23,755	-12.5
18	Japan Airlines International	23,592	-1.4
19	Hainan Airlines	23,530	1.6
20	British Airways	22,754	-0.9
21	Shenzhen Airlines	21,966	1.6
22	Qantas Airways	21,796	4.1
23	Azul	21,476	-13.4
24	AVIANCA	21,416	5.3
25	Sichuan Airlines	21,380	6.8

Source: DLR

# Number of Monthly Departures in February 2026

## Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

### Ryanair Dominates the European Market

Ryanair operated the highest number of departures in Europe in February 2026, with more than 71,000 flights — representing growth of 6.0% compared with the previous year. This is almost twice the volume of easyJet, which ranks second with 37,600 departures.

The twenty-five **airlines in Europe** with the most passenger flights from European airports are listed here.

### Lufthansa Leads in Germany Amid Structural Shifts

In Germany, Lufthansa remains the airline with the highest number of departures, operating around 14,700 flights in February. It is followed by Eurowings with nearly 4,800 departures and Ryanair with approximately 3,400 departures, all showing declining trends. The reduction at Lufthansa can partly be explained by a transfer of capacity to its subsidiary, Lufthansa City Airlines. While Lufthansa has significantly reduced its own flight programme, including fewer domestic feeder services such as Berlin–Frankfurt, capacity has increased at subsidiaries and partner airlines, including Brussels Airlines. EasyJet expanded frequencies in Hamburg and Munich and introduced new services from Frankfurt and Dusseldorf. Condor increased operations in Berlin and Frankfurt.

This table ranks the twenty-five **airlines** that offer the most passenger flights in **Germany**.

Tab. 5: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in Europe from European airports

Rank	Airline	02/2026	Growth rate
1	Ryanair	71,036	6.0
2	easyJet	37,600	1.8
3	Turkish Airlines	25,270	4.9
4	Lufthansa German Airlines	21,804	-13.6
5	British Airways	19,786	-1.4
6	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	19,700	21.0
7	Air France	17,570	1.9
8	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	16,130	-6.9
9	Pegasus Airlines	15,979	9.1
10	Iberia	15,426	-1.8
11	Aeroflot Russian Airlines	14,172	-1.4
12	Vueling Airlines	13,972	-7.9
13	Wizz Air	11,159	20.6
14	Ajet	10,014	8.8
15	Wizz Air Malta	9,925	6.1
16	Wideroe's Flyveselskap	9,016	-1.3
17	Swiss	8,593	-7.5
18	Finnair	8,502	-1.2
19	Eurowings	8,130	-5.0
20	ITA Airways	7,779	-11.3
21	LOT - Polish Airlines	7,651	8.0
22	TAP Air Portugal	7,473	1.9
23	Aegean Airlines	7,031	3.0
24	Austrian Airlines AG	7,022	-2.3
25	Binter Canarias	6,948	15.9

Source: DLR

Tab. 6: Number of monthly departures by the largest airlines in Germany from German airports

Rank	Airline	02/2026	Growth rate
1	Lufthansa German Airlines	14,655	-12.7
2	Eurowings	4,783	-6.3
3	Ryanair	3,388	-2.0
4	Condor Flugdienst	1,683	66.8
5	Air Dolomiti	1,681	-4.2
6	easyJet	1,304	10.8
7	Lufthansa City Airlines	1,116	110.6
8	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	1,070	-14.3
9	Austrian Airlines AG	953	-6.0
10	British Airways	920	-9.8
11	Turkish Airlines	919	4.0
12	Pegasus Airlines	884	7.8
13	Air France	821	7.6
14	Wizz Air	789	25.6
15	Swiss	753	-2.3
16	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	680	37.4
17	SunExpress	609	-10.3
18	Wizz Air Malta	591	-3.1
19	Eurowings Discover	554	4.7
20	TUIfly	539	-0.4
21	Brussels Airlines	452	56.9
22	United Airlines	387	7.2
23	LOT - Polish Airlines	381	2.4
24	Iberia	380	-2.6
25	Aegean Airlines	353	-3.8

Source: DLR

# Air Transport Development in February 2026

## Development and Changes Globally and for Germany

### Global and German Air Traffic Trends in February 2026

The following diagrams show the development of global and German flight capacity over the last fifteen months, both worldwide and in the individual region.

#### Fig. 1-2: Moderate Global Growth with Regional Variations

In February 2026, the global number of scheduled passenger departures increased by approximately 2.8% year on year, reaching 2.9 million flights. The regions with the highest traffic volumes are Asia, North America and Europe. Growth rates vary considerably by region, with the Middle East recording the strongest increase at around 8.1%.

#### Fig. 3-4: Decline in Germany Despite Growth on Long-Haul Routes

In Germany, approximately 47,600 scheduled passenger departures were planned for February 2026, representing a decline of 2.1% compared with the previous year. While capacity to Africa, Asia and the Middle East is being expanded, departures to Europe, North America and South America are decreasing. Around 40,800 flights are scheduled to European destinations.

Fig. 1: Development of the global air transport supply

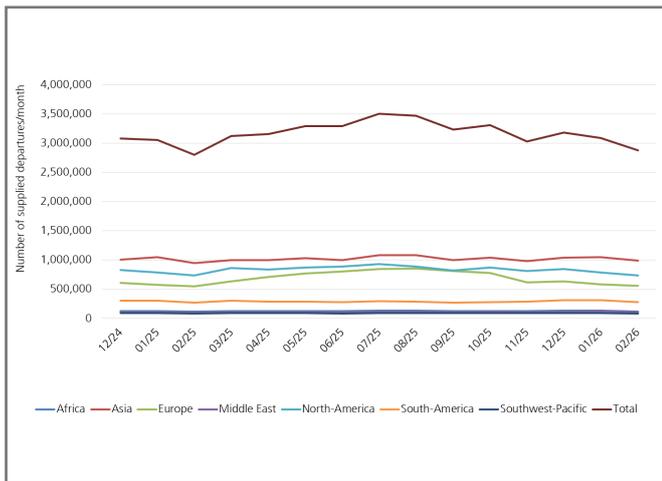


Fig. 2: Changes in the global air transport supply

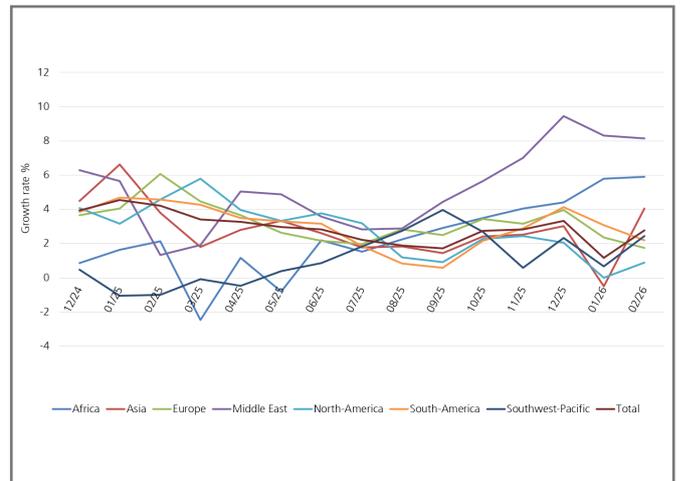


Fig. 3: Development of the German air transport supply

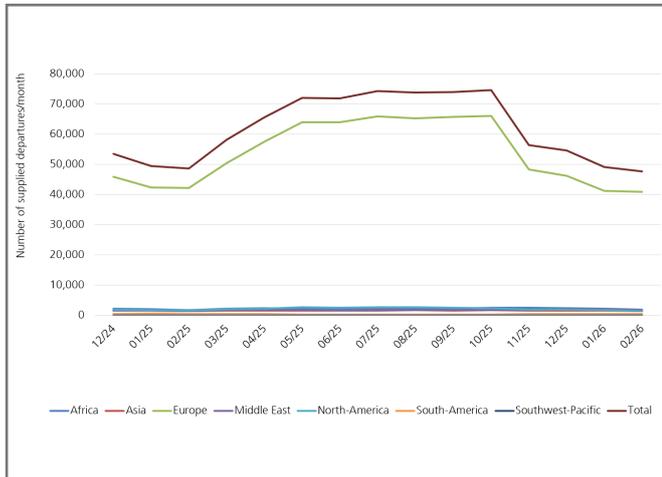
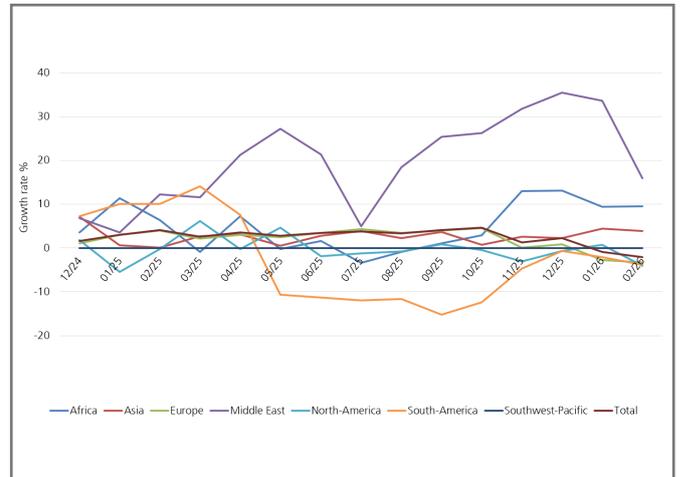


Fig. 4: Changes in the German air transport supply



Source: OAG 2024-2026, DLR 2024-2026

## DLR Overview

The DLR is the research center of the Federal Republic of Germany for aerospace. We conduct research and development in aviation, space, energy, transportation, security, and digitalisation. The German Space Agency at DLR is responsible, on behalf of the Federal Government, for planning and implementing German space activities. Two DLR project agencies manage funding programmes and support knowledge transfer.

Climate, mobility, and technology are changing globally. The DLR utilises the expertise of its 54 institutes and facilities to develop solutions for these challenges. Our more than 11,000 employees have a common mission: we explore Earth and space and develop technologies for a sustainable future. In doing so, we contribute to strengthening Germany's knowledge and economic base.

## DLR Institute of Air Transport

The DLR Institute of Air Transport researches the complex interactions within the air transport system. We develop future scenarios, conduct economic and business analyses, and model and simulate flight and fleet operations.

We forecast, shape, and evaluate air transport as part of the overall transport system to enhance climate compatibility and performance. To achieve this, we integrate ecological, economic, technological, and social aspects of air transport.

Within DLR, we consolidate expertise in analysing air transport markets and assessing the entire value chain. This positions us as a competent partner for industry, society, and policy makers.

## Imprint

Publisher:  
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Institute of Air Transport

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