



# GLOBAL AVIATION MONITOR March 2026

Statistical Report of Global, European and German Air Transport



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**Note:** Due to the Iran crisis, actual traffic in March 2026 is expected to differ from the planned figures, particularly in the Middle East region.



# 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 March 2026

## Ranking by Airports Globally, for Europe & Germany

### North American Airports Dominate Global Rankings

At 18 of the world's 25 largest airports, the number of departures increased in March 2026 compared with 2025. The four largest airports are located in North America, with Chicago ranking first at around 38,000 departures and continuing traffic growth. European airports Istanbul and London Heathrow rank 12th and 13th. Asian airports Guangzhou, Shanghai Pudong, Tokyo Haneda and Delhi occupy positions 5, 6, 7 and 11. Frankfurt ranks 27th worldwide. The strong growth in Chicago is mainly due to increased capacity from American Airlines and United Airlines.

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

### Six European Airports Exceed 16,000 Departures

The European airports with the highest number of passenger departures in March 2026 are Istanbul, London Heathrow, Amsterdam, Paris, Madrid and Frankfurt, each with more than 16,000 scheduled departures.

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	03/2026	Growth rate
1	Chicago O'Hare International	38,029	16.4
2	Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson Intl	33,864	0.5
3	Dallas/Fort Worth Intl	29,947	-4.2
4	Denver Intl	28,986	1.6
5	Guangzhou	23,293	11.4
6	Shanghai Pudong International	21,996	3.4
7	Tokyo Haneda	21,955	7.9
8	Charlotte	21,717	-7.0
9	Los Angeles International	21,186	-2.9
10	Phoenix Sky Harbor Intl	20,984	-0.4
11	Delhi	20,955	4.1
12	Istanbul	20,878	6.8
13	London Heathrow	20,107	0.8
14	Dubai	19,464	5.6
15	Amsterdam	18,784	-0.3
16	Houston George Bush	18,682	2.9
17	Beijing Capital	18,593	1.4
18	Orlando International	18,589	2.4
19	Kuala Lumpur International	18,189	21.6
20	Shenzhen	18,144	1.8
21	Miami International	17,770	-1.9
22	Paris Charles de Gaulle	17,717	0.9
23	New York J F Kennedy	17,392	-1.6
24	Jakarta Soekarno-Hatta	17,351	12.1
25	Chengdu Tianfu	17,226	4.9

Source: DLR

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

Rank	Airport	03/2026	Growth rate
1	Istanbul	20,878	6.8
2	London Heathrow	20,107	0.8
3	Amsterdam	18,784	-0.3
4	Paris Charles de Gaulle	17,717	0.9
5	Madrid Barajas	17,160	4.7
6	Frankfurt	16,704	-0.1
7	Barcelona	13,771	3.0
8	Rome Fiumicino	13,118	1.5
9	Munich	12,086	-0.9
10	Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen	11,715	13.5
11	Copenhagen	10,371	16.6
12	Zurich	9,963	4.4
13	Dublin	9,887	14.1
14	London Gatwick	9,816	-1.1
15	Athens Intl Eleftherios Venizelos	9,169	6.6
16	Lisbon	9,119	0.2
17	Vienna	8,903	0.1
18	Moscow Sheremetyevo	8,625	0.2
19	Paris Orly	8,567	8.7
20	Oslo	8,351	-1.4
21	Stockholm Arlanda	7,854	5.1
22	Milan Malpensa	7,840	1.3
23	Manchester International	7,653	5.9
24	Warsaw	7,314	8.2
25	London Stansted	7,161	0.0

Source: DLR

# Number of Monthly Departures in March 2026

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

Rank	Airport	03/2026	Growth rate
1	Frankfurt	16,704	-0.1
2	Munich	12,086	-0.9
3	Berlin	7,131	-2.0
4	Dusseldorf	5,599	5.7
5	Hamburg	4,404	2.7
6	Stuttgart	2,629	4.2
7	Cologne/Bonn	2,257	1.5
8	Hanover	1,490	10.2
9	Nuremberg	1,158	-2.2
10	Memmingen	784	-6.7
11	Dortmund	651	-6.1
12	Bremen	650	-7.4
13	Karlsruhe/Baden Baden	480	0.4
14	Weeze	480	10.9
15	Hahn	478	-9.0
16	Leipzig/Halle	401	-9.1
17	Dresden	287	-12.5
18	Munster	219	0.0
19	Paderborn	95	-6.9
20	Friedrichshafen	86	309.5
21	Saarbrücken	79	-1.3
22	Augsburg	36	5.9
23	Luebeck	36	1700.0
24	Westerland	33	26.9
25	Hamburg Finkenwerder	30	15.4

Source: DLR

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

Rank	Airline	03/2026	Growth rate
1	American Airlines	198,987	2.4
2	Delta Air Lines	156,412	3.6
3	United Airlines	152,329	4.2
4	Southwest Airlines	125,546	-0.1
5	Ryanair	87,018	5.8
6	China Eastern Airlines	77,475	7.6
7	China Southern Airlines	71,189	6.3
8	IndiGo Air	68,796	-2.0
9	Air China	54,961	5.4
10	LATAM Airlines	51,171	7.8
11	easyJet	48,316	6.5
12	Alaska Airlines	37,794	3.3
13	All Nippon Airways	35,153	14.7
14	Turkish Airlines	35,087	9.8
15	Air Canada	32,866	2.7
16	Lufthansa German Airlines	29,219	-10.5
17	JetBlue Airways Corporation	27,856	-0.8
18	Japan Airlines International	26,429	-1.2
19	British Airways	26,081	1.0
20	Azul	24,670	-5.3
21	Qantas Airways	24,239	6.9
22	Hainan Airlines	24,184	6.0
23	AVIANCA	23,564	4.3
24	Air France	23,361	-0.1
25	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	23,246	15.0

Source: DLR

## Mixed German Trends

Frankfurt remains Germany's largest airport with around 16,700 departures. The three largest airports – Frankfurt, Munich and Berlin – recorded slightly lower figures than last year, while Dusseldorf, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Cologne and Hanover reported increases, as did low-cost airports such as Karlsruhe and Weeze. Ryanair is expanding in Weeze with higher frequencies to Alicante and Thessaloniki and new routes to Ibiza and Sarajevo. Departures at smaller airports such as Paderborn declined following Lufthansa's withdrawal. In Friedrichshafen, Wizz Air has launched a route to Belgrade, while new domestic flights marketed by Air Uniqon and operated by FlexFlight are planned to Dusseldorf, Berlin and Hamburg. Luebeck has introduced a new Ryanair service to London.

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

## Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

### American Airlines Leads Global Airline Rankings

Most major airlines worldwide increased their number of scheduled passenger flights in March 2026. American Airlines leads with around 199,000 departures, while Lufthansa ranks 16th with about 29,200 and shows a declining trend. Comparisons with the previous year should take account of factors such as holidays or public vacation periods, which may influence monthly flight schedules.

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

# Number of Monthly Departures in March 2026

## Ranking by Airlines Globally, for Europe & Germany

### Ryanair Remains Europe's Largest Airline by Flights

Ryanair offers the highest number of flights in Europe in March 2026 with about 84,300 departures, representing growth of 5.7% compared with the previous year. This is almost twice as many flights as easyJet, which ranks second with around 46,300 departures.

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

### Lufthansa Remains Largest Airline in Germany

Lufthansa remains the airline with the highest number of departures in Germany, with around 17,800 flights in March. It is followed by Eurowings with almost 6,500 departures and Ryanair with around 3,900 departures. Both Lufthansa and Ryanair show declining trends. The reduction at Lufthansa can partly be explained by the transfer of capacity to the new subsidiary Lufthansa City Airlines. While Lufthansa is reducing its own flight offer – including fewer domestic feeder flights such as Berlin–Frankfurt – the number of flights operated by subsidiaries or partner airlines such as City Airlines and Brussels Airlines is increasing significantly. easyJet is increasing frequencies in Hamburg and Munich and introducing new services from Frankfurt and Dusseldorf. Condor is expanding its operations in Berlin and Frankfurt and launching new services from Stuttgart and Hanover.

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	03/2026	Growth rate
1	Ryanair	84,349	5.7
2	easyJet	46,328	6.1
3	Turkish Airlines	28,855	8.8
4	Lufthansa German Airlines	26,828	-11.4
5	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	22,852	15.1
6	British Airways	22,730	0.7
7	Air France	20,049	-0.5
8	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	19,988	1.3
9	Pegasus Airlines	17,514	12.6
10	Vueling Airlines	17,244	-2.3
11	Iberia	17,176	-2.9
12	Aeroflot Russian Airlines	16,132	-1.4
13	Wizz Air	12,881	26.2
14	Wizz Air Malta	12,225	17.2
15	Ajet	11,616	14.4
16	Eurowings	11,247	3.8
17	Swiss	10,414	-5.2
18	Wideroe's Flyveselskap	10,249	1.0
19	Finnair	9,568	2.0
20	ITA Airways	9,105	-10.2
21	Austrian Airlines AG	9,052	1.8
22	LOT - Polish Airlines	8,721	6.1
23	Aer Lingus	8,417	5.8
24	Aegean Airlines	8,412	5.7
25	Binter Canarias	8,323	10.0

Source: DLR

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

Rank	Airline	03/2026	Growth rate
1	Lufthansa German Airlines	17,795	-10.7
2	Eurowings	6,450	3.3
3	Ryanair	3,941	-7.3
4	Air Dolomiti	1,993	-2.4
5	Condor Flugdienst	1,981	30.6
6	easyJet	1,600	15.5
7	Lufthansa City Airlines	1,385	95.6
8	KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines	1,302	-7.1
9	Austrian Airlines AG	1,216	-3.3
10	SunExpress	1,089	13.9
11	Turkish Airlines	1,051	5.8
12	Pegasus Airlines	1,044	16.1
13	British Airways	1,041	-8.4
14	Air France	928	4.0
15	Wizz Air	928	32.4
16	Swiss	879	-3.5
17	Wizz Air Malta	775	15.2
18	SAS Scandinavian Airlines	753	36.9
19	Eurowings Discover	752	12.6
20	TUIfly	733	3.1
21	Brussels Airlines	511	53.9
22	United Airlines	504	1.0
23	Aegean Airlines	443	1.6
24	LOT - Polish Airlines	436	1.4
25	Iberia	417	-6.5

Source: DLR

# Air Transport Development in March 2026

## Development and Changes Globally and for Germany

### Global and German Air Traffic Trends in March 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: Global Passenger Flights Grow by 3.9%

In March 2026, the number of scheduled passenger departures worldwide grew by around 3.9% compared with the previous year, reaching approximately 3.2 million flights. The regions with the highest traffic volumes are Asia, North America and Europe. Traffic growth varies across regions; for instance, Africa experienced a strong increase of 7.6%. Due to the Iran crisis, actual traffic in March is expected to differ from the planned figures, particularly in the Middle East region.

#### Fig. 3-4: German Passenger Flights Increase Slightly

In Germany, around 58,300 scheduled passenger departures are expected in March 2026. This represents growth of 0.4% compared with the previous year. While flight offerings to Africa, Asia and the Middle East are increasing, services to Europe, North America and South America are declining. Around 50,100 departures are scheduled to European destinations.

Fig. 1: Development of the global air transport supply

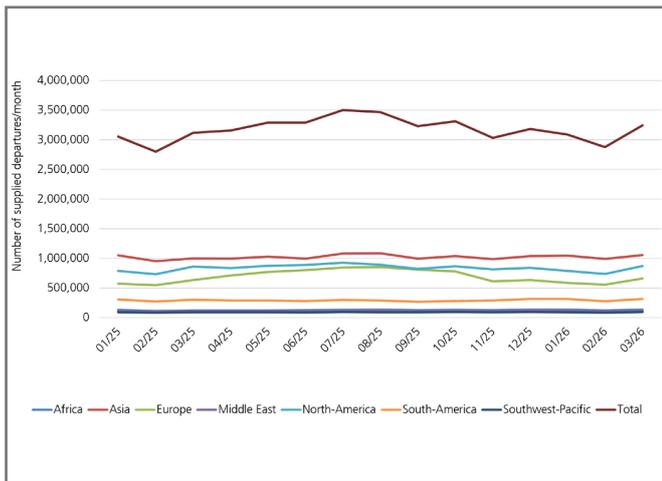


Fig. 2: Changes in the global air transport supply

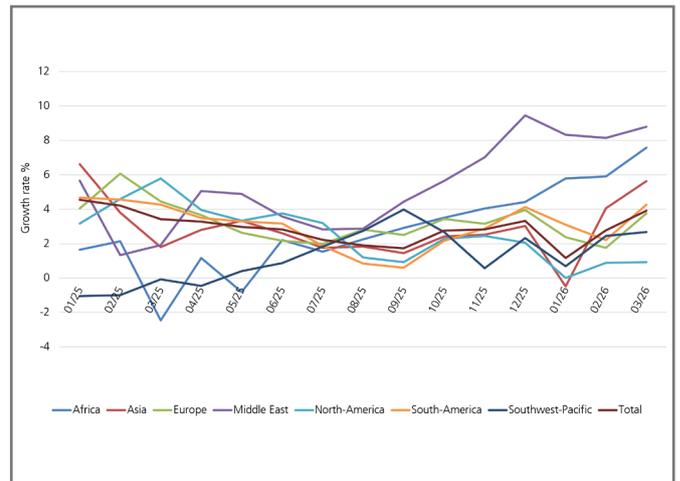


Fig. 3: Development of the German air transport supply

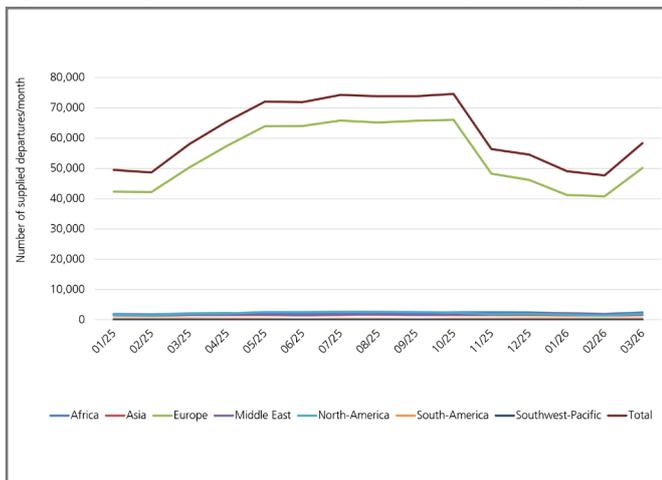
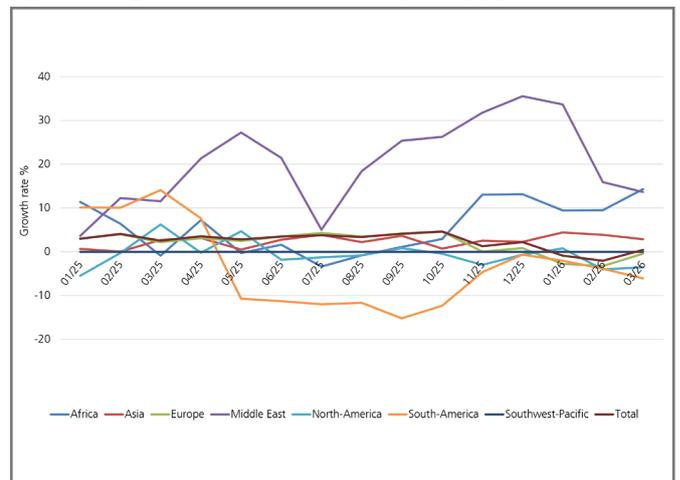


Fig. 4: Changes in the German air transport supply



Source: OAG 2025-2026, DLR 2025-2026

## 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 58 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.

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