

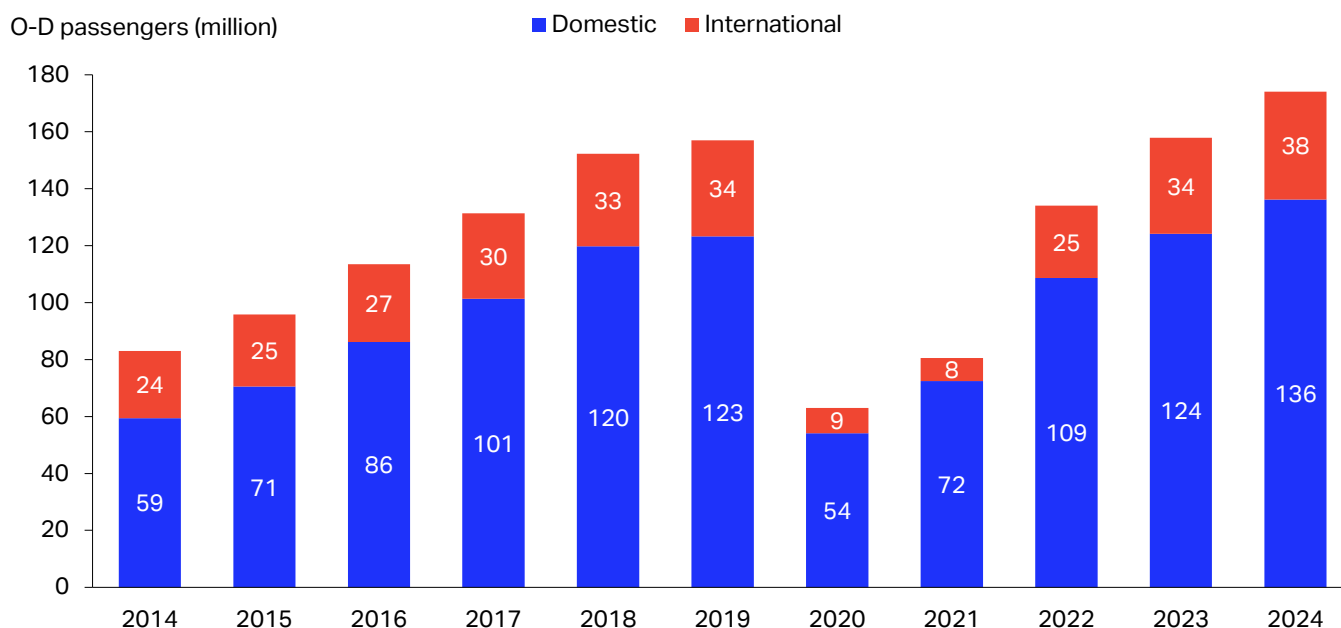


Chart of the Week

4 July 2025

India's drive to leverage air transport for economic development

Total departing O-D air passenger traffic from India, by type of travel (2014-2024)



Source: IATA Sustainability and Economics based on data from DDS

- India is now the world's 3rd largest air travel market, as measured by annual origin – destination (O-D) departures, which have more than doubled over the past decade. The country's ranking has risen from #8 in 2014. Domestic air travel in India has surged by 129% over the same period, thanks in part to policies supporting more affordable airfares. This enabled growth in domestic travel to outpace the already robust 61% growth in the international market segment. As a consequence, the domestic share of total O-D departures rose from 72% to 78%.
- The country's geography, growing population and economy, and vast distances between major cities, are important drivers of domestic air travel. The three busiest routes link Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru. While rail or road travel from the capital Delhi to Bengaluru – India's tech hub – takes more than 1.5 days, flights transport passengers on this route in under 3 hours.
- International air travel underpins India's emigration, which is among the highest in the world. The most popular international destinations from India are the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and Saudi Arabia - countries with large Indian diasporas (top 5 together with Malaysia and Canada). Air travel between those three countries and India has increased by 59% since 2014.
- India's expanding air transport market illustrates the country's embrace of air transport as a vector for economic development. India plans to add 50 airports over the next 5 years, and the country also plans to achieve 1% SAF blend on international flights in 2027, and 5% by 2030. Greater certainty around taxation is critical for India to exploit the full potential of its aviation sector.

IATA Sustainability & Economics

economics@iata.org

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