

African airlines led the pack in January 2024, experiencing an impressive 18.5% increase in passenger traffic compared to the same month in 2023, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

This positive trend comes despite ongoing economic and geopolitical uncertainties across the globe.

While Africa saw the strongest traffic growth, the load factor remained the lowest among regions at 73.3%. This indicates that while passenger numbers are rising, planes are not yet fully filled to capacity.

Globally, passenger demand rose by a healthy 16.6% in January 2024 compared to the previous year. This growth was accompanied by a 14.1% increase in available seat capacity and a 1.7 percentage point rise in load factor to 79.9%.

Other regions also showed positive signs, for instance Europe saw traffic climb 10.8%, with the load factor at 77.3%. Routes between Europe and North America are recovering strongly, exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

In the middle East, airline traffic increased by 16.2%, and the load factor reached 79.9%, according to IATA economic statistics.

North America has also experienced traffic ring to 12.3%, but the load factor dipped to 79.4%. In Latin America, traffic saw a significant growth of 17.9%, with the highest load factor among all regions at 86%.

In addition, IATA reports that China's domestic market experienced a strong performance driven by Lunar New Year travel. Chinese carriers responded by increasing capacity, particularly with wide-body jets.

IATA Director General Willie Walsh emphasized the importance of supportive government policies for the aviation industry to thrive. He stressed the need to avoid increased taxes and burdensome regulations, and instead, focus on cost reduction, efficiency improvement, and achieving net zero CO2 emissions by 2050.