

More people flying in Africa

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Intra-Africa passenger numbers increased by 9.4% year-on-year (y/y) in January the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said on Wednesday (6 March).



IATA is an international industry trade group representing some 240 airlines comprising 84% of scheduled international air traffic.

Strong economic growth in many African nations - especially West Africa - was driving the demand and expansion.

Africa's airlines recorded the lowest load factor of 67, 9% indicating that planes were flying with more than a quarter of the available seats unsold. The load factor is calculated as a percentage of available revenue generating seats sold, averaged across all commercial flights flown by IATA's African member carriers.

The global load factor was 77.6%.

Intra-African premium air traffic grew by 14.7% in 2012, while economy traffic increased by 11.5% compared with global international air traffic growth of 4.8% and 5.9% respectively, IATA said that the premium travel markets were driven largely by demand for business travel, which is why the double-digit growth in this sector is good news for African economic growth.

Looking ahead, IATA said there were some promising signs for world trade growth.

Changes in new export orders tend to lead changes in future trade growth by three to four months, and although the Global PMI for new export orders has been in a decline for many months, recent results are showing a significant improvement.

The new export orders index is now almost out of "contraction" territory, indicating that world trade growth could stabilise in the months ahead.

Business confidence is a good leading indicator of premium travel growth itself.

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