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“Pioneering
Airline
and Travel
Technologies
Hitit's
30-Year Path
to Global
Leadership”



Airbaltic
to Become
Europe's First
Airline to
Implement
SpaceX's
Starlink
Technology



A Premium
Journey
Above the
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The AI Revolution in the Skies: A Glimpse into the Future of Aviation

AI technology is poised to optimize processes and assist professionals, enhancing both safety and sustainability. This shift towards AI integration is not just a technological evolution but a necessity for a safer, more efficient, and environmentally responsible aviation future.

The application of AI in areas such as flight operations and maintenance demonstrates its far-reaching impact. EASA explains how AI enables predictive maintenance by processing vast datasets, optimizing schedules, and predicting part failures, which can significantly reduce unplanned downtimes and improve operational efficiency. Meanwhile, AI's potential to enhance air traffic management (ATM) is critical for mitigating

congestion and delays, benefiting both the industry and its passengers. EUROCONTROL's commitment to the FLY AI initiative further underscores the collaborative effort required to advance AI standards and foster a suitable infrastructure for ATM applications across Europe.

Yet, as Alex Brooker from Cirium points out, implementing AI in aviation is no easy task. Brooker emphasizes challenges like data management and safety validation—issues that demand sophisticated solutions to ensure that AI applications are trustworthy and reliable. He raises the critical point that aviation's data-rich environment also presents a unique challenge; harmonizing data from varied sources like weather reports, air traffic systems, and

passenger information is paramount for AI's success in predictive analytics and operational decision-making.

The ethical implications and cybersecurity concerns associated with AI in aviation also cannot be overlooked. As EASA stresses,

robust safety and risk management protocols are necessary for building secure AI systems that protect sensitive data and prevent cyberattacks, reinforcing the industry's commitment to operational integrity.

Finally, the potential of AI in supporting





new and innovative air mobility solutions, including drones and air taxis, opens an exciting chapter for the future. AI will be instrumental in managing the airspace as it becomes more congested, ensuring the seamless integration of manned and unmanned

aircraft through advanced U-space services.

In a field as complex and regulated as aviation, AI holds the promise of overcoming longstanding challenges, from optimizing flight trajectories to enhancing passenger experiences. However,

as all our contributors emphasize, realizing this potential will require a collaborative, cautious, and well-regulated approach to ensure that AI's transformative power is wielded responsibly.

AI is reshaping aviation and to consider the questions and challenges that lie

ahead. I believe the AI in the Sky: A Unified Approach with ICAO event will shed light on the future of the aviation industry in this context.

Enjoy the issue ... [→](#)

Ayşe Akalın
Editor in Chief

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Ayşe Akalın.



“Pioneering Airline and Travel Technologies Hitit’s 30-Year Path to Global Leadership,,

Since its founding in 1994 by two female entrepreneurs, Hitit has evolved into a global leader in airline and travel software, exporting to 49 countries. The company’s journey began with the launch of Crane FF in 1999, the first loyalty program tailored for aviation. Now, with a comprehensive range of solutions spanning reservations to check-in, Hitit’s technologies are used at over 750 airports worldwide. Post-IPO, Hitit has enhanced its R&D focus, developing AI-powered solutions to support the sector’s digital transformation and promote sustainability and gender equality. We talked with Nevra Onursal Karaağaç, CEO at Hitit about the innovation journey of Hitit within 30 years.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Founded on June 6, 1994, and now celebrating 30 years, Hitit has grown into a global brand, exporting to 49 countries. Could you share the story of this remarkable 30-year success journey with us?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç: Hitit was founded by two female executives who, with years of experience in the aviation industry, believed they could develop more innovative technology and address key gaps in the sector. By reinforcing its belief in Türkiye’s young, visionary minds and the creativity rooted in these lands through a productive and growing team, Hitit provides solution-oriented,

smart, reliable, and creative services and solutions for airline and travel industry players focused on growth and transformation. We position ourselves as a role model in sustaining the airline and travel industries through intelligent technologies, and we’re proud to have become the world’s third-largest technology company in our field today.

Looking back, I’d say our first major milestone on this journey was Crane FF. In 1999, we launched Crane FF (Frequent Flyer), the first loyalty solution specifically tailored for the aviation sector, and by 2012, it had become the world’s most widely adopted solution of its kind. Crane FF brought Hitit recognition across the industry, and we’ve since continued expanding our Crane solutions portfolio to deliver next-generation technology and software to companies—especially airlines—

in the air transportation and travel sectors. Hitit now exports commercial airline applications such as passenger services, operations, accounting, cargo, travel merchandising worldwide through its software-as-a-service model, providing solutions and services to airlines of all sizes, from the smallest carriers to the largest.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As Türkiye's rising star in airline and travel IT solutions, Hitit serves clients with a team of over 400, primarily based in Istanbul, Pakistan, and the Netherlands, with additional locations worldwide. Could you please give us some information about your goals and expectations for the year 2025 with the new offices, both in terms of the number of staff and the organization?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç: As you mentioned, we operate with a team of over 400 employees, approximately 70% of whom are engineers. Our headquarters is based at İTÜ Teknokent in Istanbul, and we also have teams in Pakistan and the Netherlands. With local representatives worldwide, we stay closely aligned with the airline and travel sectors, adapting to regional dynamics. Our teams at headquarters, along with those in the Netherlands and Pakistan and our local representatives, all work together seamlessly. We've established a remarkable balance by thoughtfully



crafting this harmony and blending it with Hitit's unique team spirit. This team spirit and balance are what set us apart, driving success and consistent growth in our industry.

Our company has successfully navigated key milestones, including the pandemic and our IPO achievements that have elevated Hitit to a leading position in Türkiye and globally. As you know, we are now the second-largest reservation systems provider in Europe and the third-largest worldwide. Thirty years ago, when two female entrepreneurs set out with the goal to "develop airline technology and sell it to the world," it may not have garnered much attention. But today, beyond establishing a prominent name in the industry, we have become a force to trigger change with a vision, innovative strength, and business development capacity that drive transformation across the sector.

Our strength was further solidified in 2022 with the addition of our investors through our IPO, which reinforced our dynamic growth. We are in a financially strong position and will continue investing, supported by solid cash flow. We aim to make 2025 a year where we especially strengthen our R&D efforts through investments and share Hitit's developments and innovations with the global airline and travel community at major international events. In parallel, we plan to expand our ecosystem with new partnerships.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As Türkiye's first civil airline and travel technology company, you currently provide software-as-a-service to 75 partners across 49 countries on six continents, with Hitit's technologies now in use at over 750 airports worldwide. Could you share more about the primary products and services that Hitit offers to its

clients (partners)? We'd also love to hear about recent developments in your global user profile and portfolio, including updates on your solutions and any new clients joining your network. Have additional countries or clients recently been added to these figures?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç: One of the most remarkable factors that has established Hitit as a global brand is its ability to develop software that covers the full 360-degree scope of airline operations. We offer nearly 30 different software solutions under key categories such as Passenger Service Systems, Operations Planning, Travel Solutions, Merchandising, Cargo, and Accounting. This comprehensive range of solutions is unmatched by any single technology provider globally, giving us a unique and distinguished position in the industry.

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Let's take a closer look at Hitit's current position through these figures. As you mentioned, we serve 75 airlines across 49 countries on six continents. Thanks to new partner acquisitions and integration efforts tailored to the evolving needs of our existing partners, the Crane solution platform now operates worldwide, connecting with over 75 banking and payment system infrastructures, more than 750 airports, and the customs and border systems of 85 countries.

Additionally, our partner airlines do not adhere to a specific business model; we can provide the same high-quality service to both startups and legacy carriers. If you look at our portfolio, you'll notice a significant number of flag carrier airlines. One of Hitit's distinguishing features is that, in terms of both technology and customer satisfaction, our partners often recommend us through word-of-mouth. This is an incredibly proud achievement for any

company. For example, despite differing regional dynamics, we currently work with four airlines in Romania and six in Nigeria. The most widely used aviation software in these countries is Hitit's Crane solutions. This illustrates how we continue to grow horizontally within existing markets while also opening doors to new ones.

We have new partners that we haven't disclosed yet, but as a publicly traded company, I cannot name them without their permission until certain procedures are completed. However, I want to emphasize that our expansion will continue in new markets, as well as in personnel and software solutions. We are moving forward with confidence and plan to sustain this growth trend into 2025.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As artificial intelligence-based systems become more integrated into our daily lives, you are undoubtedly focusing on the new technologies that will emerge in the coming

years. In this regard, what can you share about the new solutions and technologies you are developing and showcasing in the field of artificial intelligence (AI)?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç:

The innovations we've introduced in the fields of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are a direct result of our increased R&D investments following our IPO in 2022. Throughout this process, we have refined AI models trained on real data from pilot customers among our partner airlines, launching pilot applications in critical areas such as revenue management, dynamic pricing, and supply optimization. The initial results have been impressive, with our dynamic pricing systems achieving up to 95% success rates.

These achievements are evident not only in operational processes like revenue management and pricing but also in our functional modules, including rule-based

inventory management, loyalty management, and group and value management.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As a company that consistently increases its R&D investments, what portion of your budget has been allocated to R&D in 2024? We observe that companies are placing significant emphasis on artificial intelligence in this area. How are you collaborating with companies that specialize in this field? Considering that artificial intelligence is expected to be used more widely in all aspects of our lives in the future, what is your strategy for moving forward? In your view, particularly in the airline and travel sectors, will the rise of artificial intelligence pose a risk of unemployment for workers in these fields, or will it enable them to acquire new skills?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç:

We collaborate with suppliers specializing in artificial intelligence to enhance our AI-driven dynamic pricing capabilities. Additionally, as part of our omnichannel strategy, we aim to provide equal opportunities across all sales channels. Our AI-powered solutions will be integrated into our travel solutions, enabling broader implementation across various operational areas, while our efforts to develop new AI models will continue to progress rapidly.

Artificial intelligence is driving significant transformation in the air transport and travel sectors, and we can confidently say that this transformation will create new opportunities rather than lead to unemployment. AI and automation will enhance operational efficiency while elevating human creativity, strategy, and problem-solving skills. This shift will not only lead to the emergence of new job roles but also empower existing positions with new skills.

Companies like us are developing new solutions in areas such as AI-driven dynamic pricing and revenue management throughout this transformation process. These solutions not only enable more efficient utilization of human resources but also encourage employees to build skills in areas like technical expertise and strategic thinking. By automating routine tasks, artificial intelligence frees people from repetitive work, allowing them to take on more creative and complex roles. I believe the future will be built on an ecosystem where artificial intelligence and human labor work in harmony, leading to more opportunities for continuous learning and development. As professionals in the airline and travel sectors adapt to these new skills, they will be able to create stronger and more innovative solutions alongside AI.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Your systems can also be used in maritime and rail transport. As these sectors grow alongside aviation, can we expect to see more concrete projects from you in these areas in the near future?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç:

Hitit is a travel technology company that serves not only airlines but also partners across various segments, including airport ground service providers, major travel agencies, and tour operators. Within this broad service range, we have strong overlapping capabilities in areas like reservation and sales management, and we regularly engage with companies from different regions worldwide. For example, our award-winning product, Crane

PAX, is a comprehensive reservation system offered as part of our Passenger Service Systems (PSS) portfolio.

As a fully web-based PSS, Crane PAX offers an extensive solution that includes inventory management, fare management, marketing tools, central reservations, online and mobile booking and ticketing, allotment, departure control, and call center services. Designed with the same versatility, our software solutions can also support both maritime and rail transport, as demonstrated by our previous collaboration with IDO (Istanbul Fast Ferries Co. Inc.). Similarly, suppose TCDD (Turkish State Railways) were to modernize its railway systems. In that case, we would also be a strong candidate for that project.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: In our last interview with you in 2023, you mentioned that nearly 37% of your total workforce was women. Over the past year, how has this percentage changed? You also shared plans to provide technology training to support young women across various provinces in Türkiye. What training initiatives have you implemented so far as part of your social responsibility project, and what are your plans for 2025 and beyond?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç:

Compared to last year, we have seen an increase, even if only by 1%. Currently, 38% of our total workforce is female, and I'm proud to say that we are a company committed to achieving gender balance—particularly within the technology and aviation sectors, where this remains a challenge. I'm also pleased to share that women now hold the majority of leadership roles in our organization. Half of our Board of Directors is female, and of our nine senior executives, including the Chairman of the Board and the CEO, five are women.

Additionally, we are a signatory of IATA's 25by2025 initiative, a global campaign aimed at increasing gender equality in aviation. The primary goal of IATA's 25by2025 initiative is to raise the proportion of women in senior management and technical roles to 25% by 2025. As a company that has long surpassed the industry's



Şebnem Akalın & Nevra Onursal Karaağaç & Ayşe Akalın



Nevra Onursal Karaağaç met with Willie Walsh at the IATA annual meeting.

gender balance targets, we place great importance on gender equality. Beyond setting an example for equal opportunities in the workplace in both Türkiye and globally, we reflect this approach in our internal HR practices and actively take on responsibilities through NGOs. We support women's education in STEM through various associations and platforms, prioritize young women in internships and hiring, and contribute to their development through mentorship and scholarship opportunities. We are also proud supporters of the "100 Women Leaders in Technology in the 100th Year of the Republic" project launched by wTech, through which we will provide young women in STEM with enhanced education and mentorship. Additionally, through our sports initiative, "Rockets Up" we work to ensure equal access to sports for both girls and boys. All of these projects will continue to gain momentum in the coming years.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Given that the aviation sector cannot thrive without technology, and as one of the world's leading technology companies in airline software, what new software or technologies is Hitit developing to support the aviation industry's goal of reaching zero emissions by 2050?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç: Climate change, a global issue, impacts all living beings on our planet. We are aware of the economic and commercial risks it may bring and are taking concrete actions to mitigate these effects.

Hitit is developing digital solutions that allow airlines to monitor and optimize their carbon emissions. Our Crane Cost Accounting (Crane.CA) solution includes carbon emissions tracking and optimization functions that are aligned with the CORSIA guidelines developed by ICAO. These features enable our partners

to accurately forecast emissions and minimize them through optimal fleet and aircraft allocation, route planning, and scheduling. This approach allows airlines to proactively reduce their environmental footprint and contribute to the aviation industry's sustainability goals. Crane.CA incorporates a range of features aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the aviation sector in which Hitit operates.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As Türkiye's largest exporter of aviation technologies, what kinds of international events does Hitit organize for representatives of global airlines and travel companies to introduce further innovations to the aviation sector, increase brand recognition, and drive growth in new markets?

Nevra Onursal Karaağaç: International events are crucial for our industry. Since airline and travel are sectors that naturally

transcend borders, industry players can establish business connections worldwide, underscoring the importance of international fairs and conferences. We participate in nearly all conferences organized by IATA, where we have been a strategic member for 16 years. Additionally, we attend events hosted by leading aviation organizations such as ICAO, ERA, PATA, ALTA, and AFRAA, as well as conferences held by key industry evaluators like CAPA and T2RL and events organized by sector stakeholders like ATPCO and APG. We also participate in flagship trade shows like the World Aviation Festival.

Beyond this, although it is technically an internal, closed event, our Hitit Partner's Event has become a signature gathering in our industry. This event allows us to explore digital transformation in aviation from all angles while promoting Türkiye, bringing together hundreds of aviation professionals from dozens of countries, with participation growing each year. The Hitit Partner's Event creates a lasting impact throughout the year, enabling us to host long-standing and new partners, as well as potential partner airlines. It has truly become our signature event, receiving highly positive feedback for its contributions to sales 🌐

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Airbaltic to Become Europe's First Airline to Implement SpaceX's Starlink Technology

At the Riga Aviation Forum, We spoke with Mr. Martin Gauss, President and CEO of airBaltic, to gain insights into their fleet and route expansion plans, the use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), and digitalization initiatives.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Martin, thank you for the interview. Let's start with your personal assessments of the Riga Aviation Forum.

Martin GAUSS: The event continues to grow each year, featuring an impressive lineup of speakers. IATA was present, Eurocontrol participated online, and we had representatives from Riga Airport. Mr. Serkan Kaptan was also here to present on behalf of TAV Airports, contributing to a strong program. The celebration of Riga Airport added to the event's success.

During my keynote interview, I discussed our current position, as local understanding of these international processes can sometimes be limited. I hope that in the future, the forum will become even more international. I believe it would be beneficial to

rename it the Baltic Aviation Forum while still hosting it in Riga. It's still important to keep it in Riga, but I envision it as the Baltic Aviation Forum moving forward.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Can you share with us the figures on the Air Baltic's performance in the first nine months of this year?

Martin GAUSS: We are unable to share that information at this time as we need to approach the financial markets regarding the bonds listed on the Stock Exchange. However, we provided guidance in August indicating that we expect to meet our revenue, EBITDA, and passenger targets set at the beginning of the year. This is a positive outlook. We currently have record load factors and passenger numbers that exceed our booking expectations, although we are experiencing pressure on yields, similar to what other European airlines are facing. Overall, the outlook remains optimistic."

✈️ Aviation Turkey: With the fleet of 49 aircraft, can you tell us about the new orders and your fleet expansion plan and delivery schedules?

Martin GAUSS: Our 49th aircraft is arriving this month, followed by the

50th in February. Over the next five years, we expect an additional 50 aircraft. Next year, we'll add 5 more, bringing our fleet to 54 by the end of the year. By 2026, we'll have 66 aircraft, 77 by 2027, and we're on track to reach 100 aircraft by 2029. Currently, we have 97 firm orders and additional purchase rights, which we'll announce within the next three years as needed. This steady delivery schedule will take us confidently to a 100-aircraft fleet

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Do you have any plans for the new type of aircraft or bigger ones?

Martin GAUSS: We are exclusively using the A220-300. No variants of it. This aircraft has a range of seven hours, allowing us to operate flights to Dubai and various other long and short routes.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: How would you evaluate the performance of the A220 so far?

Martin GAUSS: The aircraft's performance is truly impressive. It's a 150-seater with providing a wider aisle that resembles a wide-body aircraft. Additionally, the larger overhead compartments enhance the passenger experience, setting it apart from a typical narrow-body

plane. With a range of seven hours, this aircraft allows us to explore a broader route portfolio, extending beyond Europe to serve destinations outside the continent as well.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: What are your plans for the route expansions? What are the new routes to be announced?

Martin GAUSS: We have 136 routes now, and each year add new routes. We focus on destinations that can be reached within seven hours. While we consider traffic rights and the capabilities of airports, we have no limitations in targeting major business centers and capitals, as well as leisure destinations. Additionally, we are continuously adjusting and increasing frequencies to existing airports.

For the upcoming year, we have already announced new routes to Mykonos from Riga and Ibiza from Vilnius, both appealing leisure destinations. We also recently introduced flights to Hamburg and Düsseldorf from Vilnius, which serve as key business centers connecting to the capitals. We are increasing our frequencies, currently operating 30 flights to Amsterdam from the three Baltic states. We have

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secured prime-time slots, differentiating ourselves from the low-cost model, which typically does not operate at Schiphol airport. In contrast, we do, and we also have a codeshare agreement with Turkish Airlines for flights to Istanbul, which is performing well. We are optimistic about expanding our routes as we receive more aircraft. Additionally, we have signed a contract with the Lufthansa Group for 21 aircraft, which will operate under our branding and uniforms for the next three years. This contract reflects our ongoing commitment to this aspect of our business.

Aviation Turkey: So, are there any new routes to Türkiye?

Martin GAUSS: No, but there could be leisure routes and charter flights to the popular destinations such as Antalya. This can be seasonal but now there are no scheduled destinations.

Aviation Turkey: You had a codeshare with Turkish Airlines. Are you planning to increase the frequencies?

Martin GAUSS: We are staying at the current frequencies (four times a week). I think it's okay for both of us at the moment. Let's see what the future brings. If there is more demand, of course, frequency can go up.

Aviation Turkey: What can you say about the SAF usage of Air Baltic?

Martin GAUSS: According to European Union regulations, we will have to have 2% of SAF in 2026. We will fulfill that. Today, we take SAFI wherever we can. In Riga, there is no SAF available, but for example, there are some airports like Oslo which is already mandatory, and we will be using SAF as it is foreseen when it's available because we want to use as much SAF as possible.

Aviation Turkey: Also, last but not least, what about your digital activities of your airline?

Martin GAUSS: We are a highly tech-driven airline, embracing numerous technological advancements. Our Frequent Flyer Program features NFTs, which are expected to sell out soon. Additionally, we have been accepting various cryptocurrencies as a payment method for the past ten years, which has proven successful.

The most significant upcoming technological enhancement is the implementation of SpaceX's Starlink on all our aircraft, which we hope to launch by the end of the year. This will make us the first airline in Europe to offer this service. While other airlines such as Air France, Qatar Airways, and United Airlines have announced plans for

Starlink by the end of next year, we believe our early adoption will greatly enhance the passenger experience. We have been working on the Starlink project for two and a half years, and we are excited to be the launch operator in Europe.

Aviation Turkey: Can you manage to solve the problems with the P&W engines?

Martin GAUSS: This is a common issue across the industry. We experience seasonal highs and lows; this summer, we did not have many missing engines, but we anticipate more shortages this winter. Currently, we do not have enough spare engines to support our entire fleet year-round. It is expected to take another one to two years to have sufficient spare engines for the Airbus A220. While it may take even longer for the A220, we expect to resolve our engine shortages within the next one to two years.

Aviation Turkey: Would you like to add something for our readers?

Martin GAUSS: Yes, we would like to see your readers if they are in Türkiye to come and visit the Baltics as much as they can.

Aviation Turkey: Thank you for sparing your time to our readers 🙏



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A Premium Journey Above the Clouds from Istanbul to Riga with AirBaltic



by Ayşe Akalin



My first flight with airBaltic on the Airbus A220 left a memorable impression. AirBaltic, with its modern fleet, offers a unique experience blending high-quality service with affordability, setting a new standard for business travel.

The journey from Istanbul to Riga took about three hours, and experiencing their business class truly stood out. The exceptional wine selection, diverse beverage options, and gourmet menu made this flight feel like a luxurious dining experience at 35,000 feet.

With its differentiated passenger

offer, airBaltic brings “the best of both worlds” with the benefits of both traditional and low-cost airlines. It provides high-quality service without excessive costs. Passengers can choose Economy Class tickets for flexibility, adding services such as baggage, meals on board, and seat selection, or Business Class tickets for a full-service package, including priority check-in, a front-row seat with extra space, a gourmet meal, and quicker disembarking upon arrival.

I also loved the bright, spacious cabin and the ambient lighting in AirBaltic’s signature colors, which created a fresh and



modern atmosphere. The Airbus A220-300 offers an excellent flying experience, with benefits for passengers such as wider seats, larger windows, more hand luggage space in the cabin and an enhanced in-flight experience overall.

The flight from Istanbul to Riga takes around three hours. One-way fares start from EUR 159* in Economy Class and EUR 299* in Business Class.

During the winter season, airBaltic plans to operate up to three weekly flights between Istanbul and Riga. Since May 2023, airBaltic and Turkish Airlines have been in a codeshare partnership.

AirBaltic, the leading airline in the Baltic region, connects over 130 destinations through its hubs in Riga, Tallin, Vilnius, and Tampere, with seasonal flights to Gran Canaria.

This extensive network offers convenient connections across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Caucasus region. As the Baltics' vital link to the rest of Europe, airBaltic ensures seamless travel with more than 20 codeshare partners, providing one-stop connections to over 200 destinations worldwide.

Airbaltic has recently announced the addition of 16 new routes to its network. From Riga, the airline will now fly to Rzeszow, Cluj-Napoca, Mykonos, and Stavanger. Additionally, from Tallinn, travelers can now reach Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Hamburg, Reykjavik, and Tirana. From Vilnius, new destinations include Prague, Rhodes, Valencia, Tirana, Tel Aviv, Chisinau, and Ibiza. The flight schedules for these new routes from Riga have been optimized to coordinate with transit flights to and from Estonia, Lithuania,





Finland, and Scandinavia, providing seamless connections through the airline's home base.

Single-type fleet of Airbus A220-300 – one of the youngest in Europe

The airBaltic fleet – one the youngest in Europe – consists of a single aircraft type – Airbus A220-300. The airline currently operates 49 aircraft of this type and plans to double its fleet to nearly 100 A220-300s by 2030. With new orders, airBaltic strengthens its commitment to the aircraft type and further reinforces its position as the largest A220 customer in Europe, and it maintains its position as the largest operator in the world for this aircraft type.

The deliveries for the additional 40 A220-300s are planned to start in 2026.

In late 2016, airBaltic became the global launch operator of

the A220-300 and since May 2020 has been operating all its flights with a single-type fleet of this aircraft type. Thus far, the airline has carried more than 16.3 million passengers on the Airbus A220-300 aircraft. The airBaltic A220-300s have completed close to 183 thousand flights and flown more than 401 thousand block hours.

For those seeking a reliable, high-quality, and comfortable travel experience, airBaltic from Istanbul to Riga offers a refreshing alternative in the skies. Additionally, Riga serves as a convenient gateway to the Baltic states and Nordic countries, making it an ideal choice for travelers looking to explore Northern Europe. With its extensive network and seamless connections, airBaltic offers efficient access to destinations across these regions, enhancing travel options for both business and leisure passengers.



TAM DONANIMLI UÇUŞ EĞİTİMİ



AW119T

Leonardo, dünya çapında benzersiz, entegre ve uygun fiyatlı eğitim ürünlerini sunmaktadır. AW119T, benzersiz yeteneklere sahip, hızlı ve güçlü, hafif, tek motorlu bir eğitim helikopteridir. Sağlam, dayanıklı bir tasarımla birleştirilmiş üstün güç güvenlik limitleri, mükemmel uçuş kavrama nitelikleri ve kumanda kabiliyeti ile tam donanımlı bir eğitim platformu olarak sunulmaktadır. AW119T ayrıca son teknoloji ürünü Gece Görüş Gözlüğü uyumlu tek pilot lisanslı VFR/IFR özellikli dijital kokpiti ve aviyonik sistemleri sayesinde sınıfının içinde en yüksek seviyede uçuş güvenliği ve hareket performansı sağlamaktadır.



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TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHANGING FACE OF AVIATION

Bariş Findik, CIO of Pegasus Airlines, looks ahead to the future of the industry.

As the CIO of Pegasus Airlines, I've had the privilege of witnessing our incredible transformation over the past few years. Since launching our digital transformation program in 2018, we've been on a mission to be among the top three airlines in the field of technology. Our dedication to new and emerging technologies has propelled us toward this goal for enhancing operational efficiency, passenger experience, and innovation. This has been a remarkable year for Pegasus Airlines, marked by significant strides in technology and AI use.

Pegasus Innovation Lab: One Step Beyond with Technology and Innovation

At the end of 2023, we launched the Pegasus Innovation Lab in Silicon Valley. Through our presence in the world's most influential tech hub, we became part of a vibrant ecosystem of start-ups, talented

individuals, technology companies, other airlines, and universities. By leveraging this diverse network, we aim to drive innovation and creativity, ensuring that we stay at the heart of technological progress. Our lab is playing an instrumental role in embedding cutting-edge technologies into our operations. The first project emerging from our lab was our AI-driven voice cloning and multi-language announcement system. From October 2024, passengers on select routes heard announcements in their local language - Spanish, Russian or Arabic - delivered by an AI-cloned voice of a real Pegasus captain. Our priority at Pegasus Innovation Lab is to capture innovations early, adapt them effectively, and turn them into value for our company.

Leading the AI Revolution - FlyGPT

This year we also introduced FlyGPT, a bold initiative to

lead new projects and training programs across the company to align our employees and business processes with AI technologies. One of the exciting outcomes is the Plan Your Trip with ChatGPT feature in our FlyBot app. This AI-powered travel assistant allows passengers to plan their journeys effortlessly, making Pegasus the first airline in Türkiye to offer AI-driven travel planning. There are multiple ways in which AI can support us in running more efficient operations and delivering a smoother travel experience. By positioning AI and similar innovative technologies as part of our business strategy, we aim to drive transformation in our current processes and place ourselves in an advantageous position to achieve our goals.

Inclusivity and Sustainability

Our innovations also make us more inclusive and sustainable. In 2024, we launched an AI-powered system that predicts wheelchair

needs on a flight-by-flight basis. This innovation has reduced delays by 80%, enhancing operational efficiency and guest satisfaction. Looking ahead, AI will play a key role in helping us achieve our goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. From optimising flight paths to supporting sustainable fuel development, we will use AI to drive change and shape a greener future for aviation.

Looking Into the Future

As a senior leader at Pegasus, I'm proud of the progress we've made in our digital transformation journey. We are dedicated to driving value at every stage of this path. Our ongoing commitment to technology makes air travel more accessible, efficient, and sustainable, positioning Pegasus Airlines as a leader among low-cost carriers. This approach allows us to push boundaries and establish new standards of excellence across the sector 🌱

A Gateway to Bavarian Culture and Festivities: Nuremberg

We recently attended the TasteofNUE event organised by Albrecht Dürer Airport Nuremberg and the Nuremberg Tourist Office. The event offered participants an engaging evening filled with insights into the rich history and vibrant cultural life of Nuremberg. The event highlighted not only the charm of the city, but also its accessibility, especially for travellers from Turkey.

One of the key points discussed was the convenient travel options available via Pegasus Airlines. With direct flights from Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen Airport, visitors can reach Nuremberg in

just 2.5 hours. Currently offering six flights per week, Pegasus Airlines plans to increase this frequency to seven, making it even easier for travellers to explore this beautiful Bavarian city.

Located in the heart of the Bavarian region, Nuremberg is an ideal hub for access to many nearby cities. Its strategic location enhances its appeal as a destination and provides a gateway to explore the wider cultural landscape of Bavaria.

There are currently eight nonstop destinations connecting Turkey and Nuremberg, highlighting the increasing demand

for travel between these regions. This surge in passenger traffic underscores a strong interest in connectivity and could lead to further enhancements in services and options for travelers.

the TasteofNUE event not only about Nuremberg's historical and cultural significance, but also

highlighting the city's growing connectivity, inviting more visitors to experience all it has to offer. There are four UNESCO World Heritage sites within just an hour's drive of the Nuremberg region: the Würzburg Residence, the Bayreuth Margravial Opera House, Bamberg Old Town, and Regensburg Old Town.

Nuremberg is also best known for its Christmas Market, which is considered to be one of the richest and most festive in Europe. This popular market transforms the city into a winter wonderland of lights, fragrances and holiday cheer, attracting visitors from the last week of November to the last week of December 🌟



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Routes World 2024

A Landmark Event Shaping the Future of Global Aviation

The aviation industry's biggest event of the year, Routes World 2024, opened its doors in Bahrain with a spectacular display of collaboration, innovation, and opportunity. Hosted by Bahrain Airport Company, the event attracted over 2,300 decision-makers, representing more than 230 airlines and 390 airports, along with key players from over 110 countries. Routes World 2024 showcased the dynamic, interconnected nature of the aviation sector while serving as a vital platform for shaping

the future of global air routes.

A Gathering of Aviation Giants

On October 5, 2024, the Bahrain International Circuit became the focal point for the aviation industry, as key figures from major airlines, airports, and destinations convened to discuss, negotiate, and unveil new route developments. Notable attendees included representatives from some of the world's leading airlines such as Turkish Airlines, Qatar Airways, Emirates Airline, Lufthansa Group,

Air Canada, Air France, and Gulf Air, among many others. These industry leaders came together to explore new opportunities, share insights, and form partnerships that would shape the future of air travel.

With over 9,000 meetings scheduled between airlines, airports, and destinations, Routes World provided a unique and valuable networking opportunity for decision-makers to explore strategic alliances, operational efficiencies, and innovative solutions aimed at improving the



by Şebnem Akalın

passenger experience and increasing air connectivity.

A Thriving Aviation Hub: Bahrain's Strategic Growth

Routes World 2024 was particularly significant for Bahrain, as the Kingdom's aviation sector continues to grow and evolve. This year's event comes at a time when Bahrain International Airport (BIA) reached new milestones in



passenger traffic, with a 13.2% increase in the first half of 2024 alone, serving over 4.6 million travelers. The country's new passenger terminal, which opened in January 2021, has already doubled the airport's capacity to handle over 14 million passengers annually, alongside an increase in cargo and flight operations.

Mohamed Yousif AlBinfalal, CEO of Bahrain Airport Company, underscored the significance of hosting Routes World 2024, highlighting Bahrain's growing stature as a regional hub for aviation and tourism. He emphasized that the event aligns with Bahrain's broader vision to establish itself

as a global aviation and tourism center. By 2026, the Kingdom aims to connect to 100 destinations worldwide, creating exciting opportunities for airlines and travelers alike.

The Future of Aviation

Routes World is much more than a networking event. It is a forum for addressing the challenges and opportunities facing the aviation industry. In 2024, participants engaged in high-level discussions surrounding key topics such as sustainability, new technologies, evolving passenger expectations, and the critical need for operational efficiencies. The 9,000 meetings held throughout the event provided fertile ground for new partnerships, route development, and collaborative efforts designed to enhance the overall air travel experience.





Steven Small, Director of Routes, expressed his enthusiasm for Bahrain hosting such an important event. He noted that Bahrain's strategic investments in infrastructure and tourism initiatives position the Kingdom for continued growth

in the aviation sector. Hosting Routes World has highlighted Bahrain's potential as a major player in the global aviation industry, helping to drive its goal of becoming an internationally recognized center for both air travel and tourism.

Among with the Global Participants; Turkey's largest airports, Sabiha Gökçen and Istanbul Airport took place in the event

One of the standout performers is Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport (ISG), which reported welcoming over 31 million passengers during the first half of the year. This surge in traffic underscores the growing demand for air travel to and from Istanbul, positioning Sabiha Gökçen as a key gateway for both international travelers and domestic passengers.

Sabiha Gökçen, located on the Asian side of Istanbul, is a vital airport for low-cost carriers and offers direct flights to a wide range of global destinations. Its growth in passenger numbers aligns with the broader recovery of the aviation industry, which has rebounded strongly after the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Istanbul Airport: The Growing Global Hub

Meanwhile, Istanbul Airport (IGA), the city's largest and one of the busiest airports in the world, continues to establish itself as a major player in international air travel. Opened in 2018, iGA Istanbul Airport has already become a key transit hub, connecting millions of passengers between continents. The airport's extensive facilities, which include advanced technology, luxury lounges, and a wide variety of dining and retail options, have contributed to its increasing popularity among travelers.

Istanbul's central geographic location makes both airports pivotal for connecting Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. This strategic positioning is expected to keep both airports growing as Turkey becomes an even more essential hub for global aviation. By the end of 2024, the number



of passengers at Istanbul Airport is expected to reach 82 million, these figures was 52 million in 2019.

Looking Ahead to Hong Kong 2025

As Routes World 2024 wrapped up, attention turned to the future of the event. Routes World 2025 will take place in Hong Kong from September 24-26, offering another significant opportunity for the aviation community to come

together, share insights, and shape the global air network. As the aviation landscape continues to evolve, industry leaders will undoubtedly rely on platforms like Routes World to stay ahead of emerging trends, foster innovation, and ensure the continued growth and success of the global aviation sector.

Routes World 2024 was a defining moment for the aviation industry, highlighting the sector's resilience, connectivity, and

the exciting opportunities on the horizon. For Bahrain, hosting such a prestigious event was an opportunity to showcase its growing infrastructure, strategic vision, and position as an emerging global hub. As the aviation sector continues to navigate a post-pandemic recovery, the collaboration and partnerships formed at Routes World will be crucial in shaping the future of air travel. With Bahrain setting its sights on becoming a key player





in the global aviation market, the future looks bright for both the Kingdom and the aviation industry as a whole.

Rimini - Italy will host Routes Europe 2026

At Routes World 2024, it was officially announced that Rimini will host Routes Europe 2026. Situated in Italy's Emilia - Romagna region, Rimini has seen significant growth as a

key tourist destination. By hosting Routes Europe 2026, the city will highlight its ongoing urban transformation and commitment to sustainability, showcasing its potential to leading airlines from the region's fastest-growing markets.

Leonardo Corbucci, CEO of AIRiminum 2014 S.p.A., which operates Rimini and San Marino International Airport, spoke to the strategic

importance of the airport in connecting the region to Europe. "Rimini Airport is the gateway to our region, and its continued development is crucial in positioning Rimini as a cutting-edge international city," Corbucci stated.

Newcastle International Airport named overall winner of the Routes World Awards

At a glittering gala night at the Bahrain National Theatre, the Routes Awards found their owners. The 2024 Routes World Awards recognized excellence across the aviation industry with several key winners. Newcastle International Airport was celebrated as the Overall Winner and took home the award for airports with fewer than 5 million passengers. Other notable airport winners included Edmonton International Airport in the 5-10 million passenger category, Prague Airport for 10-20 million passengers, and Brussels Airport, which claimed the award for airports with over 20 million passengers. The Destination Award went to the Deputy Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Cyprus, while British Airways was honored as the Airline of the Year. In individual accolades, Michael Garko, Senior Network & Scheduling Analyst at Sun Country Airlines, was named Rising Star, and Jay L. Lingeswara, Vice President of Commercial at VietJet Air, received the Individual Leadership Award. This year's awards highlighted the outstanding contributions of organizations and individuals shaping the future of air travel 🌐



ISTANBUL SABIHA GOKCEN AIRPORT

Your Gateway to Türkiye and Beyond

Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen (ISG) International Airport is your gateway into Istanbul's rich tapestry of history, culture, shopping and dining. Situated on the Anatolian side of the city, ISG connects 140 destinations worldwide across 51 countries.

With the addition of a second runway in December, 2023, Sabiha Gökçen Airport is poised to double its traffic capacity. As Türkiye's second largest airport, ISG served 371 million passengers in 2023, marking the highest annual figure in its history.

Innovative Technology

ISG continually enhances its services through technological innovation to elevate the passenger experience. ISG Mobile App provides a seamless digital experience, offering a digital gateway to airport services and information allowing passengers to check in for flights, track and view flight status, navigate the airport, purchase services such as fast track, lounge and access information on deals, campaigns and promotions available at the airport.

Embracing the future of travel, Sabiha Gökçen offers cutting-edge technology ensuring a secure and swift travel experience. The new chip ID card system allows Turkish passengers to breeze through their boarding gates, monitored by an artificial intelligence-based passenger tracking system for security. Coupled with the e-passport system, Turkish citizens over the age of 18 with chip-embedded passports can scan their passports at e-passport counters for a fast and easy journey through passport control.

To enhance the passenger experience, ISG provides an innovative E-Translator system, powered by advanced AI and machine learning, offering real-time language translation service at



information desks, parking payment centers, and lost property units. This innovative solution breaks down language barriers, ensuring seamless communication for all passengers maximizing their travel experience.

With these comprehensive services and innovation, ISG offers a seamless and enjoyable travel experience for all its guests.

Introducing SAVVY Digital Assistant

As customer demands soar, businesses must adapt to deliver exceptional service. Therefore Sabiha Gökçen has introduced its AI Digital

Assistant SAVVY in order to provide exceptional customer service and to optimize processes.

SAVVY, Sabiha Gökçen Airport's conversational AI application can efficiently handle passenger inquiries and provide support around the clock, thereby freeing up human support agents (at SAWCare Call Center) to handle more complex customer issues.

Experience the future of airport service with SAVVY

It is well-known that the chatbots are commonly used in the retail industry but SAVVY, the future of airport customer service – pioneers the use of AI in airport customer service by simulating human conversation with the passengers and providing responses to the queries.

SAVVY uses conversational AI techniques such as natural language processes (NLP) to understand the questions and automate responses. With instant responses and personalized solutions, SAVVY offers a new level of convenience and efficiency.

With this automation tool, now Sabiha Gökçen passengers can utilize SAVVY chatbot for customer service instead of waiting for a human agent to respond to their queries.

Making travel more convenient than ever





As CEO of Pegasus Airlines, I am immensely proud to reflect on the remarkable progress we have achieved in 2024. This has been a landmark year for us, as we continue to consolidate our position as a leading low-cost carrier (LCC) in the ever-evolving global aviation market. Central to our success are our investments in a modern, young fleet, our unwavering commitment to sustainability, and our focus on technology and innovation.

Operating One of the World's Youngest Fleets

With a fleet of 112 aircraft, averaging 4.5 years in age as of 30 September 2024, we operate Türkiye's youngest fleet and one of the youngest globally. A significant portion of our fleet now comprises new-generation Airbus aircraft, which offer enhanced fuel efficiency, sustainability benefits, and improved guest comfort. In 2024, we are set to receive a total of 16 Airbus A321neo aircraft, with a further 52 to be added between 2025 and 2029. This ongoing investment in fleet

A Year of Growth and Innovation for Pegasus Airlines

A CEO's Perspective

by Güliz Öztürk, CEO, Pegasus Airlines

renewal not only enables us to deliver a superior travel experience but also aligns with our mission of achieving sustainable aviation goals.

New Routes and Destinations

Our home base, Istanbul, with its strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, gives us a distinct advantage for network growth. Each new route strengthens our connectivity, offering our guests more choices and better access to an expanding number of destinations. In 2024, we launched several new routes across Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia, including destinations in Slovakia, Scotland, Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Egypt, and Kazakhstan. With 143 destinations across 53 countries, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing affordable, efficient, and accessible air travel to our guests.

Leading the Industry in Sustainability

At Pegasus Airlines, sustainability is not just a buzzword; it is at the heart of everything we do. In the first nine months of 2024, we achieved our lowest-ever emissions intensity, averaging 58.3 gCO₂/RPK. In recognition of our efforts,



we were honoured with the Global Environmental Sustainability Airline of the Year Award at the CAPA Sustainability Awards 2024 last week, based on an independent assessment of airline emissions data. As we work towards the industry's Net Zero 2050 goal, we continue investing in next-generation aircraft, seeking to expand our use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), and keep embracing innovative technologies—each a vital component of our Climate Transition Roadmap.

Pioneering Innovation and Technology

Innovation has always been a driving force at Pegasus Airlines. Since launching our digital transformation programme in 2018, we have continually sought new ways to improve operational efficiency and enhance the guest experience. Our commitment to innovation led to the establishment

of our Silicon Valley-based Innovation Lab at the end of 2023. These pioneering initiatives, reflecting our dedication to remaining at the forefront of technological advancements, launched its first project in September, where we introduced AI-generated captain's announcements in multiple languages, allowing us to connect with guests in their native tongues. Additionally, to adapt swiftly to the latest advancements in artificial intelligence, we've launched an initiative called FlyGPT in this year. FlyGPT serves as our umbrella program, leading the way for innovative projects and training programs across the company. Through this initiative, we aim to equip our employees and integrate our business processes with AI technologies, fostering alignment with cutting-edge developments in the field.

At Pegasus Airlines, we not only closely monitor technological and innovation trends globally, but we also maintain a strong commitment to leading and fostering a spirit of innovation in these fields. Inspired by emerging trends, our focus is on delivering unique innovations that enhance our guests' travel experience and on introducing technological and digital tools that empower our employees, helping them feel more capable and equipped. We encapsulate all of this in a single motto: 'One Step Beyond with Technology and Innovation'.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the future, I am filled with optimism and confidence in what lies ahead for the aviation industry and Pegasus Airlines. Our expanding route network, strong commitment to investing in technology and improving customer experience, as well as our industry-leading sustainability initiatives, position us for continued success in the years to come. We look forward to welcoming millions more guests on board as we continue to grow, innovate, and lead the industry towards a more sustainable and connected future 🌍

The Role and Regulation of AI in Aviation: Current Trends and Key Considerations

by Lale Selamoğlu Kaplan, Founder of Selamoğlu Law Firm

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the aviation industry, delivering breakthroughs that enhance operational efficiency, safety, and the overall passenger experience. One of the most promising areas in aviation is autonomous flight systems. AI's capabilities are paving the way for autonomous aircraft, particularly in the domain of drones and small cargo planes, where complex decisions can be managed by AI, reducing dependency on human pilots. In piloted aircraft, AI plays a vital role in assisting pilots, analyzing real-time flight data to suggest optimal actions, and automating certain controls, which ultimately reduces the workload on flight crews.

In air traffic control (ATC), AI-driven systems are being used to optimize traffic flow, a development that not only reduces congestion at airports but also enhances the efficiency of crowded airspace. Collision avoidance is another crucial application, where AI algorithms help aircraft

detect potential risks mid-air and suggest corrective actions to pilots, thus improving safety.

In the realm of maintenance and operations, AI allows airlines to practice predictive maintenance by analyzing data to forecast potential equipment failures. This approach enables preemptive action, cutting costs associated with unexpected downtime. Furthermore, AI-powered drones and robots are now used to perform routine visual inspections, reducing the time needed to check for any structural defects or damages.

Customer experience has also benefitted from AI's applications, as many airlines now use virtual assistants to assist travelers with booking flights, answering common queries, and providing real-time flight updates. By analyzing customer data, AI systems can offer personalized recommendations, such as flight upgrades or in-flight services tailored to



individual preferences, thus enhancing the travel experience.

Safety remains a top priority, with AI playing a role in analyzing vast amounts of flight data to detect patterns that might indicate safety risks or anomalies, leading to improved protocols. Additionally, advanced simulators powered by AI allow for more effective pilot training, replicating complex scenarios and fostering adaptive learning environments.

AI is also advancing sustainability efforts. By optimizing flight routes, speeds, and

altitudes, AI helps reduce fuel consumption, contributing to environmental goals. Emissions monitoring is another area where AI provides airlines with the tools to track and manage carbon output, allowing them to meet regulatory standards for sustainability.

In air cargo, AI automates logistics, improving efficiency in cargo handling, sorting, and tracking at airports. AI systems can forecast cargo demand, enabling airlines to better manage capacity and avoid wastage.

With AI's growing role in aviation, regulatory bodies such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are actively developing frameworks to guide its safe and ethical application. Safety and certification standards are fundamental; aviation authorities require rigorous testing of AI systems, especially those in flight control and other critical functions. Most regulations also require human oversight for AI applications in autonomous systems, given that full autonomy in commercial aviation remains limited.

The use of AI in unmanned and autonomous aircraft is also subject to strict regulations, with guidelines in place for drones and urban air mobility solutions. Regulatory bodies in the EU and the U.S. have defined standards to ensure safe integration into airspace. In air traffic control, AI systems are required to meet reliability, transparency,

and security standards, with both ICAO and regional regulators setting guidelines to ensure consistency in safety practices.

Ethical and data privacy considerations are equally important. AI systems in customer service and data analysis must comply with data protection laws, such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to safeguard passenger information. Furthermore, AI systems must be designed to minimize biases that could affect customer service, security, or operational decisions.

Cybersecurity is another critical regulatory focus. As AI systems can be vulnerable to hacking or malicious manipulation, authorities are establishing cybersecurity standards to protect AI-driven systems, especially those used in autonomous aircraft and ATC.

International cooperation is essential to address these challenges on a global scale. ICAO is working to establish a unified regulatory framework for AI in



aviation, promoting consistent standards across countries. Through such collaboration, nations aim to create cross-border standards for AI-based aviation systems, ensuring interoperability, safety, and compliance worldwide.

Finally, research organizations, including the Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics (RTCA) in the U.S. and the European Organisation for Civil Aviation Equipment (EUROCAE), are at the forefront of developing standards that align with regulatory requirements. These groups are essential

to the advancement of AI in aviation, ensuring that technological progress is both safe and compliant with international norms.

As AI continues to evolve, it will likely reshape aviation in ways that push the boundaries of safety, efficiency, and customer service. However, robust regulatory frameworks will be crucial to balancing automation with human oversight, ensuring cybersecurity, and maintaining ethical standards. With these safeguards, AI holds the potential to drive transformative and sustainable advancements across the aviation sector.



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TAV Airports' Ambitious Investment Drive to Strengthen Regional Aviation Hubs by 2025

We met with TAV Airports CEO Serkan Kaptan at the Riga Aviation Forum to discuss the 2024 performance of TAV Group companies and operations, as well as their investment plans for the future.

Aviation Turkey: How is this year's Riga Aviation Forum going for you?

Serkan Kaptan: It's going well. We have around 400 participants this year. We've been sponsoring this forum from the start, with both our team and service companies present. Interest has grown each year. As you've seen, it's not only regional aviation companies and airports attending but also major organizations like ICAO, IATA, ACI, and Eurocontrol, as well as companies like Airbus, who come to share their insights. We organize this forum in collaboration with Riga Airport, the airport authority, and it continues to attract more interest each year.

Aviation Turkey: You've been active in Riga for nearly 15 years. Could you tell us about your activities here?

Serkan Kaptan: We began ground handling services here with Havaş in 2010, so we've been providing these

services for 15 years now. Ground handling is provided by two companies—the airport's own service and Havaş. As TAV Airports, we will soon mark our 14th year in Riga as of January 1, 2011. We manage all commercial areas within the terminal, including duty-free shops, food and beverage outlets, lounges, and other leased spaces. Our group companies, ATÜ-BTA are also part of this.

Additionally, our subsidiary TAV Technologies has implemented the AODB (Airport Operational Database) and A-CDM (Airport Collaborative Decision Making) systems for the airport. Through a separate agreement between Riga Airport and TAV Technologies, our technology company continues to provide service support in Riga.

Aviation Turkey: How did TAV Airports perform in the first three quarters of 2024?

Serkan Kaptan: We'll be announcing the results after our upcoming board meeting. In general, passenger traffic growth has continued across all our airports. We see the positive impact at all our airports.

Our financial results have also been strong. Our new airport in Almaty is performing exceptionally well. We completed our investment there and opened the new terminal on June 1, 2024, with all remaining work expected to be finalized by year-end.

We've made a significant investment in Antalya Airport, where all developments are set to be completed by the first quarter of next year. We're

doubling the capacity of both the domestic and international terminals, ensuring Antalya is fully ready for the 2025 tourism season. Major infrastructure investments have also been made on behalf of the State Airports Authority.

Our investments continue at Ankara Esenboğa Airport as well, including upgrades to the runway, taxiways, apron, and access roads. Additional projects, like a new Air Traffic Control Tower and aircraft hangar for the State Airports Authority, are also underway. These, too, are on track to be completed by the first quarter of next year. By the end of 2024 and into the first quarter of 2025, we will have completed our three major projects in Almaty, Ankara, and Antalya.



Ankara Esenboğa Airport

INTERVIEW

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Is there a renovation plan for the domestic and international terminals at Ankara Airport?

Serkan Kaptan: The international terminal at Ankara Airport is growing rapidly. This winter, we'll begin renovating the international terminal. All passenger flow areas, including duty-free shops and food and beverage outlets, will be updated. We plan to start during the low season, with everything ready in time for the next high season.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: What is the size of these investments?

Serkan Kaptan: The first phase of Antalya Airport involves an investment of €750 million, while the first phase at Ankara Airport includes an investment of €200 million, with €300 million planned in total. In Kazakhstan, a \$200 million investment has been made, which will be fully completed in the next 3–4 months.

In the coming period, we have a planned investment in Medina, which we expect to start before the end of the year. Once these investments are realized, we will be able to focus more on operations.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: So, to what extent did these investments contribute to the growth of the TAV?

Serkan Kaptan: With the Almaty, Ankara, and Antalya



Almaty Airport DutyFree

airports, our concession period has been extended to around 30 years. We manage airports through lease agreements, with Almaty being the only property we fully own. The additional 25-year operating period for Antalya and Ankara brings our total operating period to nearly 30 years, which is significant for both investors and shareholders, as it supports the company's long-term,

sustainable growth and stability.

It's important to view this as more than just airport operations. We also operate service companies that manage duty-free areas, food and beverage outlets, lounges, IT, security, and ground handling services. TAV continues to grow not only in airport management but also in the broader services sector.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: You are aiming to increase your EBITDA to around €500 million by 2025. How do you plan to achieve this, and what will drive this profitability growth?

Serkan Kaptan: We're only seeing a half-year impact from Almaty this year, given that the new terminal became operational in June. Antalya's new domestic and international terminals will be operational next year, and the increased traffic, along with additional revenue from new commercial enterprises, will undoubtedly boost our revenue. With rising passenger traffic at other airports, we're continually making upgrades. Airports require constant nurturing, much like a baby. We're consistently enhancing passenger services and commercial areas, which, in turn, will increase per-passenger spending.



Madinah Airport Lounge

We're also expanding our parking facilities. To reduce costs, we're investing significantly in solar energy. By April 2025, our solar energy projects will go live at three of our airports: Ankara, İzmir, and Bodrum.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Have you selected these airports as pilot locations?

Serkan Kaptan: Yes, these airports were chosen as pilot locations. We started in Türkiye and will be testing their efficiency this year. Afterward, we plan to extend these investments to other airports under our management.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Apart from energy investments, what is your overall strategy for sustainability?

Serkan Kaptan: Our approach to sustainability goes beyond energy and carbon; we take a holistic view that includes operational sustainability and employee satisfaction. From an environmental perspective, all our new investments are rigorously certified, either as LEED Gold or EDGE Advanced—globally recognized standards that are also accepted by creditors. We work with institutions like the IFC, EBRD, and the Asian Development Bank, which are part of the World Bank Group. Their strict standards, frankly, work to our advantage as we leverage these requirements to minimize environmental impact.



Antalya Airport

In the regions where we operate, our goal isn't just to build airports, generate revenue, or pay rent to the government. We aim to enhance the quality of life for local communities and continually seek ways to contribute to sustainability in these areas.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: You successfully operate 15 airports in eight countries. What are your goals for further expanding and strengthening your presence in different regions abroad? Can we expect any new developments in the near future?

Serkan Kaptan: We're always focused on growth. Through our service companies, we provide services to 110 airports in 30 countries. In terms of airport management, we operate 15 airports in eight countries. In some locations, we manage lounges; in others, we offer technology services; and at some airports, we operate duty-free shops or provide food and beverage services. This broad presence across different regions allows us to experience diverse airports, countries, and cultures and helps us identify new opportunities.

Currently, we're following two tenders for airport operations. One is for the Podgorica and Tivat airports in Montenegro. The pre-qualification process for these was completed before the pandemic, but changes in government significantly extended the timeline. We expect the tender to proceed by the end of this year or early next year, and we're one of the three qualified companies. Similarly, there's a tender in Kuwait, where three companies, including us, are competing. We anticipate a final decision on this by year-end.



Madinah Airport

INTERVIEW



Tbilisi Airport

✈️ Aviation Turkey: The extension of the Macedonia contract had been on the public agenda. Could you tell us more about this?

Serkan Kaptan: We have a 20-year concession in Macedonia, with eight years remaining. Traffic is growing rapidly there, as it is across the entire Balkan region. As you know, we also operate at Zagreb Airport in Croatia. In Macedonia, we're exploring possibilities for new investments in exchange for future opportunities, but with eight years still left on the concession, there are currently no plans for a new tender or extension. The airport undergoes regular upgrades, maintenance, and renovations to accommodate passenger traffic.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: As you mentioned, TAV Technologies plays a significant role in your operations. Could you update us on the latest developments in your smart airport initiatives?

Serkan Kaptan: We initially used our own airports as pilot locations to test these technologies. At the time, Istanbul Atatürk Airport was our largest hub, where we experimented with many solutions. As these projects proved successful, we began exporting our products. Today, beyond the airports we operate in Türkiye, TAV Technologies' products are used across a vast geographic region—from state-owned

airports within Türkiye to locations as far as Panama, Mexico, Chile, South Africa, Riga in Latvia, and Thailand. Their offerings encompass a wide range of applications, from check-in and personnel management software to specialized systems like Airport Operational Databases (AODB) and Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM) projects.

Since TAV Technologies focuses exclusively on airports, it has the capability to develop all types of software needed within an airport environment. Initially established as an internal department, it has since become a fully institutionalized company, now offering services externally. TAV Technologies has reached €120 million in revenue and continues to grow rapidly. Technology is a vital tool we rely on to streamline operations in future airports and minimize human error.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: What is your perspective on AI technologies?

Serkan Kaptan: We use AI across various areas to enhance both passenger comfort and security. Now that the cameras are also smart, whether for density measurement or passenger security, we're exploring ways to maximize the benefits within our security systems by fostering collaboration between TAV Security

and TAV Technologies. In passenger services, our team also develops software for check-in and ground handling, fully integrated into the airport system. The ability to connect and integrate different systems is crucial, and having our own technology company provides us with a distinct advantage in this area.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Additionally, we'd also like to hear a bit about your role with Airports Council International (ACI).

Serkan Kaptan: I've been a board member of ACI Europe for three years, representing both our region and TAV as an airport operator. ACI makes a significant impact on the aviation industry through its statistical insights and lobbying efforts across Europe. Being part of ACI Europe allows us to exchange knowledge with aviation leaders, which brings valuable know-how back to our company. It's not about personal gain; by representing TAV, I gain insights and share our expertise. We contribute our understanding of emerging markets while benefiting from their experience in developed markets—ultimately, a win-win for the group. I believe we're making a positive impact on the aviation industry as well.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Lastly, is there a final message you'd like to share with our readers?

Serkan Kaptan: Frankly, we're seeing rapid growth worldwide in the post-pandemic era, especially in the regions where we operate. TAV is quite selective in this regard, typically focusing on countries with growing or emerging economies. Our key regions include Eastern Europe, North Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East, and surrounding areas in Türkiye. All of these regions are experiencing fast growth, and with that comes increased demand. As a group, we believe we're well-positioned to respond quickly to these needs.

✈️ Aviation Turkey: Thank you very much for your time 🙏

TAV Operation Services in Kazakhstan Extime Lounge Opened

TAV OS has inaugurated Extime Lounge at Almaty airport. Designed to offer an ultimate experience with personalized services, these two international departure lounges at Almaty Airport mark the first international development for Extime Lounge after the flagship inauguration in Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport in 2023.

The two lounges, a business lounge and a lounge for VIP customers, cover an area of approximately 600 square meters and 560 square meters, respectively. The business lounge offers 125 seats and amenities tailored to business travelers, including high-speed Wi-Fi, a business corner, a meeting room, a family room, an à la carte and live cooking buffet featuring global and local flavors, as well as a shower area and spa.

The VIP lounge can accommodate more than 100 guests and offers an upscale experience with a touch of luxury. In addition to the same amenities as the Business Lounge, it features premium food and beverage options, an

exclusive VIP room and a dedicated bar area. Guests are offered an end-to-end journey by entering the lounge through a private entrance. A dedicated passport and security control area ensures a seamless journey, and when it is time to board, the Extime team also provides VIP transfer services directly to the aircraft.

Franck Mereyde, Chairman of Executive Committee, Executive Board Member of TAV Airports commented "We are extremely excited about the international debut of Extime Lounge in Kazakhstan at Almaty Airport. We are the largest airport management platform globally, Groupe ADP, with a footprint in 120 airports in 50 countries. Our goal to sustain a high growth model in accordance with new environmental and societal challenges. to develop Almaty as the best airport in Central Asia. Our growth strategy focused on three pillars: Digitalization, Sustainability and Hospitality. We will continue in investing in Almaty to develop Almaty as the best airport in Central Asia."



Aude Ferrand, CEO of TAV OS, explains the vision behind TAV OS' new investment in Kazakhstan: "As a global hospitality company, we are delighted to bring our expertise to Almaty Airport by offering an exceptional lounge experience. It is essential to understand passengers and provide them with tailored services. That is why Extime is redefining the airport experience to make every visit unique and memorable, away from the crowds and the regular path, offering enhanced services and a wider range of amenities. We are very pleased to be part of taking the passenger experience at

Almaty Airport to a new level.

As Groupe ADP Chief Customer Officer, Mathieu Daubert commented: "We are delighted to expand the Extime hospitality model beyond our frontiers along with TAV OS. Extime lounge sets new standards on the luxury lounge segment providing passengers an upscale range of services, design and commercial offers within one single place. We are very confident of TAV OS strong expertise in providing distinctive end-to-end hospitality services to bring passenger journey in Almaty to the next level."

Platinum Lounge



Çelebi Aviation Unveils New Platinum Lounge at Çukurova Airport

Çelebi Aviation has opened its third Platinum Lounge at Çukurova Airport, hosting a grand launch event attended by Çelebi executives, government officials, industry leaders, partners, and media. Following the success of its lounges at Budapest Liszt Ferenc and Diyarbakır Airports, the new Çukurova location combines contemporary design with top-tier comfort to enhance the travel experience.

The lounge spans 788 square meters across both the domestic and international terminals. The domestic lounge covers 446 square meters and accommodates 96 guests, while the international lounge spans 342 square meters, serving 86 guests. Both lounges offer amenities including unlimited Wi-Fi, dedicated workspaces, accessible restrooms, baby care facilities, flight information screens, and a selection of premium alcoholic beverages. Guests can enjoy an extensive menu of food and drinks, making their waiting time more





enjoyable whether traveling for business or leisure.

Çelebi's Platinum Lounge not only boosts Çukurova Airport's modern infrastructure but also aims to enrich passenger experience by adding a layer of comfort and convenience. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Osman Yılmaz, General Manager of Çelebi Aviation, emphasized the company's 65 years of experience and dedication to innovation. "The Platinum Lounge is a testament to Çelebi Aviation's commitment to providing premium, passenger-centered services. This investment will not only expand the potential of Çukurova Airport but will also bring fresh energy to the regional aviation industry. We aim to serve around 250 passengers daily in both our Domestic and International Çelebi Platinum Lounges at Çukurova," he stated.

Founded in 1958, Çelebi Aviation has grown into a global leader in ground handling services, operating across three continents, six countries, and over 60 stations. Strengthening its presence in strategic markets such as Hungary, India, Germany, Tanzania, and Indonesia, the company offers a broad range of services, including ground handling, cargo services, warehousing, and VIP passenger support.





Aviation Turkey's Editor in chief, Ayşe Akalın, is on board with the cabin crew during the SunExpress flight from Antalya to Milan.

SunExpress Takes Off: Expanding Horizons and Enhancing Travel Experiences for Türkiye and Beyond



SunExpress, Türkiye's premier leisure airline and a joint venture of Turkish Airlines and Lufthansa, is setting impressive benchmarks as it expands its network and fleet to meet the growing demand for travel to Türkiye. In 2024, SunExpress has already carried over 12 million passengers and introduced a remarkable 28 new routes for the summer season, reaching nearly last year's full-year passenger count and marking a significant milestone in its commitment to boosting tourism and connectivity.

Achieving Milestones and Shaping Future Growth

At a recent press conference, CEO Dr. Max Kownatzki and Deputy General Manager Tuncay Eminoğlu announced SunExpress's plans for the 2024 winter season and beyond. With an 87% seat load factor year-to-date, SunExpress is well on track to surpass its 2024 target of 15 million passengers. "Türkiye's great value offering keeps demand high," said Kownatzki, who attributed

the increase to Türkiye's rich cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, diverse cuisine, and tourism-friendly initiatives by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Winter Network Expansion: Connecting Türkiye's Heritage and Beauty Year-Round

SunExpress has launched 15 new routes for the winter, the largest winter network expansion in its

history. These routes, both domestic and international, aim to meet rising demand for travel to Türkiye during the winter months. The new international routes include flights from Kayseri to Prague, Izmir to Rovaniemi, Izmir to Sharm El Sheikh, and Trabzon to Muscat. Domestically, SunExpress now connects Antalya with cities such as Bursa, Erzurum, and Şanlıurfa, and Izmir with destinations like Elazığ, Nevşehir, Sivas, and Şanlıurfa.



Tuncay Eminoğlu,
Deputy General Manager &
Dr. Max Kownatzki, CEO at
SunExpress



Kownatzki noted the significance of expanding domestic connections, highlighting the importance of supporting local tourism and boosting the national economy. The new routes enhance accessibility to Türkiye's major cultural, trade, and tourism hubs, underscoring SunExpress's role in strengthening Türkiye's tourism sector throughout the year.

Focused Growth in Core Markets: Germany and the UK

SunExpress remains strongly focused on its core markets, especially the German-speaking DACH region (Germany,

Austria, and Switzerland), which has long been central to its operations. In addition, SunExpress is expanding in the UK market, where it plans to increase service to 11 destinations by 2025, up from the current 9. This strategic expansion aligns with the airline's commitment to provide the most direct connections to Türkiye from major European markets, particularly to popular destinations on the Turkish Riviera and throughout Anatolia.

Ambitious Fleet Growth Strategy

The airline has also been recognized as "Europe's

Best Leisure Airline" in 2024 and continues to grow its fleet, adding 11 new aircraft this year to reach a total of 77. To further support its expansion, SunExpress is set to operate up to 85 aircraft in 2025, responding to the 17% increase in early bookings for the upcoming summer compared to 2024. Beyond this, SunExpress targets an impressive 100 aircraft by 2028, with an ultimate goal of 166 aircraft by 2035. This long-term growth strategy underpins SunExpress's commitment to accommodating increasing passenger numbers and further establishing Türkiye as a global travel destination.

Looking Ahead: Workforce Expansion

The airline plans to expand its workforce by hiring approximately 800 new employees in 2025, including 170 pilots, 400 cabin crew members, and over 200 ground personnel. Female leadership representation has reached 24.6%, nearing IATA's 25% by 2025 goal.

SunExpress continues to soar, delivering exceptional service and expanding its reach across Europe and beyond.

As SunExpress broadens its footprint, it remains committed to its vision of elevating Türkiye as a global tourism hub. By



Dr. Max Kownatzki & Ayşe Akalin



expanding connections and increasing fleet capacity, SunExpress continues to serve as a bridge between Türkiye and international travelers, bringing the country's natural wonders and cultural treasures closer to the world.

experience Italy's cultural heartland.

Flight Frequencies for Summer 2024:

Antalya-Milan: Twice weekly, allowing flexible

travel options from Turkey's southern coast to Northern Italy.

İzmir-Milan: Operating three times a week, maintaining its popularity among travelers from Turkey's Aegean region.

By continuously expanding its flight map, SunExpress is dedicated to bridging the distance between Turkey and Europe, facilitating leisure and business travel for an increasing number of passengers 🌍

SunExpress Expands Italian Horizons with New Antalya-Milan Route

Starting from Summer 2024, SunExpress now offers a direct connection from Antalya to Milan—a valuable addition to its European route network. Following the success of the İzmir-Milan route, which has been operational since Summer 2022, this new flight provides travelers even more options to



Mr. Kaspars Briskens

Minister of Transport
of Latvia

Riga Aviation Forum 2024 Concludes with Key Insights

The Riga Aviation Forum, a prominent aviation business conference, has commenced, focusing on both the opportunities and challenges facing the aviation industry in the Baltics.

This high-level event gathers key stakeholders from across the European and Baltic aviation sectors, including industry leaders, experts, and scholars. Discussions center around the strategic development of aviation in the region, while top executives from major companies offer insights into solutions for the sector's pressing issues, with a focus on innovation and efficiency in the path toward sustainable and climate-neutral aviation.

A major emphasis of this year's conference is the

future of aviation, exploring innovations, multimodality, the creation of urban environments around air hubs, and addressing the challenges of urban mobility.

Throughout the forum, prominent company leaders, experts, stakeholders, and decision-makers deliver keynote speeches,



Richard Maslen, Head of Analysis at CAPA & Martin Gauss, CEO of Airbaltic

participate in panel discussions, and engage in hard-talks addressing the current trends and issues affecting the aviation industry in the Baltics, Europe, and globally. Topics include future scenarios for net-zero-carbon aviation, the unique dynamics of air freight in the Baltic region, the critical intersection of

employment and education within the industry, the transformation of airports into next-generation socio-economic hubs, and the evolving challenges of ground handling in the region.

Following the opening speech of Kaspars Briskens, Minister of Transport of Latvia, Serkan Kaptan

Board Member at ACI EUROPE and CEO of TAV Airports delivered a speech on the current state of airports and aviation across Europe. In addition, a Keynote Interview was held with Martin Gauss CEO of airBaltic, moderated by Richard Maslen Head of Analysis at CAPA, to further explore the evolving dynamics of the aviation industry, AirBaltic's vision and current status at the market. Havaş CEO Mete Erna also delivered a speech focusing on ground handling.

Serkan Kaptan, CEO of TAV Airports and Board Member at ACI EUROPE, addressed the current challenges and opportunities within the European aviation market during his keynote at the ACI EUROPE event. He provided insights into the uneven recovery across markets, the ongoing effects of geopolitical tensions, and the structural changes shaping air connectivity in the post-pandemic era.

Geopolitical Impact

Kaptan highlighted that the non-EU+ market is underperforming (-20%) compared to the EU+ market (-13%), primarily due to geopolitical factors. He pointed to the war in Ukraine, where Ukrainian airports have lost all air connectivity, and Russia (-43%) and



Belarus (-87%) continue to experience dramatic declines. The conflict in Gaza also contributed to losses, with Israel suffering a significant decrease (-42%) in total air connectivity.

Structural Shifts and Market Recovery

Over four years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, total air connectivity (both direct

and indirect) remains 14% below 2019 levels, although there has been a slight improvement over last year's figures (2023 at -16%). Kaptan noted that direct connectivity (-8%) is faring better than indirect connectivity (-17%), largely due to the expansion of Ultra-Low Cost Carriers (LCCs) and a relative pullback by Full Service Carriers (FSCs) as the market adapts post-pandemic.



Serkan Kaptan - The Board Member at ACI EUROPE and CEO of TAV Airports

National Market Performance

Within the EU+ region, only a few countries have exceeded their pre-pandemic total air connectivity levels, with Greece (+22%), Iceland (+7%), and Portugal (+4%) leading the way. Meanwhile, Finland (-37%), Sweden (-31%), Slovenia (-29%), the Czech Republic, and Austria (both at -28%) remain among those farthest from full recovery. Tourism-heavy Spain has performed relatively well (-2%), followed by the UK (-12%), France (-15%), and Germany (-24%). In the non-EU+ market, Albania (+55%), Uzbekistan (+29%), and Türkiye (+24%) have shown notable growth.

Key Challenges for European and Latvian Aviation

Kaptan outlined several key challenges facing the aviation industry:

- Geopolitical Instability:** Ongoing conflicts, particularly in Ukraine and Gaza, are affecting Western airspace and reducing connectivity.
- Supply Chain Issues:** Disruptions in the supply chain are slowing down industry recovery.
- Cybersecurity Threats:** Cyber risks, such as data breaches and system outages, continue to pose operational risks.



•**Macroeconomic Pressures:** Rising fuel costs, currency volatility, investment constraints, and inflation have all impacted the aviation sector.

•**Pandemic Risks:** Continued viral outbreaks, like monkeypox, threaten the stability of the sector.

Sustainability Commitments

Kaptan emphasized the industry's commitment to achieving net zero CO2 emissions by 2050. Currently, 289 airports are certified under Airport Carbon Accreditation, covering 78% of European

air traffic. These airports have collectively reduced Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 20% in 2023. Notably, 130 airports have set ambitious targets to reach net zero by 2030 or earlier, with nine airports in Europe already achieving Level 5 Airport Carbon Accreditation.

Key airport actions for reducing emissions include electrifying ground support equipment, reconfiguring airside infrastructure to minimize fuel consumption and emissions on the ground, and supporting Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) initiatives. Additionally, airports can implement sustainable operational practices like Continuous Descent Approach (CDA) and introduce revenue-neutral modulation of airport charges based on CO2 emissions and aircraft technology. Developing intermodal connections with other modes of transport, especially rail, is also essential.

General Manager S. Mete Erna took place as a speaker in the "Ground Handling" panel.

The panel discussed strategies to make ground operations more sustainable and safe. In particular, the focus was on reducing the environmental impact of Ground Support Equipment (GSE). Transition to electric and hydrogen fuel cell GSE, increasing energy efficiency, use of environmentally friendly materials, streamlining operations to save fuel, and the importance of utilizing renewable energy solutions for charging and rapid refueling were among the main topics discussed.



Riga International Airport's 50th anniversary

A special highlight of this year's Riga Aviation forum is the celebration of Riga International Airport's 50th anniversary, marking a milestone in the region's aviation history.

Riga Airport is a fast-growing Northern European air traffic hub, connecting the Baltic countries with European business centres and popular holiday destinations. 5.3 million passengers were served at RIX Riga Airport in the first nine months of this year. The number of passengers handled in September, as compared to September last year, increased by 9 % and reached 664 thousand travellers. The company's forecasts show that by the end of the year, the total number of passengers served at Riga Airport will exceed 7 million.

Riga Airport serves as the primary hub for AirBaltic,

Latvia's national airline. From Riga, AirBaltic connects passengers to over 130 destinations across Europe and beyond. Turkish Airlines is operating 12 weekly flights between Riga and Istanbul.

TAV Airports has been managing the commercial areas at Riga Airport, the hub of Latvia's national carrier, AirBaltic, since 2011. Additionally, TAV Airports' subsidiaries—ATU Duty Free, BTA, TAV Operation Services and HAVAS—provide various services at the airport.

The World's First Airport Symphony, created by RIX Riga Airport was performed by composer Rihards Zalupe. Every move (luggage carriers, passengers, etc.) was filmed and then turned into a certain note using AI. Then composer Rihards Zalupe and the director put the video and notes into logical sequences, creating a unique composition. 🎵



Ajet Received First International Award

AJet, Turkey's new airline company, was awarded by the Association for Airline Passenger Experience (APEX), one of the leading organisations in the aviation industry.

APEX, which prioritises passenger experience, awarded AJet in the 'Four Star Low Cost Airline' category as a result of the evaluations of one million passengers worldwide. AJet awarded its success as the only Turkish brand to receive an award in its category.

APEX, one of the world's most respected aviation organisations, gives awards in various categories related to passenger experience.

AJet was the only Turkish brand to receive an award in its category among dozens of international airlines in the APEX passenger evaluation with its approach prioritising passenger satisfaction and affordable price policy. AJet was deemed worthy of the award in the 'Four Star Low Cost Airline' category as a result of the evaluation attended by one million passengers.

Turkey's new airline AJet, which made its first flight under the name AJet on 31 March, has received its first international award seven months after its establishment.

The award was presented to AJet Marketing President Fatih Cıçal and AJet Cabin Training Manager Türkan İşyapan Gürbüz by APEX/IFSA CEO Dr Joe Leader at a ceremony held at the APEX/IFSA Global Expo in the USA.

AJet Marketing President Fatih Cıçal said, "As AJet, we are proud to be considered worthy of one of the most prestigious awards in the world. I would like to thank all my colleagues for their dedicated work in building this success. We will continue to take steps to be the first brand our guests think of when it comes to safe travel at affordable prices, and to ensure that they choose us."



Istanbul Airshow 2024 Welcomes Aviation World

The 14th Istanbul Airshow International Civil Aviation and Airports Fair was held from September 26-28 at Istanbul Atatürk Airport's International Terminal.

As a specialized fair, Istanbul Airshow hosted domestic and international industry professionals, bureaucrats, government officials, businesspeople, students, and technical staff during the first two days, with public access on the third day. Istanbul Airshow 2024 successfully brought together key industry players, from

charter companies and brokers to Türkiye's national airline, Turkish Airlines, airline companies, terminal operators, flight schools, and aviation clubs. A total of 22 aircraft and helicopters, including business jets, training planes, firefighting aircraft, multipurpose aircraft, and helicopters, were exhibited in the static display area.

The Airshow featured the Airbus A220-300 regional passenger aircraft, as well as Dassault Falcon's new-generation twin-engine

6X and three-engine 8X business jets. Airbus proposes the A220-300 to meet Turkish Airlines' regional passenger aircraft needs. This year's A220-300 displayed at the Airshow belonged to Croatia Airlines, while Airbus had exhibited an airBaltic A220-300 in the previous fair. The General Directorate of Forestry displayed its firefighting equipment, including the T-70 helicopter with a 2.5-ton water capacity, the amphibious and tanker version AT-802 Air Tractor

firefighting aircraft with a 3-ton water capacity, a Bell 429 firefighting management helicopter, and the Beechcraft King Air 350, known as OTAĞ, with advanced imaging and satellite systems. Rolls-Royce, known for its Trent engine family in the aviation sector, showcased the Trent 700 engine model. THY, which ordered 230 aircraft in total from Airbus (150 A321neos and 80 A350s), also signed an engine supply agreement with Rolls-Royce, making it the world's largest operator of the Trent XWB engine with its latest order.



Opening Ceremony

The 14th Istanbul Airshow International Civil Aviation and Airports Fair was officially opened by Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Abdulkadir URALOĞLU. Other notable figures in the industry, including Director General of Civil Aviation Prof. Dr. Kemal YÜKSEK, General Director of the State Airports Authority (DHMI) Enes ÇAKMAK, Chairman of the Board of Turkish Airlines Prof. Dr. Ahmet BOLAT, CEO of Turkish Airlines (THY) Bilal EKŞİ, and CEO of Turkish Technic Inc. Mikail AKBULUT, also attended the Opening Ceremony held on Thursday, September 26, at the Opening and



Congress Hall of the Fairground. The ceremony included discussions on the advancements, investments, and goals of Turkish civil and military aviation, as well as Türkiye's position in global civil aviation.

In his speech, Minister URALOĞLU emphasized the impacts of accessibility and speed in all areas, highlighting the significance of civil aviation at an international level. URALOĞLU underlined the importance of aviation as the fastest, safest, and most comfortable means of transport, vital for establishing international economic partnerships and developing foreign trade activities. He stressed that the Airshow is essential not only for the future of the aviation and aerospace sectors but also for the economic and socio-cultural future



of nations. URALOĞLU remarked on the importance of air transport in the context of multinational production, cross-border financial flows, and the substantial scale of international trade. He stated Türkiye's strategic location with these words: "Our country, at a unique location where 1.4 billion people across 67 countries can be reached within a 4-hour flight, is naturally a bridge between Asia and Europe, at the center of the East-West corridor, and also at the core of the corridor from the Caucasus and Central Asia to Africa. With the bridges we have built in the skies, we have become a global aviation hub in the Eurasian region." He shared recent developments in Turkish civil aviation, mentioning that Türkiye has reached air transport agreements with 173 countries, allowing flights to 347 destinations across 131 countries in international routes. The Minister also gave information on new flight routes: "After long negotiations, we plan to commence flights to Santiago, Chile, via Istanbul-São Paulo-Santiago on December 18,

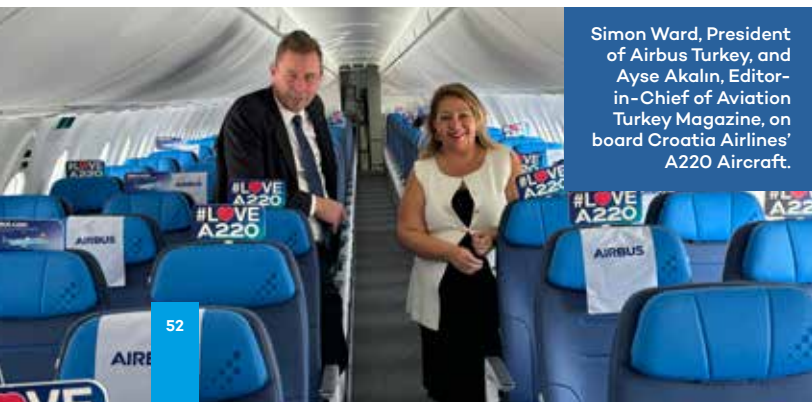
2024, with Turkish Airlines operating four frequencies weekly. This will be the first time Turkish Airlines flies to Chile. Additionally, as of December 4, 2024, Turkish Airlines is scheduled to start flights on the Istanbul-Kuala Lumpur-Sydney route. Following the launch of Melbourne flights earlier this year, Sydney will be the second new point in Australia. By the end of this year, we aim to reach 349 international flight destinations."

In his opening speech, the CEO of Turkish Airlines, Bilal EKŞİ, discussed Turkish civil aviation and THY's achievements and goals. He noted the continuous growth in fleet size, flight network, and personnel numbers, proudly stating that THY has long held the title of the airline that flies to most countries globally. He spoke about new routes opened in 2024: "With over 460 aircraft, we reach 130 countries and 349 destinations across six continents. In the coming months, we will connect Santiago and Sydney to the world through Istanbul, continuing to bridge global destinations. By 2033, with a fleet of 813 aircraft, we will be the



world's third-largest airline." EKŞİ emphasized THY's commitment to providing safe and comfortable flights while strengthening its presence in the aviation ecosystem through its subsidiaries, noting: "Today, we support the aviation ecosystem in all areas, from maintenance to production, and we are expanding with our subsidiaries for this purpose. We have become a major cargo and technical center worldwide.

We are also contributing to maintenance and repair activities, aircraft seating, cabin equipment, and flight simulators with our partners in civil aviation." EKŞİ elaborated on THY's future goals, noting, "With over 90,000 employees, we continue to grow. In the first half of the year, we increased our passenger count by 5% compared to 2023, reaching 40.6 million. Last year, when we celebrated our 90th



Simon Ward, President of Airbus Turkey, and Ayşe Akalın, Editor-in-Chief of Aviation Turkey Magazine, on board Croatia Airlines' A220 Aircraft.





Ayşe Akalın , Editor in Chief of Aviation Turkey Magazine and Sebnem Akalın on board of Dassault Falcon 6X.

anniversary, we shared our 2033 goals with the public, reaffirming our leadership ambition. In ten years, we will have the world's third-largest fleet. Our orders have commenced."

Director General of State Airports Authority Enes ÇAKMAK noted that DHMI has constructed airports, such as Istanbul Airport, Tokat Airport, Rize-Artvin Airport, and Çukurova International Airport,

that rival or surpass many global airports in various respects, during this golden era of Turkish aviation. He highlighted that the Istanbul Airshow plays a key role in sharing industry innovations, technological advancements, and collaboration opportunities, enhancing global competitiveness.

General Director of Civil Aviation Prof. Dr. Kemal YÜKSEK highlighted the

role of digitalization in the aviation sector, describing it as not only a trend shaping the future but also a guarantee of sustainable growth, operational efficiency, and safety. YÜKSEK highlighted the advantages brought by digitalization across various aspects, from aircraft design and air traffic management to passenger experiences and maintenance processes. Detailing innovations in aviation digitalization, he stated: "For instance, digital twin technology allows for the creation of digital models of aircraft and airports, enabling more efficient and cost-effective operations. AI-supported systems enhance air traffic management safety and allow for the early detection of potential faults in maintenance processes. Such innovations not only raise safety standards but also reduce costs, making the sector more competitive. Additionally, digitalization plays a crucial role in reducing environmental impacts that are in line with sustainable aviation goals. Route optimizations to

reduce fuel consumption and energy efficiency initiatives to minimize carbon footprints are managed more effectively through digital platforms." YÜKSEK emphasized the significance of investments in digitalization for domestic and national aviation projects, asserting that digital solutions developed for both civil and military aviation would strengthen the Turkish civil aviation sector's position on the international stage, making it more powerful and competitive.

Following the speeches, the ribbon-cutting ceremony took place. Minister URALOĞLU, along with other officials, visited the stands of exhibiting companies like Airbus, Rolls-Royce, THY, and Turkish Technic to receive briefings on the products displayed. The Minister also toured the A220 regional passenger aircraft in the static display area, receiving information from Johan PELISSIER, Airbus's President of Region Europe and Head of Commercial Europe for Commercial Aircraft, and Simon WARD, President of Airbus Türkiye 🇹🇷



The D328® Uplift Flying Testbed Becomes the First Large Aircraft to Successfully Fly with 100% Synthetic Zero Aromatics Fuels



German aircraft manufacturer Deutsche Aircraft has successfully operated the first-ever test flight using 100% synthetic zero aromatics fuel in both engines of the D328® Uplift flying testbed. This is the first time a CS-25 aircraft has operated solely on a fuel that is chemically identical to Power-to-Liquid fuel (PtL). The flight, which was conducted at Oberpfaffenhofen Airport on 9 October 2024, is the starting point of the CLIMOART inflight emission measurement campaign, which will investigate the benefits of using 100% zero aromatics PtL to reduce climate impact. PtL can be produced using sustainable CO₂, renewable energy and water in the future, offering the potential to reduce the CO₂ balance by up to 95% as well as decreasing non-CO₂ effects.

The current CLIMOART

measurement campaign with the D328® Uplift platform is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) through the LuFo-Klima Aviation Research Programme. The project is led by the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and Deutsche Aircraft, with Sasol as the contributing fuel partner. During this flight campaign, the D328® Uplift aircraft flies in formation with DLR's Falcon 20E research aircraft, which is equipped with probes to measure the emissions from zero aromatics synthetic fuel and to probe the properties of ice crystals in condensation trails. The campaign also marks the first time that the emissions of a CS-25 turboprop aircraft are measured in flight with fully synthetic fuels. The in-flight emission

measurements were preceded by extensive emission measurements of the D328® turboprop aircraft on the ground, powered by the same zero-aromatics PtL-proxy fuel.

The synthetic fuel is supplied by Sasol, a leading South African chemical company, that has mastered the Fischer-Tropsch process on an industrial scale. While the currently used fuel is not yet produced from sustainable feedstock (hence being called "PtL-proxy"), Power-to-Liquid fuels, or e-kerosene, have the potential to facilitate aviation's transition to climate neutrality in the long term, as their production is not constrained by feedstock scarcity. In addition to reducing the CO₂ footprint, the absence of aromatics can significantly reduce the warming effect of contrails and will improve

the air quality at airports.

Nico Neumann, Chief Operations Officer at Deutsche Aircraft, remarks: "The CLIMOART project is another piece of the puzzle in our holistic approach to optimising the environmental impact of our aircraft, with the objective of implementing the latest climate science in our D328eco™, which is currently under development. This achievement not only underscores the potential of synthetic fuels but also highlights the significance of the collaboration between industry and research institutions and the support from the German government in driving meaningful change and contributing to the global aviation value chain."

Regina Pouzol, Director Sustainable Flight at Deutsche Aircraft, adds: "We want the D328eco to

be compatible with zero aromatics PtL produced from renewable and sustainable resources, in addition to any other fuel choice of our customers around the world. I would like to thank the DLR and our fantastic team for their efforts and spirit of collaboration to make this flight happen.

“Sustainable fuels will play an important role in climate-friendly aviation in the future, especially electricity-based

fuels for widespread production,” explains Dr. Markus Fischer, DLR Executive Board Member for Aeronautics. “I am therefore particularly pleased that our new D328 UpLift research aircraft is the first in the world to fly with such a synthetic aromatics-free fuel in its turboprop engines on its research campaign premiere. With our ‘flying laboratory’ Falcon 20E, we are contributing DLR’s outstanding expertise in

measuring emissions and the resulting contrails directly in flight.”

The D328® UpLift Flying Testbed will be pivotal in the application of new, climate-friendly systems, fuel and propulsion technologies. It is predicted that PtL production volumes will have to be increased in order to meet the mandate of the ReFuelEU Aviation regulation obliging airlines to uplift a minimum share of e-kerosene by 2030.

The scientific findings of this campaign will inform policy and build momentum to support the required ramp-up of Power-to-Liquid fuels.

As the D328® Uplift continues to soar, Deutsche Aircraft remains committed to playing a pivotal role in innovation, setting an example for the aviation industry to achieve a future that is more sustainable and environmentally conscious.

Two Airbus H175 Helicopters Set to Soar in Australia with PHI

Two Airbus H175 helicopters have officially entered service with PHI Aviation in Australia, supporting their offshore energy transportation, search and rescue and medical evacuation operations.

PHI, which has pioneered many firsts over its 75-year history, operates bases in Broome, Darwin and Exmouth, Australia. The new H175 helicopters will be based out of Broome, with additional H175s expected to join the fleet in the coming months.

“These state-of-the-art aircraft are a significant addition to our growing fleet in Australia. They elevate our operational capabilities while reinforcing our commitment to sustainable



innovation and delivering world-class service to our clients,” said Cory Latilais, PHI Aviation Chief Operating Officer, Asia Pacific.

“We are pleased to support our long-term customer PHI Aviation with delivery of the H175 helicopters for their current Australian fleet. The high performance of the H175 aircraft in the challenging Western Australian environment is

an excellent addition for the PHI Aviation fleet, especially with their focus on search and rescue operations, and marine transfers,” said Christian Venzal, Managing Director of Airbus Helicopters in Australia and New Zealand.

PHI is a global leader in providing safe and reliable helicopter transportation, with a strong focus on supporting energy providers, hospitals and air

medical organisations, and governments worldwide.

The H175 helicopter offers superior performance, payload capacity, and range, making it ideal for long-range transport across Western Australia’s vast distances. Combined with the lowest vibration and sound signature in its class, and advanced Helionix safety systems, the H175 delivers exceptional comfort and safety for both passengers and the communities it serves.

These helicopters complement PHI’s existing multi-type fleet and can be reconfigured with hoists for search and rescue missions, or fitted with a medical interior for emergency evacuations from offshore oil rigs.



Air Astana Receives APEX Five Star Major Airline Award

Air Astana received an Airline Passenger Experience Association (APEX) 2025 Five Star Major Airline Award at a ceremony held in California (USA) on 30th October 2024. This is the 5th time that Air Astana has received this particular award over the past 7 years and it has also previously received Passenger Experience Awards in the Best Cabin Service, Best Inflight Food and Beverage, Best Seat Comfort and Best Onboard Entertainment System Excellence categories in recent years.

"On behalf of Air Astana, I am delighted to receive this prestigious APEX Award, which is a testament to the airline's total dedication to service excellence and passenger satisfaction," said Zhamilya Jaxybekova, Manager of Inflight Service of Air Astana at the ceremony. "We deeply appreciate the positive feedback from so many of our passengers, which has resulted in us receiving this latest APEX award."

The APEX Five Star and Four Star Airline Awards stand as the global awards entirely based on neutral, third-party passenger feedback and insights gathered through APEX's partnership with Triplt® from Concur®, the world's most used travel-organizing app. For the 2025 Awards, over one million PNR verified flights have been rated by passengers spanning over 600 airlines from around the world using a five-star scale. The APEX Five Star and Four Star Airline Awards are independently certified by a professional external auditing company.

Earlier in June 2024 Air Astana has been honored by Skytrax, another globally renowned organization, for the twelfth year in the row. Skytrax is awarded following in-depth audit assessment and analysis of each airline's front-line Product and Service quality standards, covering the onboard and airport environments.

Together, these two recognitions affirm Air Astana's holistic commitment to service excellence across every stage of the passenger journey.

Gözen Digital Aviation's Simorg Platform Selected by Atlantic Flight Training Academy for Digital Transformation of Pilot Training

Gözen Digital Aviation announced that Atlantic Flight Training Academy (AFTA), operating in Cork, Ireland, has chosen the Simorg platform to digitalise its training operations. AFTA will contribute to Gözen Digital Aviation's growth in Europe as the first Irish training institution to use Simorg.

AFTA's implementation of Simorg supports its goals of increasing operational efficiency, making a difference in pilot training with advanced digital tools and maintaining its outstanding success in the industry. With Simorg's innovative platform, AFTA's training processes will be optimised, data management will be strengthened and a seamless experience for students and instructors will be ensured.

Mert Yağcı, Commercial Director of Gözen Digital Aviation, commented on this important co-operation: "We are delighted to see Simorg's rapid expansion in Europe with AFTA, a well-established organisation, joining our platform. AFTA's focus on excellent pilot training will be further strengthened by the integration of Simorg's advanced digital solutions."

Mark Casey, AFTA's Founder, CEO and Director of Training, said:

"At AFTA, we are constantly looking for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our training operations. By adopting Simorg, we are ensuring our students and instructors have access to the most advanced tools, which means a smoother and optimised operation. We look forward to all the innovations Simorg will bring to our academy."



Flights from Sabiha Gökçen to Dublin have Been Launched



Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport (ISG), the second busiest airport in Turkey and the ninth busiest airport in Europe, launched direct flights to Dublin, the capital of Ireland, with Pegasus Airlines on 30 October. Sabiha Gökçen Airport continues to expand our country's international airline network by strengthening Istanbul's international connections with a total of five new routes opened in October.

Dublin, the fifth new international route opened from Sabiha Gökçen in October, also facilitated flights from Istanbul to North America with the possibility of connecting flights.

Starting from 30 October, Pegasus Airlines will operate two weekly direct flights from ISG to Dublin on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Dublin, the fascinating capital of Ireland, attracts attention with its historical and touristic richness as well as its large green areas and the hospitality of its people. Having the title

of 'City of Literature' by UNESCO, Dublin stands out as a deep-rooted cultural centre where leading names of world literature such as James Joyce, Oscar Wilde, W.B. Yeats and Samuel Beckett were born and raised. Dublin continues to attract the attention of travellers in search of cultural travel all year round with literary events and festivals.

Pegasus Airlines' Dublin route makes travelling to Ireland easier and access to the USA and Canada more convenient. From Dublin, which has strong connections to North America, major North American cities such as New York, Boston, Chicago and Toronto can be reached easily.

ISG CEO Alp Er Tunga Ersoy emphasised that with the new routes, they are strengthening Turkey's international air connections day by day, "We are proud to introduce a total of five new routes to Istanbul in October with the inauguration of the Dublin route. We believe

that the new Dublin route will both strengthen our relationship with Ireland and increase our interaction with this region by facilitating travel to North American cities. As ISG, we connect a total of 140

destinations, including 38 domestic routes and 102 international routes, in 51 countries with Istanbul, supporting trade and tourism. I wish that our new route will be beneficial for our country and all our guests.



Direct flights with Qatar Airways from Turkey for 20 years

Qatar Airways celebrated its 20th anniversary in Turkey with an event hosted by Turkey General Manager Evren Ökmen and his team.

Qatar Airways operates a total of 40 flights per week from Istanbul, Sabiha Gökçen and Ankara Esenboğa airports in the winter season and 56 flights per week from Turkey with the addition of Antalya, Bodrum, Adana and Trabzon airports in the summer season.

Airbus Delivers First A321XLR to Iberia

The aircraft, powered by CFM LEAP-1A engines, will be operated by Iberia on a number of regional flights across the airline's European network before its first transatlantic mission from Madrid to Boston later in November.

Marco Sansavini, CEO & Chairman at Iberia, said: "We are very proud to be the launch airline for this new Airbus aircraft. The A321XLR will allow us to reach new destinations, operating transoceanic routes and doing so in a more efficient way."

Christian Scherer, CEO Commercial Aircraft at Airbus, said: "Five years in the making, the newest member of the Airbus family is all set to join its first operator, Iberia. The A321XLR will enable countless new non-stop destinations; it truly opens a new chapter in air connectivity. It is another proud "first" for all of us at Airbus in our constant quest to innovate and bring value to our customers. We are pleased to share this special moment with a special customer: gracias y felicidades Iberia."

The newly delivered A321XLR to Iberia seats 182 passengers in a two-class layout with lie-flat business class seats with direct aisle access. Boasting the new Airspace cabin, the aircraft will provide passengers with long haul comfort in all classes. The XL bins provide 60% more luggage capacity for a more relaxed boarding experience for passengers and cabin crew. In addition, in-seat connectivity is available for passengers at every seat, and the latest lighting system enhances the overall passenger experience.

The A321XLR is the next evolutionary step from the A320neo which responds to market needs for even more range and payload, creating more value for the airlines. It will deliver an unprecedented Xtra Long Range of up to 4,700nm – 15% more range than the A321LR and with 30% lower fuel burn per seat compared with previous generation competitor aircraft, as well as reduced NOx emissions and noise. So far, Airbus has secured more than 500 orders for the aircraft.

The first A321XLR completed its maiden flight in June 2022. This was followed by an extensive test programme involving three test aircraft. As with all Airbus aircraft, the A321XLR aircraft is already able to operate with up to 50% SAF. Airbus is targeting to have its aircraft up to 100% SAF capable by 2030.

İGA Istanbul Airport, Published '2023 Sustainability Report'

According to the 2023 Sustainability Report of İGA Istanbul Airport, the Airport's energy consumption decreased by 10.7 percent thanks to energy efficiency studies, while its emissions decreased by 25.6 percent compared to the base year 2019. Within the scope of the 2050 Net Zero Roadmap, İGA Istanbul Airport is preparing to take another big and important step with the SPP investment to reduce its emissions.

With its investments in environmental sustainability, İGA Istanbul Airport recycled 34.66 per cent of its waste to the economy with an increasing trend, while 35 per cent of the water used was obtained from recycled water. İGA Istanbul Airport, which also continues its efforts to reduce the emissions of its stakeholders in its ecosystem, encourages the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

Taking decisive and responsible steps towards

serving a sustainable future and continuing its operations with the mission of 'Our Focus is the World, Our Goal is the Future', İGA Istanbul Airport published its Sustainability Report for 2023. The Report, prepared using double materiality analysis, reveals the steps taken in line with sustainable mobility strategies and the environmental, social and economic contributions of İGA.

According to the Report, İGA Istanbul Airport, which focuses on designing the integration of air transport with other transportation options, carbon footprint and resource use in the lowest and safest way with its studies on the future of mobility, broke records in the number of flights and passengers in 2023 with its inclusive and welfare-oriented service approach, while reducing energy consumption by 10.7 percent and emission emissions by 25.6 percent compared to the base year.





Dokia Air Launches Premium Charter Operation with New Dassault Falcon 2000LXS

Dokia Air, a new private air charter provider in Romania, has placed a new Dassault Falcon 2000LXS into service to provide the highest level of business jet transportation to local and regional customers. The aircraft is based in Bucharest.

The Falcon 2000LXS is a widebody business jet carrying up to 10 passengers. It's designed and manufactured by the French company Dassault Aviation.

With more than 100 years of aeronautical experience, Dassault Aviation has set worldwide standards in aircraft design. It is the only manufacturer in the world that builds business jets and advanced supersonic fighters side by side. Designed by the same engineering teams, assembled in the same factories and test flown by the same pilots, Falcons benefit from a know-how unavailable to other aircraft manufacturers.

"This is a big step up for Romanian charter, with a modern, highly capable and

very comfortable business jet," said Florin Susanu, CEO. "The Falcon 2000LXS is the first factory-new aircraft in the country. Its optimized design, reliability, short-field capability, as well as low operating costs, are much appreciated by operators and customers. In addition, the Falcon 2000LXS, like all other Falcons, can fly on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), thus significantly reducing its environmental impact.

"Dassault Aviation's unique DNA was also part of the final selection decision," Susanu said. "Inherited from its military experience, the company has always integrated the most advanced technological features into their business aircraft, bringing more safety, reliability and passenger comfort."

"Thanks to its optimized ramp image and superior weight design, the Falcon 2000LXS allows for unmatched performance out of challenging airfields even in adverse conditions, flying several legs without refueling



at the lowest operating cost, which will obviously be very profitable for our customers," Susanu added.

With a 4,000 nm range, the Falcon 2000LXS connects all major European city-pairs and routes to the Middle East and North Africa non-stop.

From Nice, it can reach the East Coast of the United States.

The charter company expects flights to the Greek islands to be popular in summer and to ski locations in Austria, France, Italy and Switzerland in winter.



SunExpress and South African Airways Expand Cooperation with Winter Flights

SunExpress, the joint venture of Turkish Airlines and Lufthansa, and South African Airways (SAA) are expanding their cooperation in the upcoming winter season.

After a successful first year, SunExpress is strengthening its cooperation and doubling the number of aircraft leased to SAA. In this context, the airline will allocate 4 Boeing 737-800 aircraft with cockpit and technical crew to SAA for six months. The aircraft leased in the new period of cooperation will have a new cabin configuration with 16 premium and 159 economy seats. The first aircraft will start operations at the beginning of November.

This increased capacity will enable SunExpress to support South Africa's flag carrier with 134 weekly flights on three routes, while offering wider flight network connectivity and more travel options.

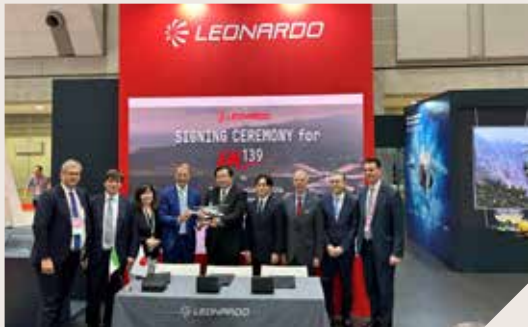
As the agreement enters its second year, the two airlines expanded their cooperation and worked together on a special training programme. Last September, a special training programme for SAA cabin crew was launched at SunExpress' headquarters in Antalya.

Max Kownatzki, CEO of SunExpress : 'We are excited to expand our co-operation with South African Airways and build on the successes of our first year together. 'Doubling the number of aircraft we lease to SAA is an important step to manage the effects of seasonality as we grow our fleet. The specialised training we are providing to SAA is an indication of our shared vision for operational excellence and reflects our desire to seize more opportunities together.'

Prof. John Lamola, CEO of SAA, said: 'SunExpress has demonstrated exceptional reliability since the beginning of our agreement last year. We are pleased to announce the expansion of our co-operation to include two additional aircraft during our peak season. The additional aircraft will support our growth in line with increasing customer demand and make it easier for us to manage the global aircraft availability challenge. We are also delighted that our cabin crew members will have the opportunity to participate in a special training programme that will further enhance the high level of service and safety we offer to our customers.'



Toho Air Signs for an Additional AW139 Helicopter to Enhance Shuttle Service in Japan



At Japan Aerospace Toho Air Service Co., Ltd., Mitsui Bussan Aerospace Co., Ltd. and Leonardo signed a contract for the supply of an additional Leonardo AW139 intermediate twin engine helicopter for Tokyo-Ai land shuttle services. The aircraft is expected to be delivered in 2025.

Toho Air, headquartered in Tokyo and with over 60 years of experience, operates commuter helicopter service linking together the six major Izu islands. The AW139 will deliver greater capabilities in terms of navigation, cabin space and comfort, safety standards, sustainability and maintenance approach enhancing the level of service provided to Toho Air's customers.

The signing took place as Leonardo and Mitsui Bussan Aerospace celebrate 20 years of successful collaboration in the Japanese helicopter market. The first major step towards growing success of this collaboration was achieved with the introduction of the AW139 in Japan, which rapidly became not only one of the most popular models in this country, but also a true icon across the globe as a bestseller and the most important helicopter programme in the entire rotorcraft industry over the last 20 years.

With over 1400 units on order, more than 1200 aircraft already in service and over 4 million flight hours logged to date with more than 300 operators worldwide in over 90 countries, the AW139 has demonstrated its ability to meet all requirements in every market application. AW139s are used by a number of operators in Japan for a wide range of roles including passenger transport, law enforcement, search and rescue, medevac, disaster relief, firefighting and electronic newsgathering.

Qatar Airways Launches the World's First Boeing 777 Starlink-Equipped Flight

Qatar Airways has taken the future of in-flight connectivity to greater heights by operating the world's first Starlink-equipped Boeing 777 aircraft from Doha to London on Tuesday, 22 October 2024.

This milestone establishes Qatar Airways, the World's Best Airline as voted by Skytrax in 2024, as an industry leader in bringing advanced technology on board. The airline is the largest and first carrier in the MENA region to offer passengers Starlink ultra-high-speed, low-latency internet. Starlink is free to all passengers and operates from gate to gate.

The national carrier of the State of Qatar is also set to exceed its initial target of three Starlink-equipped aircraft by introducing 12 Boeing 777-300s upgraded with this innovative service by the end of 2024. Qatar

Airways has further committed to rolling out the technology on its entire Boeing 777 fleet in 2025 – one year ahead of schedule – with the Airbus A350 fleet following in the summer of 2025.

This significant move highlights Qatar Airways' commitment to bridging the gap between the skies and the ground by offering ultra-high-speed, low-latency internet.

Engineered by SpaceX, Starlink is the world's first and largest satellite constellation using a low Earth orbit that will provide passengers reliable, high-speed internet so they can stay connected with friends and family, stream their favourite entertainment, watch live sports, play online games, or work efficiently at 35,000 feet – all for free and with a simple 'one-click-access'.

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Turkish Airlines Receives Three Awards from APEX

Turkish Airlines, the national flag carrier, has been honoured with the 'World Class' award by APEX (Airline Passenger Experience Association) for the fourth consecutive year, maintaining its position among the 10 airlines in the world to receive this prestigious award.

The global brand, which also won the 'Best in Class in the World Class Sustainability Category' award at a special ceremony held at the APEX/IFSA Global Expo in California, once again proved its commitment to excellence in passenger experience and operational quality.

As a result of extensive audits conducted by industry professionals, the 'World Class' award is judged based on

performance in three categories: Safety and Health, Guest Experience and Sustainability, for which Turkish Airlines won the 'Best in Class in World Class Sustainability Category' award. This success reflects the importance Turkish Airlines attaches to sustainable practices such as digitalisation and waste management.

In addition to these awards, the flag carrier also received the 'FTE Pioneer Award' from Future Travel Experience, part of the APEX family. The FTE Global Airline Pioneer Awards ceremony took place in Los Angeles to recognise six winning companies from around the world that are pushing the boundaries of innovation, enhancing the customer experience and playing an important role

in the advancement of the air transport industry.

Commenting on the awards, Prof. Dr. Ahmet Bolat, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of Turkish Airlines, said: 'We are proud to receive the "World Class" and "Best in Class in the World Class Sustainability Category" awards and the "FTE Global Airline Pioneer" award from APEX. These three achievements once again recognise the quality of our performance in enhancing the passenger experience, fostering innovation and delivering world-class flight experience to our guests, while highlighting our dedication to integrating sustainable practices into our operations. I would like to thank our

Turkish Airlines family for these achievements and our guests who trust our services.'

Dr Joe Leader, CEO of APEX, said: 'Turkish Airlines continually raises the bar in luxury travel by earning APEX World Class recognition every year. Its unrivalled global network, combined with a passenger experience that represents world-renowned Turkish hospitality, elevates excellence to new heights. Introducing the new Crystal Business Class suite in 2024, offering enhanced privacy, more spacious seating areas and elegant design details, Turkish Airlines continues to raise the standards of unique air travel, truly reflecting the essence of the APEX World Class awards presented by YATES+.'

Air India and Singapore Airlines Deepen Partnership With Addition of 51 New Codeshare Destinations

Air India and Singapore Airlines (SIA) have agreed to significantly expand their codeshare agreement, adding 11 Indian cities and another 40 international destinations to their network. This marks the first extensive expansion of codeshare arrangements between the airlines since 2010, offering customers enhanced travel options between Singapore and India, as well as beyond.

From 27 October 2024, Air India and SIA will codeshare on each other's flights between Singapore and the Indian cities of Bengaluru and Chennai, increasing their total weekly scheduled codeshare services between the countries to 56 from 14.

SIA will codeshare on Air India's domestic flights between Delhi



and Amritsar, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Lucknow, and Varanasi, between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Goa, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Thiruvananthapuram, as well as between Kolkata and Guwahati.

Air India customers will be able to access 29 destinations across SIA's network. These are Adelaide, Brisbane, Cairns, Darwin, Melbourne, Perth,

and Sydney (Australia), Bandar Seri Begawan (Brunei), Phnom Penh and Siem Reap (Cambodia), Denpasar, Jakarta, Medan, and Surabaya (Indonesia), Fukuoka, Nagoya, Osaka, Tokyo-Haneda, and Tokyo-Narita (Japan), Busan and Seoul (South Korea), Kuala Lumpur and Penang (Malaysia), Auckland (New Zealand), Cebu and Manila (the Philippines), as well as Danang, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam). This includes existing

codeshare arrangements to Kuala Lumpur.

SIA customers will also be able to connect to Air India's international services from Bengaluru, Delhi, and Mumbai to 12 destinations across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. These are Copenhagen (Denmark), Paris (France), Frankfurt (Germany), Milan (Italy), Nairobi (Kenya), Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Jeddah and Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Colombo (Sri Lanka), as well as Birmingham, London-Gatwick, and London-Heathrow (the United Kingdom).

Subject to regulatory approvals, the codeshare flights will be progressively made available for sale through the airlines' respective booking channels.

Turkish Technic Provides Redelivery Check for IndiGo's Airbus A320neo

Turkish Technic, a leading provider of maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services, and IndiGo, India's largest airline, have signed an agreement covering the Redelivery Checks of 7 Airbus A320neos.

Under this agreement, Turkish Technic will provide Redelivery Check services for Airbus A320neo aircraft at Turkish Technic facilities in İstanbul Atatürk Airport as well as Sabiha Gökçen Airport, with the first aircraft arriving in October 2024.

Regarding the agreement, Mikail Akbulut, CEO and Board Member of Turkish Technic, said: "We are pleased to further expand our partnership with IndiGo. This agreement stands as a testament to our technical expertise in aircraft services. With years of experience under our belt, we are fully equipped to ensure the smooth and timely redelivery of IndiGo's Airbus A320neo aircraft, contributing to their continued operational success. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration and exploring

new opportunities with IndiGo."

Commenting on the continuation of the partnership, Wolfgang Prock-Schauer, COO of IndiGo said: "We are committed to ensuring the highest standards of safety and efficiency through our partnership with Turkish Technic. This agreement for the Redelivery Checks of our Airbus A320neo underlines our trust in Turkish Technic's expertise and capabilities. This collaboration will support the seamless redelivery

process, ensuring our aircraft are maintained to the highest global standards."

Operating as a one-stop MRO company with high-quality support, competitive turnaround times, and comprehensive in-house capabilities at its state-of-the-art hangars, Turkish Technic provides maintenance, repair, overhaul, engineering, modification, tailor-made component supply and reconfiguration to many domestic and international customers at five locations.

Riga Airport Welcomes 6 Million Passengers from January to October

Preliminary data reveals that RIX Riga Airport handled 6 million passengers from January to October, marking a 5% increase compared to the same period in 2023.

In October alone, Riga Airport saw 667,000 passengers, a 7% rise from the previous year. Direct passenger numbers surpassed 531,000, up by 6% from 2023 and 8% from 2019. This upward trend in direct passengers has been consistent throughout the year, with increases of 5% from 2023 and 2% from pre-pandemic levels in 2019.



"We're seeing strong results in direct passenger traffic, even exceeding pre-pandemic levels. This growth is fueled by Riga Airport's extensive route network, the most comprehensive in the Baltics, catering to

diverse travel needs and connecting both leisure and business destinations," noted Laila Odiņa, Chairperson of the Board at Riga Airport.

This winter season, 11 airlines will operate direct flights from Riga,

offering more than 80 destinations—a notable increase of 13 destinations over last winter. Riga Airport is projected to welcome over 7 million passengers in 2024, representing a 6% rise from 2023.

The top five destinations from Riga this year are London, Helsinki, Oslo, Stockholm, and Tallinn.

So far this year, the airport has handled 53,100 flights, with a 3% growth in passenger flights and a 2% increase in cargo flights compared to last year.

Riyadh Air Places Firm Order for 60 Airbus A321neo Family Aircraft

Riyadh Air, the new premium international airline based in Saudi Arabia, has placed a firm order for 60 A321neo Family aircraft. The agreement was signed at the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, marking a significant milestone for Riyadh Air. The signing ceremony was attended by His Excellency Yasir Al-Rumayyan Governor of the Public Investment Fund (PIF) and Chairman of Riyadh Air, Tony Douglas, CEO of Riyadh Air, Christian Scherer, Chief Executive Officer, Commercial Aircraft at Airbus and Benoit de Saint-Exupery,



Executive Vice President Sales of the Commercial Aircraft business.

"This investment will not only enable us to support economic growth in the aviation industry, it will ensure Riyadh Air operates one of the most

fuel efficient fleets. It'll be instrumental in helping Saudi Arabia achieve its decarbonisation goals," said Riyadh Air CEO Tony Douglas. "This deal strongly reinforces the positive economic impact of Saudi Arabia's newest airline on

both a global and local scale to facilitate the fast-growing Saudi aviation ecosystem."

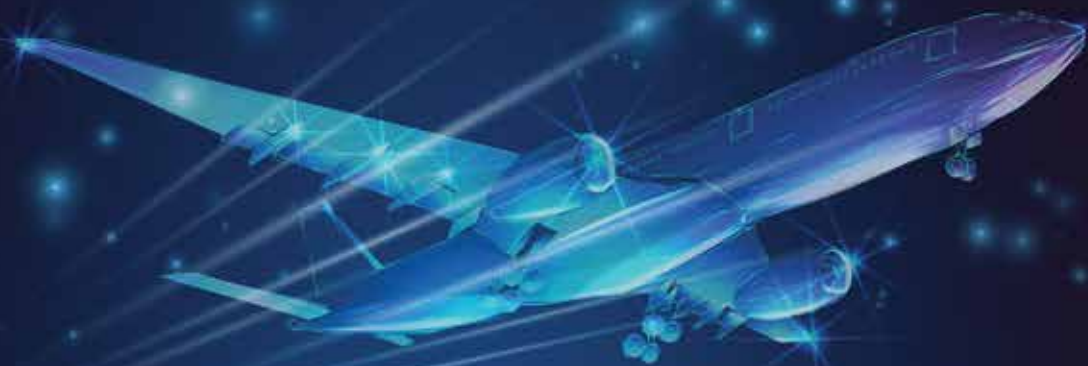
Christian Scherer, CEO of Commercial Aircraft at Airbus said: "We are proud to welcome Riyadh Air as a new Airbus customer and partner. The latest generation A321neo aircraft will bring exceptional efficiency to the airline's operations, concrete contributions to its decarbonisation goals and comfort to its passengers. We look forward to working together to support the strong ambitions of Saudi aviation."

beyond the horizon



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