2024 Global Corporate Travel Trends Report

& 2025 OUTLOOK

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Introduction

The Global Corporate Travel Report 2024 marks the second edition of CTM's Corporate Travel Report series, aimed at equipping the corporate travel community with actionable data and market intelligence insights for better business travel decision-making. This report will analyze trends in capacity, demand, pricing, and activity within the corporate travel industry, primarily utilizing CTM’s global corporate travel data as well as third-party sources to construct a comprehensive overview of the sector in 2024 and an outlook to 2025.

All currency within this report is USD unless specified otherwise, and all CTM corporate travel data was extracted on January 6, 2025.

Executive Summary

The corporate travel industry is experiencing a strong period of growth, with positive trends across key areas. **Global air capacity continues to expand, now 3% above 2019 levels and 6.4% higher than in 2023**, as airlines scale operations to meet sustained demand. Major corporate travel hubs worldwide have seen capacity increases, driven by network expansions from full-service carriers, all of which grew their capacity in 2024.

Business travelers are flying longer distances than last year, reflecting a renewed focus on international corporate engagements, while airfares have stabilized after the sharp rises of 2023, providing greater budget certainty. Confidence in long-term growth remains high, with aircraft manufacturers facing record order backlogs and over 1,600 new deliveries expected in 2025.

Additionally, corporate travelers are booking further in advance than at any point since 2020, signaling greater confidence in travel planning. However, hotel rates remain elevated, underscoring continued strong demand in key business destinations despite expanding airline capacity.

2024
Air Travel
Trends

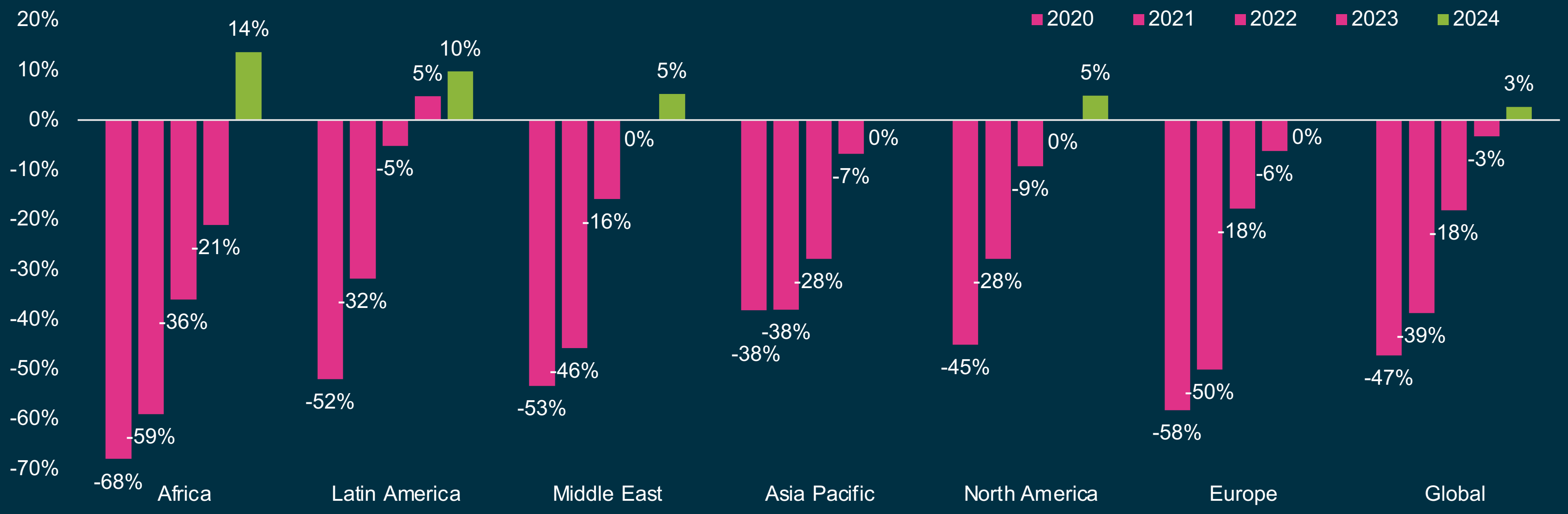
Airline Seat Capacity Recovery
Domestic & International

In 2024, global seat capacity rose by 3% compared to 2019 and 6.4% on 2023, reflecting a full recovery in overall airline capacity compared to pre-pandemic levels.

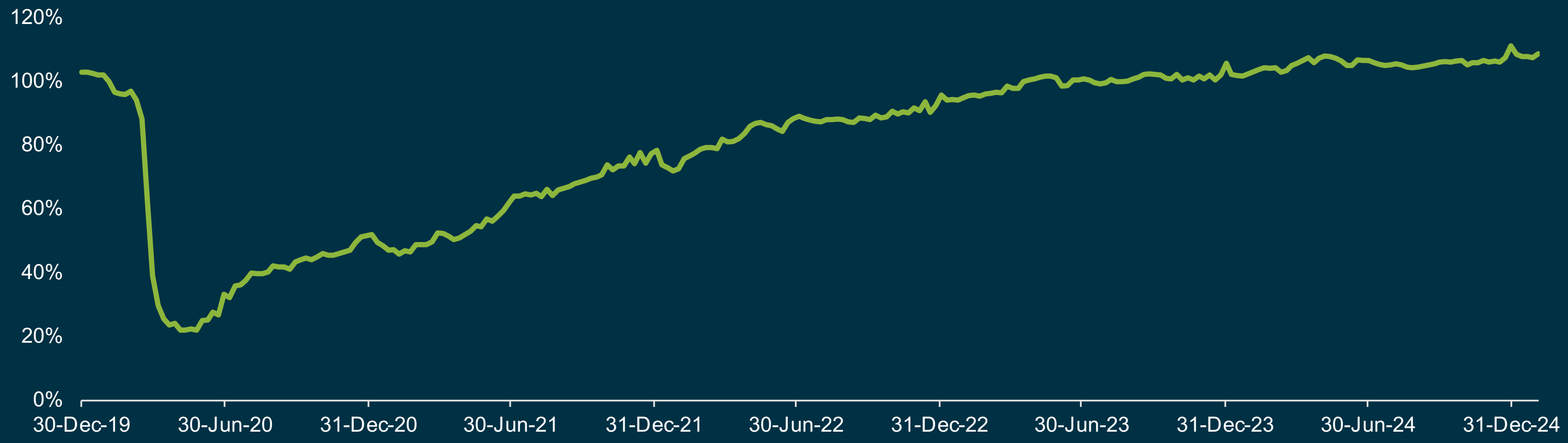
Africa and Latin America have shown the most significant recoveries, despite operating at lower volumes compared to other regions. North America has demonstrated notable growth, with seat capacity increasing by 5% from 2019, driven by strong domestic markets and robust international demand. Meanwhile, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region are still grappling with challenges hinged to the strict COVID-induced border closures and weakened economic landscapes, only recently returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Despite regional disparities, the steady annual growth in seat capacity since 2020 highlights the continued resurgence in travel demand, with further growth expected in 2025.

Regional domestic & international seat capacity change: baseline 2019



Global average recovery (%): baseline 2019



Source: CAPA Centre for Aviation

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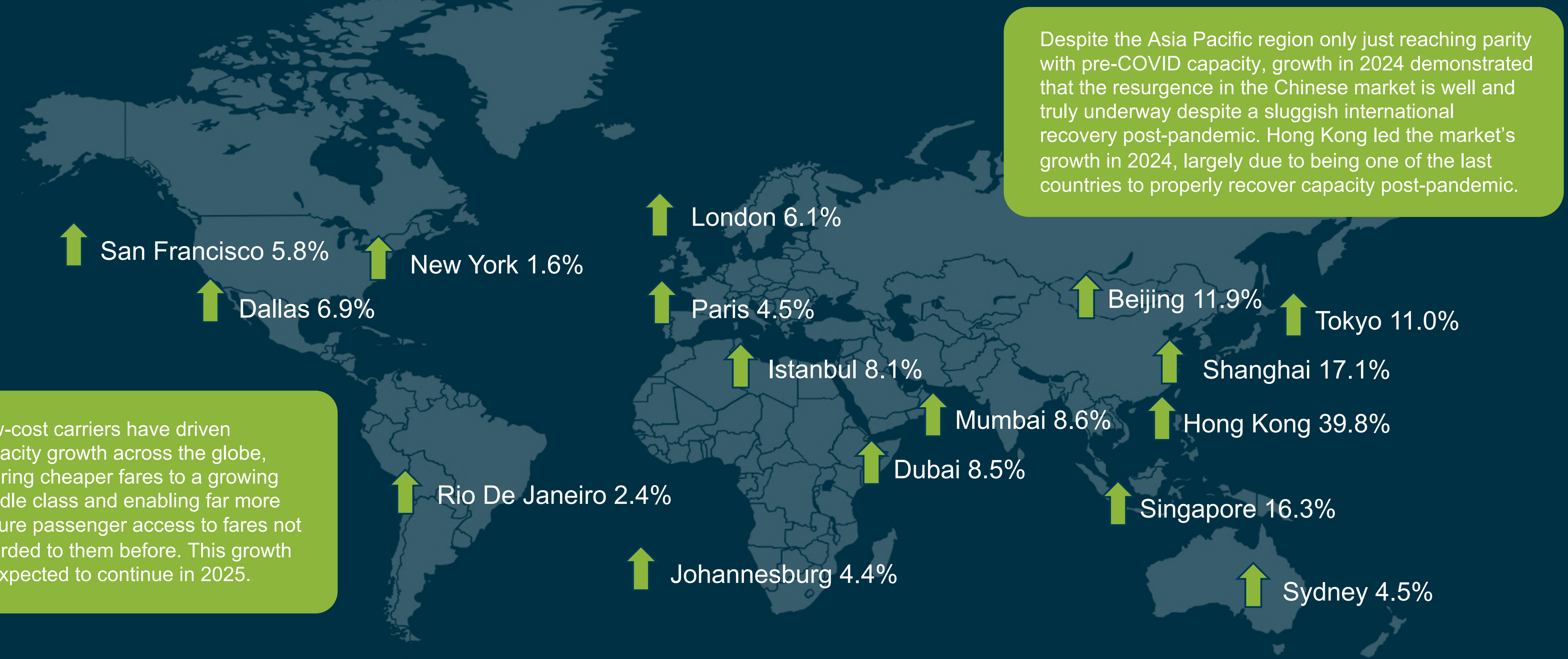
Airline Seat Capacity: Key Global Corporate Travel Hubs

The 2024 airline seat capacity growth was evident in all key corporate travel hubs, with most notable increases in hubs within Asia Pacific driven by surging demand for leisure travel, capacity restoration, and competitive low-cost carriers expanding aggressively. Cities such as Mumbai, Istanbul and all major Chinese cities benefited from relaxed travel restrictions and growing demand. In contrast, key hubs like New York saw marginal growth due to slot constraints, regulatory challenges, and slower corporate travel recovery. Strong transit demand, government support, and infrastructure investments fueled capacity expansions in cities like Dubai and Singapore, reinforcing their positions as global aviation hubs. Overall airline seat capacity grew 6.4% globally year on year, driven mostly by strong growth in Asia Pacific, North America, and Europe - the world's largest aviation markets.

Despite the Asia Pacific region only just reaching parity with pre-COVID capacity, growth in 2024 demonstrated that the resurgence in the Chinese market is well and truly underway despite a sluggish international recovery post-pandemic. Hong Kong led the market's growth in 2024, largely due to being one of the last countries to properly recover capacity post-pandemic.



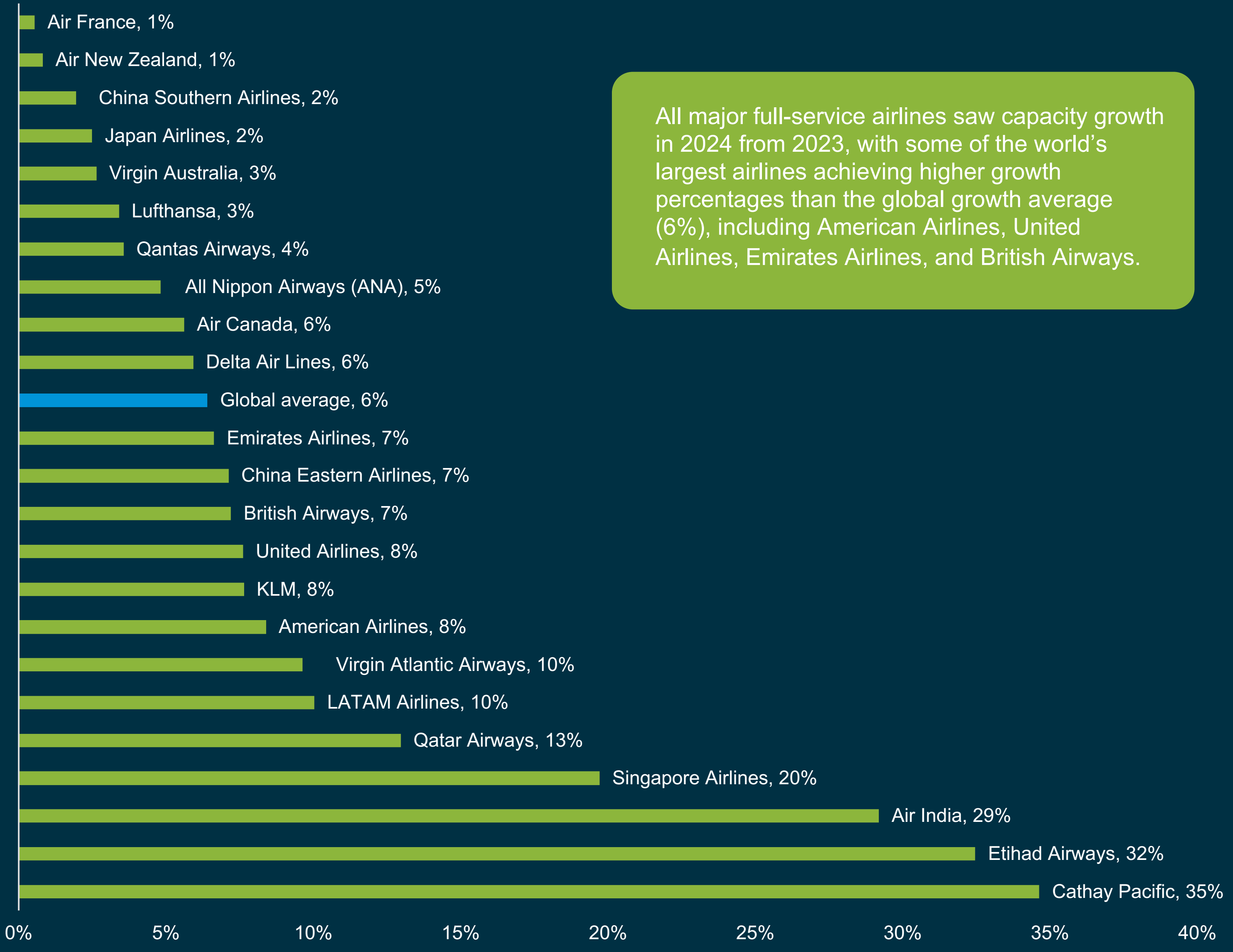
Low-cost carriers have driven capacity growth across the globe, offering cheaper fares to a growing middle class and enabling far more leisure passenger access to fares not afforded to them before. This growth is expected to continue in 2025.

Data summary: Annual seat capacity, inclusive of all airports in the city metro area as defined by CAPA.

Source: CAPA Centre for Aviation

Airline Seat Capacity
Full-Service

Annual seat capacity growth of global full service airlines, 2024 growth on 2023



All major full-service airlines saw capacity growth in 2024 from 2023, with some of the world's largest airlines achieving higher growth percentages than the global growth average (6%), including American Airlines, United Airlines, Emirates Airlines, and British Airways.

Data summary: Capacity change for the top corporate airlines, 2024 growth on 2023

Source: CAPA Centre for Aviation

All full-service airlines globally increased seat capacity in 2024, however some increased more than others.

Cathay Pacific's significant growth was driven by the late recovery of capacity post-pandemic and expanding its network in Asia.

Etihad Airways saw a boost from fleet modernization and introducing new aircraft, improving efficiency and capacity; while Air India's growth was attributed to a major fleet expansion and modernization, positioning it well in both domestic and international markets.

Singapore Airlines has increased capacity by adding new aircraft and increasing flight frequencies. Qatar Airways also grew by expanding its fleet and resuming services to key destinations.

Many airlines, including LATAM, American Airlines, and Delta, recovered capacities lost during the pandemic by restoring services on high-demand routes and modernizing fleets. Emirates and Air Canada grew by focusing on network restoration and fleet upgrades.

The overall industry saw expansion as airlines adapted to rising travel demand through strategic fleet development and a resurgence of international travel.

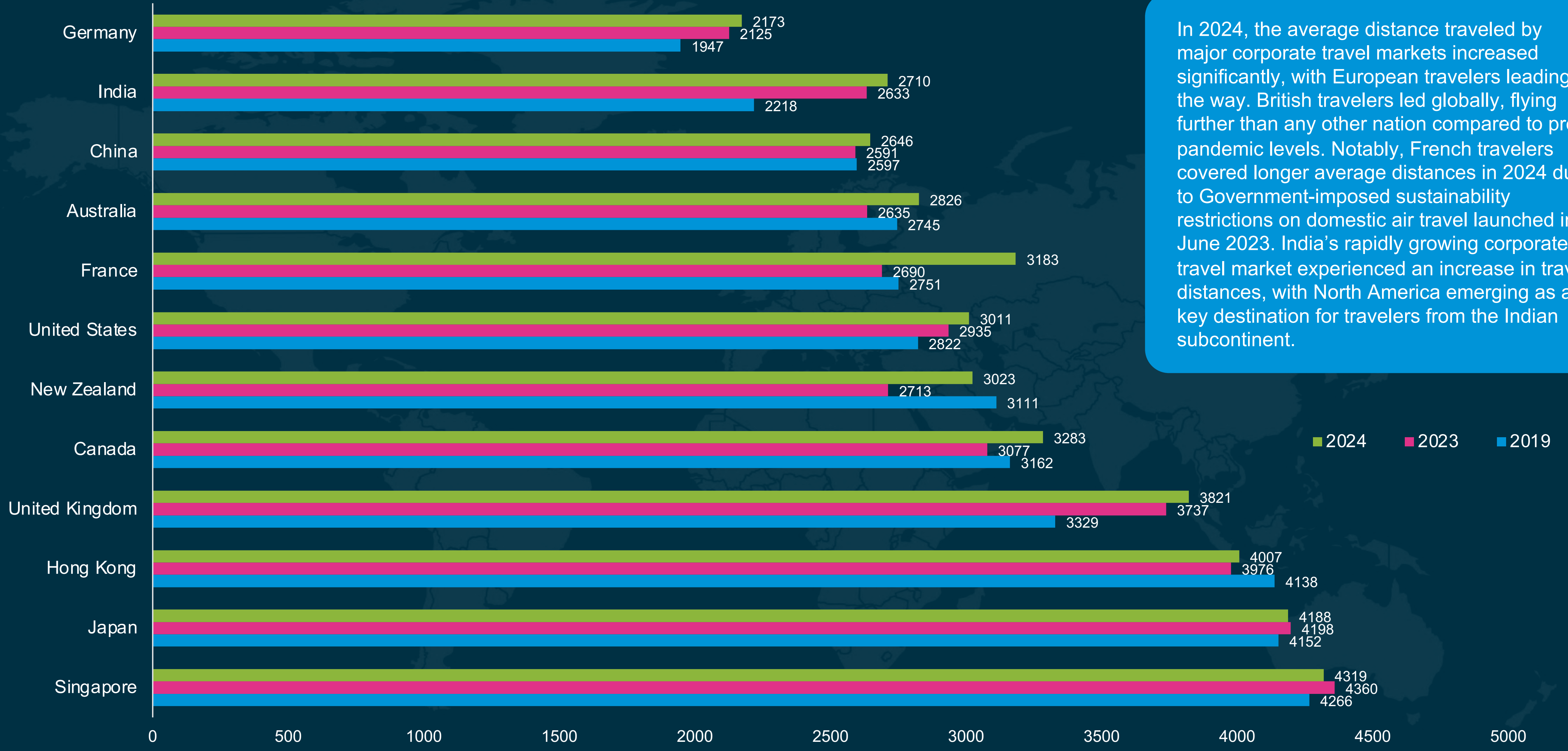
Top 10 Corporate Travel Routes

The top global corporate travel route remained London-New York, with London-Hong Kong a close second place. Over the course of 2024, volume on the Sydney-Melbourne route increased steadily due to strong corporate and leisure demand, placing it the third (previously sixth) most popular route.

Source: CTM corporate travel data

Average Travel Distance for Key Corporate Travel Markets

Average miles flown by travelers from each country in 2024 compared with 2023 and 2019



In 2024, the average distance traveled by major corporate travel markets increased significantly, with European travelers leading the way. British travelers led globally, flying further than any other nation compared to pre-pandemic levels. Notably, French travelers covered longer average distances in 2024 due to Government-imposed sustainability restrictions on domestic air travel launched in June 2023. India's rapidly growing corporate travel market experienced an increase in travel distances, with North America emerging as a key destination for travelers from the Indian subcontinent.

Source: CTM corporate travel data

Global Airfares Index Jan-19 to Dec-24

Global airfare monthly growth, indexed to Jan-19

Source: CTM corporate travel data

Domestic Airfares Business & Economy

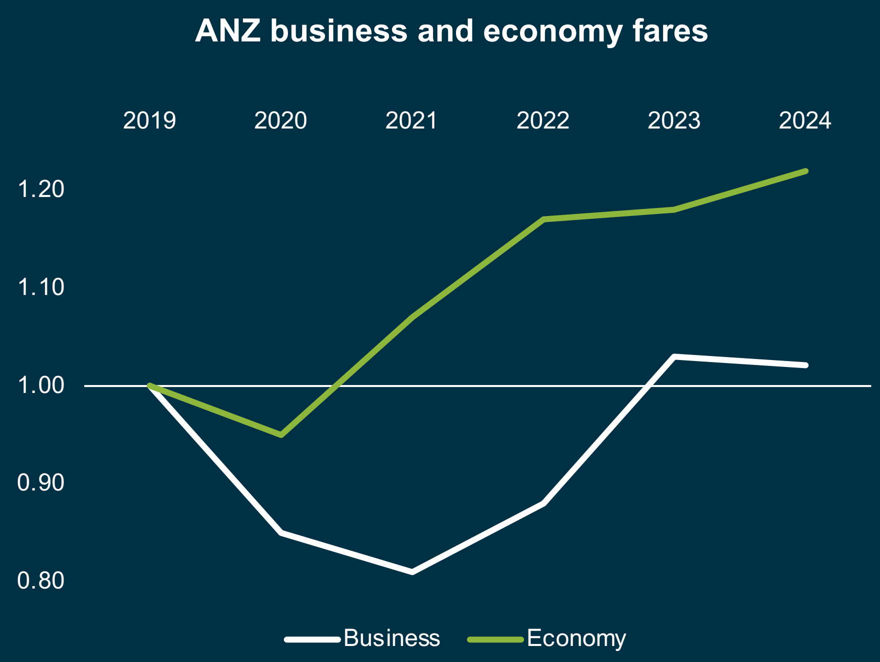
Regional split domestic fares
2019 index = 1.00

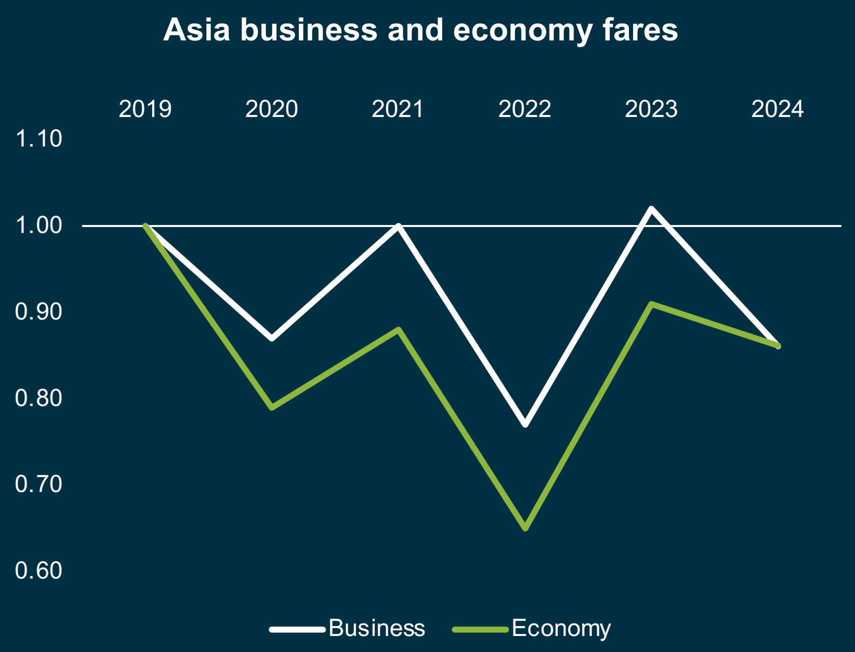
ANZ economy fares continue their steady rise as capacity remains constrained and demand persists, however business fares plateaued slightly in 2024.

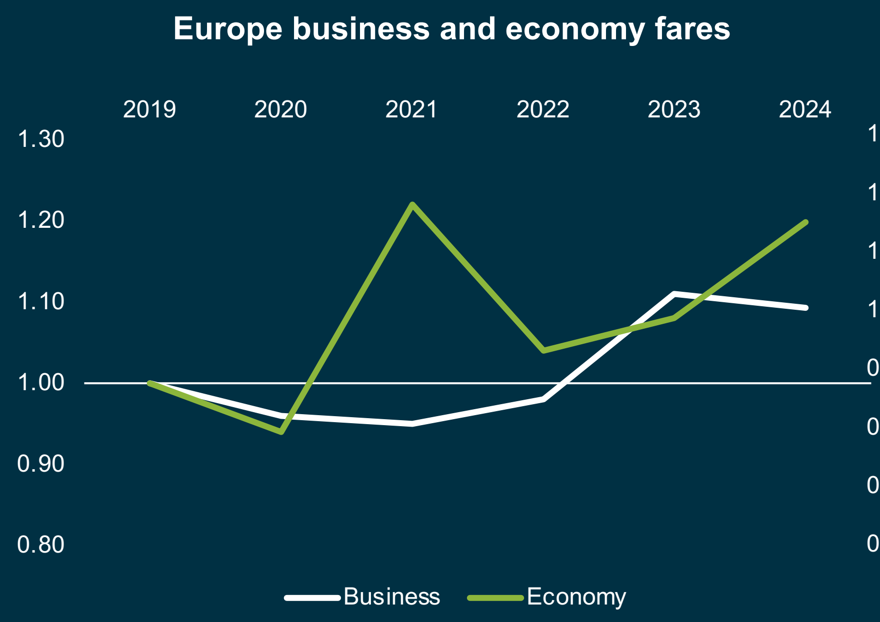
In Asia, both fare types declined again in 2024 compared with 2019, reflecting competitive pricing as capacity returns.

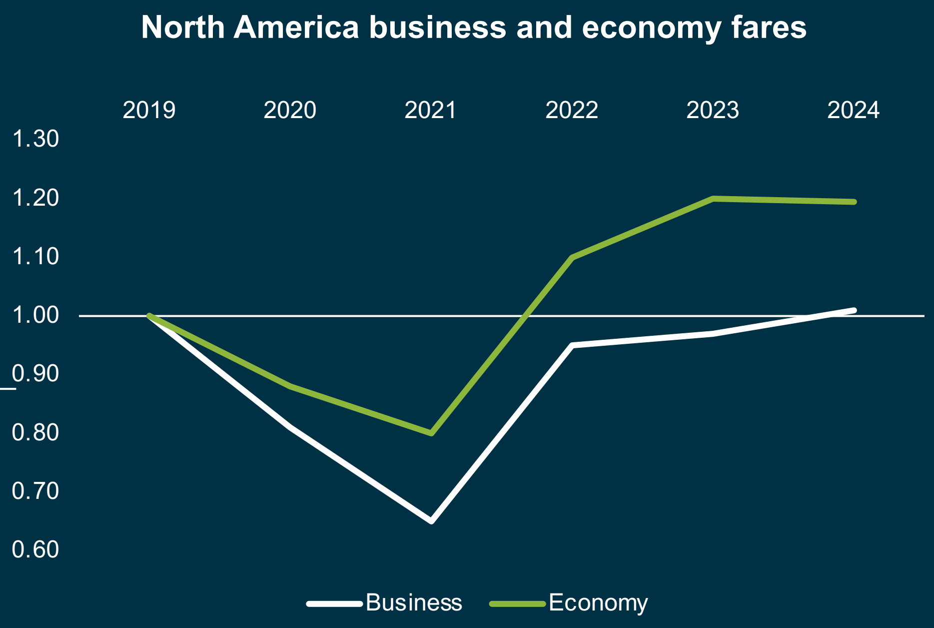
Europe saw economy fares surge, driven by strong demand despite broader economic uncertainties, while business fares slightly dipped.

In North America, economy fares remain elevated but stable, suggesting capacity aligned with demand. Business fares continued to rise, albeit slowly, as corporate travel leads growth in premium seats.









Source: CTM corporate travel data

International Airfares
Business & Economy

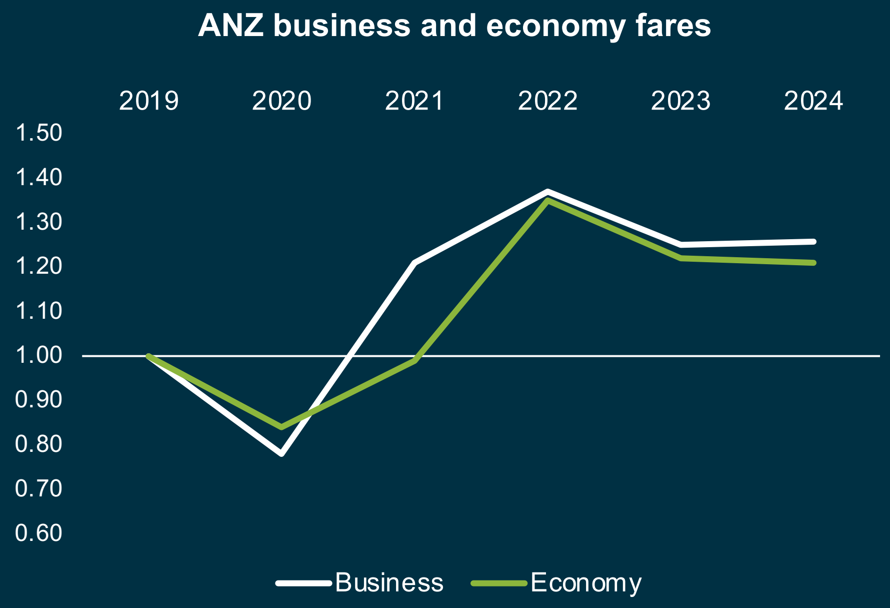
Regional split domestic fares
2019 index = 1.00

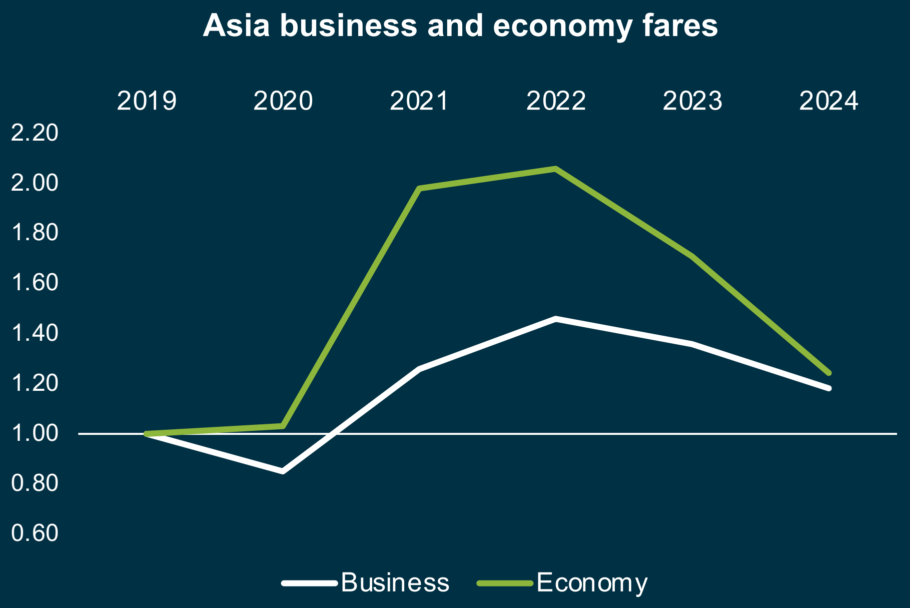
In the ANZ market, growth stabilized as increased competition boosted capacity to meet rising demand, easing fare pressures.

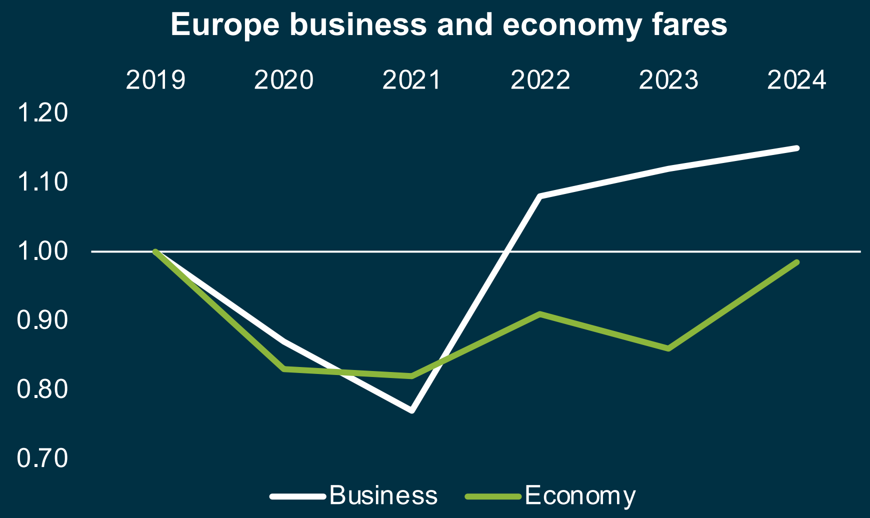
Asian fares continued to decline, largely due to price corrections following the pandemic-era highs caused by prolonged supply shortages.

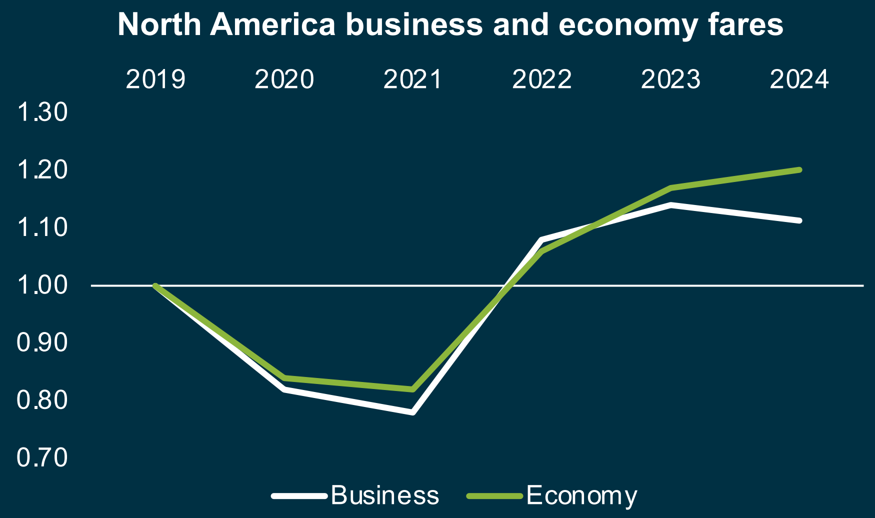
European business class fares rose as corporate and premium leisure demand surged, coupled with constrained seat availability.

Meanwhile, North American fares stabilized as airlines added Transpacific and Transatlantic capacity to match steady demand, balancing the market after years of volatility.







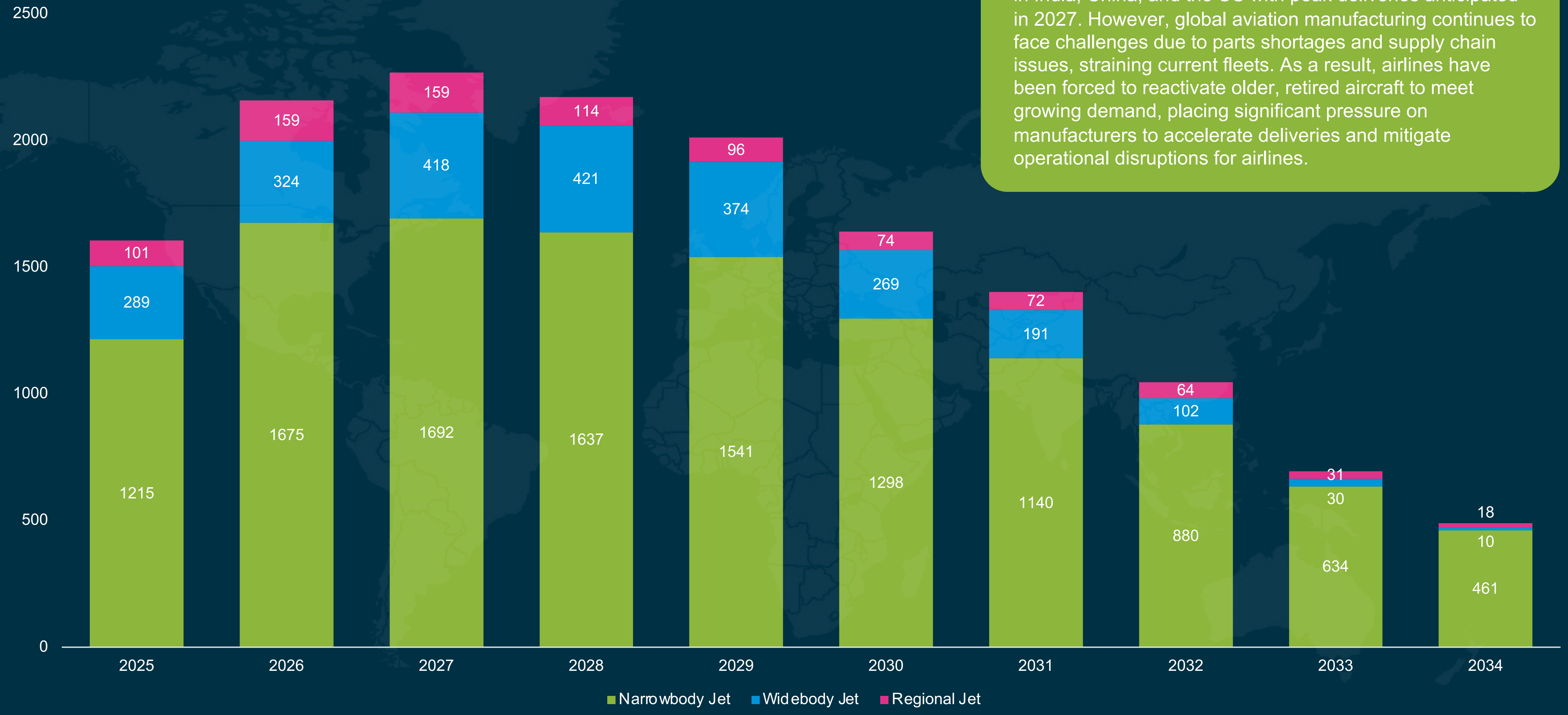


Source: CTM corporate travel data

Global Aircraft Deliveries: 10-Year Outlook

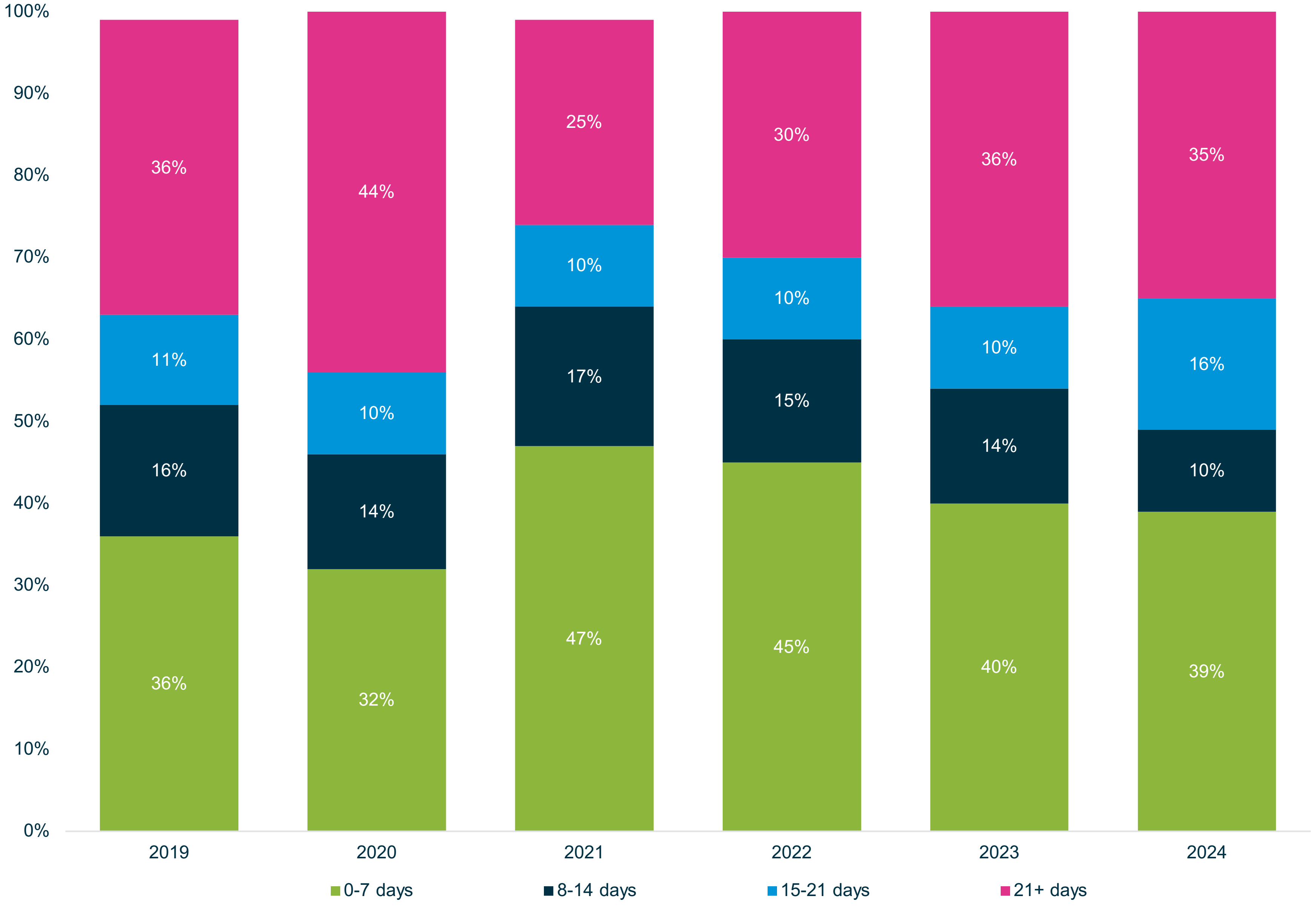
During the pandemic, many airlines globally retired older long-haul aircraft. In the years following border re-openings, Airbus and Boeing have seen their order backlogs surge with significant orders from airlines across all regions, particularly in India, China, and the US with peak deliveries anticipated in 2027. However, global aviation manufacturing continues to face challenges due to parts shortages and supply chain issues, straining current fleets. As a result, airlines have been forced to reactivate older, retired aircraft to meet growing demand, placing significant pressure on manufacturers to accelerate deliveries and mitigate operational disruptions for airlines.

Global aircraft deliveries over the next ten years



Source: CAPA Centre for Aviation

Booking lead time (in days) 2019 - 2024



Source: CTM corporate travel data

Global Air Booking Lead Times

In 2024, corporate travel booking behaviors continued to shift away from pandemic-era patterns. Before 2020, travelers often booked well in advance to secure lower fares and accommodate predictable schedules. The uncertainty of the pandemic led to a surge in last-minute bookings as travelers navigated fast-changing travel restrictions and disruptions.

In 2024, the share of bookings made within 7 days of departure has steadily decreased. At the same time, bookings made 15 to 21 days before travel have reached their highest levels since 2019, even as bookings more than 21 days in advance have declined slightly compared to 2023.

These trends indicate a gradual return to pre-pandemic booking habits, with a subtle shift toward travelers securing flights 15 days or more before departure.

Regional Air Booking Lead Times

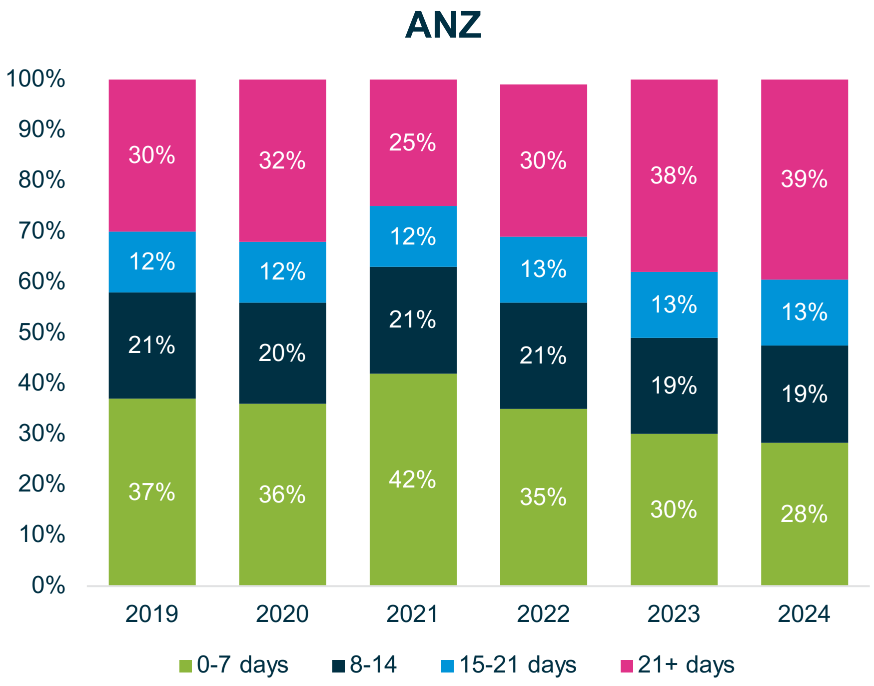
While global booking lead times in 2024 largely stabilized, resembling pre-pandemic patterns, regional variations continue to reshape these trends. North America has seen the most significant shift, with 35% of travelers now booking 21 days or more in advance of travel. This change is likely driven by stronger demand, competitive pricing for early bookings, and increased corporate travel planning.

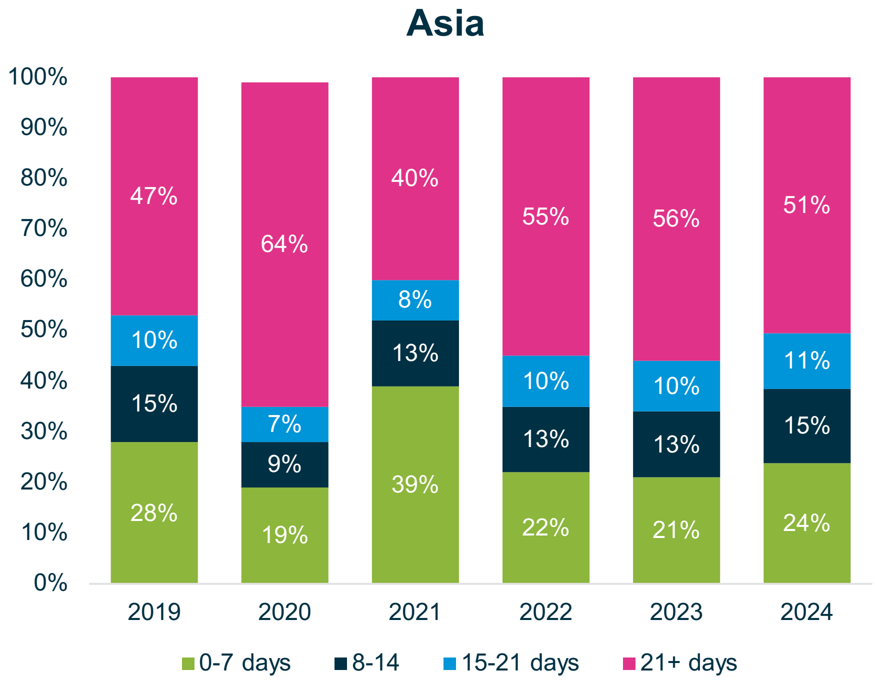
Europe has followed suit with 54% booking 21+ days prior to travel, potentially influenced by seasonal demand peaks, capacity constraints, and price-conscious behavior as fares rise.

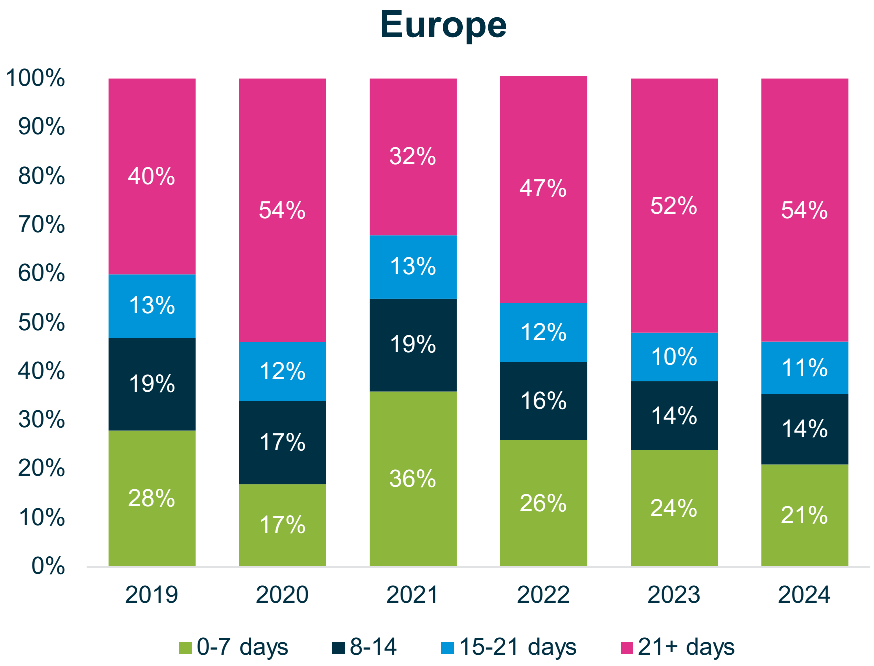
The ANZ market similarly shows a gradual shift toward earlier bookings, reflecting growing consumer confidence and increased availability of long-term fare options.

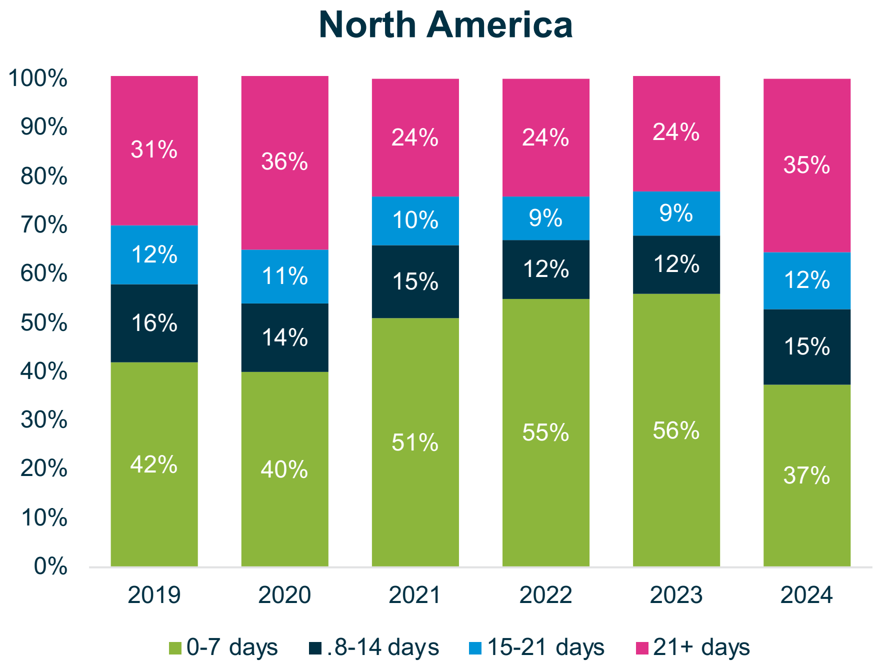
Asia, however, stands apart. Travelers here are booking closer to departure, driven by growing low-cost carrier presence, flexible fare options, and a preference for more spontaneous travel.

Source: CTM corporate travel data









2024 **Accommodation** Trends

Top 10 Corporate Travel Cities by Total Hotel Nights

Unsurprisingly, many of the top corporate travel cities by room nights are similar cities seen in the top 10 air routes, namely London, Hong Kong, New York, and Sydney.

Throughout 2024, US overnight hotel stays increased in many cities, with more than half of the top 10 corporate travel cities by hotel nights now located in the USA.

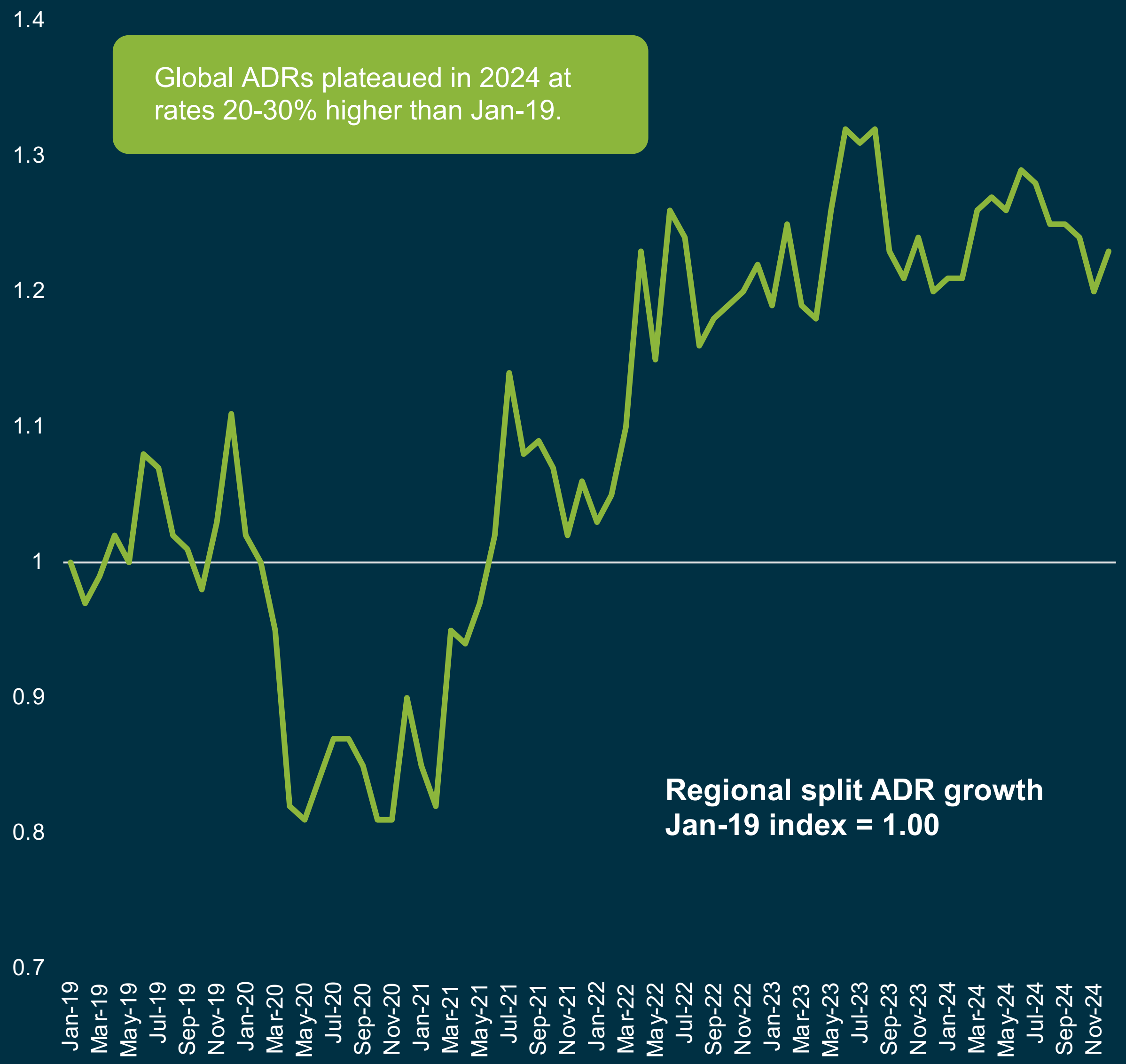
Source: CTM corporate travel data

Data summary: Top cities globally, ordered by the total room nights.

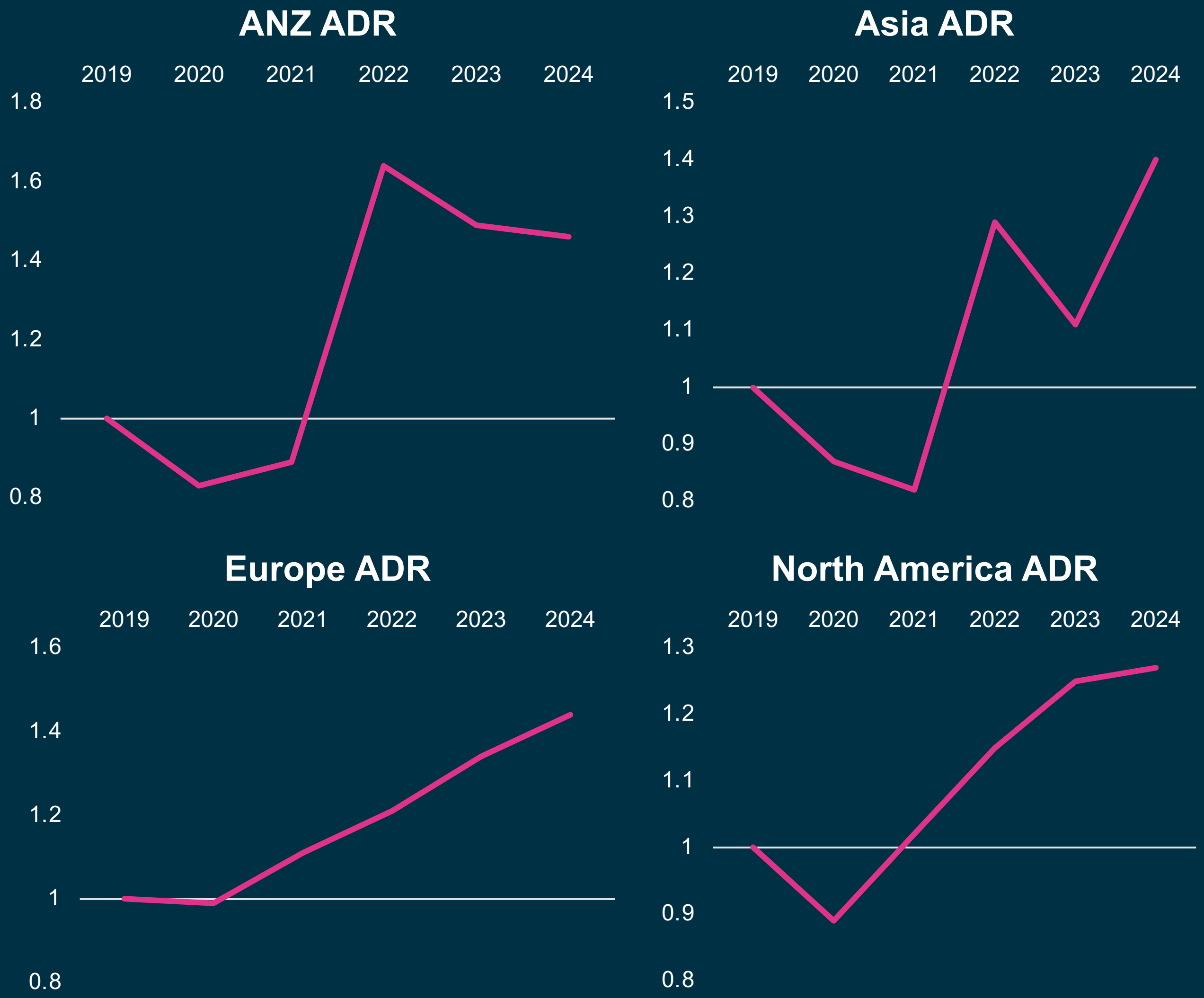
Global Hotels: Average Daily Rates (ADR)

In 2024, ADRs continued to rise compared to 2019. Although ANZ stands out with a steady decline from its 2022 peak , the region remains the highest globally. This decline is due to increased competition and restored hotel capacity. North America and Europe continue to see rising ADRs driven by strong demand, limited capacity, and higher costs. Asia has experienced significant ADR growth from 2023, fueled by the recovery of both corporate and leisure travel, especially in key markets like China and Japan.

Global hotel ADR monthly growth, indexed to Jan-19



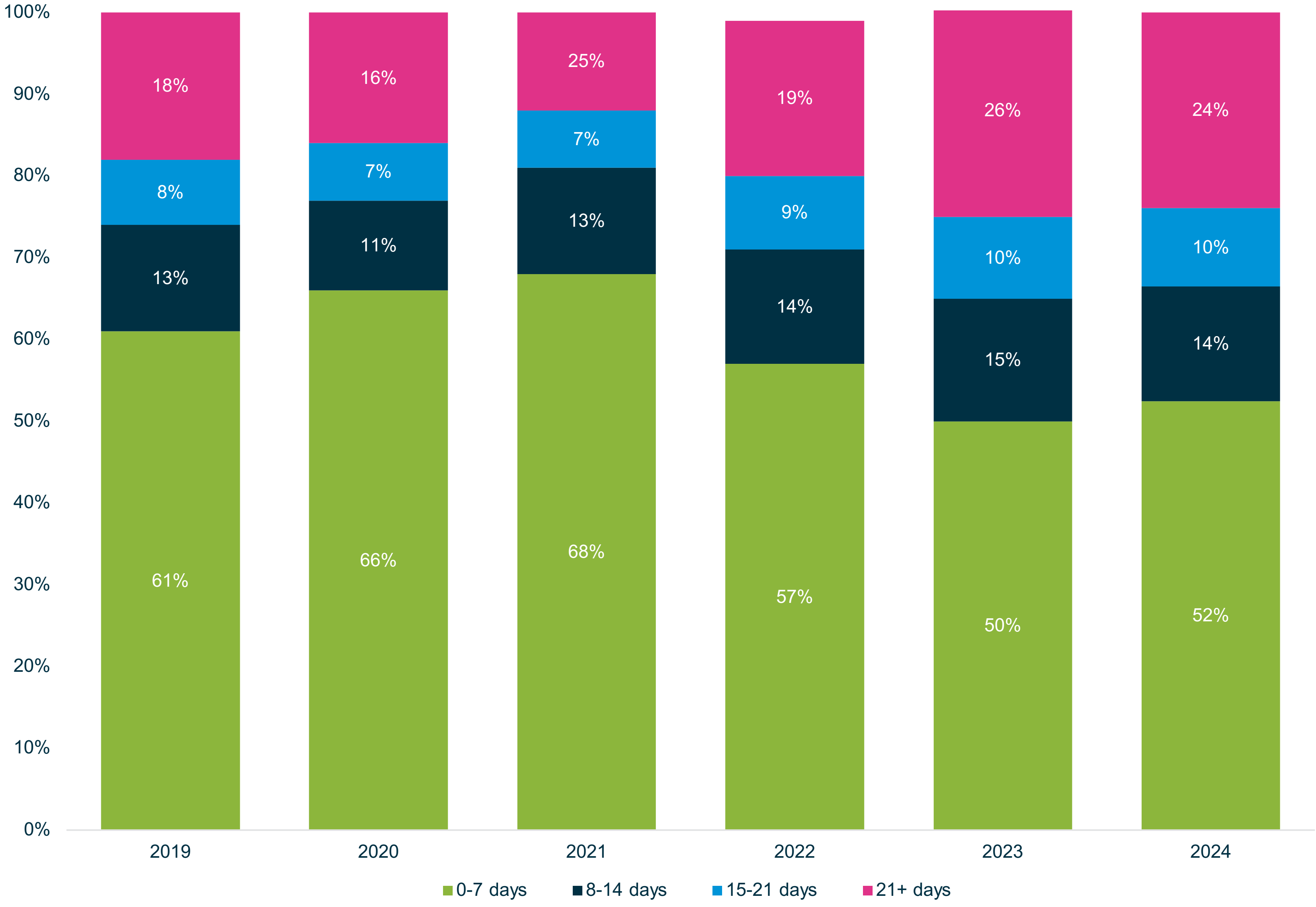
Regional split ADR growth
Jan-19 index = 1.00



Source: CTM corporate travel data

Global Hotels Booking Lead Times

Booking lead time (in days) 2019 - 2024



Source: CTM corporate travel data

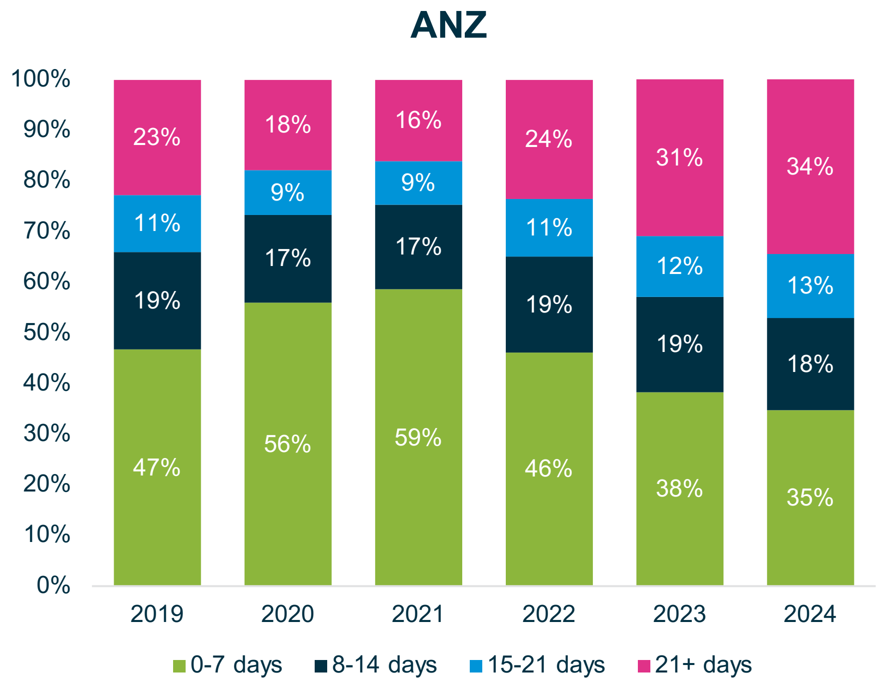
Global hotel booking lead times have seen a notable shift since the pre-pandemic era. In 2019, 61% of hotel bookings were made within 7 days of arrival, but by 2024 this figure has dropped to 52%. In contrast, 24% of travelers are now booking 21 days or more in advance, up from just 18% in 2019.

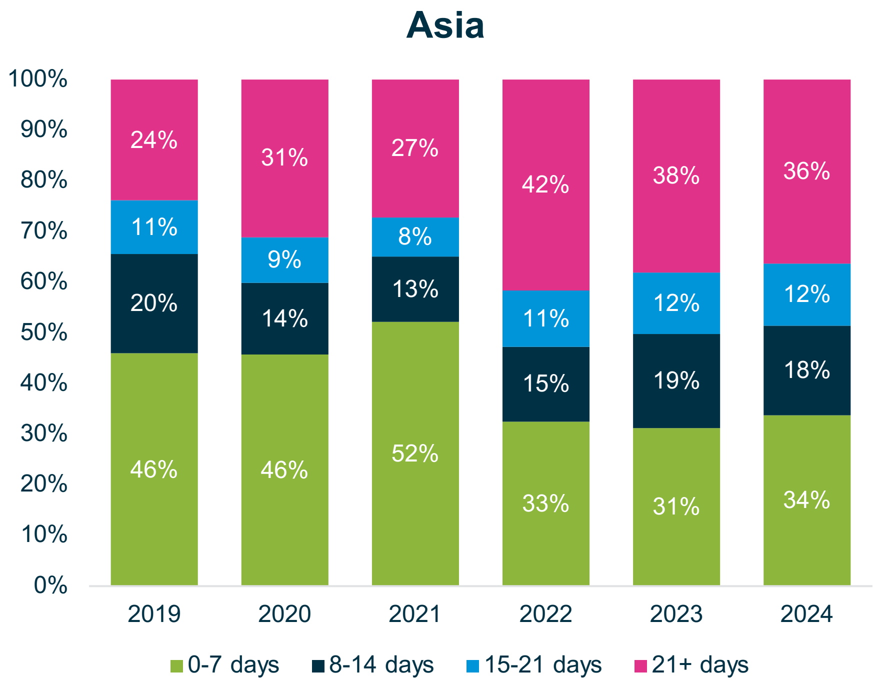
During the pandemic, last-minute bookings became the norm as travelers faced uncertainty with rapidly changing travel restrictions. However, with travel confidence returning and average daily rates remaining elevated, there has been a noticeable shift back to more advanced booking trends. This trend is likely driven by travelers seeking to lock in rates and secure accommodations in advance amid persistent demand and limited availability in key markets.

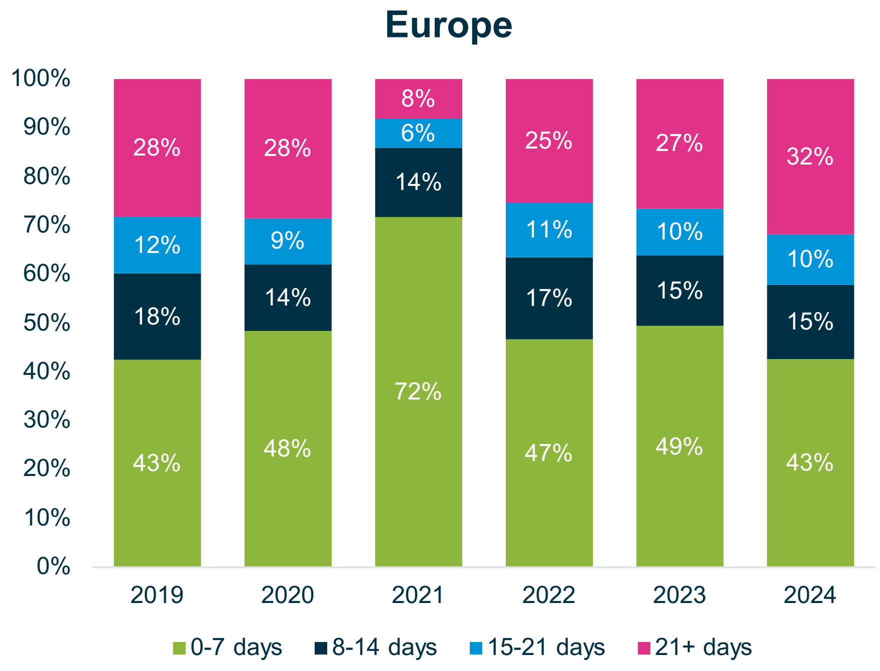
Regional Hotels Booking Lead Times

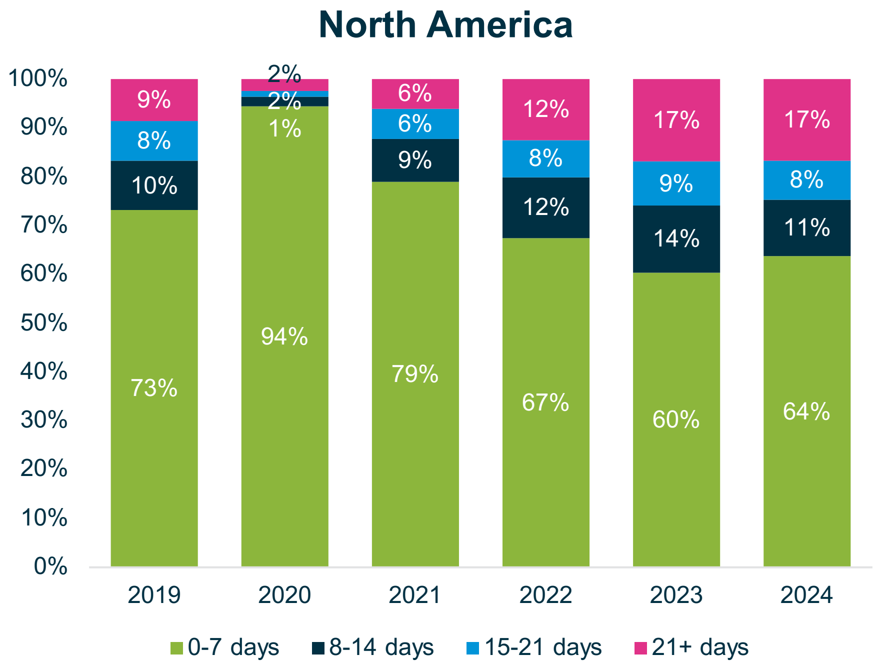
ANZ, Asia and Europe are leading the shift towards earlier bookings, with 34% of bookings in ANZ , 36% in Asia, and 32% in Europe made more than 21 days in advance. This trend reflects increased traveler confidence and a desire for better rates. ANZ and Asia regions are also seeing significantly fewer last-minute bookings (within 7 days of departure) compared to pre-pandemic.

In North America, last-minute bookings remain dominant, with 64% now booking within 7 days, up from 60% in 2023. This is likely due to increased capacity and competitive pricing that encourages shorter booking windows. A trend that is in difference to the booking trends of airfares.









Source: CTM corporate travel data

2025 Outlook

Travel Outlook for 2025

Corporate travel is set to continue its strong recovery, with Morgan Stanley forecasting a 6% year-on-year increase in travel budgets for 2025. Further, according to the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) 2024 Business Travel Index Report, global business travel spending is projected to reach $1.64 trillion in 2025, up from $1.48 trillion in 2024. While growth remains robust, the pace of expansion is forecasted by GBTA to moderate slightly, with spending increasing by 10.4% in 2025 compared to 11.1% in 2024. By the end of 2028, business travel spending is projected to climb beyond $2.0 trillion and growth is expected to gradually moderate throughout the forecast period, resulting in an annual compound growth rate of 7% from 2025 to 2028.

Overall, 67% of business travel professionals surveyed in GBTA's November 2024 Business Travel Industry Outlook Poll indicated they are optimistic about the business travel industry outlook for 2025. Looking at travel budgets, many companies are planning to split their spending very similarly to GBTA's January 2024 travel poll with revenue-generating activities like sales and account management meetings taking the biggest slice of the pie at 28%, followed by internal company meetings with colleagues at 20%, conferences, trade shows or industry events 16%, service trips 12%, employee training development 10%, and supplier meetings at 8%.

28% SALES & ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT MEETINGS

20% INTERNAL COMPANY MEETINGS

16% CONFERENCES, TRADE SHOWS OR INDUSTRY EVENTS

12% SERVICE MEETINGS

10% EMPLOYEE TRAINING DEVELOPMENT

8% SUPPLIER MEETINGS

Travel Sentiment: Optimism drives business travel demand

Despite economic uncertainties, travel sentiment remains strong as organizations prioritize business growth and face-to-face connections. According to the GBTA November 2024 Business Travel Outlook Poll, **55% of travel buyers are unlikely to limit business travel**, with **52% anticipating higher travel spending in 2025** compared to 2024. Across all regions - North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific, and Europe - at least half of travel buyers expect increased budgets, underscoring the critical role of travel in achieving corporate objectives.

Employee sentiment reflects similar enthusiasm, with **45% of travel buyers reporting that employees are showing a greater desire to travel for business**. This aligns with The International Air Transport Association (IATA) 2024 public opinion polling, which revealed a positive outlook for passenger demand over the next 12 months.

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Travel Sentiment: Optimism drives business travel demand

Among surveyed travelers, **41% expect to travel more frequently, 53% anticipate maintaining current levels, and only 5% foresee traveling less. Additionally, 47% plan to spend more on travel,** highlighting a willingness to invest in business and personal travel experiences.

IATA 2025 public opinion poll

"Business travel demand is on a strong upward trajectory for 2025, fueled by increased budgets and employee enthusiasm for in-person collaboration. As demand grows, organizations must balance this momentum with strategic cost management, sustainability commitments, and traveler well-being. With rising budgets, travel managers are uniquely positioned to optimize spend, secure stronger supplier agreements, and refine policies that drive cost efficiency and traveler satisfaction. A well-managed program is essential to turning increased travel investment into measurable business impact. The evolving landscape underscores the need for a data-driven, flexible travel program; one that integrates advanced insights, technology, and the expertise of a trusted TMC partner like CTM. By doing so, organizations can ensure travel remains a strategic asset rather than a cost center."

— Ana Pedersen, CTM Global Chief Commercial Officer

The Economic and Geopolitical Landscape

Businesses should work closely with their travel management company (TMC) to adapt travel policies and manage costs effectively.

Global GDP growth is forecasted to reach 3.2% in 2025, building on 3.1% growth in 2024, according to the Mastercard Economics Institute. Regions such as the US and India are expected to drive robust economic performance, while Europe and Latin America are projected to see modest expansion. This steady economic growth presents opportunities for businesses to explore emerging markets, potentially increasing demand for corporate travel to support business development and market expansion.

US policy shifts ranging from changes in immigration regulations to trade tariffs could influence international business opportunities, impacting visa requirements, travel costs, and cross-border operations. Businesses should work closely with their travel management company (TMC) to adapt travel policies and manage costs effectively in response to these evolving dynamics. IATA notes that geopolitical factors could present risks to business travel, particularly if ongoing conflicts in Europe and the Middle East escalate. However, progress toward peace especially in the Russia-Ukraine conflict could have a positive impact on global travel and economic stability. Additionally, the approach of the US administration toward trade policies, deregulation, and aviation decarbonization may influence corporate travel by either creating new efficiencies or potentially introducing complexities. The travel industry could also benefit from lower oil prices in 2025, which may help reduce airline fuel costs, making travel more accessible.

2025 OUTLOOK

Air Travel: Connecting the World in 2025

Air travel is set to reach historic milestones in 2025, with traveler numbers surpassing 5 billion and flights exceeding 40 million globally, according to IATA. This growth will amplify aviation's role in supporting economic activity, from driving the hospitality and retail sectors to enabling businesses to meet customers, manage supply chains, and transport goods more efficiently. The connectivity provided by air transport will continue to be a critical enabler of global business.

5 Billion
travelers globally

40 Billion
flights globally

$380 average airfare
1.8% lower than in 2024

44% drop in average
airfare compared to 2014

"We're seeing a surge in new international routes and direct connections, with more on the way. Airlines are focused on improving inflight products to stay competitive, so the industry is in a healthy place right now and we expect significant growth over the next five years."

— John Balloch, CTM Chief Partnership Officer, Global Air & GDS

Organizations are ready to benefit from continued improvements in efficiency and affordability within the aviation sector. IATA reports that the average airfare in 2025, including ancillary services, is projected to be $380 - 1.8% lower than in 2024. When adjusted for inflation, this represents a 44% drop compared to 2014, demonstrating the industry's commitment to passing value back to travelers while advancing operational improvements.

Air Travel
Connecting the World in 2025

Airlines are increasingly using data to create 360° traveler profiles with insights from loyalty programs, booking history, and traveler preferences according to the 2025 Travel Trends Report from Amadeus. With a better understanding of passengers, more accessible pricing and increased connectivity, 2025 offers exciting opportunities for organizations to expand their global footprint and for travelers to experience enhanced value and convenience in air travel.

Sustainability is a Growing Priority

Sustainability will remain a key focus for corporate travel programs in 2025 as new regulations, such as mandatory climate reporting, help to encourage organizations to adopt lower-carbon travel options where possible. For example, businesses are increasingly encouraging multi-destination trips, or 'linked' trips, which combine multiple meetings or stops in a single journey. This trend, already evident in 2024, is expected to expand further according to GBTA, with over half (53%) of travel buyers reporting an increase in linked trips year-over-year.

Encouragingly, employees are making more sustainable travel choices, with **increases in rail travel (38%)** and multimodal trips (33%). Europe leads the adoption of practical rail options, setting a benchmark for enabling sustainable traveler behavior.

Regional differences are also evident in sustainability commitments, with **61% of European and 64% of Asia-Pacific buyers considering sustainability a high priority**, compared to 34% in North America. Similarly, 60% of European buyers have integrated sustainability initiatives into their programs, versus just 36% in North America, reflecting regional preferences and the availability of sustainable travel solutions.

Sustainability is a Growing Priority

"With corporate sustainability reporting mandates in place, organizations will seek ways to reduce the environmental impact of their business travel. Accurate, complete travel data will be essential for compliance with the new legislation, making a TMC a key partner in supporting organizations to report emissions effectively. To meet new requirements, companies are encouraged to collaborate with their sustainability teams and TMC to understand data needs and ensure all bookings are consolidated through a single channel for full visibility and reporting accuracy."

— Lauren Hook, CTM Global Head of Sustainability

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Adoption

Amadeus reports that globally **46% of travel technology leaders see Generative AI as a priority** ahead of any other technology over the next year. Travel technology leaders see a broad range of uses for Generative AI right across the ecosystem. The industry has so far focused on customer support as the first widespread use case for the technology, with 53% of companies currently deploying Generative AI for digital assistance for travelers during booking and 48% deploying it for recommendations for activities or venues.

According to the GBTA's November 2024 Business Travel Industry Outlook Poll, 49% of travel programs plan to increase investments in technology, with 44% of respondents saying they are excited about the impact of AI on the business travel industry. The poll also found only 14% of buyers currently use AI in their travel programs, but this marks an 8% increase from the previous year, suggesting a heightened interest and adoption rate.

"AI will continue to transform the traveler experience in 2025 through hyper-personalization. Predictive tools, tailored recommendations, and live updates will make journeys smoother and stress-free. Chatbots and virtual assistants will offer 24/7 support, enhancing service and efficiency."

— Eric Ediger, CTM Global Head of Automation & Machine Learning

2025 OUTLOOK

Global Hotel Performance

Hotel performance is expected to stabilize in 2025 according to JLL, with growth returning to more moderate levels as corporate, group, and international travel recover to pre-pandemic volumes. While leisure travel demand normalizes, limited new hotel supply due to high development costs may potentially see hotels maintain elevated room rates, particularly in key business hubs.

Over the next five years, global hotel supply is projected to grow at a slower pace than historical averages, with new developments largely concentrated in high-demand regions such as the Middle East and India. In key corporate travel destinations, especially urban centers with limited supply, the scarcity of new inventory may further affect pricing and availability. Luxury hotel brands will continue to attract significant investment, with mergers and acquisitions shaping the competitive landscape and driving expansion in premium accommodation.

"For corporate travel programs, there will be a need for strong hotel partnerships, accessibility to a wide variety of rates and proactive rate management to control accommodation spend. By leveraging data and working with a TMC, travel managers can secure the most competitive rates, optimize hotel spend and access accommodation content that meets the needs of their business and travelers. Prioritizing preferred supplier agreements, leveraging TMC hotel programs in key business hubs, assessing loyalty program value as brands consolidate and maintaining close engagement with hotel partners will be essential to navigating pricing pressures and securing quality accommodation in high-demand locations."

— Erik Shor, CTM Chief Partnership Officer, North America and Global Hotel Programs

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