

UK Civil Aviation Authority

CAA Aviation Trends Quarter 3 2026

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UK Civil Aviation Authority

Report Notes

1. Welcome to the CAA's *Aviation Trends* report. Every quarter we update key metrics which summarise "commercial" aviation activity at the United Kingdom's airports. Please note that the figures may be subject to minor changes in future due to on-going adjustment, revision and updates - historic reports will not be reissued.
2. The data in this report is compiled by the CAA with the co-operation of UK airport and airline operators. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged. More detailed data and information regarding the source(s) are available on the CAA's website: https://www.caa.co.uk/data-and-analysis/uk-aviation-market/
3. Since the information contained in this report has been acquired from multiple sources, it is not possible for the CAA to check and verify whether it is accurate and correct nor do we undertake to do so. Consequently the CAA cannot accept any liability caused by any person's reliance on it.
4. For the purposes of this report the Channel Islands - Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney - and the Isle of Man are considered domestic aviation and their data is included, despite not formally being part of the United Kingdom.
5. Terminal Passengers
    a. Terminal passenger are travellers who board or disembark a commercial flight at a UK reporting airport. Note: domestic passengers are effectively counted twice (on boarding at one UK airport and disembarking at another) and therefore the figures displayed will not reflect the number of "onboard" passengers in the UK aviation market.
    b. Load Factor is calculated by dividing the number of passengers on a flight by the total number of seats expressed as a percentage - i.e. reflecting the seat occupancy on flights.
6. Air Transport Movements (ATMs)
    a. Similar to Terminal Passengers (above), an ATM between two UK airports - i.e. a domestic flight - will be counted twice, once on departure and on arrival at the destination airport.
    b. Data excludes Air Taxi flights: this is charter air transport movements performed by aircraft with a Maximum Take Off Weight (MTOW) of below 15 tonnes.
7. Cargo Tonnage data represents freight and mail which is transported into and out of the UK on air freighters and in the belly hold of passenger aircraft. Any cargo transiting the UK is not included in the figures.
8. Punctuality
    a. The CAA collects punctuality information from 25 UK airports - these are typically the largest airports in terms of movements/passengers. For the full list please visit the link below
    b. In the punctuality data, 'delay' is recorded as the difference between an aircraft's scheduled arrival or departure time and the actual time it reaches or departs the airport gate (pre 2018 'delay' was measured as the difference between the scheduled time and a calculated time that the aircraft reached/departed the gate by taking the time the aircraft arrived at the runway and a fixed taxi time to/from the gate (see the link below for more information).
    c. In 2018 the CAA began formally collecting flight cancellation information from airport suppliers. Before this data was supplied to the CAA on a voluntary basis. For more information on what formally constitutes a cancellation in the CAA data, please visit the link below.
    d. A flight is deemed to be "on-time" if it arrives or departs from the airport gate within 15 minutes of its scheduled time. The figures displayed in this report are an aggregation of UK arrival and departure punctuality.
    e. Since the CAA only collects information from UK airports, this report contains no information about overseas punctuality. This is pertinent particularly for flights departing the UK where time may be gained (or lost) en-route and therefore the total delay experienced by passengers may vary to that published.
    f. Average delay minutes are calculated from the total minutes of delay recorded by all flights (with early flights counted as zero minutes delay) divided by the total number of flights operated.
    g. More details regarding CAA punctuality statistics can be found here: https://www.caa.co.uk/data-and-analysis/uk-aviation-market/flight-punctuality/uk-flight-punctuality-statistics/
9. As some of the trends in this report are long term (30+ years), not all airports consistently reported to the CAA over this period - particularly regarding punctuality dataset. Therefore these figures should be used as a guide of national performance and not necessarily the precise results.

Key Performance Indicators - Q3 2026 (vs 2025)

Passengers



91.3M

+1%

Flights (ATM's)



595K

+1%

Cargo Tonnage



699K

+2%

Load Factor



86%

-0.5%pt

Flights On Time*



66%

+2%pt

Average Delay



20min

0min

The figures on the left show the number of passengers, air transport movements (ATMs) and cargo volumes for the quarter. The load factor (the percentage of seats occupied on flights) and punctuality metrics are also displayed.

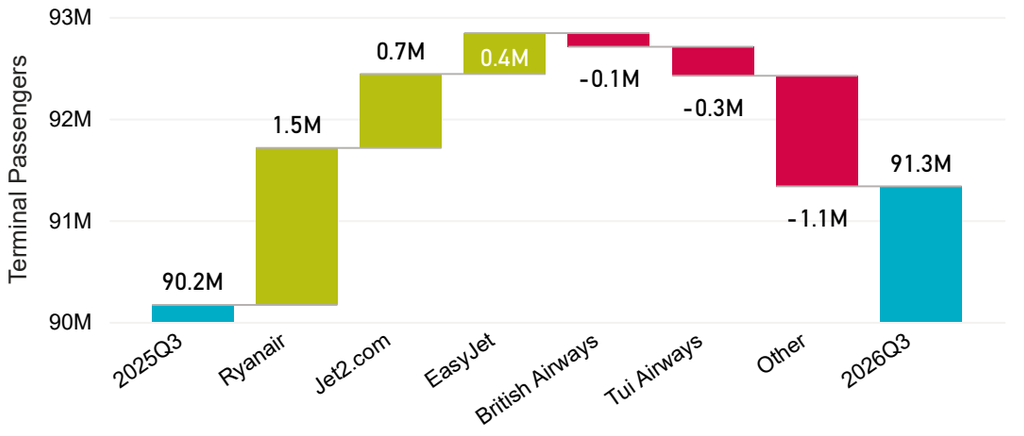
The text in green or red show growth rates relative to the same period last year.

* A flight is considered "on time" if it arrives or departs the gate within 15 minutes of the scheduled time.

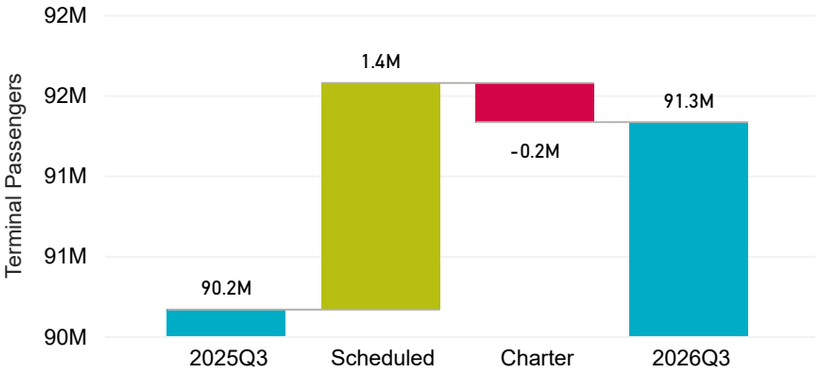
Terminal passengers Q3 2026

Year-on-year comparison

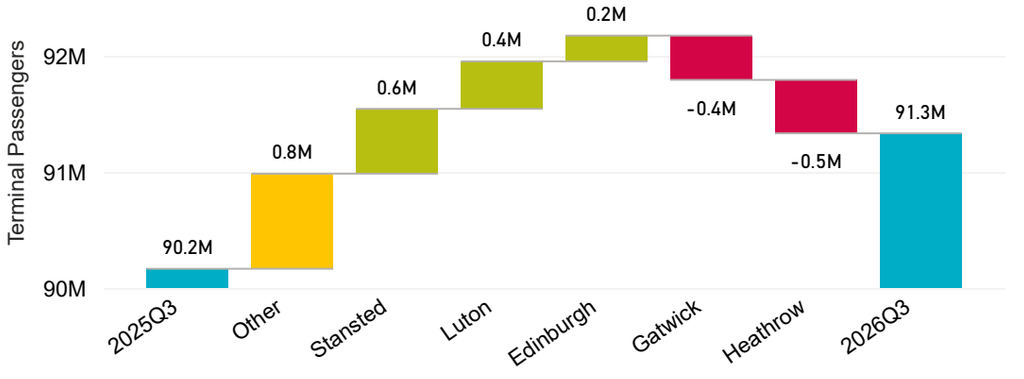
Terminal passengers by airline



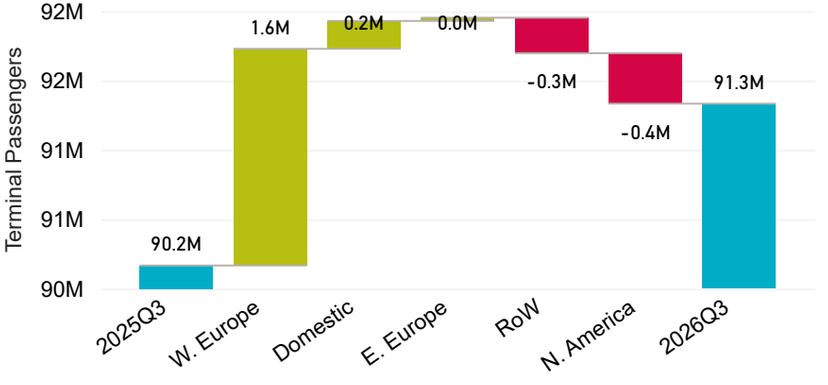
Terminal passengers by scheduled & charter services



Terminal passengers by reporting airport



Terminal passengers by market



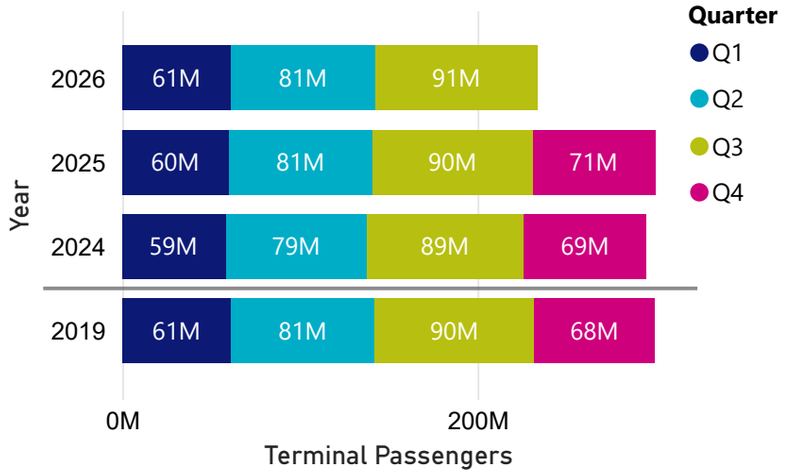
The number of terminal passengers in Q3 was 91.3M up from 90.2M in the same period last year.

The charts on this page show the distribution of passenger growth across UK airports, airlines, operation type and market. The top 5 contributors are displayed for airports and airlines with the remainder grouped as “Other”.

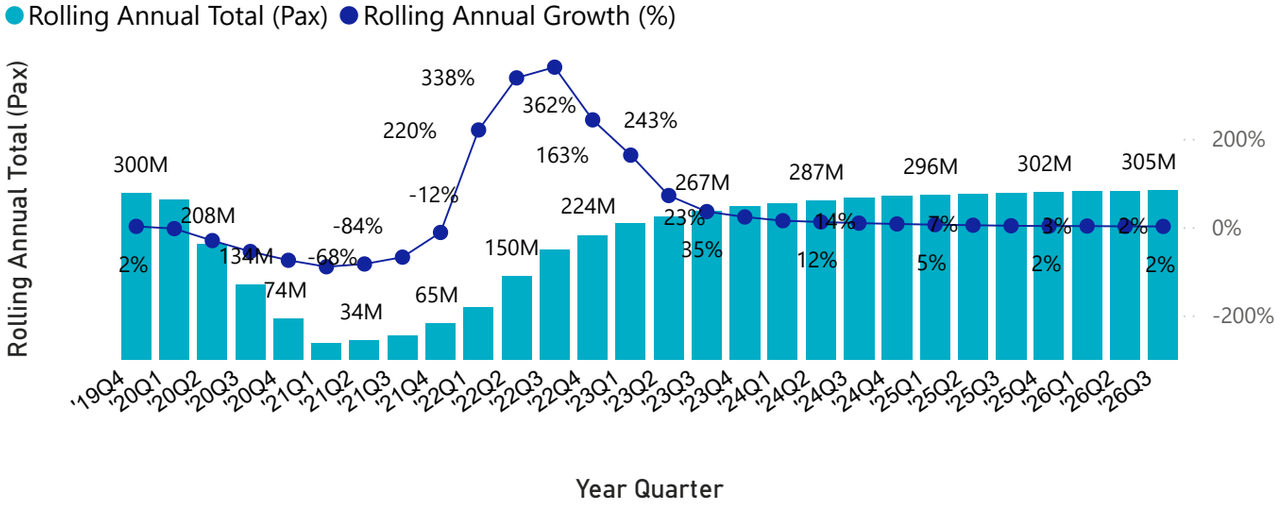
Terminal passengers

5 Year Trend

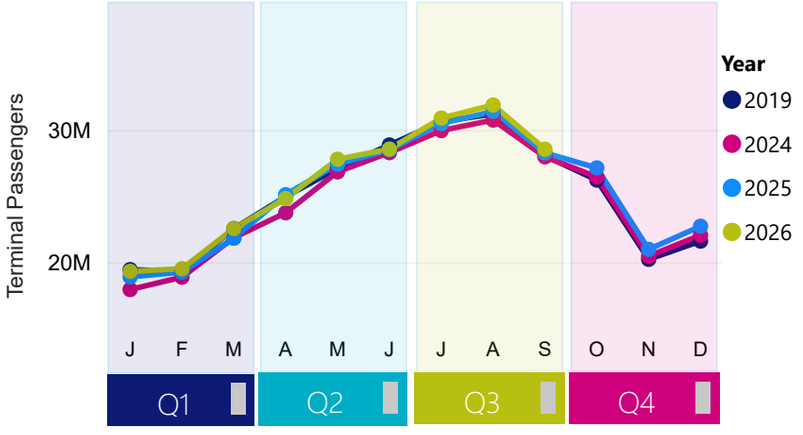
Quarterly



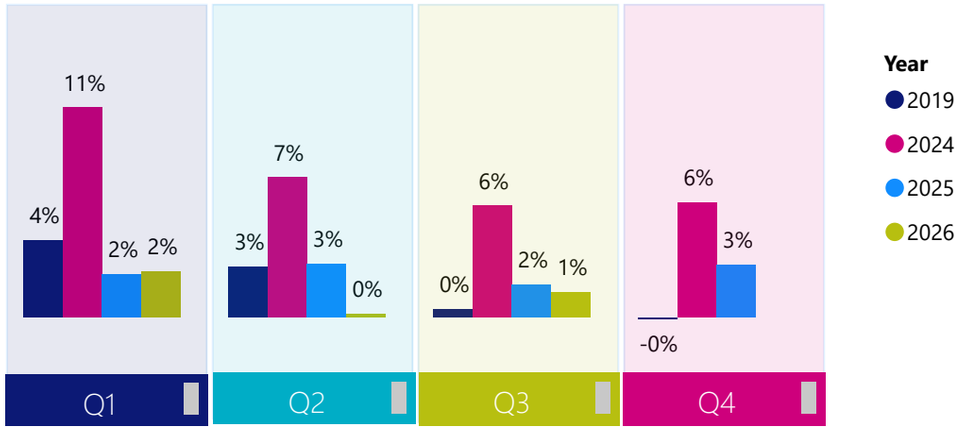
Rolling 12-month total



Monthly



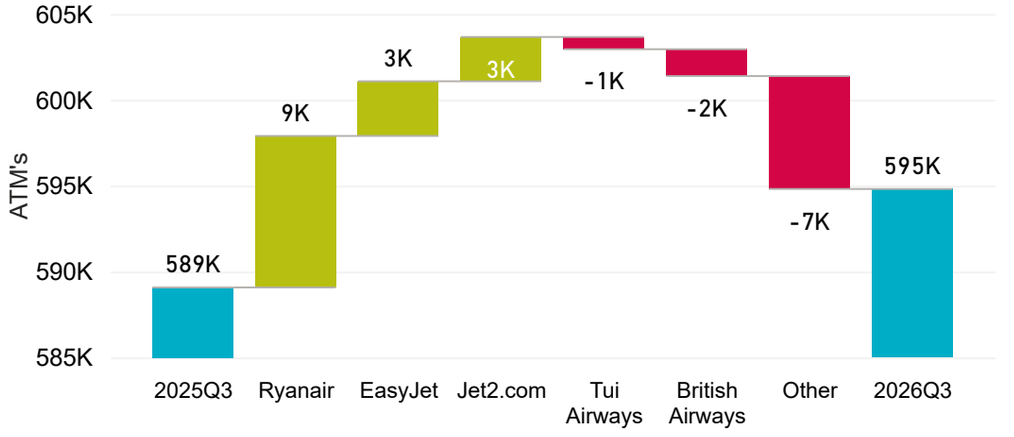
Year-on-year % Variance



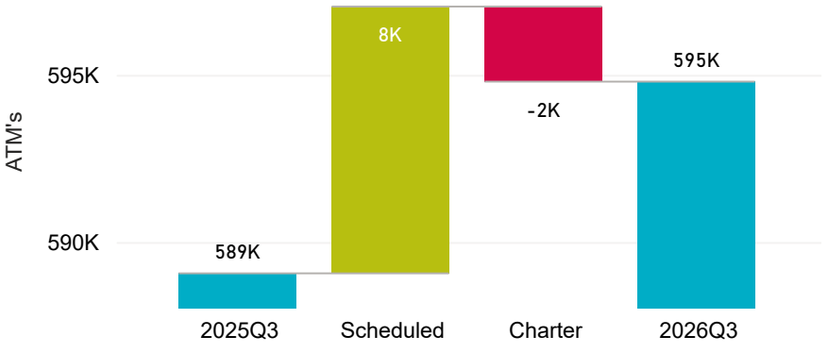
Air Transport Movements (ATM's) - Q3 2026

Year-on-year comparison

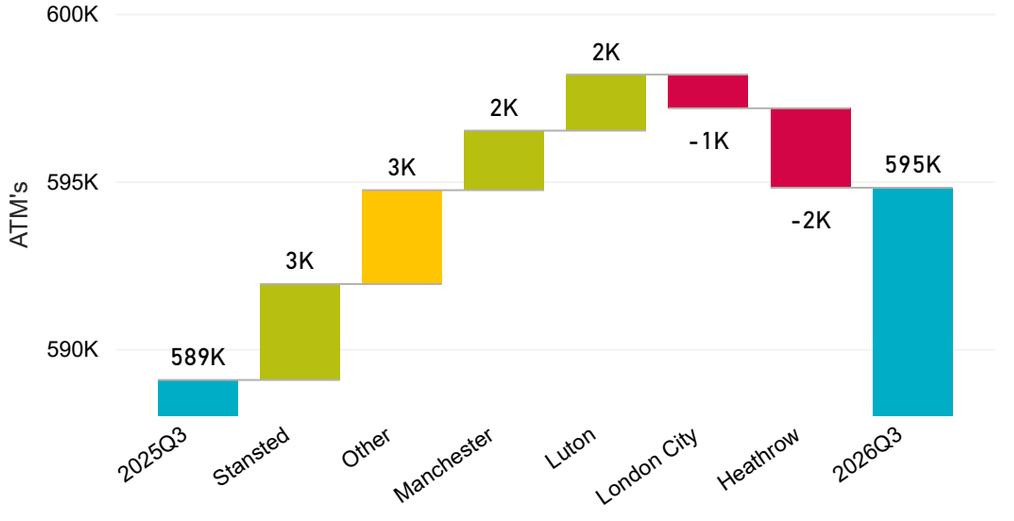
ATM's by airline



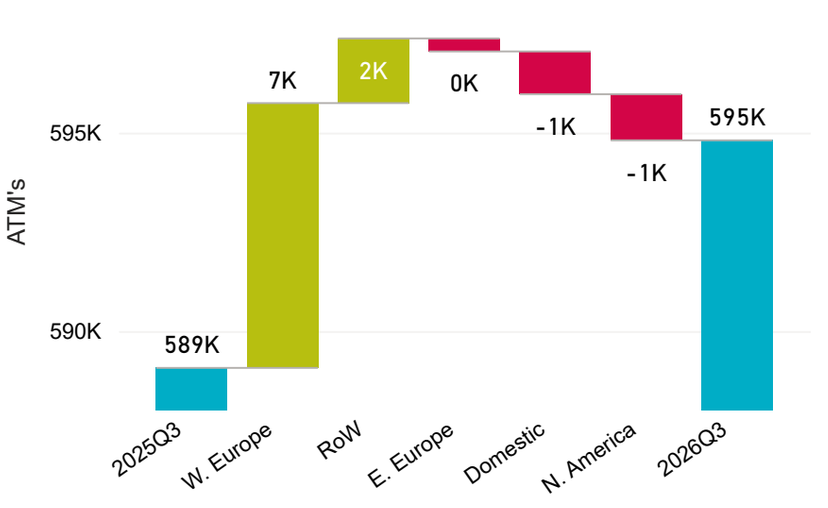
ATM's by scheduled & charter operation



ATM's by reporting airport



ATM's by market



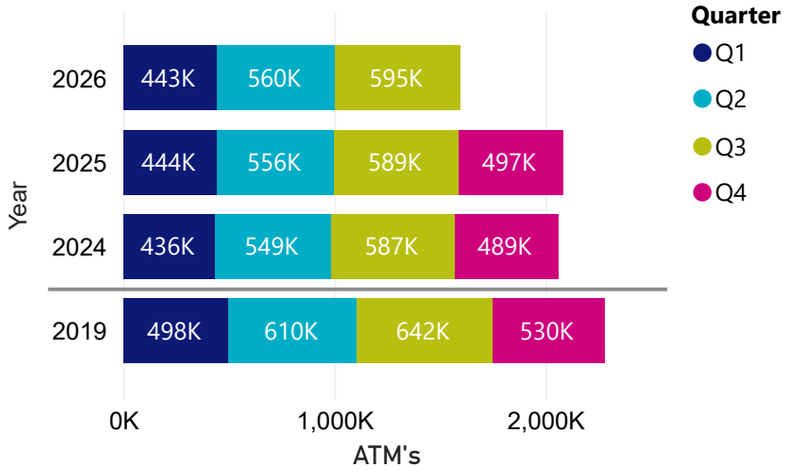
The number of ATMs in Q3 was 595K, slightly up on the same period last year.

The charts on this page show how ATM growth is distributed across UK airports, airlines, operation type and market. The top 5 contributors are displayed for airports and airlines with the remainder grouped as "Other".

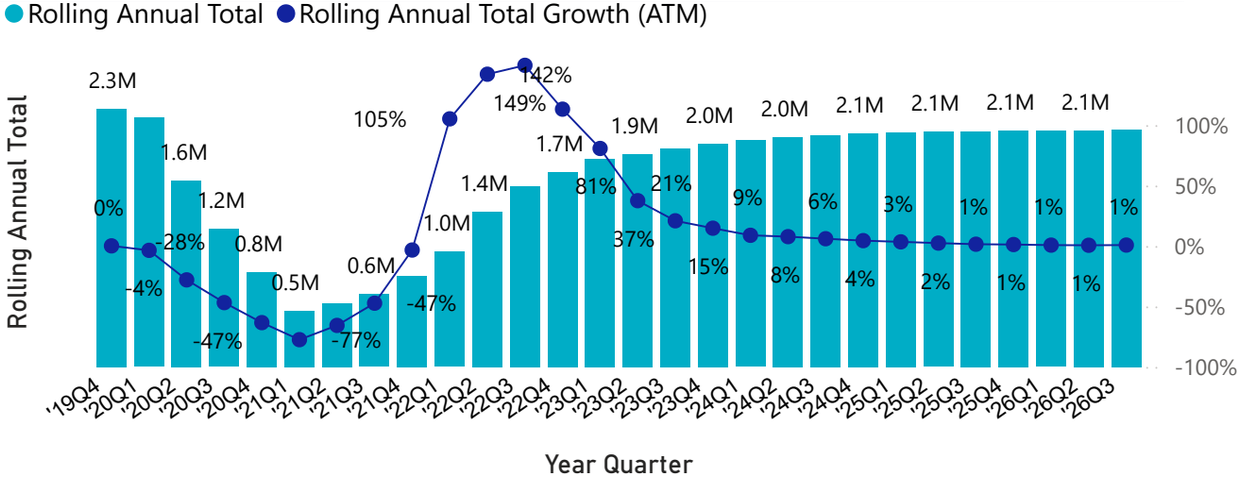
Air Transport Movements (ATM's)

5 Year Trend

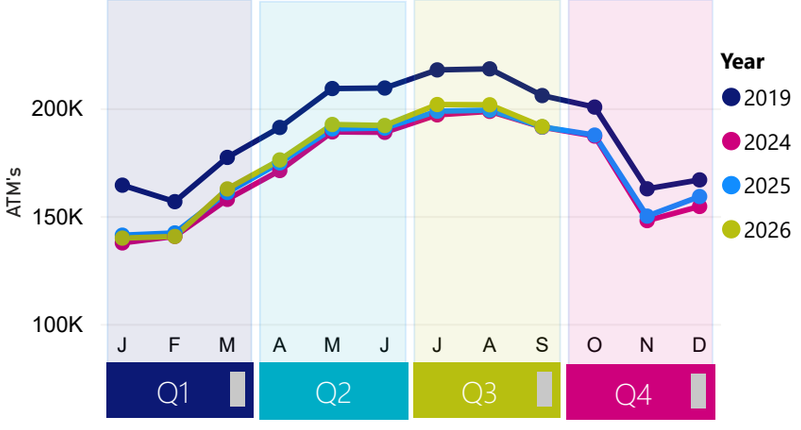
Quarterly



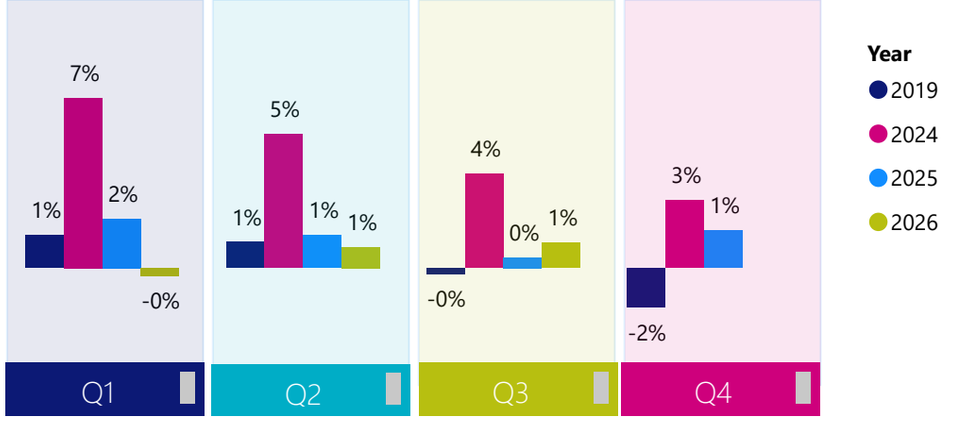
Rolling 12-month total



Monthly



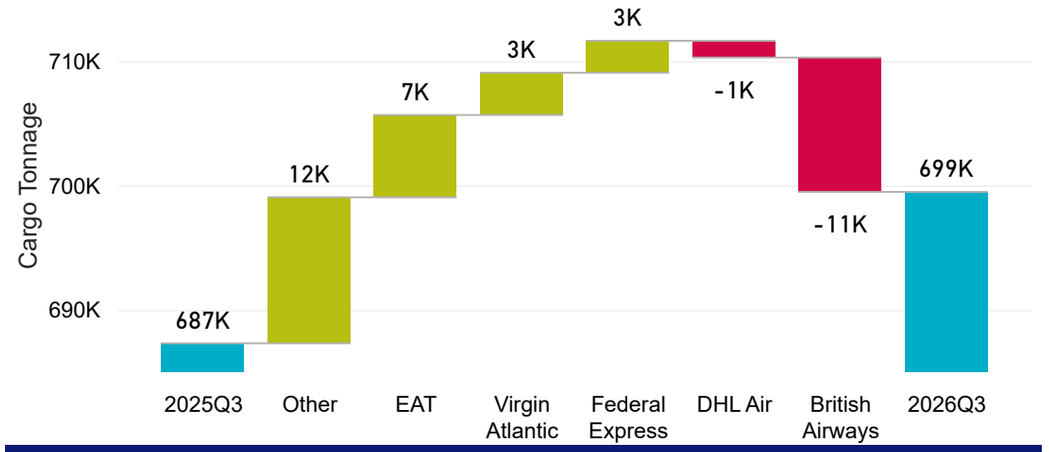
Year-on-year % Variance



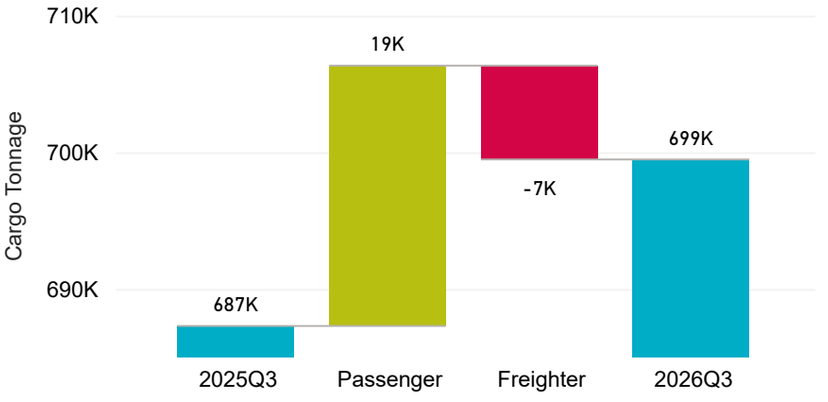
Cargo Tonnage - Q3 2026

Year-on-year comparison

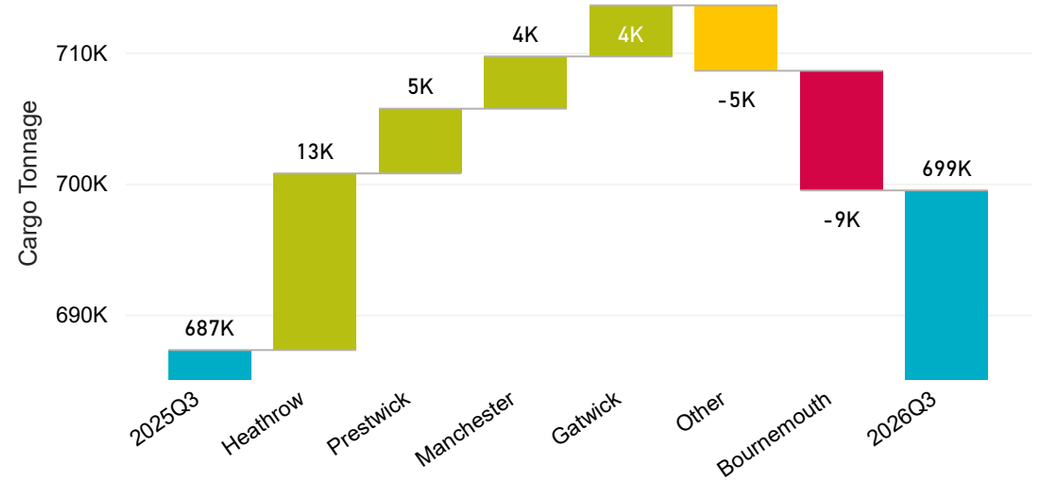
Cargo tonnage by airline



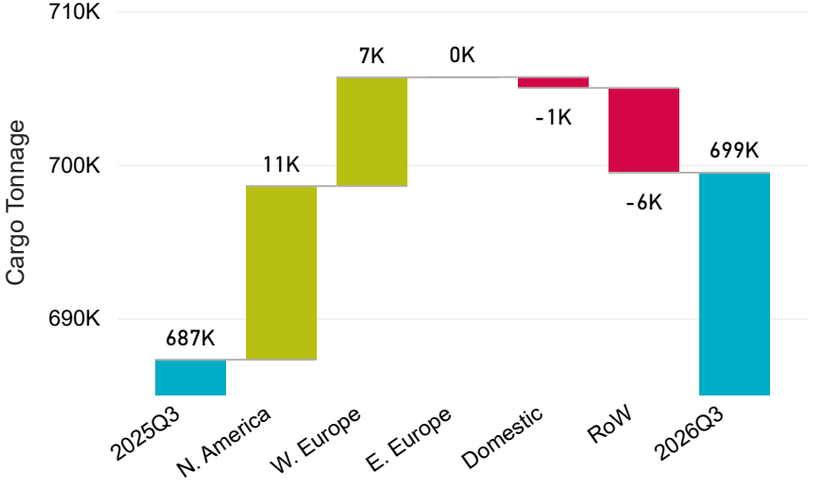
Cargo tonnage by passenger & freighter services



Cargo tonnage by reporting airport



Cargo tonnage by market



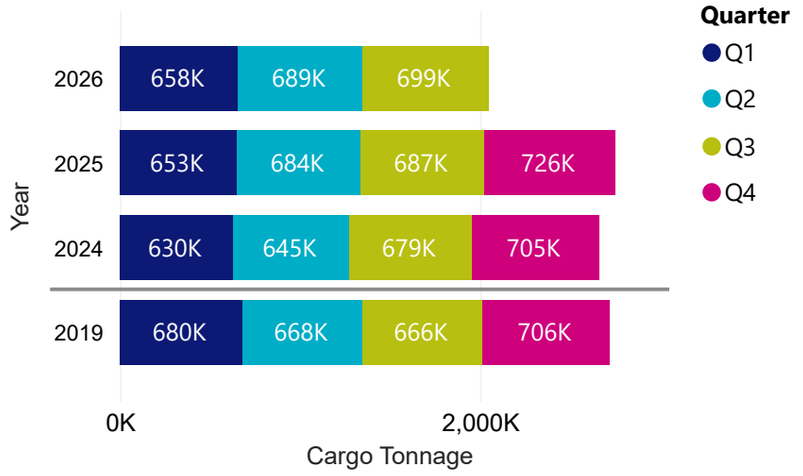
Cargo Tonnage in Q3 was 699K up from 687K in the same period last year.

The charts on this page show how cargo tonnage growth is distributed across UK airports, airlines, operation type and market. The top 5 contributors are displayed for airports and airlines with the remainder grouped as “Other”.

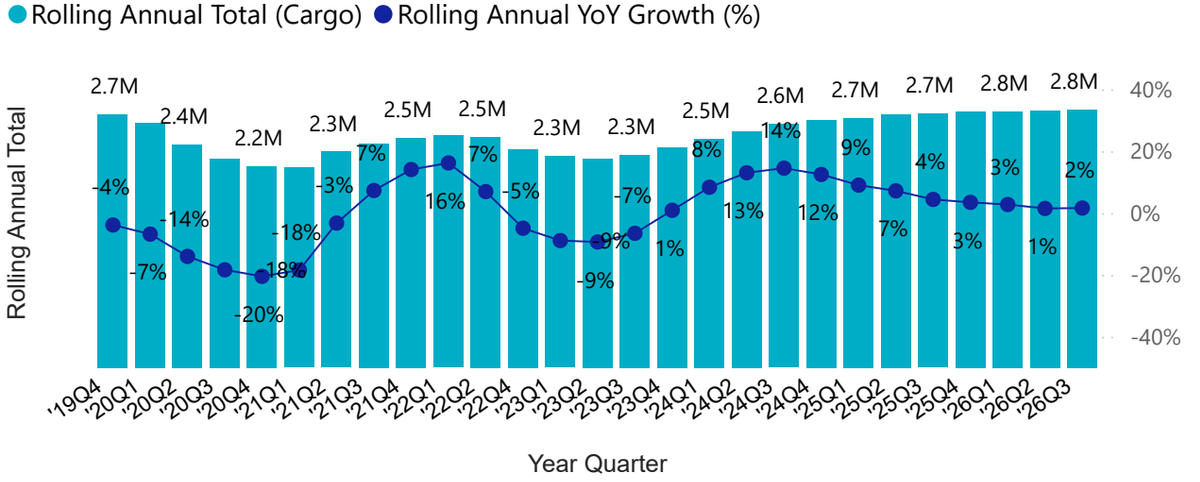
Cargo Tonnage

5 Year Trend

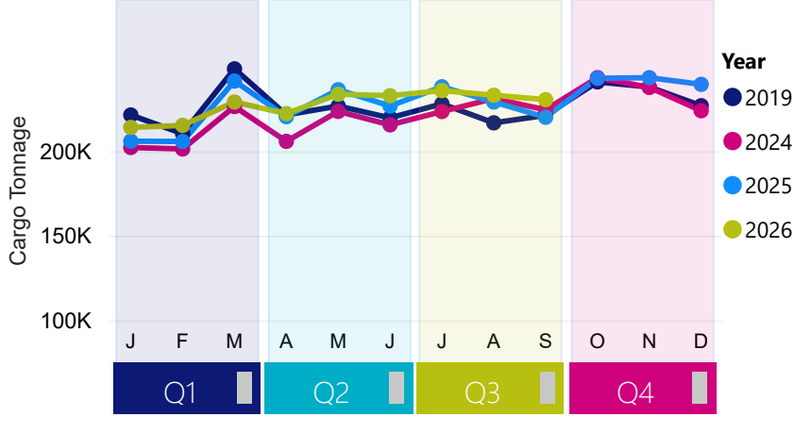
Quarterly



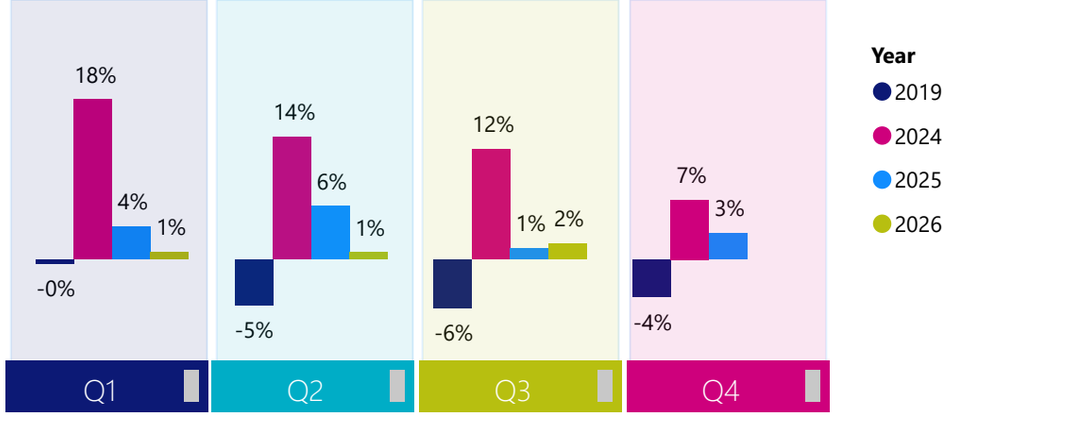
Rolling 12-month total



Monthly



Year-on-year % Variance



Punctuality Trends - Q3 2026

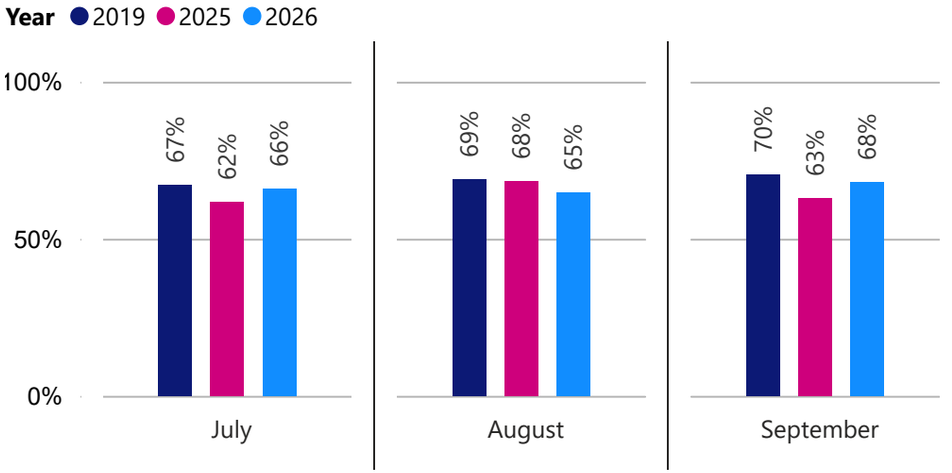
vs Last Year & 2019

NB: Delays can occur for multiple reasons - many of which are out of the control of industry operators

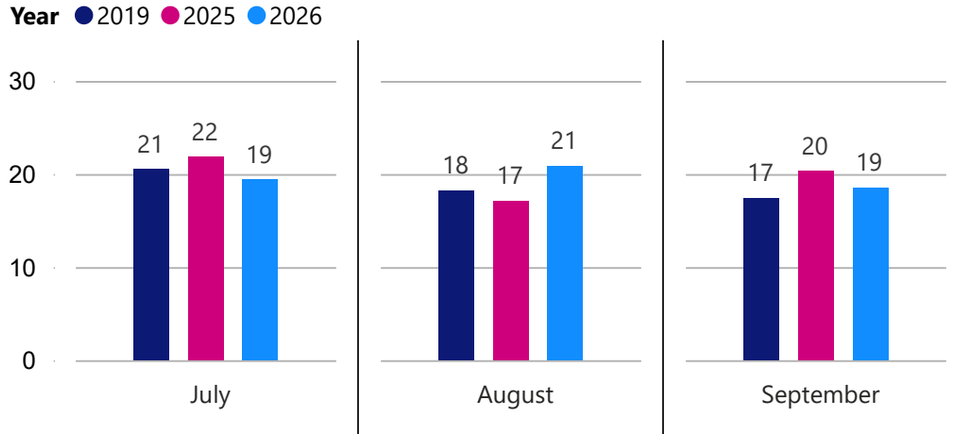
Quarterly Results

Quarterly % On-Time Flights	Average Delay per Flight:	Quarterly % Flights Cancelled
66%	**20min**	**1.40%**
Last Year: **64%** ▲	Last Year: **20mins** ▼	Last Year: **0.94%** ▲
2019: **69%** ▼	2019: **19mins** ▲	2019: **1.07%** ▲

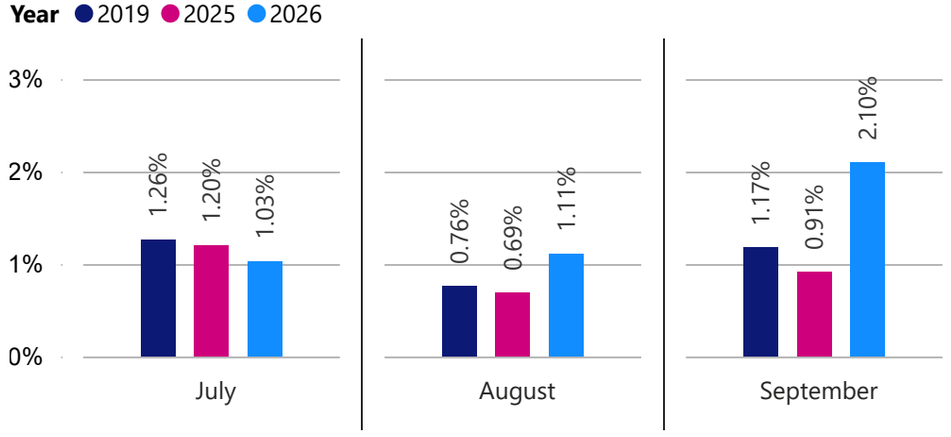
% On-Time Flights (within 15mins of schedule)



Average Delay per Flight (mins)



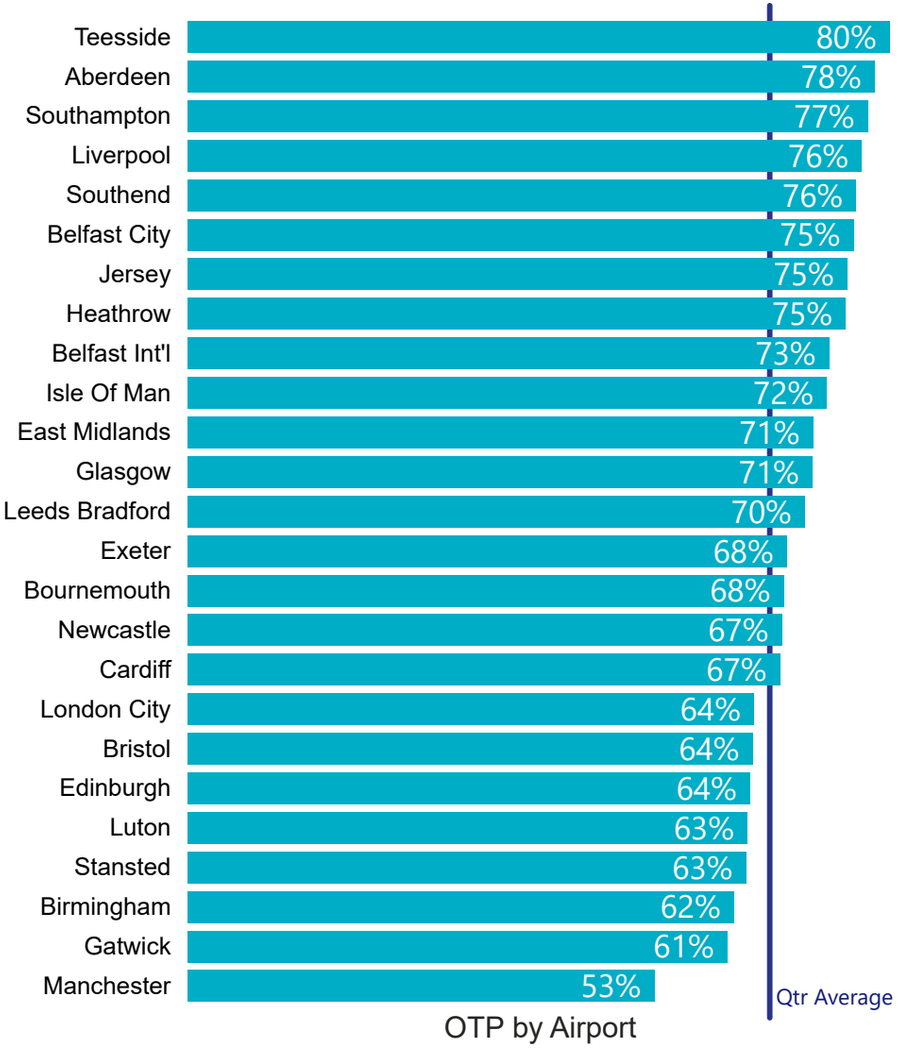
% Flights Cancelled (inside 24hr before departure)



Flight Punctuality - Q3 2026 (UK Arrivals & Departures)

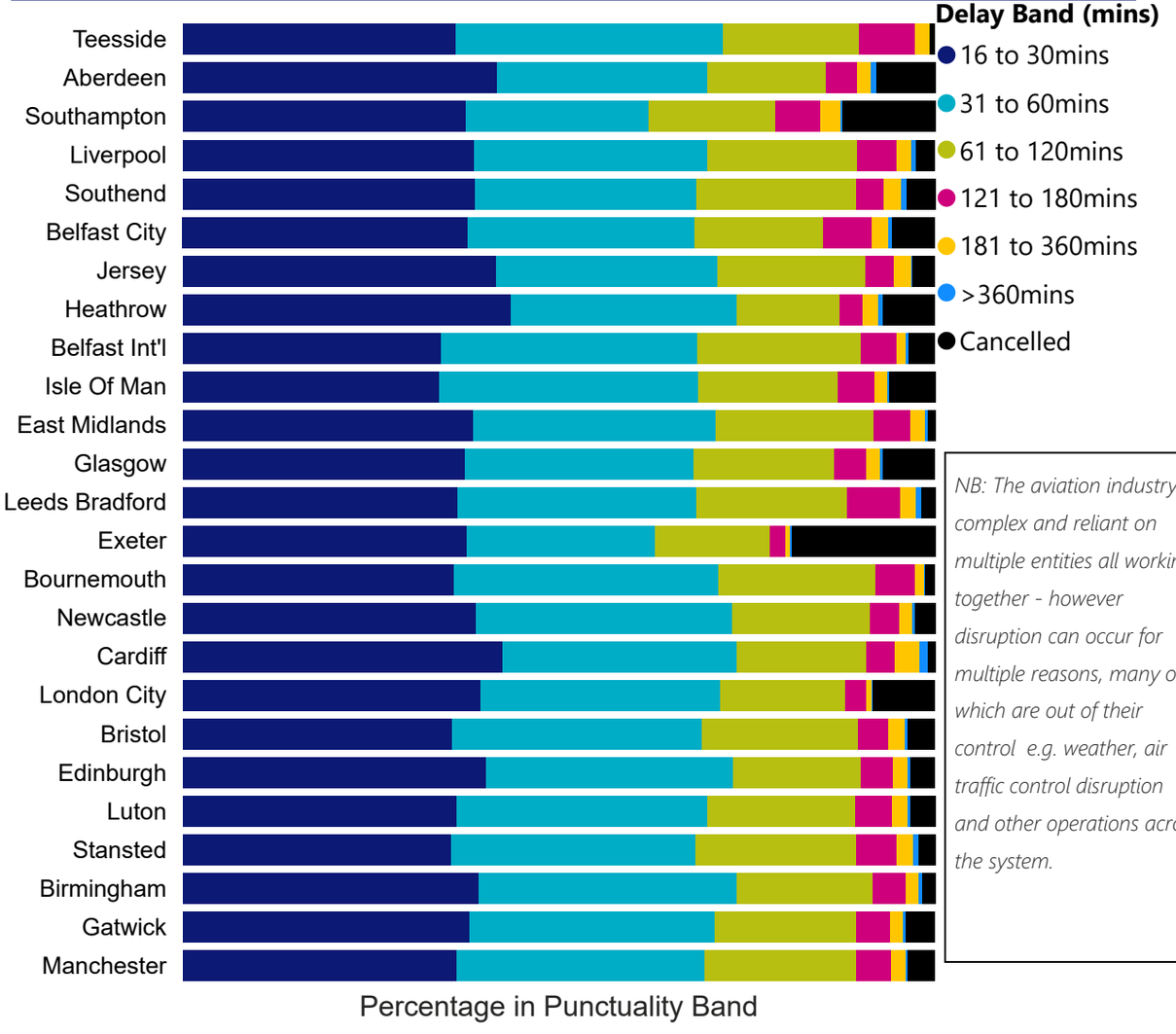
CAA (UK) reporting airports

Percentage of flights on time (<15mins)



OTP by Airport

Distribution of delayed flights

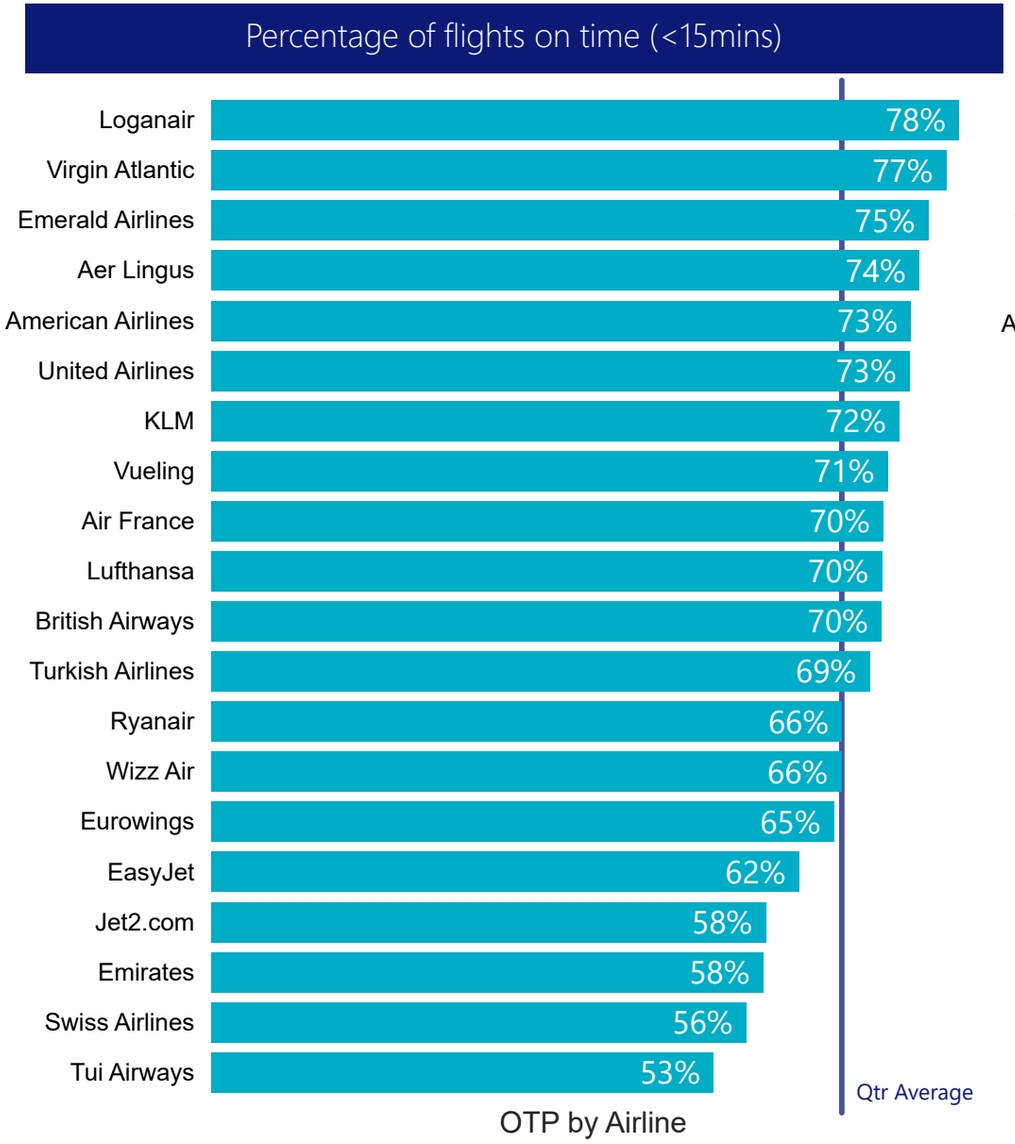


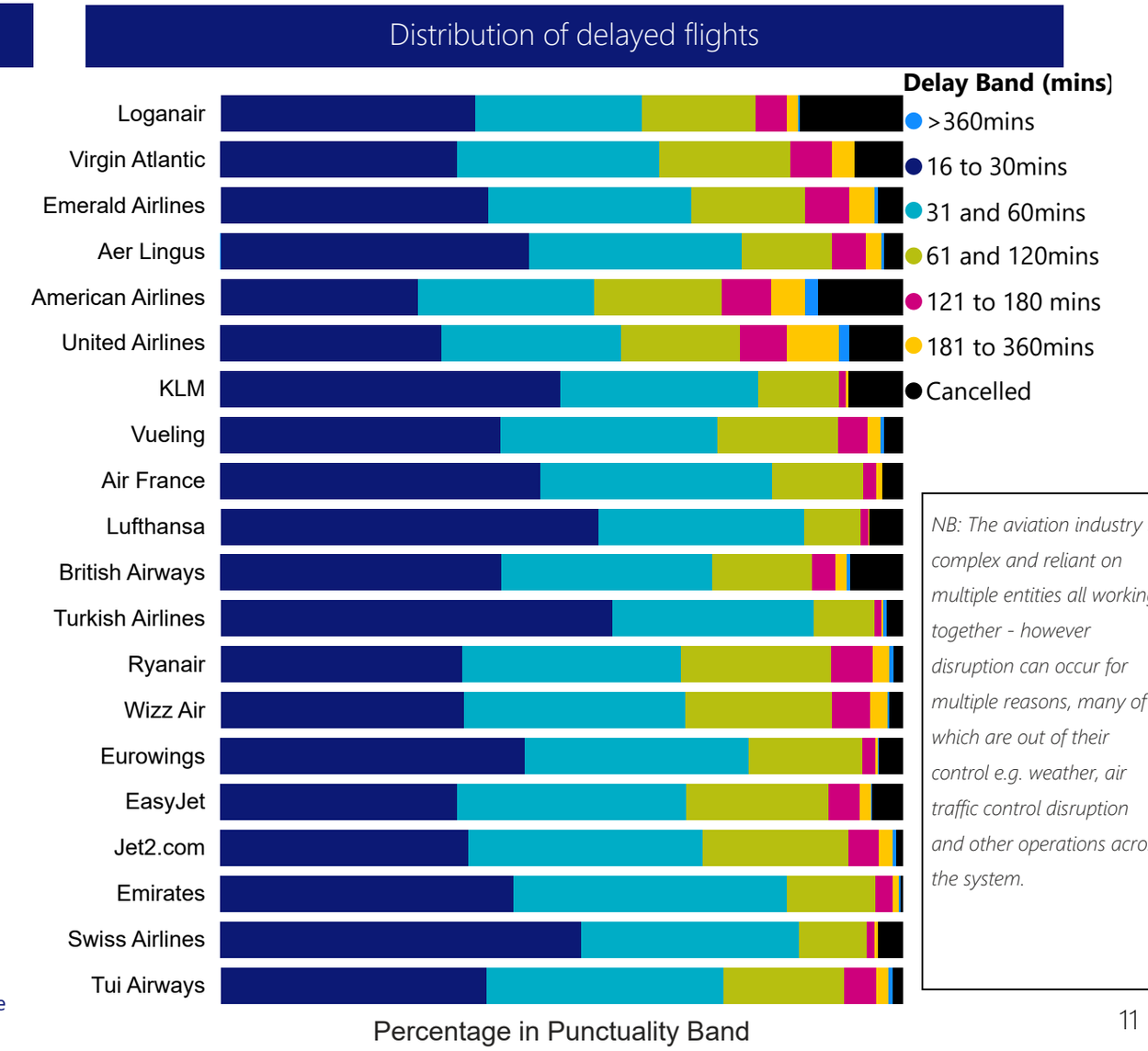
Percentage in Punctuality Band

NB: The aviation industry is complex and reliant on multiple entities all working together - however disruption can occur for multiple reasons, many of which are out of their control e.g. weather, air traffic control disruption and other operations across the system.

Flight Punctuality - Q3 2026 (UK Arrivals & Departures)

Top 20 largest airlines by ATM's



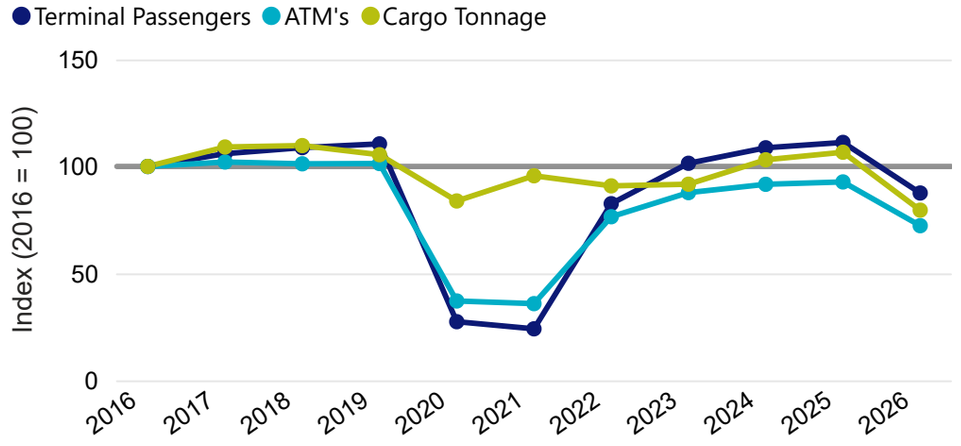


NB: The aviation industry is complex and reliant on multiple entities all working together - however disruption can occur for multiple reasons, many of which are out of their control e.g. weather, air traffic control disruption and other operations across the system.

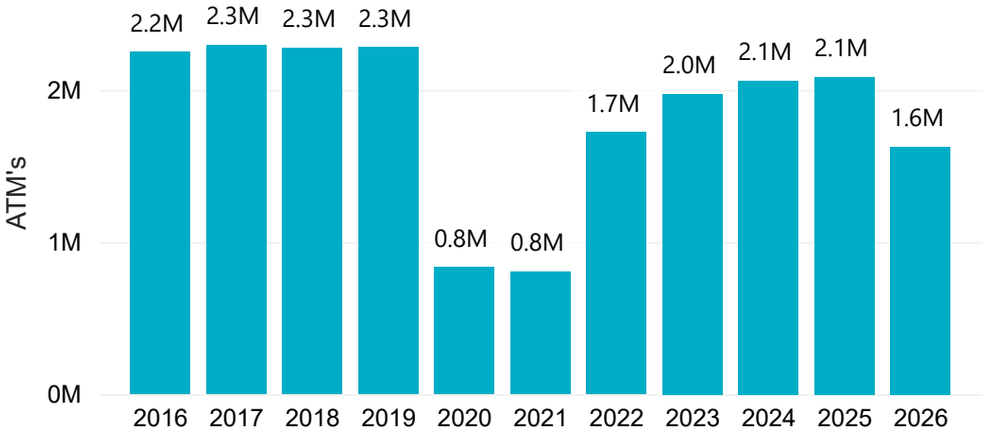
10 year trends

Terminal Passengers, Air Transport Movements (ATM) and Cargo Tonnage (NB: 2026 values are year-to-date and will update throughout the year)

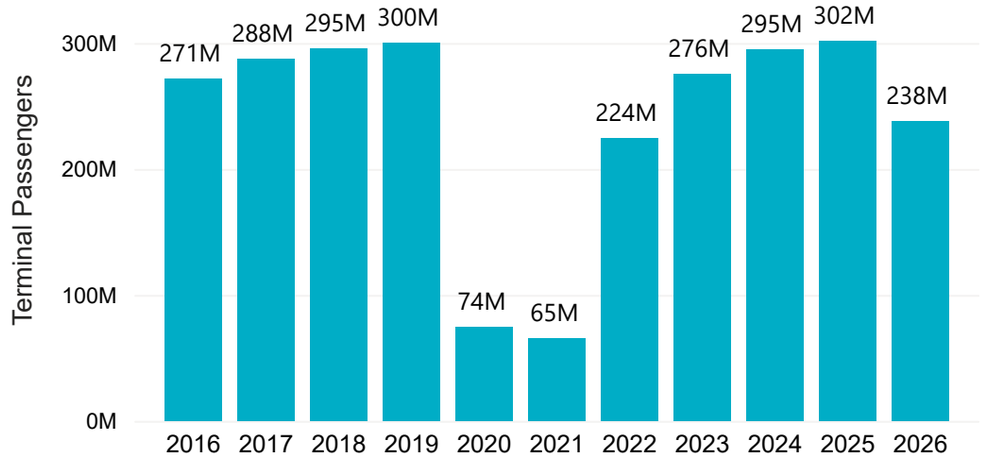
Indexed passenger, ATM and cargo growth (2016 = 100)



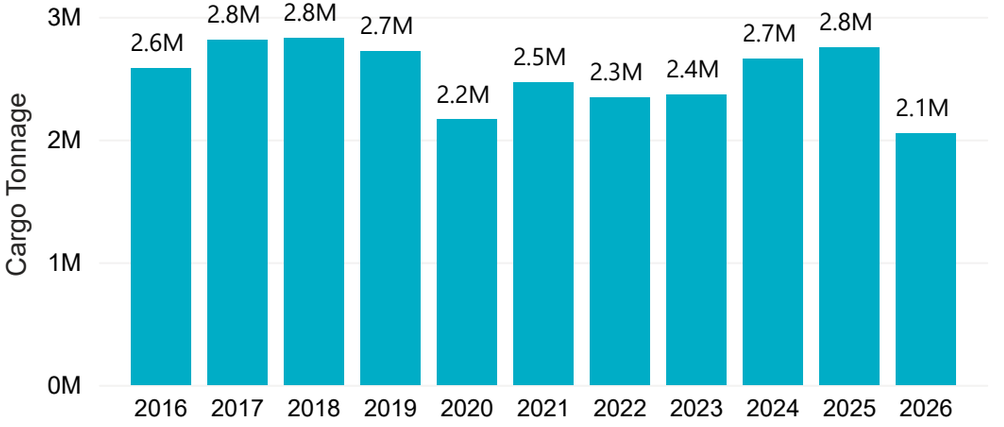
ATM's (millions)



Terminal passengers (millions)



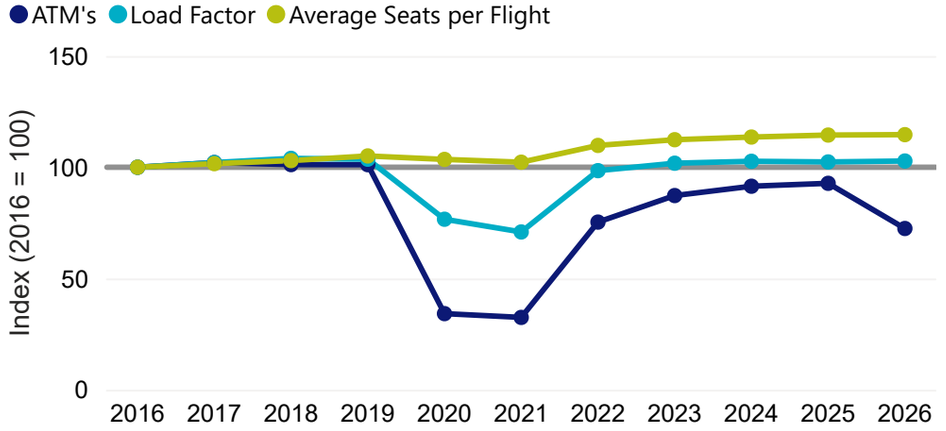
Cargo tonnage (millions)



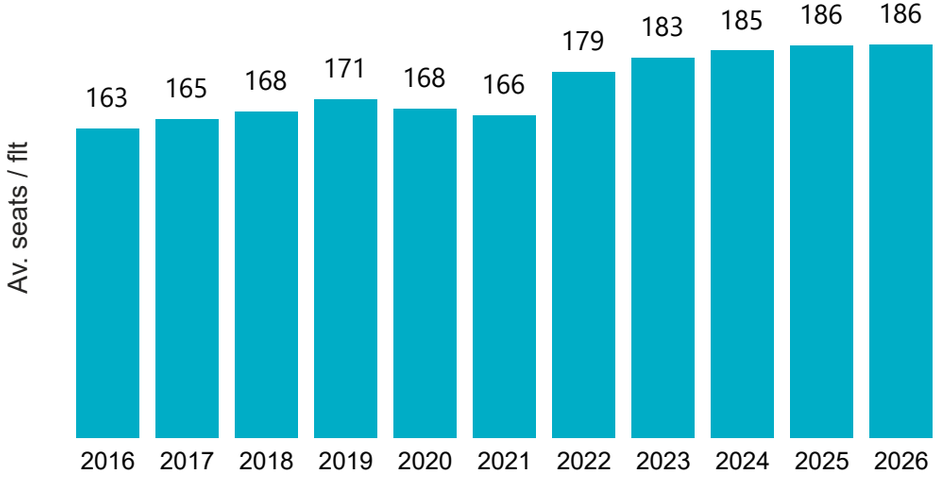
10 Year trends

Load Factor & Average Seats per Flight (NB: 2026 values are year-to-date and will update throughout the year)

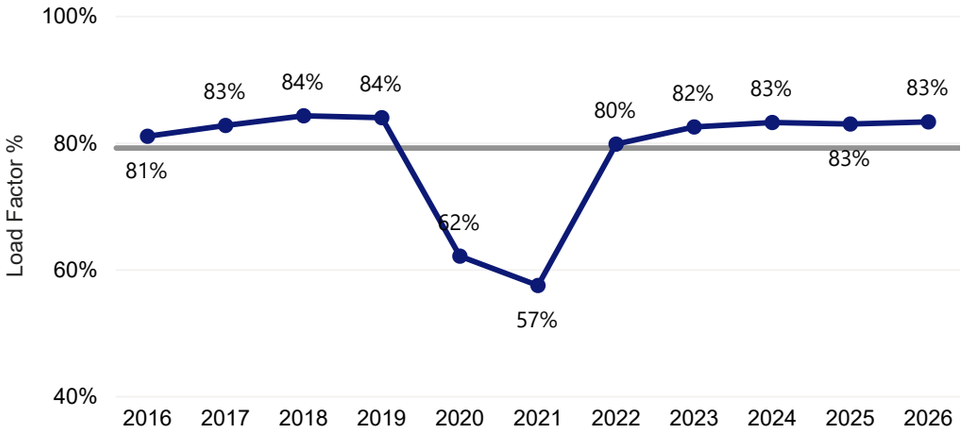
Indexed ATM, load factor and av. seats per flight (2016 = 100)



Average seats per flight



Average load factor (%)

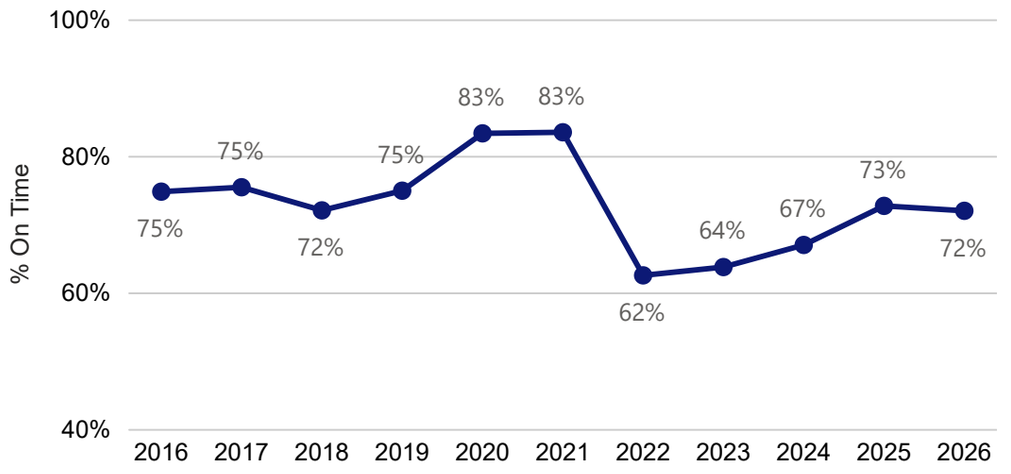


NB: Load Factor (%) represents the proportion of seats on a flight used on a flight i.e. Terminal Passengers / Total Seats.

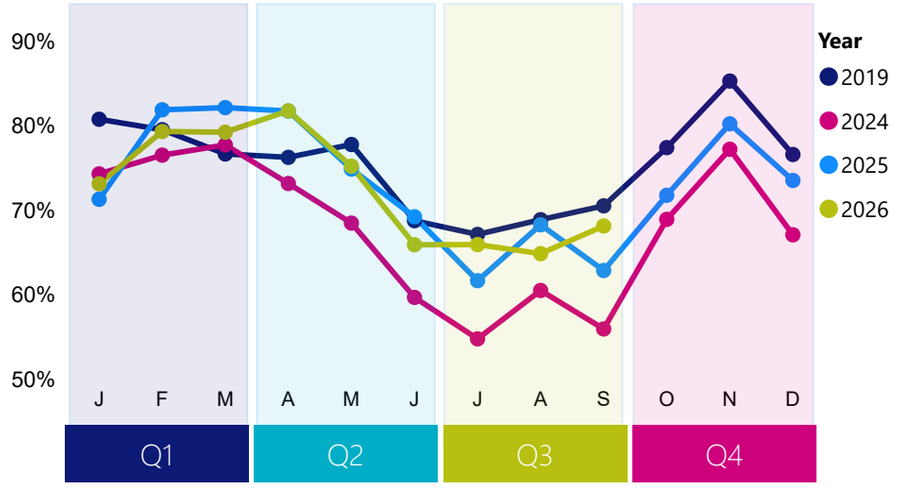
10 Year trends

Punctuality (NB: 2026 values are year-to-date and will update throughout the year)

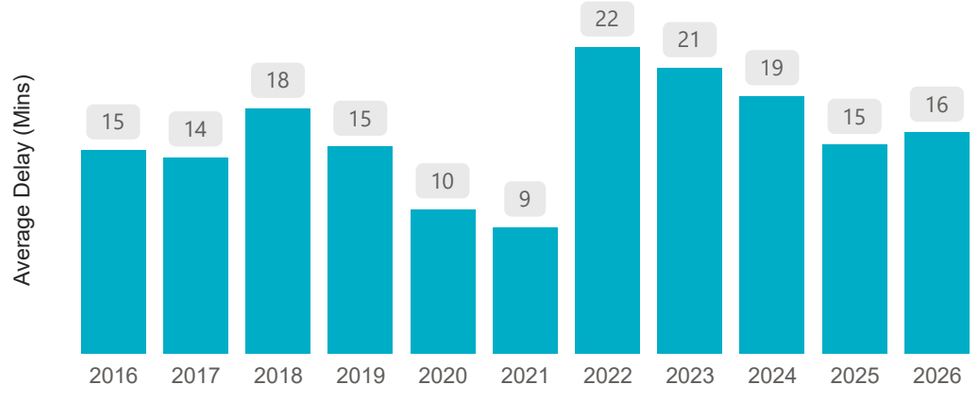
% On-time performance (OTP) <15mins



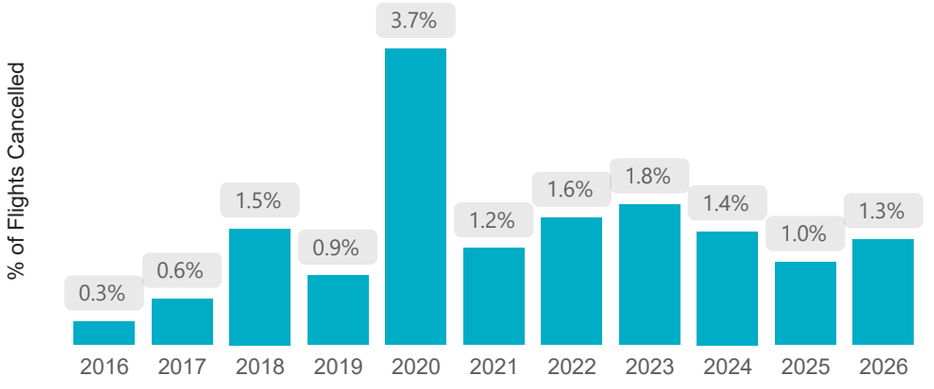
% OTP by month (last five years)



Average delay minutes per flight



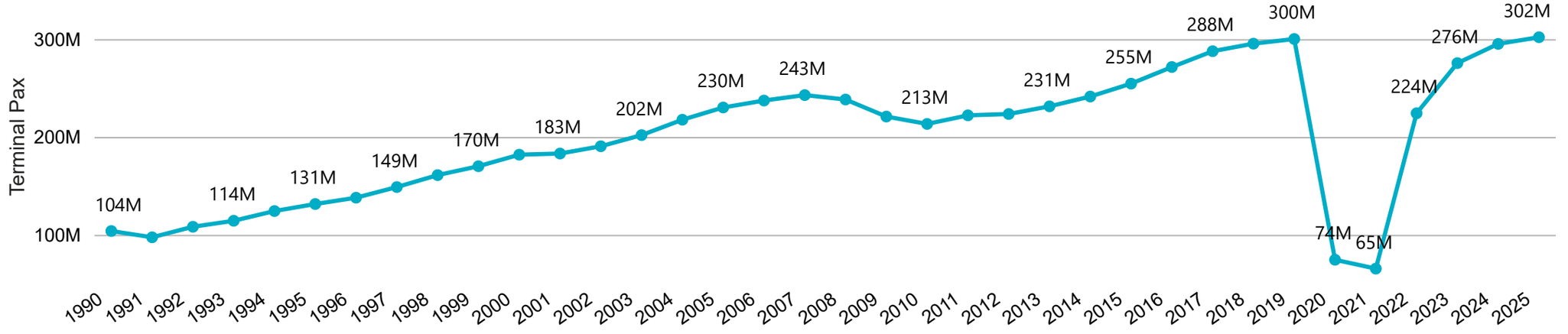
% of flights cancelled (within 24hr before departure)



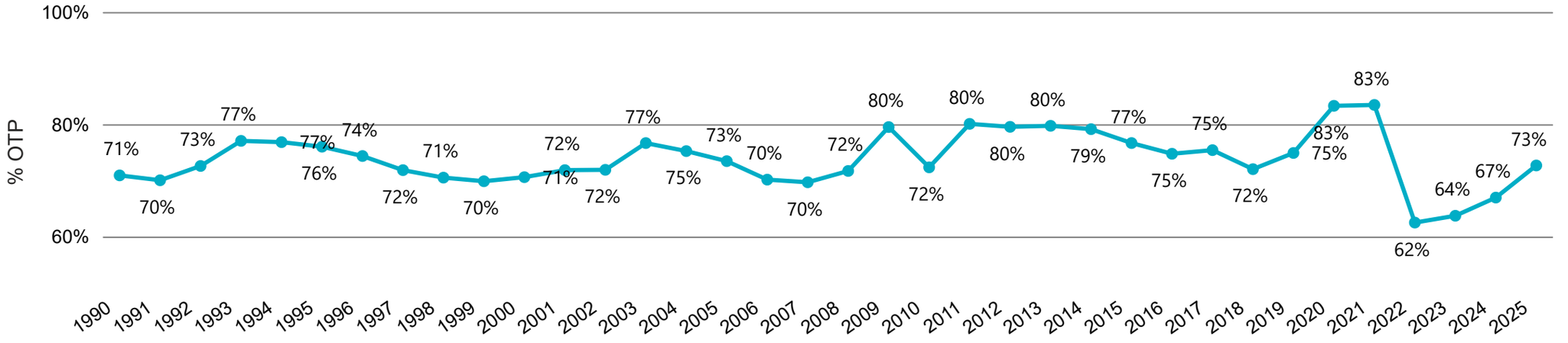
Trend since 1990 (30+ years)

Terminal Passengers and % On-Time Performance

Annual UK Terminal Passengers (1990 - 2025)

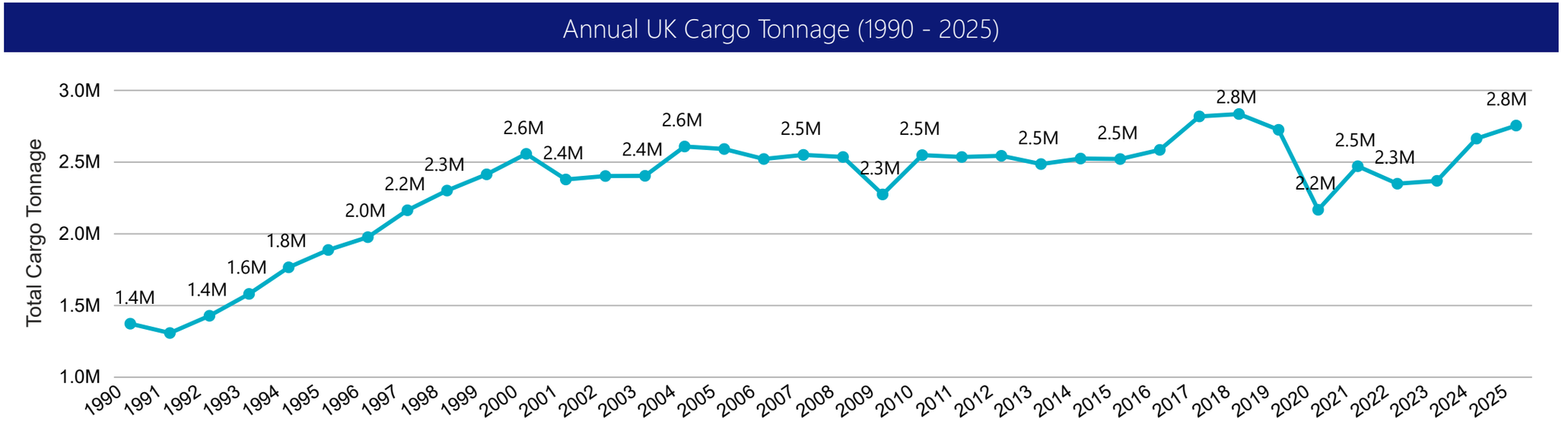


On-Time Performance (within 15mins of schedule)



Trends since 1990 (30+ years)

Cargo Tonnage



Data Tables (Latest Quarter): *Terminal Passengers - Q3 2026*

Top 25 UK reporting airports			
Reporting Airport	Term. Passengers	% YoY	
Heathrow	22,905,334	-2%	▼
Gatwick	12,860,848	-3%	▼
Manchester	10,095,879	2%	▲
Stansted	9,179,330	6%	▲
Luton	5,573,851	8%	▲
Edinburgh	5,400,496	4%	▲
Birmingham	4,447,813	3%	▲
Bristol	3,484,621	1%	▲
Glasgow	2,546,807	3%	▲
Belfast Int'l	1,984,486	-0%	▼
Newcastle	1,928,018	8%	▲
Liverpool	1,823,328	5%	▲
Leeds Bradford	1,575,557	2%	▲
East Midlands	1,550,287	4%	▲
London City	940,386	-8%	▼
Belfast City	678,536	8%	▲
Aberdeen	625,049	-5%	▼
Bournemouth	523,169	-2%	▼
Jersey	475,395	4%	▲
Cardiff	407,369	13%	▲
Inverness	275,585	13%	▲
Southend	269,468	10%	▲
Southampton	265,850	4%	▲
Prestwick	231,470	7%	▲
Guernsey	218,677	7%	▲
Total	90,267,609	1%	▲

Top 25 Airlines			
Airline (groups)	Term. Passengers	% YoY	
EasyJet	18,011,189	2%	▲
Ryanair	17,892,471	9%	▲
British Airways	14,499,733	-1%	▼
Jet2.com	8,493,030	9%	▲
Tui Airways	4,513,053	-6%	▼
Wizz Air	3,076,575	-4%	▼
Virgin Atlantic	1,604,003	-3%	▼
Emirates	1,290,238	-16%	▼
KLM	1,261,071	-0%	▼
Aer Lingus	1,259,956	-2%	▼
American Airlines	956,425	-13%	▼
Vueling	937,599	-12%	▼
Lufthansa	917,720	-13%	▼
Loganair	805,858	5%	▲
Qatar Airways	795,678	-18%	▼
United Airlines	792,014	3%	▲
Turkish Airlines	659,642	-3%	▼
Air Canada	572,470	8%	▲
Delta Airlines	511,779	-8%	▼
Sunexpress	489,931	-25%	▼
Swiss Airlines	478,561	6%	▲
Eurowings	473,931	10%	▲
Pegasus Airlines	464,603	12%	▲
SAS	454,393	-2%	▼
Air France	425,849	11%	▲
Total	81,637,772	2%	▲

Top 25 international destinations			
OD Airport Name	Term. Passengers	% YoY	
Dublin	2,798,445	4%	▲
Palma De Mallorca	2,769,651	2%	▲
Alicante	2,204,361	8%	▲
Malaga	2,104,972	5%	▲
Amsterdam	2,094,760	-4%	▼
Faro	1,802,702	7%	▲
Barcelona	1,576,911	13%	▲
Tenerife (Surreina Sofia)	1,393,117	-0%	▼
Dubai	1,288,991	-22%	▼
Antalya	1,224,451	-11%	▼
Paris (Charles De Gaulle)	1,216,391	9%	▲
Dalaman	988,077	-16%	▼
Ibiza	987,646	2%	▲
New York (Jf Kennedy)	976,703	-18%	▼
Madrid	958,289	16%	▲
Rhodes	888,748	6%	▲
Arrecife	881,979	1%	▲
Lisbon	846,143	2%	▲
Corfu	840,553	1%	▲
Istanbul	820,417	-5%	▼
Doha Hamad	803,875	-23%	▼
Copenhagen	775,108	6%	▲
Malta	728,865	10%	▲
Nice	721,201	3%	▲
Heraklion	689,561	1%	▲

Data Tables (Latest Quarter): *ATM's - Q3 2026*

Top 25 UK Reporting Airports			
Reporting Airport	ATM's	% YoY	
Heathrow	120,889	-2%	▼
Gatwick	76,944	0%	▲
Manchester	58,856	3%	▲
Stansted	55,299	5%	▲
Edinburgh	35,600	2%	▲
Luton	31,232	6%	▲
Birmingham	28,459	3%	▲
Bristol	22,364	2%	▲
Glasgow	19,892	3%	▲
East Midlands	14,043	2%	▲
Aberdeen	13,639	-5%	▼
Belfast Int'l	13,357	-2%	▼
Newcastle	12,337	5%	▲
Liverpool	11,788	5%	▲
London City	11,180	-8%	▼
Leeds Bradford	10,910	2%	▲
Belfast City	7,797	13%	▲
Jersey	4,861	1%	▲
Southampton	4,355	2%	▲
Guernsey	4,209	-10%	▼
Norwich	3,539	-10%	▼
Bournemouth	3,252	-7%	▼
Sumburgh	3,191	1%	▲
Cardiff	2,761	12%	▲
Inverness	2,598	2%	▲
Total	573,352	1%	▲

Top 25 international destinations			
OD Airport Name	ATM's	% YoY	
Dublin	22,870	5%	▲
Amsterdam	17,503	-5%	▼
Palma De Mallorca	16,708	2%	▲
Alicante	13,051	11%	▲
Malaga	12,353	6%	▲
Faro	10,838	6%	▲
Paris (Charles De Gaulle)	9,916	6%	▲
Barcelona	9,751	13%	▲
Tenerife (Surreina Sofia)	7,536	-1%	▼
Antalya	6,893	-15%	▼
Ibiza	6,248	2%	▲
Madrid	5,740	19%	▲
Dalaman	5,583	-22%	▼
Lisbon	5,243	4%	▲
Copenhagen	5,225	7%	▲
Arrecife	4,984	-1%	▼
Rhodes	4,964	7%	▲
Corfu	4,809	2%	▲
New York (Jf Kennedy)	4,737	-11%	▼
Nice	4,735	3%	▲
Istanbul	4,668	-0%	▼
Malta	4,187	12%	▲
Heraklion	3,896	3%	▲
Dubai	3,593	-12%	▼
Doha Hamad	2,818	-20%	▼

ATM's by operation type			
Op. Type	ATM's	% YoY	
Scheduled	560,355	1%	▲
Charter	34,443	-6%	▼

ATM's by market			
Market	ATM's	% YoY	
W. Europe	365,464	2%	▲
Domestic	108,010	-1%	▼
RoW	45,696	4%	▲
E. Europe	41,219	-1%	▼
N. America	34,418	-3%	▼

Data Tables (Latest Quarter): *Cargo Tonnage - Q3 2026*

Cargo Tonnage by UK reporting airport			
Reporting Airport	Cargo Tonnage	% YoY	
Heathrow	404,809	3%	▲
East Midlands	99,520	-2%	▼
Stansted	68,153	-2%	▼
Gatwick	37,195	12%	▲
Manchester	30,335	15%	▲
Prestwick	16,423	43%	▲
Birmingham	13,394	-4%	▼
Edinburgh	9,859	22%	▲
Luton	6,563	-16%	▼
Belfast Int'l	6,018	-11%	▼
Glasgow	2,823	10%	▲
Aberdeen	1,547	1%	▲
Newcastle	806	-30%	▼
Teesside	646	29%	▲
Sumburgh	327	16%	▲
Kirkwall	318	3%	▲
Stornoway	216	-14%	▼
Benbecula	189	7%	▲
Islay	74	-32%	▼
Jersey	67	-46%	▼
Humberside	45	14%	▲
Bristol	39	95%	▲
Guernsey	28	-91%	▼
Southampton	22	35%	▲
Alderney	17	17%	▲
Total	699,434	3%	

Top 25 international destinations			
OD Airport Name	Cargo Tonnage	% YoY	
New York (Jf Kennedy)	34,316	-1%	▼
Leipzig	32,858	9%	▲
Doha Hamad	30,928	-12%	▼
Dubai	29,300	-14%	▼
Shanghai (Pu Dong)	23,109	25%	▲
Los Angeles International	22,310	-2%	▼
Delhi	18,479	30%	▲
Mumbai	16,678	16%	▲
Beijing	16,162	1%	▲
Chicago (O'Hare)	15,647	2%	▲
Istanbul	13,433	-3%	▼
Cologne Bonn	13,423	-6%	▼
Singapore	13,031	-2%	▼
Hong Kong (Chek Lap Kok)	12,976	-7%	▼
Guangzhou Baiyun International	12,384	-9%	▼
Abu Dhabi International	11,225	13%	▲
Toronto	11,220	17%	▲
Dallas/Fort Worth	11,152	27%	▲
Paris (Charles De Gaulle)	11,147	12%	▲
Cincinnati	10,780	16%	▲
Brussels	10,463	-5%	▼
Atlanta	9,712	26%	▲
Memphis	9,214	5%	▲
Tokyo (Haneda)	8,909	8%	▲
Miami International	8,909	-16%	▼

Cargo Tonnage by operation type			
Op. Type	Cargo Tonnage	% YoY	
Scheduled	668,849	2%	▲
Charter	30,624	-10%	▼

Cargo Tonnage by market			
Market	Cargo Tonnage	% YoY	
RoW	329,977	-2%	▼
N. America	220,044	5%	▲
W. Europe	124,341	6%	▲
Domestic	24,090	-3%	▼
E. Europe	1,020	2%	▲