

Nearly 2.3 million passengers (+3.2%) at Brussels Airport in May Strong growth in cargo volumes reaching nearly 76,000 tonnes (+12%)

11.6.2026 - | Brussels Airport

This continued growth since the start of the year was achieved despite the ongoing war in the Middle East and the national day of industrial action on 12 May. Nearly 2.3 million passengers travelled via Brussels Airport in May, representing an increase of 3.2% compared to the same period last year. This growth was supported by several long weekends as well as the end of the school holidays in French-speaking education. Strong growth was again recorded in the cargo segment, which saw volumes rise by 12% to nearly 76,000 tonnes.

Passenger traffic continues to grow, up 3.2% from May 2025

Despite two events that had an impact on operations, passenger numbers at Brussels Airport continue to grow. The airport welcomed 2,271,847 passengers last month, up 3.2% compared to May 2025. Passenger growth was driven in particular by several long weekends, including the 1 May weekend, as well as by the end of the school holidays of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles.

The ten most popular destinations last month were the same as in April: Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Germany, Portugal, France, the United States and Switzerland.

Outbound transfer passengers accounted for 13% of total traffic and once again recorded growth, mainly towards Europe, Africa and North America, confirming Brussels Airport's role as a strategic European hub connecting these regions.

As in the two previous months, the situation in the Middle East continues to affect activities at Brussels Airport. There are currently no flights to Tel Aviv or Doha, and flights to Dubai and Abu Dhabi are operating at reduced frequency.

In parallel, a national day of industrial action on Tuesday 12 May also impacted airport activities, with 25,000 passengers unable to take their scheduled flight. However, unlike the eight previous days of industrial action since 1 January 2025, nearly half of all passenger flights were able to operate this time.

Cargo volumes rise strongly by 12%

In May, total cargo volumes through Brussels Airport reached 75,847 tonnes, representing an increase of 12% compared to the same period in 2025. This double-digit growth is mainly driven by the increase in flown cargo (+12.3%), particularly due to the boom in the full freighter segment (+53.3%), linked to higher volumes with Asia and South America. Trucked volumes also recorded double-digit growth (+10.1%).

In contrast, integrator services declined for the first time this year (-5.4%). Cargo carried on passenger flights ("belly cargo") continues to be affected by the situation in the Middle East,

decreasing by 5.3%.

The main import regions are Asia and North America, both showing strong growth, while Africa recorded a slight decline in imports. The same three regions also represent the main export markets, with slight growth in North America and Africa.

Slight increase in commercial flight movements (+0.6%)

Brussels Airport recorded a 0.6% increase in the number of commercial flight movements in May compared to May 2025. This growth was visible in both passenger flights (+0.8%) and cargo flights (+0.4%). Passenger load factors have continued to rise since the start of the year. On average, there were 147 passengers per flight in May, four more than in the same period last year, reflecting sustained demand and more efficient use of capacity.

<https://pressroom.brusselsairport.be/nearly-23-million-passengers-32-at-brussels-airport-in-may-strong-growth-in-cargo-volumes-reaching-nearly-76000-tonnes-12>