

CENTRAL ASIA TAKES OFF:  
THE DATA BEHIND ONE OF THE  
WORLD'S FASTEST GROWING  
REGIONS

WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL



# SPEAKERS



## John Grant

Chief Analyst, OAG

With a wealth of experience across the global aviation industry, John provides expert commentary on market developments for OAG, making connections between what the data is telling us and the trends and events occurring in the sector.



## Dmitry Martynenko

Commercial Director, Samarkand International Airport

Dmitry is the Commercial Director at Air Marakanda, the operator of Samarkand International Airport in Uzbekistan. He has 10 years of international aviation experience, gained across a range of Central Asian and Russian markets.



## Deirdre Fulton

Partner, MIDAS Aviation

Deirdre is a partner in an aviation consultancy providing meaningful insight and analysis to clients around the world. She works closely with OAG on their data analysis and publications.

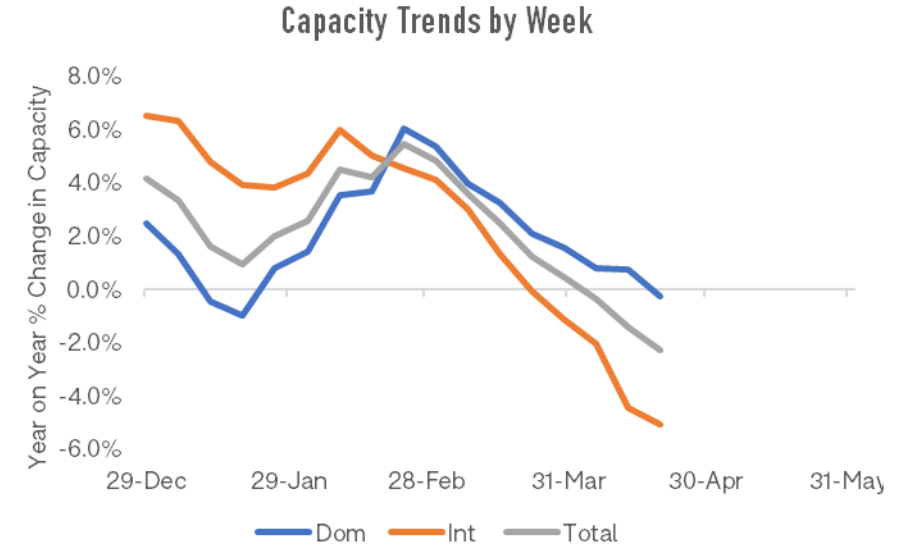
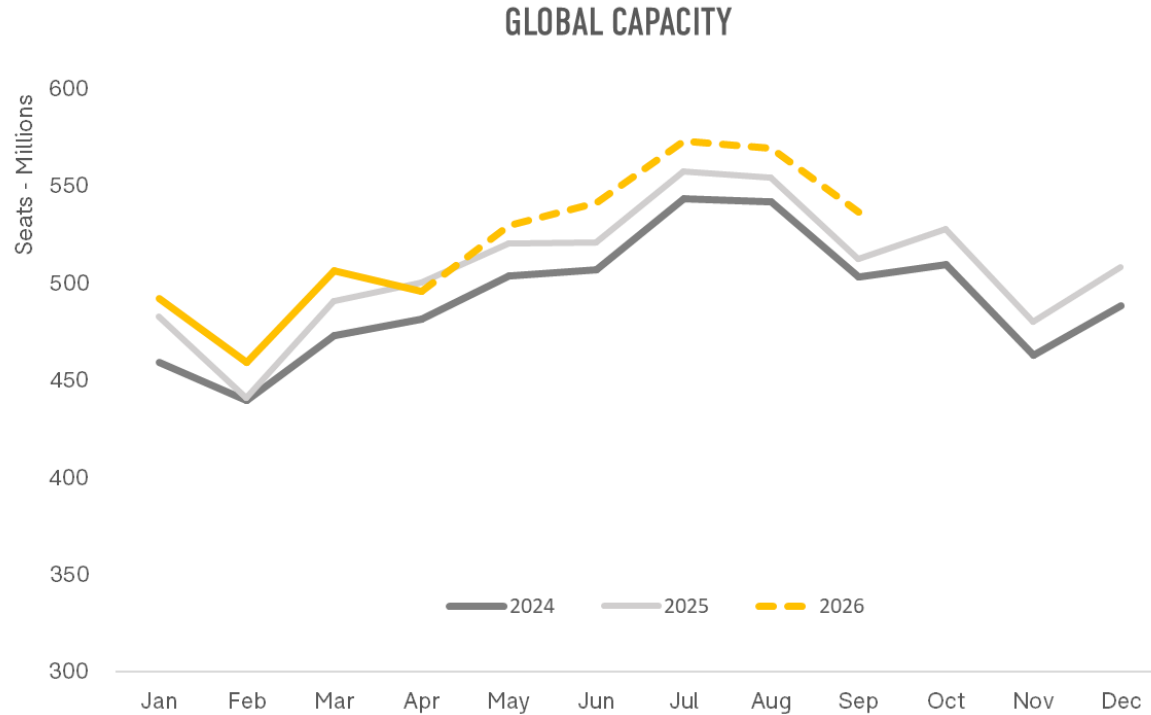
# TODAY'S DISCUSSION

Join us as we look at the numbers behind one the fastest growing markets in the world: Central Asia. We'll be investigating:

- Growth highlights by country, with a focus on Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan
- Route trends: where new services are launching and why
- Airline dynamics: which carriers are driving growth?



# Global capacity position this April



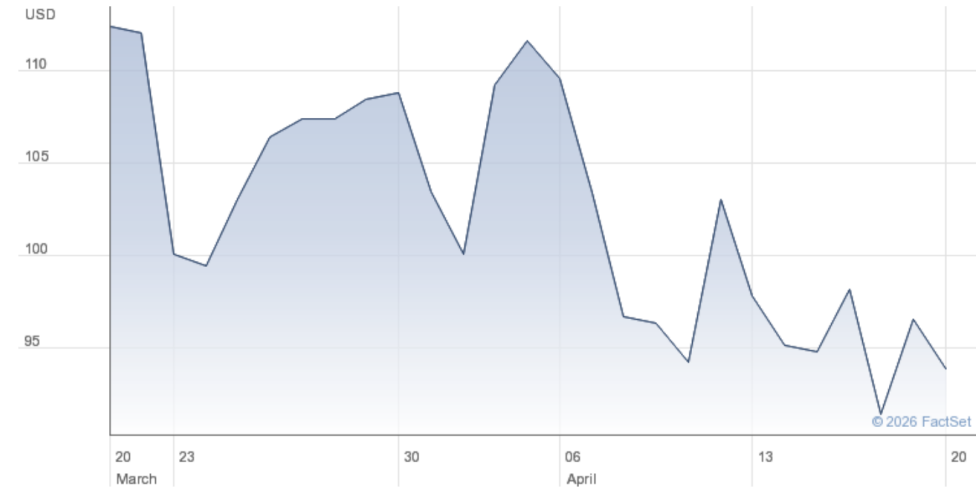
- Global capacity is expected to be -0.9% down in April year on year due to the Israel/US – Iran war
- International capacity sees a sharper fall, down 3.3% in April, although the timing of Easter impacts this – last year Easter holidays fell in April, this year they start in March.
- Looking ahead to May, the current schedule position sees a slight improvement, although this is not yet certain. Weekly capacity trends are still showing year on year decline



# What will Summer 2026 bring for airlines?

- While significant disruption remains in the Middle East market, concerns are building about the ongoing impact on airlines globally in terms of fuel supply.
- Context is important – oil prices remain considerably higher than the previous 12 months

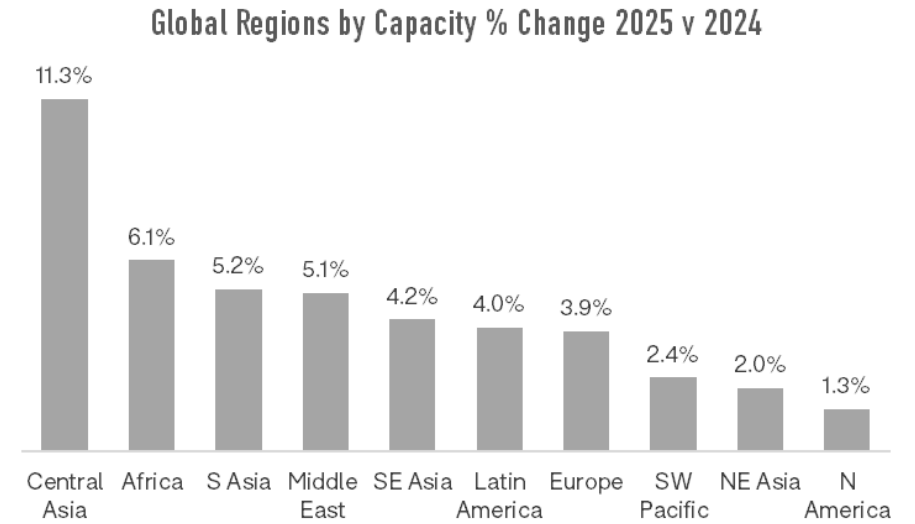
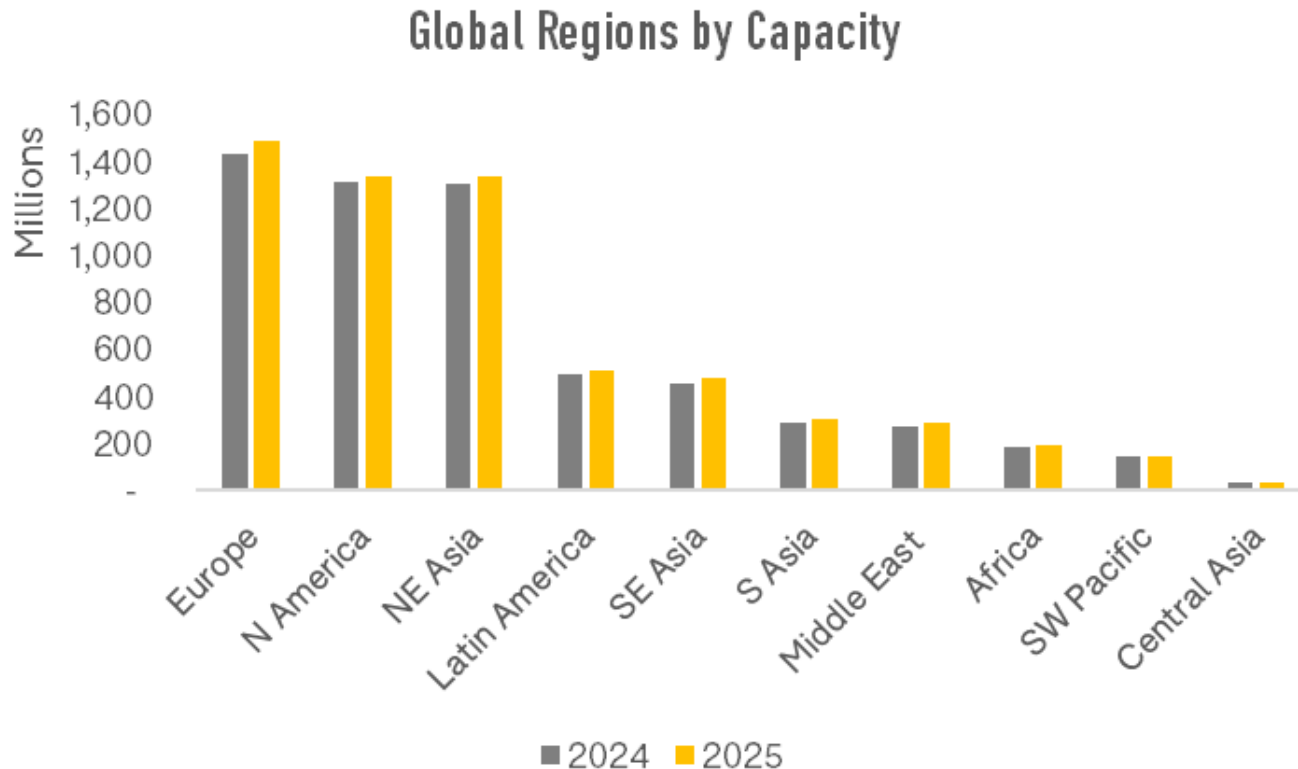
In the context of the last month, oil prices appear to be falling..



..however, the last 12 months highlights the scale of the challenge for airline cost bases



# Small, but growing fast: Central Asia in context

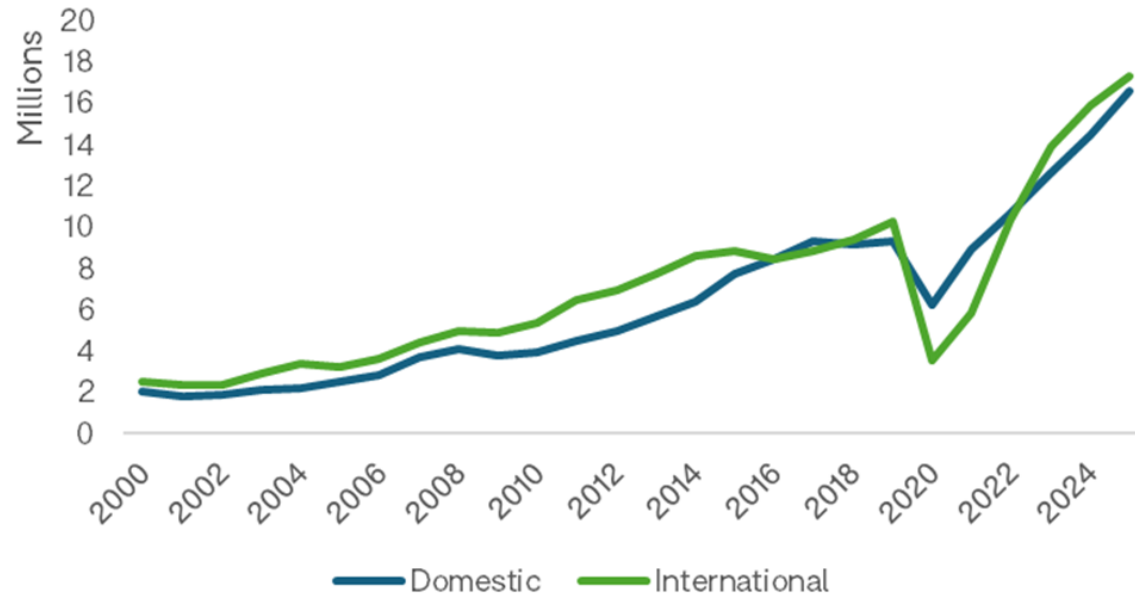


- With just 33.7 million seats in 2025, Central Asia is the smallest region for capacity
- It is fastest growing globally with capacity increasing by 11.3% compared to 2024

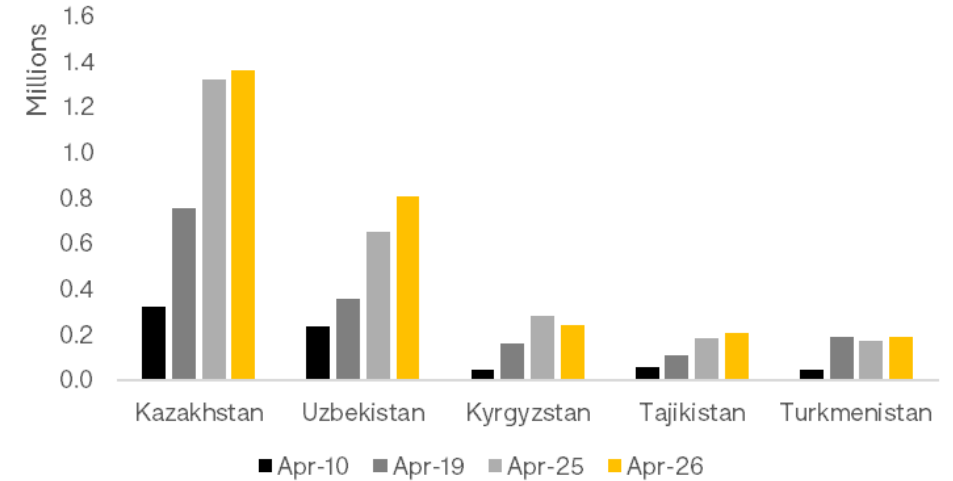


# Central Asia in 2025

Central Asia Capacity



Central Asia Capacity by Country



- Whilst international capacity grew steadily from 2010 onwards, growth in Central Asia really took off in 2021 following the pandemic, and outbreak of the Russia/Ukraine war in 2022
- Growth is uneven though across Central Asia’s five country markets, with Uzbekistan leading in 2026 with an increase of 24% year on year

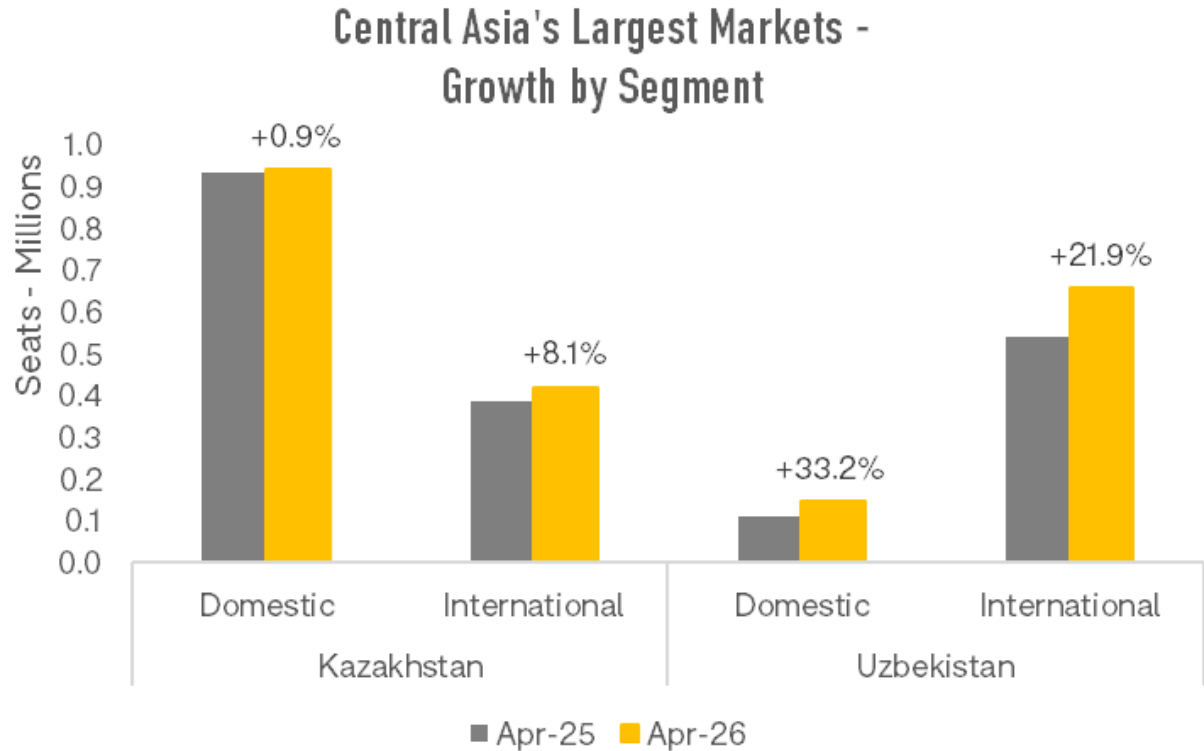
	Capacity Growth Rates		
	2000-2025	2015-2025	25 v 19
Kazakhstan	10.6%	8.5%	82%
Uzbekistan	5.4%	11.0%	346%
Kyrgyzstan	9.3%	3.9%	145%
Tajikistan	24.3%	3.8%	-10%
Turkmenistan	7.5%	0.9%	-48%



# A Tale of Two Markets: Structural Differences remain



Source: Wikipedia



- Central Asia’s two largest country markets (in population and aviation terms) are the ones that are growing fastest
- Almost 80% of Central Asian capacity operates through Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and almost half of the region’s international capacity operates out of Uzbekistan.
- Kazakhstan has a large domestic market, almost at 1m seats this April, reflecting its large landmass
- Uzbekistan is growing fastest in both domestic and international markets



# Drivers of Growth in Central Asia

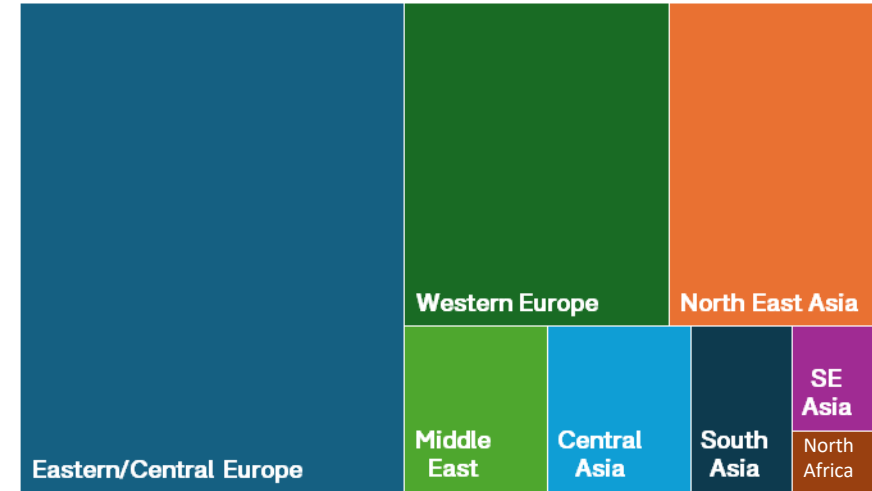
- Central Asia is transitioning from a collection of underdeveloped economies into emerging economies. Market liberalization is underway, leading to fast paced economic growth
- GDP growth was 6.1% in 2025 and is estimated at 4.9% - 5.2% in 2026
- As disposable income increases, LCC expansion has taken the region's LCC share from just 0.4% in 2010 to 21% in 2025
- An estimated 5-6 million Uzbek's and 4-5 million Kazakh's live abroad, generating remittances from overseas and supporting travel for the purposes of returning home to visit relatives or travel to visit those living overseas.
- 28.6 million tourists visited the region in 2024, and this was expected to be considerably higher in 2025 – likely over 30m



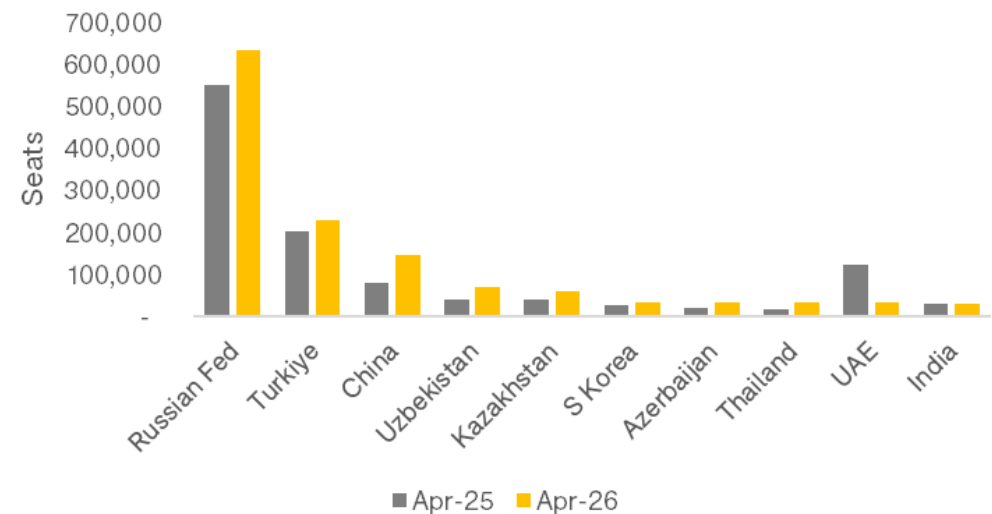
# Growth is strong but still fragile

- Central Asia remains heavily dependent on Russia with 42% of international capacity operating to and from there
- Thereafter the market is more fragmented - Turkiye is the next largest market with 15% of seats in April 2026, and China is third largest with 10% of capacity.
- Geopolitical instability in the Middle East and beyond continues to have an impact
- Like many other regions, fuel price volatility remains a concern for airlines in the region

Central Asia Capacity by Region

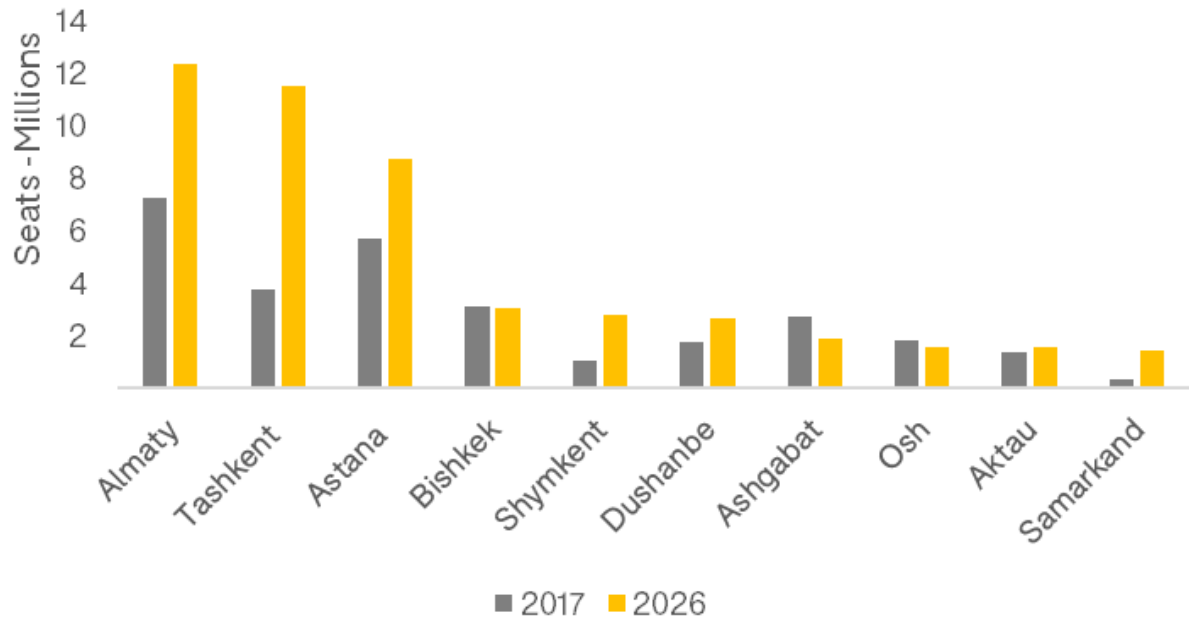


Top 10 International Country Markets

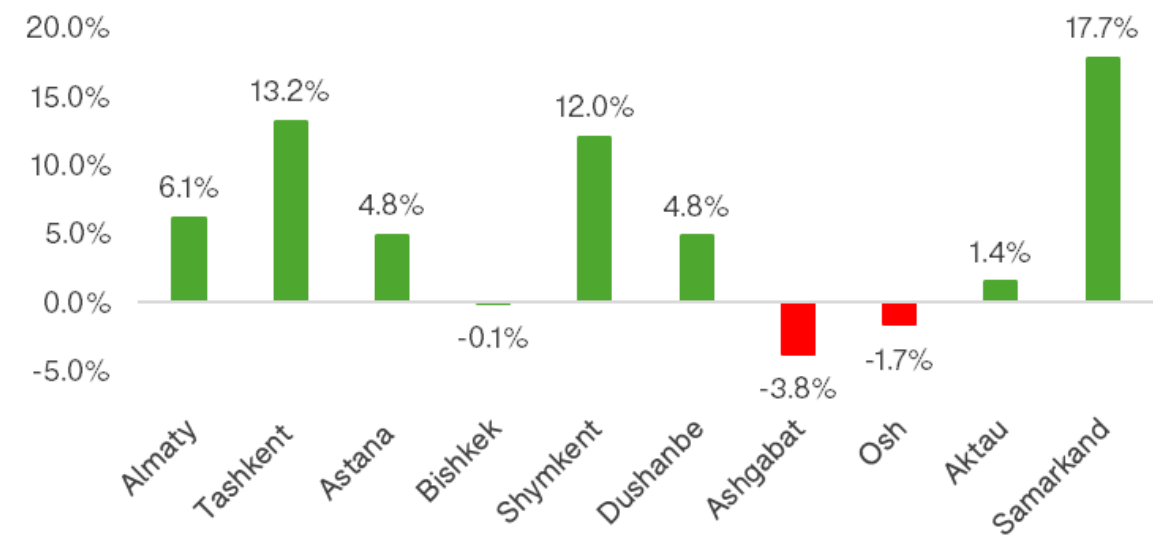


# The Central Asian airports leading the way

Top 10 Airports in Central Asia



Average Annual Growth Rates 2017-2026

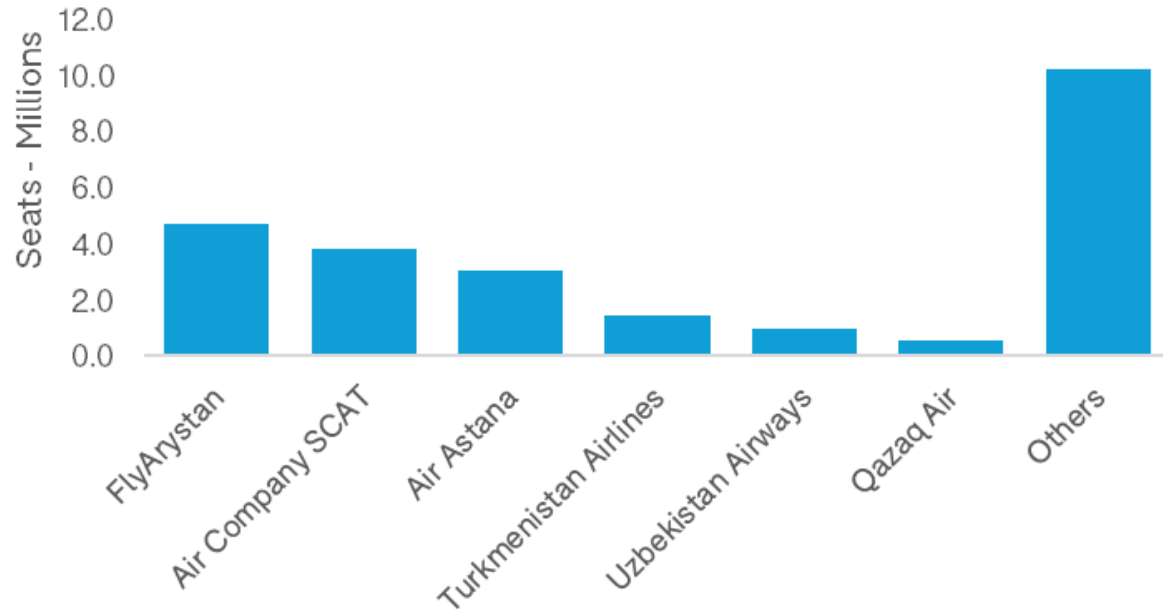


- Three airports in the region are driving growth and recording double digit annual increases in capacity in the last decade- Tashkent, Shymkent and Samarkand.

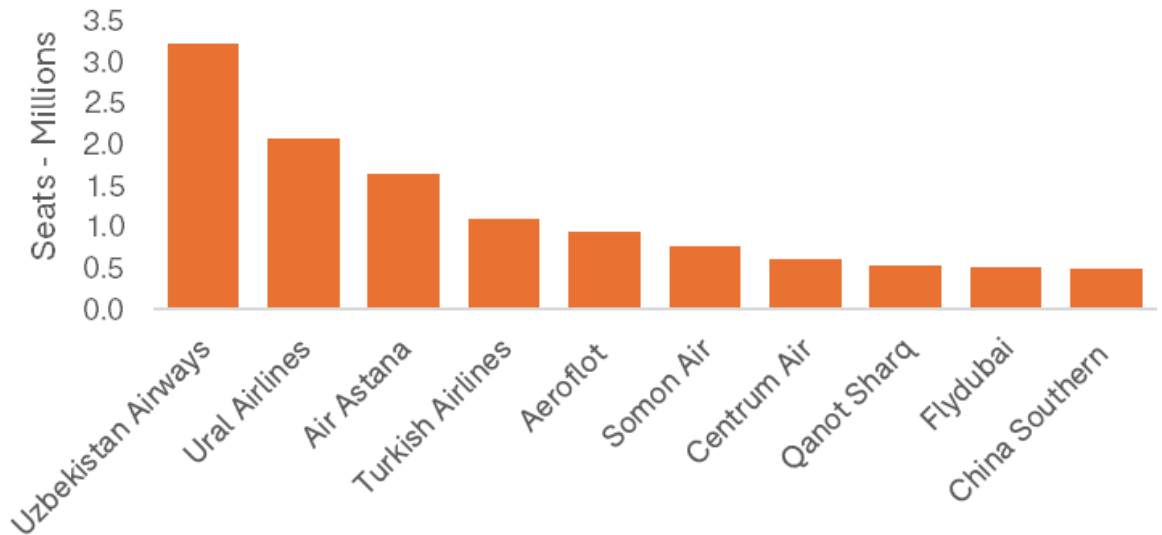


# Central Asia's Airline Landscape

Central Asia Largest Domestic Carriers in 2025



Central Asia Top 10 International Carriers in 2025



- Driving growth in Central Asia's domestic markets are largely national carriers for each of the countries.
- FlyArystan, the Kazakhstan LCC subsidiary of the Air Astana group, is the largest domestic carrier with 28% of the region's domestic capacity. Combined with Air Astana, the group operates 47% of Central Asia's domestic capacity.



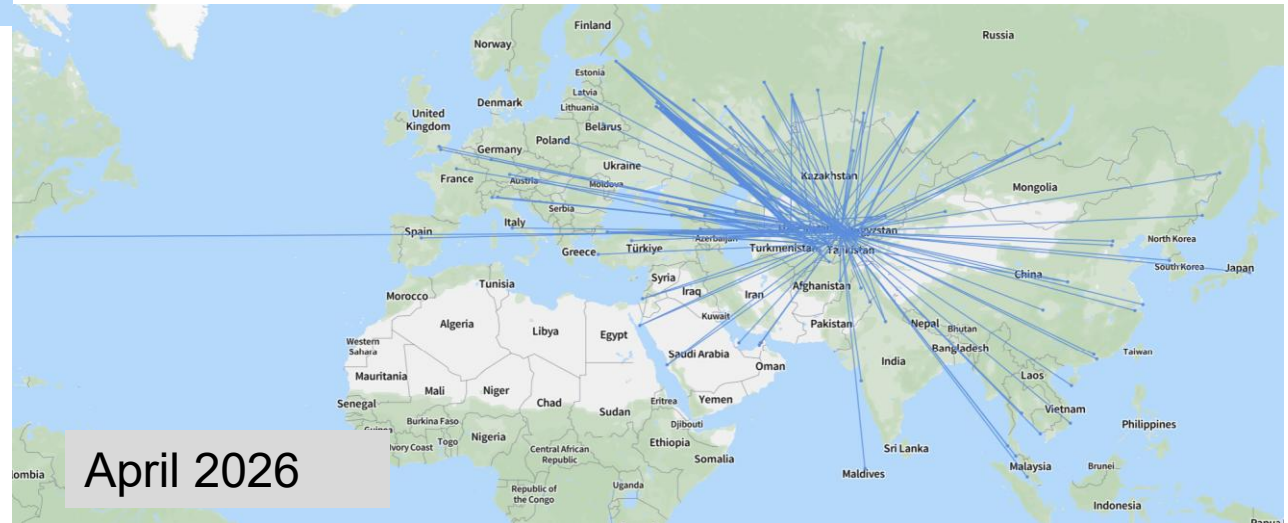
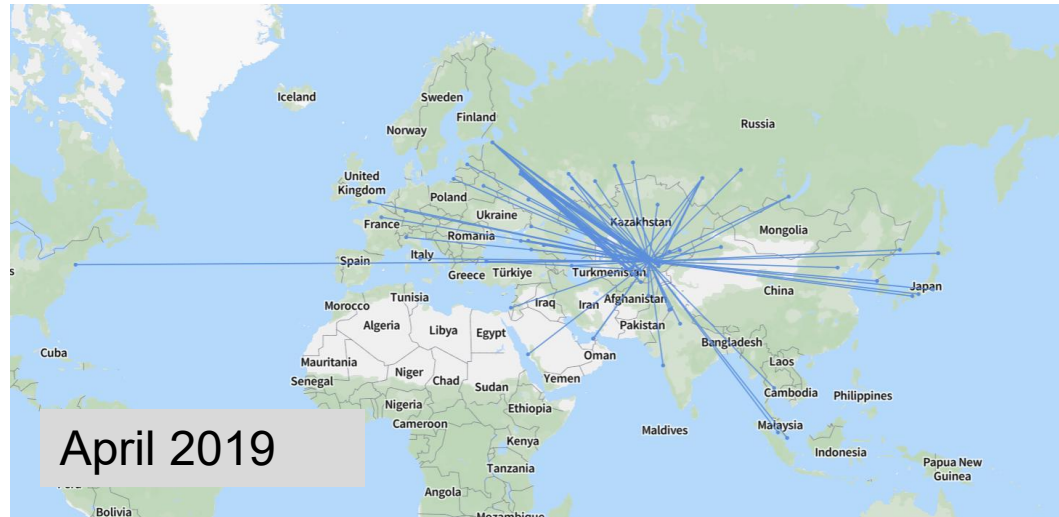
# Where has connectivity happened?

- Focus of growth has been to North East Asia (China), Eastern Europe (Russia) and Turkiye.
- The Middle East has also seen strong growth

Central Asia New Routes by Region  
2019 v 2025



# Uzbekistan International Connections now and then



# What is the outlook for Central Asia?

Airport infrastructure developments planned in the coming years

- New airport in Tashkent likely to open in 2030 with capacity for 20 million passengers annually, and scope to increase this to 54 million. Passenger volumes in 2025 reached 10 million
- Currently the largest airport in Central Asia with an estimated 12.9 million passengers in 2025, Almaty is also expanding, increasing capacity to around 14 million passengers



STAY INFORMED

SIGN UP TO OUR BLOG

[www.oag.com/insights](http://www.oag.com/insights)

Contact us via: [contactus@oag.com](mailto:contactus@oag.com) or visit [www.oag.com](http://www.oag.com)



WEBINAR