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LunaJets Bucks the Trend and Exceeds Industry Growth in 2019

The European market proved to be challenging for private operators, airports and charter brokers in 2019. According to WINGX Live, a business aviation research company, the total number of business jets that took off from all European airports (including Russia) dipped by -2.3% last year to settle just under a half a million at 494,436 departures.

Despite a good start to the year, which saw the number of take-offs increase by 6.3% in the first quarter of 2019 versus same period one year ago, the number of flights was down 4.4% over the next three quarters of last year. Eymeric Segard, CEO and Founder of LunaJets said: “While there are multiple reasons for this downturn in Europe, some key factors stand out for 2019: uncertainty surrounding the Brexit; economic trade tensions between the US and China overflowing into Europe; no global quadrennial sports event of international reach; lack of snow at the end of the year before the holidays.”

Over the same geography and period, LunaJets was able to sustain its growth for the twelfth year in a row, with flights increasing 14.7% in 2019, remaining the number one independent charter broker in Europe.

Five of Top Six European Airports Experience Difficult Year

The top six European Airports with the most traffic remain unchanged in 2019, yet all but one saw negative annual growth according to WINGX Live. In order of importance, the six airports with the most departures were: Le Bourget, Nice, Geneva, London Luton, London Farnborough and Zurich. While Paris—represented by Le Bourget—is the single most important city in number of departures with just under 20,000 take offs in 2019, London and its five principal airports takes first place as a city with a total of 30,000 departures last year.

The only airport in the top six that showed growth last year was Farnborough with an impressive +6.7%, while the other five saw a decrease in growth between -7 and -2%. The remarkable results of Farnborough can in part be explained by the fact that Northolt airport—in relative proximity—was closed for a refurbishment for most of 2019.

WINGX Live reports that departures in Switzerland for 2019 were down -6.6% in Geneva, -6.7% in Zurich and -8.8% in Basel.

Geneva-based LunaJets saw increases in its year-on-year take offs to London and Zurich, while flights were down slightly and flat to Le Bourget (-5%) and Nice respectively.



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Flying to and From and in Between the Top Six Airports

The three favoured destinations for the top six airports (listed above) are—little surprise—Le Bourget, Geneva and Nice. The one notable exception and that is for travellers from Nice, whose number two destination is Vnukovo in Moscow, and this for a second year in a row.

In the case of LunaJets, the top three European cities for both departures and arrivals were by order of importance London, Geneva and Paris.

A Challenging Summer

Typically, summer months prove excellent for jet chartering companies and airports alike. This was less so in 2019. Looking back at last summer, Alain Leboursier, Head of sSales & Development at LunaJets says: “In a time of market contraction, we worked especially hard to keep LunaJets’ growth up during the past summer. We were able to outperform the industry from May through August. We actually reached our first peak in July with 19% more departures from Europe versus 2018—while the industry average shrank -3%.”

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The disappointing spring and summer months (Q2 and Q3) hurt virtually every single one of the top six European airports with the clear exception of Farnborough who saw growth every month from May through October included. In July and September 2019, for instance, Farnborough grew +17% year-over-year in terms of number of flight departures.

Flight Duration Slipped in 2019

Another sign that 2019 was a challenging year can be seen in average length of flights in the European market. Last year, the average flight lasted one hour and 36 minutes, slipping -2% from 2018.

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In 2019, LunaJets bucked this trend. Leboursier said: "LunaJets' own flight duration average was slightly up last year versus one year ago and, in addition, our flights are slightly longer than the industry average. We are now flying our clients to even farther destinations across Europe, the US, Middle East well beyond."

Growth in number of private jet departures from all European airports including Russia for the industry and LunaJets 2019 versus 2018



Source: WINGX Live 10 Feb. 2020 and LunaJets internal data

About LunaJets

Founded in Geneva in 2007, LunaJets is the leading European Private Jet Broker, offering bespoke service, round-the-clock availability and absolute flexibility anywhere in the world. LunaJets' services are powered by proprietary technology to organise all types of flights. The company guarantees a 24/7 worldwide service, thanks to its dedicated Private Aviation Advisors. For business or for pleasure, from Very Light jets to Super Large jets or commercial aircraft, LunaJets has access to more than 4,800 aircraft and is able to match client needs with available business jets through its online booking platform, delivering the best possible value for money. Discover LunaJets: www.lunajets.com or follow @LunaJets