

# Quarterly civil aviation statistics, third quarter 2022

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## Highlights

Total operating revenue for the 24 largest Canadian air carriers totalled \$8.0 billion in the third quarter of 2022, significantly higher than the same quarter of 2021 and almost equal to the revenue generated in the third quarter of 2019.

In the third quarter of 2022, passenger revenue remained the primary revenue source for airlines, at \$7.0 billion. Air cargo generated \$593.0 million, or 7.4% of the total, roughly twice the share of revenue prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following 10 consecutive quarters of losses, Canadian air carriers reported positive net operating income (\$750 million) for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

In the third quarter of 2022, Canadian carriers transported 21.2 million passengers on scheduled and charter services, more than twice the number flown during the same period in 2021.

On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. In the months that followed, Canadian air travel remained well below historical levels. Unless otherwise specified, comparisons are made with the same quarter in 2019 (also referred to as "pre-pandemic levels"), when airline activity levels were in line with historical trends.

## Rapid recovery in air travel

During the third quarter of 2022, operating revenue for the 24 largest Canadian air carriers (Levels I and II) continued to approach pre-pandemic levels, totalling \$8.0 billion. This was more than double the revenue from the third quarter of 2021 and represented 98.8% of that from the third quarter of 2019, before the pandemic.

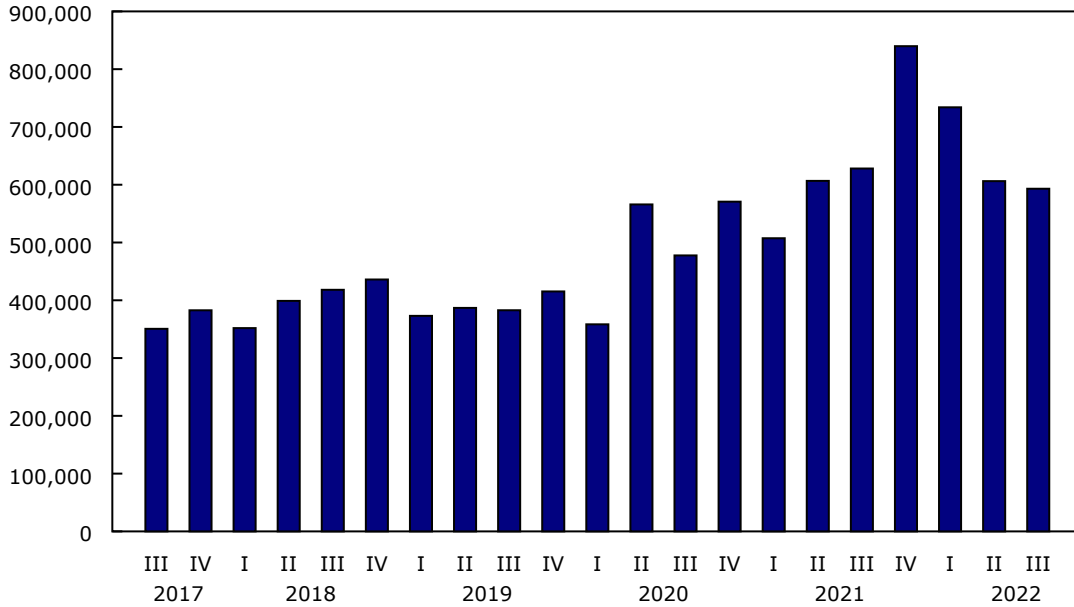
At \$7.0 billion, passenger revenue accounted for 87.5% of total operating revenue in the third quarter of 2022, slightly below 89.4% in the same quarter of 2019.

Cargo continued to be an important source of earnings for many airlines during the pandemic. Goods revenue accounted for \$593.0 million, or 7.4% of total operating revenue in the third quarter of 2022, more than one-and-a-half times greater than in the same quarter of 2019.



**Chart 1**  
**Quarterly goods revenue, Canadian air carriers**

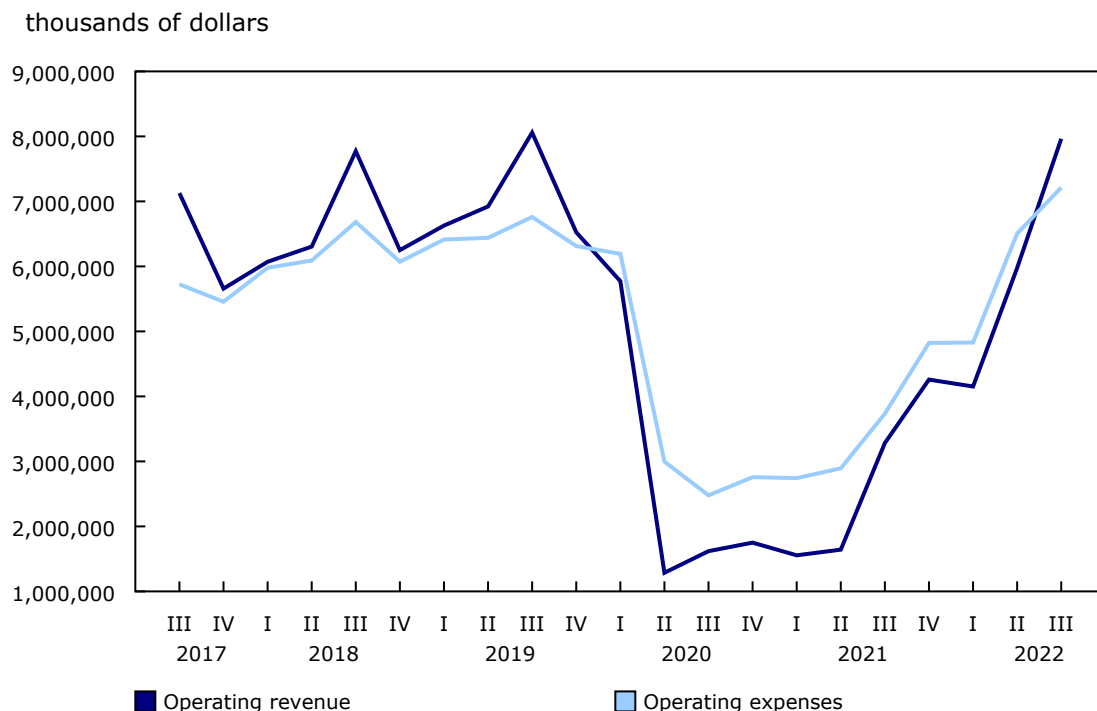
thousands of dollars



Source(s): Table 23-10-0260-01.

On the other side of the ledger, total operating expenses were \$7.2 billion, 6.7% more than the third quarter of 2019. With available seat kilometres remaining below pre-pandemic levels, the operating cost of airlines per available seat-kilometre (scheduled services only) was 23.3% higher than the third quarter of 2019.

**Chart 2**  
**Operating revenue and expenses, Canadian air carriers**



Source(s): Table 23-10-0260-01.

Compared with the same quarter of 2019, employment was 7.5% lower, while wages, salaries and benefits increased by 29.8% in the third quarter of 2022. Airlines incurred \$1.5 billion in expenses for their 58,000 employees.

Canadian air carriers spent \$2.4 billion on turbo fuel, an increase of 31.3% from the same quarter in 2019. The [Industrial Product Price Index](#) reported a doubling of jet fuel prices for the July to September reference months of 2022, compared with the same months in 2019.

The other operating expenses category, which includes depreciation and maintenance, accounted for the largest share (46.6%) of total operating expenses in the third quarter, followed by turbo fuel (32.8%) and wages, salaries and benefits (20.6%).

Although the net operating income of \$750 million in the third quarter was 42.2% lower than that of the same quarter in 2019, this was the first positive quarterly result since the onset of the pandemic, following 10 quarters of operating losses. However, non-operating losses continued to negatively impact the industry's bottom line. These losses typically refer to expenses attributable to financing or other activities that are not an integral part of the air transportation activities undertaken by the carrier. The carriers reported net losses of \$330 million during the third quarter of 2022.

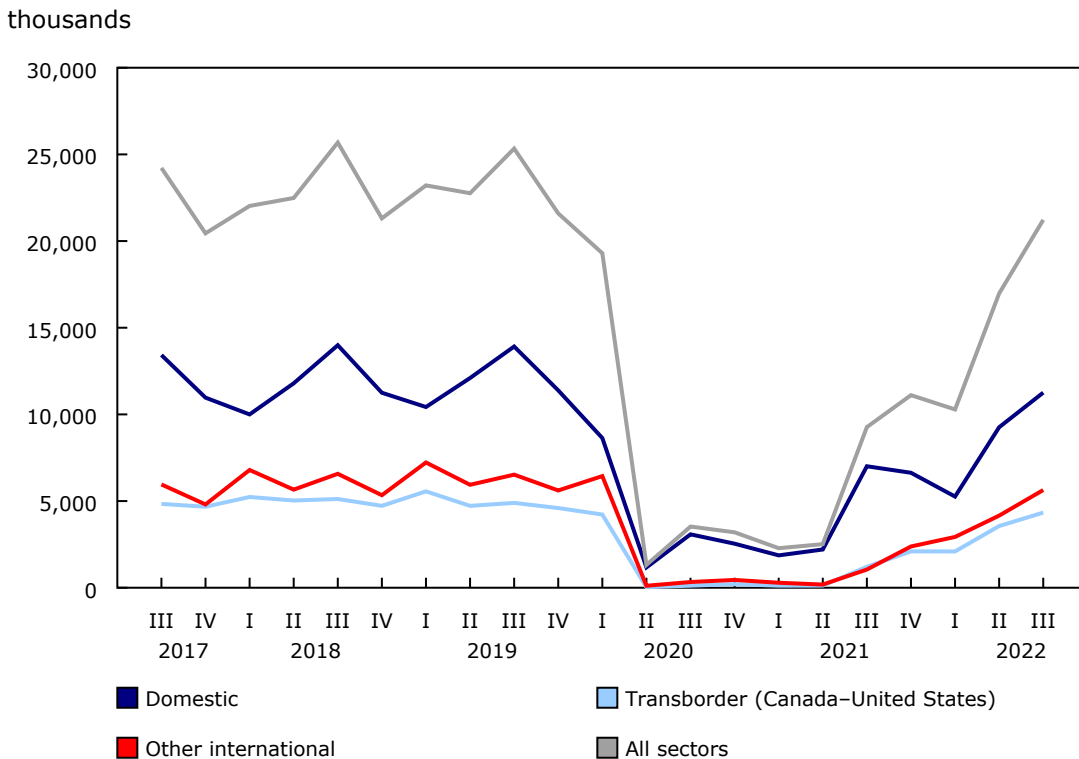
### Sharp increase in passengers taking to the skies

Although the increase in passengers during the third quarter was normal for the busy summer travel months, the country's major airports faced challenges accommodating the surge of air travellers. Increasing volumes combined with staff shortages caused some long line-ups, delays and misplaced luggage.

The 24 Canadian air carriers transported 21.2 million passengers in the third quarter, with 20.8 million on scheduled flights and 464,000 on chartered flights. While more than double the number of passengers that were transported in the same quarter of 2021, it was 83.8% of the level in 2019, before the pandemic.

The number of passengers on domestic routes was 11.3 million. The 10.0 million passengers on international flights consisted of 4.3 million flying transborder (between Canada and the United States) and 5.6 million on other international routes. As travel restrictions eased, the share of passengers in the international sector rose to almost half (47.0%) of the total number of passengers in the third quarter of 2022, up from about a quarter (24.4%) during the same period in 2021.

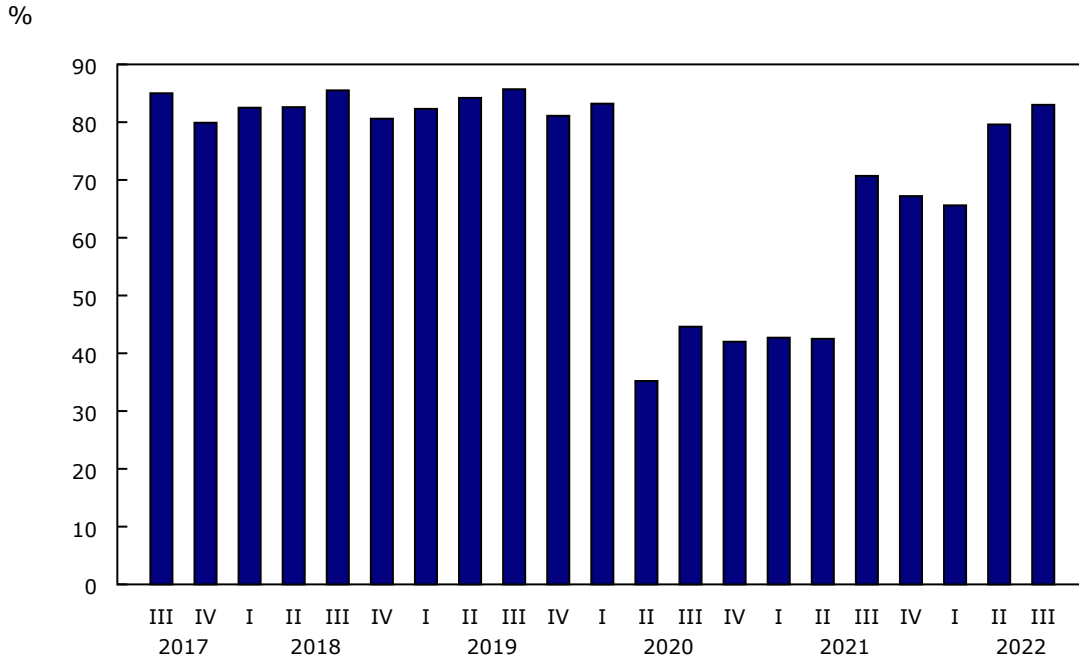
**Chart 3**  
**Passengers carried, by sector, Canadian air carriers**



Source(s): Table 23-10-0259-01.

Scheduled (non-charter) traffic was 55.7 billion passenger-kilometres in the third quarter of 2022, while capacity was 67.1 billion available seat-kilometres. This resulted in an 83.0% load factor (ratio of revenue passenger-kilometres to available seat-kilometres) for the third quarter. This load factor was the highest reported since the first quarter of 2020, prior to the pandemic.

**Chart 4**  
**Passenger load factor, Canadian air carriers**



Source(s): Table 23-10-0258-01.

**Note to readers**

*This release covers Canadian Level I and II air carriers. Because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, no air carrier level changes were applied for reference year 2022.*

***Level I air carriers** include every Canadian air carrier that, in the calendar year before the year in which information is provided, transported at least 2 million revenue passengers or at least 400 000 tonnes of cargo.*

***Level II air carriers** include every Canadian air carrier that, in the calendar year before the year in which information is provided, transported (a) at least 100,000, but fewer than 2 million revenue passengers, or (b) at least 50 000 tonnes, but fewer than 400 000 tonnes of cargo.*

***Net non-operating income and loss** are from commercial ventures that are not part of the air transportation services, from other revenues and expenses attributable to financing or other activities that are not an integral part of air transportation, and from special recurrent items of a non-periodic nature. Provision for income taxes is also included. **Non-operating income** can be, for example, capital gains from the sale of aircraft, interest income and foreign exchange adjustment, while **non-operating expenses** can include capital losses and interest on bank loans and other debt.*

*Data in this release are not seasonally adjusted.*

*No revisions to previous reference periods were made for this release.*

*Because of rounding, components may not add up to the total.*

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**Available tables:** [23-10-0258-01](#) to [23-10-0262-01](#) .

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2712](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).