

Press release

Liege Airport, January 9, 2024

Mixed year for Liege Airport

The year 2023 was a mixed one for Liege Airport, with a decline in freight traffic and an increase in passenger traffic. With 1,005,676 metric tons transiting through its facilities, the airport is still in pole position in Belgium and among the European leaders. In terms of passenger activity, Liege Airport welcomed 175,606 passengers (up 5.2% on 2022).

The years 2020 and 2021 had been exceptional, with growth of 50% following the Covid epidemic, the explosion of e-commerce and the cessation of passenger flights (50% of air cargo is carried "belly" in passenger aircraft), while the normalization of the market had begun in 2022 and continued into 2023.

The main statistics for 2023 are as follows

- 1,005,676 tonnes (versus 1,140,060 tonnes in 2022, a decrease of 11.8%);
- 175,606 passengers (versus 166,898 in 2022, an increase of 5.2%);
- 33,548 aircraft movements (vs. 37,589 in 2022, down 10.7%), including 23,917 cargo movements (vs. 27,840 in 2022, down 14%).

It should be noted that, for the last quarter of 2023, an increase in both overall (up 3.5%) and cargo movements (by 3.3%) was recorded. Also the handled imports tonnage grew by 2.3%, suggesting a slight recovery in the market. Due to the overall economical situation the export volumes handled are seeing down.

The airport's transformation continues, with significantly fewer night flights and more day flights, as shown in the graph attached. The airport recorded almost 70% night flights in 2021 and just over 30% in 2023 (almost 10,000 night flights in 2023).

"FedEx's restructuring came into full effect in 2023 on top of a difficult international economic context (war in Ukraine, downturn in the Chinese market, less consumer spend in Europe). All European cargo airports are experiencing a backlash. Even if the reference year is already a long way off, it's worth noting that we are gaining 11.5% in tonnage in 2023 compared with 2019 (pre-covid year), while having digested the FedEx restructuring (from April 2022) and the departure of AirBridge Cargo following the outbreak of war in Ukraine (from February 2022). This sets us apart from most European airports, which are behind on their 2019 cargo figures. ," explains Laurent Jossart, CEO of Liege Airport, who outlines an interesting outlook: "With the new operating license, our Board of Directors has adopted our ambitious Master Plan and Business Plan "Vision 2040". More than 500 million euros will be invested over the next 20 years, with the aim of becoming a multimodal hub, exemplary in environmental terms and a creator of jobs for our region."

About Liege Airport :

Liege Airport, the world ranking top 20, 5th cargo airport in Europe and 1st in Belgium, is the only European airport giving priority to full cargo (#freightersfirst). It is specialised in perishables, pharmaceutical, express, E-commerce, medical, humanitarian material and also living animals.

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