



DESPITE DECEMBER GAINS, EURO BIZAV FLYING DOWN IN 2015

News / Business aviation



While business aircraft activity in Europe climbed 1.7 percent last month, to 51,563 departures, the gain wasn't enough to push full-year results into positive territory, according to data released yesterday by WingX Advance. Overall, flying was down 0.6 percent in the region last year, equivalent to 4,866 fewer flights than in 2014.

WingX said last month's boost was the result of piston activity, which increased 28 percent year-over-year and ended the year up by 5 percent. Business jet activity, which accounts for 60 percent of all business aviation flights, fell 4 percent last month, with full-year jet activity down by 2.5 percent.

The UK and France saw modest growth last month, firming up a slight recovery in activity seen throughout last year. Business aviation activity saw solid growth last month across most of Western Europe, especially Germany. There was also strong year-over-year activity growth in Spain, Austria and Sweden, WingX said.

Intra-European flights rose 3 percent in December, but flights from Southern and Eastern Europe continued to trend slightly downward. Europe's business aviation connections with the CIS region fell 22 percent, however. Inbound flights from North America were down 2 percent last month and were flat overall for 2015. Despite flights from the Middle East slumping 12 percent last month, that region recorded a "narrowly positive" full-year trend. Flights from Europe to Africa dropped 15 percent, taking the 2015 trend to -9 percent.

"December's spike in piston activity flatters underlying demand for business jets, which is still weak overall, and particularly soft in peripheral markets such as Russia and Turkey," said WingX Advance managing director Richard Koe. "But there were signs of consolidation in Western Europe last year, with flight activity in Germany, UK, France and Spain ahead of 2014. Particularly in these countries, the light jet market has stabilized and could be set for growth this year. The midsize and heavy jet segments still look weak, but demand for ultra-long-range jets is resilient and a lot of super-midsize jets coming into operator fleets have also boosted activity."

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