

New report by ForwardKeys says air capacity to China down by 80%

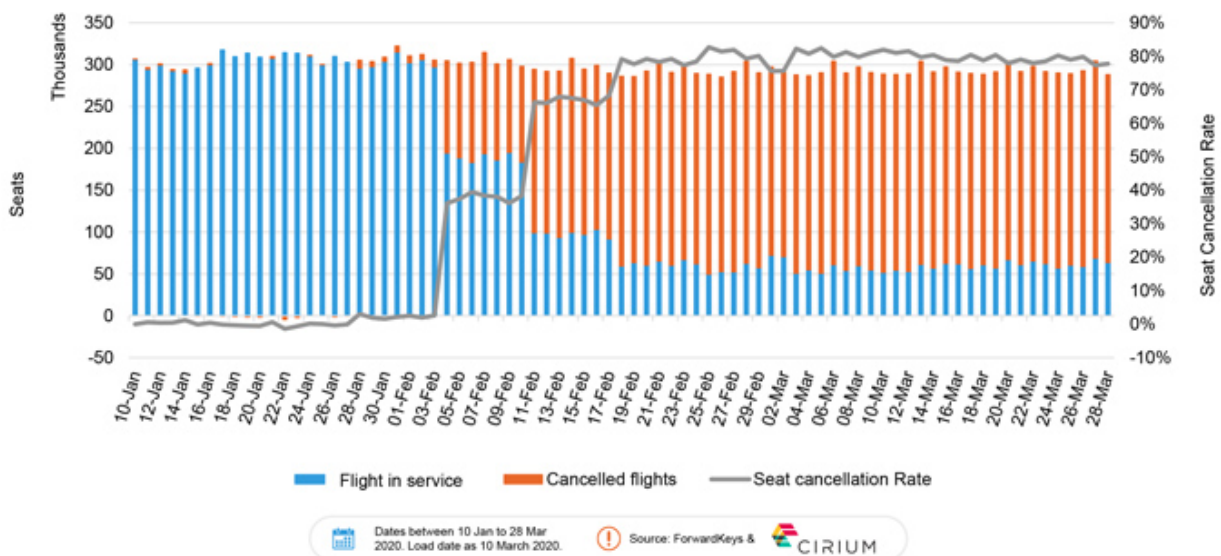
By **Hibah Noor** on March, 18 2020 | Airlines & Airports



Travel analytics company, ForwardKeys, reveals that four fifths of flight capacity between China and the rest of the world has been cut back due the global pandemic COVID-19.

In response to emergency government regulations, seat cancellations began in early February and by the third week of the month, only 20% of seats remained in service.

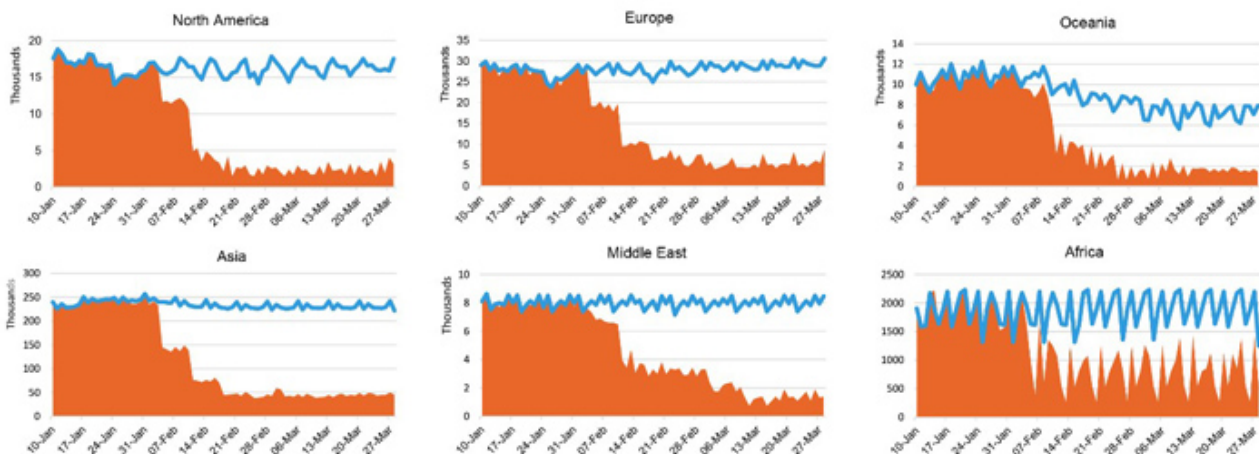
Coronavirus impact on seat capacity from China to international destinations 10th January to 28th March 2020



Looking at the different regions of the world, Asia has experienced the greatest impact in terms of the total number of seats lost, at around 5.4 million in March. In percentage terms, travel to North America is worst affected: American, United, Delta, and Air Canada canceled all their flights to mainland China; and Chinese carriers cut their capacity by 70%. Between China and Europe, over 2,500 flights have been eliminated in March. The three major Chinese carriers cut capacity by 69%; while BA, Lufthansa and Finnair ceased their services completely. Qantas and Air New Zealand also stopped flying to China, which left only about 200 flights in March to Oceania, provided by Chinese airlines. Capacity between China and the Middle East & Africa is also substantially down but less in both percentage and absolute numbers. Most flight suspensions are currently due to remain in force until 28th March, the end of the winter season.

Changes of seat capacity from China to international destinations

10th January to 28th March, before and after the coronavirus outbreak



Dates between 10th Jan to 28th Mar 2020 vs. same dates in the previous year. Load date as 10 March 2020. Source: ForwardKeys & CIRIUM

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According to China’s Civil Aviation Authority, during the third week of March, 72 destinations in 38 countries had direct air links to China, which is around a third of the pre-crisis level.

Olivier Ponti, VP Insights, ForwardKeys shares, “At the start of the year, we were looking at another year of healthy growth in air travel from China. But now, we are witnessing the grounding of aircraft on an unprecedented scale. The loss in seats is more than the entire outbound market from the five Nordic countries combined.”