

UAE visa changes spur triple-digit Russian growth to DWC

Russian travellers have taken advantage of a change in entry visa regulations to the UAE, with soaring numbers bolstering total traffic at Dubai World Central (DWC) by 6.4% to 900,000 in 2017.

An annual traffic report issued by Dubai Airports revealed the bulk of Eastern Europe's passenger traffic gains came from Russia, which contributed 279,100 passengers (+955.4%).

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai last year approved Cabinet Resolution No. 24 to grant citizens of the Russian Federation an initial 30-day entry visa at all UAE points of entry, renewable for a similar period.

Total traffic on Eastern European routes grew by 168% to 452,631.



PAX capacity at Dubai World Central is expected to increase to 26m in 2018.

Source: Dubai Airports.



Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai. Source: Government of Dubai.

CAPACITY INCREASE NEARS...

Meanwhile, traffic from Western Europe grew by 34.6% to 94,452 with Germany the largest contributor at 41,671 passengers.

Among the most popular traffic carriers were Wizz Air, Azur Air, Royal Flight, Condor and Ural Airlines.

Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports commented: "DWC's performance was very satisfying both in terms of passenger numbers as well as cargo volumes.

The airport is gaining popularity among airlines operating point-to-point routes, thanks to the unique advantages of convenience, quick turnaround times, and cost efficiency that DWC offers to carriers and passengers.

"DWC will have much more to offer to our airline partners and customers in 2018 as the project to expand the capacity of the passenger terminal building from five million to 26 million passengers per annum is nearing completion," said Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports.