Coronavirus impact as China seats down 162 million in 5 months

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The coronavirus impact on China has been stark, with all seats to, from, and within the country down 164 million seats in February to June 2020 versus the year-ago period.

And in just one month -February 2020 versus January 2020- seats were down 55 million, or 57%.

China seats down 164 million in five months from coronavirus
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Domestic China down 135 million seats

With a decline of 135 million, domestic China is overwhelmingly responsible for this drop. But no region was spared capacity cuts, albeit not always fully from coronavirus. For example, service to Mexico and Ukraine ended in this period, impacting their regions.

	Total seats February to June 2020	Total seats February to June 2019	% change	Absolute change in seats
Domestic	219,061,379	353,581,110	-38	-134,519,731
Asia (except domestic)	47,804,271	68,100,150	-30	-20,295,879
North America	3,800,826	6,326,854	-40	-2,526,028
Europe	6,336,168	8,412,850	-25	-2,076,682
Australasia	1,282,540	2,690,438	-52	-1,407,898
Middle East	1,796,183	2,541,750	-29	-745,567
Latin America	57,505	187,243	-69	-129,738
Africa	722,689	807,685	-11	-84,996

Source: OAG Schedules Analyser

International seats down 27 million

Across 82 countries from China, the seat cull was an average 333,000 per country. Predictably, most of the hardest-hit are close to China, including tourist- and VFR-focused destinations. After all, tourism and 'unnecessary' spending takes a backseat in such circumstances, with the inevitable economic and financial consequences. Thailand saw the greatest decline both from Bangkok (-2.59 million) but also beach resorts. Phuket, for example, is the sixth hardest-hit airport globally: its seats to/from China declined 843,000 to 1.2 million. While Vietnam is also in the top-10 countries for cuts, leisure destination Nha Trang was responsible for over half of this. It is the seventh-worst globally, down 753,000 to just 178,000. For such places, China is an important source of visitors. On a volume *and* percentage basis, Australia (-56%), Vietnam (-48%), Taiwan (-45%), and USA (-42%) are notable.

China seats down 164 million in five months from coronavirus

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Big coronavirus impact, but 11 of 82 countries see capacity growth

Portugal (+50,000) and Hungary (+34,000) lead the pack of 11 countries that didn't have seat cuts. Portugal was up from zero as Beijing Capital Airlines added Beijing –

Xian – Lisbon. In Hungary, Hainan Airlines began Chongqing – Budapest, while Shanghai Airlines started three: Shanghai Pudong – Chengdu – Budapest, Shanghai Pudong – Xian – Budapest, and Shanghai Pudong – Budapest. Morocco also grew strongly (+33,000) from Royal Air Maroc's Casablanca – Beijing Daxing service starting in January 2020. Rwanda (+24,000) was from Kigali – Mumbai – Guangzhou commencing in June 2019, almost outside the period being examined. Little wonder that Africa's cut was 'just' 11%.

The impact of the coronavirus on China alone is significant. And as the virus spreads away from China, other countries and regions are bracing themselves. This week, the potential full economic implications on the world economy began to scare global businesses and financial communities.

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