

PE Sarajevo International Airport

Native name JP Međunarodni Aerodrom Sarajevo

Type Public-owned enterprise

Industry Consumer services

Founded 2 June 1969; 52 years ago (Current form)

Headquarters Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Area served Bosnia and Herzegovina

Key people Alan Bajić (Director)

Services Airport operations

Revenue €24.25 million (2017)[2]

Net income €6.64 million[2]

Total assets €126.37 million (2017)[2]

Total equity €86.00 million (2017)[2]

Owner Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (100.00%)

Number of employees 484 (2016)[citation needed]

Sarajevo International Airport (Bosnian: Međunarodni aerodrom Sarajevo/Међународни аеродром Сарајево); (IATA: SJJ, ICAO: LQSA), also known as Butmir Airport, is the main international airport in Bosnia and Herzegovina, serving Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is located 3.3 NM (6.1 km; 3.8 mi) southwest of the Sarajevo railway station[1] and some 6.5 NM (12.0 km; 7.5 mi) west of downtown Sarajevo in the Ilidža municipality, suburb of Butmir. In 2019, 1,143,680 passengers traveled through the airport, compared to 323,499 in 2001.[3]

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History[edit]

Early years[edit]

First regular flights to Sarajevo using an airfield in the suburb of Butmir begin in 1930 when

the domestic airliner Aeroput opened a regular route linking Belgrade to Podgorica via Sarajevo.[4] A year later, Aeroput opened a new route which linked Belgrade and Zagreb via Sarajevo, Split, and Rijeka. In 1935, Aeroput operated three times weekly the non-stop route Belgrade – Sarajevo, which was extended to Dubrovnik a year later. In 1937, Aeroput included regular flights linking Sarajevo to Zagreb, and 1938 was the year when first international flights were introduced when Aeroput extended the route Dubrovnik – Sarajevo – Zagreb to Vienna, Brno, and Prague.[4][5]

The airfield in Butmir remained in use all the way until 1969. The need for a new airport in Sarajevo, with an asphalt-concrete runway, was acknowledged in the mid-1960s when JAT, Yugoslav national carrier at that time, began acquiring jet planes. The construction of the airport began in 1966 at its present location, not far from the old one.[citation needed] Sarajevo Airport opened on 2 June 1969 for domestic traffic. In 1970, Frankfurt became the first international destination served. Most of the time the airport was a 'feeder' airport where passengers embarked for flights to Zagreb and Belgrade on their way to international destinations. Over time, the traffic volume steadily grew from 70,000 to 600,000 passengers a year. The first renovation came for the 1984 Winter Olympics, when the runway was extended by 200 meters, the navigation system was improved, and a new terminal building was built, designed for 1 million passengers a year.[citation needed]

At the beginning of the Bosnian War, the airport was put under control of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA). When the regular flights were stopped, the JNA evacuated some 30,000 people, mostly women and children, who were spouses and children of JNA officers fleeing the siege of Sarajevo; the first humanitarian aid from the US and France arrived in this period too.[6] After JNA left, the airport was for a while under control of Bosnian Serb forces and in June 1992, they handed over the airport to the UN to use it for humanitarian purposes (UN Security Council Resolution 757). In the biggest humanitarian operation in history of the UN that followed, during the Bosnian war, some 13,000 flights were carried out and over 160,000 tons of international humanitarian aid was delivered to the besieged city of Sarajevo.[6]

The airport re-opened to civilian air traffic on 16 August 1996 and has since been renovated and slowly restored. Since the Dayton Agreement in 1995, the airport has a commercial flight business which includes Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa, Air Serbia, Croatia Airlines, Turkish Airlines, and others.

Development since the 2000s[edit]

On 18 October 2005, Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, suspended a decision by Bosnian authorities to name the airport after Alija Izetbegović, the first President of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative stated that such a renaming might undermine the reconciliation process by alienating non-Bosniak citizens.[7] In 2005, the European branch of the Airports Council International awarded Sarajevo the award of Best Airport Under 1 Million Passengers.[8]

In 2013, Sarajevo International Airport had 665,638 passengers which is more than all of the other airports in Bosnia and Herzegovina had together and a 14.7% increase from 2012, this is the highest number of passengers per year since the reopening of the airport. On 26 December 2014, the airport welcomed its 700,000th passenger on Austrian Airlines flight

OS758 to Vienna.[9]

In May 2015, work has started on expansion of Sarajevo International Airport. Current work is undergoing on expansion of arrival area, adding more passport control check stands and rearranging whole arrival area to make it more passenger friendly. Next to follow is expansion of check in area which will include three more check in counters making it total of 15 check in counters. By the end of the year the airport will begin with platform expansion and the construction of rapid exit taxiway with scheduled completion by mid of the next year. 2017 should be the year in which airport will enter into the reconstruction of the runway and the maneuvering areas. Expansion of the airport at the current level is financed by Sarajevo Airport own funds. On 6 June 2015, Pope Francis visited Sarajevo arriving on an Alitalia Airbus A320-200 from Rome. Welcome ceremony was held at Sarajevo International Airport.

The airport served as the home base for the country's flag carrier, B&H Airlines, until July 2015 when the airline ceased operations.[10] During December 2015, Sarajevo Airport experienced very low visibility and fog. About 40% of flights were canceled which impacted passengers growth and financial loss to the airport. Airport handled only 28.167 passengers of 50.000 planned (last year in December 43.079 passengers were handled). For Sarajevo International Airport one of major restrictions is a mountain terrain that requires a high approach precision and a big inclination angle in a procedure of unsuccessful approach and landing. Mr Vlado Jurić, Head of the Office for aviation safety at Bosnia and Herzegovina Air Navigation Services Agency (BHANSA), presented the information about problems caused by reduced minimums at Sarajevo Airport. For the implementation of ILS categories (CAT II or CAT III), the terrain in front of the runway start should be free of obstacles for at least 1,000 meters. It means that the RWY 12 threshold should be moved for additional 200 meters which would reduce the runway length and as such is unacceptable. From the point of view of procedure design, the reduction of minimums is not an option and therefore it is necessary to find other solutions for improvement of landing conditions at Sarajevo Airport. The biggest problem at Sarajevo Airport is fog. The representative of Sarajevo Airport, Mr Nermin Zijadić informed that there is a relevant plan regarding this problem. He also presented the information about future projects of Sarajevo Airport among which the most important one is a reconstruction of the runway including its lighting system.[11]

In 2016, Qatar Airways announced a new route from Doha to Sarajevo. However, the start of this service was first postponed and then moved to 10 October 2017. with four weekly flights.[12] On 5 December 2016, the airport welcomed its 800,000th passenger on Air Serbia flight JU113 to Belgrade.[13]

In 2017, Sarajevo International Airport welcomed six new airlines and seven destinations: AtlasGlobal (Istanbul), Wizz Air (Budapest), Wataniya Airways (Kuwait City), Nesma Airlines (Riyadh), TUI fly Belgium (Charleroi), flydubai (Dubai), Qatar Airways (Doha).[14] On 28 November 2017, Sarajevo International Airport has welcomed its 900,000 passengers of the year, representing a record number of passengers in one calendar year. On 5 December 2018, Sarajevo International Airport has welcomed for first time its 1,000,000 passenger of the year.[15]

On 3 May 2017, the airport announced a major terminal expansion. The project is worth 20

million Euros and scheduled to be completed in 2020. A new, 10.000 sqm building on four levels will be built as an addition to the current terminal building. The new terminal will have capacity to handle 2 million passengers per year and will be equipped with three jet bridges.[16] On 9 April 2019, the airport announced expansion of the VIP area into a new VIP building as part of the expansion project for the new main terminal with a separate check-in, customs and arrival section for VIP travellers.[17] During June–July 2019, Sarajevo Airport has seen its largest destination expansion. Total of 10 new destinations have been added. FlyBosnia started flights from Sarajevo to Riyadh, Kuwait, Jeddah, Gassim and Bahrain. Flynas started flights from Riyadh and Jeddah. Norwegian started flights from Göteborg and Eurowings started flights from Berlin Tegel Airport. In October and November 2019, FlyBosnia started flights to London Luton and Rome Fiumicino Airport. On 17 November 2020, Sarajevo International Airport terminated its contract with FlyBosnia after the company failed to repay its debts within 60 days.[18]

On 3 February 2021, Wizz Air announced the opening of its second base in Bosnia and Herzegovina, after Tuzla; the airline will open a base at Sarajevo with one Airbus A320. The airline announced nine new European destinations from Sarajevo with 21 weekly departures.[19]

On 12 August 2021, Wizz Air has announced that it will base its second aircraft at Sarajevo International Airport. It is planned to launch 7 new routes from December 2021.[20] Also, Wizz Air Abu Dhabi plans to introduce direct routes between Sarajevo and Abu Dhabi in October 2021.[21]

Airlines and destinations[edit]

Passenger[edit]

The following airlines operate regular scheduled and charter flights at Sarajevo International Airport:[22]

Airlines Destinations

Air Arabia[23] Seasonal: Abu Dhabi, Sharjah

Air Serbia[24] Belgrade

AnadoluJet[25] Istanbul–Sabiha Gökçen

Seasonal: Antalya, Bodrum

Austrian Airlines[26] Vienna

Croatia Airlines[27] Zagreb

Eurowings[28] Cologne/Bonn, Stuttgart

flydubai[29] Dubai–International

flynas[30] Seasonal: Jeddah, Riyadh

Gulf Air[31] Seasonal: Bahrain

Jazeera Airways[32] Seasonal: Kuwait City

Kuwait Airways[33] Seasonal: Kuwait City

Lufthansa[34] Frankfurt

Norwegian Air Shuttle[35][36] Stockholm–Arlanda

Seasonal: Copenhagen, Oslo

Nouvelair[37] Seasonal charter: Monastir

Pegasus Airlines[38] Istanbul–Sabiha Gökçen

SalamAir[39] Seasonal: Muscat

Swiss International Air Lines[40] Zürich

Turkish Airlines[41] Istanbul

Wizz Air[42] Abu Dhabi, Basel/Mulhouse, Beauvais, Billund (begins 17 December 2021),
Charleroi, Cologne/Bonn (begins 16 December 2021), Copenhagen, Dortmund, Eindhoven,
Gothenburg, Hahn (begins 16 December 2021), Hamburg (begins 16 December 2021),
Memmingen, Malmö (begins 16 December 2021), Sandefjord (begins 19 December 2021),
Stockholm–Skavsta, Treviso (begins 17 December 2021)

Cargo[edit]

Airlines Destinations

DHL Aviation[43] Ancona, Milan-Malpensa

Statistics[edit]

Traffic figures[edit]

See source Wikidata query and sources.

Passenger numbers[44]

Year/Month January February March April May June July August September October

November December Year total Change

2021 13,239 10,836 18,115 17,106 31,925 71,985 136,017 151,309 99,950 550,483
175.4%

2020 58,397 51,969 28,249 929 367 3,629 13,345 22,014 21,011 21,416 14,949 13,367
249,642 78.2%

2019 53,485 53,130 67,893 89,843 74,178 119,205 180,929 178,943 105,370 95,628
67,358 57,718 1,143,680 9.3%

2018 54,113 48,986 65,991 86,995 81,026 92,997 159,380 159,506 98,227 83,660 62,253
53,417 1,046,635 9.2%

2017 43,377 41,122 57,381 79,796 84,137 78,170 140,025 144,330 100,923 80,769 57,887
50,218 957,971 14.2%

2016 41,208 42,567 53,438 68,085 85,738 66,429 109,141 118,350 91,123 71,360 47,352
44,183 838,968 8.5%

2015 43,700 39,908 50,273 63,064 80,143 74,855 89,319 101,307 79,120 71,255 51,793
28,167 772,904 8.8%

2014 36,114 35,435 45,789 56,611 71,513 74,976 74,948 88,591 71,168 64,844 46,833
43,079 709,901 6.6%

2013 33,437 30,399 44,631 56,918 65,495 72,949 69,699 79,796 66,721 64,387 44,446
36,760 665,638 14.7%

2012 33,247 26,278 36,765 49,709 55,107 62,491 69,346 60,787 60,323 52,115 38,612
35,278 580,058 3.3%

2011 30,484 34,148 40,803 49,489 56,812 62,994 81,042 59,042 59,074 52,957 39,785
33,348 599,978 6.5%

2010 31,746 28,850 37,657 39,907 51,398 59,636 72,615 60,475 54,753 51,137 40,912
34,180 563,266 6.2%

2009 28,117 27,266 33,909 41,390 45,921 57,588 + + 177,762 + + 121,427 530,391 4.7%

2008 23,909 27,121 34,896 38,052 46,974 55,391 62,524 61,560 42,752 46,094 34,089

32,913 506,398 0.2%

2007 32,235 28,028 35,168 42,297 43,633 53,281 59,436 57,381 45,113 43,980 31,952

32,735 505,269 8.4%

Passengers, cargo and movements[edit]

Year Passengers Change Cargo (t) Change Aircraft movements Change

2002 310.126 4,1% 7.401 % 1.686 %

2003 364.512 17,5% 9.877 33,4% 1.648 2,2%

2004 399.607 11% 9.982 1,0% N/A N/A

2005 433.222 8,4% 11.309 13,2% N/A N/A

2006 455.626 5,1% 13.433 18,7% N/A N/A

2007 496.756 9,0% 13.891 3,4% N/A N/A

2008 510.396 2,7% 13.599 2,1% 1.837 N/A

2009 533.915 4,7% 13.824 1,6% 1.815 1,1%

2010 563.266 6,2% 13.347 3,4% 1.753 3,4%

2011 599.978 6,5% 11.633 12,8% 1.607 8,3%

2012 580.058 3,3% 10.635 8,5% 1.526 5,0%

2013 665.638 14,7% 11.026 3,6% 1.603 5,0%

2014 709.901 6,6% 12.074 9,5% 2.060 28,5%

2015 772.904 8,8% 11.107 8,0% 4.235 105,5%

2016 838.966 8,5% 11.399 2,6% 2.865 32,3%

2017 957.971 14,2% 12.773 12,0% 2.957 3,2%

2018 1.046.635 9,2% 13.432 5,1% 2.508 15,1%

2019 1.143.680 9,3% 13.671 1,8% 2.523 0,6%

2020 249.642 78,1% 5.896 56,8% 2.461 2,4%

Source:[45]

Access[edit]

By car[edit]

Sarajevo Airport is connected to the Sarajevo–Zenica–Mostar highway (A1) via nearby Stup Interchange and Brijesce Interchange.

By bus[edit]

Centrotrans Eurolines, in cooperation with Sarajevo International Airport, provide a bus service Airport – Bašćaršija City Center – Airport. Bus stand is just outside of arrivals area in main terminal. The price of a one-way ticket is €2.50. WiFi internet is available on board.[46]

By trolleybus[edit]

Airport is connected with Sarajevo city center with trolleybus number 103 operated by GRAS transport company[47]

Accidents and incidents[edit]

18 January 1977: Džemal Bijedić, then prime minister of Yugoslavia, and his wife were among the eight people killed when their Learjet 25 crashed on the Inač mountain near Kreševo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The plane took off from Batajnica Air Base in Belgrade and was en route to Sarajevo when it crashed, ostensibly due to poor weather conditions. Conspiracy theorists have suggested that the crash was not an accident but rather the result

of foul play at the hands of his Serbian rivals.[48]

31 December 1994: Belair cargo plane Ilyushin 76TD, registration EW-76836 was operating flight from Luxembourg to Sarajevo on behalf of the United Nations. At the time of landing Sarajevo airport runway was flooded and the aircraft overran runway and struck a ditch with the nose gear. There were no fatalities in crash-landing but the aircraft was damaged beyond repair.[49]

23 December 2001: A Crossair Avro RJ, registration HB-IXH, skidded 100 meters off the runway when it tried to land at Sarajevo airport under snowy conditions. Nobody was injured in the accident, nor was there any damage. By next Monday afternoon, the aircraft had been recovered and was parked on the apron. The French Air Detachment (DETAIR) and local aeronautical authorities have opened an investigation to determine the cause of the accident. It was snowing on the afternoon of 23 Dec.. The airport snow plough had just cleared the runway, a 20-minute job, when an HB-IXH from Zürich requested authorization to land.[50]

See also[edit]

List of airports in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Tuzla International Airport

Mostar International Airport

Banja Luka International Airport