

Impact of Covid-19 on International Flights

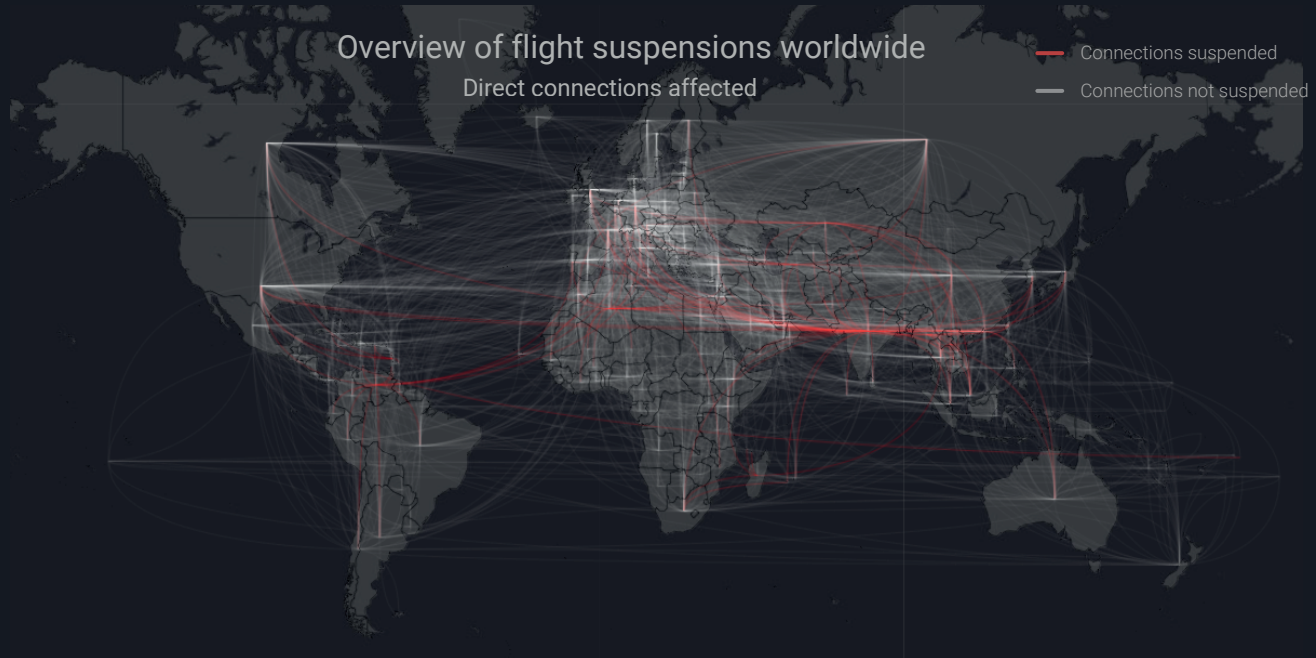
Weekly update | Omicron variant

Last updated : 14 February 2022

Data Source: IATA Timatic Coronavirus Outbreak updates, Government web sources, information received from IOM staff, DTM networks and trusted media outlets.



On 26 November 2021, WHO designated the variant B.1.1.529, named Omicron, a variant of concern on the advice of WHO's Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution (TAG-VE). Since the Omicron variant was designated, new countries, territories or areas (C/T/As) have implemented more stringent mobility restrictions for individuals. The map below shows the international air travel connections that are currently suspended.



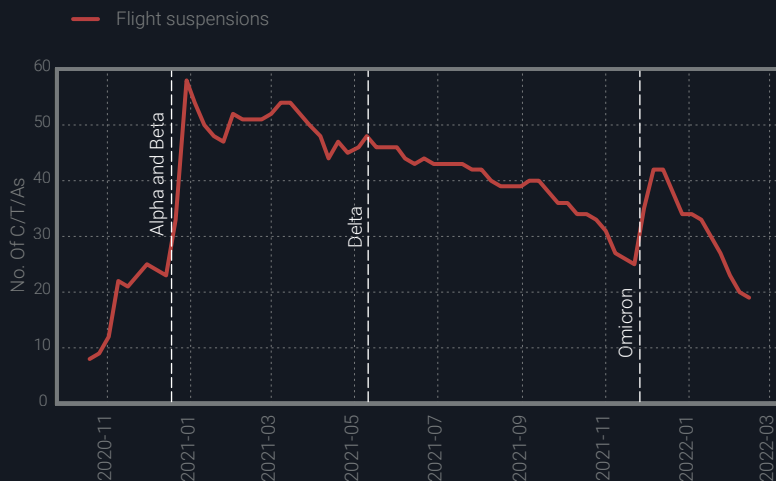
Overview of flight suspensions worldwide

Direct connections affected

— Connections suspended
— Connections not suspended

Overview of flight suspensions over time

Number of C/T/As issuing flight suspensions



Timeline:

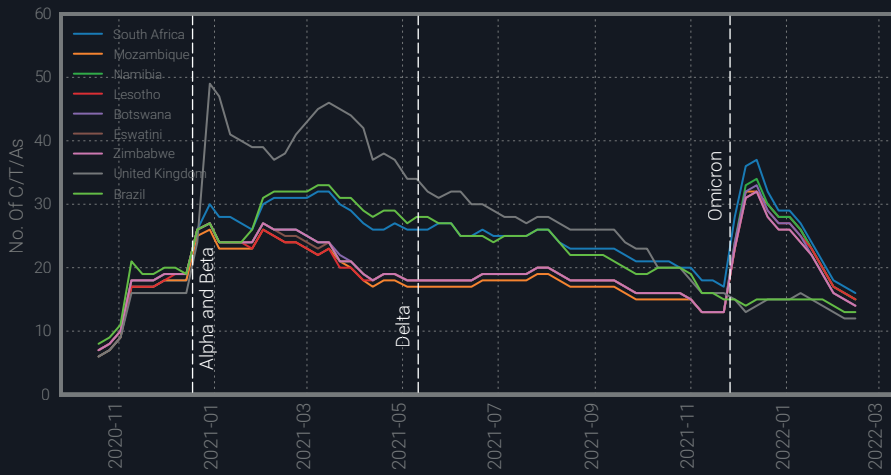
18 December 2020: The Alpha and Beta variants were designated variants of concern, and soon after the designation 35 C/T/As issued new flight suspensions on international flights.

11 May 2021: The Delta variant was designated as a variant of concern, this time the number of C/T/As issuing flight suspensions fluctuated until early June, and then it started decreasing until the Omicron variant was designated.

26 November 2021: The Omicron variant was designated as a variant of concern and as a result 18 C/T/As (*) issued new flight suspensions, reaching a peak of 34 C/T/As issuing flight suspensions by 6 December 2021. Since the peak, those C/T/As that had issued new flight suspensions in response to the Omicron variant, have lifted them. On the other hand only Hong Kong SAR (China) still holds flight suspensions issued in response to the Omicron variant.

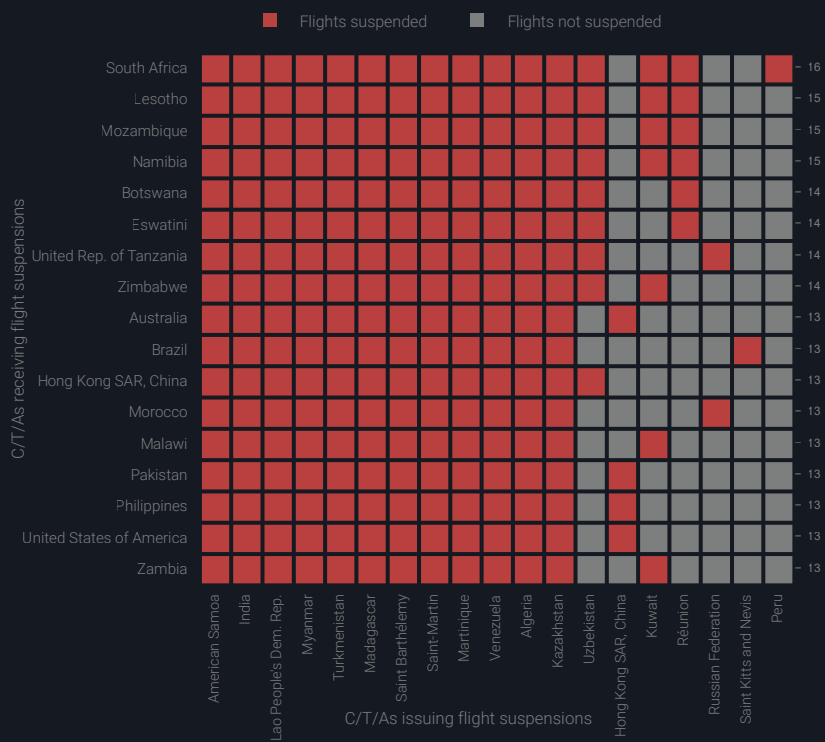
(*) Angola, Australia, Austria, Caribbean Netherlands, Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Morocco, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Réunion, Slovak Republic, Spain, Turkey, and Uzbekistan.

C/T/As most affected by flight suspensions



After the Alpha and Beta variants were designated as variants of concern on 18 December 2021, flight suspensions to/from specific C/T/As were issued – specially those where the variants were first documented. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland received the most flight suspensions, followed by a group of South African C/T/As. The designation of the Delta variant as a variant of concern on 11 May 2021 had less of an impact on flight suspensions. When the Omicron variant was designated as a variant of concern on 26 November 2021, routes to/from South Africa were more affected than any other C/T/A in the region. However, as of 14 February 2022 most flight suspensions issued on Southern African C/T/As after the Omicron designation, have been lifted.

Matrix of C/T/As receiving and issuing flight suspensions



The horizontal axis represents C/T/As issuing flight suspensions, whereas the vertical axis represents C/T/As receiving a higher number of flight suspensions.

Southern African C/T/As are still the most affected by flight suspensions. Namely, flights from/to South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, and Zimbabwe are suspended by more than 14 C/T/As. On the other hand, 5 C/T/As (American Samoa, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Turkmenistan) have cancelled all international flight connections.

C/T/As receiving flight suspensions worldwide

