

# Press release

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## Growth in air traffic to the Middle East

**After a 50% drop in Middle-East traffic from 2001 to 2002, traffic is now growing again. The airlines believe in the trend, and two operators are starting up services to Beirut.**

9/11 2001 led to a 50% reduction in air traffic to the Middle East. Only 101,864 passengers travelled to the Middle East in 2002, down from 208,150 passengers a year earlier. In 2003, the passenger volume increased by almost 20% to 119,602 passengers.

“We are not yet back at the pre-9/11 level, but we definitely see a trend in the right direction. In the summer programme, two airlines are introducing flights to Beirut, and our analyses clearly indicate that there is a market for these services. At the moment, we are seeing growing activity in the area around Iraq, which intensifies the demand for more routes from Copenhagen to that part of the Middle East,” Trille Tang Dalsgaard, head of Airline Relations at Copenhagen Airports, comments.

The two airlines flying to Beirut out of Copenhagen Airport are SAS low-cost carrier Snowflake and Middle East Airlines, which is back at Copenhagen Airport after six years.

Snowflake will have a flight once a week, starting on 28 March, using B737-800s with a seating capacity of about 150 passengers. Middle East Airlines will be offering two weekly flights on the Beirut route from 1 June, using Airbus A330s with a seating capacity of 250 passengers.

### **Facts on services out of Copenhagen Airport to the Middle East:**

Teheran (Iran Air & Kish Airlines)

Tel Aviv & Eilat (Arkia)

Beirut (Snowflake from 28 March and Middle East Airlines from 1 June)

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