

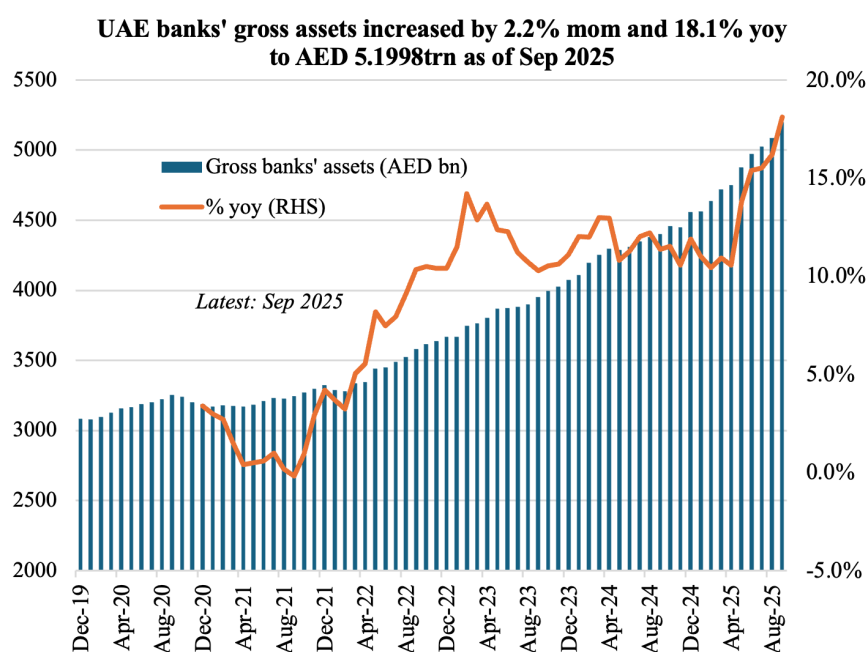
MENA Momentum Continues: UAE Credit Uptick, Saudi Trade Gains, and Rising Air Traffic: Weekly Insights 28 Nov 2025

UAE monetary developments. Saudi trade surplus. Middle East airline activity.

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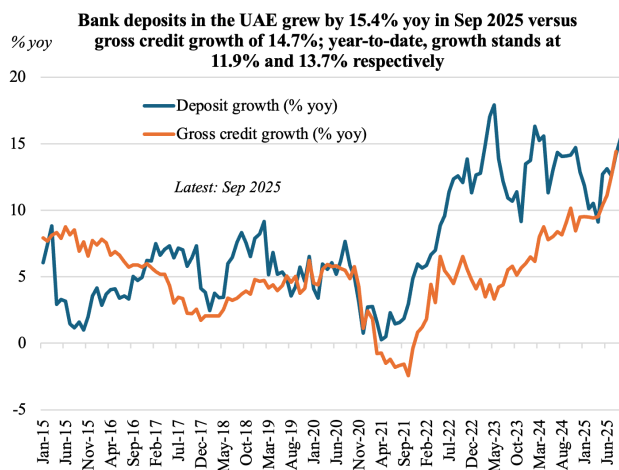
1. UAE deposits grow at an average 12.2% pace in Jan-Sep; credit growth inching closer



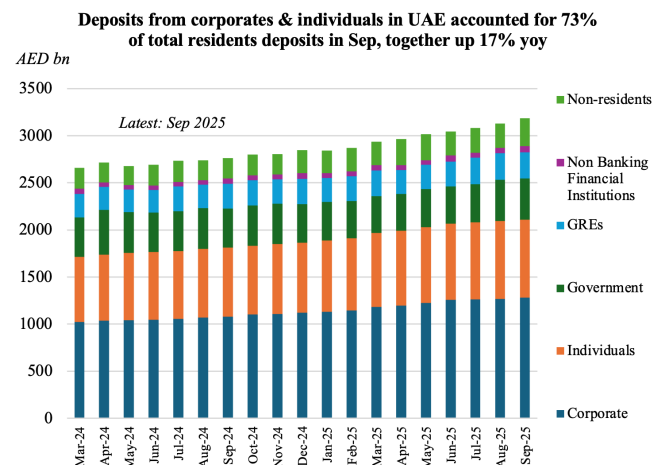
- **UAE's gross bank assets continue to grow at a fast pace:** it increased by 14.1% year-to-date (ytd) to a record AED 5.199trn in Sep. The central bank's **total assets grew to AED 1.012trn in Sep**, up 18.4% yoy & 0.4% mom.
- **Central bank's net international reserves grew 0.5% mom**

to AED 966.99bn, but its **gold holdings** have jumped to **AED 28.9bn** (10.6% mom and 46% ytd).

- **UAE banks' deposits** grew at an average **12.2% pace** in **Jan-Sep 2025**. It grew 15.4% yoy in Sep, thanks to a 13.5% yoy rise in resident deposits (to AED 2.9trn) and 38.0% growth in non-resident deposits (9.3% of total deposits).
- **Private sector deposits** (at AED 2.1trn) accounted for 73% of residents' deposits (13.5% yoy). **Government & GREs**, accounted for one-fourth of residents' deposits, rising by 4.7% yoy and 8.1% % respectively.

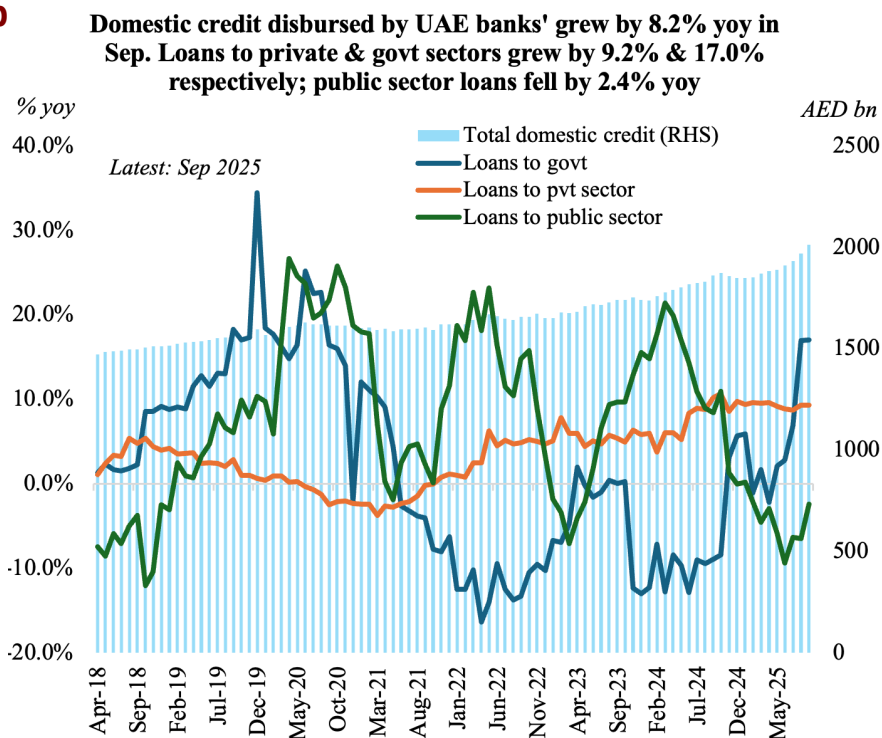


Source: UAE Central Bank. Charts by Nasser Saidi & Associates



2. UAE gross credit & domestic credit grew by 13.7% & 9.2%

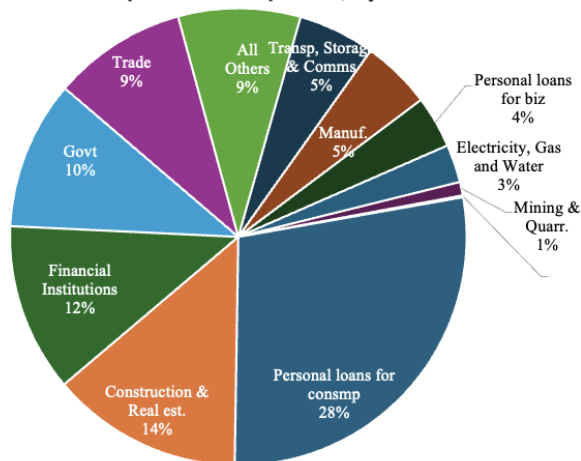
year-to-date as of Sep



- **Average growth in Jan-Sep 2025 of gross credit (11.2% yoy) and domestic credit (6.0% yoy) lagged overall deposit (12.2%) in the UAE.** Year-to-date, both gross credit & bank deposits are up by 13.7% and 11.9% respectively.
- **Gross credit in the UAE grew by 2.5% mom and 14.7% yoy to AED 2.478trn in Sep.** This was **driven by growth in domestic credit (8.2% yoy to AED 2.01trn) and a surge in foreign credit (54.5% yoy to AED 466.8bn).** **Foreign credit** also includes loans and advances to non-residents, which grew by 59.6% yoy to AED 39.1bn.
- **Loans to the private sector accounted for close to three-fourths of domestic credit.** **Loans to the government** increased by 17% yoy to AED 226.4bn while growth of **loans to GREs** fell 2.4% to AED 276.6bn.
- **Lending to SMEs** increased to AED 89.1bn, the most since end-2021, up 7.7% yoy (fastest growth since Q4 2020) and 1.9% qoq.
- When classifying bank credit to residents by economic activity, **construction & real estate (14%), financial institutions (12%) and government (10%)** were among the

top.

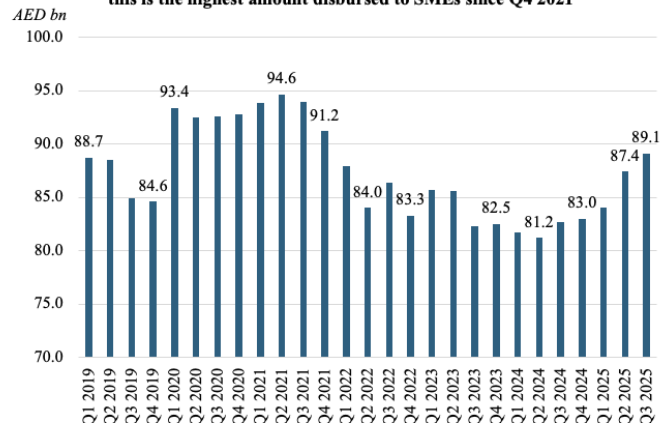
Share of loans by economic activity in UAE, Sep 2025



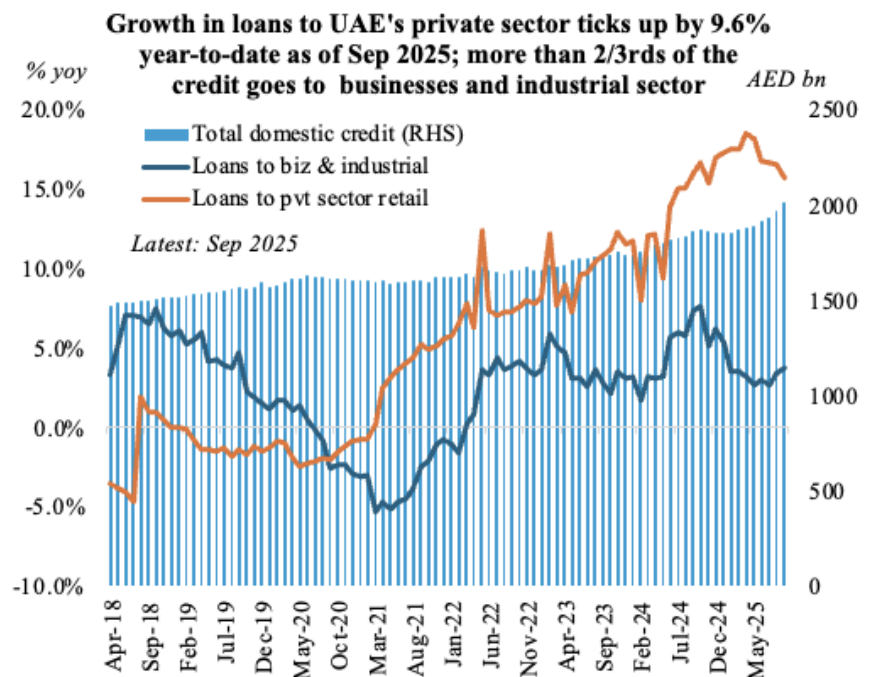
Source: UAE Central Bank. Charts by Nasser Saidi & Associates

Note: All others in economic activity include Credit to the Service Sector and Non-Profit Institutions

SME lending in the UAE increased to AED 89.1bn as of Q3 2025 (AED bn): equivalent to 6.1% of domestic credit to the pvt sector, this is the highest amount disbursed to SMEs since Q4 2021



3. UAE's Q3 credit sentiment survey indicates banks' strong appetite and willingness to lend; rapid increase in personal lending

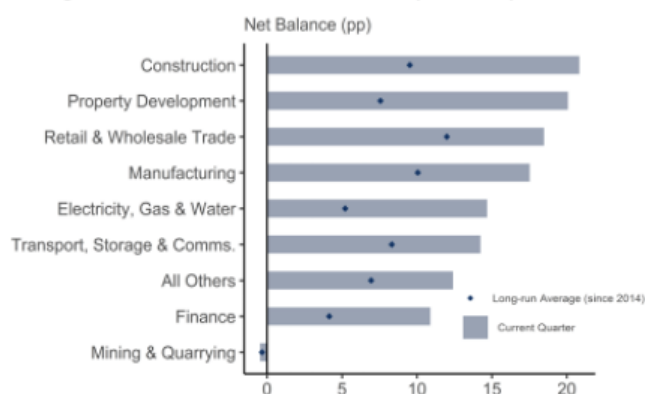


- Loans disbursed to UAE's **business & industrial sector** accounted for **45.8% of total domestic credit in Sep 2025**. It grew by 3.7% yoy in Sep (& 5.6% year-to-date) versus a faster pace in the private retail sector (9.4% yoy and 15.7% ytd).
- The UAE central bank's Q3 2025 credit sentiment survey shows a **strong appetite for credit demand**. But domestic

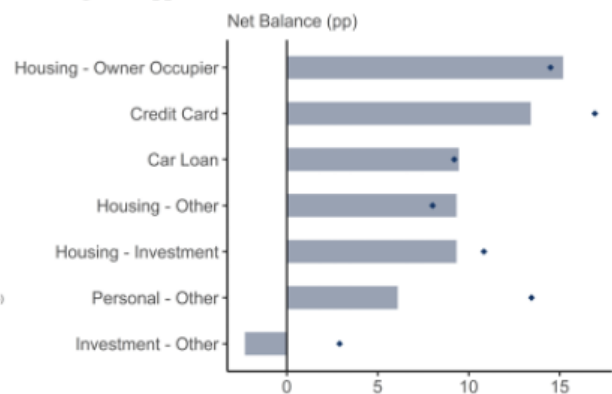
credit grew by 8.2% yoy in Sep, at a quicker pace than 6.0% and 7.5% in Jul and Aug respectively.

- **Demand for business loans** rose in Q2 2024: demand was strongest from Dubai (among all emirates) and large firms (by firm category). **The highest growth was seen in construction, property development and retail & wholesale trade** while mining dropped. Appetite will remain strong in Q4 given favourable economic conditions and interest rate changes.
- **Demand for personal loans has increased and financial institutions reported increased lending appetite** – most for housing loans and credit cards. This is widely expected to strengthen further in the rest of the year.

Change in Demand for Business Loans by Industry



Change in Appetite for Personal Loans

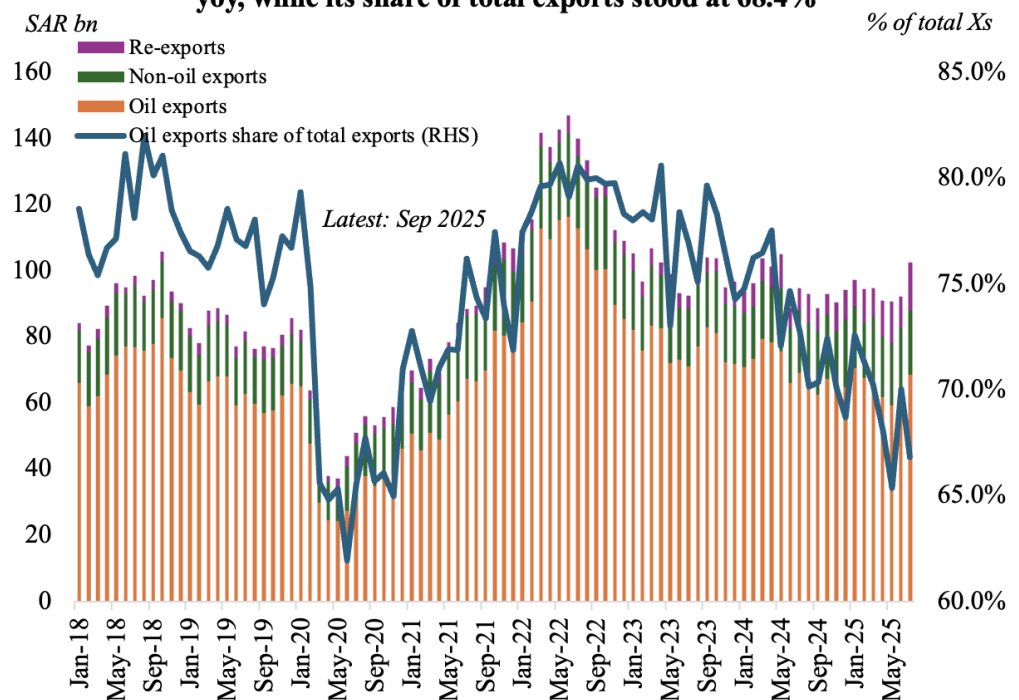


Source: Credit Sentiment Survey Q3 2025, UAE Central Bank.

4. Saudi non-oil exports surge in Sep; surplus widened the

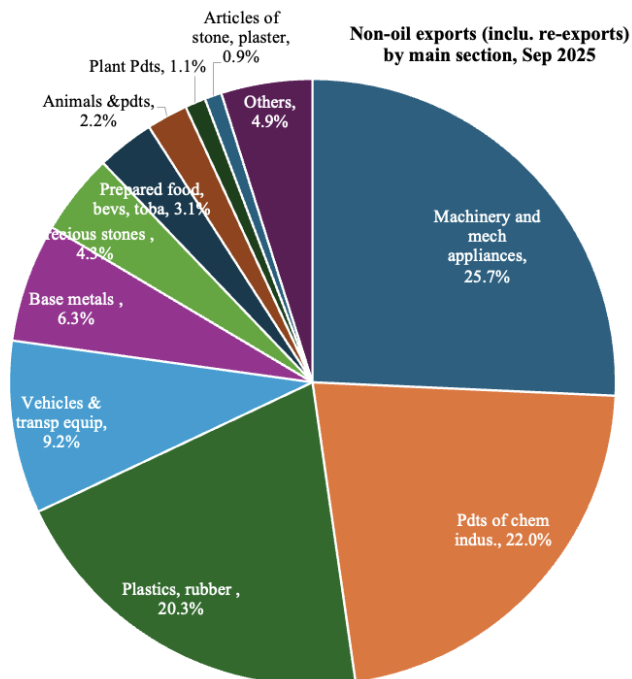
most since mid-2024

Non-oil exports (inclu. re-exports) surged by 9.2% mom and 21.7% yoy to SAR 32.1bn in Sep; oil exports jumped by 10.7% yoy, while its share of total exports stood at 68.4%

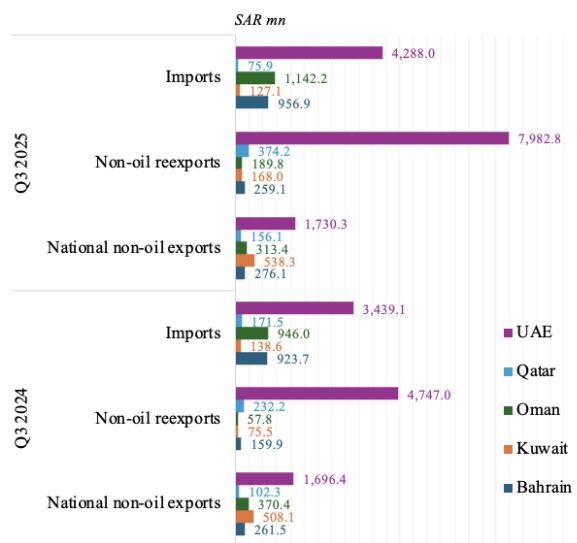


- **Saudi Arabia's overall exports grew by 2.2% mom and 14% yoy to SAR 101.4bn, with annual gains across all components. Share of oil exports to overall exports slipped to 68.4% (Aug: 70.4%).**
- **Total non-oil exports (i.e. including re-exports) grew by 9.2% mom and 21.7% yoy to SAR 32.1bn in Sep.** A breakdown shows that re-exports and domestic non-oil exports (i.e. excluding re-exports) grew by 7.7% mom and 10.1% mom to SAR 12.3bn and SAR 19.7bn respectively.
- **Imports fell by 4.3% mom to SAR 75.4bn (but rose 2.8% yoy), resulting in a wider trade surplus, SAR 25.99bn, the most since May 2024.**
- **Machinery was the largest segment of total non-oil exports (26%), followed closely by chemicals & its products (22%) and plastics, rubber and their articles (20%).** UAE accounted for 30.3% of non-oil exports; share of non-oil exports to GCC was just over 37%.
- **China was the largest trade partner for KSA in Apr: it received 14.3% of Saudi exports and was source nation for 28.2% of KSA imports.**

- **UAE was the top trade partner in West Asia:** received 10.7% of Saudi's total exports and the source for 5.7% of Saudi imports.
- **Saudi non-oil trade with the rest of GCC is substantial:** 37.4% of total in Sep. Non-oil trade surplus with the GCC more than doubled to SAR 5.4bn in Sep from a year ago. This was largely due to a 70.2% surge in re-exports & almost doubling of UAE surplus to SAR 5.4bn.

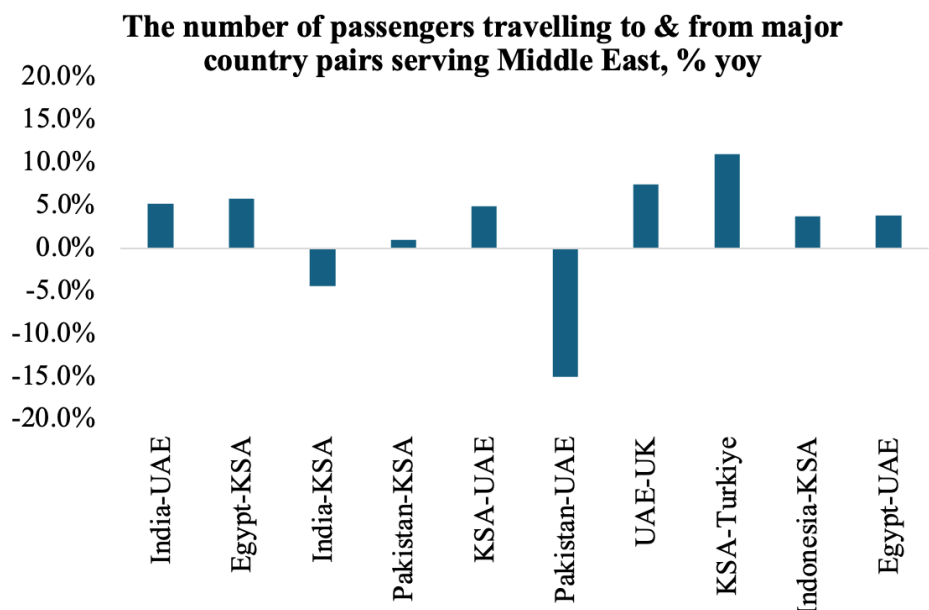


National non-oil exports to GCC from KSA surged by 46% yoy in Sep 2025. Non-oil trade surplus more than doubled to SAR 5.4bn in Sep (driven by a 70.2% surge in re-exports & almost doubling of UAE surplus to SAR 5.4bn)

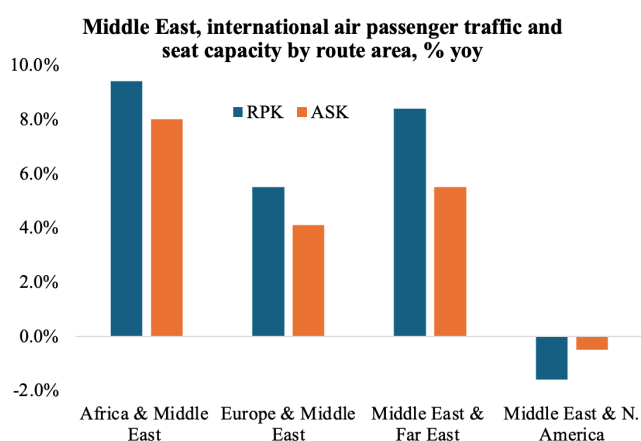


Source: GaStat. Charts by Nasser Saidi & Associates

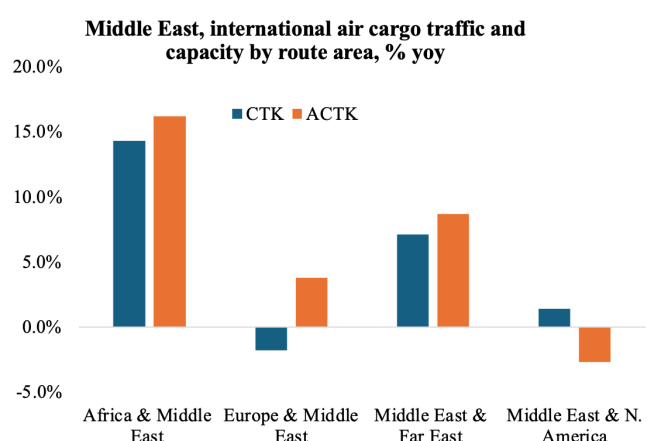
5. Middle East Air Passenger & Cargo activity accelerated in Q3



- **Middle East airlines recorded an acceleration in both passenger and cargo demand in Q3**, with overall increases 7.2% yoy and 1.9%. Both capacities also expanded in Q3 (6.8% & 4.7% respectively). Passenger Load Factor rose to 83.3%, a historical high for the region.
- The **Middle East-Asia corridor** continues to dominate in passenger traffic, while the Africa-Middle East corridor has been expanding at a much quicker pace in both passenger & cargo.
- Interestingly, there is **evidence of a diversification of cargo routes away from North America** (ACTK dropped 2.7%) into new regions; Middle East-Europe continued its decline though capacity is rising.
- **India & Pakistan were the main Asian destinations for travellers from the Middle East**: however, visitors to India grew (0.3% yoy) while it fell to Pakistan (-5.3%, given the 15% dip in UAE-Pakistan route). **Türkiye** (due to the strong KSA corridor) **and Egypt** (both with UAE & KSA) **were the main connections to Europe & Africa respectively**. Capacity is expected to rise further, given the demand & launch of new airlines (KSA).



Source: *Quarterly Air Transport Chartbook - Q3 2025, Nov 2025, IATA.*



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