

Department of Tourism South Africa - Best Practices Workshop

Changes in airlift impact on travel

Ms Adefunke Adeyemi

Regional Director External Affairs & Sustainability

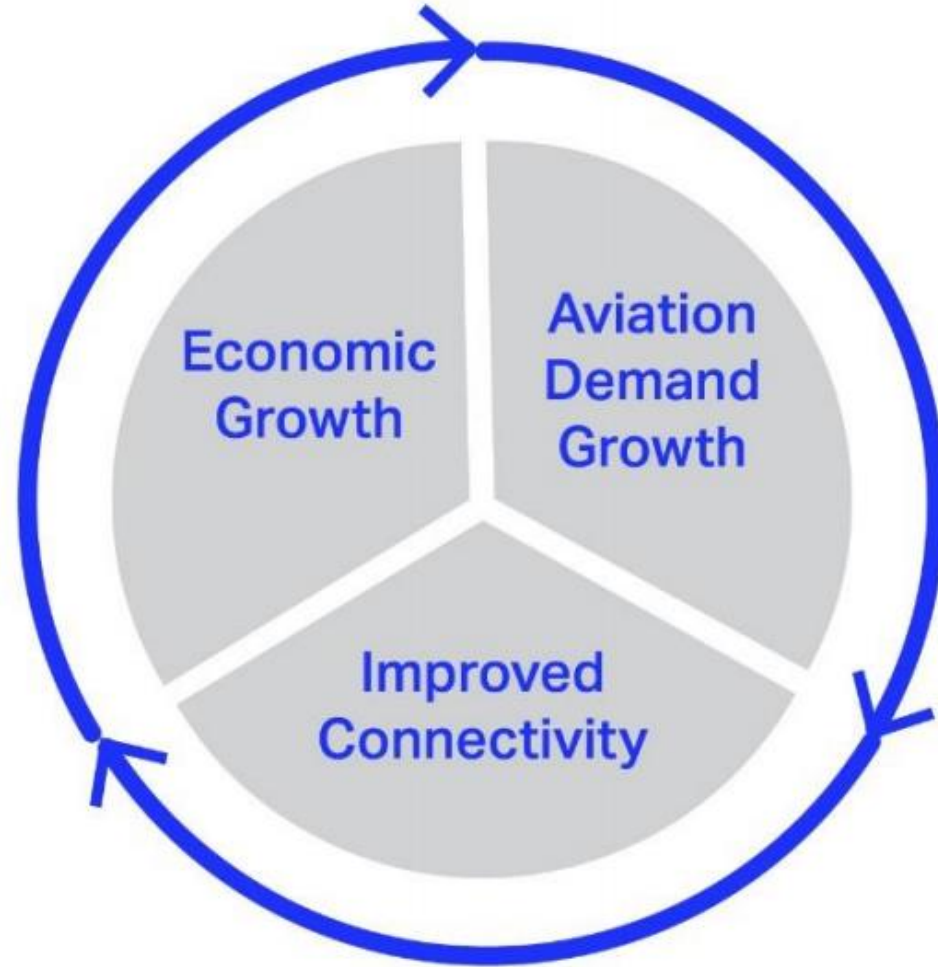


Agenda

- High Level Economic Overview
- Latest medical evidence – the impact of Omicron
- The blueprint for simplifying air travel
 - Risk frameworks and health status protocols
- Scorecards and Advocacy planning
- Verification of traveler Health status
- Q&A

Air connectivity is an engine of economic growth

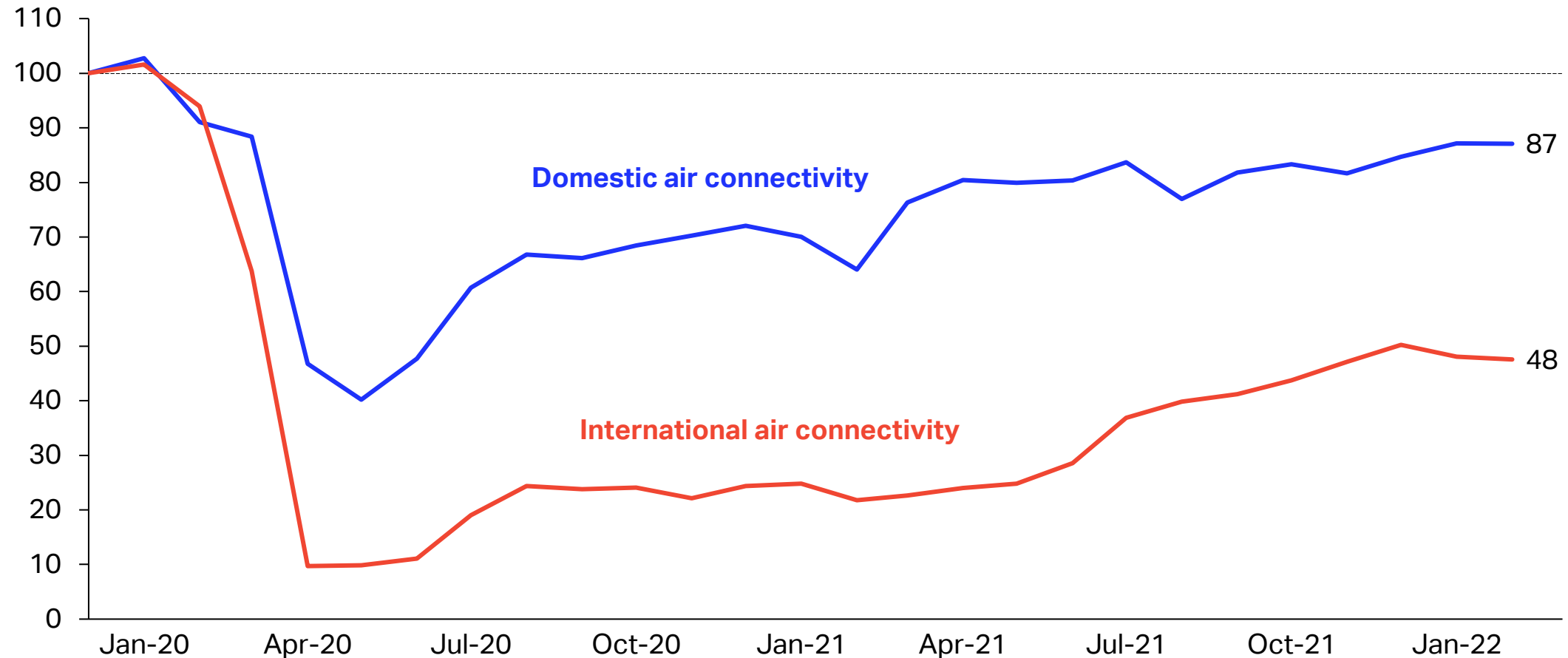
The virtuous circle of air connectivity and economic performance



Global international air connectivity in Feb. 2022 at 48% of pre-crisis levels

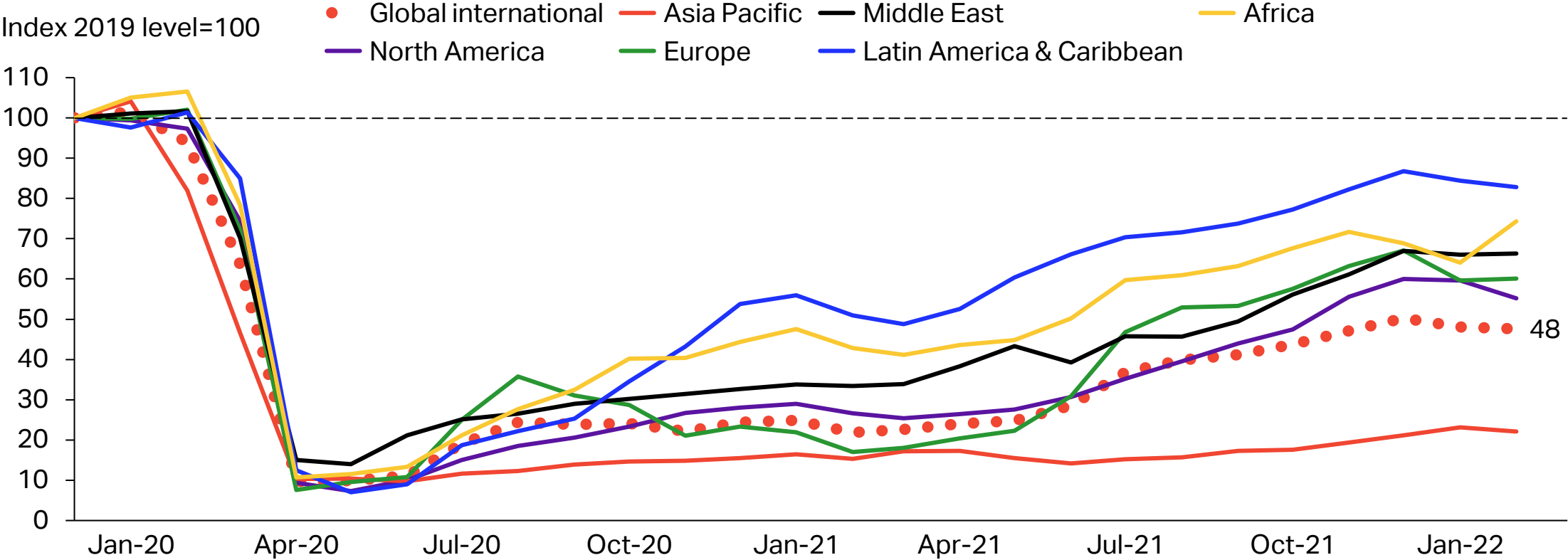
IATA Global Air Connectivity Index, monthly Jan 2020-Feb 2022

Index 2019 level=100



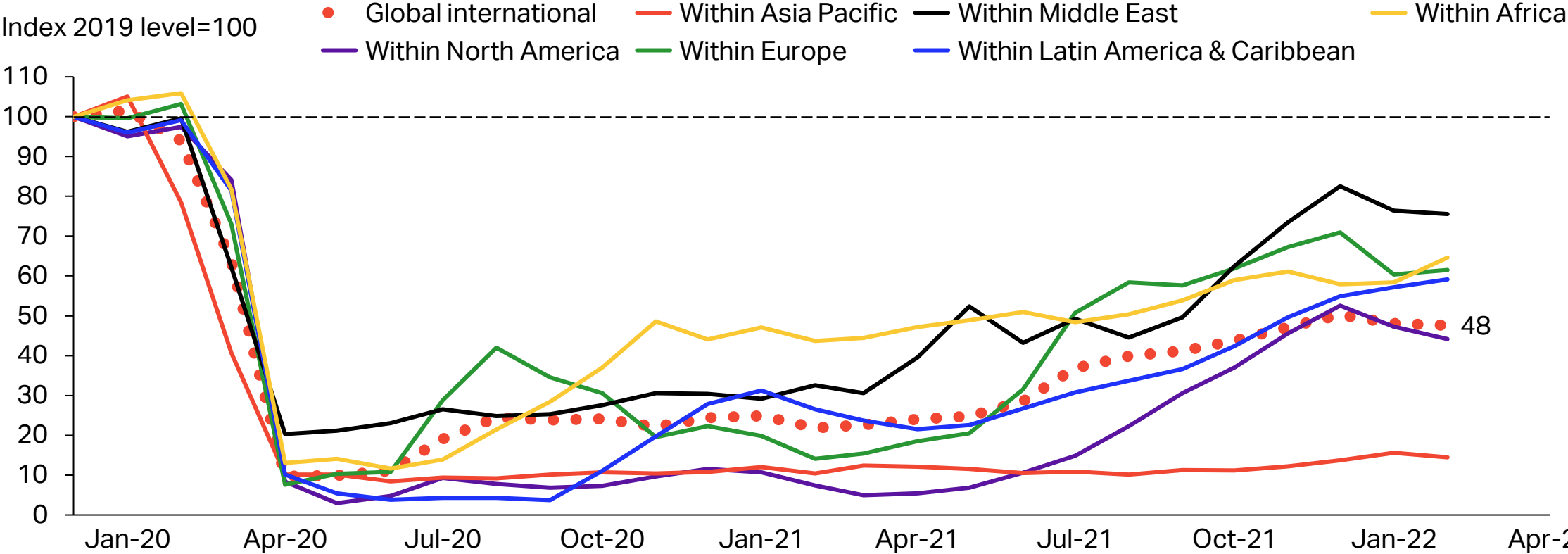
International air connectivity recovery by Feb. 2022 varies significantly across regions

IATA International Air Connectivity Index by region for all international routes, monthly Jan 2020-Feb 2022



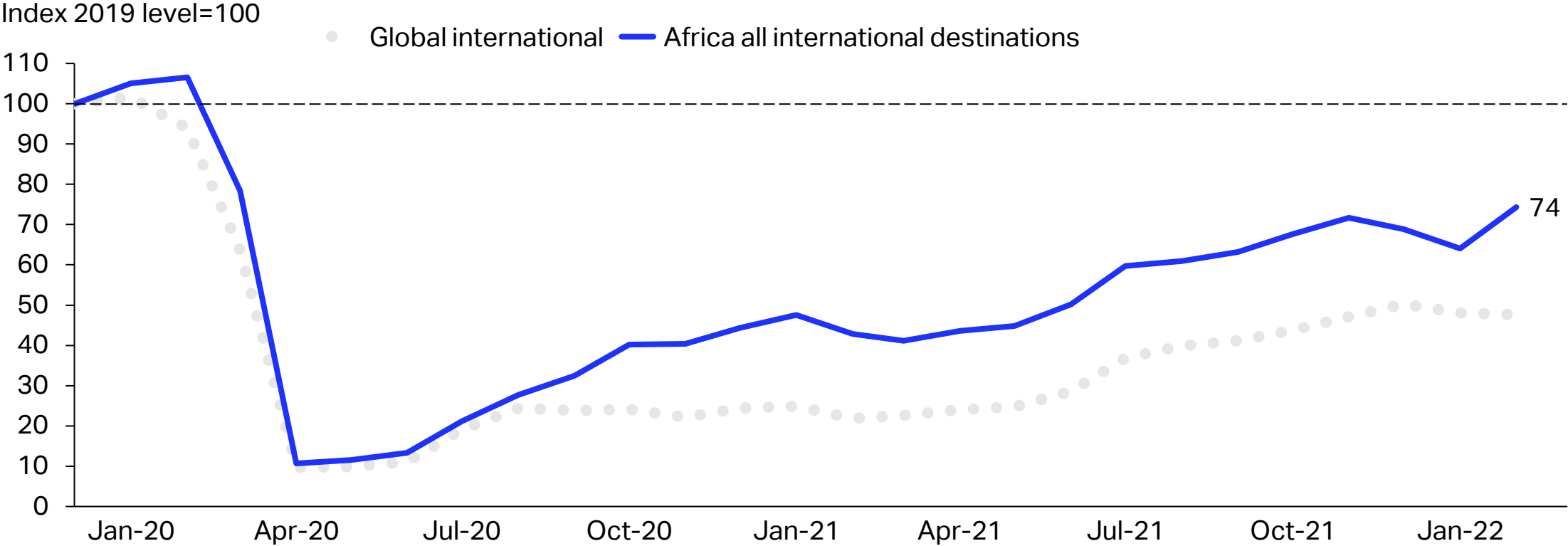
International air connectivity recovery within regions by Feb. 2022 varies significantly

IATA International Air Connectivity Index for intra-regional international routes, monthly Jan 2020-Feb 2022



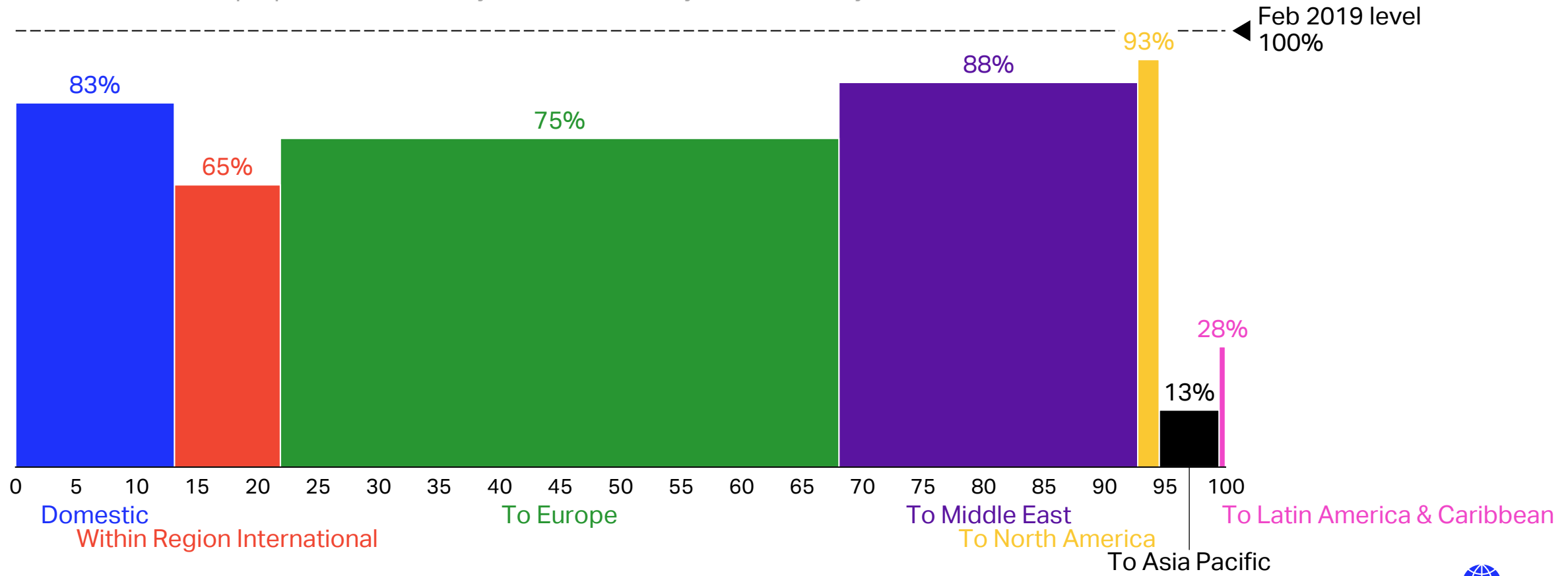
Africa total international air connectivity in Feb. 2022 is 74% of pre-crisis levels

IATA International Air Connectivity Index, monthly Jan 2020-Feb 2022



Extent of recovery to Feb. 2019 connectivity for Africa by Feb. 2022

Africa connectivity recovery by route area in Feb. 22 as % of Feb. 19 level
Horizontal scale shows proportion of February 2019 connectivity contributed by each route area



IATA Connectivity Index using data from OAG



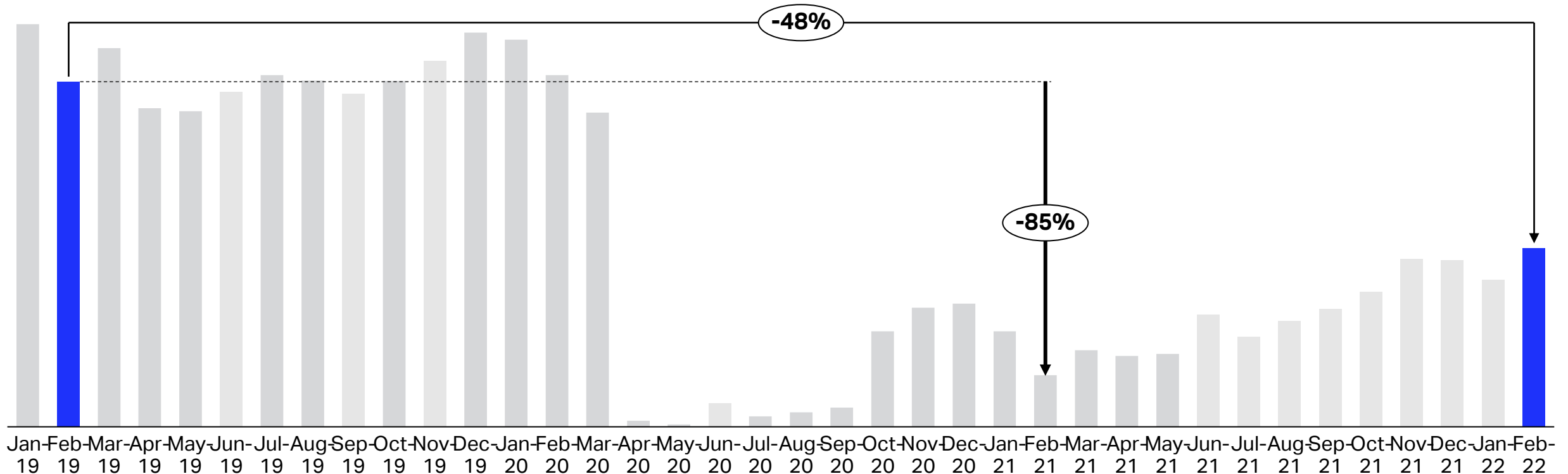
46 international destinations accessible from South Africa in Feb. 2022 vs 64 pre-crisis

Indicator	Feb-19	Feb-22	% of 2019
International flights per week	983	535	54%
International destinations*	64	46	72%
Countries connected	42	31	74%

* Unique airport destinations with at least one scheduled flight per week

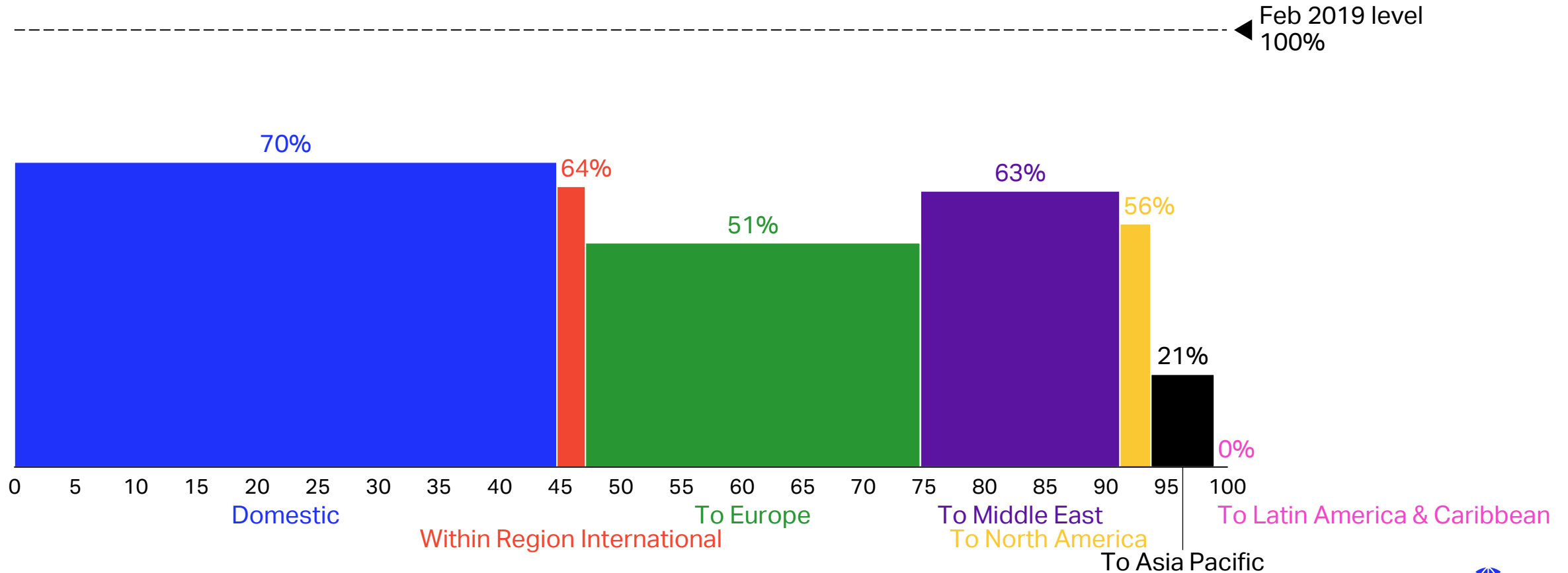
South Africa international air connectivity in Feb. 2022 is 48% below pre-crisis levels

IATA International Air Connectivity Index for South Africa, monthly Jan 2020-Feb 2022



Extent of recovery to Feb. 2019 connectivity for South Africa by Feb. 2022

South Africa connectivity recovery by route area in Feb. 22 as % of Feb. 19 level
Horizontal scale shows proportion of February 2019 connectivity contributed by each route area



IATA Connectivity Index using data from OAG



Simplifying Air Travel

Latest Medical Evidence



Narrative around Omicron: December '21



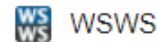
Canada poised to tighten borders, warn against non-essential travel as COVID cases surge



France sees 100,000 daily COVID cases for first time

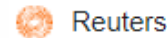


Records fall and borders close as world races to get control of Omicron



Scientists warn of looming catastrophe as Omicron spreads

...



COVID-19 vaccines may be less effective against Omicron - WHO



Covid Omicron: European nations reinstate restrictions



Omicron Coronavirus India Highlights: Omicron 3 times more transmissible than Delta, strict actions required, Centre to states


More positive narrative emerging: January '22

 Sky News


COVID-19: 'End in sight' but there will be more 'bumps' for next three months - WHO envoy

Newsweek


Model Predicts U.S. Omicron Wave Will Crest by Next Week as U.K. Sees Case Decline

 BBC


[Omicron: US to lift travel restrictions from southern Africa](#)

 DW


COVID: Israel to lift omicron travel bans to US, UK

 Mint


No tests for vaccinated travelers as UK scraps pre-departure Covid test

 Business Standard


Covid now comparable to flu, may turn endemic post Omicron: UK professor

 The New York Times

Covid News: Omicron Causes Fewer and Shorter Hospitalizations, Study Shows


 Daily Mail

Daily Covid cases see biggest fall in Omicron outbreak: UK reports 120,821 new infections

 The Times

[Ski holidays boost as France set to reopen borders for British](#)

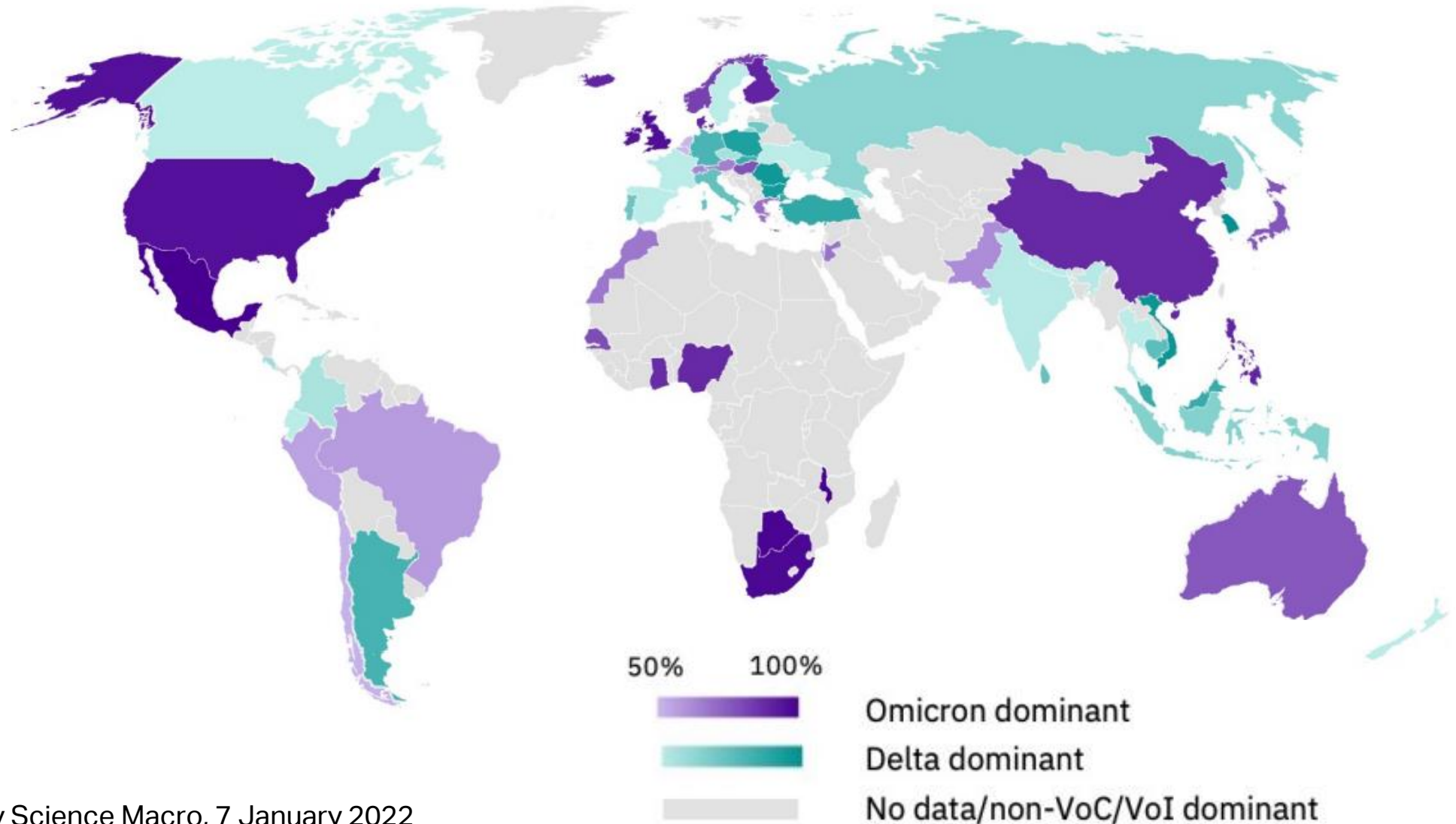
...

 CNN

[Australia moves to lift Covid-19 restrictions amid surge in Omicron infections](#)

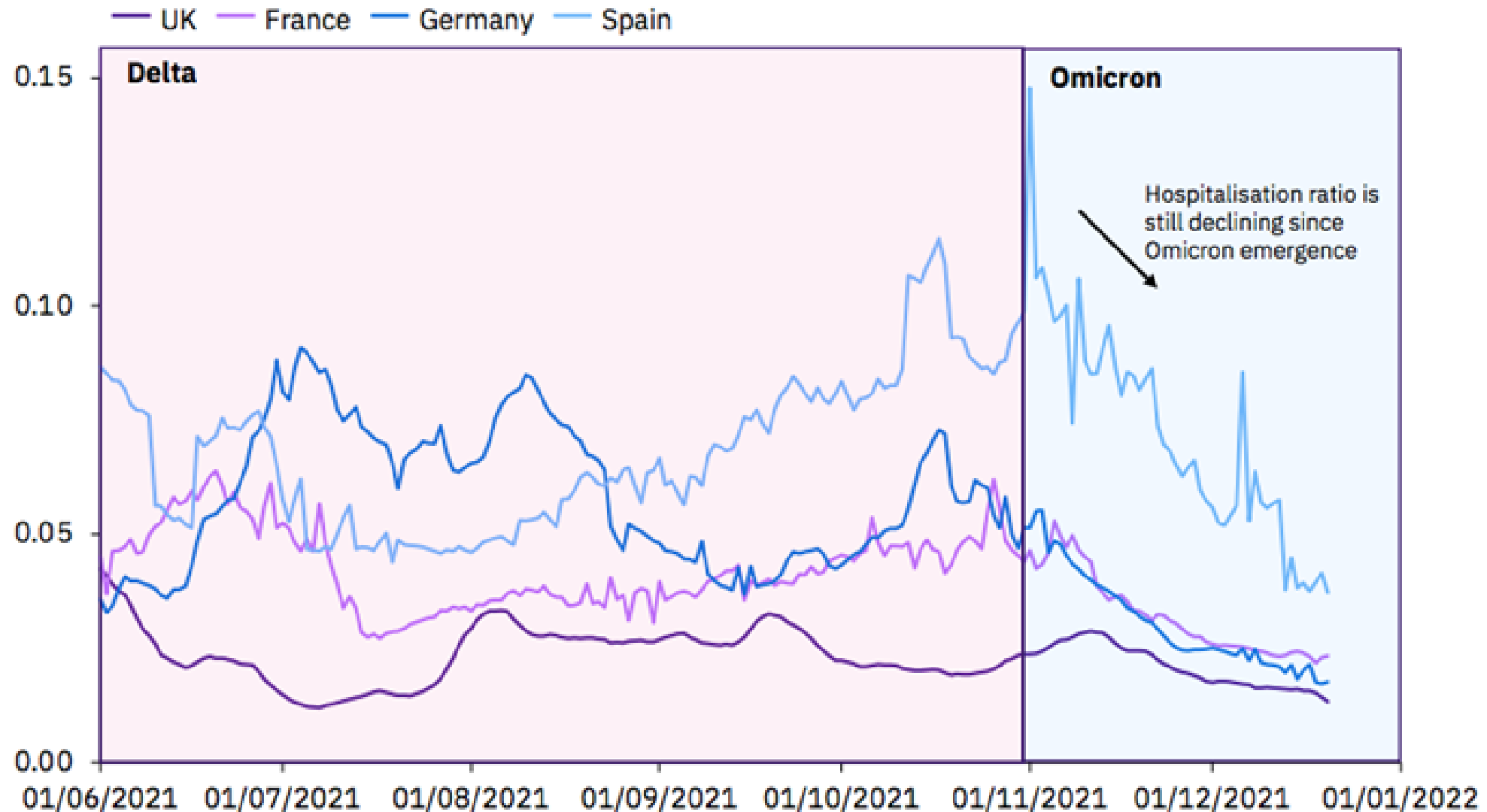
Highly transmissible variants dominant globally

Almost all countries moving away from COVID elimination strategies



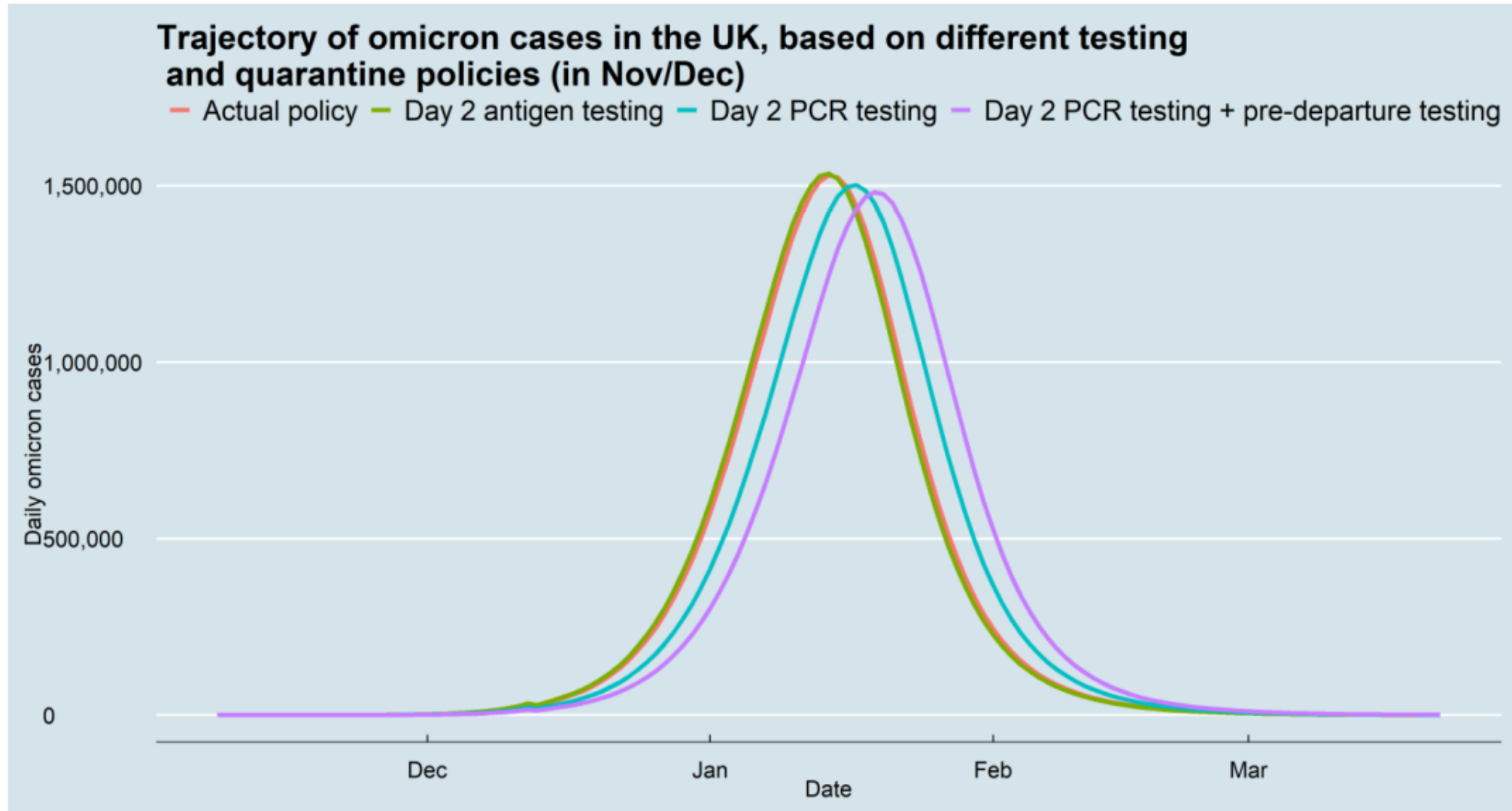
Omicron accelerating transition to endemic COVID

Omicron wave may also be shorter than previous COVID waves



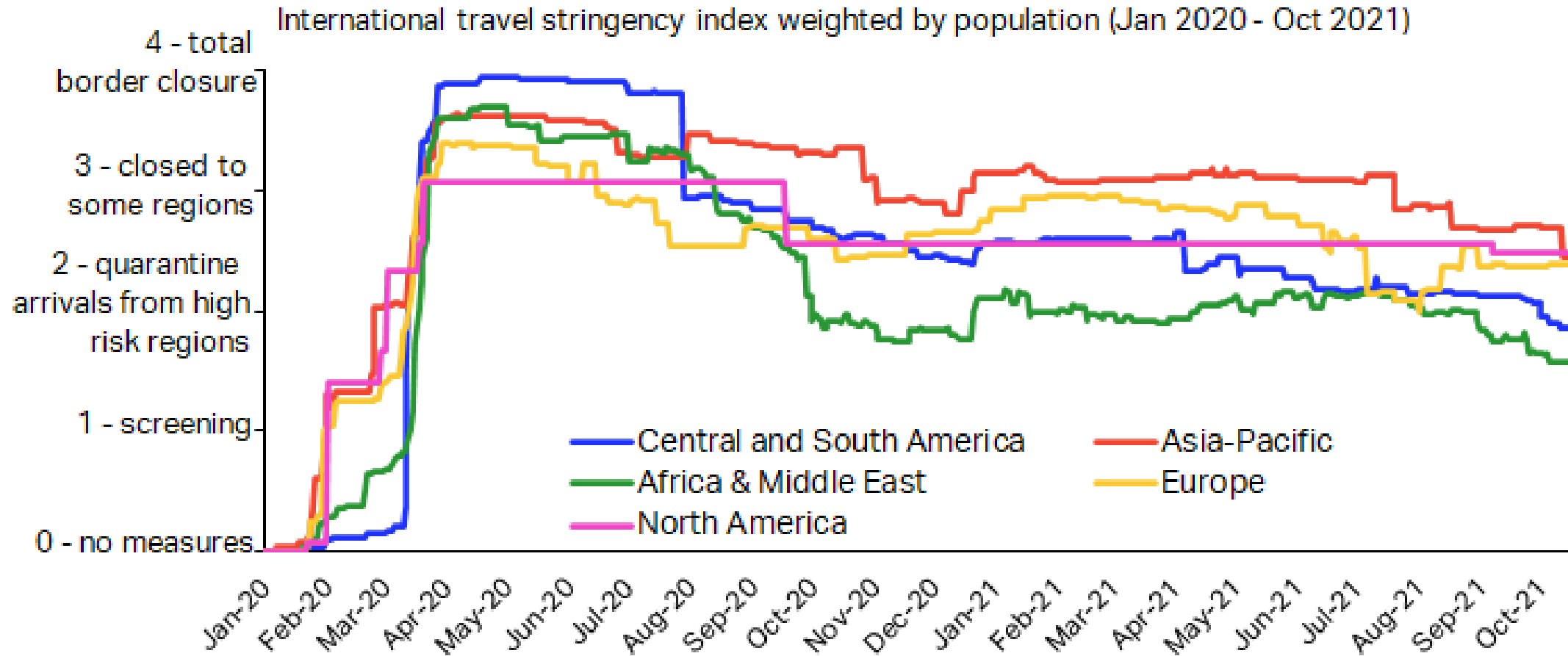
Travel restrictions ineffective in slowing Omicron spread

Additional testing requirements barely impact timing of Omicron peak



Travel restrictions limit the international travel recovery

100,000+ individual travel measures in place globally



Source: IATA Economics analysis based on Oxford University data



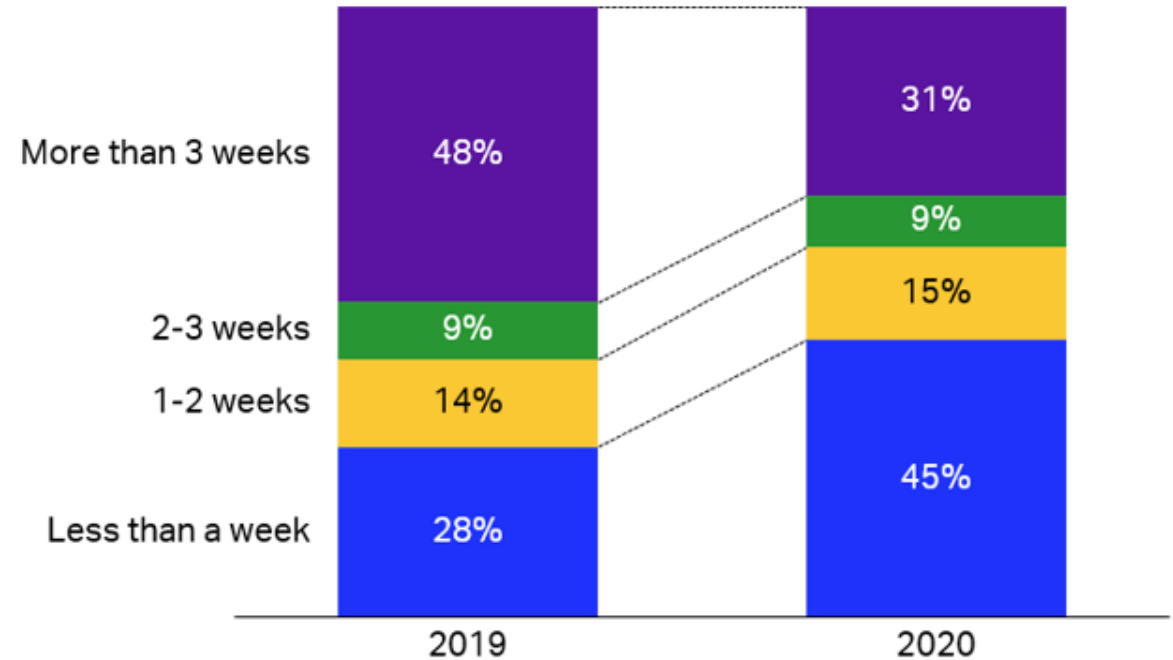
Lack of predictability undermining traveler confidence

Short notice rule changes and restrictions disrupting booking patterns

Good practice principles for Risk-based frameworks:

- Transparency
- Predictability
- Regular review
- Non-discrimination

Period between booking and travel, 2020 vs 2019



Source: IATA Economics based on DDS

Simplifying Air Travel

Risk-Based Frameworks & Health Status Protocols



2022 FOCUS

Travel Restrictions

As long as travel restrictions remain, government financial aid will be needed

Safely Restarting the Aviation System

- Safety hazards
- Balancing capacity and demand
- Airport slots

Safely Reopening Borders

- Risk mitigation not elimination
- Roadmap to recovery
- Vaccination & Testing
- Contact tracing

Keeping Borders Open: Stability, Simplification, Harmonization

- Pandemic to endemic
- Stability and resilience
- Simplification and cost-effectiveness
- Consistency across markets

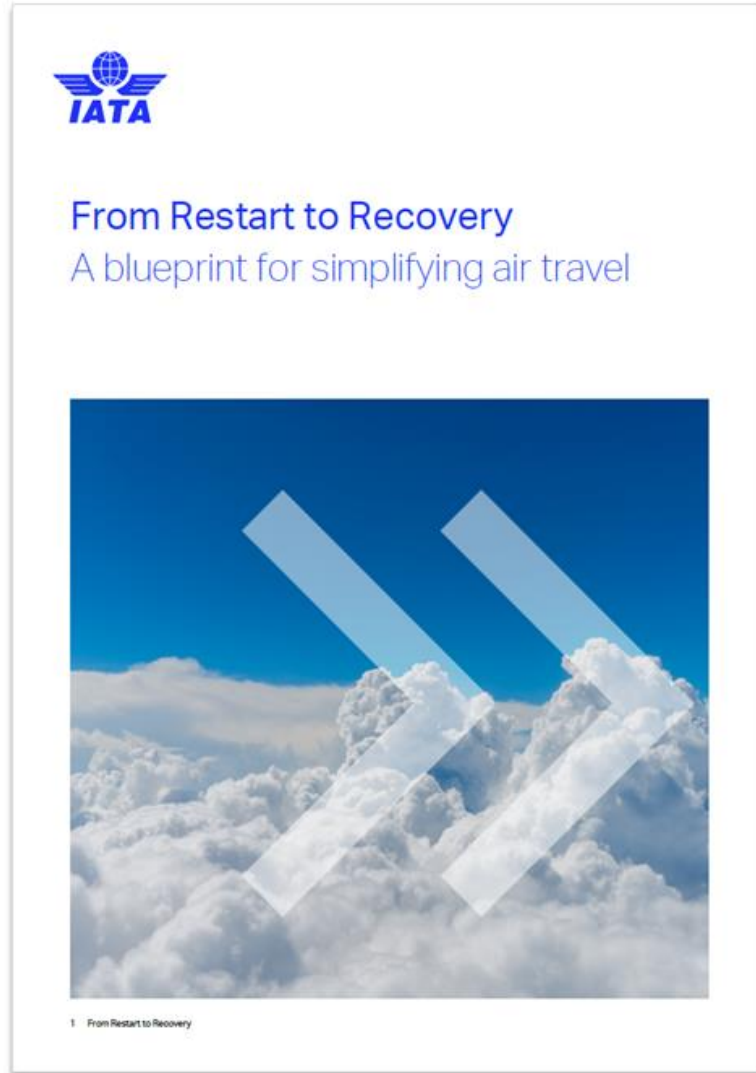
Restore Consumer Confidence and Stimulate Demand

- Open destinations
- Travel incentives
- Travel trends

Airlines' Financial Sustainability

- Extension of government aid
- Keep infrastructure charges down
- Address unfair increases in fees
- Optimize OEM/MRO costs
- Avoid new taxes on the industry
- Reduce payment holdbacks and costs

Blueprint document – the way forward



- From Pandemic to Endemic, **Blueprint** is a practical and pragmatic way to help States to deliver on Harmonisation and Coordination (ICAO HLCC)
- Goal: simplified and better communication of travel requirements for consumers while protecting public health
- Lessons learned from Omicron makes the blueprint even more relevant

Facilitate international travel for vaccinated passengers

Vaccines are the single best protection against COVID-19

1 Make vaccines available to all



Promote global vaccine equity

2 Fully vaccinated travelers should face no additional barriers



Accept all WHO EUL vaccines

3 Use testing for non-vaccinated passengers



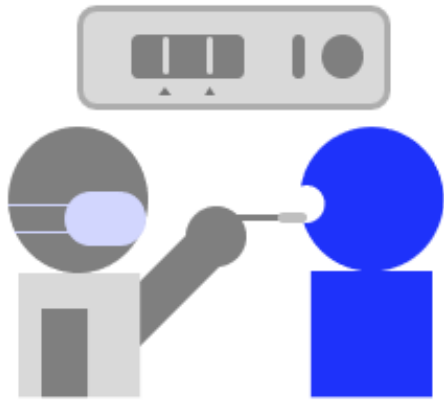
Minors
Previously infected
Medical exemptions

Apply a consistent set of exemptions

Use testing to allow travel for non-vaccinated passengers

Testing protocols should be simple, convenient and affordable

1 Promote the use of antigen tests



Antigen is as effective as PCR in detecting the Delta variant

2 Test prior to the first point of departure

Pre-departure: Antigen < 48 hrs.; PCR < 72 hrs.



Test as close to travel as practical

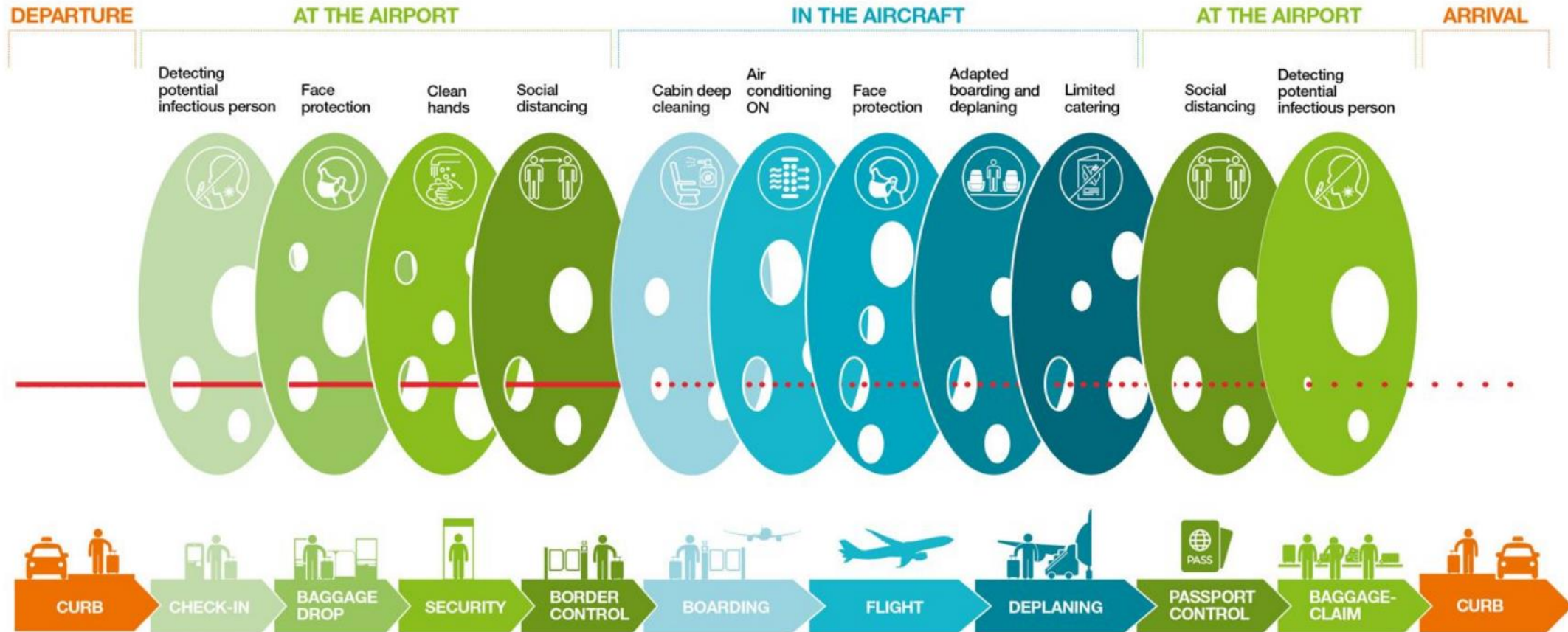
3 Governments should pay the cost of testing



States should follow Article 40 of the IHR

Review measures regularly and apply sunset clauses

Roadmap for removing redundant measures to come in early 2022



Source: Mackay, Ian M. (2020) The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Virus Defence. figshare. Figure. <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13082618.v22>

Simplifying Air Travel

**Scorecards, Advocacy
and Next steps**



Country scorecards & Advocacy Roadmaps

We focused on the top 33 Aviation Markets Globally with 2 States from Africa in that category...

- **South Africa** Advocacy roadmap focused on
 - 1) remove PCR test requirements restrictions for vaccinated travelers
 - 2) use of Antigen tests in lieu of PCR for non-vaccinated travelers; and
 - 3) interoperability for digital solutions.
- **Ethiopia** Advocacy roadmap focused on
 - 1) remove PCR test requirements restrictions for vaccinated travelers
 - 2) use of Antigen tests in lieu of PCR for non-vaccinated travelers
 - 3) exemptions from testing for under 18s and
 - 4) issuance of Bar-code equipped health certificates.

Blueprint recommendations - Best practice examples

- **Senegal:** Accepts either vaccination certificate for fully vaccinated pax or negative PCR result for entry
- **Botswana:** Accepts either vaccination certificate for fully vaccinated pax or negative PCR result for entry.
- **Uganda:** Removes testing on arrival requirement for all passengers (**Pre-departure PCR testing still relevant**)
- **Namibia:** Removes testing requirement for vaccinated travelers (**for nationals and permanent residents only at this stage**)
- **South Africa:** Removes quarantine requirement for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive travelers.
- **Cabo Verde:** Accepts PCR test or Antigen test for all travelers.
- **Guinea Bissau:** Accepts PCR test or recovery certificate for all travelers.

Two recent examples -Egypt

WHAT MAKES THIS AN EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE?

Egypt is the 36th largest international air travel market worldwide (2019) and the third largest market for tourists in the Middle East after Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It has adopted many of the guidance and measures set out in the *IATA blueprint for simplifying air travel* and established a risk-based approach to managing COVID-19.

This approach could be of interest to other countries particularly those that rely heavily on inbound tourism.

Switzerland

WHAT MAKES THIS AN EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE?

On 17 February 2022, Switzerland removed all COVID-19 health-related measures at the border for those eligible to enter to Switzerland. This means there is no requirement to provide a test, vaccine or recovery certificate or the need to complete a Passenger Locator Form (PLF). This is an example of good practice.

Fully vaccinated travelers from around the world are eligible to enter Switzerland for any reason including Tourism. While this is good news, there remains significant advocacy work to do because the majority of unvaccinated travelers traveling for non-essential reasons from outside the European Union and Schengen area (known as third country nationals) are not currently eligible to enter Switzerland.

However, the changes announced highlight that Switzerland is progressively moving beyond COVID-19 as an emergency health situation and has started the process of living with the virus. The country also has an excellent digital tool that enables travelers to see quickly and easily if they are eligible to travel to and enter Switzerland.

Industry Restart and Recovery Blueprint Key Focus

- Risk-based frameworks
 - Vaccination strategies and testing protocols
 - Exceptions (e.g., relating to minors)
 - Health certification and verification
 - Communication of health-related entry requirements
 - Contact tracing and resilience
- Looking to the future.

We will share these Best Practices with States

Simplifying Air Travel

Verification of traveler health status



Health status credentials

- **Certificates using QR codes** both in paper and electronic form are being deployed in a growing number of countries.
- Well-designed digital solutions have many benefits including **user-friendliness, reduced fraud and pre-travel verification.**
- Determining the entry eligibility based on health credentials is a **responsibility for governments**
- This determination should result in the issuance of notification confirming that the passenger meets those requirements that airlines can check if needed, preferably digitally.

Key principles

Interoperability: A solution to prove health status needs to be interoperable, scalable, affordable and simple to implement, as well as being consistent with international guidance and standards.

Protection of privacy: Solutions should address the risks of proliferation of personal medical data and adequately protect traveller privacy. Solutions should not rely on airlines collecting or storing health or travel history information.

Pre-travel processing: Any declaration should be done in advance of travel to avoid burdensome processes, queues and congestion at airports.

Non-Duplicative: Data and information collected on passengers through different channels must be shared between agencies requiring them to perform their functions. Digitalization enables this sharing and avoids collecting the same information from different channels.

Good practice: **EU DCC**

The European Digital COVID Certificate (DCC) is in use in all 27 European Union Member States with credentials in 22 non-EU countries having achieved equivalence.



1

**In line with
WHO Guidance**

2

**A tried and
tested solution**

3

**Fast becoming the
global standard**

Good practice: EU DCC key criteria

Format: Can be both paper and digital format, in the national language and English, free of charge.

QR code: The DCC QR code in both digital and paper format. It contains essential information to make sure the certificate is authentic.

Verification and authentication: European Commission gateway through which the encrypted data used to sign DCCs and required to authenticate certificates can be distributed. This allows for automated verification, remotely or in person.

Good practice: EU DCC equivalency

In the absence of a single global standard for digital vaccination certificates, **third countries may also seek an EU DCC equivalence decision** for their own COVID-19 certificates.

An equivalence decision confirms that COVID-19 certificates issued by a third country adhere to the standards and technological systems interoperable with the EU DCC Trust Framework.

Contact tracing

- Many governments are requiring passenger contact information to be provided as a condition for international travel.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes contact tracing as a key strategy for interrupting chains of transmission of COVID-19 and reducing mortality.
- In the context of international travel, contact tracing is an important complement to measures applied during the travel experience and at the border and therefore play a role as part of a **multi-layered, risk-based** approach.

Contact tracing

- For the purpose of pandemic management, the process should be **digital** with paper solutions avoided
- Online portals or applications will **simplify** the process for the passenger as well as enabling pre-departure authorization to travel
- Airlines **should not** be intermediaries in acting as health information broker on behalf of government authorities
- Government authorities **must be** the decision taker on the admissibility of the passenger



Future developments in the passenger process

- The rapid development of technology and tools such as the **IATA Travel Pass** is already contributing to restart to recovery efforts
- Tools to manage passenger health credentials and identity information must be developed based on **open standards, open APIs and the IATA One ID concept**
- As recovery continues the investments made in these technologies can be leveraged to achieve a completely **contactless end to end passenger experience**