

Economic Impact of Edinburgh Airport, 2025

A report to
Edinburgh Airport

17th December 2025



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1.

Executive Summary

In 2025, Edinburgh Airport generated **£2.7 billion Gross Value Added (GVA)** in the Scottish economy and supported **43,560 jobs**.

Edinburgh Airport is **Scotland's busiest airport**. In 2025 it handled **16.6 million passengers**, its highest annual figure. It is the 6th busiest airport in the UK, with an increasing share of UK passengers.

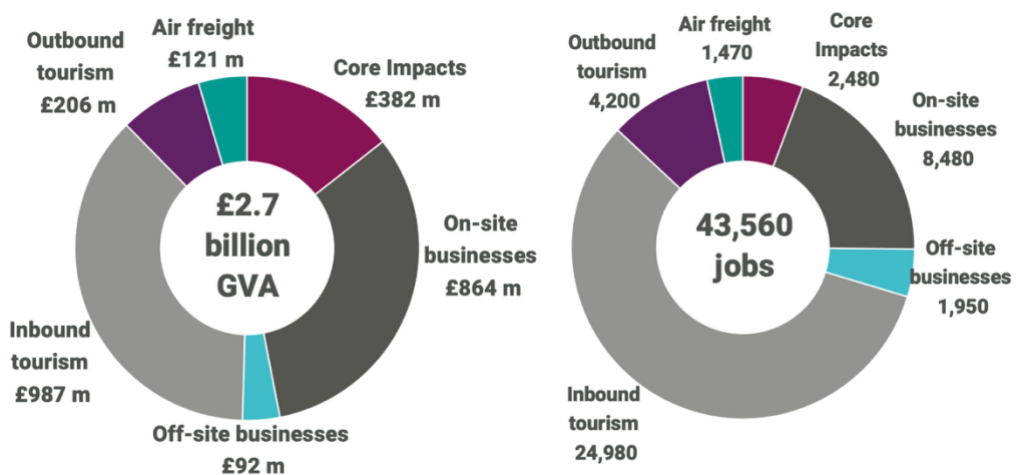
Edinburgh Airport offers 240 routes to 160 destinations, and has invested across its operations to improve efficiency, expand capacity and increase its food and retail offering. In 2025 it had **£353.0 million in income**, a 12% increase on the previous years and directly **employed over 1,000 staff**.

Edinburgh Airport supports significant economic activity through its **core activities, on-site and off-site businesses** and the **millions of visitors** who pass through the Airport, as well as by handling **air freight**, which supports exporters and importers.

The total economic impact generated in 2025 was estimated to be:

- **£1.6 billion GVA and 23,750 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;**
- **£2.7 billion GVA and 43,560 jobs in Scotland; and**
- **£3.9 billion GVA and 71,650 jobs across the UK.**

Figure 1-1: Economic Impact of Edinburgh Airport, Scotland (2025)



Since 2019, on a like-for-like basis, Edinburgh Airport has increased its **GVA impact in Scotland by 31%** and its **employment impact by 37%**. This has been driven by an increase in inbound passengers, who account for half of passengers (much higher than other UK airports) and growth in core operations and on-site businesses.



2.

Introduction

BiGGAR Economics was commissioned by Edinburgh Airport to assess its economic impact in 2025.

2.1 Context

Edinburgh Airport is the busiest airport in Scotland, with an estimated 16.6 million passengers in 2025, connected to 160 destinations.

Up until 2024, the Airport was wholly owned by Global Infrastructure Partners, who bought it from BAA in 2012 and also owned London City and London Gatwick. In June 2024, a majority stake (50.01%) was sold to VINCI, a large French multinational that operates around 70 airports internationally.

While the Airport generates a direct economic impact from its operation, this is minimal compared to the economic impact of other on-site and off-site operators (e.g. retail, airlines, logistics), its contribution to Scotland's tourism sector and handling air freight.

2.2 Study Objectives & Approach

This report outlines the contribution Edinburgh Airport made to the local and national economy in 2025. The methodology for this assessment is based on previous assessments of Edinburgh Airport undertaken by BiGGAR Economics based on data from 2015 and 2019.

2.2.1 Sources of Impact

Edinburgh Airport generates economic impact in a variety of ways. This can be aggregated into the following categories:

- **core:** this includes the direct impact of the Airport's operations (e.g. income and direct employment), as well as through its purchases of supplies, spending in capital improvements and the expenditure of employees;
- **other on-site businesses:** economic impact of those operating within the Airport, such as airlines, logistics firms and retail concessions;
- **off-site businesses:** economic impact of off-site operators whose business is based on the Airport, such as hotels, car hire companies and bus companies;
- **tourism:** the off-site spending associated with visitors inbound to Scotland, as well as the impacts of spending from visitors outbound from Scotland; and
- **air freight:** exporters and importers who use the Airport, including chemicals and pharmaceuticals companies and manufacturers of medical instruments.



2.2.2 Methodology

The quantifiable impacts are considered in terms of:

- **Gross Value Added (GVA):** a measure of the monetary contribution an organisation adds to the economy through their operations; and
- **Employment:** measured in terms of headcount jobs supported.

For each source of activity, impacts are inclusive of the **direct, indirect** (supply chain impact), and **induced** (staff spending) economic impact generated. To estimate such impacts, data provided by Edinburgh Airport was analysed and applied to publicly available sources of information, including the Scottish Annual Business Statistics¹ and the Scottish Government Input-Output Tables².

2.3 Study Areas

The impacts are assessed at three main levels:

- **City of Edinburgh;**
- **Scotland** (inclusive of those of the City of Edinburgh); and
- **the UK** (inclusive of those of Scotland).

In addition, the economic impacts generated for the wider local economies surrounding the airport (East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian and Fife) are presented in **Appendix A**.

2.4 Report Structure

This report is structured as follows:

- **section 3** provides a profile of the airport, including an overview of its core operations and passenger profile;
- **section 4** presents the core economic impacts of the airport, generated by its role as a direct employer and its spending on goods and services;
- **section 5** describes the economic activity generated by businesses located on-site at Edinburgh Airport;
- **section 6** outlines the potential scale of activity passengers generate in off-site businesses as part of their visit to the airport, such as hotels, car-parking, and transport providers; and
- **section 7** quantifies the scale of tourism activity supported for Scotland's economy from passengers arriving via Edinburgh Airport;
- **Section 8** assesses the impact associated with air freight; and
- **section 9** summarises the total scale of economic impact generated by Edinburgh Airport for the local and national economy.

¹ Scottish Government (2025), Scottish Annual Business Statistics 2023

² Scottish Government (2024), Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables



3.

Edinburgh Airport Profile

Edinburgh Airport is Scotland's busiest and the 6th busiest in the UK.

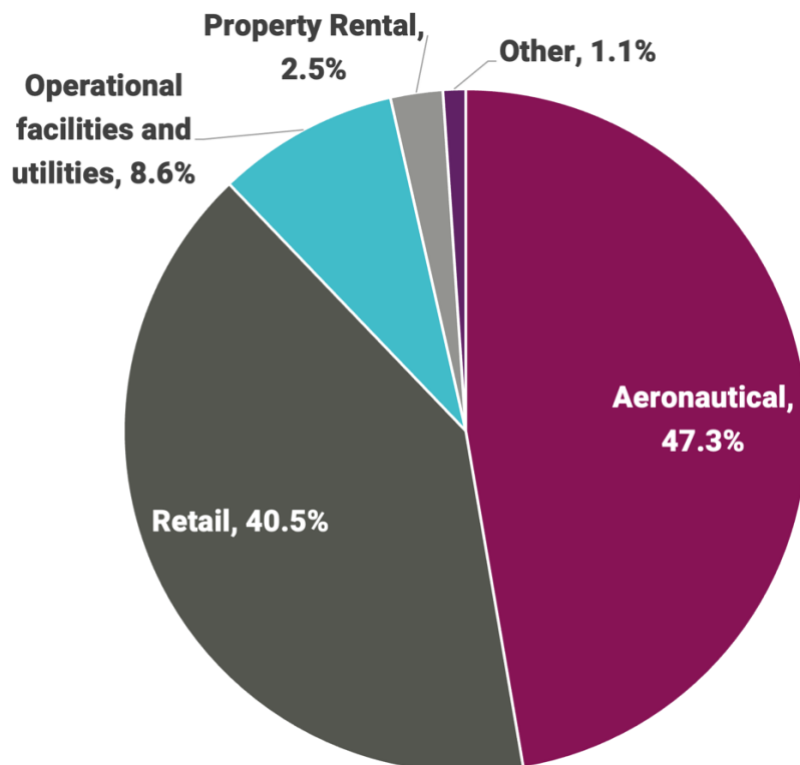
3.1 Core Operations

In 2025, Edinburgh Airport's total income was £353.0 million, a 59% increase from 2019 (£221.4 million) and a 12% increase since 2024 (£314.7 million).

While a breakdown of income for 2025 was not available at the time of writing, in 2024 the largest source of income was aeronautical income (47.3%), which includes all income from airlines, such as landing and parking fees, passenger fees and the use of airport services (e.g. ticket counters etc.). The second largest source of income was from retail concessions within the Airport (40.5%), which includes shops, cafes and restaurants.

Edinburgh Airport's overall strategy is to improve connectivity (discussed in Section 3.3) as well as increasing offerings within the Airport. It has invested in new capital projects to improve operational efficiency, expand terminal space, generate solar energy and increase space for retail (e.g. World Duty Free, new Scottish retail) and food and drink (e.g. Pizza Express, BrewDog expansion).

Figure 3-1: Edinburgh Airport Income Breakdown, 2024



Source: Edinburgh Airport (2025), Annual report and financial statements, 2024

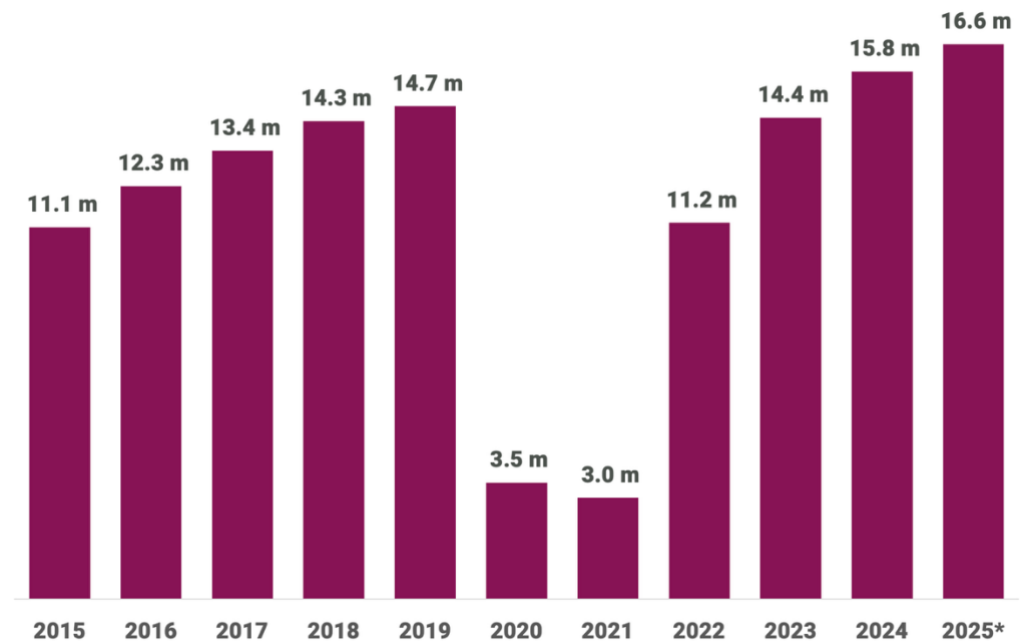


3.2 Passenger Numbers

Since 2015, the number of passengers flying through Edinburgh Airport has increased from 11.1 million to 16.6 million in 2025, representing growth of 49.3%. Like other airports, Edinburgh Airport experienced a significant reduction in activity in 2020 and 2021 (over 75%) as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Only in 2024 did it exceed its pre-Covid passenger total.

Over time, Edinburgh Airport has also increased its overall share of passengers in the UK. Between 2015 and 2024 (the latest date when comparable data is available), the number of passengers at Edinburgh Airport increased by 42.0%, while the overall number of passengers in the UK has increased by 16.3%. As a result, while it has remained the 6th busiest airport in the UK, its share of passengers has increased from 4.4% to 5.4%.

Figure 3-2: Edinburgh Airport Passenger Numbers (2015-2025)



Source: CAA – Annual Airport Data, Size of UK Airports. *Edinburgh Airport estimate

3.3 Connectivity

Growth in passenger numbers was driven by an increase in the number of destinations, with regular flights to 160 destinations across 240 routes in 2025, as well as new and expanding airlines.

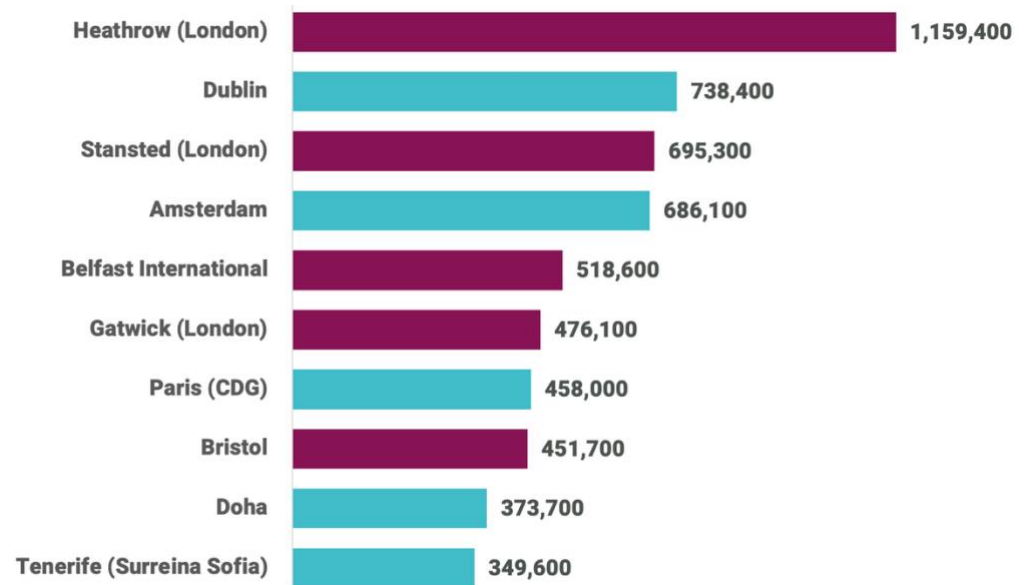
Airports act as part of a network, which means that the more airports they are connected to, the more valuable they are to other airports because their customers can reach their destination in fewer journeys. Some airports are particular hubs which makes them more valuable nodes to connect to, with high passenger numbers associated with hubs such as London Heathrow, Amsterdam, Charles de Gaulle and Doha.



A number of airlines have operational bases at Edinburgh Airport, including easyJet, Jet2 (both of which have expanded in recent years) and Ryanair. New airlines in 2024 and 2025 have included JetBlue, which operates routes to New York and Boston, enhancing connectivity to North America, and Austrian Airlines, which operates the route to Vienna. Other airlines have expanded including WestJet, which operates new routes from Toronto and Halifax, while flights to Dubai and Philadelphia have resumed after pausing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The airports responsible for the greatest number of passenger journeys are presented in Figure 3-3.

Figure 3-3: Edinburgh Airport Top Routes, 2024



Source: CAA – Annual Airport Data, Size of UK Airports.

3.4 Edinburgh Airport Profile Summary

In recent years, Edinburgh Airport's activity has increased considerably, with more passengers than ever before, a total of 16.6 million in 2025, as well as more destinations and retail. As a result, Edinburgh Airport's income has increased by 59% since 2019 to £353 million in 2025.



4.

Core Impact

This section assesses the scale of economic activity arising from the core impacts of Edinburgh Airport.

Edinburgh Airport's core impact is generated from those activities which are associated with its direct operation, including:

- **generating income and providing employment;**
- **spending on goods and services;**
- **spending of employee wages and salaries;** and
- **capital investment projects.**

4.1 Generating Income and Employment

In 2025, Edinburgh Airport had an income of £353.0 million and spent approximately £65.4 million³ on goods and services to support its core operations. Direct GVA is measured by subtracting non-staff expenditure from total income. Therefore, in 2025, Edinburgh Airport directly generated £287.6 million GVA.

The airport directly employed 1,019 members of staff in 2025, equivalent to 957 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

4.2 Spending on Goods and Services

Expenditure on goods and services benefits the turnover of the businesses where they are spent, supporting their employment. In turn, these businesses spend in their own supply chain spending and their staff spend in the wider economy.

Of the £65.4 million expenditure by Edinburgh Airport in 2025, 90% (£59.1 million) was spent on suppliers based in the UK, with 61% (£39.9 million) going to companies based in Scotland, and 55% (£36.0 million) to companies based in Edinburgh. A breakdown of expenditure by category is provided in Figure 4-1.

³ An estimate for the full year based on actual data up to October 2025 and estimates for November and December 2025.



Figure 4-1: Share of Supply Chain Expenditure by Category of Expense



Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

To estimate the economic activity associated with this expenditure, each source of expenditure was first assigned to a relevant economic sector, based on the ONS Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Codes.⁴ The relevant turnover per job and turnover/GVA ratios were then applied to each source of expenditure to estimate the direct impact supported by Edinburgh Airports expenditure in supply chain companies. Sector appropriate Type I (indirect) and Type II (induced) multipliers were then applied to estimate the total scale of activity supported.

In this way, Edinburgh Airports expenditure on goods and services during 2025 supported an estimated economic impact worth up to:

- £26.8 million GVA and 650 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £35.0 million GVA and 840 jobs in Scotland; and
- £70.3 million GVA and 1,590 jobs across the UK.

4.3 Spending of Employee Wages and Salaries

Staff directly employed by Edinburgh Airport (1,019 headcount in 2025) are paid wages and salaries which they then go on to spend in the economy, supporting local businesses. All staff employed by Edinburgh Airport earn above the real living wage. In 2025, wages and salary payments to Edinburgh Airport employees totalled £33.3 million. Accounting for other employment costs, such as national insurance and pension contributions, Edinburgh Airport spent around £62.9 million on staff costs.

⁴ ONS, UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/ukstandardindustrialclassificationofeconomicactivities>



The location of economic activity generated by the spend of employee wages and salaries is largely dependent on where staff live. Based on information provided by Edinburgh Airport, 22% of staff live in the City of Edinburgh and 100% live in Scotland. Of those living in the rest of Scotland (i.e. out with the City of Edinburgh), 21% live in Fife, 19% live West Lothian, 19% in Midlothian and 4% in East Lothian.

Based on previous work undertaken by BiGGAR Economics on household spending analysis, it was assumed that 74% of spend associated with wages and salaries was retained in the Scottish economy. It was also assumed that 50% of spend was retained in the local authority where staff live. In this way, the total spend per study area was determined, which was estimated at around £5.7 million to the economy of the City of Edinburgh, £28.3 million to the Scottish economy, and £38.3 million to the UK economy. Expenditure on VAT, estimated at around 7% of total annual household spend⁵, was then excluded from the total values.

Turnover/GVA and turnover/job ratios for household spending were then applied to expenditure values to assess the impact directly associated with Edinburgh Airport employees' spend in the economy. Type I and Type II multipliers were then applied to determine the total impact of this spend.

In this way, it was estimated that the spend of wages and salaries by Edinburgh Airport employees in 2025 supported an economic impact worth around:

- £3.2 million GVA and 20 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £19.1 million GVA and 150 jobs in Scotland; and
- £37.9 million GVA and 340 jobs across the UK.

4.4 Capital Investment Projects

Capital investment represents expenditure on large-scale projects that require significant upfront capital and are required for organisations to achieve their long-term growth strategies. In the case of Edinburgh Airport, this represents investment in areas such as asset replacement, commercial and compliance projects, and efforts to increase environmental sustainability. This supports economic activity in sectors such as construction and manufacturing.

These projects are large-scale and can often take years to complete, with the value spent varying significantly from year to year. Therefore, an average value for expenditure on capital investment was taken based on plans for between 2025 and 2030. In this way, it was estimated that Edinburgh Airport typically spends around £96 million on capital investment projects each year.

The main contractors for such projects are based in North Lanarkshire, West Lothian, Glasgow, Falkirk, and Stirling. BiGGAR Economics' previous analysis of Edinburgh Airport found that 75% of all capital investment spend went to businesses located in Scotland, and 100% to companies based in the UK. Around 5% went to contractors

⁵ ONS (2025), The effects of taxes and benefits on household income 2023/24



based in the City of Edinburgh. Applying these assumptions to the total annual spend gave an approximation of the spend in each study area for 2025. To this, appropriate sectoral ratios and multipliers for construction, manufacturing and IT contracts were applied to estimate the total scale of economic activity supported.

In this way, through its expenditure on capital investment projects, Edinburgh Airport supports an annual economic impact worth around:

- £2.2 million GVA and 30 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £40.1 million GVA and 4,370 jobs in Scotland; and
- £81.0 million GVA and 920 jobs across the UK.

4.5 Summary of Core Impact

The total economic impact generated by Edinburgh Airport in 2025 from its core activities is estimated at:

- **£320.0 million GVA and 1,720 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;**
- **£381.8 million GVA and 2,480 jobs in Scotland; and**
- **£476.8 million GVA and 3,870 jobs across the UK.**

Table 4-1: Edinburgh Airport - Core Impact Summary, 2025

Source of Activity	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)			
Generating Income and Employment	287.6	287.6	287.6
Spending on Goods and Services	26.8	35.0	70.3
Spending of Employee Wages & Salaries	3.2	19.1	37.9
Capital Investment Projects	2.2	40.1	81.0
Total Core GVA Impact	320.0	381.8	476.8
Employment (Jobs)			
Generating Income and Employment	1,019	1,019	1,019
Spending on Goods and Services	650	840	1,590
Spending of Employee Wages & Salaries	20	150	340
Capital Investment Projects	30	470	920
Total Core Employment Impact	1,720	2,480	3,870

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

5.

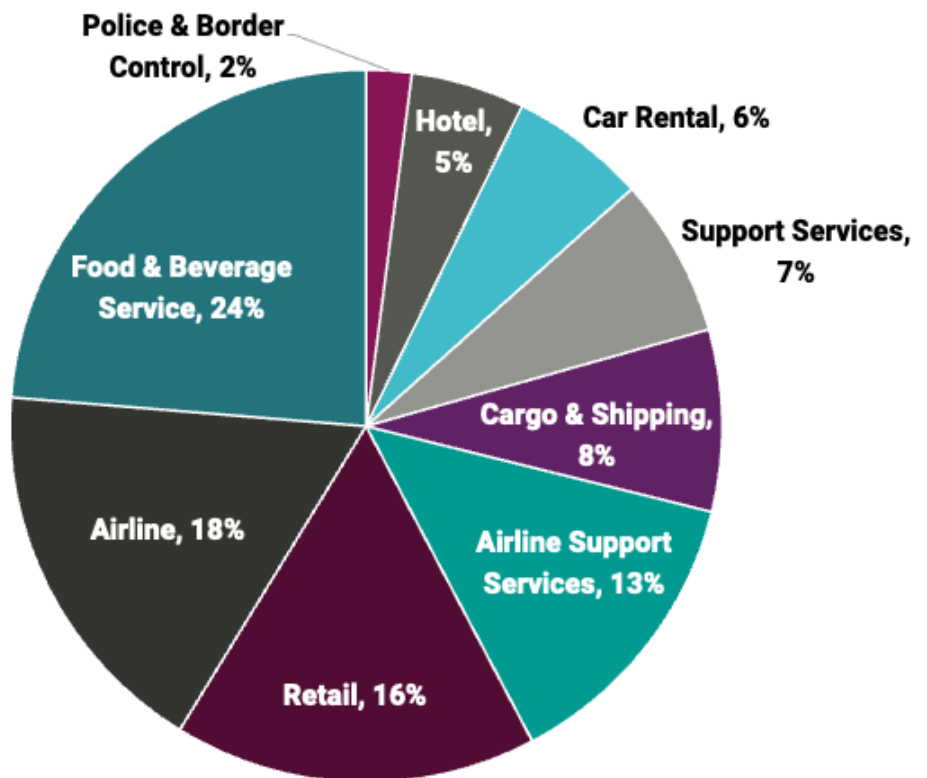
On-Site Businesses

This section describes the economic activity generated by the on-site businesses at Edinburgh Airport that serve passengers as part of their visit to the airport.

In the same way that Edinburgh Airport, through its role as a commercial organisation, generates economic activity from its daily activities, so too do the tenant businesses located on-site.

Edinburgh Airport hosted 93 tenant organisations on-site in 2025, each of which generates income, employs staff, pays wages and salaries, and spends on goods and services to support their operations. The nature of these businesses can primarily be classified as: airline operators and airline support providers, ground handlers, engineering, IT, vehicle rental services, retail, and food and beverage service activities. A breakdown of the share by type is provided in Figure 5-1.

Figure 5-1: On-Site Businesses at Edinburgh Airport by Type, 2025



Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis

The impact of these activities can be attributed to Edinburgh Airport as in most, if not all, cases they are franchises/branches of larger organisations that operate throughout the country. Were it not for the existence of Edinburgh Airport, the



particular franchise/branch would be unlikely to otherwise exist. Therefore, the sales and employment of these organisations form part of the total economic impact generated by Edinburgh Airport.

Information on the tenant organisations located on-site was provided by Edinburgh Airport for 2025, including the nature of each organisation’s activities and their total on-site employment at the Airport. In this way, it was possible to apply the relevant sectoral turnover/job ratio for each organisation to estimate total turnover for the year. The direct GVA generated by the organisation was then estimated by applying the turnover/GVA ratio for the sector.

On this basis, it was estimated that the direct impact associated with the tenant businesses located at Edinburgh Airport collectively was equal to £578.6 million GVA in 2025, supporting 5,780 jobs.

Indirect (supply chain) and induced (staff spending) effects were then estimated by applying Type I and Type II multipliers for the sector. Location of both supply chain and employee spend were assumed to be the same as that for Edinburgh Airport directly, and the indirect impact was adjusted to account for impacts counted elsewhere (e.g. airlines paying fees to the Airport and other on-site operators).

Therefore, it was estimated that, in 2025, tenant organisations based on-site at Edinburgh Airport supported economic activity worth around:

- **£666.6 million GVA and 6,660 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;**
- **£863.5 million GVA and 8,480 jobs in Scotland; and**
- **£1.3 billion GVA and 12,060 jobs in the UK.**

Table 5-1: Edinburgh Airport – On-site Businesses Impact Summary, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)			
Direct	578.6	578.6	578.6
Indirect	55.9	91.8	216.2
Induced	32.1	193.1	475.5
Total On-site Businesses GVA Impact	666.6	863.5	1,270.3
Employment (Jobs)			
Direct	5,780	5,780	5,780
Indirect	600	980	2,030
Induced	290	320	4,260
Total On-site Businesses Employment Impact	6,660	8,480	12,060

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.



6.

Off-Site Businesses

This section describes the economic activity generated by the off-site businesses surrounding Edinburgh Airport that serve passengers as part of their journey to the airport.

Off-site businesses that provide services which support passengers travelling to/from Edinburgh Airport include:

- **hotels;**
- **car park providers;**
- **transport services** (taxis, coaches, buses and trams);
- **other supporting sectors** (e.g. vehicle rental, shipping, and animal care)

Some, or in some cases all, of the employment in these businesses can be attributed to the existence and operation of Edinburgh Airport. This is due to the number of passengers or staff using the services of these businesses on a daily basis.

Information on these businesses was provided by Edinburgh Airport and supported by previous assessments of this impact by BiGGAR Economics, with employment estimates calculated as follows:

- **hotels:** there are 10 hotels, hosting around 1,970 rooms, within the vicinity of the airport that were assessed as having employment attributed to its existence. The number of employees was determined by dividing the number of rooms per hotel by the average number of rooms per FTE staff member, based on the latest evidence on the relationship between a hotel's star rating and its employment.⁶ It was estimated that the total attributable employment was 630;
- **car parking:** four parking providers, collectively accounting for around 5,400 spaces, were considered attributable to the existence of the Airport. Based on estimates of the number of car park spaces per employee, it was estimated that they had 55 staff;
- **transport services:** providers such as chauffeurs, local taxi services, coach providers, buses, and trams all support passengers to reach the Airport. In several cases, the existence of the service or route provision is to directly serve airport travel. In others, it is likely that some of the business activity is linked to the high number of passengers requiring transport to the Airport and using the service as part of their journey. Estimates of employment were based on information provided by the airport, analysis of Companies House and estimates of the number of daily journeys and driving time per FTE driver. It was estimated that there were 490 attributable direct jobs; and

⁶ Homes and Communities Agency - Employment Densities Guide 2015



- **other supporting services** :based on an analysis of company accounts for co-located businesses identified by the Airport, it was estimated that there were around 140 further attributable jobs in these organisations.

For each of the type of organisations identified, sector appropriate turnover/employee and GVA/employee ratios were applied to estimate direct employment. Type I and Type II sectoral multipliers were then applied to estimate the full scale of activity supported that can be attributed to Edinburgh Airport.

In this way, it was estimated that, in 2025, off-site businesses located near Edinburgh Airport, supported economic activity worth around:

- **£70.4 million GVA and 1,460 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;**
- **£92.5 million GVA and 1,950 jobs in Scotland; and**
- **£138.5 million GVA and 3,280 jobs in the UK.**

Table 6-1: Edinburgh Airport – Off-Site Businesses Impact Summary, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)			
Hotels	22.8	27.0	42.3
Parking	7.9	9.5	14.3
Transport	22.6	35.4	50.7
Other	17.1	20.6	31.1
Total Off-site Businesses GVA Impact	70.4	92.5	138.5
Employment (Jobs)			
Hotels	660	780	1,360
Parking	70	90	140
Transport	550	840	1,430
Other	180	240	350
Total Off-site Businesses Employment Impact	1,460	1,950	3,280

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.



7. Supporting Scotland's Tourism Economy

This section assesses the contribution that Edinburgh Airport makes to Scotland's tourism economy.

Edinburgh Airport is Scotland's busiest airport and is one of the main ways that people enter or leave Scotland. It is key infrastructure, connecting Scotland to the rest of the world and supporting the Scottish tourism industry.

Without the Airport's presence, it would be much more difficult to visit Scotland, which would result in fewer people visiting and a smaller tourism sector. As well as reducing employment, Scotland's global cultural contribution would be diminished, as events such as the Edinburgh festivals would attract fewer performers and visitors.

Edinburgh Airport has a higher share of passengers who are inbound (i.e. visiting the country) compared to visitors who are outbound (i.e. leaving to visit elsewhere) than other UK airports. Data provided by Edinburgh Airport shows that 51% of international leisure tourism was inbound and for domestic tourism 49% was inbound. In comparison, for the UK airport sector as a whole, 31% of passengers were inbound international visitors⁷.

7.1 Impacts of Inbound Tourism

Passengers flying into Edinburgh visit Scotland for leisure purposes, such as a holiday, or to visit friends and relatives (VFR) or for business (though the share of visitors coming for this reason has declined post-Covid-19).

The number of passengers of each type was estimated based on data from Edinburgh Airport, as well as information from the Great Britain Tourism Survey 2024 and the International Passenger Survey 2024, which also provided evidence on spending per trip. This is shown in Table 7-1. Note that most passengers will arrive at the start of their trip and depart at the end and so the numbers of individuals is half the number of flights.

⁷ ONS (2025), Travel trends: 2024.



Table 7-1: Edinburgh Airport – Inbound Passengers and Spend per Trip, 2025

	Inbound passengers	Spend per Trip (£)
Domestic total, of which:	1,121,203	
Domestic Leisure	7%	355
Domestic VFR	34%	224
Domestic Business	59%	419
EU total, of which:	2,619,395	
EU Leisure	9%	603
EU VFR	29%	652
EU Business	61%	326
International total, of which:	443,710	
International Leisure	7%	1,388
International VFR	28%	942
International Business	65%	1,709
Total Inbound	4,184,308	

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Based on GB Tourism 2024, International Passenger Survey 2024. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

However, it would not be reasonable to attribute the economic impact associated with all passengers to Edinburgh Airport (i.e. some people would have come to Scotland even if Edinburgh Airport didn't exist). To account for this, assumptions were made about how attributable each type of visitor. For example, it was assumed that attribution for domestic visitors to friends and relatives would be lower than for international leisure visitors (who would be more likely to choose an alternative destination if Scotland was not so accessible via Edinburgh Airport).

Overall, it was estimated that there would be 3.6 million visitors whose presence can be attributed to Edinburgh Airport.

Multiplying the number of attributable visitors by spending per trip and on-site and off-site spending, it was estimated that additional visitor spending would be worth £1.8 billion to the Scottish economy. The share of visitors going to Edinburgh was based on data from Edinburgh Airport.

Applying a breakdown by category of spending, based on the Tourism Satellite Accounts⁸, and assigning a sector to each category, it was estimated that visitors attributable to Edinburgh Airport contributed:

- £467.8 million GVA and 12,640 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £987.2 million GVA and 24,980 jobs in Scotland; and

⁸ ONS (2025), UK Tourism Satellite Accounts 2022



- £1.5 billion GVA and 43,340 jobs in the UK.

Table 7-2: Edinburgh Airport – Inbound Tourism Impact, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)	467.8	987.2	1,490.5
Employment	12,640	24,980	43,340

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis

7.2 Impacts of Outbound Tourism

Passengers flying outbound from Edinburgh Airport are likely to spend money beforehand in preparation for their travels.

Data from the UK Tourism Satellite Accounts⁹ show that 38% of outbound visitor expenditure is on air transport services. In order to estimate the total level of expenditure of outbound passengers, it was assumed that expenditure in on-site operators at the Airport is equivalent to spend in the air passenger transport activities categories. This expenditure, as well as on categories such as hotels and travel, was excluded to avoid double counting.

On this basis, it was estimated that the additional expenditure associated with Edinburgh Airport’s 4.1 million outbound passengers would be £459 million. The share taking place in the City of Edinburgh was estimated based on its share of population of the local authorities near Edinburgh Airport.

Applying economic ratios and multipliers, it was therefore estimated that the economic impact of outbound passenger expenditure was equal to:

- £45.6 million GVA and 980 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £206.4 million GVA and 4,200 jobs in Scotland; and
- £307.1 million GVA and 7,040 jobs in the UK.

Table 7-3: Edinburgh Airport – Outbound Tourism Impact, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)	45.6	206.4	307.1
Employment	980	4,200	7,040

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

⁹ ONS (2025), UK Tourism Satellite Accounts 2022



8.

Air Freight

Over £500 million worth of goods are imported and exported via Edinburgh Airport.

In addition to providing services for passengers, Edinburgh Airport is also a hub for the transport of freight.

As key infrastructure for the export and import of high value goods, Edinburgh Airport supports the wider economy, lowering barriers to trade and costs for Scottish companies. These are typically high value and sometimes time-sensitive goods that are not suitable for road or water transport, so without the presence of the Airport, their transport may not be viable.

This activity complements the passenger routes that the Airport operates, as freight is often packed into the hold of airplanes that carry people to their destination. As a result, the increasing number of routes and hubs that the Airport connects to provides a larger global market for both exporting and importing.

8.1 Exports

In 2024/2025 (based on data from October 2024 to September 2025), there were £218.7 million worth of exports from Edinburgh Airport, of which £103.0 million went to European countries and £115.7 million went to non-EU countries¹⁰.

The main exports included electrical machinery and equipment (30%), followed by chemicals and pharmaceuticals (23%) optical, photographic and medical devices (20%, mainly medical instruments) and nuclear reactors and other machinery (10%).

By providing a means for companies to export their goods, Edinburgh Airport supports their business and without its presence there would be less economic activity. The value of exports represents turnover for these companies, and by assigning each export category to the appropriate sector of the economy, it was possible to estimate the associated economic impact.

Applying appropriate economic ratios, it was estimated that the economic value supported was equal to £88.4 million GVA and 910 jobs. However, not all of this employment can be attributed to Edinburgh Airport, so an attribution rate of 50% was applied. The share of impact in the City of Edinburgh was based on the level of manufacturing employment in the area, compared to the east of Scotland.

¹⁰ HMRC (2025), HM Trade Info



On this basis, it was estimated that Edinburgh Airport contributed:

- £9.4 million GVA and 110 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £71.3 million GVA and 870 jobs in Scotland; and
- £106.0 million GVA and 1,060 jobs in the UK.

Table 8-1: Edinburgh Airport – Air Freight Export Impact, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)			
Direct	6.9	44.2	44.2
Indirect	0.9	13.9	30.4
Induced	1.6	13.2	31.4
Total Impact	9.4	71.3	106.0
Employment (Jobs)			
Direct	70	450	450
Indirect	10	230	280
Induced	20	190	320
Total Impact	110	870	1,060

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

8.2 Imports

In 2024/25, there were £297.5 million worth of imports to Edinburgh Airport, of which the EU accounted for £166.2 million and non-EU countries accounted for £131.3 million.

The main imports include electrical machinery and equipment (23%), followed by optical, photographic and medical devices (20%), nuclear reactors and machinery (17%), and chemical and pharmaceutical products (16%).

By providing a means for companies to access vital inputs from abroad, Edinburgh Airport supports economic activity. This can be estimated by assigning a sector to each category of import and applying the ratio of supply chain expenditure to GVA and employment. However, not all of this employment can be attributed to Edinburgh Airport, so an attribution rate of 25% was applied.

The share of impact in the City of Edinburgh was based on the level of all employment in the area, compared to the east of Scotland.



On this basis, it was estimated that Edinburgh Airport contributed:

- £14.6 million GVA and 180 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;
- £49.9 million GVA and 600 jobs in Scotland; and
- £79.8 million GVA and 1,000 jobs in the UK.

Table 8-2: Edinburgh Airport – Air Freight Import Impact, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£ million)			
Direct	10.3	27.8	27.8
Indirect	2.0	13.7	31.4
Induced	2.3	8.3	20.6
Total Impact	14.6	49.9	79.8
Employment (Jobs)			
Direct	130	370	370
Indirect	20	150	360
Induced	20	80	270
Total Impact	180	600	1,000

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. Figures may not sum due to rounding.



9.

Summary of Impact

In 2025, Edinburgh Airport generated **£2.7 billion GVA** in the Scottish Economy and supported **43,560 jobs**.

Edinburgh Airport supports economic activity by:

- **carrying out operational activities as part of its role as a commercial organisation and employer;**
- **hosting on-site tenant businesses** that locate there specifically for the purpose of serving passengers;
- **supporting the operation of off-site businesses** that are based close to the Airport, or which provide services that are directly linked to the Airport;
- **enabling millions of visitors** to pass through the Airport as part of their journey to Scotland, ensuring the country remains an accessible location for visitors; and
- **handling air freight** that supports both exporters and importers.

The total economic impact in 2025 was estimated to be:

- **£1.6 billion GVA and 23,750 jobs in the City of Edinburgh;**
- **£2.7 billion GVA and 43,560 jobs in Scotland; and**
- **£3.9 billion GVA and 71,650 jobs across the UK.**

Table 9-1 provides a breakdown of this impact by source for each study area.



Table 9-1: Edinburgh Airport – Economic Impact Summary, 2025

	City of Edinburgh	Scotland	UK
GVA (£m)			
Core Impacts	320.0	381.8	476.8
On-Site Businesses	666.6	863.5	1,270.3
Off-Site Businesses	70.4	92.5	138.5
Inbound Tourism	467.8	987.2	1,490.5
Outbound Tourism	45.6	206.4	307.1
Air Freight	24.0	121.2	185.8
Total GVA Impact	1,594.3	2,652.6	3,869.1
Employment (Jobs)			
Core Impacts	1,720	2,480	3,870
On-Site Businesses	6,660	8,480	12,060
Off-Site Businesses	1,460	1,950	3,280
Inbound Tourism	12,640	24,980	43,340
Outbound Tourism	980	4,200	7,040
Air Freight	290	1,470	2,060
Total Employment Impact	23,750	43,560	71,650

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

9.1 Comparison to 2019

9.1.1 Key Metrics

Since 2019, the last year in which BiGGAR Economics assessed the economic impact of Edinburgh Airport, the Airport has increased its operations significantly, with more staff (38% increase) and more income (59%). In addition, spending has increased across the board with higher wages (44%), supply chain expenditure (50%) and capital spending (126%).

At the same time other key measures of activity have increased, with more on-site employment (13% increase) and more passengers (12%). Of particular importance is a 40% increase in inbound visitors.



Table 9-2: Edinburgh Airport, Key Metrics – 2019-2025 Comparison

	2019	2025	Change
Total Income (£m)	221.4	353.0	59%
Total Employment	738	1,019	38%
Wages and Salaries (£m)	26.6	38.3	44%
Supply Chain Spend (£m)	43.6	65.4	50%
Average capital investment (£m)	42.8	96.6	126%
Employment at on-site businesses	5,090	5,776	13%
Total passenger journeys	14.7	16.6	12%
Total inbound passengers	3.0	4.2	40%
Total outbound passengers	4.4	4.1	-6%

9.1.2 Methodology

To be a meaningful comparison between 2019 and 2025, it is necessary to compare the same thing, which means that inflation and methodological differences need to be accounted for.

Since 2019, there has been considerable inflation across the economy. To account for this, GDP deflators have been applied to the impacts from 2019 to ensure that they are in 2025 prices, increasing the values by about 26%¹¹.

The previous analysis was undertaken and published in March 2020, to inform an understanding of the potential economic implications of Covid-19. The analysis that was undertaken has been revisited and some changes to it have been made to ensure that the methodology is consistent with the new 2025 analysis. In particular, the methodological changes to the 2019 analysis have increased the impacts from inbound tourism and reduced the assessment of on-site indirect employment. This allows for a meaningful comparison between 2019 and 2025 on a like-for-like basis.

9.1.3 Change in Impact

As can be seen in Table 9-3, the GVA impact in Scotland, on a GDP deflated basis has increased by 40% and the employment impact has increased by 44%.

Excluding air freight and some off-site businesses (buses and taxis), which were not included in the 2019 study, the difference was 31% for GVA and 37% for employment, with much of this difference being driven by the increase in inbound visitor expenditure.

¹¹ HM Treasury (2025), GDP deflators at market prices and money, November 2025



Table 9-3: Edinburgh Airport – Economic Impact in Scotland – 2019-2025 Comparison

	2019 (in 2025 prices)	2025	Change
GVA (£m)			
Core Impacts	311.0	381.8	23%
On-Site Businesses	677.5	863.5	27%
Off-Site Businesses (like-for-like)	51.0	57.1	12%
Inbound Tourism	712.0	987.2	39%
Outbound Tourism	147.2	206.4	40%
Sub-total	1,898.7	2,496.0	31%
Air Freight**	-	121.2	-
Off-Site Businesses (additional)**	-	35.4	-
Total GVA Impact	1,898.7	2,652.6	40%
Employment (Jobs)			
Core Impacts	1,990	2,480	25%
On-Site Businesses	7,310	8,480	16%
Off-Site Businesses (like-for-like)	860	1,110	25%
Inbound Tourism	17,110	24,980	46%
Outbound Tourism	2,900	4,200	45%
Sub-total	30,200	41,250	37%
Air Freight**	-	1,470	0%
Off-Site Businesses (additional)**	-	840	-
Total Employment Impact	30,200	43,560	44%

*GVA figures have been GDP-deflated. **Not included as part of the previous study.



10.

Appendix A: Local Economy Impacts

This presents the impacts of Edinburgh Airport on the local economies of West Lothian, Midlothian, East Lothian, and Fife.

The local economies benefit from activity predominantly related to:

- **spending of employee wages and salaries** (61% of Edinburgh Airport staff live in these local authorities) plus employees from on-site businesses;
- **capital investment projects** (West Lothian is home to some of the main contractors for works secured); and
- **tourism:** from visitors arriving to Scotland via Edinburgh Airport and visiting surrounding areas as part of their journey/destination; and
- **air freight:** exporters and importers who use Edinburgh Airport.

The estimated economic impact West Lothian, Midlothian, East Lothian, and Fife are set out in Table 10-1.

Table 10-1: Local Economy Impacts, 2025

	West Lothian	Midlothian	East Lothian	Fife
GVA (£m)				
Employee spending	2.0	2.0	0.4	2.2
Capital investment	20.7	-	-	0.4
Inbound tourism	36.3	24.5	24.5	68.4
Outbound tourism	16.0	8.6	9.9	32.2
Air freight	10.5	3.7	3.5	18.5
Total GVA Impact	85.5	38.7	38.2	121.8
Employment (Jobs)				
Employee spending	20	20	3	20
Capital investment	260	-	-	10
Inbound tourism	980	660	660	1,850
Outbound tourism	340	180	210	690
Air freight	120	40	40	220
Total Employment Impact	1,720	900	913	2,790

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

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