

Schiphol tonnages impacted by slowing Chinese output

[Amsterdam Airport Schiphol's](#) cargo throughput totalled 385,842 tonnes in the first three months of 2015, down 1.8% on 2014. Reductions in cargo to and from Asia and Europe accounted for the drop, the first quarterly fall in almost two years.

While January (-2.3%) and February (+2.1%) tonnages maintained the previous year's levels and smoothed the effect of the shift in dates of the Chinese New Year between 2014 and 2015, it was March's decline of 4.7% which resulted in the deficit.

Asia – Schiphol's largest market region – saw a reduction in share to 36.49% of the total, representing a year-on-date drop of 3%. North America maintained the second largest share at 18.9%, up 4.4% on 2014 Q1. The Middle East accounted for 13.82% (down 1.5%), Africa's share was 11.67% (up 0.7%) and Latin America came 5th with 11.17% share (up 1.9%). In 6th place, Europe including Russia also saw a significant fall - to 7.95% of the total (down 16% quarter over quarter).

Freighter aircraft movements in the first quarter showed growth of 1.3% over 2014 Q1, to a total of 4080.

Says Senior VP Cargo Enno Osinga: “The results are disappointing, but not unexpected, and not confined to Schiphol alone. China is our single largest market, and we are China's largest gateway into Europe; so the slowing of its economy and manufacturing output are inevitably very visible in our traffic figures.

“Europe's weaker tonnages are explained by the impact on flower traffic of falling Russian demand around Valentine's Day and Women's Day, caused by their currency weakness. The Europe figures additionally include transshipments to China, which are also affected by the cooling of Chinese trade.

“This latest volatility in airfreight markets endorses our policy of continuing caution about over-predicting traffic increases. We hope for more stability and a return to gentle growth later this year, and meanwhile will continue undeterred on our path of process optimisation, to further strengthen our proposition. This will be the best insulator from wider market issues beyond our control.”

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