ATR SEES VIETNAM AS A KEY GROWTH MARKET FOR REGIONAL AVIATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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ATR highlighted Vietnam's significant potential as a market for modern regional aviation, pointing to strong underlying demand, an expanding airport network and a new generation of turboprop aircraft that is redefining what regional flying can offer in terms of comfort, accessibility and economics across Southeast Asia. A year on from ATR's joint study with Vietnamese transport consultancy Transport Engineering Design Inc. (TEDI), which identified 87 unserved domestic routes with viable traffic potential, the market context has continued to evolve, with new cross-border services and the arrival of ATR's latest cabin concepts opening up new possibilities for regional connectivity in and around Vietnam.

ATR: new route opener

Vietnam's aviation market is largely concentrated on major trunk routes, yet the country's geography – a long, narrow landmass with coastal cities, highland communities and island destinations – points to a much broader potential network of routes that could support regular air service with ATR 72-600 aircraft. ATR and TEDI's research identified 149 potential domestic routes under 555 kilometres, of which 87 remain unserved. Connecting them would require around

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25 ATR 72-600 aircraft.

Jean-Pierre Clercin, Head of Region Asia-Pacific at ATR, commented: "Vietnam has strong fundamentals for growth in regional aviation. There is growing passenger demand, an expanding airport network and many city pairs that are better suited to regional turboprop aircraft. The ATR 72-600's lower operating costs allow airlines to serve routes profitably at demand levels where narrowbody jets may not be economically viable. The ATR 72-600 burns 45% less fuel than similar-sized regional jets.ATR's frugality, when it comes to fuel consumption, means it is a natural hedge against volatile fuel prices."

The economic and social impact of regional aviation is also profound: studies show that a 10% increase in regional flights can lead to a 5% rise in local tourism, a 6% boost in regional GDP and an 8% increase in foreign direct investment. ATR's success in markets such as Japan and New Zealand demonstrate how regional aviation can drive connectivity and economic development.

Supporting cross-border connectivity

Beyond Vietnam's domestic market, Air Cambodia's ATR 72-600 service on the Ho Chi Minh City-Phnom Penh route demonstrates how ATR aircraft can serve short-haul international sectors efficiently, supporting international tourism and business links in the region. The latest generation ATR 72-600 equipped with Pratt & Whitney Canada engines, operated by Air Cambodia, delivers a three-percentage-point fuel burn reduction compared with older generation ATRs.

The ATR 72-600 is also ideal for connecting Vietnam to neighbouring Laos and Thailand, markets where ATR aircraft are already active. ATR sees cross-border turboprop connectivity, especially to tier-two and tier-three cities, as an important and underdeveloped part of Southeast Asia's wider air transport network, and one that complements rather than competes with larger airline operations.

ATR 72-600: Elevating regional experience

One of the enhancements introduced with the ATR 72-600 series is an upgraded passenger cabin, Armonia, designed in collaboration with the renowned Italian design firm Giugiaro Design. The Armonia cabin has much larger overhead bins than the earlier -500 model, and LED lighting throughout. Both ATR models are compliant with the most stringent external noise standards, and internal noise is comparable to that of regional jets of the same capacity. ATR 72-600 also has an 'all-glass' cockpit by Thales that has five large-format LCD screens. The intuitive user-interface reduces pilot workload and provides greater situational awareness. The aircraft's avionics system also makes use of satellite-based navigation for more efficient flight paths and precision approaches.

For further comfort, ATR developed ATR HighLine, a wide offering of premium cabin configurations. The world's first ATR HighLine-equipped aircraft was delivered to Malaysian airline Berjaya Air in May 2026. The ATR 72-600 can seat 26 passengers in a 1-1 all business class configuration. Berjaya Air will be using the aircraft to serve high-end resorts in Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, including resorts in Phu Quoc.

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