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The demand in air traffic has continued its strong growth in the third quarter of the year. The passenger volume at Finavia's airports increased in January-September by 9.4 per cent year-on-year, which translates to a nearly 1.5 million passenger increase compared to the corresponding period last year.

The total passenger volume at Finavia's airports in January-September was 16,842,241 (15,530,602 passengers in Jan-Sep 2016). International travel increased by 11.1 per cent. Domestic travel remained at a steady growth rate of slightly under one per cent. At Helsinki Airport, total passenger volume increased in January-September by 6.1 per cent.

International transit traffic, which is of great strategic importance to Finavia, also developed well, and the number of people transferring from one flight to another increased by 25.5 per cent compared to the previous year.

Revenues have increased in line with the growth of passenger volumes. Comparable revenues increased during the third quarter by 10.9 per cent. The outlook for the current year remains unchanged: revenues excluding non-recurring items are expected to remain on the same level as in 2016 despite the increased write-downs relating to the development programme.

– When it comes to growth in travel, the year has continued at an excellent level, and we expect to break records again this year. Our growth has also been supported by the strong appeal of Finnair's connections to Asia. Good revenue development supports the implementation of the investment programme according to the planned schedule and ensures our ability to operate amidst such a large construction project, says Finavia's CEO Kari Savolainen.

In July, Finavia published a climate programme, which aims to reduce CO2 emissions to zero at all airports by 2020. Helsinki Airport already received the status of carbon neutral airport in July. Finavia wants to be a forerunner in reducing the emissions of the air traffic industry as passenger volumes continue to grow.

The expansion of Helsinki Airport progresses according to plan and on schedule

The EUR 900 million development programme at Helsinki Airport, aiming to expand the terminal, has proceeded according to the planned schedule. In July, the first expansion, the South Pier, was opened to air traffic.

The next phase of the terminal expansion, the large central square, will be opened to traffic in 2019 and after that, the West Pier opens in 2020. During the period under review, Finavia made an investment decision concerning the expansion of Terminal 2 and Terminal 1. The passenger volume from Asia is expected to grow at an increasing rate, and Finavia will reach its goal of 20 million passengers earlier than expected.

Despite the large-scale construction work, customer satisfaction has been maintained at an excellent level at 4.12 (4.06 in Jan-Sep 2016).

– It is important to us to take good care of our customers, and we have organised the construction work in the terminals and on the apron level to occur in phases to ensure smooth air traffic. Despite the growing passenger volume, we have been successful in this, says Savolainen.