

## Despite Crises, Brazil Has World's Second Largest Aircraft Fleet

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Brazil has the second largest fleet of civil aircraft in the world, totalling 11,000 airships. The country only loses to the United States, which has 200,000 aircraft.

The sector in Brazil is among the ten best with regard to security and quality, according to the qualification by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Almost eight decades ago, when operations began, so that the country could have its first lines, then president Getúlio Vargas authorized two foreign companies to operate lines, Condorsyndikat, from Germany and Aéropostiale, from France.

In the same year, 1927, after a partnership between the German company and Varig, the first operation by a Brazilian airline was born, a 270 kilometer route between the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the southernmost Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul and Pelotas, in the interior of the state, and the aircraft used was the Atlantico, with a capacity for 9 passengers.

Nowadays there are restrictions to foreign companies operating domestic routes, and the norms state that for this kind of operation, the airline must be based in the country.

The number of Brazilian airlines is as high as 33, 25 being regular aerial transport companies and eight charter companies. Apart from that, there are 275 air taxi companies, which offer charter flights to executives and companies.

Another nine companies were being established at the end of April, according to the Civil Aviation Department (DAC).

This story of growth, however, is also full of crises among private companies, not just the current one.

In 1965, the military government ordered the closing of PanAir, which had been established in 1929, and divided the company lines between Varig and Cruzeiro do Sul.

In 1975 Cruzeiro do Sul was purchased by the Rubem Berta Foundation, the controller of Varig, which maintained the Cruzeiro logo on its aircraft up to 1997.

In 1990, the government of the state of São Paulo privatized its Vasp airline. The company had been established by private companies in 1933, and was transferred to the state as a mixed capital company in 1935, only to be privatized in 1990.

In 2002, the Brazilian Justice declared airline Transbrasil bankrupt, partly due to the entry into operation of a private airline, Linhas Aéreas Gol, the previous year.

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