

Leaving Iberia behind: LEVEL formalises independence within IAG and launches operations under LL code

The Barcelona-based carrier has stepped out of the shadow of Iberia and is now operating flights as a standalone IAG airline.



Luke Peters · December 3, 2025

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LEVEL, the budget long-haul airline within the International Airlines Group (IAG), has formally begun flight operations as a fully independent carrier.

Previously run as a division of Iberia, LEVEL started using its own two-letter IATA code, LL, on 1 December. The switch marks a significant milestone for the Barcelona-based airline as it steps out as an autonomous operator within the wider IAG portfolio.

LEVEL becomes an independent airline within IAG

The move completes a journey that began in December 2024, when LEVEL secured its own Air Operator Certificate, enabling it to operate in its own right rather than under Iberia's traffic rights.

Over the course of 2025, the airline obtained operating permits for the US, Argentina and Chile, followed by IOSA certification in June that confirmed compliance with global safety and operational standards.



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The first flight using the LL designator, LL2627 from Barcelona to New York JFK, departed on 1 December and symbolised what the company described as “reaching a point of operational autonomy as an independent airline within IAG.”

LEVEL has also adopted the radio callsign ‘Dali’, a tribute to Salvador Dalí and a nod to the cultural heritage of Catalonia.

The LL code will now appear on all tickets, boarding passes and airport information screens, reinforcing LEVEL's new identity as a standalone carrier. The airline currently holds 16% of Barcelona's long-haul market and 29% of North Atlantic traffic, making it the leading long-haul operator at El Prat.

LEVEL's independence will drive growth

As reported by [AirInsight](#), CEO Rafael Jiménez Hoyos described the departure of the first flight using the new prefix code as "historic," and praised the employees at LEVEL's dedication to transform the airline into an "independent, efficient, and innovative" long-haul operator focused on growing Barcelona's global connectivity.

"Launching operations with our own IATA code 'LL' is the culmination of a year of effort, dedication, and collective commitment following the awarding of our Air Operator Certificate," he said.



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Hoyos said that obtaining its own designator code will help LEVEL to continue building its long-haul services from Barcelona, “connecting the city to the world and offering our passengers an accessible, customisable, and competitive experience.”

To meet the requirements for independence, LEVEL has undergone rapid internal expansion. Staff numbers have grown by 750% since 2024 as the airline hired its own flight and cabin crews and expanded its operations, safety and commercial teams.

LEVEL is operating its most extensive flight schedules ever

In December, LEVEL will be flying from Barcelona to six destinations in North and South America.

These include Boston Logan International Airport (BOS), Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), Miami International Airport (MIA), and New York John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in the US, while it will also fly to Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport (EZE) in Argentina and Santiago International Airport (SCL) in Chile.

According to Planespotters.net, the carrier currently operates a fleet of six Airbus A330-200s configured in a two-class configuration. These aircraft accommodate 20 passengers in a premium economy cabin and 255 in economy class. The average age of the fleet is 12.3 years.



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Along with reaching the milestone of autonomy, the airline is also looking to expansion as a means of consolidating its position as the leading long-haul carrier at Barcelona.

In June, the carrier said it would be increasing its winter 2025/26 capacity by 51%, offering over 400,000 seats and marking its largest-ever winter schedule. Growth, it said, would be led by a 64% capacity boost in its routes to the US, with flights on its New York-JFK route more than doubling.

In South America, LEVEL is operating up to 12 weekly flights from Spain to Buenos Aires and expanding Santiago de Chile service to five weekly flights during peak months.

Future growth is on the cards at LEVEL

The airline is planning to add a seventh Airbus A330-200 to its fleet in 2026 to continue its growth trajectory. LEVEL also hopes to secure a share of the 21 A330neo aircraft that IAG has on order from Airbus, with deliveries expected around 2028.

IAG is one of the world's largest airline groups, which, alongside LEVEL, also owns British Airways, Iberia, Aer Lingus, and Vueling.

LEVEL has been IAG's fastest-growing airline in terms of passenger numbers and capacity (measured in available seat kilometres) in recent years.

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