



GIUZ Airmiles Report: Monitoring 2023

April 2024

Executive summary

In 2023, total air travel at GIUZ remained almost the same as the year before, but lower than in pre-Covid years. Flight distances and emissions were almost exactly meeting the UZH target. The most frequent reasons for air travels were (1) conferences and workshops and (2) field trips and excursions. Employees with PhD represented the largest air travel share by function, followed by PhD candidates and guests. All GIUZ thematic areas remained below the UZH target, except for Human Geography, which (per capita) clearly overshot the flight distance target, but reduced compared to 2022.

In 2022, the [MNF Sustainable Travel Policy](#) was based upon voluntary, personal reductions. MNF missed the 2022 targets by nearly 5% (or 84,7 tons CO₂eq) and therefore implemented an updated Travel Policy in 2024 (with retrospective validity since January 2023) with an incentive tax of CHF 200 per ton CO₂eq. 80% of the incentive tax is used to reimburse train travel for members of the MNF. 20% of the incentive tax is refunded to all Departments and is considered a 'Justice Fund' that must prioritize the needs of young researchers and must not create policies and practices which favor one kind of individual over another (e.g., gender). **GIUZ will need to develop rules and processes on how to use the 'Justice Fund' in our department.**

Aim

This document provides statistics and reports on results for GIUZ air travel in 2023. Have a look at our [website](#) for more information about our working group, goals, activities and methods.

Airmiles at GIUZ in 2023

In 2023, air travel at the Department of Geography (GIUZ) increased compared to the Covid-19 travel ban period, remained similar to the year before, but lower than in pre-Covid years. GIUZ total and per capita flight distance (Figure 1) and CO₂ emissions (Figure 2) were almost exactly meeting the UZH target for 2023. The UZH goal is to reduce air travel by 40% compared to the pre-pandemic (2018-2019) years by 2022 and then continue a linear path (green line) of a 3% annual reduction until 2030, reaching a total of -53% of pre-pandemic levels.



Figure 1: Total air travel distance (in km) at GIUZ between 2017 and 2023. Following Covid-19, air travel (yellow line) increased in 2022 and remained similar in 2023, both in terms of total flight distance (top) and flight distance per capita (bottom). GIUZ is almost exactly on the UZH target in terms of total flight distance (top) and within the target per capita (bottom).

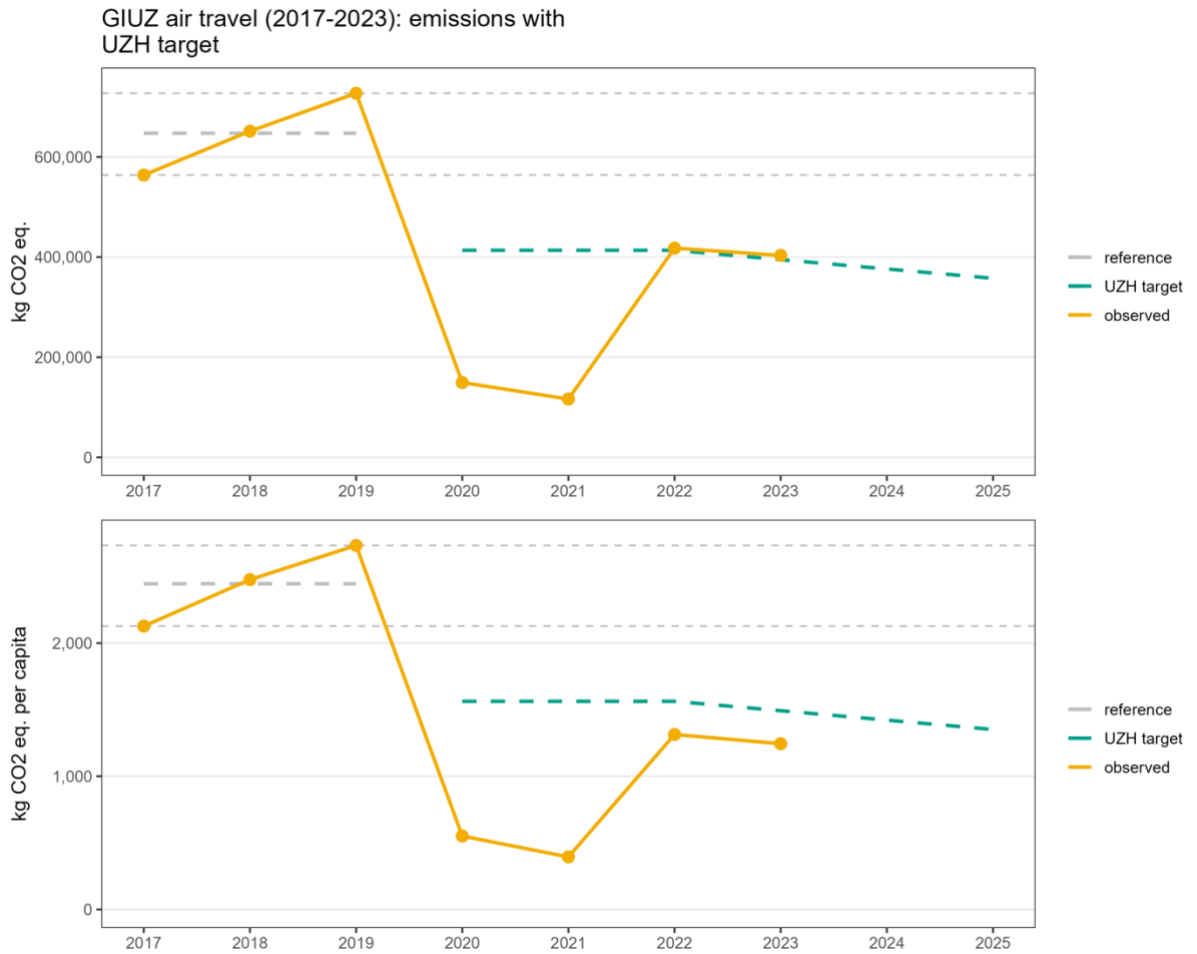


Figure 2: Total air travel emissions (in kg CO₂ equivalents) at GIUZ between 2017 and 2023. Following Covid-19, air travel (yellow line) increased in 2022 and remained similar in 2023, both in terms of total flight emissions (top) and flight emissions per capita (bottom). GIUZ is almost exactly on the UZH target in terms of total emissions (top) and well within the target for flight emissions per capita (bottom).

GIUZ flights were predominantly to conferences and workshops as well as to carry out fieldwork and excursions, while travels for project meetings, teaching and examination were less frequent (Figure 3). The share of flights per function (e.g. PhD student, professor) was greatest for employees with PhD, followed by PhD candidates, invited guests and professors. Employees without a PhD travelled the least. (Figure 4). In 2023, GIUZ counted 100 PhD candidates, 90 employees with PhD, 79 employees without PhD, 38 guests and 17 professors.

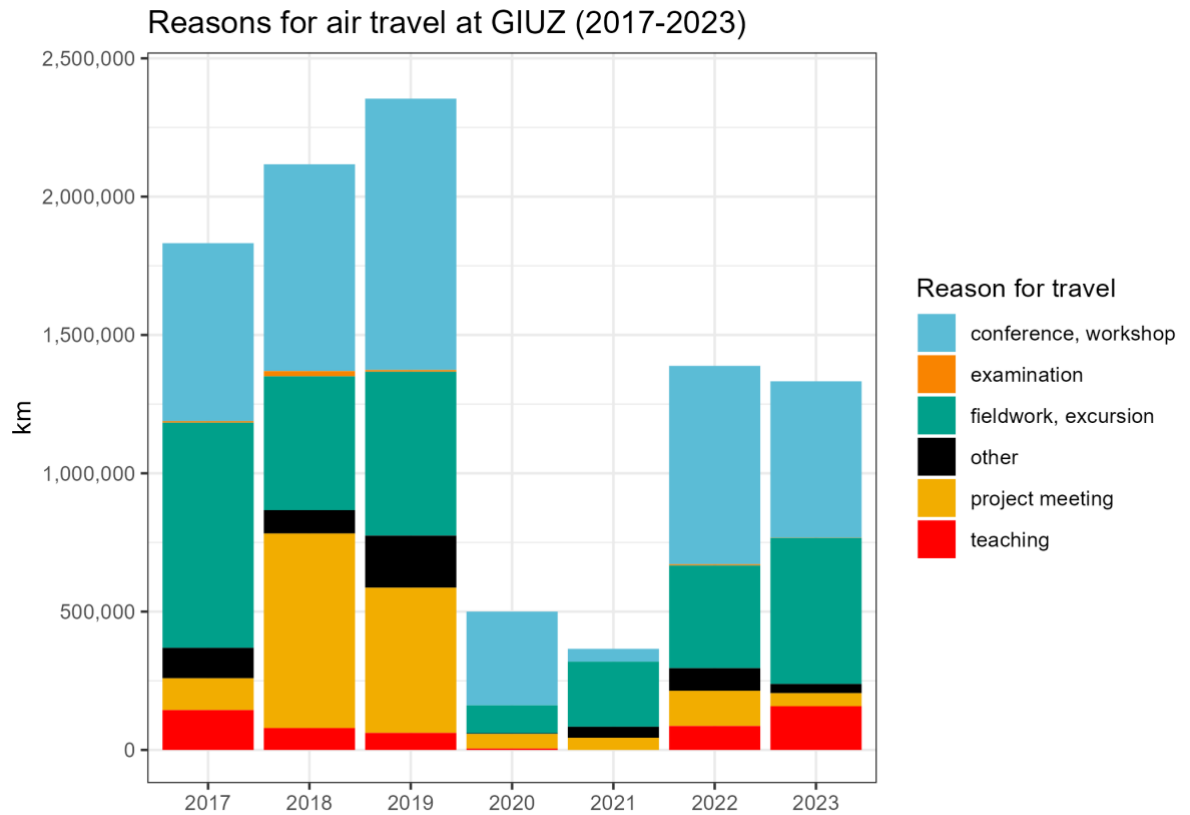


Figure 3: Reasons for air travel at GIUZ from 2017 to 2023.

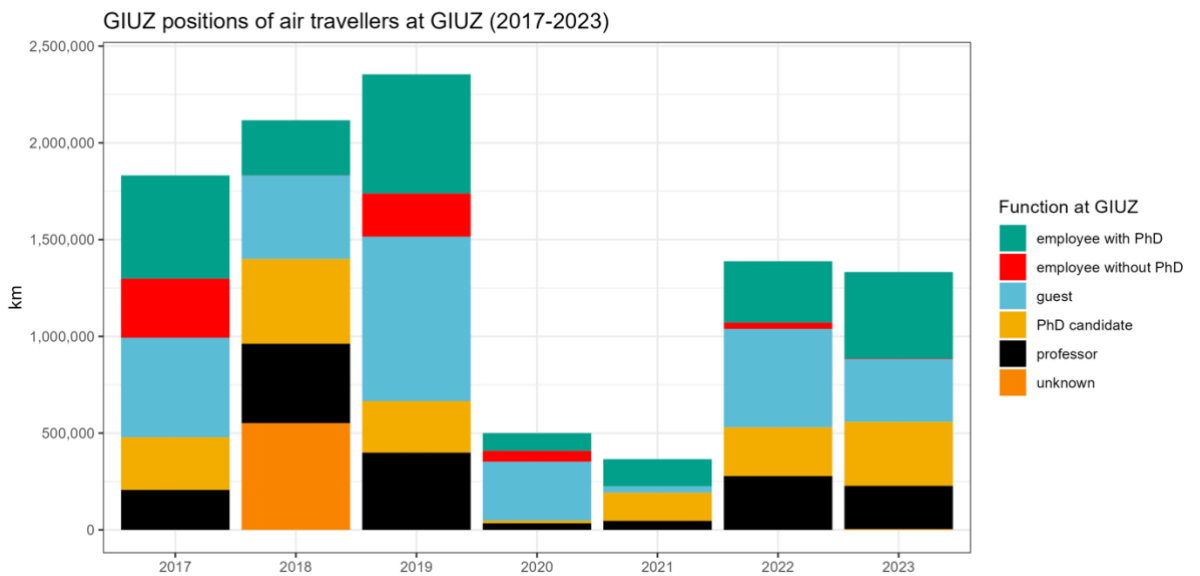


Figure 4: Functions of air travellers at GIUZ from 2017 to 2023.

All thematic areas within GIUZ increased their air travel in 2023 compared to the low travelling in 2020 and 2021 (Figure 5), but remained below the pre-Covid air travel. While GIScience and Remote Sensing slightly increased their flying compared to 2022, Human Geography and Physical Geography decreased their flight distance. In increasing order of air travel per capita, GIScience travelled the least, followed by Remote Sensing, Physical Geography and Human Geography. All thematic areas remained below the UZH target, except for Human Geography which (per capita) clearly overshoot the target, but decreased compared to 2022.

GIUZ air travel (2017-2023): Thematic areas



Figure 5: The annual flight distance (per capita) per thematic area (2017-2023).