

SNAPSHOTS

Pilots get ready to board training planes on the runway at the Civil Aviation Flight University of China.
CHU HONGYU / XINHUA



AMBITION TAKES FLIGHT

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China's civil aviation boom is giving hope to wannabe pilots chasing the dream of landing a lucrative job in the skies.

Driven by the growing number of airports being built and the increasing use of private planes, the country will need to train around half a million civilian pilots by 2035, according to China's national civil aviation authority.

But it is a long haul before a Chinese pilot can get the prime position in the cockpit of a passenger plane. For example, for Air China, a pilot needs to have clocked more than 3,000 hours of flight time to fly a Boeing 737.

In China, 90 percent of the country's airline pilots are trained at the Civil Aviation Flight University of China, the world's largest civil aviation institution.

With its headquarters in Guanghan, Southwest China's Sichuan province, the university owns five airports as subcolleges for flight training and has 262 airplanes for different training levels. It also has 45 360-degree flight simulators.



Trainees take to the skies (top) and study in their dormitory (above).



Trainees must become familiar with Airbus and Boeing planes before they can work as copilots.



Junior pilots practice stalls.



An instructor teaches a class of trainee pilots.