

Ryanair has axed 222 routes for this summer

Airline is shifting its capacity to some of the biggest airports in major European cities



Chief executive officer of Ryanair Michael O'Leary: the company has shifted focus from flying to farflung airports. Photograph: Gerard Julien/AFP/Getty Images)

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An analysis of internal aviation industry data has uncovered the full extent to which [Ryanair](#) has overhauled its low fares business model.

The analysis, provided to *The Irish Times* by specialist aviation industry website [anna.aero](#), illustrates the extent to which the airline is abandoning its old policy of pursuing growth primarily by flying to secondary airports located miles from major cities.

Using data obtained from [Innovata](#), the company to which most global airlines report changes to their route networks, the website has found that Ryanair axed 222 routes for this summer, even after launching 138 new routes. Most of the routes axed are to outlying airport.

The analysis underscores how much the airline is shifting its capacity to some of the biggest airports in major European cities, which it typically eschewed until the company changed its model last year after a series of profit warnings.

Using analysis of all of Ryanair's routes for August 2014 compared with the same month last year, [anna.aero](#) says Ryanair axed its flights from 10 European airports, including Doncaster in England, as well as several tiny airports in southern Sweden. Capacity has been dramatically scaled back at scores of other airports. Another 10 airports have been added to its network, most of which are the main airports at some of the biggest cities in Europe, such as Rome's Fiumicino, Brussels, Athens, Lisbon and Prague.

Most expensive

For example, Ryanair has added 112 flights per week to Fiumicino, the biggest and most expensive airport in Italy. It has added 91 flights per week to the main airport in Brussels, 79 to Athens, 66 to Lisbon, and 53 to Barcelona.

Ryanair previously served the Catalan city mostly through Girona, which is 92 km from Barcelona, but it has axed 59 flights per week from Girona this summer. It also cut 65 flights per week from Charleroi, which is 46 km from Brussels city centre, and 73 flights per week from Weeze, which is 70 km from Dusseldorf.

Ryanair has previously announced it will chase more market share from business travellers, who pay higher fares to fly to more convenient locations.

Ryanair chief executive Michael O'Leary has previously said the only airports it will never fly to are London Heathrow, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Paris Orly, and Frankfurt Main. The airline declined to comment last night as it is in a closed financial period.

Moving into the city: Changes to Ryanair routes Summer 2014 v Summer 2013

Brussels Charleroi (46 km from city centre) – decrease of 65 flights per week
Brussels Airport - increase of 91 flights per week

Girona Airport (92 km from Barcelona) – decrease of 59 flight per week
Barcelona Airport - increase of 53 flight per week

Cuts at smaller airports

Weeze (70km to Dusseldorf) – decrease of 73 flights per week
Oslo Rygge (60 km from city centre) – decrease of 36 flights per week

Increases at major airports

Athens Airport – increase of 79 flights per week
Rome Fiumicino – increase of 112 flights per week

Source: [www.anna.aero New Route Database](#)