

Record-breaking summer at Heathrow with millions heading to top destinations like Venice and Dubai

Heathrow Airport has successfully maintained its position as Europe's busiest airport throughout the first half of this year, setting new records in passenger traffic during July.

An impressive figure of 8 million travellers used the West London hub in that month alone, surpassing other major European airports such as Amsterdam Schiphol and Paris Charles de Gaulle.

During the start of the school holidays, Heathrow experienced six of its busiest departure days on record with more than 140,000 passengers leaving the airport – a feat achieved despite July's widespread IT outage and environmental protests.

For the first time, Heathrow exceeded 1.8 million passengers in a single week and continued to do so for three consecutive weeks from 8 to 28 July, leading up to the Paris Olympic Games.

July also saw a hike in travel to destinations like Venice, Dublin, and New York's JFK. There was a particular uptick in flights to US cities such as Orlando, San Francisco, and Chicago, evidencing a surge in transatlantic travel, as reported by [City AM](#).

Chief Executive of Heathrow, Thomas Woldbye commented: "In July, we were smashing a passenger record almost every single day and we're chasing down our never before seen goal of serving 8m passengers in a single month."

Woldbye added, "I'm proud that although there were a few potential challenges which could have caused us to stumble, our team remained focused on the prize of making every journey better and delivered a medal-winning start to the summer getaway."

Despite a major global IT outage in July leading to the cancellation of thousands of flights worldwide, record-breaking figures have been reported.

Heathrow Airport is concurrently contending with fresh Home Office bureaucracy for certain nationalities passing through on connecting flights, which constitute a large portion of the airport's traffic.

The newly implemented Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) now requires visa-exempt travellers from specific countries to apply for an online permit, costing £10 and taking approximately three days to process. Initially applied to Qatari nationals in November, the scheme has expanded to include Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Heathrow disclosed to its shareholders on Monday that since the ETA's introduction in 2023, around 90,000 transfer passengers have been lost.

In a plea for reconsideration, Heathrow stated: "This is devastating for our hub competitiveness. We urge government to review the inclusion of airside transit passengers, every little bit of extra competitiveness that government can deliver for aviation will help deliver vital growth for the whole of the UK economy."

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