

AIR TRAVEL TIME IS LONGER THAN YOU THINK



Many people want to fly less to protect the climate. However, not only the higher prices but also the longer travel time discourage people from switching to train or coaches. However, travel portals systematically distort the picture, reports the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) by underestimating the air travel time.

If you compare air and rail travel based on the real travel time from door to door, air travel does not perform as well as travel information portals often state. This is the conclusion of a study led by Thomas Sauter-Servaes from the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW).

With the help of volunteer study participants and an app, the research team recorded the door-to-door travel time of a total of 312 trips, including 74 air and 238 train trips, as the ZHAW announced. The result confirms what some travelers already guessed. **Especially with air travel, there is a lot of buffer time that is not included on the travel information portals.**

On average, the study participants stayed at the airport just under 118 minutes before departure and took an average of 39 minutes after landing to leave the arrival airport or change to other modes of transport. An almost identical picture emerges even on shorter flights of less than three hours and less than an hour and a half.

At train stations, however, the situation was very different: travelers only spent around 20 minutes before departure and an average of 12 minutes after arrival.

The researchers also checked seven travel information portals. **Only two of them currently offer a comparison of door-to-door travel times**, the ZHAW stated. One of these two portals assumes halfway realistic buffer times for air travel, but the other systematically underestimates the time required at the airport before and after the flight for shorter flights.

Sauter-Servaes was quoted as saying that the short length of stay of just 60 minutes before and 10 minutes after the flight was not only unrealistic at international hubs, but also at smaller hubs. For longer, international flights, the information portal assumed more realistic times of stay.

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