

# EU: EXTRA CHARGES FOR HAND LUGGAGE ARE QUESTIONED



Seven low-cost airlines are under investigation by the Spanish government. The Ministry of Consumer Protection in Madrid has stated the need to clarify whether charging travelers extra for a standard service is unfair and abusive.

The pricing policies of airlines such as Vueling, Wizzair, and Ryanair suggest that the primary objective is to achieve high positions on online comparison portals, the ministry said. **Ultimately, the prices paid by passengers are often significantly higher as they need to pay extra for hand luggage and other services.**

The proceedings are based on a complaint by the Spanish consumer protection organization Facua. Facua reiterated that it considers the airlines' pricing policy illegal: "The law on air traffic stipulates that the air carrier is obliged to carry objects and packages carried by the passenger free of charge in the cabin as hand luggage."

**In recent years, more and more airlines have begun charging for carry-on baggage.** Only a handbag or small backpack is then allowed free of charge.

In 2019, the Italian competition authority imposed fines of three million euros on Ryanair and one million euros on Wizzair. However, the penalties were overturned by the courts.

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