

HEATHROW SCORES POORLY IN PUNCTUALITY



The Association of European Airlines published the details of the punctuality performance of 27 major European airports in the first quarter of 2008. The survey concerning the rates of delays have churned out interesting results, mostly for those visiting airports in Britain and Germany. To put it briefly, Heathrow is very guilty of keeping passengers waiting whereas. Munich turned out to be one of Europe's most punctual airports. The most interesting finding was that delays are mostly due to air traffic management and not due to aircraft not being ready to leave.

The general rate of delay in all European airports was slightly higher at the beginning of 2008. Precisely 22.4% of departures were delayed by 15 minutes or more in the first quarter of 2008 compared to 2007, when 20.5% of flights were subject to delays for the same amount of time.

Very few delays were down to the planes not being ready, weather conditions or technical problems. This is perhaps surprising as the unfortunate passenger's reaction is nearly always to blame technicians or presume that the weather has something to do with the problems either at the airport or somewhere in the sky between the airport and the point of destination. However, air traffic management, or the lack of it, is mostly to blame.

The biggest culprit is Heathrow, where an astonishing 44.1% of European departures in the first quarter of 2008 were subject to delays. Dublin came in second place at 33%. The problem is the lack of spare runway space at both airports, which leads to one delay leading to another. Thus, if one plane does happen to have a technical fault, a queue of 20 or so other planes is delayed as a result. The fact that Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports certainly does not help.

Most Punctual Airports:

1. Munich

2. Vienna

3. Larnaca

4. Dusseldorf

5. Istanbul

Least Punctual Airports:

1. London Heathrow

2. Dublin

3. Helsinki

4. Geneva

5. Frankfurt

Any experiences with these airports? Add your comment.

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