

Strengthening of Italian strategy

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easyJet PLC

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easyJet to expand at Milan Malpensa, Naples and Venice and reduce services at Rome Fiumicino

easyJet today announced a strengthening of its Italian strategy through expanding its bases in Italy at Milan Malpensa and Naples and the opening of a new base in Venice from April 2016. The airline plans to support this expansion by redeploying aircraft and crew from Rome Fiumicino.

easyJet CEO Carolyn McCall outlined the airline's plans:

"Italy is a key strategic country for easyJet and our plans for 2016 announced today will expand our presence at Milan, Naples and Venice, where there are more opportunities for long term sustainable and profitable growth, while ensuring we continue to connect Rome Fiumicino with Europe in a way that best reflects passenger demand."

"Milan, Naples and Venice are all centres of important Italian economic regions. Each has high levels of passenger demand from leisure as well as business passengers and all have demand for flights both into and out of Italy."

"Our expansion in these three airports will bring thousands of direct and indirect jobs in each region and will ensure easyJet remains the largest airline at each airport giving all three cities the best network connecting them with the rest of Europe."

"At a time when there are significant profitable growth opportunities for easyJet across Europe we are continuing to make a very significant investment in Italy. easyJet has grown steadily in Italy in recent years in terms of investment and jobs and will base 29 aircraft in the country next year, employing over 1000 pilots, cabin crew and other staff and supporting thousands more direct and indirect jobs."

Barcelona

easyJet also announced that it is to open a new base in Barcelona from February 2016, basing three Airbus aircraft there. Barcelona has always been a key network point for easyJet and the base opening consolidates easyJet's strong position at Barcelona carrying almost three million passengers a year to and from 14 airports across Europe.

With aircraft based at the airport business travellers will be able to benefit from earlier departures as well as an increased number of flights on existing routes connecting to primary airports in Europe such as London, Paris, Geneva and Milan.

Venice

easyJet will open a base at Venice Marco Polo Airport starting from April 2016. With four Airbus aircraft based at the airport, easyJet will increase its contribution to the local economy by providing 150 local jobs for pilots and cabin crew.

Venice has for some time been a key network point for easyJet, having operated flights into and out of the city since

1998. The airline has increased the number of passengers carried by an average rate of 15% per year over the last five years. easyJet currently flies to Venice from 15 primary airports across Europe - such as London Gatwick, Amsterdam and Paris Charles de Gaulle - and is the largest airline at Marco Polo Airport.

As well as being a world famous tourist destination the region is Italy's third largest economy and 28% of easyJet's 1.6 million passengers on flights to and from Venice are travelling on business. This will be further enhanced when aircraft are based at the airport as business travellers will be able to benefit from early morning departures.

Milan Malpensa

Milan Malpensa is already easyJet's second largest base with 18 aircraft and will receive three more from April 2016, providing over 100 new jobs for pilots and cabin crew. This will strengthen easyJet's existing status as the largest airline at Milan Malpensa and gives the airline a strong strategic position serving Italy's richest metropolitan area of some 9 million people with one of the country's highest GDP.

Naples

easyJet opened its new base in Naples in 2014 and is now firmly established as the largest airline at the airport. Naples is southern Italy's largest city and the third largest in the country.

easyJet already bases three aircraft in Naples and will base one more plane there from April 2016 providing 35 more jobs for pilots and cabin crew. Naples is a top European destination both for tourism - the city being listed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO - and for business with a wide network of more than 260,000 companies and 2.6 million business travellers flying from Naples every year.

Rome Fiumicino

The Rome Fiumicino base is delivering lower returns than easyJet's other bases and the new services and routes which will be operated as a result of this redeployment will better match easyJet's customers' needs and deliver higher returns for the airline.

The worsening performance of the Rome Fiumicino base has been driven by high airport passenger charges, which have more than doubled since 2012, and will be burdened by further above inflation increases in the coming years. In addition, Rome Fiumicino airport provides a poor passenger experience which has led to low levels of punctuality and customer satisfaction which the recent capacity increases have exacerbated.

As a result of the redeployment easyJet will cease basing crew and aircraft at Rome Fiumicino from April 2016. There will be no job losses as a result of this decision as easyJet will be offering Rome Fiumicino based crew a transfer to our other Italian bases. The airline will offer individual relocation plans and support for all employees. easyJet hopes that as many of its crew as possible take up this offer.

easyJet remains committed to connecting Italy with the rest of Europe and will continue to fly around 2 million passengers to and from Rome Fiumicino next year out of its bases across its network. This decision does not reflect in any way on easyJet's Rome Fiumicino based people or the commitment and effort they have made to deliver a friendly customer experience and high operational standards.

Summary

Frances Ouseley, easyJet's Italy Director, summarised the airline's plans for 2016:

"easyJet's commitment to Italy is strengthened. With the opening of the new base in Venice and the investment increase in Milan and Naples we will be providing customers and companies with better choices to travel across our leading network, enabling the growth of local economies."

"Our capacity to and from Italy and the size of our Italian route network reflects our belief in the importance of Italy. easyJet will base 29 aircraft in Italy next year and plans to carry over 15 million passengers on the country's best European network serving over 170 routes."

"We are committed to keep on playing an important role in this dynamic Italian market and as such we need to be agile and flexible to capture new investment opportunities that are beneficial for local economies, customers and our shareholders."

Enquiries should be directed to:

easyJet plc

Investor:

Will MacLaren, Investor Relations +44 (0) 7961 763 879

Media:

Paul Moore, Communications +44 (0) 7860 794 444

Anna Knowles, Communications +44 (0) 7985 873 313

Notes to Editors

	easyJet market share Financial year 2015 (1 oct - 30 sept)	Position in airport
Milan Malpensa	45%	No. 1
Naples	30%	No. 1
Venice	19%	No. 1
Rome Fiumicino	10%	No. 3

This information is provided by RNS
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