

## European airport strikes put holiday flights at risk

- A Monitor Desk Report

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**Dhaka: Flight schedules across Europe may be disrupted over the Christmas and New Year period due to a series of strikes affecting airports and ground handling services, reports Canarian Weekly.**

Spain, including the Canary Islands, the United Kingdom, Portugal, and Italy are at risk of delays and cancellations.

In Spain, baggage handlers at Azul Handling, part of the Ryanair Group, have been on strike since 15 August over overtime, bonus payments, and unstable part-time contracts, with industrial action set to continue until 31 December. Strikes occur four days a week — Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays — during three key periods: 5:00-9:00, 12:00-15:00, and 21:00-23:59, coinciding with peak airport hours.

Airports potentially affected include Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Tenerife North and South, Alicante, Barcelona, Girona, Ibiza,

Madrid, Málaga, Palma de Mallorca, Santiago de Compostela, Seville, and Valencia. Ryanair said it aims to operate flights as scheduled but delays are possible.

In the UK, ground handling staff at London Luton Airport employed by DHL will strike in two stages: 3:00 on 19 December to 3:00 on 22 December, and 26-29 December. Over 400 flights could be disrupted, particularly affecting low-cost and holiday carriers.

Portugal experienced a nationwide transport strike on 11 December, affecting Lisbon, Porto, and other airports, with around 400 flights delayed or cancelled amid disagreements over labour legislation. Further strikes by ground staff are planned in December and early January.

In Italy, airline staff, ground services, and air navigation personnel will strike on 17 December from 13:00 to 17:00, affecting Rome, Milan, Venice, and other major hubs.

Authorities advise travellers to check flight status regularly, allow extra time for check-in and security, and carry hand luggage when possible.

Non-EU travellers may face additional delays due to the new EES entry system, which is not yet fully operational. Weather and technical issues may also continue to affect flights.

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