

## One Eurasian airport overtakes London Heathrow as Europe's busiest hub

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**Dhaka: Istanbul Airport has surpassed London Heathrow as Europe's busiest hub. The airport handled around 6.9 million passengers in January compared to Heathrow's just over 6.3 million.**

Istanbul's rise is attributed to its strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa. In addition, Turkish Airlines' extensive network, which covers secondary cities rarely served directly by Western hubs, also played a vital role. Competitive fares via Istanbul are also drawing price-sensitive travelers away from traditional European gateways.

Heathrow, constrained by its two-runway layout, is pushing for a third runway. Airport management has outlined plans to submit a development consent application within the current parliamentary term,

though the costs run into tens of billions of pounds. However, environmental groups, local councils, and legal challenges are expected to slow progress significantly.

For travelers, Istanbul's growth translates to more affordable one-stop options to emerging markets. For Heathrow, expansion has become critical to reclaiming its position as Europe's premier hub.

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