



RYANAIR AIMS FOR MAJOR EXPANSION IN ROMANIA

News / Airlines



Ireland-based low-cost carrier (LCC) Ryanair plans to substantially increase its presence in Romania, with the creation of up to five bases in the Eastern European nation over the next few years, according to CEO Michael O'Leary.

The move is a clear challenge to Hungary-based Wizz Air, which is the major LCC in Central and Eastern Europe. Currently, Ryanair flies only to a single Romanian destination, Bucharest, transporting some 200,000 passengers to and from the Romanian capital in 2014.

Speaking to Romanian journalists visiting Ryanair's Dublin HQ, O'Leary contrasted Ryanair's operations in their country with those in Poland, where it operates to 12 destinations and has four bases. He anticipated creating a similarly sized network in Romania over the next five years.

As well as Wizz Air, Ryanair will face competition from Romanian LCC Blue Air and national carrier Tarom.

With the exception of Poland, Ryanair's footprint in Eastern Europe is relatively small, with the Irish carrier flying into just one or two destinations in most countries in the region.

Initial traces of expansion can be seen, however. Having begun services to Bucharest in 2014 it serves the city from four European points, with another three due to come on-line in coming months.

More evidence of Ryanair looking further east for new traffic can be seen in its 2015 decision by both to open new services to Israel.

12 DECEMBER 2015

SOURCE: ATW

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