

## The Travel Observatory: The explosion of low cost airlines

Over the last ten years low cost airline companies have completely changed the face of airline transportation, made air travel more accessible and totally turned our travel habits inside out. liligo.com has integrated all of these companies—around 70—into their flight search engine in order to offer exhaustive access to the best travel solutions available on the web at low cost. Today, however, not all travellers are equal when faced with a “low cost” offer.



### 1. Europe: home of the low cost airline model

Close to **70% of low cost companies that exist today are based in Europe**. They offer:

- domestic routes, creating stiff competition with national airlines and railways
- connections between major European cities allowing travellers to move between one metropolis to another at a lower cost
- flights to destinations as far away as North Africa, the Middle-East and even the USA and Asia.

Even though the concept was born in the USA with Southwest Airlines, known in the 1970s as the “peanut company”, the low cost model really took off when it appeared in Europe. Ryanair, which has been a pioneer since 1985, opened with a capital of 1 Euro. This Irish airline didn’t have to wait long before finding passengers who jumped at finding airfares up to five times lower than regular airlines. The low cost model was born and Ryanair inspired dozens and has seen hundreds of other low cost companies since, more or less profitable.

Today low cost doesn’t just stop at short-haul, it extends worldwide and long-haul. Recently, Air Asia has become one of the first airlines to offer low cost flights on a long-haul route from London and Paris to Kuala Lumpur.

For consumers, the principle of low cost is simple: the price of the seat is the cheapest possible but all the extra services (baggage, meals, payment methods...) are optional. These types of carriers often get caught up in controversy, trying to reduce transportation costs by whatever means possible (Ryanair now charges for in-flight toilet access, £1) to remain competitive.



### 2. Stacking up low cost airlines

TOP 20 low cost airline companies<sup>1</sup>

	Airline Company	Number of routes offered
1	Ryanair	3087
2	Easyjet	1659
3	Air Berlin	1512
4	<a href="#">Vueling</a>	699
5	Flybe	660
6	Wizz Air	530
7	Air Baltic	411
8	Meridiana	395

<sup>1</sup> Number of routes available, all regions included



9	Germanwings	365
10	Pegasus Airlines	311
11	Condor	242
12	Jetairfly	201
13	Air Asia	171
14	<a href="#">FlyNiki</a>	166
15	Transavia	165
16	Thomson Airways	152
17	Jet4you	135
18	Norwegian Air	126
19	Southwest Airlines	124
20	Windjet	123

**TOP 15 airline departing from the UK<sup>2</sup>**

- 1 **Easyjet**
- 2 Ryanair
- 3 Flybe
- 4 Wizz Air
- 5 Thomson Airways
- 6 Bmibaby
- 7 Aurigny.com
- 8 Norwegian Air
- 9 Jet2
- 10 Germanwings
- 11 Air Asia
- 12 Air Berlin
- 13 Air Transat
- 14 Flystar Astraeus
- 15 Pegasus Airlines



**3. Stacking up countries: Italy leads in low cost service**

**TOP 15 countries serving the most cities with [low cost flights](#)**

- 1 **Italy**
- 2 Spain
- 3 Germany
- 4 [France](#)
- 5 United Kingdom
- 6 Belgium
- 7 United States
- 8 Switzerland
- 9 Austria
- 10 Romania
- 11 Morocco
- 12 Australia
- 13 Netherlands
- 14 Hungary
- 15 Portugal

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<sup>2</sup> Number of clicks



With more than 2300 routes available departing from all over the country, Italy is at the head of the pack when it comes to hosting the most low cost destinations. That's approximately 50% more destination cities accessible by low cost airlines than the UK.



#### 4. UK cities do not offer equal low cost service

Departure city	Number of cities accessible by low cost airlines
London	648
<a href="#">Manchester</a>	152
Birmingham	108
Bristol	73
Liverpool	65
<a href="#">Glasgow</a>	61
Leeds	56
<a href="#">Edinburgh</a>	54
Belfast	52
Nottingham	40
Newcastle upon Tyne	39
Exeter	29
Southampton	28
Doncaster	22
Cardiff	21
Bournemouth	18
Manston	13
Norwich	10
Isle Of Man	10
Jersey	10

If London remains at the top of the list offering the most departures with low cost airlines, thanks of course to its five airports (two of which are used solely by low cost airlines), more and more routes are expected to transfer through London from the country's regional airports. Bmibaby recently added more routes from Newcastle in the northeast, expected to also contribute more than 120 jobs to the local economy.



#### 5. The most accessible European cities with low cost airlines

##### TOP 25 cities

	Arrival city	Number of routes to the city
1	<b>London</b>	<b>452</b>
2	<a href="#">Paris</a>	421
3	Barcelona	316
4	<a href="#">Rome</a>	298
5	Milan	252
6	Madrid	238
7	Berlin	195
8	Palma de Majorque	174
9	Brussels	171
10	<a href="#">Malaga</a>	155



11	Bucharest	142
12	<a href="#">Amsterdam</a>	130
13	Alicante	114
14	Vienna	112
15	Ibiza	110
16	Marrakech	110
17	Cologne	107
18	Dusseldorf	107
19	Venice	106
20	Dublin	101
21	Tenerife	101
22	Budapest	96
23	Seville	95
24	Marseille	94
25	Frankfurt	92



## 6. Low cost flight prices

Route	Minimum price (€) <sup>3</sup>	Average price (€)	Airline company
<a href="#">London Paris</a>	48	106	Easyjet
<a href="#">London Edinburgh</a>	45	86	Easyjet
London Berlin	40	109	Easyjet
<a href="#">London Amsterdam</a>	51	100	Easyjet
<a href="#">London Dublin</a>	12	59	Ryanair
<a href="#">London Madrid</a>	28	142	Ryanair
<a href="#">London Budapest</a>	48	91	Wizz Air
Manchester Faro	59	77	Ryanair
Manchester Pisa	45	86	Ryanair
Manchester Geneva	55	70	Easyjet
Glasgow Belfast	54	68	Ryanair
Glasgow London	12	45	Ryanair

### About liligo.com

*liligo.com is the first [travel search engine](#) to integrate more than 250 sites (travel agencies, airline companies, low cost, tour operators, hotels...) of which 70 are low cost in each search. liligo.com allows travellers to access travel solutions easily from all corners of the web, sorted and presented in a cohesive and objective manner. Comprehensive, exhaustive, innovative, objective, liligo.com is dedicated to help the user find their holidays and trips simply, the most effectively as possible. Available in 10 domains (United Kingdom, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Switzerland), liligo.com is a product of Findworks Technologies, an enterprise that was founded by Pierre Bonelli, Bertrand de la Ruelle, Xavier Corbel and Mikaël Quilfen in 2005 and is financed by venture capital funds from Alven Capital and SNCF Voyages.*

<sup>3</sup> Flight prices (round trip) found on liligo.com from July-October in 2010