Heathrow retains position as Europe's busiest airport in Q1

[Heathrow Airport](#) has reported a strong start to 2023, with 16.9 million passengers in Q1, "beating Paris, Frankfurt and Schiphol to retain our position as Europe's busiest airport and second in the world for international travel."

According to the airport, "Passengers also rated Heathrow's service ahead of our main EU hub rivals, with a strong performance during the half term and Easter holidays. Our robust contingency plans kept the airport running smoothly throughout a period of industrial action over the Easter peak. Passengers can expect to travel as normal during the Coronation and half term peaks, regardless of further unnecessary strike action by Unite. We are working with partners on further improvements to service, such as Border Force's successful trial of extending eGates to 10+ year-olds over Easter."

However, Heathrow has not yet returned to profit with adjusted losses of £139 million (US$173.9 million) in Q1 due to the revenue allowance in the CAA's H7 settlement being set too low.

"We have worked to better connect all of the UK to global markets, with Loganair taking advantage of our domestic charges discount to open up new routes to Northern Ireland and Scotland, as well as opening up connections to 10 Chinese cities as borders reopen. Frequencies to Beijing and Shanghai will increase to twice daily before the summer. We urge Ministers to make the UK more competitive for overseas visitors versus the EU by removing the 'tourist tax' of VAT on shopping which will drive more spend in shops, restaurants and attractions across Britain."

Heathrow was the first airport to achieve science-based validation from the SBTi for its 2030 carbon

reduction goals. As the global aviation sector starts to decarbonize, the airport urged the government to move faster to bring production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel onshore, increasing energy security and creating skilled green jobs in leveling up areas.

Heathrow CEO John Holland-Kaye said, "2023 has got off to a strong start, and I'm proud of the way colleagues are working together to deliver great passenger service every day. We are building our route network to connect all of Britain to the growing markets of the world – now we need the government to lure international visitors back to the UK by scrapping the 'tourist tax'."