

SPAIN FINES LOW-COST AIRLINES 179 MILLION FOR ABUSIVE PRACTICES



The Spanish Ministry of Social Rights, Consumption, and Agenda 2030 has fined several low-cost airlines, including Ryanair, Vueling, easyJet, Norwegian, and Volotea, nearly 179 million euros for abusive practices. These practices include charging extra fees for hand luggage and reserving adjacent seats to accompany dependent individuals.

Specifically, Ryanair has been fined 107.7 million euros, while Vueling faces a fine of 39.2 million euros, making these two airlines responsible for most of the total penalty. Additionally, **easyJet has received a fine of 29.09 million euros, Norwegian 1.6 million euros, and Volotea 1.18 million euros.**

The Directorate General for Consumer Affairs' investigation in 2023 into what it categorized as "very serious" violations of consumer regulations has now concluded. This marks the first instance in which sanctions classified as very serious have been enforced by the General State Administration in the realm of consumer affairs following the ministry's acquisition of sanctioning powers in June 2022. The sanctions also include a direct prohibition against continuing the practices that have been penalized.

The abusive practices:

- Requiring an additional fee for hand luggage carried in the cabin.
- Charging extra for tickets for continuous seats for dependent individuals and their companions.
- Not permitting cash payments.
- Imposing a fee for printing boarding passes.

Penalties were determined based on the profits the airlines gained from these infringing practices.

This signed order concludes the administrative process. An administrative appeal can now be filed with the Administrative Litigation Division of the National Court within two months. If the companies do not file an appeal within these two months, the order will take effect.

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