

EasyJet says revenues slump almost 90% on virus hit

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British no-frills airline EasyJet said Thursday that revenues collapsed by almost 90 percent in its first quarter as coronavirus ravaged travel demand, warning that second quarter capacity will be slashed.

Revenues nosedived 88 percent to £165 million (\$226 million, 187 million euros) in the three months to December 31 compared with the prior year, after it flew just 18 percent of its schedule as a result of COVID-19 lockdown measures.

Capacity in the group's second quarter to March would be about 10 percent below the year-earlier level due to ongoing restrictions, EasyJet added in a statement.

The airline, which is based in Luton north of London, also confirmed that 1,400 jobs had already been axed under its previously-announced restructuring.

On a more upbeat note however, the carrier said it was planning for a surge in pent-up demand when virus [travel](#) restrictions are lifted—and as vaccinations are rolled out.

"Our performance in the period was in line with management expectations, despite more stringent restrictions coming into place," Chief Executive Johan Lundgren said.

"We have taken the right actions to emerge leaner with a reduced cost base and the retrenchment of legacy carriers at key airports will provide additional opportunities for EasyJet."

He added: "The key to unlocking travel is going to be the vaccination programmes combined with governments progressively removing restrictions when it is safe to.

"And in the meantime, our flexible industry-leading policies mean that customers can make plans and book with confidence."

In November, EasyJet posted the first annual pre-tax loss in its 25-year

history on the virus fallout, while the airline is axing up to 4,500 jobs or almost one third of its staff.

The COVID-19 health crisis that has decimated demand for global air travel and sparked heavy losses, job cuts, bankruptcies and massive state rescue plans in the sector.

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