Ireland's Ryanair aims to hire another 5,000 new staff

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Chief Executive of Ryanair, Michael O'Leary, speaks during a press conference in London, Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021.Credit: AP Photo/Frank Augstein

Irish airline Ryanair said Thursday that it's planning to create 5,000 jobs over the next five years as part of its recovery from the shock of the

coronavirus pandemic.

The additional pilots, [cabin crew](#) and engineers will mean that the company will have more than recouped the 3,000 [jobs](#) it got rid of at the start of the pandemic last year.

CEO Michael O'Leary said the carrier has been snapping up slots that have been vacated by airlines that have either collapsed or retrenched over the past 18 months or so.

"Ryanair will open 10 new bases across Europe this year as we work with airport partners to help them recover traffic and jobs post-COVID, and take up slot opportunities that are being vacated by competitor airlines who have collapsed or significantly reduced their fleet sizes," he said before the company's annual shareholder meeting in Dublin.

Ryanair also upgraded forecasts for growth over the next five years, with projections that passenger numbers will grow by 50%, compared with 33% predicted previously. That equates to 226 million passengers by March 2026, 25 million more than previous targets.

"We can recover strongly from the COVID [pandemic](#) and deliver higher-than-expected growth in both traffic and jobs over the next five years," O'Leary said.

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