

Ryanair doubles annual loss forecast on Omicron

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Ryanair expects a loss of between 250 to 450 million euros (\$283-510 million) in its financial year that runs through March 2022, up from an earlier forecast of 100 to 200 million euros.

Low-cost airline Ryanair said Wednesday that the Omicron coronavirus variant would have a strong impact on its financial performance as it more than doubled the forecast for its annual loss and cut back flights.

The Irish airline now expects a loss of between 250 to 450 million euros (\$283-510 million) in its financial year that runs through March 2022, up from an earlier forecast of 100 to 200 million euros.

Ryanair said in a statement that "the Omicron Covid variant and recent government travel restrictions across Europe have notably weakened close-in Christmas and New Year bookings."

It added that "this sudden downturn has also caused Ryanair this week to cut its planned January schedule capacity by 33 percent."

A growing number of European nations are tightening travel restrictions and several are reimposing restrictions on gatherings as the number of Covid-19 infections is rapidly rising.

The airline said that in light of the current uncertainty about the Omicron variant, as well as further developments regarding intra-Europe travel restrictions, it has not made any decisions yet on cutbacks to its February or March schedule.

Ryanair said its new loss forecast was very sensitive to pandemic developments and that it hoped to have more clarity about the impact of Omicron on travel within Europe by the time it presents its third quarter results on January 31.

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