



LUFTHANSA LCC EUROWINGS MULLS COOPERATION WITH EASYJET

News / Airlines



Lufthansa Group's low-cost subsidiary **Eurowings** and UK low-cost carrier **easyJet** reportedly could become partners, Lufthansa Group chairman and CEO Carsten Spohr told German magazine *Der Spiegel*.

A Lufthansa spokesperson in Frankfurt confirmed Spohr's quotes to *ATW*.

"We can cooperate with other airlines very actively. EasyJet had also shown interest in the past to cooperate with the Lufthansa Group," Spohr had been quoted as saying.

Eurowings is able to offer new partnership possibilities for the group, even with non-Star Alliance members. However, Lufthansa ruled out the possibility of feeder services to its hubs from a carrier like easyJet.

“We also need consolidation in the European low-cost carrier market and Eurowings should become an important part of that,” Spohr said.

Spohr told *ATW* in June that Lufthansa will remain a driving force for consolidation within Europe. “The big five airlines in Europe have a 43% market share,” he said. “The big five carriers in the US have 90%. I definitely think there are too many airlines in Europe.”

However, Spohr sees Lufthansa at a turning point. For the first time in Lufthansa's history, it has not shown growth for several years. With its current cost structure, it has become nearly impossible to find a new cost-efficient route for the German-based carrier, he said.

“Good pay [for employees], good working conditions and good career perspectives. All these don't fit together anymore [with Lufthansa's current cost-structure],” he said.

Spohr told *ATW* that airlines must offer several different platforms—ranging from premium segments to low-cost carriers.

Eurowings operated its maiden flight Feb. 1 from Hamburg to Prague, with its first 162-seat Airbus A320.

Lufthansa has also established Eurowings Europe GmbH, which was established in Austria on Aug. 10. The company will serve as the starting point for further growth, which will create several more operating bases throughout Europe.

Eurowings will also launch intercontinental services Oct. 25, which will use two Airbus A330-200s. These aircraft will be wet leased from the Lufthansa/Turkish Airlines (50/50) joint venture SunExpress. The Eurowings' long-haul fleet will gradually expand to seven A330s.

Separately, the spokesperson confirmed Lufthansa will launch 5X-weekly Frankfurt-Tampa Airbus A340-300 services on Sept. 25, which will be operated 4X-weekly during the winter season.

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