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‘European airports have advantage over American and Asian airports in hub competition’

In a study on hub competition in the world-wide airport network, Airneth fellow Stefano Paleari and colleagues conclude that, thanks to their geographical position, European hubs generally have an advantage over their American and Asean counterparts. They come to this conclusion in a study on the performance of 232 hubs in connecting markets, based on the minimum travel times to connect each pair of airports.

The research of Paleari et al. from the Universities of Bergamo and Brescia is a substantial contribution to the current body of knowledge as it is the first study to offer a comprehensive overview of competition between hubs on a global scale. In addition, the research disentangles the effects of geographical location and connection times on the connectivity performance of hubs.

According to their analysis, Frankfurt is the largest worldwide hub, as 32% of all worldwide origin-destination markets are served via this airport, be it directly or indirectly (with one or more transfers). The main competitor for Frankfurt in the hub market is Paris CDG, which competes with Frankfurt on 81% of all origin-destinations markets offered via Frankfurt. Heathrow and Amsterdam follow Paris as the other major competitors of Frankfurt.

On the US side, Atlanta, Chicago O’Hare and New York JFK are the strongest hubs on world-wide origin-destination markets. The most important competitors of Atlanta are Chicago O’Hare, New York JFK and New York Newark. Large European airports perform on average better than their Asian and American counterparts because of their better geographical position and as a consequences, lower routing factors.

In addition, the research demonstrates the geographical specialization of worldwide hubs. Primary hubs such as Frankfurt, Heathrow, Amsterdam and Atlanta show a low degree of specialization: they serve various world regions to a comparable extent. In contrast, other hubs are highly specialized in serving specific intercontinental regions, such as Madrid (Latin America-Europe), Los Angeles (Asia-North America) and Vienna (Europe-Asia).

Source:

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