# Police swiftly respond to hoax bomb threat on Ryanair flight at Charleroi, causing major disruption



Police responded swiftly to a hoax bomb threat on a Ryanair flight, leading to significant disruption at Charleroi Airport in Belgium. The incident unfolded around 11am local time, when authorities received a report that prompted the immediate suspension of multiple flights. Eyewitness footage captured the tense moments as armed officers boarded the aircraft, with panicked passengers glancing around in confusion.

Nathalie Pierard, a spokesperson for Charleroi Airport, communicated with The Brussels Times about the unfolding situation, stating that the aircraft had been moved to a secure area while a security perimeter of 500 metres was established. The authorities were proactive, ensuring the safety of the 166 passengers, who were to be evacuated upon police approval. The runway, along with the main access road, was closed, highlighting the gravity of the threat, despite it later being confirmed as a hoax by Belgian prosecutors, who noted they were informed by Interpol.

This incident is reminiscent of previous bomb threats involving Ryanair flights, underlining the airline's challenges with security in recent years. For instance, in May 2021, a Ryanair flight was forced to divert to Belarus amid an alleged bomb threat that was later determined to be fabricated for political purposes. An International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) report categorically described the threat as “deliberately false” and implicated the Belarusian government in orchestrating the diversion to detain dissenters.

Moreover, hoax bomb threats involving Ryanair flights are not unprecedented. In 2015, another bomb threat led to a grounded aircraft at Warsaw’s Modlin Airport, resulting in the arrest of a 48-year-old man whose call was traced back to his home. Polish authorities decried the act as an “irresponsible prank,” indicative of the potential ramifications such threats have on air travel and airport operations.

Following the recent scare at Charleroi, Ryanair confirmed that their operations resumed at approximately 1.45pm local time, albeit not without substantial disruption. The swift response from the authorities and the measures employed to ensure passenger safety reflect the ongoing emphasis on security within the aviation industry, especially following prior incidents that have raised alarms about the safety protocols employed in response to threats.

Airports, particularly those serving high volumes of passengers, like Charleroi—serving over nine million passengers in 2023—are constantly under scrutiny, balancing efficient operations with stringent security measures. As the frequency of such incidents suggests an ongoing challenge, the aviation sector must remain vigilant and prepared to address potential threats, real or otherwise, to uphold passenger safety and confidence in air travel.

In summary, the chaotic scenes at Charleroi Airport serve as a stark reminder of the stakes involved in air travel safety, as well as the large-scale repercussions that can ensue from threats—whether genuine or fabricated. The industry continues to grapple with these challenges while striving to maintain operational integrity and passenger trust.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: Source [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14708125/moment-police-storm-Ryanair-bomb-threat-Belgian-airport-suspend.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. Paragraph 2: Source [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14708125/moment-police-storm-Ryanair-bomb-threat-Belgian-airport-suspend.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
3. Paragraph 3: Sources [[2]](https://www.politico.eu/article/un-agency-report-bomb-threat-ryanair-flight-diverted-belarus-deliberately-false/), [[4]](https://travelradar.aero/belarus-implicated-ryanair-bomb-threat-icao-finds/), [[7]](https://travelweekly.com.au/article/icao-report-says-ryanair-bomb-threat-flight-diversion-to-belarus-deliberately-false/)
4. Paragraph 4: Source [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-33267576)
5. Paragraph 5: Source [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14708125/moment-police-storm-Ryanair-bomb-threat-Belgian-airport-suspend.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
6. Paragraph 6: Source [[5]](https://www.aerotime.aero/articles/28039-ryanair-boeing737-diverts-to-berlin-after-bomb-threat)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14708125/moment-police-storm-Ryanair-bomb-threat-Belgian-airport-suspend.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.politico.eu/article/un-agency-report-bomb-threat-ryanair-flight-diverted-belarus-deliberately-false/> - An International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) report concluded that the bomb threat that diverted Ryanair Flight 4978 to Belarus in May 2021 was deliberately false. The report found significant inconsistencies in the Belarusian authorities' account, including the timing of the threat and the lack of corroborative evidence. The ICAO stated that the threat endangered the aircraft's safety and was communicated to the flight crew under instructions from senior Belarusian government officials. The agency was unable to attribute the act to any individual or state due to insufficient information from Belarusian authorities.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-33267576> - In May 2015, a Ryanair passenger jet was grounded at Warsaw's Modlin Airport following a hoax bomb threat. A 48-year-old man was arrested after the call was traced to his home. The airport was closed to inbound flights while the plane was inspected, but the call was later determined to be a hoax. Ryanair expected to release the aircraft and reopen the airport shortly. The incident was described as an 'irresponsible prank' by Polish police.
4. <https://travelradar.aero/belarus-implicated-ryanair-bomb-threat-icao-finds/> - A report by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) implicated Belarus in the Ryanair bomb threat incident. The investigation found that the bomb threat was fabricated by the Belarusian government to divert the plane and arrest political dissenters. The report highlighted significant discrepancies in the Belarusian authorities' account, including the timing of the threat and the lack of corroborative evidence. The ICAO stated that the diversion was carried out under false pretenses and that the Belarusian authorities attempted to obscure evidence.
5. <https://www.aerotime.aero/articles/28039-ryanair-boeing737-diverts-to-berlin-after-bomb-threat> - In May 2021, a Ryanair Boeing 737-800 made an emergency landing in Berlin after a reported bomb threat. The flight, operating from Dublin to Krakow, was diverted to Berlin Brandenburg Airport after German authorities notified the crew of a potential security threat. Passengers disembarked, and the aircraft was searched by federal police and sniffer dogs. No suspicious items were found, and the flight resumed to Krakow via a spare Ryanair jet. This incident occurred a week after another Ryanair flight was forced to land in Minsk due to a false bomb threat.
6. <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20210531-ryanair-passenger-plane-makes-emergency-landing-in-berlin-after-bomb-threat> - In May 2021, a Ryanair passenger plane made an emergency landing in Berlin after a reported bomb threat. The flight from Dublin to Krakow was diverted to Berlin-Brandenburg Airport, where passengers disembarked, and the aircraft was inspected by the bomb squad. No dangerous items were detected, and the passengers continued their journey to Poland on a spare aircraft. This incident followed a similar event a week earlier, where a Ryanair flight was forced to divert to Belarus due to a false bomb threat.
7. <https://travelweekly.com.au/article/icao-report-says-ryanair-bomb-threat-flight-diversion-to-belarus-deliberately-false/> - The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) released a report stating that the bomb threat that diverted Ryanair Flight 4978 to Minsk in May 2021 was 'deliberately false.' The report found that Belarusian authorities failed to provide requested information and that the threat endangered the aircraft's safety. The ICAO acknowledged that the threat was communicated to the flight crew under instructions from senior Belarusian government officials. The agency was unable to attribute the act to any individual or state due to insufficient information from Belarusian authorities.