

# Airline starts to weigh luggage and passengers

4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Harder



Finland's national carrier Finnair has started weighing passengers on its flights from the capital city of Helsinki. The weigh-ins are being done on a voluntary basis and are completely anonymous. A company spokesperson said the new initiative is to ensure safety standards on flights are adhered to. He said any airplane should not exceed the prescribed maximum weight for safe takeoffs and landings. This weight is made up of the aircraft itself, the fuel, checked baggage and cargo, all and onboard catering, water tanks, and passengers. Finnair said airlines never know the exact weight of passengers and they're carry-on baggage, so they have to rely on average estimates provided the aviation authorities.

Passengers who volunteer to be weighed are stepping on weighing scales at the departure gates at Helsinki Airport. Finnair officials were initially concerned about customer backlash because weight is such a personal issue. However, in the first week of the tests, over 1000 passengers had agreed to be weighed. The company said: "We hope to have a good sample of volunteers, both business and leisure travelers, so that we can get the most accurate information possible for important balance calculations." it added: "Our customers have taken it really positively so far." and officials said travelers could "rest assured" and have "peace of mind" that their weight would not be linked to their personal data.

Sources: [sky.com](https://www.sky.com) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [euronews.com](https://www.euronews.com) / [breakingnewsenglish.com](https://www.breakingnewsenglish.com)

## DISCUSS

*"It is wrong to weigh people before they board an airplane."* Do you agree or disagree? Why (not)?

## True / False

- 1) All passengers flying with Finnair must now be weighed. T / F
- 2) Weight is important in ensuring safe takeoffs and landings. T / F
- 3) The weight of an aircraft includes water tanks. T / F
- 4) Airlines know exactly how much their passengers weigh. T / F
- 5) Finnair said it had no concerns about a possible customer backlash. T / F
- 6) More than 1000 passengers were weighed in a week. T / F
- 7) Finnair was not interested in weighing business class passengers. T / F
- 8) The weight of passengers is kept entirely confidential. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in bold are from the news article.)

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b>carrier</b>    | a. comprised      |
| 2. <b>anonymous</b>  | b. retaliation    |
| 3. <b>initiative</b> | c. precise        |
| 4. <b>made up of</b> | d. unnamed        |
| 5. <b>exact</b>      | e. representative |
| 6. <b>initially</b>  | f. airline        |
| 7. <b>backlash</b>   | g. cross section  |
| 8. <b>sample</b>     | h. details        |
| 9. <b>official</b>   | i. scheme         |
| 10. <b>data</b>      | j. at first       |

## DISCUSS MORE

- 1) What do you think of being weighed before you fly?
- 2) Would you volunteer to be weighed?
- 3) Should passengers pay for their ticket according to their weight?
- 4) What do you think of your national carrier?
- 5) How much do you worry about the security of your personal data?
- 6) What do you think of flying?
- 7) Should there be more limits on the weight of baggage?
- 8) What do you think of the airports?
- 9) What do you think of taking off and landing?
- 10) What questions would you like to ask Finnair?

## Airplanes

**Which is the best thing about airplanes?  
Rank these items from 1 (top) to 8 (bottom).**

- \_ Flying
- \_ Food
- \_ Flight crew
- \_ Legroom
- \_ Seat comfort
- \_ Other passengers
- \_ Reading material
- \_ In-flight entertainment