

# Heavy snow, freezing rain hobble European travel

January 17 2024, by Deborah COLE



All departures from Frankfurt airport were cancelled in the afternoon due to freezing rain.

Severe winter weather in northern Europe prompted the cancellation of hundreds of flights Wednesday at Frankfurt airport, Germany's busiest,

while heavy snow in Scandinavia shut down air travel in Oslo for several hours.

A Frankfurt airport spokeswoman said 570 of 1,047 flights had been axed by [late morning](#) as Germany's business capital prepared for dramatic weather conditions.

By early afternoon, all remaining departures were temporarily struck from the schedule due to the onset of freezing rain although landings were still possible, a spokesman said. It was not immediately clear how long the disruption would continue.

Munich airport also reported "significant restrictions in [flight](#) service" due to [bad weather](#), with 250 of 650 scheduled flights cancelled.

Oslo [airport](#) said it closed for several hours because of [heavy snow](#), before reopening at 3:30 pm (1430 GMT). Most buses in the Norwegian capital were canceled and train operator Vy announced the closure of routes in large parts of the east of the country.

In neighboring Sweden, heavy snow led to multiple traffic incidents in western and southern parts, causing traffic jams along several key roads.

"The [road surface](#) is reported to be very slippery and the police are urging the public not to go out on the roads unless absolutely necessary," police said in a statement.

## **Deadly road accident**

German flag carrier Lufthansa advised passengers to confirm that their flights were still scheduled before setting off for airports.

Low-pressure system Gertrud bearing down on southwestern and central

Germany promised up to 40 centimeters (16 inches) of snow and treacherously icy [road](#) conditions, particularly in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg.

Police there reported an "accumulation of accidents" on roads near Baden-Baden while a 34-year-old driver in neighboring Rhineland-Palatinate crashed into a tree and died after skidding off a rural road.

Firefighters and other first responders in Rhineland-Palatinate had prepared for a rash of road accidents and other emergencies by calling up extra staff and vehicles. They urged motorists not to take to the roads unless unavoidable.

National rail company Deutsche Bahn said it was slowing down its high-speed trains due to slick conditions and warned of delays and cancellations in its regional and long-distance network, particularly between the western cities of Cologne and Frankfurt.

Bus routes in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland were also deprived of service as the German Weather Service warned of extremely slippery roads and the risk of tree branches and power lines breaking under the weight of ice and snow.

In large parts of Bavaria, Germany's biggest state, schools were shuttered in anticipation of dangerous winter conditions.

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