2026/1042

18.5.2026

COMMISSION DECISION (EU) 2026/1042

of 23 April 2026

on the consistency of the performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan submitted by Ireland pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 549/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council with the Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period of the Single European Sky performance and charging scheme

(Notified under document C(2026) 2554)

(Only the English and Irish texts are authentic)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 549/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2004 laying down the framework for the creation of the single European sky (the framework Regulation) ([1]), and in particular Article 11(3) point (c) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/2803 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 on the implementation of the Single European Sky ([2]), and in particular Article 58(3) thereof,

Having regard to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 of 11 February 2019 laying down a performance and charging scheme in the single European sky and repealing Implementing Regulations (EU) No 390/2013 and (EU) No 391/2013 ([3]), and in particular Article 15(1) and (2) thereof,

Whereas:

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

(1) Pursuant to Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 549/2004, Member States are to draw up plans, either at national level or at the level of functional airspace blocks ('FABs'), including performance targets, for each reference period of the performance and charging scheme for air navigation services and network functions. Those plans are to include local performance targets which are consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for the reference period concerned.

(2) On 12 June 2024, the Commission adopted Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period ('RP4', 2025–2029). Those Union-wide performance targets were set out in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688 ([4]).

(3) On 1 October 2024, Ireland submitted to the Commission a draft performance plan for RP4. After the verification of completeness of that draft performance plan by the Commission, Ireland submitted an updated draft performance plan ('the draft performance plan') on 18 November 2024.

([1]) OJ L 96, 31.3.2004, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/549/oj.
([2]) OJ L, 2024/2803, 11.11.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2803/oj.
([3]) OJ L 56, 25.2.2019, p. 1, http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/317/oj.
([4]) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688 of 12 June 2024 setting Union-wide performance targets for the air traffic management network for the fourth reference period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2029 (OJ L, 2024/1688, 17.6.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/1688/oj).

(4) The Commission found that the cost-efficiency performance targets set by Ireland in the draft performance plan in respect of its *en route* charging zone do not meet the assessment criteria laid down in point 1.4 of Annex IV of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 and thus are not consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

(5) On 16 May 2025, the Commission therefore notified Ireland of the findings regarding the inconsistency of the performance targets referred to in recital 4 through Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1040 ([5]). In that Decision, the Commission issued recommendations to Ireland in view of ensuring the consistency of their performance targets with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

(6) On 18 August 2025, Ireland submitted a revised draft performance plan for RP4 for assessment by the Commission. Following the verification of completeness of that plan, Ireland submitted an updated version of the revised draft performance plan (the 'revised draft performance plan') on 8 October 2025.

(7) In accordance with Article 15(1) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has assessed the consistency of the local performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan on the basis of the assessment criteria laid down in point 1 of Annex IV to that Implementing Regulation, and taking account of local circumstances, where relevant.

(8) The Commission has complemented its assessment of the revised draft performance plan with a review of the elements set out in point 2 of Annex IV to that Implementing Regulation. However, the allocation of costs between *en route* and terminal services referred to in point 2.1(d)(vii) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 is subject to a separate review by the Commission based on additional information received from Ireland in December 2025. Therefore, the Commission has not drawn any conclusions, at this stage, in respect of the compliance of that cost allocation methodology with points (e) and (f) of Article 15(2) of Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([6]) and Article 22(5) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.

(9) The Performance Review Board ('PRB'), assisting the Commission in the implementation of the performance and charging schemes pursuant to Article 13(2) of Regulation (EU) No 2024/2803, has submitted to the Commission its opinion on the performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland with regard to the consistency of those targets with the Union-wide performance targets. The findings set out in this Decision have been informed by the detailed technical assessment set out in the PRB opinion ([7]).

COMMISSION ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the safety targets

(10) As regards the key performance area of safety, the consistency of the targets included in the revised draft performance plan has been assessed in accordance with point 1.1 of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.

([5]) Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1040 of 16 May 2025 on the inconsistency of certain performance targets included in the draft national and functional airspace block performance plans submitted by Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, France, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Slovakia pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 549/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council with the Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period of the Single European Sky performance and charging scheme (OJ L, 2025/1040, 23.5.2025, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2025/1040/oj).

([6]) Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2004 on the provision of air navigation services in the single European sky (the service provision Regulation) (OJ L 96, 31.3.2004, p. 10, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/550/oj).

([7]) PRB Opinion n° 1-2026 on the assessment of the revised draft performance plans for the fourth reference period (RP4), 28 January 2026.

(11) The performance targets in the key performance area of safety proposed by Ireland in respect of the effectiveness of safety management, broken down per safety management objective and expressed as a level of implementation, are as follows:

Ireland	**Targets on the effectiveness of safety management, expressed as a level of implementation, ranging from EASA level A to D**					
Air navigation service provider	**Safety management objective**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
AirNav Ireland	Safety policy and objectives	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety risk management	D	D	D	D	**D**
	Safety assurance	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety promotion	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety culture	C	C	C	C	**C**

(12) The Commission has found that the safety performance targets proposed by Ireland for the air navigation service provider 'AirNav Ireland' are equal to the Union-wide safety targets in respect of each calendar year from 2025 to 2029.

(13) The Commission notes that the revised draft performance plan sets out measures for AirNav Ireland for the achievement of the local safety targets, such as improving hazard identification and recording, purchasing software to analyse data on the fatigue levels of air traffic controllers ('ATCOs') and the recruitment of safety analysts to review changes in management processes.

(14) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals 11, 12 and 13, the local safety performance targets for 2029 included in the revised draft performance plan are in line with the corresponding Union-wide targets set in Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688. Therefore, those local safety performance targets should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets.

Assessment of the environment targets

(15) As regards the key performance area of environment, the consistency of the targets included in the revised draft performance plan regarding the average horizontal *en route* flight efficiency of the actual trajectory has been assessed based on the criterion laid down in point 1.2 of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317. Accordingly, the proposed environment targets of Ireland have been compared to the relevant *en route* horizontal flight efficiency reference values set out in the European Route Network Improvement Plan ('ERNIP'), drawn up in accordance with Annex I to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/123 ([8]) and available at the time of adopting the Union-wide performance targets for RP4, that is on 2 July 2024.

([8]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/123 of 24 January 2019 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of air traffic management (ATM) network functions and repealing Commission Regulation (EU) No 677/2011 (OJ L 28, 31.1.2019, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/123/oj).

(16) The environment performance targets proposed by Ireland for RP4 and the corresponding national reference values from the ERNIP, expressed as the average horizontal *en route* flight efficiency of the actual trajectory, are as follows:

Ireland	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of environment, expressed as the average horizontal *en route* flight efficiency of the actual trajectory	**1,42 %**	**1,40 %**	**1,38 %**	**1,36 %**	**1,34 %**
Reference values	1,42 %	1,40 %	1,38 %	1,36 %	1,34 %

(17) The Commission observes that the environment targets proposed by Ireland are equal to the corresponding national reference values for each calendar year of RP4.

(18) The Commission notes that Ireland has presented, in the revised draft performance plan, measures for the achievement of the local environment targets, which include the roll-out of a new air traffic management ('ATM') system and the implementation of cross-border free route airspace including possible further improvements to be identified during RP4.

(19) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals 16, 17 and 18, the targets in the key performance area of environment included in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

Assessment of the capacity targets

(20) As regards the key performance area of capacity, the consistency of the targets included in the revised draft performance plan regarding the average *en route* air traffic flow management ('ATFM') delay per flight has been assessed based on the criterion laid down in point 1.3 of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317. Accordingly, the proposed capacity targets of Ireland have been compared to the relevant reference values set out in the Network Operations Plan drawn up in accordance with Article 9 of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/123 and available at the time of adopting the Union-wide performance targets for RP4, that is on 2 July 2024.

(21) The *en route* capacity targets proposed by Ireland for RP4, expressed in minutes of ATFM delay per flight, and the corresponding reference values from the Network Operations Plan, are as follows:

Ireland	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of capacity, expressed in minutes of *en route* ATFM delay per flight	**0,03**	**0,03**	**0,02**	**0,02**	**0,02**
Reference values	0,08	0,06	0,05	0,03	0,03

(22) The Commission observes that the capacity targets proposed by Ireland are lower than the corresponding national reference values for each year of RP4.

(23) The Commission notes that Ireland has presented in the revised draft performance plan measures for the achievement of the local *en route* capacity targets which include the recruitment and training of additional ATCOs and air traffic safety electronics personnel ('ATSEP'), an improved sectorisation, and the realisation of investments in systems and infrastructures enabling enhanced capacity.

(24) Furthermore, the Commission notes that Ireland has established, in the revised draft performance plan, two additional key performance indicators ('KPIs') and associated additional performance targets in the key performance area of capacity, in accordance with Articles 8(4) and 10(3) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317. The purpose of those additional KPIs is to track the implementation by AirNav Ireland of the measures to strengthen its ATCO and ATSEP staffing levels measured in full-time equivalents ('FTEs'). The increase in the number of FTEs in those staff categories is critical for the purpose of enhancing airspace capacity and support the timely implementation of the planned investments in fixed assets.

(25) Ireland has also set up incentive schemes of financial nature, in accordance with Article 11(4) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, to support the achievement of the additional capacity performance targets referred to in recital 24.

(26) With reference to recitals 24 and 25, the Commission views positively the additional capacity performance targets and the related financial incentive schemes established by Ireland in the revised draft performance plan. The Commission notes that the financial incentives are linked with the actual traffic evolution over RP4 and would aim to mitigate the costs borne by airspace users in the event the planned recruitments of ATCOs and ATSEPs are not implemented in full. The Commission considers that the financial incentives set for the ANSP in this respect are justified and proportionate in light of the significant costs associated with the planned recruitments of additional ATCOs and ATSEPs over RP4.

(27) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals 21 to 26, the targets in the key performance area of capacity included in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland and referred to in recital 21 should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

Review of the capacity targets for terminal air navigation services

(28) In accordance with point 2.1(b) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has reviewed the capacity performance targets for terminal air navigation services set in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland in respect of the airports referred to in Articles 1(3) and (4) of that Implementing Regulation. It was found that those targets do not give rise to concerns.

Assessment of the cost-efficiency targets

(29) In Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1040, the Commission concluded that the proposed *en route* cost-efficiency targets included in the draft performance plan of Ireland submitted in 2024 were inconsistent with the Union-wide performance targets. Ireland has proposed revised *en route* cost-efficiency targets in its revised draft performance plan.

(30) The table below shows the revised cost-efficiency performance targets proposed by Ireland in the revised draft performance plan.

***En route* charging zone of Ireland**	**2019 baseline value**	**2024 baseline value**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Revised cost-efficiency targets, expressed as determined *en route* unit cost (in real terms in 2022 prices)	**27,61 EUR**	**26,89 EUR**	**28,49 EUR**	**29,51 EUR**	**29,49 EUR**	**29,56 EUR**	**29,85 EUR**

(31) The Commission notes that the determined unit cost ('DUC') of Ireland for each year of RP4 is slightly lower than in the draft performance plan submitted in 2024, which constitutes an improvement.

(32) The determined costs expressed in EUR in real terms in 2022 prices ('EUR2022') and the traffic assumptions for the charging zone, as set by Ireland in the revised draft performance plan, are shown in the table below:

***En route* charging zone of Ireland**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Revised determined costs in real terms in 2022 prices (revised draft performance plan)	**147 M EUR**	**155 M EUR**	**158 M EUR**	**161 M EUR**	**165 M EUR**
Traffic forecast (revised draft performance plan), expressed in thousands of *en route* service units	**5 175**	**5 256**	**5 349**	**5 458**	**5 544**

(33) The Commission has assessed the consistency of the revised cost-efficiency targets proposed by Ireland based on the criteria laid down in points 1.4(a), (b) and (c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.

(34) Concerning the criterion laid down in point 1.4(a) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that the *en route* DUC trend at charging zone level of +2,1 % over RP4 underperforms the Union-wide trend of -1,2 % over the same period.

(35) Concerning the criterion laid down in point 1.4(b) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that the long-term *en route* DUC trend at charging zone level over the third reference period ('RP3') and RP4 of +0,9 % underperforms the long-term Union-wide trend of -1,0 % over the same period.

(36) Concerning the criterion laid down in point 1.4(c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that the baseline value for the DUC of EUR 26,89 of Ireland in EUR2022 is 5,4 % lower than the average baseline value of 28,43 EUR2022 of the relevant comparator group set out in Article 7, point (b), of Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688.

(37) Furthermore, the Commission has examined whether the deviations referred to in recitals 34 and 35 may be deemed necessary and proportionate under point 1.4(d) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317. Accordingly, the Commission has assessed whether the observed deviations from the Union-wide DUC trend and from the long-term Union-wide DUC trend referred to in recitals 34 and 35 are exclusively due to additional determined costs related to measures necessary to achieve the performance targets in the key performance area of capacity or to restructuring measures within the meaning of Article 2(18) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.

(38) The PRB has calculated the estimated differences between the determined costs for RP4 set by Ireland in the revised draft performance plan and the determined costs that would be required to meet the Union-wide DUC trend for RP4 and the long-term Union-wide DUC trend for RP3 and RP4 combined. Based on the PRB findings, the total determined costs for RP4 proposed by Ireland fall short by approximately EUR 92,9 M in EUR2022 of the level required to meet the Union-wide DUC trend, which represents an average annual gap of EUR 18,6 M in EUR2022. A similar difference amounting over the whole RP4 to approximately EUR 98,0 M in EUR2022 is observed against the level required to meet the long-term Union-wide DUC trend, which corresponds to an annual average gap of EUR 19,6 M in EUR2022.

(39) In respect of the criterion set out in point 1.4(d)(i) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission notes that Ireland refers in the revised draft performance plan to additional determined costs incurred over RP4 by the *en route* air navigation service provider AirNav Ireland in relation to measures needed for the achievement of the local capacity targets ('capacity measures').

(40) The Commission observes that Ireland has presented and quantified, in the revised draft performance plan, eight capacity measures of a total value over RP4 of EUR 104,1 M expressed in real terms in EUR2022.

(41) Those capacity measures comprise firstly the training and employment of additional staff, in particular ATCOs and ATSEPs, by AirNav Ireland:

— AirNav Ireland plans to increase over RP4 by 30 full-time equivalents ('FTEs') the number of ATCOs in operations at the Shannon area control centre ('ACC'), thus bringing the total number of ATCOs in operations at the ACC to 225 FTEs in 2029. Ireland explains that, through this measure, the ATCO staffing levels of AirNav Ireland will be adequate to accommodate traffic demand whilst also increasing the resilience of its operations. As a result, AirNav Ireland expects to considerably reduce the recourse to overtime by ATCOs.

— As regards the employment of additional ATSEPs, Ireland explains that the increase in engineer staffing levels would support the delivery of capital investment projects and the implementation of a new ATM system during RP4, while in previous reference periods the ANSP has been unable to achieve full deployment of investments due to an under-resourcing of ATSEP positions. Furthermore, AirNav Ireland aims at employing a total of 83 operations management and overhead support staff by 2029, releasing ATCOs from non-operational tasks, thus increasing the productivity and efficiency of the employed ATCOs.

(42) Ireland also invokes as a capacity measure investments in systems and infrastructure, the acquisition and deployment of a new ATM system, which will provide functional and technical improvements:

— The new ATM system will replace the legacy system currently in use since 17 years. The new ATM system will enable enhanced technical functionalities to support ATCO decision making, improved ATCO productivity and automation of routine tasks.

— AirNav Ireland also plans to implement a new contingency ATM system and extend its ACC buildings. This investment will allow to prove and test facilities of the new ATM system, increase capacity and ensure continuity of service.

— Furthermore, AirNav Ireland will upgrade its radar infrastructure, including the replacement of technical components installed between 2005 and 2008, which have reached their end of life. The objective of this investment is to provide reliable radar coverage, improved capacity and productivity.

(43) The PRB has analysed in detail the capacity measures invoked by Ireland. In its analysis, the PRB has taken account of the additional justifications provided in the revised draft performance plan and of the additional incentive schemes, referred to in recitals 25 and 26, which were set up by Ireland in relation to the implementation of the planned recruitments of ATCOs and ATSEPs over RP4. Against this background, the PRB considered that the capacity measures invoked by Ireland are necessary and proportionate for the achievement of the capacity targets.

(44) Having regard to the evaluation made by the PRB, the additional costs reported by Ireland for the capacity measures referred to in recitals 39 to 43 are larger than the deviations from the Union-wide cost-efficiency trends calculated by the PRB and presented in recital 38.

(45) In light of the considerations in recitals 39 to 44, the Commission finds that the criterion set out in point 1.4(d)(i) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317 should be considered fulfilled in respect of Ireland with regard to the deviation from the Union-wide DUC trend referred to in recital 34 and with regard to the deviation from the long-term Union-wide DUC trend referred to in recital 35. Therefore, the Commission considers that Ireland has adequately addressed the recommendations set out in Article 3 of Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/1040 with regard to the revision of its local cost-efficiency performance targets.

(46) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals 30 to 45, the targets in the key performance area of cost-efficiency included in the revised draft performance plan should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

Review of the cost-efficiency targets for terminal air navigation services

(47) In accordance with point 2.1(c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has reviewed the cost-efficiency performance targets for terminal air navigation services set in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland in respect of the airports referred to in Articles 1(3) and (4) of that Implementing Regulation. It was found that those targets do not give rise to concerns.

CONCLUSIONS

(48) In the light of all the foregoing, the Commission has found that the performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan of Ireland are consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan submitted by Ireland for the fourth reference period ('RP4'), listed in the Annex to this Decision, are consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4 set out in Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688.

Article 2

This Decision is addressed to Ireland.

Done at Brussels, 23 April 2026.

For the Commission
Apostolos TZITZIKOSTAS
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

Performance targets included in the revised draft performance plan submitted by Ireland pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 549/2004, found to be consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF SAFETY

Effectiveness of safety management

Ireland	**Targets on the effectiveness of safety management, expressed as a level of implementation**, ranging from EASA level A to D					
Air navigation service provider concerned	**Safety management objective**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
AirNav Ireland	Safety policy and objectives	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety risk management	D	D	D	D	**D**
	Safety assurance	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety promotion	C	C	C	C	**C**
	Safety culture	C	C	C	C	**C**

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF ENVIRONMENT

Average horizontal *en route* flight efficiency of the actual trajectory

Ireland	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Targets in the key performance area of environment, expressed as the average horizontal *en route* flight efficiency of the actual trajectory	**1,42 %**	**1,40 %**	**1,38 %**	**1,36 %**	**1,34 %**

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF CAPACITY

Average *en route* ATFM delay in minutes per flight

Ireland	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Targets in the key performance area of capacity, expressed in minutes of ATFM delay per flight	**0,03**	**0,03**	**0,02**	**0,02**	**0,02**

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF COST-EFFICIENCY

Determined unit cost for *en route* air navigation services

***En route* charging zone of Ireland**	**2019 baseline value**	**2024 baseline value**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Revised cost-efficiency targets, expressed as determined *en route* unit cost (in real terms in 2022 prices)	**27,61 EUR**	**26,89 EUR**	**28,49 EUR**	**29,51 EUR**	**29,49 EUR**	**29,56 EUR**	**29,85 EUR**