



2025/1060

28.5.2025

COMMISSION DECISION (EU) 2025/1060

of 19 May 2025

on the consistency of the performance targets included in the draft performance plan submitted by Malta 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(2025) 2922)

(Only the English and Maltese 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 14(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) The Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period ('RP4', 2025-2029) were set out in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688 ⁽⁴⁾.
- (3) All Member States have drawn up and adopted draft performance plans for RP4, which were submitted to the Commission for assessment by 1 October 2024. Following the verification of completeness of those draft performance plans, the Commission requested Member States to submit updated draft performance plans by 15 November 2024.
- (4) The Commission's assessment presented in this Decision is based on the updated draft performance plan for RP4 submitted by Malta (the draft performance plan).
- (5) The Performance Review Body ('PRB'), assisting the Commission in the implementation of the performance scheme, has submitted to the Commission a report containing its advice on the assessment of the draft performance plans.

⁽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, ELI: 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).

- (6) In accordance with Article 14(1) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has assessed the consistency of the local performance targets included in the draft performance plan on the basis of the criteria laid down in point 1 of Annex IV to that Implementing Regulation, and taking account of local circumstances where relevant.
- (7) The Commission has complemented its assessment of the draft performance plan with a review of the elements set out in point 2 of Annex IV to that Implementing Regulation. In respect of point 2.1(d)(vii) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission notes that it has not conducted, as part of that review, a detailed analysis of the methodology used by Malta for the allocation of costs between *en route* and terminal services in RP4. 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) Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽ⁱ⁾ and Article 22(5) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.

COMMISSION ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the safety targets

- (8) As regards the key performance area of safety, the consistency of the targets included in the draft performance plan has been assessed in accordance with point 1.1 of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317.
- (9) The performance targets in the key performance area of safety proposed by Malta in respect of the effectiveness of safety management, broken down per safety management objective and expressed as a level of implementation, are as follows:

Malta	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
MATS	Safety policy and objectives	C	C	D	D	D
	Safety risk management	C	C	C	C	D
	Safety assurance	C	C	C	C	D
	Safety promotion	C	C	C	D	D
	Safety culture	C	C	C	C	C

- (10) The Commission has found that the safety performance targets proposed by Malta for the air navigation service provider 'MATS' are equal to or higher than the Union-wide safety targets in respect of each calendar year of RP4, including year 2029.
- (11) The Commission notes that the draft performance plan sets out measures for MATS for the achievement of the local safety targets, such as the continuous update of the integrated management system and of the safety plan, the implementation of a new risk management software, and enhanced cybersecurity trainings.
- (12) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals (9), (10) and (11), the local safety performance targets included in the draft performance plan should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets.

⁽ⁱ⁾ 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>).

Assessment of the environment targets

- (13) As regards the key performance area of environment, the consistency of the targets included in the 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 Malta 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 ⁽⁶⁾ and available at the time of adopting the Union-wide performance targets for RP4, that is on 2 July 2024.
- (14) The environment performance targets proposed by Malta 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:

Malta	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of environment , expressed as the average horizontal <i>en route</i> flight efficiency of the actual trajectory	1,56 %	1,54 %	1,52 %	1,50 %	1,48 %
Reference values	1,56 %	1,54 %	1,52 %	1,50 %	1,48 %

- (15) The Commission observes that the environment targets proposed by Malta are equal to the corresponding national reference values for each calendar year of RP4.
- (16) The Commission notes that Malta has presented, in the draft performance plan, measures for the achievement of the local environment targets which include the implementation of cross-border free route airspace and a planned reduction of route availability restrictions to the largest possible extent.
- (17) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals (14), (15) and (16), the targets in the key performance area of environment included in the draft performance plan should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

Assessment of the capacity targets

- (18) As regards the key performance area of capacity, the consistency of the targets included in the 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 *en route* capacity targets of Malta 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.
- (19) The *en route* capacity targets proposed by Malta for RP4, expressed in minutes of ATFM delay per flight, and the corresponding reference values from the Network Operations Plan, are as follows:

⁽⁶⁾ 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).

Malta	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of capacity , expressed in minutes of <i>en route</i> ATFM delay per flight	0,03	0,02	0,01	0,01	0,01
Reference values	0,03	0,02	0,01	0,01	0,01

- (20) The Commission observes that the capacity targets proposed by Malta are equal to the corresponding national reference values for each calendar year of RP4.
- (21) The Commission notes that Malta has presented, in the draft performance plan, measures for the achievement of its *en route* capacity targets. Those measures include the opening by the area control centre of an additional sector during daytime and the extension of the sector opening hours, in order to accommodate the forecasted traffic demand.
- (22) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals (19), (20) and (21), the targets in the key performance area of capacity included in the draft performance plan should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4.

Review of the capacity targets for terminal air navigation services

- (23) In accordance with point 2.1(b) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has complemented its assessment of the draft performance plan by reviewing the capacity performance targets for terminal air navigation services set 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

- (24) As regards the key performance area of cost-efficiency, the consistency of the targets included in the draft performance plan regarding the determined unit cost ('DUC') for *en route* air navigation services has been assessed based on the criteria laid down in points 1.4(a), (b) and (c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317. Those criteria consist of the DUC trend over RP4, the long-term DUC trend over the third reference period ('RP3') and RP4 (2020-2029), and the baseline value for the DUC at charging zone level compared with the average value of the charging zones where air navigation service providers have a similar operational and economic environment.
- (25) The *en route* cost-efficiency targets proposed by Malta for RP4, and the related baseline values, are as follows:

<i>En route</i> charging zone of Malta	2019 baseline value	2024 baseline value	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets and baseline values in the key performance area of cost-efficiency , expressed as determined unit cost (in real terms at 2022 prices)	EUR 24,87	EUR 16,72	EUR 17,61	EUR 17,01	EUR 18,71	EUR 19,48	EUR 21,60

- (26) Concerning the assessment criterion set out in point 1.4(a) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that Malta's DUC trend at charging zone level of +5,2 % over RP4 underperforms the Union-wide trend of - 1,2 % over the same period.

- (27) Concerning the assessment criterion set out in point 1.4(b) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that Malta's long-term DUC trend at charging zone level over RP3 and RP4 of - 1,6 % outperforms the long-term Union-wide trend of - 1,0 % over the same period.
- (28) Concerning the assessment criterion set out in point 1.4(c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission observes that Malta's baseline value for the DUC of EUR 16,72 in real terms at 2022 prices ('EUR2022') is 47,7 % lower than the average baseline value of EUR 31,96 in EUR2022 of the relevant comparator group set out in Article 7 Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1688.
- (29) It is clear that Malta's long-term DUC trend outperforms the corresponding Union-wide trend and that Malta's baseline value for 2024 is significantly below the comparator group average. Therefore, the Commission considers that the deviation from the Union-wide DUC trend for RP4 referred to in recital (26) does not preclude Malta's cost-efficiency performance targets from being consistent with the Union-wide cost-efficiency performance targets.
- (30) On the basis of the findings set out in recitals (25) to (29), the targets in the key performance area of cost-efficiency included in the 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

- (31) In accordance with point 2.1(c) of Annex IV to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, the Commission has complemented its assessment of the draft performance plan by reviewing the cost-efficiency performance targets for terminal air navigation services set in respect of the airports referred to in Articles 1(3) and (4) of that Implementing Regulation. It was found that those targets give rise to concerns.
- (32) The Commission observes that the terminal DUC trend of Malta of +6,6 % over RP4 is higher than the *en route* RP4 DUC trend of +5,2 % and represents a significant deterioration compared to the actual terminal DUC trend of - 8,1 % observed over RP3. The Commission notes that the observed deteriorating DUC trend is mainly driven by a significant increase in costs. Indeed, the determined costs of terminal air navigation service provision for Malta for 2029 are planned to be approximately 77 % higher than the level of costs in 2024, whilst the traffic growth in service units over the same period for the terminal charging zone is forecasted to amount to approximately 21 %.
- (33) Therefore, the Commission considers that, in connection with the adoption of its final performance plan in accordance with Article 16, point (a) of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/317, Malta should further justify the terminal cost-efficiency performance targets for RP4 in light of the observations set out in recital (32), or should revise downwards those targets.

CONCLUSIONS

- (34) In the light of the foregoing, the performance targets included in the draft performance plan of Malta should be considered consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for RP4,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The performance targets included in the draft performance plan submitted by Malta 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 the Republic of Malta.

Done at Brussels, 19 May 2025.

For the Commission
Apostolos TZITZIKOSTAS
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

Performance targets included in the draft performance plan of Malta, found to be consistent with the Union-wide performance targets for the fourth reference period

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF SAFETY

Malta	Targets on the effectiveness of safety management, expressed as a level of implementation, ranging from European Aviation Safety Agency ('EASA') level A to D					
Air navigation service provider	Safety management objective	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
MATS	Safety policy and objectives	C	C	D	D	D
	Safety risk management	C	C	C	C	D
	Safety assurance	C	C	C	C	D
	Safety promotion	C	C	C	D	D
	Safety culture	C	C	C	C	C

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF ENVIRONMENT

Malta	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of environment , expressed as the average horizontal <i>en route</i> flight efficiency of the actual trajectory	1,56 %	1,54 %	1,52 %	1,50 %	1,48 %

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF CAPACITY

Malta	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets in the key performance area of capacity , expressed in minutes of <i>en route</i> ATFM delay per flight	0,03	0,02	0,01	0,01	0,01

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA OF COST-EFFICIENCY

En route charging zone of Malta	2019 baseline value	2024 baseline value	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Targets and baseline values in the key performance area of cost-efficiency , expressed as determined unit cost (in real terms at 2022 prices)	EUR 24,87	EUR 16,72	EUR 17,61	EUR 17,01	EUR 18,71	EUR 19,48	EUR 21,60