



Brussels, 10.2.2026  
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**COMMISSION DECISION**

**of 10.2.2026**

**on the process for introducing operating restrictions at Dublin Airport in accordance  
with Regulation (EU) 598/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council**

(Only the English text is authentic)

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### on the process for introducing operating restrictions at Dublin Airport in accordance with Regulation (EU) 598/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council

(Only the English text is authentic)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

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

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 598/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on the establishment of rules and procedures with regard to the introduction of noise-related operating restrictions at Union airports within a Balanced Approach and repealing Directive 2002/30/EC<sup>1</sup> (the “Regulation (EU) 598/2014”), and in particular Article 8(3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) On 8 August 2025, in accordance with Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) No 598/2014, Ireland notified the Commission of its intention to introduce operating restrictions at Dublin Airport registered with the reference Ares(2025)6514967. The submitted documents included references to, among other, a regulatory decision issued by the Aircraft Noise Competent Authority (‘ANCA’) following a study on proposed operating restrictions to be introduced at Dublin Airport, Inspector’s reports informing the decision of following a number of appeals to ANCA’s Regulatory Decision, and the Planning Commissioner’s Final Decision.
- (2) Following the analysis of the submitted documents, the Commission posed a number of questions to the Irish Authorities by letter of 31 October 2025 registered with the reference Ares(2025)9354715. The replies by the Irish authorities were received on 8 December 2025 registered with the reference Ares(2025)10814577.
- (3) The Commission assessed the submissions of the Irish authorities under Regulation (EU) 598/2014, in particular with respect to the applicable procedure, the objectives of the measure and the proportionality of the proposed operating restrictions.
- (4) The Noise Abatement Objective as set in the Noise Action Plan for Dublin Airport seeks to “*limit and reduce the long-term adverse effects of aircraft noise on health and quality of life, particularly at night, as part of the sustainable development of Dublin Airport*”. It will be primarily measured through the number of people highly annoyed and highly sleep disturbed by aircraft noise, particularly at night. The objective also requires a reduction in the number of people exposed to aircraft noise above 55 dB L<sub>night</sub> and 65 dB L<sub>den</sub> when compared to conditions in 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 173, 12.6.2014, p. 65.

- (5) ANCA, following its assessment, determined that to achieve the objective the following measures are necessary, which was reflected in its Regulatory Decision published on 20 June 2022:
- A Noise Quota Scheme with an annual quota count budget of 16.260 between 23:00 and 06:59 (operating restriction);
  - The North Runway shall not be used for take-off or landing between 00:00 and 05:59 except in certain circumstances (e.g. safety, maintenance considerations, exceptional air traffic conditions etc.) (operating restriction);
  - A voluntary residential sound insulation grant scheme for residential dwellings (land-use planning measure).
- (6) Following appeals to ANCA’s Regulatory Decision lodged to An Comisiún Pleanála (‘ACP’), the appeal body for the purpose of Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) No 598/2014, relying on the reasoning expressed in Inspector’s reports, ACP acknowledges that the noise abatement objective set by ANCA can be achieved by the measures included in ANCA’s Regulatory Decision. However, ACP considers that measurements in  $L_{\text{night}}$  and  $L_{\text{den}}$  do not sufficiently consider the impact of the proposed measures on additional take-offs and landings during the night leading to additional awakenings at night. ACP thus introduces a supplementary noise metric,  $LA_{\text{max}}$ , to take into account the additional awakenings and concludes that an additional operating restriction, namely an annual night movement cap of 35,672 is necessary.
- (7) In its letter of 31 October 2025<sup>2</sup>, the Commission asked whether ACP had considered any alternative less restrictive measures to achieve the noise abatement objective containing the supplementary noise metric. By letter of 8 December 2025, ACP replied that the only measures taken into account were those proposed by the Dublin airport authority in its planning application (a noise quota system, restrictions for the use of the North Runaway between 00:00 and 05:59 and a Night-Time Residential Sound Insulation Grant Scheme) and which had already been considered by ANCA in its assessment.
- (8) Pursuant to Article 5(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) 598/2014, Member States are to define the noise abatement of the specific airport, taking account of the Noise Action Plan as appropriate. Article 8 and Annex V of Directive 2002/49/EC read together with Articles 5 and 6 of Directive 2002/49/EC and Annex I of Regulation (EU) 598/2014 require that the assessment methods for the noise indicators include, as a minimum, health effects determined through  $L_{\text{den}}$  and  $L_{\text{night}}$  indicators, detailed in Annex II and Annex III of Directive 2002/49/EC. Annex I of Regulation (EU) 598/2014 read together with Directive 2002/49/EC also allows the use of additional indicators which have an objective basis, such as  $LA_{\text{max}}$ .
- (9) Pursuant to Article 5(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) 598/2014, Member States are not to apply operating restrictions before considering other measures of the balanced approach. This is in view to determine the most cost-effective measure or a combination of measures.
- (10) ACP concluded that the annual night movement cap, which constitutes an operating restriction, is necessary to achieve the noise abatement objective considering the  $LA_{\text{max}}$  indicator, without any assessment of whether measures from the other three

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<sup>2</sup> Ares(2025)9354715

pillars of the balanced approach could have achieved the objective, contrary to Articles 5(3) (a)-(c) of Regulation (EU) 598/2014.

- (11) The Commission, therefore, is of the opinion that the process for introducing operating restrictions at Dublin Airport by the Irish authorities is not in conformity with Regulation (EU) 598/2014 and that the relevant Irish authorities should examine this Decision and inform the Commission of their intentions before introducing the operating restrictions.
- (12) For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision is without prejudice to any future Commission's assessment of the obligation of the Irish Authorities to fully comply with the provisions of Regulation (EU) 598/2014.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

- (1) The operating restrictions at Dublin Airport, which Ireland intends to introduce and which it notified on 8 August 2025, do not fully follow the process set out in Regulation (EU) 598/2014, insofar as Ireland has not considered other measures than operating restrictions in accordance with Article 5(3) of that Regulation.
- (2) Ireland shall examine this Decision and inform the Commission of their intentions before introducing those operating restrictions at Dublin Airport.

*Article 2*

This Decision is addressed to the Republic of Ireland.

Done at Brussels, 10.2.2026

*For the Commission*  
*Apostolos TZITZIKOSTAS*  
*Member of the Commission*

