



Energy for
generations

Advancing a fair, flexible and affordable clean energy future

ESB's priorities for Ireland's Presidency
of the Council of the European Union



Despite transition efforts, Europe still relies on external fossil fuels for circa 60% of energy. The EU's energy transition presents an opportunity to enhance security alongside sustainability: the momentum towards decarbonisation prevails, paving the way for a more resilient and sustainable future.



Against this backdrop, the next phase of EU policy must accelerate domestic clean energy deployment, demand flexibility and electrification. Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union provides a critical opportunity to shape this post 2030 framework towards a more resilient, competitive and electrified European energy system.

Given Ireland's current dependence on fossil fuel imports, and our abundant indigenous renewable energy potential, it is critical to the security, affordability and competitiveness of Irish society that the electrification of heat and transport is accelerated. Ireland's next electricity grid investment cycle (Price Review 6) starts in 2026, with a planned investment of over €13 billion over five years. This is more than double the investment of the previous period, reflecting the importance of this infrastructure to national economic, social and climate ambitions.

While distinct from the Council of the European Union agenda, negotiations between the European Commission and the UK on GB's potential re-entry into the day-ahead electricity market could deliver mutual benefits by strengthening regional energy cooperation and improving efficiency across interconnected markets.

EU policy has been transformative for the energy sector, including decarbonisation mandates, market reforms, renewable energy and energy efficiency targets. As an organisation which is deeply committed to climate action and to the difference that this can make for future generations, we hope that Ireland can take this opportunity to lead the next steps in Europe's energy transition.



1. Accelerating infrastructure

Deployment of renewables, accelerating grid development, promoting flexibility and a secure, resilient electricity system

Accelerating infrastructure is essential for the successful transition to clean energy across Europe. This involves the rapid deployment of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, alongside urgent upgrades to the electricity grid to accommodate growing demands and the integration of new technologies.

Enhancing grid development will not only support increased renewable generation, but also promote flexibility within the system, ensuring that electricity can be delivered reliably where and when it is needed. By investing in a secure and resilient electricity network, Europe can reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels, improve energy security, and lay the foundations for a sustainable, competitive future.

Decarbonisation and electrification increase system complexity and interdependence, requiring more robust integration of renewables, grid development, and energy storage.

Regarding the Industrial Accelerator Act designed to strengthen European competitiveness and decarbonisation, care is needed on the detail of “Made in EU” procurement requirements that could add complexity, increase costs and delay essential grid delivery.

Key files

European Grids Package

Energy Security Framework

**Multi-Annual
Financial Framework**

**European Climate Resilience
and Risk Management
Integrated Framework**

Industrial Accelerator Act



2. Energy efficiency and electrification

Reduce energy demand and increase electrification

Energy efficiency is critical because it is the fastest and most cost-effective way to reduce the EU's structural dependence on imported fossil fuels while lowering emissions.

Efficiency and electrification are mutually reinforcing: efficiency limits the scale of new generation and networks required, while electrification enables deep emissions reductions in heat, transport, industry and other sectors making them central to a cost-effective and resilient EU energy transition.

The Electrification Action Plan should set explicit electrification targets and be backed by measures embedded in a strong governance framework. These measures should include mandatory system planning, transparent monitoring, streamlined reporting, and sectoral transition pathways - all are needed to translate ambition into investable, system-aligned action.



Key files

[Heating and Cooling Strategy](#)

[Electrification Action Plan](#)

[Post-2030 Framework for Energy Efficiency](#)

[Post-2030 Renewable Energy Framework](#)

[2040 Emissions Reduction Target](#)



3. Affordability

An equitable and affordable transition

Practical approaches are required for an affordable transition, ensuring that the shift to clean energy does not disproportionately burden those least able to pay. This includes implementing targeted subsidies and grants for low-income and vulnerable groups which can help offset costs for households most at risk of energy poverty.

Tax incentives can further ease the financial impact by reducing the cost of investments in energy efficiency measures or the adoption of renewable technologies. Continued public investment in key infrastructure, such as upgrading electricity grids and expanding public transport, is also essential to lower overall transition costs and ensure widespread access to affordable, clean energy. These measures, taken together, can help deliver a fair and inclusive transition, safeguarding social cohesion while driving Europe's progress towards a sustainable energy future.



Key files

[Multi-Annual Financial Framework](#)

[European Grids Package](#)

[Future-Proof Electricity Bills](#)