



An Coimisiún  
um Rialáil Fónais  
**Commission for  
Regulation of Utilities**

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# EirGrid

# Draft Transmission Development Plan 2021 – 2030

**Consultation Paper**

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# Executive Summary

Each year, in accordance with Condition 8 of its licence, Article 8 (6) of SI No. 445 of 2000, and Article 51 of Directive (EU) 2019/944, EirGrid must prepare a Transmission Development Plan (TDP), on which Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) undertakes the consultation. EirGrid has now submitted a draft TDP to the CRU for consultation and the CRU has prepared this accompanying consultation paper calling for comment.

EirGrid's TDP is a draft plan for the development of the Irish electricity transmission network and interconnection over the ten-year period, 2021 to 2030. It presents projects that EirGrid have considered are needed to reinforce the transmission network and will help to achieve the strategic objectives laid out by national and EU policies.

To support the consultation process and the development of a robust TDP, the CRU has posed consultation questions that respondents may use as a basis for their review.

The CRU will require EirGrid to fully consider all comments and suggestions submitted. Following this, EirGrid will submit the final TDP 2021- 2030 to the CRU for approval.

# Public Impact Statement

It is a statutory and licence requirement on EirGrid to produce, each year, a network development plan for the forthcoming ten years. It provides EirGrid's view of the appropriate levels of network development to:

- ensure the security of electricity supply;
- ensure the competitiveness of the national economy;
- ensure the long-term sustainability of electricity supply in the country;
- secure transmission network supplies;
- promote market integration; and
- promote the integration of Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and complementary thermal generation.

This planning should assist EirGrid in:

- developing the transmission system appropriately and to the needs of its customers; and
- developing revenue proposals for review by the CRU who will assess them to ensure:
  - value for money for the customer is being delivered; and
  - the appropriate levels of network development to support security of supply, renewable development and a competitive electricity sector.

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## Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation or Term	Definition or Meaning
<b>CRU</b>	Commission for Regulation of Utilities
<b>EAR</b>	Environmental Appraisal Report
<b>IP</b>	Implementation Programme
<b>RES</b>	Renewable Energy Sources
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>TDP</b>	Transmission Development Plan
<b>TSO</b>	Transmission System Operator

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Commission for Regulation of Utilities

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) is Ireland's independent energy and water regulator. The CRU was established in 1999 and has a wide range of economic, customer protection and energy safety responsibilities. The CRU's mission is to protect the public interest in water, energy and energy safety.

Further information on the CRU's role and relevant legislation can be found on CRU's website at [www.cru.ie](http://www.cru.ie).

## 1.2. Background

EirGrid is the independent Transmission System Operator (TSO) and does not own, construct or operate any form of electricity generation. EirGrid has a statutory obligation under Regulation 8(6) of SI No. 445/2000 and Article 51 of Directive (EU) 2019/944, and a licence obligation under Condition 8 of the Transmission System Operator licence to produce a Transmission Development Plan (TDP)<sup>1</sup>.

The CRU undertakes the consultation on the TDP prepared by EirGrid. As part of this process, EirGrid has now submitted a draft TDP to the CRU. To support the consultation process and the development of a robust TDP, the CRU has posed consultation questions that respondents may use as a basis for their review. These are set out below.

## 1.3. Related Documents

[Directive \(EU\) 2019/944 common rules for the internal market for electricity](#)

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<sup>1</sup> In particular, Article 51 of European Directive 2019/944 requires:

- 51(1) - At least every two years, transmission system operators shall submit to the regulatory authority a ten-year network development plan based on existing and forecast supply and demand after having consulted all the relevant stakeholders. That network development plan shall contain efficient measures in order to guarantee the adequacy of the system and the security of supply. The transmission system operator shall publish the ten-year network development plan on its website.
- 51(4) - The regulatory authority shall consult all actual or potential system users on the ten-year network development plan in an open and transparent manner. Persons or undertakings claiming to be potential system users may be required to substantiate such claims. The regulatory authority shall publish the result of the consultation process, in particular possible needs for investments.

[Transmission Development Plan 2020 – 2029](#)

[Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\) for Grid IP](#)

[Grid Implementation Plan \(IP\) 2017 - 2022](#)

EirGrid also publishes a number of other documents related to network planning and these are described in Chapter 1 of the TDP. EirGrid is currently conducting a public consultation on its [Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2022](#) which ends on 08 March 2022. This plan includes a schedule of all EirGrid publications for 2022.

## 2. Overview of the Draft TDP 2021 – 2030

EirGrid's draft TDP 2021 - 2030 is the draft plan for the development of the Irish electricity transmission network and interconnection over ten years from 2021. As transmission network development is continuously evolving, it summarises transmission projects and changes that have happened since TDP 2020 – 2029, which it supersedes.

To help the comparison of network development projects year-on-year, data is represented at a fixed point in time – the data freeze date. For this draft plan, the data freeze date is 01 January 2021. This freeze date aligns with other complementary EirGrid publications.

The draft TDP describes the TSO's development planning process, it discusses the drivers and assumptions underlying the plan, and it outlines the TSO's plans for transmission network development over the next ten years (including projects under construction). In doing such, it also indicates where further potential development is likely to be required.

The TDP outlines the **15 completed projects** from TDP 2020 (see Section 3.1 of the TDP document) and **51 new projects** which have been added (Section 3.3). It also outlines a total of **145 active projects**, which can be categorised as follows:

- 52 - new builds;
- 44 - uprating/modification of existing network;
- 46 – refurbishment/replacement of existing network; and
- 3 – other<sup>2</sup>.

In addition to active projects, 4 projects were 'On-Hold' as of 01 January 2021; two of these projects were added in TDP 2020 and are now on hold, and two other 'on hold' projects have been carried over from prior years. See section 3.4 of the TDP document for further details.

As committed in the TDP 2019-2028 consultation report, EirGrid made structural changes to the document in TDP 2020-2029 to increase emphasis on the projects and provide additional projection information where possible; the new structure is continued in this 2021-2030 iteration of the document. EirGrid will also publish quarterly updates on all its transmission infrastructure

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<sup>2</sup> Other: are projects that do not fall naturally into any of the three categories above

projects as part of the CRU's decision paper on PR5 reporting and incentives. EirGrid is planning to engage with CRU on the format and detail of the proposed quarterly reporting this quarter with a view to implementation later in 2022.

A draft Environmental Appraisal Report (EAR) of Draft TDP 2021 - 2030 has been prepared by EirGrid to support the TDP. The purpose of the EAR is to ensure or consider whether the TDP 2021-2030 is in line with committed strategic environmental objectives. These objectives were set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)<sup>3</sup> for the Grid Implementation Plan (IP) 2017 - 2022. The EAR is not subject to this consultation.

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<sup>3</sup> SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the environmental effects of a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest stage.

### 3. Consultation questions

Currently, the TDP is presented as a snapshot of project status at the time of the freeze date. CRU is interested in respondents' views on if this approach adequately presents the available information in a manner that gives a clear picture on electricity infrastructure development historically, and to the end of the ten-year plan. To that end, and to support the consultation process and the development of a robust TDP, the CRU has posed the following consultation questions that respondents may use as a basis for their review.

**Q1.** Does the content and format of the document adequately reflect the intent and purpose of the TDP as set out in legislation?

**Q2.** Section 2 of the TDP 2021-2030 describes investment drivers and system needs. Does the document outline sufficient actions to address the drivers and needs presented? If not, please highlight the specific areas where additional actions may be required.

**Q3.** The North-West (section 3.2) has, for some time been identified as being an area where there is particular difficulty with network development. Does the TDP 2021-2030 adequately detail the plan to now resolve it?

**Q4.** Would it be helpful to link projects to the specific challenge they are addressing? Examples of this would include the North-West project as identified in the Renewable Integration Development Project and the Dublin Security of Supply constraint as set out in CRU paper CRU/18/228 dated 05 October 2020. If yes, would it be helpful to include the date and source of that challenge identification, and the timeline for addressing that challenge along with the associated project(s) completion date(s)?

**Q5.** The TDP currently provides general and non-project specific reasons for changes in project status e.g., from Active to On Hold or Removed. Is there a benefit to the transmission system development in providing project specific reasons for these changes, with an exception where there is a commercial sensitivity? If yes, please specify the benefits.

**Q6.** Are there any current network constraints that are not included in the TDP and will not be resolved by the successful completion of projects set out in the TDP 2021-2030?

**Q7.** Does this paper raise any concerns around delivery capability considering the challenges ahead? CRU notes that there are 145 live projects in the 2021 report and at the time of the freeze date, 15 were completed and 43 due were scheduled for completion in 2021. 30 are scheduled for completion in 2022. Comparing this to previous reports, the 2020 report showed 11 projects

completed in the previous year, the 2019 showed 23 projects completed, and the 2018 report had 26 projects completed.

**Q8.** CRU is proposing that the document should include a link to the related PR5 submission from EirGrid. This could constitute information on how many projects are on schedule, or ahead of schedule, relative to that submission. Would respondents consider this link helpful, and if so, is there related information that should also be considered?

## 4. Next Steps

The CRU will request EirGrid to fully consider all comments and suggestions submitted as part of the consultation, before submitting the final TDP to the CRU for approval.

The deadline for submitting responses to the CRU regarding EirGrid's draft TDP 2021 - 2030 is **19 April 2022 at 5.00pm**. Responses to this consultation should be sent to Eileen Deegan ([edeegan@cru.ie](mailto:edeegan@cru.ie)) at the CRU.

Please note that all responses will be published by EirGrid on their website unless it is marked confidential. Where your responses include confidential information, please put it in a separate annex where possible.