



Celtic Interconnector

La liaison électrique entre la France et l'Irlande
Connecting the electricity grids of Ireland and France

Project Overview

The Celtic Interconnector project will create an electrical interconnection between Ireland and France to allow the exchange of electricity between the two countries. The connection will link the existing electricity substation located in Knockraha (in east Cork) to the substation in La Martyre (Finistère, France). It will contribute to a more secure and a more sustainable electricity supply, by providing Ireland's only direct energy connection to an EU member state. The project is being developed by EirGrid, the electricity transmission system operator in Ireland, and its French counterpart, RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité). It is expected to be completed in 2026.

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Project Update

Trenching and ducting on the 400 kV AC cable route is now complete, with road reinstatement continuing, in cooperation with Cork County Council.

Due to the nature of the cabling works required for the Celtic Interconnector, a two-step process of road reinstatement has been agreed with Cork County Council.

The first step is for a temporary road reinstatement on impacted areas of the road only, to ensure they match the existing road level, making the surface of the road safe and serviceable. Once all

associated cabling works are completed, the team will complete the second and final step, which will be a permanent road reinstatement, full width on smaller local roads. Once again, we are grateful to road users and project stakeholders for their patience while these processes are completed along the length of the cable route.

The next stage in the cabling process is for the lengths of cable to be joined. This specialist work takes place in containers placed in the junction bays which are placed along the route.





Members of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Ireland South Branch at the converter station site in Ballyadam.

Sharing Expertise

Earlier this summer, a delegation of occupational health and safety (OHS) professionals from the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Ireland South Branch visited the converter station site to gain an insight into the health and safety practices for an electricity project of this scale.



What's Happening Now

Cable

Teams continue to make steady progress on the cable route. The next stage of the 400 kV AC cable works are for the lengths of cable to be joined. This work is undertaken in containers placed in the junction bays which are located along the route.

Trenching and ducting work has commenced on the 320 kV DC cable route, which extends from the Ballyadam site to the landfall at Claycastle Beach, Youghal and is currently focusing on cable route sections that are off-road. Works have now commenced on the N25.

Converter station

At the converter station site at Ballyadam, near Carrigtwohill, Siemens Energy and its sub-contractors have completed the enabling and earthworks phase and have mobilised for the main civil works phase at the site.

The concrete foundation for the converter station control building is complete. Focus has now shifted to the concrete foundation for the converter station building. Excavation and preparatory works of the transformer area are also progressing.

Gogganstown Substation

Work is under way at the newly named Gogganstown 400 kV substation, adjacent to the ESB Knockraha 220 kV substation. This is a substation where the 400 kV HVAC electrical supply from the interconnector will connect to the transmission grid.



A Nexans' container in a joint bay along the cable route, inside which joining specialists join together the cable lengths.



500km of the 575km cable will run under the sea between Ireland and France.

In the Marine

Marine surveys are now complete on the project between the south-east coast of Ireland and the French coast. They had been undertaken by the main project cable contractor Nexans.

Both vessels, the 'NG Worker' and the 'Detector' completed their marine survey operations on the entire cable corridor, with successful Out of Service (OoS) cable cutting, and potential Unexploded Ordnance (pUXO) identification completed, as well as geophysical surveys.

The vessel 'Aethra' has now mobilised and is currently working to carry out pre-trenching and boulder clearance along the route. This work is completed in French waters and is currently under way in UK waters.

The 'Aethra' will move into Irish waters later in the offshore campaign, depending on progress with weather constraints. EirGrid continues to liaise with the fishing community as the project progresses.



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Community Action World Oceans Day

To mark World Oceans Day, employees at EirGrid collected more than 66kg of litter at Claycastle Beach, Youghal as part of a coastal clean-up initiative which also saw colleagues in Dublin collect a further 33kg of rubbish.

In total, a group of over 25 volunteers from EirGrid, alongside local community members, took part in An Taisce's Clean Coasts Programme, rolling up their sleeves to collect rubbish.

All rubbish collected was weighed and sorted as part of marine litter surveys to quantify the amount and types of litter on Irish beaches and logged through Clean Coasts Ireland, contributing to the national effort.



EirGrid staff and local community members collected 66kg of rubbish on Claycastle Beach, Youghal to mark World Oceans Day.

Road Closure Updates

Trenching and Ducting Completed

- ✓ Section A: Knockraha Substation Road L-6989 9
- ✓ Section B: New Line L-2966 and Ballinakilla L-7631 9
- ✓ Section D: Upper Garranes L-7634 9
- ✓ Section E: Woodstock Hill (L-3606) 9
- ✓ Section J: Gortacruie Road Number L-3610, from R626 to junction L-3613
- ✓ Section C: L-7634 to Hagerty's Cross/Upper Garranes.
- ✓ Section F: L-7639 – Woodstock Road to the junction at L7640/ Ballyadam Road
- ✓ Section G: L-7640 -Ballyadam Road to the junction at L3617 – Carrigane Road
- ✓ Section K: L3613 from Broomfield Ridge (East Cork Golf Club) to Ballyspillane West

Ongoing

- Section H: Roads: L3617 – Carrigane Road - 10 June 2024 to approximately 4 October 2024
- Section H has been split into two phases.
 - » Phase 1 of section H is substantially complete.
 - » Phase 2 of section H commenced 06 August.
- Section L: L7617 & L7629 (Westpark).
- Period of licence: Monday 24 June 2024 to Friday 16 August 2024.

For more information on road closures please see www.eirgrid.ie/celticinterconnector
All dates may be subject to change.

Community Benefit Fund

The first phase of the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund saw twenty-nine community groups throughout the project area receive a total of € 838,987. Over the course of the project a total of €2.4 million will be distributed through the fund. We look forward to continuing to work with SECAD, our independent fund administrator, project forum members, local councils, the wider communities, and not-for-profit organisations in east Cork. Many of the first phase recipients have their projects well under way.

Carrigtwohill Community Hall

Carrigtwohill Community Hall, successfully received €125,000 from the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund to redevelop the hall to create additional spaces for small business incubation, a community drop in café, expanded shared youth and community space, and a library.

The redevelopment currently under way will provide additional meeting/activity space across one large and two smaller new multi-purpose rooms. This will allow for the immediate provision of additional services at the community campus, which has been operating at capacity for a number of years. This additional space will also be of use to sporting, religious, social, and recreational groups.



Members of the Castlemartyr Ballintotis Foróige Youth Club on their trip to the Cliffs of Moher, funded through the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund.

Castlemartyr Community Council, Umbrella Application

Castlemartyr Community Council successfully received €15,000 from the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund on behalf of five local community groups.

The groups applied for were Castlemartyr Camogie Club, Castlemartyr/Ballintotis Foróige Youth Club, Castlemartyr Ladies Gaelic Football Club, Castlemartyr Tidy Towns and Castlemartyr Community Alert.

Speaking about the funding, Gerard Broderick, Castlemartyr/Ballintotis Foróige Youth Club said:



The funding EirGrid gave us allowed us to bring the youth club members to experience the Burren in Clare and all its beauty. We got to see the Burren and other parts of Clare as well as the Cliffs of Moher. The young people learned about nature and the different environment around the biodiversity of the Burren region and how it is unique and needs to be protected.



The Council took advantage of an 'umbrella application' where a lead applicant, such as a Community Council, can make an application on behalf of several smaller groups or projects within the community. This can help shorten the application process for small beneficiaries, reduce the amount of paperwork and make it possible to welcome in groups that would otherwise be difficult to reach.



The umbrella application approach was introduced to the Celtic Interconnector Benefit Fund strategy to support new, multi-community and smaller groups initiatives in an area and has been welcomed as an innovative and inclusive community option.





Swift bird boxes erected in Youghal as part of the 'More Clay Less Plastic Swift Habitat Project'.

Youghal Blue and Green Community Network/ Cumann Na Daoine Swift Bird Box Project

Receiving a total of €33,819, the network's projects include those focused on biodiversity, community, and sustainability, featuring a project focusing on the restoration of Keane Park Pond, Youghal and a swift bird box project.

The erection of swift bird boxes to help preserve the species and their breeding ground in Youghal for their return from Africa, is well under way.

The first of 60 swift bird boxes have been installed on buildings around Youghal town. Led out by the 'More Clay Less Plastic Swift Habitat Project', this work will conserve swift populations in Youghal by creating suitable nesting sites and an educational programme reinforcing the many plans under way as part of the local community biodiversity enhancement programme.

The Project in Numbers

95,000

the number of hours that have been worked to date on the converter station site by contractors, Siemens Energy.



Did You Know?

France is interconnected with six European countries.

Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, England and Belgium.





An aerial view of the French landfall operations, including the towing of HDPE pipes.

RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité) Update

French landfall operations are now complete. The work included the welding, sea launch, towing and installation of three 450m-long high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes. The pipes were connected into the land using a total of three Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) operations. Favourable weather conditions allowed the team to complete this complex job.

On the Ar Merzher converter station site, the main civil works are advancing, with the main building steel structure and building cladding ongoing.

To mark one year of works on the site, RTE recently hosted an event welcoming all local stakeholders. The event recognised the significant public and stakeholder cooperation received which impacted positively on the efficient progress of work.

Stakeholder cooperation and unwavering support is seen as an essential condition for building a more united and sustainable energy future for Europe, for France and for Brittany.

Moreover, since the start of the project, 2 million euros of local economic benefits and 3,000 hours of work have been achieved in Brittany.

Project Timeline

2024

Marine surveys.

Continuation of trenching and ducting works for HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Commencement of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Converter station installations progress.

2025

Commencement of offshore marine cable installation.

Completion of installation and jointing of HVAC and HVDC land cables.

Converter station buildings complete.

2026

Completion of offshore marine cable installation.

Submarine cable protection campaigns.

Commissioning tests.
Interconnector system tests.

Trial operation period commences.

How to Contact Us

At EirGrid, we are committed to engaging with communities during all phases of project development.

We remain grateful for the continued patience and support of communities, landowners, and stakeholders as we progress this work.



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Email Updates



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Scan here to stay up to date on project progress or visit

www.eirgrid.ie/celticinterconnector



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The Celtic interconnector project is being developed by EirGrid, the operator of the energy transfer system in Ireland, and its counterpart in France, RTE (Réseau de Transport d'Électricité).

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