

IRELAND



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The Dún Aonghasa prehistoric hill fort on Ireland's rugged Aran Islands looks out across the Atlantic toward America.

- Ireland's GDP has grown by an average 5% annually since 2006, outpacing the EU's 1.2% overall rate
- 1,002 U.S. businesses in Ireland employ about 245,000 people

From Celtic Tiger to Europe's most competitive business hub, Ireland is a vital transatlantic bridge for U.S. companies.

Ireland joined the European Union (EU) in 1973 as one of the bloc's poorest states and heavily reliant on agriculture. Today, it is a dynamic international investment magnet with a 21st-century economy that consistently outperforms its peers. Last year, for example, the International Institute for Management Development ranked it the

most competitive economy in the euro area, its foreign direct investment (FDI) stocks stood at \$1.2 trillion and its gross domestic product grew 8% — double the rate of any other EU country.

"EU membership has been transformative," states Taoiseach Micheál Martin. "Access to its single market opened up major economic opportunities and shifted Ireland to an outward-looking economy."

The country is now deeply embedded in Europe. This July, it took over the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU, with goals that include improving the bloc's overall competitiveness by simplifying regulations and advancing capital markets and energy unions. "A key priority is strengthening the central relationship between Europe and the U.S. While it has faced periodic strain, it remains one of the most important economic relationships in the world and must be actively maintained," he adds.



Micheál Martin
Taoiseach

The U.S.-Ireland relationship is particularly close economically and culturally, with over 30 million Americans claiming Irish ancestry. More than 1,000 U.S. companies are operating in the EU's only English-speaking state, representing about 70% of its FDI stocks.

Among them are most of the U.S.'s global technology giants, as well as leading life science specialists — all of which have been central to the country's economic success. "U.S. companies have achieved exceptional growth here, benefiting from Ireland being a gateway to the EU and wider international markets, combined with its deep talent pool," notes Martin.

Bilateral ties built on innovation

It is a two-way economic partnership: Ireland is the fifth-largest source of FDI into the U.S., where over 780 Irish firms, ranging from multinationals like Smurfit Westrock

and Kerry Group to diverse young businesses, employ more than 200,000 people.

"There is, for example, a strong ecosystem of Irish-founded companies such as Stripe and Intercom in the U.S. tech sector, with significant activity in California," he says. "This reflects our mutually beneficial, open-trade relationship. Overall, Irish business links with the U.S. are deep and growing."

Both international and indigenous companies gain from the government's focus on fostering innovation. "We greatly admire California's creativity and its global impact in technology and innovation. Ireland has benefited from that ecosystem and continues to learn from it, while also investing in our own research, development and innovation," explains Martin.

"It is always striking to see how Californian tech giants grew from early-stage firms into global leaders by continuously innovating. We recognize the importance of sustained investment and ambition, and the lesson that no company or economy can stand still."



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



C-I-E TOURS



An open, pro-enterprise environment

-  Inward investors to Ireland committed a record \$2.9 billion to R&D last year
-  IDA Ireland's 4 strategic drivers are: AI and digitalization, semiconductors, sustainability and healthcare

Ireland continues to show it has the capabilities to attract future-focused investments.

▶ Last year, IDA Ireland achieved a record 323 foreign direct investments (FDI), 78 of them from new investors. “This success is built on our ability to support forward-looking industries such as technology, life sciences, international financial services and high-value manufacturing and engineering,” asserts Michael Lohan, CEO of investment promotion agency IDA Ireland. A key Irish differentiator as a location for investment is universal access to free, world-class education. “Ireland has one of Europe’s highest shares of science, technology, engineering and math graduates,” he notes. “We

complement this by attracting skilled professionals from across Europe and the world, maintaining an open and welcoming environment where people can build careers.” Incentives are competitive too, with a standard corporate tax rate of 12.5%, rising to 15% for large businesses. “However, what matters most to investors is that Ireland is a stable platform for firms to land, scale and grow,” says Lohan. “Many U.S. companies have been here for over 70 years because we create long-term partnerships. As a result, Ireland has a leading semiconductor ecosystem and is one of the world’s top three hubs for medtech, for instance.” Inward investors also highlight effective one-stop-shop facilitation of investments, led by IDA Ireland. “The agency has been supporting FDI for almost 80 years and has a strong track record in building long-term relationships. Today, we partner with around 1,800 client companies: about 1,000 from North America, 600 from Europe and 200 from the rest of the world,” he details, adding that IDA Ireland has 22 international offices, including ones in Palo Alto and Irvine. The impact of those clients can be seen across the nation. “FDI has strengthened



Dublin, like all Ireland's urban centers, has been transformed by international investment.

Irish enterprise by integrating local companies into global supply chains,” Lohan states. “IDA Ireland is dedicated to balanced regional development, aiming for 55% of all investments to be located outside Dublin.” Another priority is innovation and IDA Ireland’s clients committed a record \$2.9 billion to research and development last year. “In our five-year strategy to 2029, we have set a goal to deliver \$8 billion in R&D. This reflects Ireland’s status as a highly innovative economy,” he reveals. “A key strength is how deeply R&D investment connects into



Michael Lohan
CEO, IDA Ireland

Ireland’s ecosystem, linking firms with universities, research institutions and technology centers.” Within the same strategy, IDA Ireland has identified four strategic growth drivers for the country: artificial intelligence and digitalization, semiconductors, sustainability and healthcare. “Ireland has strong ecosystems in these areas and is well placed to help them evolve,” says the CEO. “Our ambition is clear: to stay at the leading edge of innovation, while remaining a trusted pro-enterprise location of choice for investors.”

From investment destination to strategic location

In an uncertain world, Ireland offers U.S. investors predictability and stability.

▶ Although Ireland has been attracting U.S. investors for decades, the American presence there has changed, according to Shane Hogan, managing partner of Matheson, a leading Irish commercial law firm.

“Ireland has evolved from an investment destination into a strategic location for long-term growth and repeat investment. Today, it is a European hub for multinationals, with substantial operations and thousands of employees,” he states. “American trade buyers and private equity remain a dominant source of capital in Irish mergers and acquisitions too, although we are seeing growing participation from European investors, reflecting Ireland’s strength as an in-



Shane Hogan
Managing Partner, Matheson

vestment jurisdiction and the quality of assets available.” With around 930 legal professionals and six offices, including ones in Palo Alto, San Francisco and New York, Matheson has advised on many of the most significant M&As. “Overall, we are focused on advising internationally oriented companies and financial institutions doing business in and from Ireland,” Hogan says. “A key part of this is our International Business

Group, the only one in an Irish law firm. We also have the largest dedicated tax practice and strong specialist practices, including technology.” At the start of 2025, there were concerns within Ireland that changes in U.S. policies could negatively impact inward investment. “In reality, U.S. investment reached a record high last year. In a period of global uncertainty, Ireland offers a stable and consistent gateway to the European Union,” Hogan notes. “Supporting that investment has been core to our firm for over 25 years. We understand why U.S. investors come to Ireland and what they need from their advisers.”

Irish businesses expand their global footprint

-  781 Irish firms in the U.S. employ 202,000 people and have invested \$390 billion in that country
-  Enterprise Ireland invested \$38 million in 198 new startups in 2025

The country gives strong support to innovative startups and scaling entrepreneurs with high export potential.

▶ Eighty-seven Irish companies attended May’s SelectUSA Investment Summit in Maryland, the largest European delegation at the U.S.’s main event for international firms expanding or starting operations in the country.

This highlights the increasing globalization of Irish businesses, particularly in areas such as advanced manufacturing, high-tech construction, life sciences, digital technology, fintech and nutrition. In 2025, for example, exports from indigenous Irish exporters supported by trade and innovation development agency Enterprise Ireland rose by 8% to reach a record \$45 billion.

“North America was the third-largest market for our clients, with their exports there growing to \$8.5 billion, while more than 100 Irish firms entered the U.S. in 2024 and 2025,” states Enterprise Ireland’s CEO Jenny Melia. “Furthermore, Irish companies are among the five biggest foreign investors in the U.S. That underpins a robust, trusted transatlantic innovation corridor.”

Dedicated to helping indigenous businesses set up and scale internationally, Enterprise Ireland is a key facilitator of this corridor. As well as bilateral missions, it has seven offices across the U.S. “We view it as multiple regional ecosystems with different sectoral strengths,” she explains, adding that the agency has 42 international offices in total. Melia’s team of 900 staff is ambitious



Jenny Melia
CEO, Enterprise Ireland

for innovative exporters to become a primary driver of the national economy. For that reason, the agency heavily promotes entrepreneurs. “A major strength in Ireland is our talent base and track record in industry-academia collaboration. Enterprise Ireland acts as a bridge between the two, bringing technology out of universities while feeding market insights and needs back in,” she details. “We also place strong emphasis on startups, supporting them directly and investing in seed and venture capital funds to attract private and international capital.”

The scale of this funding is impressive: Enterprise Ireland has completed more venture

capital deals than any other European investor in the past 10 years and the country is one of the highest per-capita investors in tech entrepreneurs worldwide. “Companies like Aerogen in pulmonary healthcare and Mbryonics in satellite communications show how Ireland can develop world-class firms from startups,” she notes.

The agency’s goal is to advance 1,000 innovative startups between 2025 and 2029. “A priority is ensuring a strong funding pathway, which is particularly important in areas such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing where firms need to scale at pace,” the CEO says. “We are also working closely with firms on competitiveness, productivity and profitability to support scaling.”

For U.S. partners, the real appeal is how Irish companies work. They bring technical capability, innovation, partnership and commitment. They stay, they invest, they build relationships for the long term, and that combination of reliability, innovation and genuine partnership is what sets them apart in global markets.

Addressing Ireland's biggest challenge

Fergal O’Brien is executive director of policy, lobbying and global affairs at Ibec, Ireland’s largest trade body. He agrees that the nation is a prime location for national and international entrepreneurs: “European Union access, innovation and a growing economy



31% of the 12,608 new jobs Enterprise Ireland's clients created in 2025 were in Dublin.

make it attractive for testing and scaling. The last decade has been remarkable. No other developed economy has matched Ireland’s pace of business expansion, and this momentum will continue.” In his view, the biggest challenge is that infrastructure investment has not kept up with economic growth. “However, the National Development Plan will deliver major projects over the next decade,” he says. “It’s one of the most ambitious public investment programs in the world.”

Dublin Chamber of Commerce CEO Mary Rose Burke shares his opinion: “Crucially, there is both political ambition and financial

capacity to deliver it. That alignment is rare and gives confidence that Ireland is building the foundations for sustained growth.”



Fergal O'Brien
Executive Director of Policy, Lobbying and Global Affairs
Ibec



Mary Rose Burke
CEO, Dublin Chamber of Commerce

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Matheson’s primary focus is on serving the Irish legal needs of internationally focused companies and financial institutions doing business in and from Ireland.

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University College Cork is placed 220th in the 2027 QS World University Rankings.



More than 5,500 international students from over 140 countries study at University College Cork.

Higher education: Europe’s best performer

- Ireland produces more STEM graduates per capita than anywhere else in the EU
- QS ranks 8 Irish universities among the top 800 globally

Talent is still the main reason to invest in Ireland, thanks to its outstanding universities.

Ireland’s 65.2% higher education participation rate is the highest in Europe. “There’s strong cultural commitment to it for personal development and economic opportunities,” explains Tim Conlon, head of policy and strategic planning at the Higher Education Authority.

The country has seven traditional and five technological universities, eight of which are in the QS World University Rankings’ top 800 institutions. “Among our strengths is that enterprise engagement is central to higher education. It shapes curriculum, enhances graduate employability and is supported by funding. For example, nearly 90% of undergraduate courses include a work placement and there’s strong emphasis on research generating economic and social impact,” he notes.

“One significant recent development in this respect is the government’s allocation of \$865 million for research infrastructure across the country in a major new initiative

called Inspire,” states Linda Doyle, provost at Trinity College Dublin, the nation’s oldest university, which epitomizes the tradition of excellence in Irish education and research.

“Building on Inspire, the government has committed \$530 million to a new network of research centers,” says John O’Halloran, president of University College Cork (UCC), which will receive a substantial amount of the funding for a semiconductor research center at its Tyndall National Institute, Ireland’s largest facility for deep-tech innovation.

UCC was founded in 1845 and is the biggest research-intensive comprehensive university in southern Ireland. Within its student body of about 27,000, 21% are international, and demand for places is rising. “We’ve developed strengths in fields such as semiconductors, food, microbiome and health, sustainability, pharmacy and future medicine,” O’Halloran explains. “95% of our students are in employment or further education within nine months of graduating.”

The university’s identity is centered on sustainability and inclusion. “We’re ranked second globally for sustainability in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings and are the only university in Europe to receive a platinum award through the U.S.’s STARS sustainability framework, while around 24% of our undergraduates enter through nontraditional pathways,” he continues.

UCC generates nearly \$1.4 billion annually for the economy and one way it does that is by nurturing entrepreneurs. For example, it operates Ireland’s leading full-time startup program for recent graduates. The president notes that UCC is increasingly popular with

U.S. researchers and students, who currently make up its second-largest international cohort. “Ireland is a safe place with a warm, welcoming culture. It’s small, but globally connected,” O’Halloran concludes.

According to the president of the University of Galway, David Burn, “One advantage of Ireland’s size is that universities can be highly collaborative.” His institution is a key illustration of this. Established 180 years ago, it is a catalyst for innovation in the western city. “We’ve created a powerful partnership between the university and industry,” he explains. “For instance, Galway is one of the world’s leading medtech hubs and we work closely with Irish medtech businesses and multinationals.”

The university is also expanding Ireland’s industrial ecosystem — it currently supports over 35 spinouts, 24 of which have launched since 2020. Most are connected to its four research strengths. “First is health innovation, covering medtech, clinical trials and related fields. Second is sustainable and resilient environments, reflecting our Atlantic location,” Burn details. “Third is transformative data and artificial intelligence, including hosting Ireland’s national supercomputer, and fourth is culture, creativity and society. We are Ireland’s only bilingual university and have a deep connection to Irish language, arts and culture.”

About 20% of the university’s staff and of its 20,000 students come from international backgrounds. “Galway is attractive to academics, students and companies alike. It’s a beautiful city, surrounded by the landscapes of Connemara, Clare and the Burren,” he stresses. “The University of Galway is a jewel in Ireland’s higher education system.”



Tim Conlon
Head of Policy and Strategic Planning, HEA



Linda Doyle
Provost
Trinity College Dublin



John O’Halloran
President
University College Cork



David Burn
President
University of Galway

Where universities work in tandem with industry

- 5 technological universities focus on regional talent development and research commercialization
- 6,125 U.S. students enrolled in Irish universities in 2025

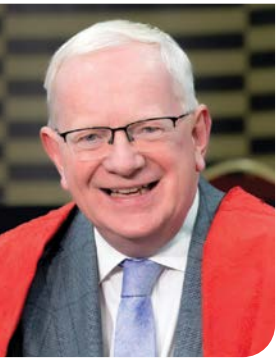
Enterprise engagement is key to technological universities, attracting investors and students to all Ireland’s regions.

“Ireland has never had abundant natural resources. Instead, our greatest resource has always been our people, and a series of smart education policies unlocked that potential,” asserts Vincent Cunnane, president of the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS).

The first of those policies was introduced in 1967: free secondary schooling, which increased access to education and demand for tertiary courses, leading to the establishment of technical colleges across Ireland. Over time, they have evolved and amalgamated into five technological universities.

“These complement Ireland’s traditional universities but, crucially, they are regionally based. They develop talent, helping attract and retain foreign investment throughout their regions,” says Cunnane. “This model has opened higher education to many who might never have attended university because they couldn’t afford to move away from home. Today, they can build careers in their own communities.”

TUS, for instance, was set up in 2021 to serve Ireland’s midlands and midwest. It has seven campuses in five towns, about 2,000 staff, over 400 PhD researchers and more than 16,500 students. “Despite its young age, we have already achieved a five-star QS rating across all assessed areas, strength-



Vincent Cunnane
President, Technological University of the Shannon

ening our international profile,” he notes. A key differentiator for Ireland’s technological universities is exceptionally close partnership with industry. TUS exemplifies this: students enjoy extended work placements and employers are involved in designing, developing and reviewing education programs. “TUS has had the highest graduate employability rate of any Irish university for three consecutive years,” Cunnane states. “We’re producing industry-ready in-demand graduates.”

The technological universities are also research intensive and drive industry innovation, with TUS working across the spectrum from research to development and commercialization, as well as supporting startups in sectors ranging from pharmaceuticals to artificial intelligence.

Another central part of its mission is widening educational access for students from all backgrounds. “For example, we support over 2,000 apprentices in various fields, addressing skills gaps and ensuring apprenticeships are valued alongside degrees,” he says. “We also prioritize lifelong learning. We support talent development and retention, helping individuals and employers continuously upgrade skills.”

Around 1,500 of TUS’s students are international, and it sees potential to expand that, particularly from the U.S., where it will launch summer schools next year. “TUS offers excellent academic and life quality,” he states. “We’ve transformed our locations into university towns, strengthening talent and ensuring investors succeed in our region.”

Ideal country to study and work in

The more traditional University of Limerick (UL) is in the same region. Its president, Shane Kilcommins, confirms that the local higher education system benefits investors. U.S. giants in sectors such as telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, medtech, biotech and financial services have a strong presence there, “largely because of the talent pool,” he says. “Recently, we have also seen more international students stay-



Technological University of the Shannon in Athlone, one of the institution’s seven campuses.

ing here after they graduate as opportunities have developed locally.”

Foreign students are increasingly studying and establishing careers throughout Ireland. In 2025, 44,500 international students enrolled in its institutions, 10% more than the year before. Dominic Dillane, registrar of Technological University Dublin, is un-

surprised: “As a country to study and live in, Ireland is highly attractive. Irish people are welcoming and we have one of the youngest populations in Europe. Our education institutions also offer very differentiated, best-in-class education. We have small classes and lecturers know their students by name — the experience is just better.”

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Future-ready skills

-  **36,000 further education and training courses were delivered in Ireland in 2025**
-  **Ireland registered nearly 10,000 new apprentices in 2025**

Further education and training are critical pillars in Irish skills development.

The Irish government's commitment to further education and training (FET) is evident: it invests over \$1.27 billion a year in the sector and has built it into all major socio-economic policies. At the core of the sector is state agency SOLAS, which provides leadership, investment, strategy and oversight, and works in partnership with the 16 regional Education and Training Boards (ETBs) that deliver programs.

"A strong talent pipeline is one of Ireland's competitive advantages, and our mission is to help sustain and strengthen that advantage. We are involved in every part of the economy, and education-enterprise collaboration is a big part of our strategy," says SOLAS CEO Deirdre McDonnell. "All countries are grappling with the challenges of demographics,

technological change and the climate agenda. FET is at the core of how we respond to some of those challenges in Ireland. For example, learning in artificial intelligence, digital and green skills is being embedded across everything we do."

Every year, over 200,000 learners engage with the ETBs in a range of ways, including full- and part-time, online and blended programs, as well as micro-qualification courses. "People can access programs that suit their circumstances," McDonnell explains. "FET serves a broad audience, and inclusion is a particularly important focus."

Another focus is apprenticeships and traineeships. "Our apprenticeships have expanded to new economic sectors in recent years, including areas like cybersecurity, robotics and biopharma, and the total number of people participating in an apprenticeship has reached 32,000," she details. "Partnering further and higher education providers and enterprise is a strong component of our apprenticeships and what makes them successful."

The government is investing almost \$120 million in capital funding to upgrade facilities and invest in specialist equipment for programs across the country over the next three years. According to the CEO: "Investment in facilities and specialist equipment will help us strengthen the quality of our offering and ensure that FET remains central to Ireland's skills, inclusion and innovation infrastructure."



Deirdre McDonnell
CEO, SOLAS

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The Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence, Louth Meath Education and Training Board.

No border for clean innovators

The country is a hotbed for green technologies with diverse global applications.

Ireland's focus on developing green skills, coupled with government support for sustainable innovation, has made the country a hub for technologies addressing climate change. A 2024 report identified over 300 climate tech companies in sectors including mobility, manufacturing, resource management, construction, energy and food that are innovating in Ireland and exporting globally.

One is Ecocem, which is decarbonizing cement, a product responsible for nearly 8% of global carbon dioxide emissions. The pioneering Dublin firm's low-carbon alternatives have been used in major infrastructure projects across Europe and are in high demand. As a result, Ecocem is currently investing about \$250 million to expand its production capacity. In December, the European Union confirmed that its latest ACT technology — which reduces emissions by up to 70% — meets technical standards for EU construction. According to the group's managing director Donal O'Riain, "With this milestone achieved, we are accelerating the commercial rollout of ACT in Europe and forging the pathway for global deployment."



Jim McAdam
Managing Director, Multihog

A second example is Turmec, an international leader in the design and build of large-scale waste processing and recycling systems for construction and demolition (C&D), commercial, industrial and utility clients. Last year, Turmec established a partnership with a leading U.S.-based supplier of equipment for the sector in order to grow its North American presence. The pair's first project was a cutting-edge 150,000-ton C&D plant in Ohio that sets a new standard for the U.S. C&D recycling industry.

As Jim McAdam, managing director of Multihog, explains: "Ireland builds world-class engineering companies because of its small size. It has to think globally from day one." Multihog is another of those businesses, having become a front-runner in sustainable multitasking sidewalk tractors that come with attachments for everything from snow removal to mowing, sweeping and washing.

"We are proof that a company from Dundalk can lead a world market by innovating relentlessly, in the product and in everything around it," he states. Last year, the company's new Electric ECV Sweeper started work on the streets of Pleasanton with support from its California dealer Municipal Maintenance Equipment. According to McAdam, demand from U.S. municipalities drove development of the electric vehicle. "The bridge across the Atlantic carries ideas in both directions. We intend to keep building it," he asserts.



The capital is home to the fourth best-connected airport in the European Union for transatlantic travel.

An increasingly well-connected hub

-  **\$28 billion is being invested in transport infrastructure**
-  **Ireland is the global leader in aircraft leasing, with about 50% of the worldwide market**

Ireland is investing heavily in countrywide public transport, while maintaining its leading position in air and digital connectivity.

The Irish government is investing \$28 billion in transport infrastructure between 2026 and 2030, with much of that targeting public transport. "We're entering the largest period of rail investment since the 19th century, focused on expanding capacity, electrification and connectivity," Minister for Transport Darragh O'Brien reveals. Alongside this program, investment continues to go into the island nation's airports. "Ireland has a strong network of international and regional airports. They are essential for connectivity, and passenger numbers are rising across them all," he says.

In 2025, Dublin Airport, the main international gateway, served 36.4 million travelers, 5% more than in 2024. A key enabler of growth has been the airport's long-standing relationship with U.S. authorities. "Preclear-

ance of passengers in Dublin allows them to arrive in the U.S. as domestic travelers," details Miriam Ryan, chief governance and strategy officer at daa, which oversees the airport. "This has helped establish Dublin as a key hub between Europe and the U.S."

The only other airport in Europe offering U.S. preclearance is also Irish: Shannon in the west, which offers flights to New York, Chicago and Boston. Dublin, on the other hand, serves 24 U.S. destinations through five airlines and over 260 flights a week. "It is the fourth best-connected airport in the European Union for transatlantic travel," Ryan comments. "Its strength as a transatlantic hub is supported by connectivity to over 190 total destinations, making it an attractive gateway between the U.S. and Europe, in particular."

In July, the government passed legislation allowing it to remove an outdated cap on the airport's passenger numbers. Once formalized, daa can implement expansion plans. "This is important, because demand is clearly there," she notes. "We look forward to growing our U.S. routes and connectivity even more in the years ahead."

Ireland's overall aerospace sector generated about \$5.3 billion in 2025 and employed over 44,000 people. "Aviation is a major strength. We have a robust ecosystem across leasing, maintenance and aviation services," O'Brien discloses. "For example, around half the world's aircraft are leased from Irish-based companies." The Irish Aviation Authority is working to combine that ecosystem's expertise with the country's high-tech capabilities.



Three Ireland's 5G covers 96% of the population, even those living in its isolated, tranquil heartlands.

According to its chief executive, Declan Fitzpatrick, "Artificial intelligence, autonomous operations, advanced materials and new power sources offer new opportunities for Irish industry. We will continue to facilitate and support innovation in aviation through regulatory support of research and development projects, and help fledgling industries to establish related design, production and/or operational bases in Ireland."

As Elaine Carey, CEO of Three Ireland, the largest telecommunications provider, explains, "Ireland's reputation as a leading technology center is built on a strong digital foundation." To date, the telecom sector has invested around \$6 billion in infrastructure that has established extensive nationwide broadband and low-latency networks. "World-class digital connectivity is a

key factor in Ireland's attractiveness to investors," Carey states. "Technology innovation has been central to Ireland's success and will remain so in the future, as Ireland continues to attract significant investment from hyperscalers, data centers and global technology companies, reinforcing its position as a major digital hub."



Miriam Ryan
Chief Governance and Strategy Officer, daa



Elaine Carey
CEO, Three Ireland

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80% green by 2030

-  Ireland's installed renewable energy capacity has grown from 3GW to 8GW in just 10 years
-  \$21.9 billion will be invested in grid infrastructure before 2030

Ireland is ready to exploit its huge potential in offshore wind to achieve its energy goals.

Ireland aims to be generating 80% of its electricity from renewables by 2030. “We’re making strong progress,” states Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment Darragh O’Brien, who is also Minister of Transport. “We have doubled onshore wind capacity in the past decade, increased solar by over 1,000% and expect further acceleration.” In 2025, the 97% state-owned Electricity Supply Board (ESB) that operates across the value chain also decommissioned the nation’s last coal-fired generation plant ahead of schedule. In line with Ireland’s ambitions, wind turbines have already been installed on its site.

As a result of public and private sector efforts, over 8 gigawatts of renewables are now connected to the grid, and between 40% and 50% of Ireland’s power regularly comes from clean sources. By 2050, however, it needs an eightfold increase in capacity to continue meeting rising power demands. Harnessing the vast potential of its oceans is key to achieving this.

“Offshore wind will be the next major step,” confirms O’Brien. “We have five proj-

ects progressing through planning, with most expected to be consented this year and moving into construction before 2030. We’ve also begun mapping our entire coastal area, securing around \$230 million to identify future sites. Overall, we have a strong project pipeline, solid public funding and significant private investment for offshore wind.”

Investing to handle rising generation

In addition to investing in generation, Ireland has become a European Union leader in integrating renewables at all scales into the grid. For instance, it ranks third in the EU for large-scale battery energy storage, with over 800 megawatts installed and 2.3 gigawatts in development. “Solar microgeneration has also developed rapidly, with around 180,000 rooftops now equipped with panels. Households are generating electricity for their own use and feeding surplus into the grid,” notes Paddy Hayes, CEO of ESB, which has been instrumental in this advance.

As well as generating electricity from resources including hydropower, solar and onshore and offshore wind in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain, ESB has over a million retail customers in Ireland. It also owns the transmission and distribution networks and operates the latter on both sides of the Irish island.

“In 2025, ESB recorded its highest-ever capital investment in clean electricity infrastructure, and we are on track to overtake that rate of investment and delivery through 2026,” says Hayes, adding that heavy spending from the transmission system operator EirGrid has accelerated the transition toward green energy.

Both organizations are ramping up investments with substantial government funding. “We have set out a \$21.9 billion



Ireland's installation of renewables is keeping pace with demands from its expanding economy.

grid investment program to 2030 to strengthen resilience and support regional development,” explains O’Brien. According to Hayes, “This program represents a significant expansion of Ireland’s electricity grid, increasing its capacity to accommodate more renewables.”

On top of this, the government is investing in integrating power systems with those of neighboring nations. “Ireland has two electricity interconnectors



Darragh O'Brien
Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment



Paddy Hayes
CEO, Electricity Supply Board

O’Brien says. “I see strong growth in start-ups across the energy transition, not just in renewables, but also in maritime technologies, mapping and sustainable aviation fuel. Many are also innovating in areas such as waste heat reuse and low-emission district heating.”

Large players like ESB are also focused on innovating. “As well as our own activities, we are involved with Irish research institutes and work extensively with international partners,” comments Hayes. “Looking ahead, one of the biggest opportunities will be finding cost-effective solutions for long-duration storage. The ability to store surplus renewable energy will become increasingly critical and Ireland is well positioned to contribute to this area.”

Partnerships with international researchers and investors across the electricity supply chain are considered vital for delivering Ireland’s clean energy goals. “We cannot be complacent,” asserts the minister. “Maintaining competitiveness is essential and our energy policy is central to that. It underpins economic resilience and future growth.”

“This shift in what was a peat-dependent region has driven the growth of hundreds of new green tech and clean energy firms, supported through Just Transition programs, including startup and expansion grants,”

A decarbonized gas and renewables future

-  15% of Ireland's gas demand could be supplied by carbon-neutral biomethane
-  Ireland plans to allocate up to 5GW of wind power to hydrogen production

While gas will remain a core element of the Irish energy mix, the country is determined to make it much greener.

While Ireland has made rapid progress in renewables, it is still dependent on natural gas, 80% of which it imports via the U.K., with the remaining 20% coming from its own offshore Corrib gas field. “Depending on weather conditions, gas provides anywhere from 10% to 90% of Ireland’s electricity, averaging around 40-45%. It is an essential backup for renewable electricity, with lower greenhouse gas emissions than oil or coal,” asserts David Kelly, CEO of Gas Networks Ireland (GNI), the state company that owns and operates nearly 9,200 miles of national gas infrastructure.

Gas also heats about 40% of homes. Over time, GNI believes domestic heating will shift to electrification through a mix of heat pumps and low-consumption gas boilers. “We’re also seeing growing interest in hybrid heat pumps, which run on electricity but can switch to gas during peak or very cold periods. This is a key transitional technology for Europe,” he says. “However, we expect industrial heat, particularly in sectors like food, drink and pharmaceuticals, to remain on gas in the longer term, as these processes are harder to electrify.”



David Kelly
CEO, Gas Networks Ireland

Given that the country will continue to be reliant on some form of gas for the foreseeable future, GNI’s focus is on replacing natural gas with decarbonized solutions, such as biomethane and green hydrogen.

“Biomethane is a renewable gas produced from agricultural and food waste through anaerobic digestion plants, which we are connecting directly to our gas network,” the CEO explains, noting that the first two of these projects have just gone online, two more should follow shortly and others are under construction. “Our goal is to connect 50 to 60 large-scale plants, potentially supplying 10% to 15% of Ireland’s gas demand with carbon-neutral biomethane.”

GNI is also preparing for the proposed development of offshore wind farms, as the Irish government plans to allocate up to 5 gigawatts of surplus energy they generate to hydrogen production. The company maintains one of Europe’s most modern natural gas networks and the new backup gas generation plants it is installing are hydrogen-ready, for example.

It is also advancing pilot projects that could lead to five industrial clusters being powered by the green fuel. “These would support hydrogen and hydrotreated vegetable oil production and transport, forming the basis of a national hydrogen system,” Kelly discloses. “In addition, Ireland’s offshore wind presents a large opportunity for hydrogen exports to markets such as Germany, where demand is strong. GNI has two subsea natural gas interconnectors with Scotland, which could potentially be repurposed or expanded for hydrogen.”

To promote a greener, resilient and secure energy system, GNI is delivering a record \$300 million in capital investment this year, which is forecast to rise to about \$580 million annually over the next five years. “A



Gas Networks Ireland's compressor decarbonization project will reduce operating emissions by about 41%.

major part of this is developing a floating liquefied natural gas terminal that will serve as an emergency reserve and is scheduled for completion by 2030. We are investing in regional network reinforcement and infrastructure upgrades too,” he says. “Another main focus is decarbonizing our compressor stations in Scotland, which will reduce our operating emissions by around 41% and increase interconnector capacity.”

The company is also collaborating with partners on innovative sustainability initiatives, ranging from producing bricks using biomethane to incorporating carbon-neutral cement in its operations. “Across the business, we have around 200 decarbonization projects underway,” states the CEO. “Decarbonization is now our central priority, as we work to reduce Ireland’s reliance on fossil fuels and transition to cleaner energy.”



Moving Ireland's Energy
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Ireland's energy transition timeline



By 2030, 80% of Ireland's power will be generated by renewables, up from 40-50% today



By 2040, the country wants to be operating a zero-carbon national electricity network



By 2050, the government is committed to delivering net zero across the entire energy system



Ireland's grass-based farming system generates exceptional dairy products.



The farmer-owned cooperative Tirlán processes about a third of Ireland's milk production.

Irish family farmers: Feeding the world

 Ireland produces enough food to feed about 40 million people worldwide

 The country ranks 3rd globally for agricultural, animal and dairy science research quality

Heritage, innovation, sustainability, quality and natural advantages have made Ireland a premium food exporter.

research. “Last year, over \$34 million was allocated to projects,” he states. “Continued investment is vital to future-proof producers and keep Ireland competitive.” At the heart of the government’s strategy is an initiative that now covers 90% of the sector’s exports. “Origin Green provides independently assured proof of sustainability across the agri-food chain. It’s the only national program of its kind,” explains Heydon.

Grass-fed dairy products lead the way

In 2025, Irish agri-food exports were headed by a dairy sector that grew its revenues 14% to \$8.4 billion. “That success is built on generations of tradition, supported by exceptional natural advantages. Our temperate climate and abundant rainfall support a grass-based farming system delivering among the lowest carbon-emission intensities globally, while, as an island nation, we have high animal health and environmental standards. It is also driven by sustained investment in leading-edge technology and value-added innovation,” states Seán Molloy, CEO of Tirlán, Ireland’s largest dairy processor that exports to around 100 countries.

Tirlán embodies the sector’s heritage, innovation and sustainability. “We are a 100% farmer-owned cooperative with a history spanning more than a century. Deeply rooted in cooperative values, we are also a forward-looking food and nutrition business,” he details.

Seán Molloy
CEO, Tirlán

The company processes about 845 million gallons of milk a year — roughly a third of Ireland’s total — creating a broad range of products across its three divisions.

One of those is consumer foods such as milks, cheese, butter and cream. “We own Ireland’s number-one dairy brand, Avonmore,” Molloy says. “In the U.S., we have a growing presence through our Truly Grass Fed brand of protein products sold on a business-to-business (B2B) basis and premium Irish butters and cheeses sold through retail outlets. This brand reflects the strengths of Ireland’s family farm system and demand for high-quality products with strong provenance, sustainability and animal welfare credentials.”

Tirlán also has a large B2B ingredients division creating proteins, powders, butter, cheese and other dairy and plant-based ingredients. “We have partnered with many of the leading global food brands for decades, tailoring solutions that meet specific technical and functional needs,” he says. In addition, Tirlán is Ireland’s biggest agri-input provider, supplying goods like feeds, seeds and crop protection products.

In 2025, Tirlán’s turnover was almost \$3.5 billion, up 10% on 2024, and its operating profit was close to \$74 million. This strong performance reflects sustained investment in innovation, operational excellence and value-added products. “We have a dedicated innovation center, which is constantly develop-

ing products, services and processes that add value throughout the supply chain,” the CEO reveals. A good illustration is its 2025 \$146 million investment in whey processing technology to support its growth in protein ingredients and enriched products, for which there is expanding global demand.

In terms of sustainability, Tirlán was a founding member of Origin Green and its products are fully traceable. “Society rightly expects high standards in water, air and biodiversity, and we are committed to delivering that,” he states. Concern for sustainability extends to the industry’s future. “One of the biggest challenges facing agriculture is attracting the next generation. We need to ensure it remains a positive, rewarding career,” Molloy asserts. “Therefore, we recently launched a generational renewal program to support young farmers, which includes financial incentives and heavy investment in education and training.”

Another factor that reinforced Tirlán’s performance last year was its financial discipline that has allowed it to build an investment fund of over \$1 billion. “We see opportunities to grow in the U.S. through value-added processing, market access and technology partnerships,” he reveals.

“On the farming side, the U.S. is strong in technology and digital innovation. At the same time, the U.S. dairy sector is increasingly export-focused, while we have expertise in global dairy trade, which creates opportunities for collaboration. The U.S.-Ireland relationship works best as a two-way flow of trade, technology and ideas, and there’s clear scope to deepen it further.”

Premium and organic seafood exporter



The Irish seafood economy was worth around \$1.45 billion in 2025



About 99% of Ireland’s salmon is organic and all its mussels are Marine Stewardship Council certified

Ireland’s fisheries, seafood processors and aquaculture firms are moving up the value chain and innovating.

Irish seafood exemplifies the island nation’s reputation for top-quality foods. “Our exports were worth about \$884 million in 2025. While not large in scale, the sector’s impact is significant in coastal communities, where it supports around 7,500 direct jobs and up to 16,000 overall,” says Richard Donnelly, CEO of Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland’s seafood development agency.

The industry is founded on three pillars — fisheries, aquaculture and processing — all of which target high-value markets. “For example, our fisheries produce premium shellfish such as lobster, crab, oysters and mussels, while species like mackerel are increasingly in demand,” states Donnelly, who notes that over 50 companies in the sector are members of the country’s end-to-end Origin Green sustainability verification initiative, a national program managed by Bord Bia, the Irish food board. “We complement this with continuous fishery improvement programs, organic standards and Marine Stewardship Council certification. Ireland is unique in having its entire mussel sector MSC certified,” he adds.

The nation also farms mussels and oysters, although its biggest aquaculture export

is Atlantic salmon, around 99% of which is organic. “BIM reoriented the salmon sector in the mid-1990s toward pioneering organic production, which has moved Irish salmon into a higher price tier,” the CEO explains. “Ireland’s exposed coastline also influences quality. Unlike countries such as Norway or Scotland, our open waters create stronger currents, meaning fish swim more and develop firmer flesh. Combined with our organic standards, this differentiates Irish salmon in global markets.” More recently, Ireland has become a front-runner in innovative aquatech solutions supporting aquaculture, a segment that has expanded rapidly to reach over \$230 million in annual revenues.

Processing has also seen a shift to added value, driven by investment in technology and automation. “A key focus area is using nutritious fish co-products such as heads, tails and trimmings. We are working to reintroduce these into the human food chain by developing innovative consumer-ready products,” he reveals. “Another important pathway is nutraceuticals and biopharma, where compounds are extracted for animal feed or human supplements. We’re moving from simple harvesting to using 100% of the fish, with no waste.”

Expanding global presence in aquatech

BIM is a crucial enabler of the country’s seafood ecosystem. Established in 1952, the full-service organization supports the industry from skills development to innovation. “For instance, we operate two fisheries training colleges, provide grant support, attract private investment into the sector and act as a knowledge and advisory service, offering businesses market intelligence on prices, trends and global demand,” he details. BIM also works with universities and other agencies to access research and turn it into commercial solutions. “Our wide-ranging innovation activities are mainly related to aquaculture and fish-



Live Irish oysters should soon be available for purchase in the U.S. market.

eries,” the CEO notes. “In fisheries, we focus on improving efficiency, including reducing fuel use, boosting selectivity and lowering environmental impact.” Its most prominent aquaculture initiative is the annual Aquatech Innovation Studio that it runs in collaboration with a global investment firm, which encourages startups to solve real industry challenges.

“Ireland has a strong entrepreneurial base across genetics, pharmaceuticals, engineering and more. We recognized that this knowledge base could be applied to aquaculture, and many firms we work with are transferring technologies from adjacent sectors,” he discloses. “Our role is to connect Ireland’s skills to global aquaculture opportunities, support companies in scaling into new markets and help them access equity funding.”

Through its Aquatech program and other activities, BIM is building links with U.S. sea-

food-related firms seeking a European Union base. “At the same time, we are attracting U.S. venture capital and private investment into our growing startup ecosystem,” he comments. “The U.S. is also an important market for Irish seafood, particularly organic salmon and mussels. We are now finalizing access for live oyster exports, which is a significant milestone, as only a limited number of EU countries can currently export live oysters to the U.S.”

As well as opening more global export avenues in the years ahead, BIM intends to strengthen technology and innovation in the sector, while making sure it remains competitive and provides sustainable careers for the next generation of Irish talent. “Our goal is to ensure Ireland continues to lead the premium, high-value seafood market into the future,” Donnelly concludes.

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Slow down and experience Ireland



Ireland has received multiple awards and nominations from the global film industry's most prestigious bodies



CIÉ Tours has created itineraries for over 3 million people

Culture, heritage and stunning landscapes make Ireland the natural destination for U.S. travelers.

Ireland received 6.4 million tourists in 2025, and 24% were from North America. "There's a real connection. For visitors from the U.S., there's a sense of exploring somewhere new but also coming home," says promotional body Tourism Ireland's CEO Alice Mansergh.

The country's scenic landscapes and rich heritage captivate not only tourists but also filmmakers, with U.S. film productions increasingly drawn to Ireland's creative strengths, world-class crew and studio infrastructure. "The Irish film and animation industry has been on a remarkable growth trajectory lately, with record-breaking production activity, alongside increased recognition through awards," states Désirée Finnegan, chief executive of Screen Ireland, the national agency for the sector, which has offices in both Ireland and Los Angeles.

The agency invests in developing Irish talent, creativity, enterprises and collaborations. "For example, Ireland's growing visual effects capabilities stem from talented artists working on major franchises

over the past 15 years, with the government introducing a visual effects incentive to recognize this potential and expand partnerships with U.S. studios," she explains.

100,000 Irish welcomes

"Ireland's renowned céad míle fáilte — a hundred thousand welcomes — defines the visitor experience," says Stephen Kent, CEO of Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ), the state-owned group that operates key transport systems, including Dublin and rural bus services and the national rail network. Through its subsidiary CIÉ Tours, the group is also a tour operator of choice for Americans. "We are the largest guided vacation company bringing visitors from the U.S. to Ireland," Kent details. "We

have more than 90 years of experience creating memorable vacations for over 3 million guests. In 2025, we welcomed more than 35,000 visitors, with a customer satisfaction rate consistently above 95%."

CIÉ Tours crafts diverse tailored vacation itineraries focused on showcasing Ireland's landscapes, heritage and culture. "As well as destinations such as Dublin, Killarney, Cork, the Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Belfast and historic sites, visitors experience authentic culture, music and traditional events that bring the real Ireland to life," he explains. "We are increasingly offering itineraries that include destinations such as Scotland, Italy or Spain as well. Our combination of experience, quality, authenticity and product evolution is why CIÉ Tours is a leading operator."

The company also offers a wide variety of travel styles, from luxury coach tours for large and small groups to self-drive, private-driver, walking and hiking vacations. Whatever style travelers pick, its expert tour directors provide local



Désirée Finnegan
Chief Executive
Screen Ireland



Stephen Kent
CEO, Córas Iompair Éireann

© CIÉ



The four-star Cabra Castle Hotel is one of many high-quality accommodation options offered by CIÉ Tours.

insights and strive to ensure everything runs smoothly, while — unlike other operators — it guarantees there are no hidden extras to its upfront tour prices.

In addition, the firm and its wider group prioritize sustainability, with CIÉ Tours having gold certification from Ireland's Sustainable Tourism Network for efforts spanning the promotion of family businesses in the sector to trialing innovative zero- and low-emis-

sion vehicle fuels. "Like Ireland itself, we are forward-looking and embracing innovation while valuing our heritage," asserts Kent. "Ireland's history is a strong draw for visitors. At the same time, it is a modern, evolving country with hotels, transport and visitor infrastructure that supports a consistently high standard of experience. This combination of rich culture and modern services is what makes Ireland distinctive."

Tirlán

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