



Ireland's explosive data centre growth triggers shocking rise in electricity bills

Description

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Ireland

[A new report](#) has revealed the whopping tax levied on households in Ireland due to runaway data centre expansion – a massive €715 million extra on electricity bills from 2015-2023. Not only that, the document published by Friends of the Earth Ireland (FOTEI) projects that between 2025-2034, bill payers are:

– set to face an additional €1.43 billion in electricity bills linked to data centre growth.

It also highlights how those least able to pay are hit, stating that:

– the poorest households in Ireland paid an extra €209 on electricity bills between 2021 and 2023 due to data centre growth.

The cost primarily stems from [data centres](#) sucking up vast amounts of energy, 24 hours a day. This means fossil gas is used more frequently to cover any potential gap in grid capacity.

Gas is prone to price shocks, and the report cites the Russia-Ukraine war and the [illegal US-Israeli assault on Iran](#) as recent examples of how fossil fuel prices can suddenly skyrocket. The €1.43 billion figure mentioned above could hit €1.6 billion if there is similar volatility in the coming decade.

The report elaborates, saying:

Ireland is one of [the] most gas-reliant countries in the EU to produce electricity – this reliance also means the price of fossil gas is the key determinant of electricity prices in

Ireland. Ireland's reliance on imported oil and gas means that our energy bills are affected by every instance of war, political instability and price shocks.

FOTEI argue:

What we need is **real energy independence, powered by renewables**, which will bring down our energy bills – not a further dependence on dirty, expensive fossil fuels brought about by data centre expansion.

Ireland – Data centres gobbling up renewable capacity

Unfortunately, data centres have been devouring – almost all new renewables capacity. The report describes them:

– cannibalising renewable energy, slowing down electrification and clean energy for everyone else.

Ireland has a vast data centre presence compared to other countries. FOTEI explain that they:

– currently consume more than 22% of electricity in Ireland and this is projected to rise to 30% by 2030.

Even the United States, which people perhaps associate most strongly with data centre rollouts, only uses between 4-6% depending on varying estimates. The Republic of Ireland has 121 data centres already, with a population of just over five million people. As reported by the Canary previously, the government plans to massively expand that number.

Friends of the Earth Ireland point out some of the policies people might actually want, using that potential \$1.6 billion going on inflated bills. They suggest the money:

– could otherwise be spent on essential needs like food, housing, childcare, retrofitting, transport etc. Instead, **households are subsidising an energy-guzzling industry** dominated by some of the wealthiest tech corporations in the world.

The –1.6 billion that data centre growth in Ireland will likely drain from households through higher electricity bills is equivalent to more than four times the amount allocated by the Government in Budget 2026 to provide fully funded upgrades for those in energy poverty.

Big Tech destroying Irish sovereignty

The reason behind the data centre boom is Ireland's dependence on foreign direct investment (FDI), particularly from large US tech firms who build these data centres. Their presence in Ireland is the result of the country's policy of very low corporate tax rates

This stance helps to entrench unaccountable corporate power worldwide, as it triggers a race to the bottom on corporate levies. Nations scramble to offer the lowest rate and attract large firms to their doorstep. This means the big multinationals keep more of their profits, and the public gets less.

It essentially amounts to Ireland surrendering much of its sovereignty. It can't do anything these corporations or the [corporate-controlled US state](#) don't like.

In 2024, the government appeared to be taking steps towards passing the Occupied Territories Bill (OTB). This legislation would have limited trade with the genocidal entity known as "Israel". The US ambassador threatened "consequences", mentioning "1,000 US companies operating in Ireland". 90 minutes later Taoiseach Micheál Martin [announced the OTB was under review](#)

Similarly, Ireland is being [pushed to integrate slowly into NATO](#) due to its now crucial role as a hub of digital infrastructure. The Irish population backs neither [support for the Zionist entity](#) nor [increased militarism](#)

Industry lobby fails to convince

[Digital Infrastructure Ireland](#) which claims to "collect the voice of Ireland's digital infrastructure ecosystem", has given an unconvincing report. Chair Maurice Mortell accused Friends of the Earth Ireland of ["just trying to sow division in society"](#).

Campaigners against injustices in capitalist economies don't need to sow division that division is inherent to a system that creates a fundamental split in society. A chasm between those who own infrastructure like data centres, and those who do not. The owners accumulate enormous wealth and political power, while the rest of us see the natural world devastated by climate-wrecking, unsustainable energy use. To add insult to injury, we then have to pick up the bill too.

Featured image via [IrishTimes](#)

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