



EUROPEAN **COVENANT OF COMPANIES** FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY

Overview of Support Schemes
IRELAND



INTRODUCTION

Context

The European Climate Law sets an ambitious emission reduction target of 55% by 2030 and the objective of becoming climate-neutral by 2050. Achieving these new 2030 energy and climate targets will require an ever more integrated approach to energy transition. It is thus essential to invite companies, in particular the less resourced SMEs, to join the energy and climate efforts of cities in order to develop mutually beneficial public-private partnerships at local level¹.

Aim of the Covenant of Companies

The European Covenant of Companies for Climate and Energy (EU CCCE) is a European Commission initiative to encourage and support companies to step up their contribution to a clean energy transition, energy savings and related climate objectives as set out in the European Green Deal. The initiative aims to provide practical, step-by-step guidelines and technical assistance to European companies to help them take concrete actions resulting in the decarbonisation of their businesses. The initiative is currently in a pilot phase for two years where concepts will be developed and tested to establish a strong foundation for the Covenant of Companies.

Overview of support schemes

With these documents the EU CCCE provides an overview of the European and national support schemes for energy efficiency and renewable energy, national financing tools for clean energy research and innovation projects, as well as available capacity building support for companies.

For the second phase of the project the Consortium has opted to create detailed overviews by narrowing the study down to eight focus countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Romania, Spain and Sweden. This document presents an overview of the financial support schemes in Ireland, the financing tools for research and innovation and available capacity building materials (non-financial support), at the national and European level. It further offers insights in the national context within which the support is provided.

Disclaimer

This document gives an overview of the available support schemes as of July 2022. It serves to give a general overview of existing material at the national level at this date. Although the Consortium has put considerable effort in collating the material presented, it cannot guarantee that the overviews are fully comprehensive and up-to-date.

¹Tender specification setting up and operating the Secretariat for the EU Corporate Covenant Initiative, p.6.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Ireland aims for a 45% improvement in energy efficiency, a 34% share of renewables in energy end-use, a 70% share of renewable energy in the electricity generation market, and a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions compared to 2018.
- The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications is responsible for the national climate and energy policy, and measures to promote the delivery of a more sustainable energy system for Ireland. The national energy authority, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), falls under this department.
- The Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment is responsible for Enterprise Innovation and Support for SMEs.
- Enterprise Ireland works together with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate, and win export sales in global markets. Special attention is also paid to Green Funding and climate action.
- At a regional level the Local Enterprise Offices provide a range of complementary support to aid those who want to start or grow a business. There is no dedicated place to find regional schemes, so regional websites must be monitored. Depending on where companies are located, they should consult the regional website.
- Many support schemes are not specifically targeted at SMEs. Most support for renewable energy and energy efficiency and financing for clean energy research and innovation is made available through SEAI.
- For research and innovation, as part of Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the Green Transition Fund aims to accelerate the decarbonization of Irish enterprise.



OVERVIEW OF MAIN SUPPORT SCHEMES

A selection of financial and non-financial support schemes available to Irish companies as of June 2023 for clean energy projects and R&D&I in clean energy.

Ireland														
SUPPORT SCHEMES	GENERAL INFORMATION			ENERGY SOLUTIONS COVERED					COSTS COVERED				STATUS	
Selected Support Schemes	Scope	Category	Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)	Renewable energy utilisation	Energy efficient buildings	Energy Efficiency in processes and operations	Sustainable mobility	Circularity	Non-specific	Consultancy fee	Capital Investments	Wages/labour costs	Other operational costs	Specific for SMEs
Energy Efficiency														
EXEED Certified Grant	FIN	GRANT			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (EEOS)	FIN	OTH			✓						✓	✓	✓	
Accelerated Capital Allowance	FIN	TAX				✓	✓				✓			
Energy Audits	FIN	GRANT		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	
Energy Contracting Support Scheme	FIN	GRANT			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Community Grants	FIN	GRANT		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme	FIN	LOAN			✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	
Renewable Energy														
Non-Domestic Microgen Grant	FIN	GRANT		✓							✓		✓	
Support Scheme for Renewable Heat	FIN	GRANT		✓							✓			
Energy Monitoring and Tracking System	FIN	GRANT		✓	✓	✓					✓			
Capital Investment for Decarbonisation Processes	FIN	FUND		✓	✓	✓					✓			
Sustainable Mobility														
Commercially bought EVs	FIN	GRANT					✓				✓			
Grant for EV Dealers	FIN	GRANT					✓				✓			

LEGEND

Scope

FIN - Financial support scheme
R&I - Research & Innovation financing tool

Category

TAX - Tax benefit or incentive
GRANT - Grant

FUND - Fund
LOAN - Loan

GUAR- Guarantee

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SUPPORT SCHEMES	GENERAL INFORMATION			ENERGY SOLUTIONS COVERED						COSTS COVERED				STATUS	
Selected Support Schemes	Scope	Category	Technology Readiness Levels (TRL)	Renewable energy utilisation	Energy efficient buildings	Energy efficiency in processes and operations	Sustainable mobility	Circularity	Non-specific	Consultancy fee	Capital Investments	Wages/labour costs	Other operational costs	Specific for SMEs	
Research & Innovation															
National Energy Research Funding Programme	R&I	GRANT							✓		✓		✓		
Digital Transition Fund	R&I	FUND							✓	✓	✓	✓			
Innovation Vouchers	R&I	GRANT							✓		✓				
Research, Development & Innovation Fund	R&I	FUND							✓	✓	✓	✓			
Agile Innovation Fund	R&I	FUND							✓	✓	✓	✓			
Exploring Innovation Grant	R&I	GRANT							✓	✓	✓	✓			
Green Transition Fund															
Climate Action Voucher	FIN	OTH							✓						
Strategic Consultancy Grant	FIN	GRANT							✓	✓					
Green Plus	FIN	GRANT			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		
Green Start	FIN	GRANT						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		

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OVERVIEW OF MAIN SUPPORT SCHEMES

Capacity building material available to Irish companies as of June 2023 for their clean energy transition.

Ireland										
CAPACITY BUILDING MATERIAL	TYPE		SCOPE							STATUS
Selected Capacity Building Material	Type of support	General information and examples	Emission inventory	Energy performance base line	Monitoring & reporting	Energy Audit	Clean energy plan or strategy	Implementation support	Networking	Specific for SMEs
Training EV Dealers	TRAIN	✓								
EV Cost Comparison Calculator	TOOL	✓								
National energy research database	PLAT	✓								
SEAI Energy Academy	TRAIN	✓						✓	✓	
GreenPlus	TRAIN						✓	✓		
Green Micro	TRAIN	✓						✓	✓	✓
Climate Ready	TRAIN	✓						✓	✓	
Energy Efficiency Guide for retailers	DOC	✓								
Supporting SMEs online	TOOL	✓								

LEGEND

Form of support

DOC - Guidance document
 EXP - Expert guidance / consultancy
 TRAIN - Course, training, workshop

PLAT - Platform or portal
 HD - Helpdesk

TOOL - Tool (web-based, template or other)
 OTH - Other

OVERVIEW OF MAIN SUPPORT SCHEMES AT EU-LEVEL

Selection of financial and non-financial support schemes available to European companies as of July 2022 for clean energy projects and R&D&I in clean energy.

EU																
MAIN LANDING PAGE		https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home														
Support schemes	GENERAL INFORMATION			ENERGY SOLUTIONS COVERED							COST COVERED					STATUS
Selected Support Schemes	Scope	Category	TRL levels	Renewable energy utilization	Energy efficient buildings	Energy storage	Sustainable mobility	Infrastructure and smart grids	Circularity	Non-specific	Consultancy fee	Capital investments	Wages/labour cost	Other operational costs	Description	Specific for SMEs
Horizon Europe - Relevant Missions																
Adaptation to Climate Change										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Operational costs are only covered when they can be attributed as direct costs. Indirect costs may sometimes fall under the grant, but will depend on the grant agreement for a specific project. See also: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/aga_en.pdf#%5B%7B%22num%22%3A92%2C%22gen%22%3A0%7D%2C%7B%22name%22%3A%22XY2%22%7D%2C%59%2C722%2C0%5D	
Climate Neutral and Smart Cities										✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.1	
Horizon Europe - Programme Innovative Europe																
EIC Pathfinder	R&I	FUND & GRANT	1 - 4		✓						✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.2	
EIC Transition	R&I	FUND & GRANT	4 - 5/6	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.2	
EIC Accelerator	R&I	FUND & GRANT	5/6 - 9		✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.2	✓
CINEA																
CEF Energy: Energy Infrastructure: Projects of Common Interest	FIN	GRANT						✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.2	
CEF Energy: Energy Infrastructure: Cross-border renewable energy projects				✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	Annotated Grant Agreement - EU Grants - Art.6.2	
LIFE Clean Energy Transition	FIN	GRANT		✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/life/wp-call/2021-2024/call-fiche_life-2022-cet_en.pdf	
LIFE Circular economy	FIN	GRANT							✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/life/wp-call/2021-2024/call-fiche_life-2022-sap-env_en.pdf	
LIFE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	FIN	GRANT		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/life/wp-call/2021-2024/call-fiche_life-2022-sap-clima_en.pdf	
Innovation Fund	R&I	GRANT		✓		✓		✓			✓				https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-02/IF_flyer-2021%20.pdf	
EIF and EIB																
Invest EU	FIN/R&I	FUND		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						The financing will typically take place through financial intermediaries that take equity participations, convertible loans and other equity-type financing. These intermediaries would typically be independent commercially-run fund managers that select companies with adequate return prospects, driven by a commercial logic when selecting companies in which to invest or provide other forms of financing. The InvestEU intervention will done on commercial terms and crowd in private investors.	✓

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OVERVIEW OF MAIN SUPPORT SCHEMES AT EU-LEVEL

Capacity building material available to European companies as of July 2022 for their clean energy transition

EU										
CAPACITY BUILDING MATERIAL	TYPE		SCOPE							STATUS
Selected Capacity Building Material	Type of support	General information and examples	Emissions inventory	Energy performance baseline	Monitoring & reporting	Energy audit	Clean energy plan or strategy	Implementation support	Networking	Specific for SMEs
LIFE close-to-market projects	PLAT	✓					✓		✓	
EIC Business Acceleration Services	PLAT	✓			✓				✓	
Invest EU - Advisory hub	EXP						✓	✓	✓	
Innovation Fund	EXP						✓	✓	✓	

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NATIONAL SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR CLEAN ENERGY PROJECTS

Renewable energy utilisation

The Irish National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) has a target to increase its reliance on Renewable Energy Source (RES) from 30% to 70% by 2030.²

Support schemes for renewables are mainly managed by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (**SEAI**). The **Non-Domestic Microgen Grant** provides financial assistance to help businesses and other sectors to install photovoltaic panels to generate electricity on-site. Grants are available for systems of up to 6kWp (approximately 16 Panels or 25m²) with potential savings of between EUR 2,000 and EUR 3,000 of annual electricity costs. SEAI also provides financial support to help businesses transition to **renewable heating**.

Additionally, **Enterprise Ireland** provides financial support in the field of renewables under the Enterprise Emissions Reduction Investment Fund. The **Energy Monitoring and Tracking System** provides grants to support companies to put in place energy monitoring and tracking systems for their activities. Manufacturing companies can further make use of the fund **Capital Investment for Decarbonisation Processes** to be used in investments in technologies such as: industrial heat pumps, electric steam boilers, heat recovery technologies, mechanical vapour recompression (MVR) evaporators, and biomass boilers.

Energy efficiency in buildings and in industry

The NECP sets the objective of reducing CO₂ equivalent emissions from the built environment by 40-45% relative to 2030 projections.³ Specific targets for the built environment are set out in Ireland's **Long-Term Renovation Strategy 2020 (LTRS)**. For commercial buildings the LTRS has set the target of "investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial building stock with a target at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER level of B".⁴ The NECP and Ireland's **Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction** set a target of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, relative to the levels in 2018.⁵ Industry plays an important role in achieving these targets. The majority of emissions coming from industry derive "from manufacturing, food and beverages processing, alumina productions, and cement".⁶ As a result, a fair amount of support is made available from the government and SEAI.

Excellence in Energy Efficiency Design (EXEED) enables organisations to establish a systematic approach to design, construction, and commissioning processes for new investments and upgrades to existing assets.⁷ Through the **Excellence in Energy Efficiency Design (EXEED) grant scheme**, SEAI allows grant support businesses to adopt the EXEED Certified standardised approach and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.⁸ The grant scheme is open to all businesses and organisations, including public bodies.

Companies who sell large amounts of energy are known as obligated parties. Obligated parties offer support to make homes and businesses more energy efficient under the **Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme (EEOS)**. For every unit of energy saved through these projects, obligated parties achieve energy credits towards their targets.

²Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030, Dublin, 2019, p.11.

³Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030, Dublin, 2019, p.11.

⁴Government of Ireland, Ireland's Long-Term Renovation Strategy 2020, Dublin 2020, p.5.

⁵Government of Ireland, Ireland's Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction, Dublin 2020, p.10.

⁶ibidem, p.48.

⁷<https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/standards/exeed-certified-program/>

⁸<https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/business-grants-and-supports/exeed-certified-grant/SEAI-EXEED-Grant-Guidelines.pdf>

NATIONAL SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR CLEAN ENERGY PROJECTS Continued.

The **Accelerated Capital Allowance** (ACA) is a tax incentive scheme that promotes investment in energy-efficient products & equipment. The ACA is based on the long-standing 'Wear and Tear Allowance' for investment in capital plant and machinery, whereby capital depreciation can be compensated through a reduction in an organisation's tax liability.

Through SEAI companies can also receive a EUR 2,000 voucher towards the cost of a professional **energy audit**.

The **Energy Contracting Support Scheme** provides financial assistance to help businesses and public sector organisations to deliver energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects through Energy Performance Contracts (EPCs), Local Energy Supply Contracts (LESCs) and Energy Performance Guarantees (EPGs).

Through the Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland, SMEs can obtain a **loan for investments in energy efficiency**. The loan is from EUR 10,000 to a maximum of EUR 150,000 per borrower for activities listed on the **Triple E Register for Products**.

Sustainable mobility

The NECP sets out to increase the penetration of electric vehicles into the market so that 936,000 electric vehicles will be on the road by 2030.⁹ The **National Policy Framework: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland, 2017-2030**, communicates the long-term vision for transport until 2050.

To help attain these targets, **Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland** has been established as a dedicated Office charged with supporting consumers, the public sector, and businesses to continue to make the switch to zero emission vehicles.

SEAI provides grant supports towards the purchase of new light **commercial N1 category electric vehicles** for businesses and public entities. The grant amounts to a maximum of EUR 3,800. **Car Dealers** can also benefit from grants for selling electric vehicles.

⁹Tender specification setting up and operating the Secretariat for the EU Corporate Covenant Initiative, p.6.

FINANCING TOOLS FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Investments in R&D through the national government is an action, among others, realised through the Climate Action Fund, the National Energy RD&D, the Enterprise Emissions Reduction Investment Fund, and the Ocean Energy Prototype Development Funding Programmes. These actions fund the deployment of the research, development & demonstration stages of energy/low-carbon technology pilot facilities. The implementation of the targets is set out in the roadmap: **Innovation 2020**.

Under the **National Energy RD&D**, SEIA holds an **annual call** for grants for research, development and demonstration. All public and private sector organisations can apply, and there are five levels of funding depending on the size of the project. Within state aid rules, a base level of approved itemised eligible costs is granted of 50% for industrial research and 25% for experimental development. SMEs can obtain an additional 10% or 20% funding above the approved base level.

Green Transition Fund

As part of Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the **Green Transition Fund** aims to accelerate the decarbonisation of Irish enterprise. The fund comprises two separate streams of funding, to support the different aspects of the decarbonisation journey for Irish enterprises. These are:

- **Climate Planning Fund for Business** – building company capability to develop plans for lower-carbon products, processes, and business models.
- **Enterprise Emissions Reduction Investment Fund** – supporting capital investment and Research, Development & Innovation in decarbonisation.

FINANCING TOOLS FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION Continued.

Several grants are available and summarised on the website of the Fund, as follows:

Grant Offer	Support Available
<p>Climate Action Voucher: Consultancy support to develop an initial sustainability/ decarbonisation/circular economy strategy and action plan.</p>	<p>€1,800 grant</p>
<p>GreenStart: Consultancy grant to support companies to introduce environmental best practice systems and structures, achieve cost and resource reduction targets and lay a foundation for future environmental improvement projects.</p>	<p>Grant rate of up to 80% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of €5000</p>
<p>GreenPlus: Support for training projects to develop a high level of environmental management capability, drive environmental efficiencies and achieve improved sustainability.</p>	<p>Grant rate of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of €50,000</p>
<p>Strategic Consultancy: Consultancy grant to assist large energy users develop a carbon reduction roadmap.</p>	<p>Grant rates of up to 50% of eligible costs. Typical maximum support of €35k</p>
<p>Capital investment for Energy Monitoring & Tracking (EM & T) Systems: Supporting companies to put in place monitoring and targeting systems to begin accounting for the carbon footprint of their activities</p>	<p>Grant rate of up to 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum grant of €50,000</p>
<p>Capital investment for decarbonisation processes: Supporting investment in carbon reducing technologies in manufacturing combustion processes</p>	<p>Max. grant rate of 30-50%, dependent on company size, up to a maximum support of €1m</p>
<p>Innovation Vouchers: Providing assistance to SMEs to explore a business opportunity or problem with a registered knowledge provider in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation</p>	<p>€5,000 per company</p>
<p>Exploring Innovation: Grant to support planning of research, development, or innovation projects in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation</p>	<p>Grant rate of up to 50% of eligible costs. Typical maximum support of €35k</p>
<p>Research & Development: Supporting the development of new or substantially improved products, services, or processes, in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation</p>	<p>Grant rates depend on project type and company size</p>
<p>Agile Innovation: Supporting the development of new or substantially improved products, services, or processes, in the areas of sustainability and decarbonisation</p>	<p>Grant rate of up to 50% of eligible costs. Typical maximum support of €150k</p>

NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING MATERIAL

In addition to financial support, several capacity building materials are available for companies.

A Green Plus project is a medium-scale training project facilitated/supported by an external environmental expert. The aim of the project is to develop a high level of environmental management capabilities, drive environmental efficiencies and achieve improved sustainability by establishing and embedding continuous improvement systems and behaviours.

Specifically for SMEs, **Green for Micro** is a programme that helps companies free of charge to become more sustainable with advice from a green consultant. Topics cover, among others, increased cost savings, resource efficiency, reduced environmental footprint and greenhouse gas emissions, opportunities for increased value of products and services, improved image and access to customers, and increased resilience to climate change impacts.

The **Climate Ready Academy** offers specialised subsidised training for businesses in the field of Climate action, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility.

Specifically for **retailers**, SEAI has published an online guide that provides simple and effective energy-related advice to achieve energy efficiency.

MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON SUPPORT SCHEMES

Title	Description page	Link
Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland	SEAI is Ireland's national energy authority investing in, and delivering, appropriate, effective, and sustainable solutions to help Ireland's transition to a clean energy future.	https://www.seai.ie/
Enterprise Ireland	Enterprise Ireland is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets.	https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND ENERGY POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND MAIN STAKEHOLDERS

With its **National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030** (NECP), Ireland aims to make progress with decarbonisation, laying down a firm foundation for consolidating a climate-neutral path for 2030 and 2050. In the mid-term (2030), the NECP aims for a 45% improvement in energy efficiency; a 34% share of renewables in energy end-use; a 70% share of renewable energy in the electricity generation market and a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions compared to 2018.

The NECP includes support to new renewable and distributed energy schemes as well as special attention to mechanisms that enhance grid flexibility and connectivity. The country's new **National Recovery and Resilience Plan** (NRRP) allocates a sum of EUR 85 million for the programme to drive digital transformation of enterprise in Ireland, in accordance with the priorities set out in in **Ireland's SME and Entrepreneurship Growth Plan**.

In addition to the NECP and the NRRP, Ireland has established several roadmaps in the form of long-term strategy documents. The **Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction** outlines the energy system transformation trajectory for the years 2030 to 2050.¹⁰ Specific targets for the built environment are set out in Ireland's **Long-Term Renovation Strategy** 2020 (LTRS). For commercial buildings, the LTRS has set the target of "investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial building stock with a target at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER level of B".¹¹

Finally, the targets in the NECP and long-term strategy plans have been incorporated in the **Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021**. This act codifies the target of a 51% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030 compared to 2018 levels.

State vs regional responsibilities

Regional assemblies make decisions about strategic planning and EU funding and help to coordinate the work of local authorities.

Ireland has three regional assemblies. Each assembly has members who are elected by the local authorities in the region. The three regions are:

- **Northern and Western region**
- **Eastern and Midlands region**
- **Southern region**

Ireland has 31 local authorities that are responsible for a range of local services, including:

- Housing
- Roads
- Recreation and amenities
- Planning
- Libraries
- Environmental protection
- Fire services
- Register of electors

Most (26) local authorities are county councils. There are also 3 city councils (Dublin, Galway, and Cork) and 2 councils that oversee a city and a county (Limerick and Waterford).

¹⁰Italy NECP: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-02/it_final_necp_main_en_0.pdf.

¹¹Italian regional SME policy responses (oecd.org).

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND ENERGY POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND MAIN STAKEHOLDERS Continued.

Institutions

The governance in Ireland, in terms of energy matters, is centralised, with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications and the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment having the main capabilities for developing energy policy.

The **Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications** is responsible for the national climate and energy policy, and measures to promote the delivery of a more sustainable energy system for Ireland. To this end the Department has established roadmaps such as the **Climate Action Plan**. The national energy authority, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (**SEAI**), falls under this department.

SEAI works with the public, businesses, communities, and the Government to achieve Ireland's transition to a clean energy future through expertise, funding, educational programmes, policy advice, research, and the development of new technologies. SEAI is funded by the Government of Ireland through the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

The **Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment** is responsible for advising and implementing the government's policies of stimulating the productive capacity of the economy and creating an environment which enables employment creation and sustainability. The department focuses, among other things, on Enterprise Innovation and Support for SMEs. Under Enterprise Innovation, the department funds and promotes enterprise-led innovation through a range of programmes and supports delivered, for the most part, through Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland. Specific support is also provided for SMEs in the form of access to finance, management development, mentoring support, business development programmes, market support and trade promotion.

Enterprise Ireland works together with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate, and win export sales in global markets. Special attention is also paid to Green Funding and climate action.

At a regional level, the **Local Enterprise Offices** provide a range of complementary supports to aid those who want to start or grow a business. The supports range from providing an initial "First Stop Shop" service where individuals can receive advice on the steps involved in setting up a business, to the provision of grants for feasibility studies, provision of financial support for the establishment of new businesses or expansion of existing ones and the provision of a range of soft supports such as training and mentoring. There are 31 local enterprise offices in accordance with the local authorities.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND ENERGY POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND MAIN STAKEHOLDERS Continued.

Useful tools

The Irish government has developed an **online tool** specifically for SMEs. SMEs can fill in their details in the tool and obtain a tailored list of support applicable to their situation.

Under Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) (2021-2026), projects supporting the digital and climate transition of enterprise are being funded through the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility. This covers projects that will facilitate emissions reductions as part of a decarbonisation plan.

The Irish government has several platforms for SMEs to find support and access to financing. The government has a website dedicated to supporting SMEs that includes a **search function** to find the best suited support for different types of SMEs. The Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment also has a page on its **website** for support to SMEs in climate and energy. The overview of what is available is categorised in accordance with type of company and type of support. The same department also keeps an updated **guide** specifically for retailers.

INTERVIEW SOURCES

- SME, 8 May 2023

[https://covenant-of-companies.ec.europa.eu/
#CovenantOfCompanies](https://covenant-of-companies.ec.europa.eu/#CovenantOfCompanies)

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