



An Bille um Ghrúpa Athbhreithnithe an Idirnascaire Thuaidh-Theas, 2021
North-South Interconnector Review Group Bill 2021

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



**AN BILLE UM GHRÚPA ATHBHREITHNITHE AN IDIRNASCAIRE THU AidH-
THEAS, 2021**
NORTH-SOUTH INTERCONNECTOR REVIEW GROUP BILL 2021

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ACTS REFERRED TO



**AN BILLE UM GHRÚPA ATHBHREITHNITHE AN IDIRNASCAIRE THUAIDH-
THEAS, 2021
NORTH-SOUTH INTERCONNECTOR REVIEW GROUP BILL 2021**

Bill

entitled

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An Act to establish a review group to examine the route of the electricity interconnection between the State and Northern Ireland of the project known as the North-South Interconnector, to define the review group's terms of reference and to require it to submit a report to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications as regards the placement of high voltage power cables on the route of the North-South Interconnector in the State, and to provide for related matters. 10

Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

Interpretation

1. In this Act—

“EirGrid” means the public limited company incorporated pursuant to Regulation 34 of the European Communities (Internal Market in Electricity) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 445 of 2000); 15

“Minister” means the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications;

“North-South Interconnector” means the proposed overhead electricity power line connecting the electricity grid of the State and the electricity grid of Northern Ireland and referred to as such in Annex VII to Regulation (EU) No. 347/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013¹, as amended in the Annex to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 389/2020 of 31 October 2019²; 20

“Review Group” has the meaning given to it by *section 2*.

Establishment of North-South Interconnector Review Group

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2. (1) There shall be established, on such day, not later than one month after the passing of this Act as may be appointed by the Minister by order, a body to be known as the North-South Interconnector Review Group (in this Act referred to as the “Review Group”) to perform, in relation to the route of the North-South Interconnector, the function assigned to it by this Act. 30

(2) The Minister shall provide such secretarial and administrative support, technical and

¹ OJ No. L 115, 25.4.2013, p.39

² OJ No. L 74, 11.3.2020, p.1

professional advice and assistance towards research to the Review Group as the Minister considers necessary or appropriate.

Terms of reference of Review Group

3. (1) The Review Group shall examine and review on matters concerning each of the following: 5
- (a) a comparative evaluation of using high voltage overhead transmission lines across lands or underground cables along public roads using the latest decision-making criteria of EirGrid, namely technical performance, economic impact, environmental preference, socio-economic impact and deliverability;
 - (b) developments in technology and best practice gained from similar interconnector projects involving the state or otherwise; 10
 - (c) analysis of the power capacity need in both the State and Northern Ireland for electricity and the consequent scale of interconnector required to meet that need, having regard to the joint EirGrid and Electricity Transmission System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) All-Island Generation Capacity Statements 2018-2027, 2019-2028 and 2020-2029; 15
 - (d) the projected economic effect on residential, commercial and agricultural property within three kilometres of any high voltage cables, pylons or other structure developed contingent to the North-South Interconnector route, having regard for existing peer reviewed international studies which outline the percentage of devaluation relative to proximity to pylons and lines; 20
 - (e) the comparative economic impact of proceeding with the placement of over ground high voltage cables and pylons as opposed to the placement underground of the high voltage cables, taking account the impact on tourism, architectural and cultural heritage, and the landscape within three kilometres of any high voltage cables, pylons or other structure developed contingent to the North-South Interconnector route. 25
- (2) Having carried out the examination and review described in *subsection (1)* the Review Group shall prepare a report for the Minister.

Membership of Review Group 30

4. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Review Group shall consist of five members who shall be nominated from time to time as occasion requires by the Minister.
- (2) The Minister shall ensure that persons appointed to the Review Group have expertise, qualification and knowledge relating to the development of major infrastructural projects in the electrical industry sector. 35
- (3) Every member of the Review Group shall, unless that member sooner dies, resigns or becomes disqualified, hold office for such period as prescribed by *section 7*.
- (4) Members of the Review Group shall be paid such remuneration and allowances for expenses as the Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, may from time to time determine. 40

- (5) A member of the Review Group may at any time resign from office by letter addressed to the Minister and the resignation shall take effect on the date specified in the letter or the date the letter is received by the Minister, whichever is the later.
- (6) The Minister may at any time, for stated reasons, terminate a person's membership of the Review Group. 5
- (7) Where there is a vacancy (however occasioned) in the membership of the Review Group, the Minister shall, if it is reasonably practicable to do so, appoint a replacement before the end of the period of one month beginning on the day on which the vacancy arose.

Meetings and business of Review Group

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- 5. (1) The Review Group shall hold such and so many meetings as may be necessary for the performance of its functions and the achievement of its work programme and may make such arrangements for the conduct of its meetings and business (including by the establishment of sub-committees and the fixing of a quorum for a meeting) as it considers appropriate. 15
- (2) The Review Group at its first meeting shall elect one of their number to be chairperson for the Review Group. If the chairperson ceases to hold that position or to be a member of the Review Group, then the Review Group shall as soon as practicable thereafter elect one of their number to be chairperson for the Review Group.
- (3) In the absence of the chairperson from a meeting of the Review Group, the members present shall elect one of their number to be chairperson for that meeting. 20
- (4) Subject to such rules as the Review Group may make regarding a quorum, the Review Group may act despite one or more vacancies in its membership.

Report of Review Group

- 6. As soon as may be after the establishment date, but not later than 12 months thereafter, the Review Group shall submit a report to the Minister of its findings and the Minister shall cause copies of the report to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas within a period of two months from the receipt of the report. 25

Dissolution of Review Group

- 7. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the Review Group shall stand dissolved three months after the date of submission of its report. 30

Short title

- 8. This Act may be cited as the North-South Interconnector Review Group Act 2021.

An Bille um Ghrúpa Athbhreithnithe an
Idirnascaire Thuaidh-Theas, 2021

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht do bhunú grúpa athbhreithnithe chun bealach an idirnasctha leictreachais idir an Stát agus Tuaisceart Éireann de chuid an tionscadail ar a dtugtar an tIdirnascaire Thuaidh-Theas a scrúdú, do mhíniú théarmaí tagartha an ghrúpa athbhreithnithe agus dá cheangal air tuarascáil a chur faoi bhráid an Aire Comhshaoil, Aeráide agus Cumarsáide maidir le cáblaí cumhachta ardvoltais a chur ar bhealach an Idirnascaire Thuaidh-Theas sa Stát, agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

*An Teachta Peadar Tóibín a thug isteach,
25 Bealtaine, 2021*

North-South Interconnector Review Group
Bill 2021

BILL

(as initiated)

entitled

An Act to establish a review group to examine the route of the electricity interconnection between the State and Northern Ireland of the project known as the North-South Interconnector, to define the review group's terms of reference and to require it to submit a report to the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications as regards the placement of high voltage power cables on the route of the North-South Interconnector in the State, and to provide for related matters.

*Introduced by Deputy Peadar Tóibín,
25th May, 2021*

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