

## Single EU electricity market may force up price in Ireland, says ESRI

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A SINGLE EU electricity market could end up leaving Irish consumers facing extra costs, the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) warns in a paper it is publishing today.

A Review of Irish Energy Policy says the all-Ireland electricity market, introduced in late 2007, is working well and concludes the price of electricity is about right as a result.

It points out the EU is moving rapidly towards an integrated electricity market, and warns such a development could create extra costs for Irish consumers.

The report's author, John FitzGerald, says an integrated market will mean greater interconnection between the Irish and other European electricity networks. "The manner in which this investment in interconnection is financed and the rules under which trade will take place across the interconnectors need to be developed," he says.

"There is a danger that EU rules could see Irish consumers paying for interconnection, which might end up raising their price of electricity."

Mr FitzGerald said yesterday that Irish electricity prices, which are considered to be high, are "about right".

He agreed that they are higher than in Britain because that country has more nuclear and coal-fired generation.

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