



European
Commission

The Environmental Implementation Review



IRELAND

Europe has ambitious laws and policies to protect air and water, to promote the circular economy, raise recycling rates and safeguard nature. Implementing them is key to achieving our environmental objectives. This is why the European Commission launched the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR), a tool to help countries address systemic obstacles to environmental integration by identifying the causes behind poor implementation. The EIR comprises a regular cycle of analysis, dialogue and peer-to-peer support. This factsheet summarises the results of the second EIR package published in April 2019.

Country profile

Ireland is characterised by its green landscapes that attract millions of visitors every year. Its soils are considered to be in good condition, with the exception of peat areas. In general the country has good air quality and has taken important steps towards a circular economy. Nevertheless, Ireland still faces a number of important environmental challenges.

Main progress EIR 2019

- + Ireland has made some progress on the designation of special areas of conservation and on drawing up conservation objectives for these sites.
- + On air quality, the country has made some progress in reducing emissions.
- + On waste policy, Ireland has made some progress in applying economic instruments.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FROM IRELAND

- + Ireland is one of the few countries with a geographical information system (GIS) service that provides detailed data on ecosystems and their services, which is also available to the public online.
- + The country is very strong in environmental research and development, attracting many researchers and a lot of early-stage green investment.
- + Ireland has made good use of EU co-financing for environmental projects, especially through the LIFE programme and European Investment Bank loans.

Main challenges EIR 2019



Water management

Water services continue to cause concern. Besides the low compliance rate with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, Ireland also has problems with its drinking water, and the quality of its bathing waters is below average. The country's new water-pricing system requires monitoring to ensure that it works in practice. The abstraction of water and hydromorphological changes are still not well controlled.



Nature protection

Significant remaining gaps in SAC designation need to be addressed and the necessary conservation measures for all sites established. Although Ireland has

made progress in finalising the National Raised Bog SAC Management Plan, only slow progress has been achieved in protecting blanket bog sites.



Access to justice

As regards access to justice in environmental matters, Ireland should make an effort to lower the cost of bringing an environmental legal action to court.

Peer-to-Peer support

The EIR is supported by the TAIEX-EIR Peer-to-Peer (EIR P2P) tool, which finances peer-to-peer learning between environmental authorities in the Member States. Ireland has made good use of TAIEX-EIR P2P by hosting a workshop on waste management, providing Romania with P2P expertise on managing the closure and after-care of landfill sites, and hosting a workshop on the urban green economy in Galway with participation from winning cities in the EU's Green Leaf network.

The full country report on Ireland and the other country reports, as well as the Communication 'Environmental Implementation Review 2019: A Europe that protects its citizens and enhances their quality of life' are available here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm

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