



An Roinn Caiteachais Phoiblí Bonneagair
Athchóiriúcháin Seirbhíse Poiblí agus Digitiúcháin
Department of Public Expenditure Infrastructure
Public Service Reform and Digitalisation

Accelerating Infrastructure

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Two core pillars



National Development Plan Review

funding for strategic focus and the national interest

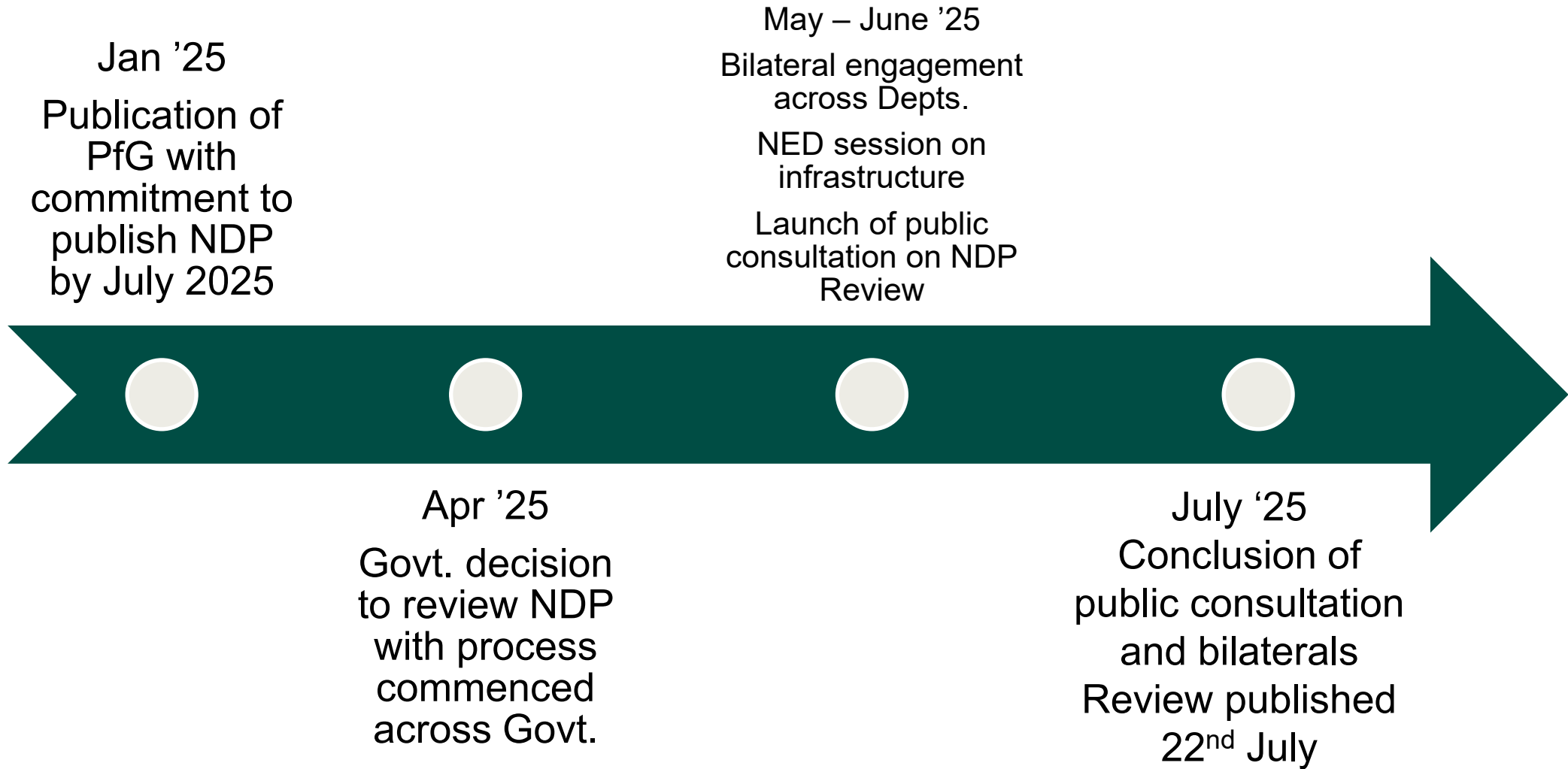
Accelerating Infrastructure Taskforce

optimising the ecosystem for delivery of infrastructure

Deliver 300,000 houses by 2030

Boost competitiveness

NDP Review Timeline

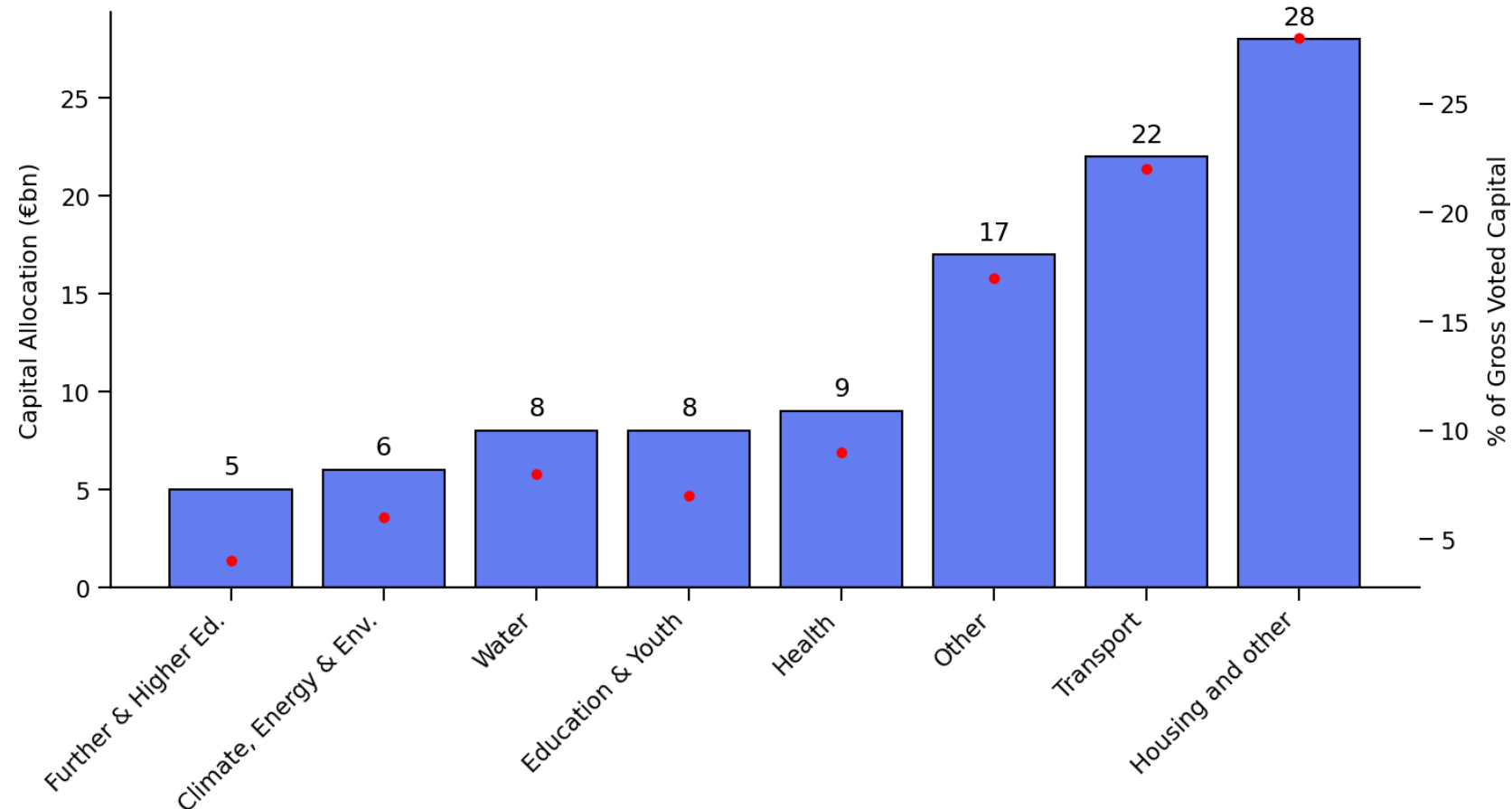


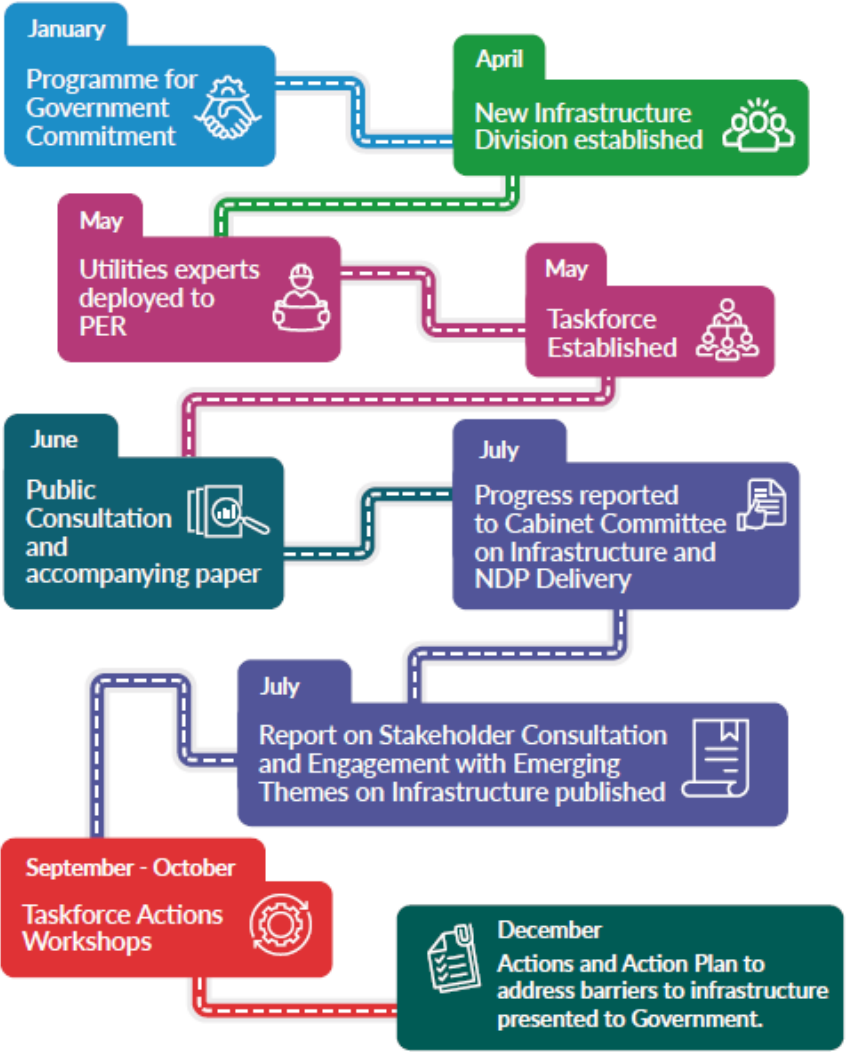
NDP Review Agreed Allocations

- €102.4bn allocated in gross Voted capital expenditure for 2026-2030
- Additional €10bn in equity and fund releases for strategic megaprojects in energy, water and transport
- Increase of €34bn relative to previous NDP, incl. the €10bn in equity releases, with increases frontloaded



Capital Allocation vs % Share (2026-2030)





Barriers to Timely Infrastructure Delivery



Legal Risks: judicial reviews – rise, threat and consequences



Regulatory Burden: complex and excessive regulation



Internal System Constraints: slow, rigid, inconsistent and uncoordinated processes; risk aversion



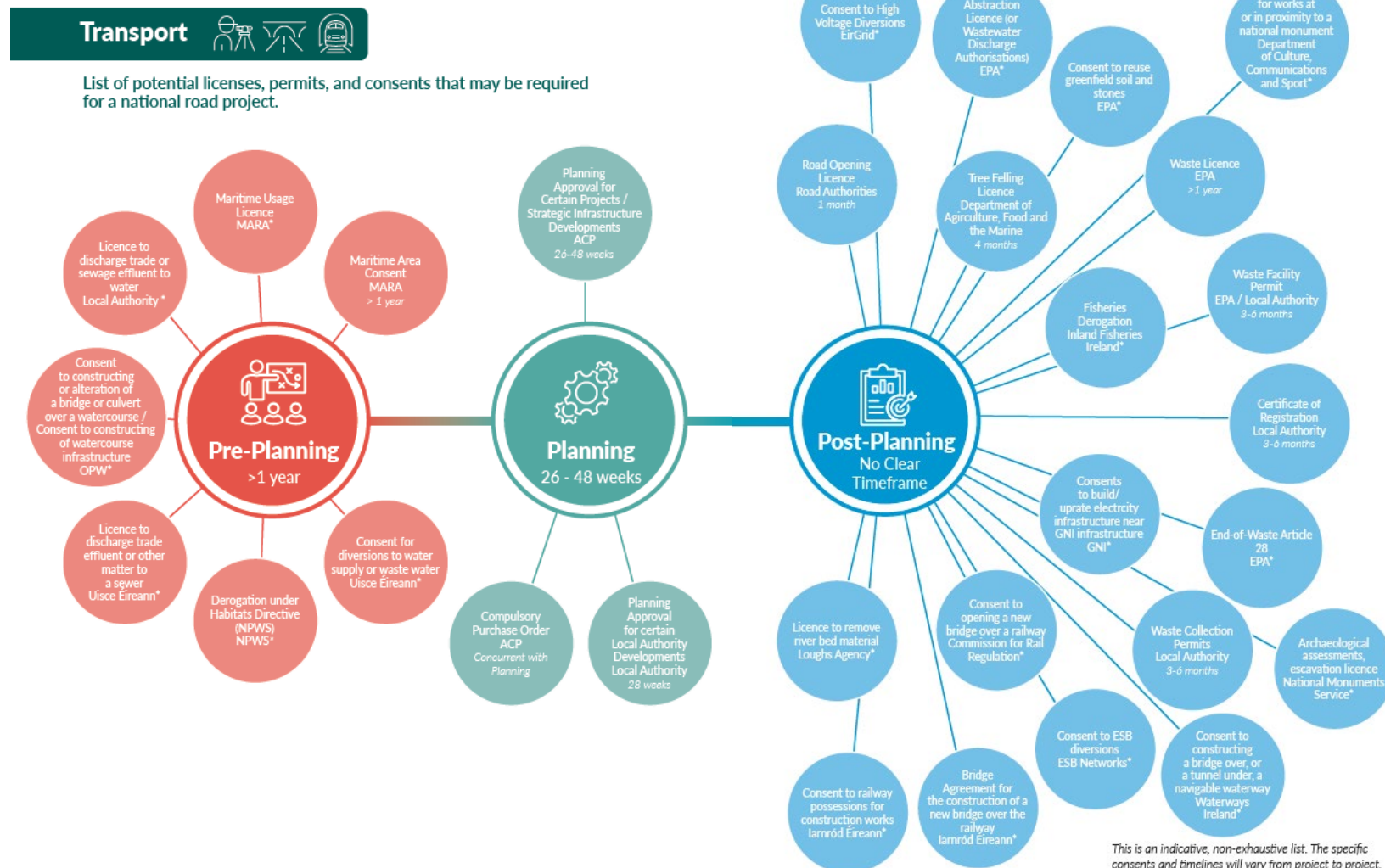
Construction Capacity: low productivity; skill/labour shortages



Public Acceptance: societal value and consequences of poor infrastructure



Figure 3: Approval Process for Typical Transport Infrastructure Project



Consequences in Practice

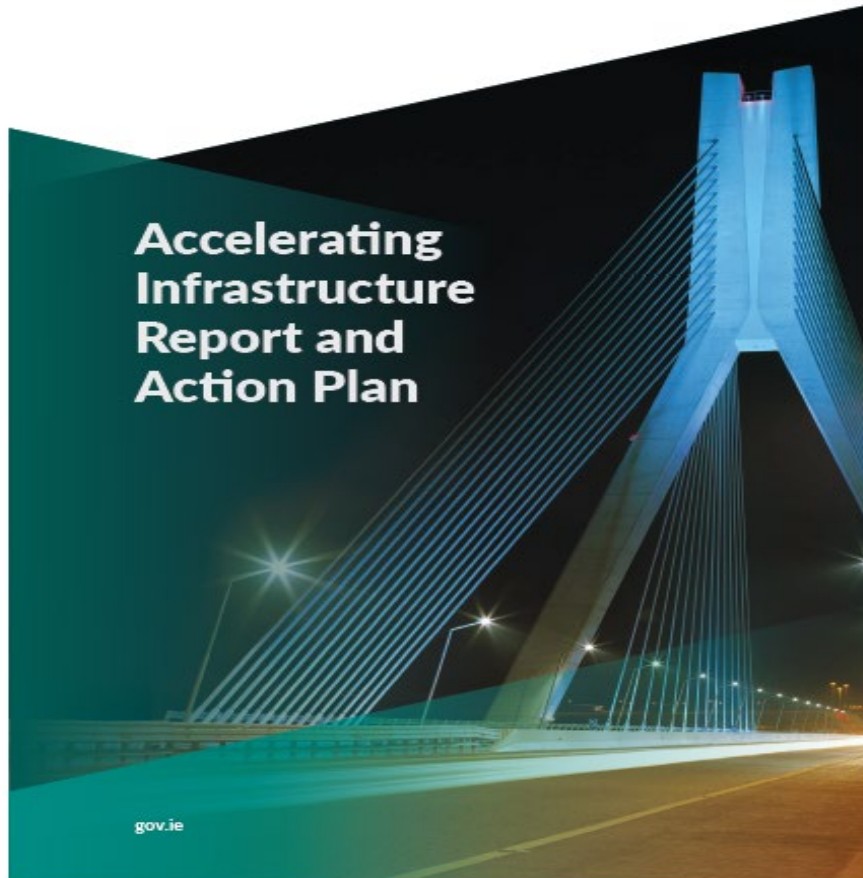


- North-South Interconnector (10-years behind; Court hearings, objections)
- The Batter Lane - distribution substations (SID vs non-SID: 7 vs 70+ weeks planning process)
- Greater Dublin Drainage Project (JRs etc.)
- M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy National Road (prioritisation, funding, JR, planning and approval)
- Flood Relief: 4-year delays, towns flood, costs rise
- Grid Delivery: 14% wind, 7% solar curtailed in 2024
- Housing Enablement: thousands of homes stalled
- Costs, including inflation
- Investors hesitate or leave
- Enterprise growth and competitiveness
- Climate: clean power curtailed, targets slip

Report and Action Plan



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Pillar 1: Legal Reform



- Reform Judicial Review to Rebalance Reliance on Courts
- Enact Critical Infrastructure Legislation to Provide a Fast Track for Critical Projects
- Increase Exemptions and Thresholds in Planning and Environmental Legislation

Pillar 2: Regulatory Reform and Simplification

- Simplify and Rationalise Regulatory Processes to Address Volume and Complexity
- Advocate for Reform to Key Legislation at EU Level and Improve Transposition
- Support Developer Led Infrastructure where Appropriate
- Review and Reform Office of Planning Regulator

Pillar 3: Co-ordination and Delivery Reform



- Publish Sectoral Investment Plans to Promote Realistic Project Pipelines
- Government to Increase Risk Appetite to Tackle Excess Caution
- Proportionate Guidelines
- Procurement Process Reform
- Coordination Between Utilities, LAs and transport
- Enhanced Coordination and Monitoring of Reform and Delivery

Pillar 4: Public Acceptance



- Make Land Available and Accessible for Critical Infrastructure
- Enhance Communication - Benefits Realisation Framework
- Build Leadership Support for Infrastructure

Accelerating Infrastructure Action Plan



- Structures (DPER, SOG, CC, AIT, JUTCH, Legislative, EU, CSG, ICG)
- Plan on track, all milestones for Q4 2025 and Q1 2026 have been met
- For a programme of this scale and ambition, that is a strong delivery rate :
 - *Departments (DCEE, DHLGH, DPER, DFHERIS, DFAT, AGO, Justice, Finance, Transport, Taoiseach)*
 - *Utilities and transport providers (UÉ, ESBNetwork, EirGrid, TII , NTA, etc.)*
 - *Local Authorities representatives*
 - *Regulators (MARA, EPA, NPWS, ACP, OPR, CRU, etc.)*
 - *Industry (CIF etc.)*

Progress on AIRAP – delivery highlights



Legislative reform

- *Critical Infrastructure Bill – designation of critical infrastructure projects*
- *Statutory Instrument capping legal fees State pays in environmental JRs*
- *Civil Reform Bill draft heads - Legislature to determine scope and application of JRs*
- *Planning and Development Amendment Bill drafting*

Regulatory reform

- *ACP – faster decisions 18-26 weeks vs 48 weeks*
- *EPA – simplified regulatory regimes – removing need for full license reviews for certain license types*
- *EPA - General Binding Rules approach for developer-led small domestic wastewater discharges (removing need for licence)*
- *EPA – improved application process and reduction in RFIs*
- *MARA – LAs and UE 'Fit and Proper' reducing processing time for MAC applications*
- *MARA – streamlined processes sharing data and digital maps (Maritime Area Viewer); organisational restructuring increased application processing efficiency by >30%*
- *MARA – regulations exempting certain activities and emergency works (e.g. underwater comm and energy cables) from requiring a MAC*
- *MARA – removed conditions relating to fishers and reduced distance requirements between survey vessels in MULs (impact on GDD and offshore renewables)*
- *EU directives – AG review of transposition practices; DFAT coordinating input at EU level*
- *Infrastructure guidelines – increasing threshold for major projects to 500m; removing requirement for external review at prelim business case stage saving (20 weeks)*

Coordination and delivery

- *National Development Plan and Sectoral Plans – setting capital expenditure allocations across sectors over 5 years*
- *Coordination: JUTCH – 10 bottlenecks (abnormal road, road opening licencing, etc.); legislative group and precedent, land transfer, NDFA support, EU leg group*

Public acceptance – working with Departments, Agencies and Utilities to raise awareness of reform, delivery and importance of infrastructure.

Progress on AIRAP – impact on delivery



Energy

- **Fostertown 110 kV substation in Co. Meath**- additional capacity, secure and effective supply of electricity for the Trim area
- **East Wall Bulk Supply Point in Dublin** - support residential housing and commercial developments in the City Centre
- **Ballycummin 110 kV substation in Limerick** - to cater for predicted demand and provide connections to customers in Raheen Business Park
- Abnormal load – 2 x 500+ tonne transforms transported over 150km from Foynes port in Limerick to Coolnabackey substation grid reinforcement

Water

- GDD – MARA MUL determination in April; potentially up to a 1 year of time saved; to go to construction this year
- 26 weeks saved on the Waterford Wastewater Treatment Plant - removal of external reviews and change in thresholds within the Infrastructure Guidelines

Transport

- Metrolink: Withdrawal of JR, tunnelling and PPP tender documents launched ahead of schedule.
- Roads: Galway City Ring Road granted approval, TII now on next phase.
- DART+ South-West: Land acquisition started in February.
- Luas Finglas: JRs withdrawn, project to next stage.
- Luas Cork: Public Consultation complete
- BusConnects Dublin: 2 out of 12-route programme underway - Liffey Valley to be delivered this year, public consultations on Ballymun/Finglas underway
- Galway Harbour: Approval for major expansion granted