

French energy firm pledges £1.1 billion to secure the UK's Energy Future Through Sizewell C

July 10, 2025

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French energy firm Électricité de France (EDF) has confirmed a major investment of £1.1 billion into the Sizewell C nuclear power project in Suffolk. The move gives EDF a 12.5% stake and marks a significant step forward in the UK's ambition to secure long-term energy resilience while reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Sizewell C, expected to power up to six million homes, is a central piece in the UK Government's energy security strategy. The total project cost is estimated to reach up to £40 billion, with funding drawn from a combination of public money, consumer energy bills, and private investors. EDF's decision to commit ahead of the Final Investment Decision, a financial milestone expected later this year, reflects growing international confidence in British nuclear infrastructure.

Energy Secretary Ed Miliband has heralded the development as part of a "new golden age for nuclear," although critics remain cautious about the cost and oversight. The government has already allocated £14.2 billion, and there are concerns the taxpayer could be exposed to financial risk if costs escalate, as seen with the Hinkley Point C project.

EDF, which is majority-owned by the French state, stressed that its investment would be capped to limit risk. It expects other major investors, such as Canada's Brookfield Asset Management and UK utility company Centrica, to contribute substantial capital. The funding model ensures no single entity bears excessive financial exposure, a lesson learned from past infrastructure delays.

With construction already underway, the government aims to avoid the setbacks that have plagued similar ventures. Industry analysts note that Sizewell C's success will hinge on efficient project management and effective collaboration between the public and private sectors. Unlike intermittent renewable sources, nuclear energy offers consistent baseline power, essential for a reliable national grid.

The plant also brings economic benefits to the local area, promising thousands of skilled jobs and apprenticeships over the next decade.

Ministers view it as not only an energy solution but a driver of regional growth.

As the UK edges towards its 2050 net-zero target, defined as balancing the amount of greenhouse gases emitted with those removed from the atmosphere, projects like Sizewell C offer a realistic path forward. The challenge now lies in delivery and cost control, two areas where the current Labour-led government must prove itself capable.