

Dr Fatih Birol

Executive Director
International Energy Agency



Dr Fatih Birol has served as Executive Director of the International Energy Agency since 2015. Under his leadership, the IEA has moved to the forefront of global efforts to reach international climate goals while ensuring that the social and economic impacts of clean energy transitions are at the heart of policy-making and energy security is safeguarded.

After taking office, Dr Birol led the IEA in its first comprehensive modernisation programme since its creation in 1974. These efforts focused on “opening the doors” of the IEA to major emerging economies including Brazil, China, India and South Africa; making the IEA the global hub for clean energy transitions; and broadening the IEA’s energy security focus beyond oil to also cover electricity, natural gas, renewables and the critical minerals needed in many of today’s clean energy technologies. With new governments joining the IEA, under his tenure the Agency’s share of global energy demand has risen from 40% to 75%.

Dr Birol took up his current position after rising through the ranks of the IEA over two decades. He joined as a junior analyst in the mid-1990s and rose to the position of Chief Economist responsible for the IEA’s flagship World Energy Outlook. Dr Birol has been named in the TIME100, TIME’s annual list of the world’s most influential people. He has also been named by Forbes as one of the most influential people in the world of energy and by the Financial Times as the Energy Personality of the Year. He chairs the World Economic Forum’s (Davos) Energy Advisory Board. He is the recipient of numerous state decorations, including the Japanese Emperor’s Order of the Rising Sun, the Order of the Polar Star from the King of Sweden and the highest Presidential decorations from Austria, Germany and Italy.

Before the IEA, Dr Birol worked at the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Vienna for six years. He earned a BSc degree in power engineering from the Technical University of Istanbul and received an MSc and PhD in energy economics from the Technical University of Vienna. Dr Birol was awarded a Doctorate of Science honoris causa from Imperial College London in 2013. He is an honorary life member of Galatasaray Football Club.