

The world is facing perilous times. Escalating conflict in the Middle East and Russia's continued war in Ukraine have global attention sharply focused on some of the world's most important energy-producing regions. While some of the acute impacts of the global energy crisis have receded, geopolitical uncertainty is exposing the underlying fragilities of the global energy system, regardless of technology or geography. Energy infrastructure is also facing increasing risks from extreme weather events that are becoming an all too common aspect of life for people around the world.

Too often, the worst impacts of these crises are reserved for the poorest in societies, especially in emerging and developing economies. Today, the greatest energy injustice is the hundreds of millions of people, mostly in Africa, who still lack access to basic energy services such as electricity or safe stoves for cooking.

With all these issues front of mind, energy security is again a major theme of this year's *World Energy Outlook* (WEO). In our fast-changing world, the concept of energy security goes well beyond safeguarding against traditional risks to oil and natural gas supplies, as important as that remains for the global economy. It also means ensuring access to affordable energy supplies; anticipating emerging risks in the electricity sector; shoring up supply chains for clean energy technologies and the critical minerals required to make them; and tackling the rising threats that extreme weather events pose to energy systems.

All these areas are key priorities for the IEA's day-to-day work. To advance the global discussion on these issues, the IEA is convening a major International Summit on the Future of Energy Security in the second quarter of 2025, hosted in London by the UK Government, to build a common understanding of the importance of energy security and what it takes to truly deliver it in the context of clean energy transitions.

The analysis in this year's Outlook reinforces my long-held conviction that energy security and climate action go hand-in-hand: the world does not need to choose between ensuring reliable energy supplies and addressing the climate crisis. This is because deploying cost-competitive clean energy technologies represents a lasting solution not only for bringing down emissions, but also for reducing reliance on fuels that have been prone to volatility and disruption.

The latest Outlook also confirms that the contours of a new, more electrified energy system are becoming increasingly evident, with major implications on how we meet rising demand for energy services. Clean electricity is the future, and one of the striking findings of this Outlook is how fast demand for electricity is set to rise, with the equivalent of the electricity use of the world's ten largest cities being added to global demand each year.

This WEO highlights, once again, the choices that can move the energy system in a safer and more sustainable direction. I urge decision makers around the world to use this analysis to understand how the energy landscape is changing, and how to accelerate this clean energy transformation in ways that benefit people's lives and future prosperity.

Finally, I would like to commend my IEA colleagues who worked so ably and with such commitment on this WEO – alongside many other important IEA reports, activities and events – for all their efforts, under the outstanding leadership of my colleagues Laura Cozzi and Tim Gould.

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