Pope Leo XIV meets with Iberdrola Executive Chairman Ignacio Galán and CEO Pedro Azagra

The audience, recorded in the Holy See's daily bulletin, placed the role of electrification at the center of Europe's decarbonization debate.

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• Iberdrola, founded in 1901 as Hidroeléctrica Ibérica, is Europe's largest electricity company by market capitalization and one of the world's two biggest utilities by market value.
• Galán also presented Pope Leo XIV with a University of Salamanca special edition of Tomás de Mercado's 16th-century work “Tratos y contratos de mercaderes y tratantes”.

Pope Leo XIV received Iberdrola's executive chairman, Ignacio Galán, and Iberdrola's chief executive officer, Pedro Azagra, in audience at the Vatican on Friday, according to the Holy See's daily bulletin. The meeting focused on sustainability, the fight against climate change, and the decarbonization of the economy, with electrification positioned as a practical pathway to accelerate emissions reduction while strengthening energy self-sufficiency and strategic autonomy.

During the audience, Galán shared his experience and Iberdrola's stated commitment to sustainability and decarbonization, and highlighted the role of electrification in achieving climate goals. In addition, he noted that financial resources currently used to import fuels could instead be allocated to productive investment that supports economic and social growth, reinforcing the link between energy policy, industrial competitiveness, and social outcomes.

The meeting also carried a cultural and academic dimension. The executive chairman presented

Pope Leo XIV with a copy of "Tratos y contratos de mercaderes y tratantes" (Dealings and Contracts of Merchants and Traders), by the 16th-century Spanish Dominican economist and philosopher Tomás de Mercado, in a special edition by the University of Salamanca, whose Social Council is chaired by Ignacio Sánchez Galán. The gesture underscored a broader conversation about ethics, trade, responsibility, and the social impact of economic decisions across centuries.

Electrification and resilience

The audience took place against a backdrop in which electrification has become a central term in the European energy transition, combining the rapid deployment of renewable electricity with stronger grids, storage, and demand-side solutions. Iberdrola has repeatedly framed electrification as a route to a secure, self-sufficient, and competitive supply, anchored in network investment and renewable generation.

By placing electrification, decarbonization, and autonomy into the same conversation, the Vatican audience highlighted how the energy transition is increasingly discussed not only as a climate imperative, but as an economic and social strategy. In that framing, reducing fossil fuel imports can translate into greater room for investment in grids, renewable power, and innovation, while helping regions and countries build more stable and predictable energy systems.

As the energy transition accelerates, the convergence of institutional dialogue, industrial investment, and long-term social impact is likely to shape how electrification is understood beyond the energy sector. Friday's audience offered a concise snapshot of that convergence, one that links climate action with competitiveness, resilience, and responsibility in decision-making.

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