

Italy microgrid energy storage

Italian grid operator Terna, in its monthly electricity demand update for November 2024, revealed the country added 1.74 GW of energy storage systems between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31, 2024.

Publishing storage system data for the first time, Terna reported Italy had around 707,000 installations at the end of October, corresponding to 11,783 MWh of capacity and 5,186 MW of nominal power, of which 864 MW was in the form of utility-scale energy storage sites.

For the ten-month period, Terna also reported operational renewables generation capacity rose 6,042 MW, including 5,482 MW of solar. That figure was a third higher (1,489 MW more) than in the same period of 2023 and also more than the 5.8 GW installed across all of 2023.

On Oct. 31, 2024, Terna reported, Italy had 38.8 GW of solar capacity and 12.9 GW of wind among a total renewables fleet of 75.2 GW in the hydro-dependent nation.

Comparing the new clean power generation projects with the national target set for areas identified by ministerial decree as suitable for expedited renewables project permitting, Terna indicated the 16,108 MW target for 2024 had been achieved two months early as 16,238 MW of renewables had been installed in such suitable areas;

Lazio installed 623 MW more than had been anticipated by the end of October, followed by Lombardy, with 459 MW extra; and Veneto, with a 284 MW surplus. Suitable areas in Puglia had attracted 327 MW less renewables capacity than anticipated for the first 10 months of 2024; Sardinia fell short by 168 MW; Basilicata underachieved by 129 MW; and Sicily was 21 MW behind.

Minister of the environment and energy security Gilberto Pichetto has signed a decree allowing Italy to proceed with its energy storage capacity auction, known as MACSE, in the first half of 2025.

Pichetto signed the decree last week (11 October), saying: "Increasing our storage capacity is essential to achieve the objectives of the NECP," referring to EU member states' National Energy and Climate Plans (NCEPs), their strategies to achieve EU energy and climate targets by 2030.

"The approval of the regulation marks an important advancement in the new design of the electricity market, focused on the development and integration of renewable sources," he added.

The MACSE auction will provide 15-year contracts for energy storage projects whereby they will be paid annual premiums to cover operating costs in exchange for making their capacity available on the Dispatching Services Market (acronymised in Italian as MSD). It will be led by transmission system operator (TSO) Terna.

The EU approved a EUR17.7 billion package to fund the programme in December 2023, and Terna is aiming for it to support the deployment of 50GWh of energy storage by 2030, which is lower than the initial 71GWh forecast.

The first phase of the scheme is specifically targeting lithium-ion battery energy storage system (BESS) projects while a second auction will be carried out for pumped hydro energy storage (PHES) projects, Terna's two 'reference' technologies chosen for their technological and commercial maturity.

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