

## Croatia industrial microgrids

Croatia is preparing to build Eastern Europe's largest energy storage project. IE Energy has secured EUR19.8 million (\$20.9 million) to develop a 50 MW storage system, potentially extendable to 110 MW by 2024.

IE Energy, a Croatia-based energy storage operator, is set to build a 50 MW storage project, after securing EUR19.8 million from the Croatian government via state aid from the European Commission. The package will help the company to partly finance the procurement and installation of grid-scale batteries, in order to provide transmission system operators with grid-balancing services.

"IE Energy said it would boost the 50 MW system to 110 MW by 2024. There is no storage facility in southeastern Europe yet with such a capacity," Attaurrahman Ojindaram Saibasan, a power analyst at GlobalData, told pv magazine. "There is immense scope for energy storage in Croatia, predominantly for battery storage."

GlobalData says that Croatia is now on target to meet its 36.4% renewable energy target by 2030. However, its recent investment in energy storage has not been accompanied by rapid solar PV development. The country might only add 2.5 MW of new solar capacity in 2022, and another 19 MW next year, according to the consulting firm.

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) says that Croatia had 309 MW of installed PV capacity at the end of 2021. GlobalData expects the country to reach 770 MW of cumulative solar capacity by 2030.

"Croatia's largest state-owned power company HEP has announced plans to invest around \$23 million annually until 2023 to install new capacity of 20 MW per year, as well as to complete 350 MW capacity by 2030," said Saibasan.

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The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development in Croatia has issued a EUR60 million (US\$66 million) Call for Funds which seeks projects for renewables, energy efficiency and energy storage totalling 20MWh.



The Ministry announced the Call this week (17 April) which will provide EUR100,000 &#8211; EUR2 million per project with a maximum of EUR4 million per beneficiary.

In September 2020, Energy-Storage.news reported on a EUR20 million grant from the EU to Croatia-based energy storage operator IE-Energy for the firm to deploy projects in the country.

In April, Croatia and its neighbour Slovenia started a trial project looking at how a five-hour duration battery storage system could increase grid flexibility in both countries, in another EU-financed project.

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