

Press Release

First of its kind: Long-Term Tolling Agreement Unlocks Large-Scale Battery Storage in Italy

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Zelestra and BKW sign innovative long-term tolling agreement enabling the delivery of a major 2 GWh battery storage project in Italy

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Zelestra and BKW have signed an innovative long-term tolling agreement that enables the delivery of one of Europe's largest battery energy storage systems (BESS), of up to 2 GWh, in the north of Italy. The construction is due to start in 2027, with full operations in 2028. The agreement expands on BKW and Zelestra's clean energy partnership in Italy, with 16 MWdc of solar projects already in construction.



Batteries support the goal of a more flexible and sustainable energy system. (Illustrative image)

Zelestra, a global, multi-technology, customer-focused renewable energy company, has signed a long-term tolling agreement with BKW, a leading energy and infrastructure company based in Switzerland, to deliver a large-scale battery energy storage system (BESS) – of up to 2 GWh – in the north of Italy.

The agreement is a first of its kind long-term financial tolling construct for battery storage in Italy. Zelestra will make part of the plant's generation capacity available to BKW to manage and optimize the flexibility in the market.

This innovative cooperation between two strong partners enables the construction of one of Europe's largest battery storage projects. The project reinforces Zelestra's strategy to co-build innovative solutions with its partners to help decarbonize their operations. With the commercialisation of the battery project, BKW expands its footprint in Italian renewables and innovative BESS structures.

Construction is expected to begin in 2027, with the project set to become fully operational in 2028. The north of Italy has high demand for electricity from industrial customers, with increasing renewables capacity coming on to the grid, and an expected phase out of thermal plants. Zelestra and BKW's major BESS project introduces an innovative approach that enhances grid flexibility, accelerates renewable integration, and supports the decarbonization of the Italian power generation fleet and at the same time enhancing security of supplies.

The latest agreement expands and deepens the clean energy partnership between Zelestra and BKW. In December 2024 the [partners closed a ten-year PPA](#) which enabled the construction of two solar projects, Ginosa (Puglia) and Bellomo (Sicily), totalling 16 MWdc.

Martina Nicodemo, Commercial Lead Renewables & BESS Origination Italy at BKW: «Italy is one of the most attractive BESS markets in Europe. Through this partnership with Zelestra, we demonstrate that BKW's product structuring expertise is at the forefront of the industry. Together, we are committed to supporting Italy's energy transition and driving our joint ambition for a more flexible and sustainable energy system.»

Bianca Sarbu, Head of Trading & Origination at BKW adds: «Beyond the technical achievement, this project underlines both our strong presence in the Italian market and our ambition to keep growing. The agreement with Zelestra supports BKW's strategy «[Solutions 2030](#)» by focusing on the expansion of Flex and Green Solutions, and by broadening our portfolio in Italian renewables.»

Eliano Russo, Zelestra's country manager in Italy, said: «With this major battery storage project, we will support BKW's needs to access clean and reliable power for their

operations, as well as delivering a project that will enhance grid stability and accelerate the wider decarbonization goals in Italy.

As a multi-technology developer, we are pleased to expand our global footprint for battery storage projects, with multiple contracts already executed elsewhere in Europe, Latin America and India. Italy is a key growth market for Zelestra, and we support the ambitious national solar power and BESS targets. We intend to grow our customer base here, and our project pipeline, significantly in the years ahead.»

Zelestra has a mature project portfolio of around 1400 MW of solar and BESS projects in Italy. The company intends to participate in both the Macse and Capacity Market auctions for BESS projects and the FER X auction for solar projects this year.

BKW

The BKW Group is a Bern-based international energy and infrastructure company, employing over 12,000 people. Its company network and innovative technologies enable it to offer customers a full range of skills in the areas of infrastructure, buildings and energy. The Group plans, builds and operates infrastructure to produce and supply energy to businesses, households and the public sector, and offers digital business models for renewable energies. Today, the BKW Group portfolio includes everything from engineering consultancy and planning for energy, infrastructure and environmental projects to integrated services in the field of building technology as well as the construction, servicing and maintenance of energy, telecommunications, transport and water utility networks. With trailblazing solutions, companies under the BKW Group umbrella create spaces for life. The portfolio of BKW in Italy includes well above 600 MW of assets, both own and third-party assets.

Zelestra

With a portfolio of 30 GW of carbon-free projects in 13 countries (5.5 GW contracted with customers and in operations, construction, or pre-construction stage) Zelestra is a vertically integrated company specializing in the development, commercialization, construction and operation of large-scale renewable energy projects. The company was recently named among the top 10 sellers of clean energy to corporate customers globally by BloombergNEF (BNEF), and number 2 in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Zelestra is backed by EQT, one of the world's largest funds, with more than €273 billion in total assets under management.

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