First spade in the ground marks start of construction for ENGIE’s new battery park in Vilvoorde

Today, on 5 July 2024, a ground breaking celebration in the presence of mayor Hans Bonte marked the start of the construction of a new 200 MW battery park on the ENGIE site in Vilvoorde. From September 2025, the batteries will be available to store 800 MWh of electricity and inject it into the grid for up to four hours. This type of flexibility, one of ENGIE's strategic priorities, will provide essential support to the power grid.

ENGIE received the permit for the construction of a new battery park in Vilvoorde in July 2023, and after the project was selected for capacity remuneration in October 2023, work on the site quickly started. A 3.5-hectare site was prepared and will soon accommodate 320 battery modules measuring

25 m x 4m x 3m. Each of these will be combined with an inverter, a transformer and the required electrical installations to connect them to the high-voltage grid.

The battery park, one of the largest in Europe, will be operational from September 2025. Start-up will be in two phases, with 100 MW of batteries being commissioned in September 2025 and another 100 MW in January 2026. Once fully operational, the park will be able to store 800 MWh of power and release it to the grid for 4 hours. This is equivalent to 160.000 5-kWh home batteries that, fully charged, can cover the power consumption of approximately 96.000 households.

Earlier this year, ENGIE announced its 2030 strategy in Belgium. Apart from accelerating the development of renewable energy and low-carbon gases, Belgium's leading energy producer is also investing in flexibility. The growing share of renewable generation causes fluctuations in the electricity supply. In addition to ENGIE's existing flexible generation park, large-scale battery storage facilities such as in Vilvoorde will be an essential link to absorb these imbalances and help support the electricity grid. Batteries can store electricity when there is an abundance of wind or solar energy and inject it back into the grid at times when there is little renewable generation. Their contribution will become increasingly important in the coming years, both in case of shortages and possible oversupply in the summer months.

To meet growing flexibility needs, ENGIE Group plans to install 10 GW of battery storage worldwide by 2030. In Belgium, in addition to the Vilvoorde battery park, ENGIE is developing two other battery projects in Kallo (100 MW) and in Drogenbos (80 MW). Permits for these projects have now been obtained.

> Vincent Verbeke, CEO of ENGIE Belgium, said: "We remain fully committed to being one of the leading developers of renewable energy in Belgium. These technologies will only reach their full potential when complemented by flexible installations, such as this battery park, which are essential to cope with the intermittency of wind and solar power generation. Our teams are more focused than ever on meeting the growing need for flexibility, with a view to offering sustainable, reliable and affordable energy."

> Hans Bonte, Mayor of Vilvoorde: "The historic energy site along the insertion dock will - finally - get a sustainable future. Where previously a coal-fired and then a gas-fired power station proved a successful engine for the industrial development of our region, today the switch is being made to environmentally friendly and sustainable energy supply. The Vilvoorde site is becoming a crucial link to the success of Belgium's sustainable energy transition. With the joint creation of a green recreational area next to the cooling towers - connected to Asiat Park - the city of Vilvoorde is strengthening its green and sustainable character. The cooling towers remain as characteristic witnesses of the city's industrial past."

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