



Spain will require 80% energy consumption from data centres to be renewables - PV Tech

- The Spanish government has unveiled plans to require data centres to have at least 80% of their hourly generation powered by renewables.



<https://www.pv-tech.org/spain-80-energy-consumption-data-centres-renewables/>

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Data centre's energy consumption will be verified on an hourly basis, with at least 80% of electricity consumed coming from renewables. Image: DCI Data Centers.

The Spanish government has unveiled plans to require data centres to have at least 80% of their hourly generation be powered by renewable energy.

Announced earlier this week during a council of Ministers, the Spanish government is working on a regulation (called a real decreto in Spanish) to regulate the requirements regarding energy and environmental sustainability, resilience and digital sovereignty applicable to data centres with a power output over 1MW.

The regulation would therefore require data centres to install new renewable energy on a 1:1 basis. Every new megawatt consumed must be matched by a new megawatt of renewable energy capacity installed within the 18 months prior to the facility's operational start. This can be through self-consumption or a power purchase agreement (PPA).

According to the Spanish Ministry of Ecological Transition (MITECO), its Artificial Intelligence Strategy forecasts nearly 2.5GW of computing power by 2030. These projects would require an electricity demand between 3.5GW and 4GW. The reality is that since 2021, Spain has awarded over 12GW of grid access and connection rights for these types of facilities.

José Donoso, general director of trade body the Spanish Photovoltaic Union (UNEF), welcomed the measure, although he called for the inclusion of energy storage hybridisation.

“It is positive for data centres to be supplied by renewables, but requiring the entire supply to come from new capacity makes no sense given the high levels of technical and economic curtailment. There should be a balance, and the inclusion of hybridised storage should be permitted,” said Donoso.

Drafted by several ministries, including MITECO, the regulatory proposal is currently open for public consultation (in Spanish) until 4 September 2026.

The regulatory proposal also includes measures regarding resilience and digital sovereignty—such as the requirement that centre operations and the control of associated data be handled by entities subject to EU law—as well as measures concerning environmental and energy sustainability.

Spain follows Australia’s footsteps

Spain’s approach towards data centres and renewables is somewhat similar to Australia’s. Last month, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said that large-scale data centres will be legally required to put at least as much energy into the grid as they draw from it, and that this new energy should be renewables.

In the US, the Trump administration’s approach to that issue has been different. In March 2026, seven tech companies – Amazon, Google, OpenAI, Meta, Microsoft, Oracle and xAI – had signed a pledge to build, bring, or buy the energy required to build and operate data centres, with no obligation that the energy come from renewables.

At the time, Oliver Kerr, North America managing director at Aurora Energy Research, told *PV Tech* that this pledge would unlikely benefit solar PV (subscription required), while energy storage could be more favourable than solar PV.