

Ankara electric vehicle infrastructure

Türkiye will invest a total of \$3 billion in infrastructure for electric vehicles, distributed generation and renewable energy technologies until 2030, Fatih Donmez, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources said on Thursday.

One of the most important topics in the coming years will be electric cars, Donmez said in a meeting organized by Association of Electricity Distribution System Operators (ELDER).

The groundbreaking ceremony for the plant in Başkent near the Turkish capital Ankara is expected to take place this year, according to the three companies. Production is scheduled to start in 2026, according to the non-binding agreement, with the three companies committing to at least 25 GWh of annual production capacity, which could potentially be expanded to up to 45 GWh.

The site near Ankara was strategically chosen because Ford and Koç Holding have operated a vehicle plant there for more than 60 years through the Ford Otosan joint venture. Light commercial vehicles are built there, also with electric drive. The Ford E-Transit for Europe comes off the production line there and already uses battery cells from LGES; but these cells are still supplied from the LG plant in Poland, where the cells for the Ford Mustang Mach-E are also built.

This announcement confirms the rumour from January 2023 that Ford is changing its battery partner for Turkey. Originally, Ford and Koç wanted to build the Turkish plant for commercial vehicle battery cells together with SK On. According to a recent report by the South Korean news agency Yonhap, this partnership, which was concluded in March 2022, was dissolved about a fortnight ago.

Reasons for the change of battery partner are not given in the Ford release. In the report, Yonhap refers to industry sources that SK On pulled out of the project due to persistent losses and rising costs. However, this has not been confirmed.

SK On is, however, to remain the battery partner for the three US cell factories under construction to be operated by the Ford-SK joint venture BlueOval SK. Ford is officially building a fourth US cell factory for LFP cells on its own, but is using CATL's expertise and technology to operate it.

"We are delivering on the commitment to produce batteries in the same region where we build electric vehicles. Establishing the new joint venture with LGES and Koç Holding will lay a solid foundation that is fundamental to building a thriving electric vehicle future for Ford in Europe," said Lisa Drake, Vice President, Ford EV Industrialisation.

"Now joining forces with Ford and Koç in Turkey, we will bring in our leading battery technology to

further boost the EV transition in Europe, thereby leading the global initiatives for a more sustainable future,” says Youngsoo Kwon, CEO of LG Energy Solution.

The order, which comprises of 200 EV fast chargers and digital services, was made by Astor Enerji, a manufacturer of transformer and switchgear products to fulfill its plans to build charging stations throughout Turkey. The company intends to set up chargers every 200 kilometers along highways all over the country and at a number of shopping malls. By the end of the year, at least 150 chargers are planned to be in operation, with the remaining chargers to be delivered by February 2024.

As part of the contract, Siemens will also provide control and monitoring configuration backend software to ensure optimised operations. The software will enable Astor Enerji to use cloud applications for the charger management system with payment modules, membership options, and energy pricing. These stations are enabled to communicate with cloud systems and can be monitored and controlled remotely via Siemens? software. 99 percent of unlikely glitches can be resolved online. In this way, time, and cost factors, e.g., sending service teams to the field, are minimised.

"We are delighted to be able to make a substantial contribution to the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Turkey," said Markus Mildner, CEO eMobility at Siemens Smart Infrastructure. "The combined expertise of Astor Enerji and Siemens supports the rapid implementation of the project. SICHARGE D is a perfect fit for the needs of EV drivers, and our digital services will help ensure highest availability of the future charging network."

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