Beat: Politics

Baltic States are fully independent from Russia's electricity system

They operate their own energy systems

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USPA NEWS - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are fully independent from Russia's and Belarus's electricity systems. They successfully integrated into the EU internal energy market by joining the European continental network via Poland. This allows the Baltic States to operate their own energy systems under common and transparent European rules. The synchronization of the Baltics not only contributes to the security of supply of the entire Union, it will also support the integration of renewable energy in the system, ultimately allowing consumers to benefit from lower energy costs.

The synchronization of the Baltics into the EU's electricity grid is a flagship project which has been supported by the Commission with unprecedented political, technical and financial backing over the past 15 years. This includes over 1.23 billion Euros in grants from the EU's Connecting Europe Facility, covering 75% of the investment costs, as well as further investments financed under the Recovery and Resilience Facility in Latvia and Lithuania to strengthen electricity infrastructure.

Commission’s President Ursula von der Leyen; Commissioner for Energy and Housing, Dan Jørgensen, and Commissioner for Defense and Space, Andrius Kubilius, participated in the ‘Energy Independence Day', the official ceremony marking the occasion in Lithuania, together with the political leaders of the three Baltic States, Poland and other stakeholders involved in the project.

The Baltic States were the last three EU Member States whose electricity networks were still operating fully within the Russian and Belarussian system where the electricity frequency was centrally controlled by Russia, leaving them vulnerable to Russia's weaponisation of energy. Synchronising their electricity networks with those of EU Member States and several neighbouring countries enables the Baltic States to move away from energy dependence on Russia. Instead, they gain full control of their own electricity networks and strengthen the energy security of the Eastern Baltic Sea region and the EU as a whole.

The success of this EU-backed project is a testament to the dedication of all EU Member States involved, especially the three Baltic States and Poland, together with the businesses, investors and transmission system operators, who worked together to bring the project to fruition 10 months ahead of schedule.

Looking ahead, the European Coordinator for the Baltic Synchronization projects, Catharina Sikow-Magny, will continue to work closely with the EU Member States in the Baltic region to implement the remaining aspects of this project, which is crucial for the completion of the Energy Union. Further work includes the construction of the 700 MW Harmony Link Interconnector between Lithuania and Poland, which is scheduled for completion in 2030.

The European Commission supported the project at all levels since it began over 15 years ago as a high priority. It is one of the main priorities of the Baltic Energy Market Interconnection Plan (BEMIP) High-level Group. EU support to the Baltic synchronization project has been channelled via investments to projects of common interest (PCIs) featuring on subsequent Union lists under the EU Regulation on Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E). Overall, the synchronization was made possible by over 40 investment projects and additional measures to ensure energy autonomy and security of supply in the region. Work to conclude the remaining investments and other measures continues until finalization.

The project was coordinated by the European Network of Transmission System for Electricity (ENTSO-E) together with the Continental Transmission Systems Operators (TSOs). Further investments supporting the synchronization by strengthening the battery energy storage systems in Latvia and Lithuania have been channelled via the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

On 8 February 2025, the Baltic States de-synchronised from the Russian and Belarusian frequency area. On 9 February, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania started the successful synchronisation process with the European frequency area, marking their full integration into the EU internal energy market.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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