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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: AOB for the meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council on 17 March 2025
Successful synchronisation of the Baltic electricity systems with the Continental Europe Synchronous Area
- Information from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Successful synchronisation of the Baltic electricity systems with the Continental Europe Synchronous Area

Information from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have successfully synchronised their electricity systems with the Continental Europe Synchronous Area via Poland on 9 February 2025, ensuring their independence from Russia's and Belarus's electricity systems. This is a key milestone for the Baltic States and for Europe strengthening the energy resilience and independence. The synchronisation enables the Baltic States to manage their electricity grids in close cooperation with all other Continental European countries, with stable and reliable frequency control, significantly enhancing regional and European energy security. Previously relying on the Russian-Belorussian IPS/UPS system for frequency management, the Baltic States have now joined the synchronous grid of Continental Europe. All electricity interconnections with Russia and Belarus have been permanently disconnected.

In July 2024, the transmission system operators of the Baltic States notified the Russian transmission system operator not to extend the agreement called BRELL (Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) beyond 7 February 2025. Accordingly, on 8 February 2025, the transmission system operators of the Baltic States started the disconnection and desynchronisation of the Baltic electricity system from the Russian combined electricity system and joined Continental Europe Synchronous Area on 9 February 2025.

Consumers were not affected during the frequency stability tests or when synchronous operation with the continental European grid started. The voltage regulation tests were successfully carried out on the high voltage 330kV network, and the voltage changes were within the planned range without affecting the quality of the power supply and the electrical installations of the consumers.

This is the result of 15 years of careful planning, strong regional cooperation, huge efforts to modernise the Baltic States energy systems and a result of true European Unity. The Baltic States have invested 15 years of hard work in the project, that involved meticulous preparation and collaboration among the Baltic governments, stakeholders and transmission system operators: Elering (Estonia), Augstsprieguma tīkls (Latvia), Litgrid (Lithuania), and their counterparts in the Continental Europe synchronous area, in particular in Poland.

Extensive infrastructure upgrades in the Baltic states and Poland were essential for this achievement. Over the last 15 years the project has received extensive political, technical and financial support, including over €1.23 billion 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. As a result, Estonian, Latvia and Lithuanian grid operators have upgraded and rebuilt more than 500 kilometres of high-voltage transmission lines, installed synchronous compensators and high-capacity battery systems.

The Baltic States were the last three EU Member States whose electricity networks were still operating fully within the Russian and Belarussian system. Synchronisation increased the security of energy supply and strengthened the independence of the Baltic region. The Baltic States regained control to manage their electricity system, ensuring a balance between production and consumption, managing the necessary safety margins and regulating power flows and frequency without involving countries outside the European Union. At the same time synchronisation of the Baltics also supported the integration of renewable energy in the system, ultimately allowing consumers to benefit from lower energy costs. The electricity grid's ability to connect renewable energy projects will be enhanced to ensure lower final electricity prices for consumers. Newly installed transmission lines, substations and synchronous compensators will increase the ability of transmission networks to support a higher share of renewables in total electricity generation.

Although the synchronisation was carried out, is still important to implement the remaining aspects of synchronisation project, which is crucial for the completion of our Energy Union. Further work includes inter alia the construction of the 700 MW Harmony Link Interconnector between Lithuania and Poland, which is scheduled for completion in 2030. Additionally there is a need for closer cooperation at the regional as well as the EU level on extending the critical infrastructure resilience and protection. The energy security situation in the Baltic region has been deteriorated by disruptions of our critical infrastructure including EstLink and Balticconnector. This raises serious concerns indicating the vulnerability of the critical infrastructure and the priority to address and respond to the new security challenges as soon as possible. Baltic States' Transmission System Operators are now actively working on identifying necessary protection measures for the critical energy infrastructure to prevent possible the hybrid threats and ensure successful synchronous regime. The Baltic States invite the European Commission to find solutions to increase the protection and resilience of critical infrastructure using existing and/or new EU instruments.