The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Baltic States to Disconnect From Russian Electric Grid in Early 2025

June 11, 2024



Matthew Henry / unsplash

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will disconnect their electrical grids from the Russian and Belarussian system (BRELL) in February next year, officials from the Baltic nations have confirmed.

"The desynchronization process, which has lasted for almost 20 years, will come to an end in early August when the Baltics inform Russia and Belarus that they do not want to be part of the new annual period starting next February," Estonia's Deputy Secretary for Energy Jaanus Uiga told national media on Tuesday.

The Baltic states will join the Continental European (UCTE) grid on Feb. 9, 2025, the day after disconnecting from BRELL. Desynchronisation was previously planned for the end of 2025.

Energy customers are not expected to be impacted by the switch.

Decoupling from the Russian and Belarussian grid, which is largely managed by Moscow, was

declared a strategic objective by the Baltic nations' prime ministers in 2007. The three countries consider electricity dependence on Russia a threat to their national security.

Related article: Estonia Approves Transfer of Frozen Russian Assets to Ukraine

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are the only EU member states not currently connected to the UCTE grid. The three countries were integrated into the Soviet power network after they were annexed as "constituent republics" by the U.S.S.R. during World War II.

In 2018, the Baltic nations signed a deal with the European Commission and Poland that provided funding to upgrade their grid infrastructure to join the UCTE.

The three states agreed to use Lithuania's existing LitPol electricity link with Poland, along with a new direct cable beneath the Baltic Sea. The deal required that the Baltic states decouple from Russia by 2025.

In May 2023, following Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the prime ministers of the Baltic nations agreed to accelerate the decoupling from BRELL. The total cost of switching is projected to be 1.6 billion euros (1.72 billion dollars), three-quarters of which is paid for by the EU.

The Kaliningrad region, a Russian exclave between Lithuania and Poland, has prepared for the switch by building new gas power stations, Estonian media reported.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/06/11/baltic-states-to-disconnect-from-russian-electric-grid-in-early-2025-a85375