

Procurement launched for the Rail Baltica

Infrastructure

8 czerwca 2022, Bydgoszcz

On 1 June 2022, the Rail Baltica joint venture RB Rail AS announced a public procurement for the Rail Baltica energy subsystem design and construction for the entire Rail Baltica line, covering more than 870 km in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Deployment of the energy subsystem in a consolidated way – from Tallinn to the Lithuania-Poland border and from Kaunas to Vilnius – makes the Rail Baltica electrification the largest railway electrification project in Europe implemented as a single project. It will allow full compliance with safety and interoperability requirements, benefit from economies of scale, as well as maximize the benefits for the environment.

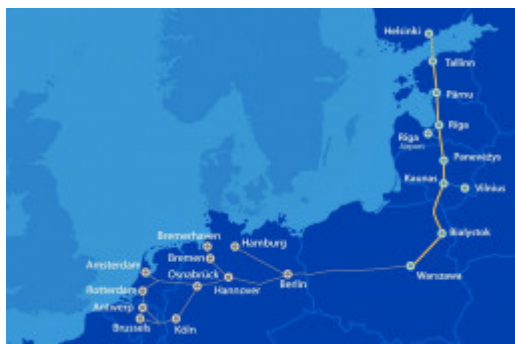
The procurement will be organized in two stages and is planned to be concluded by the end of 2023. The energy subsystem scope covers the following key components: high voltage connection points, for connection of traction power substations to the public high voltage electrical grids, traction power substations, overhead contact system, energy control command system, and other components directly linked to energy subsystem.

“We consider this a truly historical achievement for the Rail Baltica Global Project and strong evidence of the determination of the Baltic States to implement this project in a united way. This is the first time when procurement of such scope and scale is organized across three countries in Europe with a goal to provide a single electrification system with the same operational maintenance rules and interoperability requirements across several countries” said Jean-Marc Bedmar, Head of Systems and Operation department at RB Rail AS.

In practice the chosen approach also means the need to address an extra level of complexity stemming from border effects and different legislations – in Rail Baltica, there are three border sections between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. The size of the project itself is impressive – overall 870 km length of the double-track leads to the need for more than 2 000 km of catenary system, around 4 350 tonnes of copper materials, and 50 000 masts to be installed. Electricity consumed by Rail Baltica will represent 900 GW.h / year, leading to an estimated 3% increase in the national consumption in every Baltic State.

Proceeding with a major cross-border railway electrification project across Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and interconnected with Poland, requires establishing a tight cooperation between governmental authorities, strong involvement of electricity transmission systems operators (TSO) and electricity suppliers – allowing to ultimately maximize the Rail Baltica contribution to EU energy and transport policies, the Green Deal as well as national decarbonization plans.

“In the present geopolitical situation, joining forces is more important than ever. And this procurement is a proof of building maturity of both the Rail Baltica project, but also the EU policies for cross-border strategic project delivery” said Marc-Philippe El Beze, Chief Technical Officer and Member of the Management Board at RB Rail AS.



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