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## **Green technology for the Palatinate: Stadler expands market leadership in the field of alternative drive technology**

**Electric instead of diesel for regional transport in the Palatinate: DB Regio has ordered 44 FLIRT battery-powered multiple units from Stadler for use on the south-west German Palatinate network. Stadler is thereby expanding its market leadership in the field of alternative drive technologies in Germany with a second supply contract. The two-car vehicles are scheduled to enter passenger service successively from 2025.**

With the new battery-electric multiple units (BEMU), Stadler and DB Regio are bringing the technology of the future to the Palatinate on behalf of the commissioning authorities responsible for Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland and Baden-Württemberg. The two companies are not only representing the topic of “green mobility” at the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference, but are also working together to tangibly shape environmentally-friendly rail transport in Germany. From December 2025, CO<sub>2</sub> emission-free local trains will bring the railway lines in the southern and western Palatinate into a new mobility era. When timetable changes are introduced in December 2025, the first of a total of 44 FLIRT battery-powered multiple units will go into passenger service on the following routes (Palatinate network, lot 1), thereby replacing the diesel vehicles currently in use by the end of 2026.

- Kaiserslautern – Neustadt/W – Landau – Karlsruhe (RE 6/RB 51, December 2025)
- Saarbrücken – Zweibrücken – Pirmasens (RB 68, December 2025)
- Kaiserslautern – Steinalben – Pirmasens (RE 64/RB 64, December 2026)
- Kaiserslautern – Olsbrücken – Lauterecken-Grumbach (RB 66, December 2026)
- Kaiserslautern – Landstuhl – Glan-Münchweiler – Kusel (RB 67, December 2026)
- Bad Bergzabern – Winden – Karlsruhe (RB 54, December 2026)
- Landau – Annweiler – Hinterweidenthal – Pirmasens (RE 55/RB 55, December 2026)
- Saarbrücken – Dillingen – Niedaltdorf (RB 77, December 2026)

The use of Stadler’s climate-friendly drive technology was prompted by a contract granted to DB Regio AG within the framework of the European award procedure for the Palatinate networks (2 lots) on 26 November 2021 by the relevant commissioning authorities – the Zweckverband Schienenpersonennahverkehr Rheinland-Pfalz Süd, the Saarland Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour, Energy and Transport, and the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Transport.

The two-car vehicles are entirely electric and are particularly suitable for networks – like the future Palatinate network – where electrified sections alternate with track without overhead contact lines. On the electrified sections, the trains run under a catenary like traditional electric multiple units whilst charging their batteries at the same time. Once the catenary ends, the trains continue to run on battery power. The operational range in battery mode is at least 80 kilometres – Stadler has already demonstrated 185 kilometres in battery mode during test journeys. After the completion of partial electrification, the longest section of line without electrification on the Palatinate network will be around 48 kilometres.

The 55-metre-long trains have extra-long cars to increase passenger capacity as much as possible on busy routes. A total of 325 passengers can be accommodated in the ultra-modern trains, 172 of them on seats, of which 16 are in first class and 153 in second class.

Maik Dreser, Chairman of the Regional Management of DB Regio Mitte: “We are already the most climate-friendly mobility company in Germany. Rail travel is active climate protection. And by 2040, we at Deutsche Bahn want to be climate neutral. Alternative drives and fuels are an essential part of achieving this goal. We are therefore absolutely delighted that the commissioning authorities responsible for the Palatinate network have opted for environmentally-friendly technology and that we will be able to put this technology into operation in the new transport contract. This will enable us to together replace diesel drives with low-emission and energy-efficient trains. But it is not only the environment that will benefit. Our passengers can look forward to travelling on comfortable and exceptionally quiet vehicles.”

Jure Mikolčić, CEO Stadler Germany: “The use of CO<sub>2</sub>-emission free rail vehicles on non-electrified lines is a fundamental building block for achieving EU climate targets. We are proud to have been awarded this contract for 44 FLIRT battery-powered vehicles by DB Regio. This is already the second supply contract for battery-powered trains in Germany. It will allow us not only to confirm our market leadership, but above all to make our contribution towards the further development of modern, comfortable, environmentally-friendly mobility. I am particularly proud that this order will take us over the magic limit of 2,000 FLIRT vehicles sold. The fact that the 2,000th FLIRT vehicle sold is a train powered by alternative and environmentally-friendly drive technology marks a landmark in climate policy.”

### **Stadler's bestseller: the climate-friendly FLIRT model**

Thanks to the order from DB Regio, Stadler was able to celebrate the sale of its 2,000<sup>th</sup> FLIRT train – shortly before its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. The first “Fast Light Intercity and Regional Train” was developed in 2002 for Stadtbahn Zug on behalf of SBB. The four-car series went into passenger service in 2004 under the designation RABe 523. Since then, the FLIRT model has become an international bestseller. Today, vehicles of this type are in service in almost every climatic zone, from the equator to the Arctic Circle. FLIRT trains operate in 20 countries, 528 of them in Germany alone. The impressive single-decker regional and intercity multiple-unit train is extremely flexible. Two- to six-car train compositions can be realised in standard and broad gauge versions for maximum speeds of 160 to 200 km/h. The design of the FLIRT vehicles can also be customised very flexibly in terms of seating capacity, passenger flow or interior design. The lightweight construction in aluminium, maintenance-friendly construction and thousands of proven components help to keep running, energy and maintenance costs low. In addition to electric, diesel or bi-modal drive, FLIRT trains are also available with climate-friendly battery and hydrogen drive. In addition to the new contract with DB Regio for regional transport in the Palatinate, Stadler had already won an initial green technology tender in Germany in 2019 to supply 55 FLIRT battery-powered vehicles for the Nahverkehrsverbund Schleswig-Holstein. Stadler is also currently producing the first hydrogen-powered FLIRT model for the American San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA).

## **About Stadler**

*Stadler has been building trains for over 75 years. The provider of rail vehicle construction solutions has its headquarters in Bussnang in eastern Switzerland. It has a workforce of around 13 000 based in various production and engineering locations as well as more than 60 service locations. The company is conscious of its social responsibility for sustainable mobility and therefore stands for innovative, sustainable and durable quality products. The product range in the field of mainline railways and city transport includes high-speed trains, intercity trains, regional and suburban trains, metros, tramways and trams. Stadler also manufactures main-line locomotives, shunting locomotives and passenger carriages. It is the world's leading manufacturer in the rack-and-pinion rail vehicle industry.*

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Media contacts:

### **Stadler Rail Group**

Fabian Vettori  
Project Manager Communications & PR  
Phone: +41 71 626 19 19  
E-mail: [medien@stadlerrail.com](mailto:medien@stadlerrail.com)

### **Stadler Germany**

Silja Kollner  
Head of Communications & Marketing  
Phone: +49 30 91 91 15 35  
E-mail: [silja.kollner@stadlerrail.com](mailto:silja.kollner@stadlerrail.com)

[www.stadlerrail.com](http://www.stadlerrail.com)