

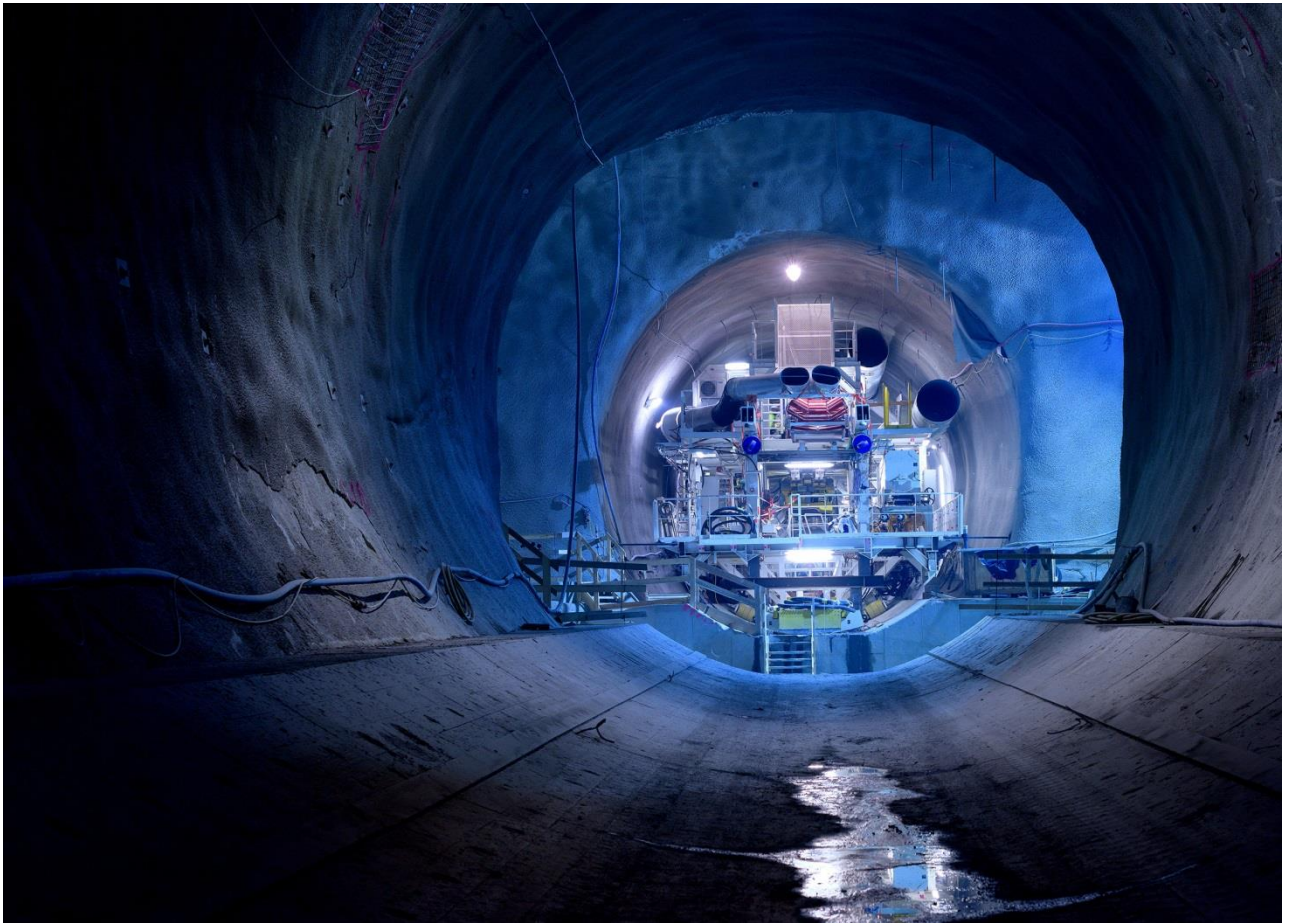
## NEWS

### **Tunnel boring machine to start work on contract section 2.1 of the Semmering Base Tunnel – First of two machines put into operation | Celebrations mark the official “switching on”**

**Dietlikon, 13 July 2018** – The Semmering Base Tunnel (SBT) is currently under construction and is now one of the most important major infrastructure projects in the heart of Europe, forming part of the new Austrian Southern Railway – the central axis on the trans-European route from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic. With a total length of 27.3 kilometres, the SBT connects Lower Austria and Styria. Under the aegis of Implenia, a joint venture commissioned by ÖBB is constructing the roughly 13-kilometre-long middle section (contract section 2.1) known as the “Fröschnitzgraben” tunnel. Implenia is also involved in the “Gloggnitz” tunnel (contract section 1.1) measuring around 7.5 kilometres.

The majority of the SBT and all of its entrances are being constructed using the traditional drill-and-blast method. The geology dictates where tunnel boring machines (TBMs) need to be used. The first of two TBMs began work today in the “Fröschnitzgraben” tunnel. Further down the line, two 120-metre-long, 2,500-tonne machines – one for each tube in the tunnel – will drill their way through around 9 kilometres of mountain from Fröschnitzgraben (Styria) towards Gloggnitz. The TBMs were built in France and travelled 1,000 kilometres to get to Semmering before being put to work. For space reasons, the two boring machines are being delivered to the site separately in individual parts and assembled 400 metres underground.

Transport Minister Norbert Hofer, EU Coordinator for the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor Kurt Bodewig, Styrian Governor Hermann Schützenhöfer, Lower Austrian Transport Secretary Ludwig Schleritzko, Implenia Infrastructure Business Unit Head René Kotacka and Chairman of the ÖBB Board of Management Andreas Matthä were thoroughly impressed with the celebrations they attended to mark the “switching on” of the first machine. The VIP guests emphasised the added value which the construction project is injecting into the economy and its significance for the future of European and Austrian transport infrastructure.



The first of two TBMs has begun work on the "Frörschnitzgraben" section of the Semmering Base Tunnel. (Picture: ÖBB)

**Contact for the media:**

Francesca Romano

Communications Manager

Telephone: +41 58 474 74 77

[communication@implenia.com](mailto:communication@implenia.com)

[@Impleniatweet](https://twitter.com/Impleniatweet)

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Implenia, with its headquarters in Dietlikon near Zurich, employs around 10,000 people in Europe and posted revenue of around CHF 3.9 billion in 2017. The company is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (IMPN, CH0023868554). More information can be found at [www.implenia.com](http://www.implenia.com).