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Amber Grid sustainability results: 13% reduction in emissions and 50% savings in electricity costs generating green energy

Amber Grid, the Lithuanian gas transmission system operator, published annual Sustainability Report, which provides an overview of its sustainability objectives and results for the past year. The state-owned company, responsible for the safe and reliable transport of natural gas in Lithuania and neighbouring countries, has been active in taking care of reducing its environmental impact, fostered relations with local communities during the implementation of the strategic GIPL gas interconnection project between Lithuania and Poland, and supported the company's employees during the pandemic by creating favourable working conditions.

“Sustainable action has taken on a new meaning in the light of recent developments in geopolitics, health, climate change, and the transformation of societies, especially in the field of energy. It encourages change and a positive impact on people's lives. Amber Grid's goal is to contribute actively to the transformation of the energy sector in Lithuania and the region towards a climate neutral economy. Gas fuels have an important role to play in the successful transition to green energy. Therefore, with a clear understanding of the meaning of clean energy, we are implementing a plan to develop a system that enables competition and the use of climate-friendly energy. We are focusing on integrating gas markets, innovating, and working on the infrastructure and market organisation necessary for green energy,” says Nemunas Biknius, CEO of Amber Grid.

Reduction of environmental impact, development of clean energy

Amber Grid places a strong emphasis on ensuring access to clean and modern energy, combating climate change, building reliable infrastructure and a sustainable supply chain, and developing innovation. Reducing environmental impacts is one of the key objectives of Amber Grid's long-term strategy. The aim is to reduce environmental impacts by two thirds by 2030. In order to achieve this goal, measures have been taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 13% in 2021. As part of ensuring the reliable and safe functioning of the gas transmission system, there were no critical gas leaks in the system last year.

In 2021, Amber Grid installed on sites under its control its own solar power plants of 1.5 megawatts (MW), which generate almost half of the electricity needed for the entire gas transmission system. Solar parks in Vilnius, Širvintos District, and Panevėžys allow the company to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions and save around 50% of its electricity costs. In this way, the company contributes to climate change mitigation goals and to the development of renewable energy in Lithuania.

The principles of sustainability were applied to the GIPL pipeline project as well

As a responsible part of society, the company continued to foster its relations with local communities by implementing a three-year project of meetings with communities in the vicinity of the pipeline construction, which was completed last year alongside the construction of the GIPL gas pipeline. During 2021, another 30 meetings were held with local communities. In the context of the largest recent strategic state energy project, it was crucial to take into account the need for local people to feel safe during the construction process. The construction of the GIPL pipeline was designed to minimise the impact on the environment. In line with this guiding principle, a special horizontal directional drilling (HDD) technology was used for the construction of the pipeline underneath the major Lithuanian rivers. This allowed the drilling of the pipeline under the Neris and Nemunas rivers to preserve forest areas on the banks as well as aquatic flora and fauna, and to maintain the natural environment without harming it.

As part of the focus on the preservation of Lithuanian history, during the construction of the GIPL pipeline, massive archaeological investigations were carried out along the entire 165 km long pipeline route, covering an area of almost 9,000 square metres, and archaeological surveys were carried out along the entire route of the pipeline, which covers nearly 200 hectares of land.

Employees and customers

Amber Grid's customer survey of 2021 showed high customer satisfaction results. These were measured according to the GCSI and NPS indices. The GCSI customer satisfaction score of 83 is in line with the scores achieved by companies with a high standard of service delivery. The NPS score was 63, which showed that 71% of respondents are likely to recommend Amber Grid to others. Customers also rated the professionalism and experience of the company's staff positively.

Safety and health remain one of top priorities of Amber Grid. The company has managed to ensure that no fatal or serious accidents have been recorded in the past year during the activities of contractors and company employees. Amber Grid has conducted over 320 occupational safety training sessions for its employees and conducted over 360 occupational safety inspections.

The company is committed to prioritising green procurement to reduce its environmental impact. One of the long-term goals by 2030 is to make all of the company's procurement green and to integrate sustainability criteria into the requirements for contracting companies. To achieve these goals, Amber Grid implemented 10% of green procurement in 2021.

Support of the company's employees and creation of favourable working and learning conditions provides additional benefits for each working professional, creating opportunities for working remotely not only in Lithuania, but also from abroad.

The Sustainability Report of Amber Grid is guided by the principles of the Global Compact initiated by the United Nations (UN) and by the recommendations of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which help to measure performance against relevant economic, environmental, labour, human rights, market, and community relations indicators.

Amber Grid is part of the EPSO-G group of companies, which aims to ensure a smooth and reliable transition of Lithuania to a large-scale renewable energy system by enabling the decarbonisation of the sector, initiating system interconnection projects, and facilitating the exchange of climate neutral energy. The group is pursuing the transformation of the energy sector by ensuring a balanced approach between environmental, social, and economic objectives.