

VILNIUS AIRPORT ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS

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In the past years, Vilnius Airport has renewed its apron lighting system, installed solar panels and added hybrid vehicles to its fleet. Those are just a few environmentally focused solutions being implemented at all Lithuanian Airports, where sustainability is a core value.

According to Kristina Greičytė, Environmental projects manager at Lithuanian Airports, implementing environmental solutions is one of the prime focuses in the airport operator's strategy which allows to efficiently use energy and emit less. "Only a balanced and sustainable stance can allow an airport to not only operate on a daily basis, but also expand and develop", - states Ms. Greičytė.

The biggest changes are seen in Vilnius

Vilnius Airport (VNO), which serves Lithuania's capital city, consumes more than two thirds of the total electricity among all three airports used for their infrastructure needs. In 2019, the country's main airport consumed 14 156 MWh, whereas all three airports combined used 18 524 MWh of electricity.

LED lights, which replaced halogen bulbs that were used to light the apron, have not only

improved visibility, but will also save 449 MWh in the upcoming five years. A further 153.48 MWh of electricity were saved by replacing a part of the airport's car fleet with electric hybrid vehicles. Also, solar panels mounted on the new VIP terminal's roof will further save an estimated 27.22 MWh per year. In total, the airport plans to save at least 168.18 MWh of electricity each year which is equal to providing 90 average households with electricity for the whole year.

"I must highlight that these figures arise from the solutions we have already implemented at Vilnius Airport. Similar projects, which include installing LED lights and opting for hybrid vehicles, are happening at both Kaunas and Palanga airports, so the total amount of electricity saved is much higher", - notes Ms. Grei?i?t?.

Emissions reduction plan

All three Lithuanian Airports are part of the voluntary and international Airport Carbon Accreditation Programme. The programme aims to help airports evaluate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that are generated in daily operations. A total of 246 airports around the world take part in this environmental programme. Vilnius Airport is the only airport in the Baltics that managed to reach the second level of the programme and aims to go further.

"This means that Vilnius Airport has developed clear measures how it will manage and reduce carbon emissions – we have developed a CO2 management plan. Until 2021, we seek to cut CO2 emissions per passenger by 35%. By participating in the Airport Carbon Accreditation Programme, we must evaluate and reduce not only electricity usage, but also take heat generation, chemical usage, in further stages – aviation fuel usage – into consideration", - states Ms. Grei?i?t?, Environmental projects manager at Lithuanian Airports.

At Vilnius Airport, new equipment to monitor electricity and other energy usage will be installed. Also, measures that reduce energy usage are being taken into consideration already in the project planning phase. Finally, regular energy usage audits are being conducted.

From solar panels to hybrid vehicles, from modern drainage systems to infrastructure development – similar projects are also under way at Kaunas (KUN) and Palanga (PLQ) airports.

Environmental protection as added value

Covid-19 brought airport operations to a standstill, so the Airport Carbon Accreditation Programme was temporarily put on hold. Due to this, Vilnius Airport's planned accession to the programme's third – for Kaunas and Palanga airports, second – level was postponed for at least a year. Despite this, energy efficiency and electricity usage reduction measures will, for sure, be further developed.

"By striving to be an environmentally conscious enterprise that successfully operates and expands, we are obliged to identify and strategically solve our environmental issues. We must understand that environmental protection is by far not only a mandatory obligation – it is an opportunity to raise operational efficiency, save resources, improve your reputation and relations with stakeholders", - says Ms. Grei?i?t?.

Lithuanian Airports are part of the ESO Progressive Energy Club which unites companies, investing into a greener tomorrow by using energy efficiently and sharing know-how with other players in the market.

Lithuania has committed to saving 11.7 TWh of energy in six years starting from 2014, so the ESO

Progressive Energy Club is yet another opportunity to reach milestones of other EU targets. For State Enterprises – this is an opportunity to reduce operating costs and add to our common goal of reducing carbon emissions and damage to the environment. In this initiative, companies publicly share their solutions in reducing energy usage and increasing efficiency, so adding to the company’s reputation and employer branding.



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