

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT 2025



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1 FOREWORD BY THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

GRI 2-22

The year 2025 marked an important milestone for GASCADE. Hydrogen has moved from ambition to reality: we successfully converted more than 400 km of pipeline infrastructure for hydrogen transport.



Dr. Christoph von dem Bussche
Managing Director GASCADE and NEL Gastransport

This is not only a pioneering technical achievement, but also a strategic investment in a climate-neutral energy future for Germany and Europe.

And this is only the beginning. We are working on Germany's hydrogen core network, with numerous projects to convert additional pipelines and to build new hydrogen pipelines where needed to meet future demand. Through the "Flow – making hydrogen happen" program, we have established a high-capacity north-south corridor for hydrogen transport. This corridor gives industrial customers—particularly in eastern Germany—an early opportunity to decarbonize, creating a tangible competitive advantage. In the years ahead, further regions will benefit as the program progresses. Through interconnections with neighboring countries, the backbone of an integrated European hydrogen transport infrastructure is gradually taking shape.

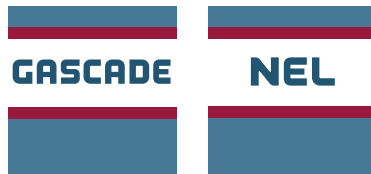
With our offshore projects AquaDuctus and the Baltic Sea Hydrogen Collector (BHC), we are opening up import corridors from the North Sea and the Baltic Sea to bring hydrogen to Germany. At the same time, through HyNOS—the association of hydrogen network operators in the North Sea region—we are advocating for hydrogen to be integrated into the planning of offshore wind generation and the related transport infrastructure. This integrated approach is essential for achieving the ambitious expansion targets efficiently.

Alongside the consistent implementation of our hydrogen projects, we are systematically making our natural gas business more sustainable. In 2025, our operational emissions remained at a significantly reduced level in a long-term comparison. Through optimized network operation, digital energy data solutions, targeted technical measures, and modern metering technology, we are continuing to make network operations more energy-efficient and lower in emissions.

During the reporting year, we also implemented and certified an environmental management system in accordance with ISO 14001. This complements our existing certified management systems for energy, information security, and quality. Supporting social initiatives and organizations in the Kassel region remained an important commitment for us in 2025, and we keep promoting both employee volunteering and projects that serve the public good.

In 2025, GASCADE made substantial progress in developing sustainable hydrogen infrastructure while continuing to drive the transformation of its existing business. In doing so, the company is making an important contribution to decarbonization and strengthening the long-term resilience of the energy system in Germany and Europe.

2 THE TRANSPORT COMPANIES



2.1 Details on the Sustainability Statement and Organization

GRI 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-14

This sustainability statement covers the following companies:

- GASCADE Gastransport GmbH (hereinafter “GASCADE”),
- NEL Gastransport GmbH (hereinafter “NGT”).

Both companies are headquartered in Kassel, Germany, and conduct their business operations exclusively in Germany. GASCADE and NGT are owned by W & G Transport Holding GmbH (WGTH). WGTH is a subsidiary of WIGA Transport Beteiligungs-GmbH & Co. KG and has been wholly owned by SEFE Securing Energy for Europe GmbH, Berlin, since 2024. In addition to operating and managing its own gas transmission network, GASCADE also provides operating services for pipelines that are jointly owned by several German transmission system operators (TSOs), in particular EUGAL, NEL, and Offshore Pipeline OAL. For emissions and energy consumption reporting, data is primarily attributed to the GASCADE network based on operation rather than ownership.

GASCADE and NGT are certified by the Federal Network Agency as independent, fully regulated transmission system operators under German law and in accordance with the German Energy Industry Act.

We are therefore legally required to conduct our transmission business on a non-discriminatory basis and independently of the interests of our direct or indirect shareholders. Compliance with these obligations is monitored through an internal compliance and non-discrimination program, an independent non-discrimination officer, and the Federal Network Agency.

This sustainability statement covers the 2025 calendar year. Our sustainability reporting follows the internationally recognized Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards and is structured accordingly. The point of contact for this report is GASCADE’s Sustainability Management team. Questions may be directed to nachhaltigkeit@GASCADE.de.

The content of this sustainability statement and the material topics identified have been reviewed and approved by management. The report has not been externally assured.

Together with its sister company NGT, GASCADE plans, builds, and operates one of Germany’s largest long-distance gas transmission networks. We provide our customers with comprehensive, expert gas transmission services. With a pipeline network spanning more than 4,200 kilometres, we connect several European countries directly with each other. In doing so, we contribute to a secure energy supply in Germany and Europe—through reliable

transmission of both natural gas and hydrogen. The first pipeline sections were converted for hydrogen transport in 2025.

More than 550 employees at 15 locations across Germany help ensure reliable gas transmission today and in the future. We transport gas flexibly to around 100 delivery points. Our business operations supply the heating market, power plants used for electricity generation, and a wide range of industrial customers throughout Germany.

Our transport customers include gas importers seeking to transport natural gas, biomethane, hydrogen, or synthetic methane to or within Germany, as well as gas traders and downstream network operators that use our transport capacities as an interface to end customers. For communication and the transmission of metering and transport data, we operate a powerful and complex IT infrastructure supported by specialized IT service providers. Implementing our large-scale infrastructure projects also requires close cooperation with

numerous specialist companies in pipeline construction. We use high-performance compressors to transport gas at high pressure and work closely with partners in the plant engineering and mechanical engineering sectors.



Corrections to the 2024 Annual Report

In the table on total energy consumption, the figures for district heating and diesel/heating oil for the base period were mistakenly interchanged (page 26).

Share of total energy consumption (%)

	Originally:	Corrected:
District heating	0 %	3.1 %
Diesel/Heating oil	3 %	0.01 %

2.2 Organizational Structure

[GRI 2-1, 2-9, 2-10, 2-11, 2-12](#)

The governance structure of the independent transmission system operators GASCADE and NGT comprises both executive management and a Supervisory Board. The establishment of a Supervisory Board is required under the German Energy Industry Act and must comply with the relevant provisions of the German Stock Corporation Act. The Supervisory Board performs the responsibilities assigned to it by law and by the Articles of Association. It acts in the interests of the companies and oversees executive management. It does not perform executive management functions itself; however, certain management decisions require its approval.

In addition, the German Energy Industry Act assigns specific responsibilities to the Supervisory Board, including decisions on the appropriation of annual profits.

The Supervisory Board fulfills its duties through regular meetings and by reviewing reports on business performance, the company’s financial position, and key matters of corporate policy.

Sustainability matters are addressed both in Supervisory Board meetings and in the reports submitted to the Board.

GASCADE’s Supervisory Board consists of four representatives of our shareholder, SEFE Securing Energy for Europe GmbH, and two inde-

pendent members (as of April 2026). Since 2024, the independent members have been elected directly by employees. As part of our efforts to promote diversity at all levels of the organization, we are pleased that women account for one third of the Supervisory Board.

2.3 Memberships

[GRI 2-28](#)

GASCADE is converting parts of its infrastructure for hydrogen transport and building new hydrogen pipelines where required. The development of the emerging hydrogen market involves a wide range of stakeholders, from market design and regulatory frameworks to technical standards and infrastructure planning. To play an active role in shaping this transformation, GASCADE participates in various initiatives and industry associations.

One such initiative is the AquaVentus association, a consortium of more than 100 companies and organizations from business and research. GASCADE underlines its commitment to hydrogen solutions through the participation of our Managing Director, Christoph von dem Bussche, on the association’s board. AquaVentus aims to open a new era of climate-friendly energy by enabling the production of green hydrogen in the German North Sea. Together with its members, the association is working toward installing 10 GW of offshore wind-based hydrogen

generation capacity in the North Sea by 2035. The AquaDuctus offshore pipeline is an integral part of this initiative.

GASCADE is also strongly committed to the new European association, the European Network of Network Operators for Hydrogen (ENNOH). Established in alignment with the European Gas and Hydrogen Package, ENNOH is working to support the development of European hydrogen infrastructure, both onshore and offshore. Its objective is to strengthen cooperation among network operators and help establish the framework conditions needed to build an efficient hydrogen transport infrastructure at European level. Our Managing Director Christoph von dem Bussche has served as ENNOH's first president since 2024.

GASCADE is actively involved in the following associations and initiatives:

- AquaVentus Förderverein e.V.
(Support Association)
- BDEW Federal Association of the Energy and Water Industries e.V.



- DVGW German Technical and Scientific Association for Gas and Water e.V.
- DWV German Hydrogen Association e.V.
- ENNOH European Network of Network Operators for Hydrogen
- ENTSG European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas
- FNB Gas - Association of Gas Transmission System Operators e.V.
- HyNOS - Hydrogen Network Operators of the Northern Seas
- UP KRITIS
- VST Association for Secure Transmission and Distribution Networks / KRITIS e.V.
- World Energy Council e.V.

GASCADE supports the societal objective of strengthening the legitimacy of parliamentary and governmental decision-making and policy processes through transparency around political advocacy. The company documents its lobbying activities in connection with federal legislative and policy processes in the German Bundestag's Lobbying Register.

3 SUSTAINABILITY AND MATERIAL TOPICS

3.1 Sustainability Management

GRI 2-13

At our transport companies, responsibility for sustainability is an integral part of the organization and is based on close collaboration between specialist departments and senior management. The Business Development and Sustainability department coordinates the regular review and analysis of material topics, compliance with reporting requirements, and the publication of the annual sustainability statement. It also identifies and coordinates sustainability measures within the company. Executive management is regularly informed about our sustainability activities and is involved in decisions on future measures and projects. Targets are presented to executive management by the Sustainability Management team and approved by management. As central governance bodies, the Supervisory Boards of the transport companies are informed about all sustainability-related measures and targets at least twice a year during their regular meetings. The respective functional departments are responsible for collecting and providing reporting data, and their expertise plays a key role in preparing the sustainability statement. We see significant potential in digital solutions to collect and



analyze environmental and resource data, enabling informed decisions that help reduce our environmental impacts. To further improve the transparency and traceability of sustainability-related data, we continued our work on a central reporting database during the reporting year (see also Section 5.2.4).

Our stated objective is to embed sustainability more systematically across all areas of the company and to develop new initiatives accordingly. In addition to our current sustainability activities, our idea management program is particularly relevant: employees regularly submit suggestions that can contribute to the company's environmental and social sustainability (see Section 7.5 for more details).

To identify and address the sustainability topics relevant to our transport companies, we draw on stakeholder surveys, materiality analysis, and the assessment of opportunities and risks for our business activities (Sections 3.2 to 3.4). We also define appropriate targets for the company and describe our pathway to climate neutrality (Sections 3.5 to 3.7).

3.2 Stakeholder Survey

GRI 2-29

In 2024, we conducted a comprehensive stakeholder survey on sustainability (see the 2024 Sustainability Report). The objective was to incorporate both internal and external perspectives on potentially material topics. We received around 230 responses in total, most of them from employees.

The topics identified were selected based on recognized reporting frameworks, including the ESRS under the CSRD and the GRI Standards, and were assessed by internal expert committees in line with the principle of double materiality. The process considered both the impacts of our business activities on the environment and society and, conversely, the effects of sustainability-related matters on our company. The results of the stakeholder survey and the expert committee assessments were then consolidated, with greater weighting given to the expert assessments because the topics were discussed in more depth and with more specialized expertise.

3.3 Material Topics

GRI 3-1, 3-2, 3-3

To assess the topics material to our business, we considered the GRI 11:2021 Oil and Gas Sector Standard and the results of our stakeholder analysis.

In addition, we aligned our prioritization of material topics with that of SEFE Securing Energy for Europe GmbH and identified the following topics as being of overarching significance.

- Energy Transition
- GHG emissions (Scope 1, 2, and 3)
- Energy security
- Employment Practices
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Governance, Compliance, and Business Ethics
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Innovation & Digitalization

In these areas, we aim to contribute to sustainable development through responsible business conduct as part of the SEFE Group.

As a regulated network operator, we are responsible for the construction and operation of our gas infrastructure and for gas transmission in Germany. Due to regulatory and legal requirements, gas transmission is strictly separated from gas production, storage, and trading. As a result, many of the material topics listed in the GRI 11:2021 Oil

and Gas Sector Standard are not material to our business. For many topics, either the likelihood of occurrence is too low or we assessed the potential impact as not material (see Chapter 8, GRI Index).

The following list presents the material topics for our transport companies that guide our sustainability reporting. In addition, we report on environmental and social topics that contribute to the implementation of our sustainability strategy.

List of material topics

- + Climate change (GHG emissions, climate adaptation, resilience, and transition to a low-emission economy, energy efficiency)
- + IT security and data protection
- + Digitalization
- + Occupational safety and health
- + Diversity and equal opportunity
- + Employment practices



3.4 Opportunity and Risk Assessment
GRI 11-2, 201-2

Our business activities primarily comprise services related to natural gas transport and the implementation of grid connections in Germany and neighboring regions. Our infrastructure is state-of-the-art, efficiently designed, and built for reliable long-term operation over many decades. We currently assess direct physical risks related to climate change—such as storm events, dry periods, or flooding—as manageable for our pipeline infrastructure and business operations. To date, climate-related changes have caused virtually no significant disruption to our operational processes. Potential risks may arise in particular from flooding at station sites or erosion or undermining along individual pipeline sections. We have implemented protective measures such as flood protection walls and installed firefighting water ponds at selected sites. Thanks to modern telecontrol technology and flexible gas flow management, we consider ourselves well prepared for such scenarios. We continue to monitor and analyze climate-related developments and scenarios for their relevance to our current and future business activities.

As part of our 2024 stakeholder survey, we also asked stakeholders to assess the key opportunities and risks for our business operations. The five most significant opportunities and risks identified

through this process are listed below and remain valid.



Opportunities for GASCADE	Risks for GASCADE
1. Climate change	1. Climate change
2. Regulatory developments	2. Regulatory developments
3. Resource use and circular economy	3. Information security
4. Fair compensation	4. Recruitment
5. Work-life balance	5. Environmental pollution

Opportunities for GASCADE**1. Climate change**

- By transitioning from fossil fuels to CO₂-neutral gases such as hydrogen, we can continue to use existing infrastructure in the long term while also implementing new projects.
- Through energy efficiency measures and the use of renewable energy, we can reduce our emissions.

2. Regulatory developments

- Participation in political dialogue can help establish appropriate framework conditions for our infrastructure and support the achievement of the energy policy “triangle of goals”: environmental sustainability, security of supply, and economic viability.

3. Resource use and circular economy

- Repurposing infrastructure for hydrogen use conserves resources and is more cost-effective.

4. Fair compensation

- Fair compensation increases the appeal of the company for new and existing employees, leading to lower turnover.

5. Work-life balance

- High employee motivation by enabling employees to better balance work and family responsibilities, while also supporting long-term health through sports and recreational activities.

Risks for GASCADE**1. Climate change**

- Risks to existing natural gas infrastructure and uncertainties surrounding the hydrogen market ramp-up.
- Risk of penalties and litigation in the event of non-compliance with legal obligations.

2. Regulatory developments

- Political and regulatory frameworks may develop in ways that adversely affect our business model and lead to higher costs.

3. Information security

- Failure of our infrastructure or data loss due to cyberattacks or sabotage.
- Vulnerability to extortion with the potential for financial loss and possible reputational damage.

4. Talent acquisition

- Shortage of skilled workers: A lack of qualified personnel could delay project implementation and create challenges for current and future business activities.

5. Environmental pollution

- Disproportionate environmental measures due to strict legal requirements.
- Claims for damages and the risk of litigation.

The most significant opportunities and risks primarily relate to climate change and regulatory developments. This reflects the high relevance of these topics to our business model as a regulated transmission system operator. Given our dependence on political and regulatory frameworks, we closely monitor both areas and believe that we are well positioned to address the challenges ahead.

We also consider ourselves well prepared in other areas. Opportunities are primarily seen in the areas of fair compensation and work-life balance, reflecting a positive perception of the company among our stakeholders. Stakeholders also recognize potential in the resource-efficient modernization of our transmission network.

On the risk side, information security is among the topics highlighted. The threat posed by cyberattacks has increased significantly in recent years. We are aware of this development and have long been among the pioneers in our industry in implementing appropriate protective measures. The demographic trend of a shrinking skilled labour pool makes workforce recruitment a key area of action. We therefore seek to continuously enhance our attractiveness as an employer.

To prevent environmental impacts and mitigate any potential adverse effects, we regularly implement measures designed to preserve biodiversity and ecological balance. Nevertheless, there is a risk that we may face claims for damages or litigation related to potential environmental damage arising from our construction and operational activities. We currently assess this risk as low. As a matter of principle, we seek to minimize the environmental impact of our activities, and consistent compliance with legal requirements is a matter of course for us.

3.5 Strategy and Sustainability

GRI 2-22

Our corporate strategy serves as a guiding framework for our day-to-day actions and sets the strategic direction for the years ahead. To complement the strategy, a corporate mission statement and leadership guidelines were developed in 2025, which strengthen our shared understanding of collaboration within the company through guiding principles such as safety, sense of community, and environmental responsibility.

The operating environment in which our transport companies implement projects remains challenging. Germany aims to become climate-neutral by 2045 at the latest. In addition, to ensure security of supply, Europe aims to further diversify its energy supply and produce more energy regionally. These developments have implications for our business segment. We will seize the opportunities presented by this transformation by focusing on hydrogen as a new business area for us and by contributing to the development of a sustainable hydrogen economy. At the same time, we intend to continue using our infrastructure to contribute to the security of supply in the European natural gas market.



Sustainability Strategy

Our overall strategic focus areas are also reflected in our sustainability strategy. We defined the key priorities of our sustainability strategy as part of our first stakeholder survey on sustainability and currently see no need to adjust them.

Our sustainability strategy encompasses four core areas in which we see a need for action and where we aim either to achieve improvements or maintain our high standards in the coming years. The four core themes on which we focus are “environmentally friendly gas transport”, “stable and secure

pipeline network”, “climate-neutral energy supply”, and “responsible company”. These core themes form the overarching framework for the measures we intend to further develop and implement in the years ahead. They provide the basis for a holistic approach to sustainability across all levels of our business operations and, at the same time, enable us to permanently embed sustainability as a guiding principle.

The core theme “environmentally friendly gas transport” currently accounts for the largest share of our measures. Making gas transport more en-

vironmentally and climate-friendly is also our greatest challenge. This is a long-term, continuous optimization process that we cannot shape alone, as gas load flow control depends on the needs of our transport customers. The large-scale gas compressors required to operate the network cannot be decarbonized in the short term. Nevertheless, we have developed various approaches to address these challenges. For example, we are working on concepts for the use of renewable energy and aiming to optimize gas load flow control based on sustainability criteria. At the same time, we are

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY GAS TRANSPORT	STABLE AND SECURE PIPELINE NETWORK
• Use of renewable energies • Sustainable load flow control • Methane emission reduction measures • Renaturation and promotion of biodiversity • Energy efficiency measures	• Occupational safety • HSE measures to prevent accidents • Security of supply • Governance and management systems • Digitalization
CLIMATE-NEUTRAL ENERGY SUPPLY	RESPONSIBLE COMPANY
• Development of hydrogen infrastructure • Compensation measures for emissions	• Buildings • Mobility • Suppliers • Employment Practices • Social commitment

reducing our methane emissions by using mobile transfer compressors.

Regarding the core theme “stable and secure pipeline network,” we currently see less urgent need for action on our part. In general, ensuring a secure supply for our customers and maintaining workplace safety have always been our top priorities and remain fundamental prerequisites for economically sustainable operations. We therefore aim to maintain our high standards through various initiatives in the areas of health, safety, and environment (HSE), as well as through process optimizations and established management systems.

Another core theme, “climate-neutral energy supply,” stems from the long-term orientation of our

business activities in gas transport. We are already laying the groundwork to prepare our network for hydrogen transport and to plan the additional infrastructure needed to connect hydrogen producers and consumers. In this area, the planning and construction of offshore pipelines are particularly important, as substantial volumes of green hydrogen will be produced at offshore wind farms. Onshore, we are assessing the conversion of existing pipelines from both technical and economic perspectives. To move closer to the goal of climate neutrality, reducing and avoiding emissions is a high priority. However, some emissions cannot be reduced in the short term for economic or process-related reasons, which is why offsetting emissions can make a valuable contribution in certain cases.

We pursue a holistic approach to sustainability and actively strive to make processes outside our core business more sustainable as well. This is why we see ourselves as a “responsible company.” While an operational focus on material topics is important, the shift toward resource-efficient business practices is taking place at all levels of our organization. This includes, for example, sustainable mobility for our employees, sustainable office and operational buildings and their management, as well as our social engagement.





3.6 Contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

By addressing the topics we have identified as material, we are also contributing to the United Nations sustainability initiative. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals cover a range of environmental, social, and economic challenges that must be addressed at global level. Businesses play a key role in this effort, as they can make a decisive contribution by mobilizing expertise, technologies, and financial resources to support the implementation of these goals. We are therefore committed to actively contributing to the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In doing so, we focus on the areas of action that are strategically most important to us. We place particular emphasis on the following three goals, to which we are already contributing through various measures:

5 Gender Equality

Goal: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Promoting equal opportunity is a key priority for

us—even though we are still in the early stages of identifying and developing targeted and effective measures. Diversity and openness have always been an integral part of our corporate culture. With the right framework in place to actively promote gender equality, we aim to further strengthen our performance in this area. We are working to systematically strengthen equal opportunity and create an inclusive work environment in which diversity is viewed as an asset. Overall, our goal is to ensure fair career and development opportunities for all employees. We want to highlight development opportunities for women and take a more active role in ensuring that they can make use of them (more information in Chapter 6).

7 Affordable and Clean Energy

Goal: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

It is our commitment and guiding principle to provide our customers with an efficient and reliable energy supply. To ensure that the costs of energy transport remain affordable in a decarbonized energy future, we are actively working to convert and

continue using existing natural gas pipelines for the transport of hydrogen and climate-neutral gases (see Chapter 4 for more details).

13 Climate Action

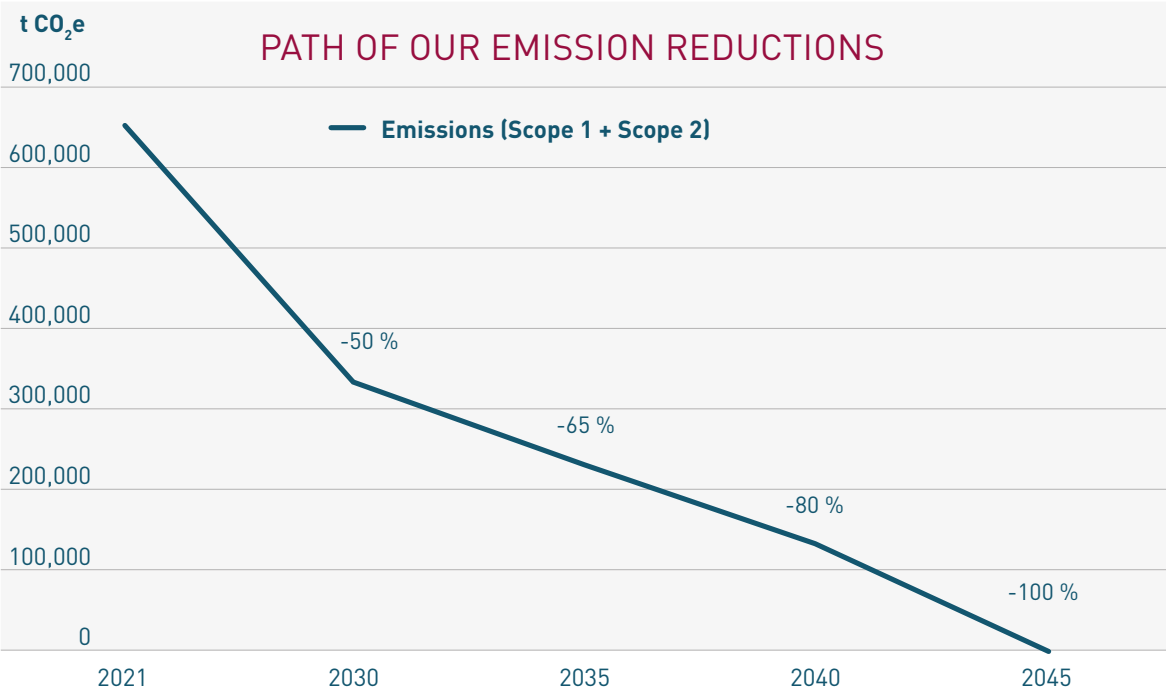
Goal: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

To enable climate-friendly gas transport, we rely on technical solutions aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions and minimizing methane emissions as far as possible (see Sections 5.1 and 5.2 for more details). We regard the significant reduction of methane emissions as one of the most effective measures in the fight against climate change. Our operations engineers and technicians are working with great commitment on innovative processes to continuously reduce our greenhouse gas emissions further.

In addition, we are increasingly using electric compressors instead of gas turbines and, wherever possible, sourcing electricity from renewable sources to reduce emissions from our business operations.

3.7 Our Path to Climate Neutrality
GRI 11-2, GRI 305-5

We are committed to the goals of the Paris Agreement and the German Climate Protection Act and want to do our part to help achieve a climate-neutral world. The following chart shows our emissions reduction pathway for the coming years, with the clear goal of reducing our operations-related emissions to net zero by 2045 at the latest. Overall, we consider ourselves well positioned for the transition to a low-emission economy. Assuming that hydrogen and climate-neutral gases will play a significant role in the energy supply, we will be able to continue operating our infrastructure in the future largely as we do today. Our employees are actively shaping the transition to a climate-neutral energy supply by expanding and providing the necessary infrastructure, as the first successful conversions to hydrogen transport impressively demonstrate. We were able to significantly reduce our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions in 2024 due to exceptionally favorable transport conditions. In 2025, total emissions also remained below the levels recorded in 2023 and 2022. This puts us on track to achieve our 2030 target. Even under normal transport conditions, we are optimistic that we will be able to meet our interim targets through to 2045.



Base year	approx. 650,000 t CO ₂ e
2030	-50 %
2035	-65 %
2040	-80 %
2045	-100 %

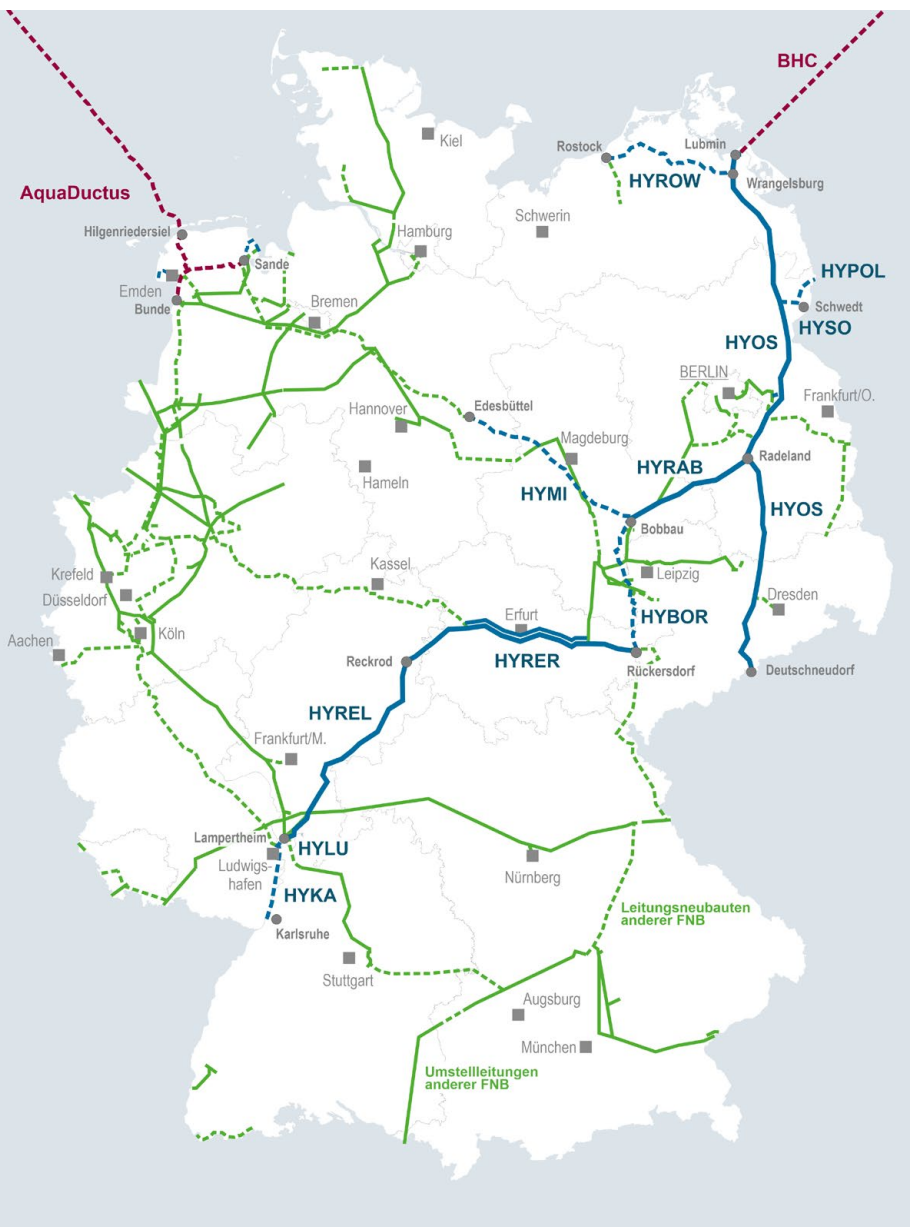
4 HYDROGEN AND THE FUTURE OF ENERGY



4.1 Hydrogen Transport as the Foundation for Market Ramp-Up

As a versatile energy carrier hydrogen plays a key role in the energy transition and in achieving climate goals. For some sectors and industrial processes, there is still no foreseeable possibility of complete decarbonization, e.g., in iron and steel production and in the chemical industry. The reliable and flexible availability of renewable energy is still one of the greatest challenges for a stable energy supply. Here, hydrogen can serve as a storage medium and prevent solar and wind farms from having to be repeatedly and extensively curtailed to relieve the strain on the power grids.

Hydrogen has long been used in industry, for example, in the production of ammonia and in the processing of petroleum products. A large portion of the hydrogen currently needed is supplied locally and on an ad hoc basis, e.g., via truck deliveries. To ensure that hydrogen can be used on a widespread basis and to support a successful energy transition, existing pipelines must be converted, thereby making the current infrastructure fit for the future. Ultimately, producers and import terminals must be connected to consumption centers and to new and existing gas infrastructure across Europe. GASCADE sees its role as contributing through its pipeline network and hydrogen projects, reporting strong progress during the year under review.



4.2 Development of the Hydrogen Core Network

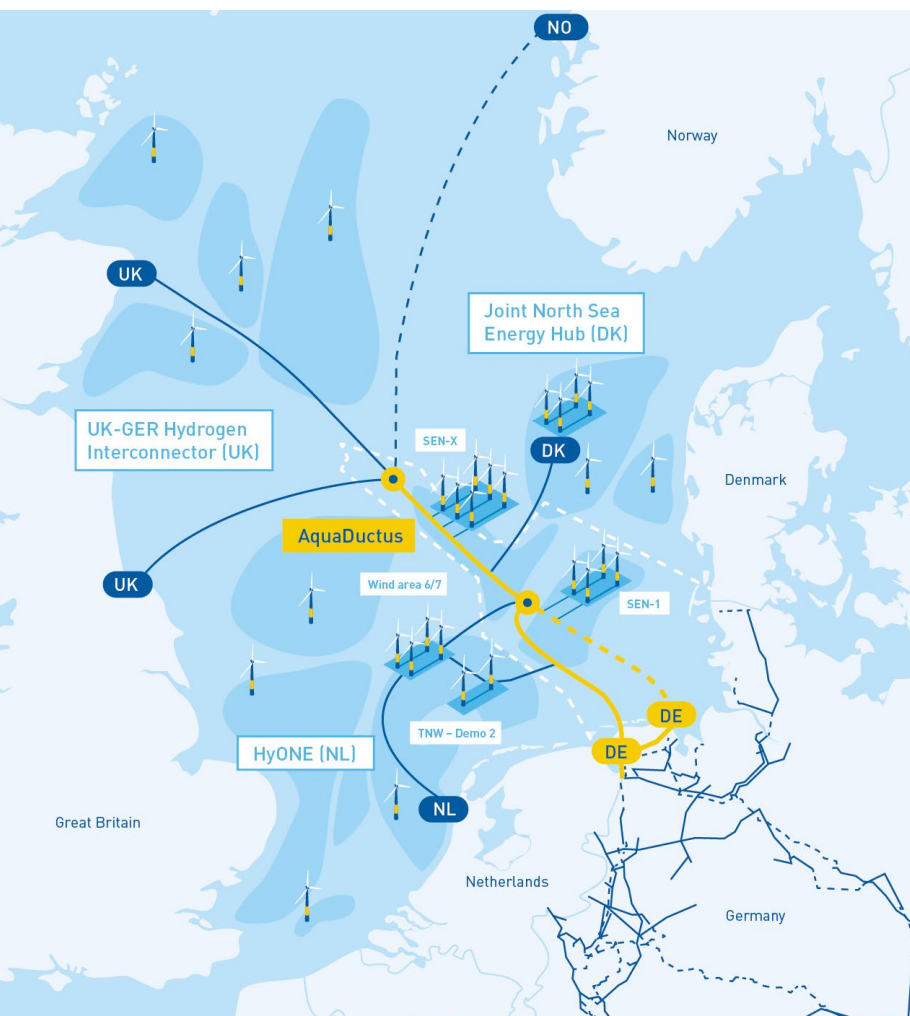
Predictability is crucial for the development of a supra-regional hydrogen transport network, as large investments are made over an extended period and transmission system operators (TSOs) such as GASCADE must make upfront investments transport infrastructure. A milestone in this regard was the approval of the hydrogen core network by the Federal Network Agency in October 2024, which authorized 9,040 kilometers of hydrogen pipelines. These pipelines are to be repurposed or newly constructed between 2025 and 2032. Approximately 60 percent of the approved core network kilometers consist of natural gas pipelines to be repurposed. Utilizing existing infrastructure saves time, conserves resources, and minimizes unnecessary environmental impact as much as possible.

The operators of the hydrogen core network finance the hydrogen core network. A corresponding concept was developed by the federal government and incorporated into the Energy Industry Act enshrined in law. This concept is intended to prevent the ramp-up of hydrogen from being jeopardized by very high fees in the early years and therefore provides for a cap on grid fees for hydrogen consumers. A so-called amortization account bridges the gap between the necessary grid fee and the fee set by the Federal Network Agency by making annual compensation payments.

The amortization account will be settled in subsequent years. KfW is financing the amortization account with a credit line of 24 billion euros. In March 2025, the first disbursement was made to the core network operators. These attractive and stable investment conditions enable TSOs to fulfil their statutory network expansion obligations.

To kick-start the hydrogen market, the core network operators, including GASCADE, sent another important signal: In October 2025, they published market information paving the way for the reservation of hydrogen capacities starting in March 2026. The basis of the reservation concept is to make it mandatory to reserve injection and withdrawal capacities for hydrogen deliveries—an important step toward providing greater security for hydrogen projects. The reservation will later be replaced by a capacity booking. With these key elements of the reservation process, the German core hydrogen network operators are aligning with the approach of their European partners, who are also launching corresponding network user processes. In doing so, they are providing momentum for hydrogen transport within Germany and across borders.

GASCADE has been working for several years on hydrogen projects such as AquaDuctus and the “Flow – making hydrogen happen” program, which are part of the core network. As a result, our company will implement 22 percent of the approved



core network and make key hydrogen import routes in the North Sea and Baltic Sea regions, as well as intra-German interconnectors, available to the market.

4.3 Hydrogen Projects of Our Transmission Companies

AquaDuctus

AquaDuctus

As part of the AquaDuctus project, which GASCADE is implementing as general service provider, a gigawatt-scale hydrogen pipeline with a transport capacity of up to 20 GW will be built to serve as a key import route for hydrogen volumes from the North Sea region to Germany. The AquaDuctus project consists of an offshore section in Germany's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the North Sea and an onshore section for integration into the downstream onshore hydrogen pipeline network extending to the German-Dutch border. The pipeline will offer network users open, non-discriminatory network access, for example for the production of hydrogen from offshore wind farms or for the import of hydrogen from European and non-European countries bordering the North Sea. As an integral part of Germany's core hydrogen network, AquaDuctus connects hydrogen production sites in the North Sea region with con-

sumption centers in Germany and Europe. In doing so, the project creates essential conditions for implementing the National Hydrogen Strategy and the Import Strategy and at the same time supports the targets formulated at the North Sea Summits in Esbjerg and Ostend for ramping up the European hydrogen economy. AquaDuctus will thus become the core of a new offshore infrastructure connecting Germany with the other North Sea coastal states.

AquaDuctus is based on scalable, demand-driven infrastructure in two sections:

AquaDuctus Section 1 comprises the connection of the German hydrogen wind farm site SEN-1 (Other Energy Generation Area with a generation capacity of up to one gigawatt) via an offshore pipeline landing on the German mainland. From there, an onshore pipeline will create a connection to the German-Dutch interconnection point at Bunde/Oude Statenzijl, ensuring supply to consumers connected to Germany's core hydrogen network and the Dutch hydrogen network.

AquaDuctus Section 2 involves extending the offshore pipeline by a further 200 kilometers, so that, in its final stage of expansion, it will reach the tip of the so-called "Duck's Beak" in Germany's EEZ. In this way, AquaDuctus will create the opportunity to connect additional hydrogen wind farm sites and link up with neighboring offshore hydrogen infrastructures of the North Sea coastal states. This will contribute to the diversification of hydrogen imports to Germany and open the door to pipeline-based offshore hy-

Supported by:



Federal Ministry
for Economic Affairs
and Energy



Niedersachsen Ministry for Economic
Affairs, Transport and Housing



Ministry for the Environment, Energy and
Climate Protection of the State of Lower Saxony

on the basis of a decision
by the German Bundestag



drogen transport across Europe.

In 2023, the European Commission confirmed AquaDuctus's status as a "Project of Common Interest" (PCI). As part of the so-called Hy2Infra wave, which comprises a total of 23 German hydrogen projects across the production, transport and storage stages of the value chain, the European Commission notified the "AquaDuctus Section 1" project as an "Important Project of Common European Interest" (IPCEI) in February 2024. AquaDuctus receives public funding from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and the two Lower Saxony ministries responsible for economic affairs, transport and construction, and for the environment, energy and climate protection. Public funding for AquaDuctus in line with the National Hydrogen Strategy is intended to ensure the swift implementation of the project and a rapid hydrogen market ramp-up.

AquaDuctus Section 1 is also part of the core hydrogen network confirmed by the Federal Network Agency in October 2024, which provides additional investment security. In addition, the overall AquaDuctus project (Sections 1 and 2) is included as a key energy infrastructure measure on the European Commission's PCI/PMI list (Project of Common/Mutual Interest).

AquaDuctus continues to take shape through collaboration among partners in the North Sea region. In May 2025, the British national gas/hydrogen network operator National Gas and GASCADE signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a hydrogen

value chain between the United Kingdom and Germany, as well as a Project of Mutual Interest (PMI project). The main focus is on creating an offshore hydrogen interconnector pipeline linking the United Kingdom with Germany, incorporating GASCADE's AquaDuctus pipeline.



Flow – making hydrogen happen

GASCADE is making a key contribution to the market ramp-up of hydrogen through the "Flow – making hydrogen happen" program. Together with partners along the entire value chain, the goal is to create a high-capacity transport corridor in several expansion phases. By the end of 2029, the plan is to transport hydrogen from the Baltic Sea coast to Baden-Württemberg and connect at least nine industrial sites along this route. The hydrogen is to be produced in the Lubmin area on the Baltic Sea coast, in the greater Rostock area, and by producers along the pipeline route. Imports are possible via the ports in Lubmin and Rostock, as well as—in the future—via a connection to the Baltic Sea Hydrogen Collector (BHC), which is intended to bring hydrogen from various countries bordering the Bal-

tic Sea to Germany, as explained in more detail in the following subsection (p. 24).

The international expansion of the "Flow – making hydrogen happen" program will begin in 2030, with connections to Poland and the Czech Republic planned. As a key cooperation project for Central Europe, GASCADE is planning the Czech-German Hydrogen Interconnector (CGHI) together with the Czech network operator NET4GAS and Open Grid Europe from Germany. The Flow route from the Baltic Sea to the Czech Republic and Poland has been confirmed as a PCI by the European Commission since the end of 2023.

Extensions to Bavaria, Austria, Switzerland, France, Denmark, and toward the northwest are possible in the future and are being completed in collaboration with other grid operators. The internationally oriented program is designed to reach a peak hourly capacity of up to 20 gigawatts in its final phase of expansion. GASCADE has the necessary grid infrastructure to enable such an expansion and is committed to the cooperative development of the market along the hydrogen transport routes. The resilience of the emerging hydrogen infrastructure will be achieved through connections to storage facilities in Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, and Hesse, as well as through diversification of the transport routes.

Flow making
hydrogen
happen

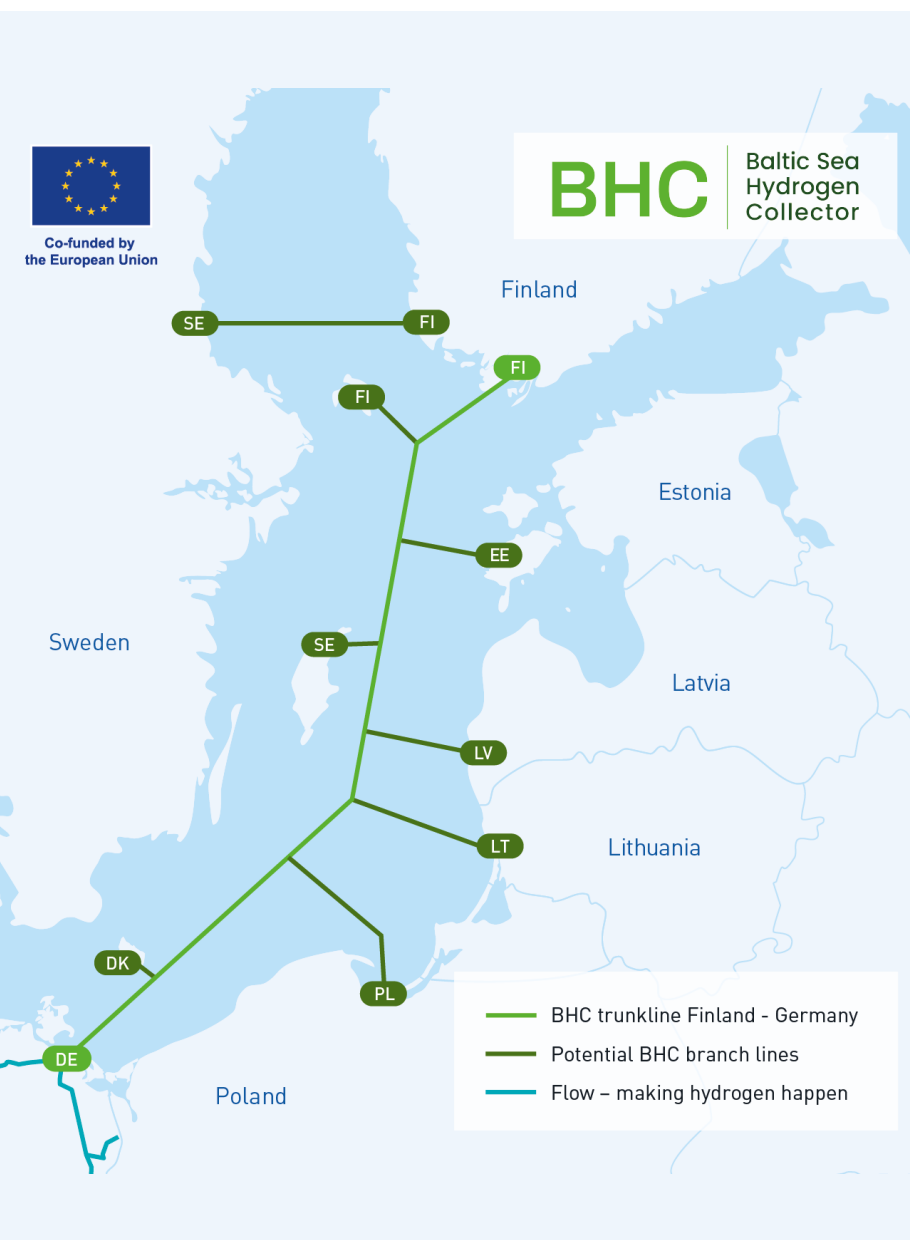


Implementation of the program was advanced in 2025 thanks to significant progress made by the participants. The world's first filling of a pipeline with a diameter of 1.4 meters with hydrogen began in February 2025, with the goal of making the first major pipeline section available for large-volume hydrogen transport. As planned, by mid-December 2025, approximately 400 km of existing natural gas pipelines had been successfully converted for hydrogen transport. This created a north-south corridor stretching from the Baltic Sea region to Saxony-Anhalt, which forms a central part of Germany's core hydrogen network. The hydrogen infrastructure is now available to the market and thus serves as the foundation for the successful ramp-up of hydrogen.

Cooperation with the Polish network operator GAZ-SYSTEM and Sevion (PNE Group), a wind farm project developer, as part of the "Pomeranian Green Hydrogen Cluster Project", has also made progress. The participants are currently working on a feasibility study examining a connection between the German hydrogen network and the Polish hydrogen network—which is yet to be built—for the exchange of green hydrogen. The European Commission is funding the feasibility study as part of the "Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)" program.

By converting primarily existing infrastructure to hydrogen transport, GASCADE is laying the foundation for a climate-neutral hydrogen economy. This will link generation capacities and import volumes

from northern Europe with storage sites along the pipelines and with the major consumption centers in eastern and southern Germany. The transition from natural gas to hydrogen will lead to significant CO₂ savings in the steel, chemical, and cement industries, as well as in other energy-intensive sectors, the mobility sector, and the heating market. At the same time, integration into the European hydrogen internal market strengthens security of supply and enables the early development of a market with a wide range of producers, traders, and consumers.



Baltic Sea Hydrogen Collector (BHC)

The Baltic Sea Hydrogen Collector (BHC) is a cross-border hydrogen infrastructure project in the Baltic Sea region. In its first phase, the project's main corridor will connect Finland and Germany. At the same time, the BHC is designed from the outset as a scalable pipeline network intended to enable and drive the development of a Nordic-Baltic hydrogen ecosystem around the Baltic Sea. In the long term, therefore, access will be made available to all interested democratic countries bordering the Baltic Sea, to incorporate added production potential in the Baltic states and on the energy islands in the Baltic Sea, while also tapping into consumption potential in countries such as Poland. In this way, the BHC lays the foundation for connecting renewable hydrogen from a politically stable European region with growing centers of demand in Germany and other parts of Northern and Central Europe. The project can thus contribute to the decarbonization of industrial value creation, to security of supply, and to the development of a resilient European hydrogen market.

The international part of the project is being developed by Gasgrid Finland, GASCADE, and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP). Since late 2023, the BHC has been recognized as a PCI by the European Commission. In October 2025, the project received 15.3 million euros in funding from the EU's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) program. The funding supports preparatory work such as technical preliminary planning, regulatory and commercial

analyses, and environmental studies.

For GASCADE, the BHC is a key component in connecting European renewable hydrogen potential from the Nordic-Baltic region with the German hydrogen core network—and specifically with the GASCADE program “Flow—making hydrogen happen”—in the long term. The German section of the BHC (the area from Lubmin to the outer boundary of Germany's exclusive economic zone in the Baltic Sea) is included in the approved core hydrogen network and is being developed solely by GASCADE.

4.4 European Hydrogen Cooperation

GASCADE is committed to collaborating with other transmission system operators at the European level to advocate for the coordinated expansion of a hydrogen network beyond current hydrogen projects. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of the offshore sector in harmony with onshore supply networks. One example of such cooperation is HyNOS—Hydrogen Network Operators of the Northern Seas.



Since 2024, HyNOS has been bringing together hydrogen TSOs from countries bordering the North

Sea to develop a shared understanding of the benefits of onshore and offshore hydrogen production from offshore wind energy. To this end, staff from the TSOs in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom meet regularly and develop well-founded recommendations, which are communicated in the form of expert papers directly to relevant decision-makers to support informed and effective policy decisions. The aim is to promote offshore wind energy through the integrated production of electricity and hydrogen in the North Sea, maximize the potential of offshore wind energy, and reduce overall transport costs. In this way, AquaDuctus offers the potential to build connections with our neighbors in the North Sea. These connections require cooperation among North Sea coastal states that goes beyond individual projects.

During the reporting year, HyNOS members prepared for the North Sea Summit in Hamburg in January 2026, which aims to transform the North Sea into a green energy hub for Europe. The comprehensive expansion of offshore wind energy to 300 GW by 2050 was reaffirmed following the last North Sea Summit in 2023 in Ostend, Belgium. The optimal utilization of this offshore wind energy depends on the integrated production of electricity and hydrogen and the interconnection of transmission grids on land and at sea. On this basis, HyNOS advocated for greater consideration of hydrogen in the tendering of offshore wind

areas and in the planning of electricity and hydrogen grids in the offshore sector. Alongside the electricity transmission system operators, the wind industry, the European Commission, and ministers from North Sea coastal states, HyNOS contributed to the summit's joint final declarations. A key outcome of the summit is that electricity TSOs and hydrogen TSOs should lay the groundwork for future integrated planning of offshore electricity and hydrogen grids.



The HyNOS managing directors at the North Sea Summit held in Hamburg in January 2026.

5 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Emissions

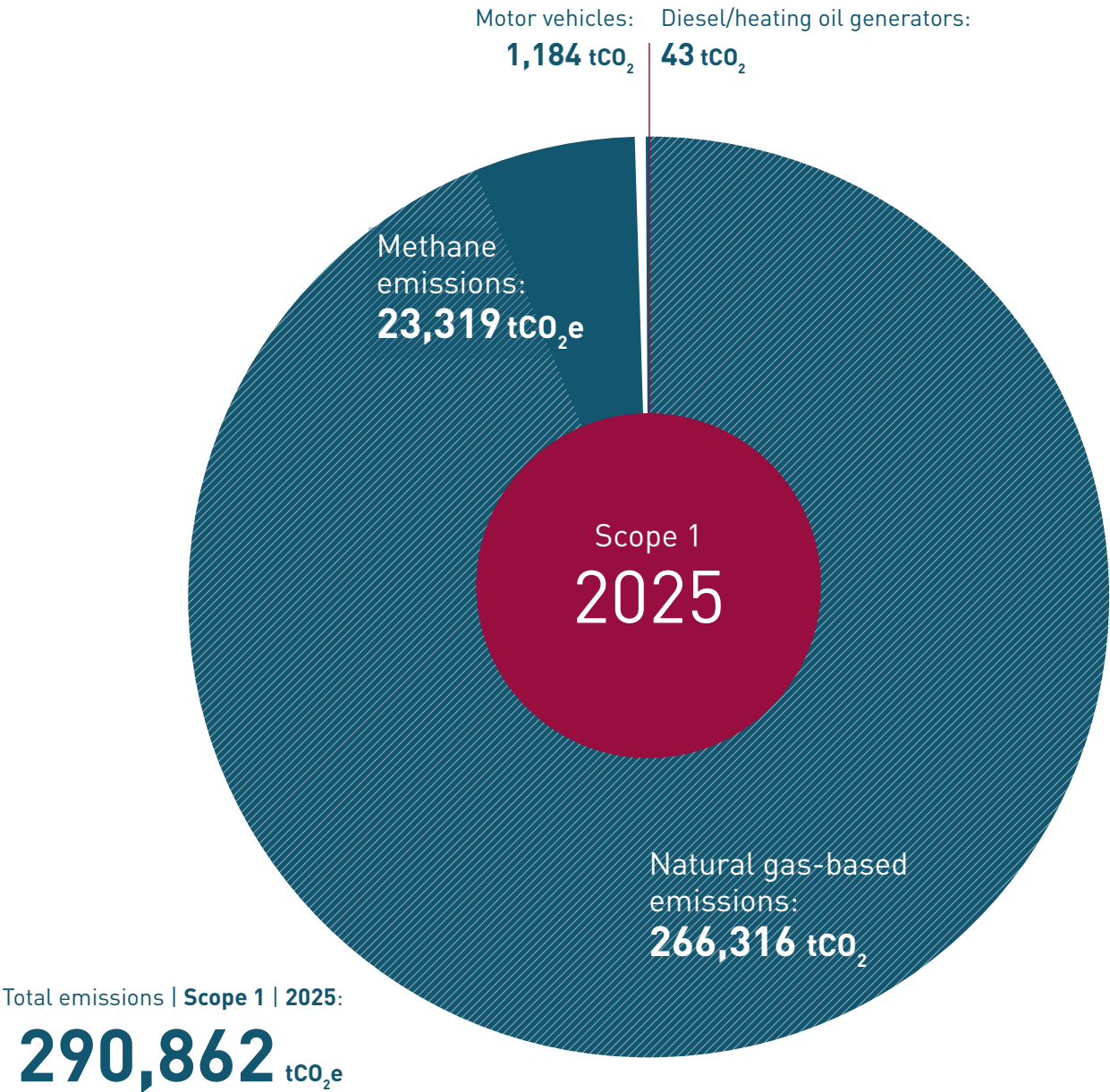
5.1.1 Scope 1 GRI 11-1, 305-1

SCOPE 1

- Natural gas-based Emissions
- Company-owned vehicles
- Diesel/heating oil generators
- Methane emissions

Emissions sources

By far our largest direct source of emissions is natural gas-powered compressors and stations. Consequently, our Scope 1 emissions are primarily generated by natural gas-based consumption units. Natural gas is used to heat buildings at many locations as well. In addition, most of our stations are equipped with diesel-powered emergency generators, which are operated at least once a year for testing purposes, thereby causing direct emissions. Methane emissions resulting from operations and as fugitive emissions during our network operations are also classified as



Scope 1 emissions. In addition, emissions from our motor vehicles must be included. Some of our current energy-related measures (see section 5.1.4 for more details) focus primarily on reducing our methane emissions. At the same time, the efficient use of energy is becoming increasingly important to us.

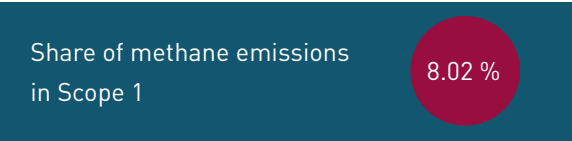
Calculation Methods

As the consolidation approach for calculating our Scope 1 emissions, we have chosen the operational control approach for determining what is included in our emissions inventory, as is also required for other reporting obligations. As we operate individual operating units as joint owners, an equity share approach for our emissions calculations would be more advantageous for us; however, we aim to maintain as much consistency as possible in the data we publish. We calculated the emission values using measured natural gas consumption and standard emission factors from the UK government’s Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The calculation of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) from methane was based on the relative global warming potential (GWP) with a 100-year time horizon. For the reported Scope 1 emissions, we limited ourselves to the greenhouse gases carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄), which are material to our business operations.

SCOPE 1

	Base year	2025
Natural gas-based emissions	544,743 tCO ₂	266,316 tCO ₂
Motor vehicles	-	1,184 tCO ₂
Diesel/heating oil generators	44 tCO ₂	43 tCO ₂
Methane emissions	61,100 tCO ₂ e	23,319 tCO ₂ e
Total emissions	605,887 tCO ₂ e	290,862 tCO ₂ e

For our baseline calculations, emissions are based on the average of our energy consumption data from 2017 to 2020 data for the base period were not sufficiently available for motor vehicles.



Our Scope 1 emissions decreased in 2025 compared to the base year. Compared to the previous year, which recorded an exceptionally low value, they increased. This is attributable to the exceptional circumstances of the previous year. The operating times of our natural gas compressors were significantly reduced because the pressure level in the upstream network and in the connected storage facilities was high. At the beginning of 2025, we were

still able to take advantage of this pressure level. As the year progressed, however, more compression was required at various compressor stations, which overall led to higher energy consumption and, consequently, higher emissions than in 2024. This is due, among other things, to the fact that our gas pipelines were used much more extensively toward Eastern and Southeastern Europe and our total transport volume increased.

5.1.2 Scope 2

GRI 305-2, 305-4

SCOPE 2

- Electricity
- District Heating

Emissions Sources

Scope 2 emissions result from the procurement and use of electricity. We require this electricity to power our electric compressors and for building management at our corporate headquarters and our operating sites. We no longer procure district heating for buildings we own.

SCOPE 2 (MARKET-BASED)

	Base Year	2025
Electricity	28,863 tCO ₂	90,489 tCO ₂
District heating	14,859 tCO ₂	0 tCO ₂
Total emissions	43,722 tCO ₂	90,489 tCO ₂

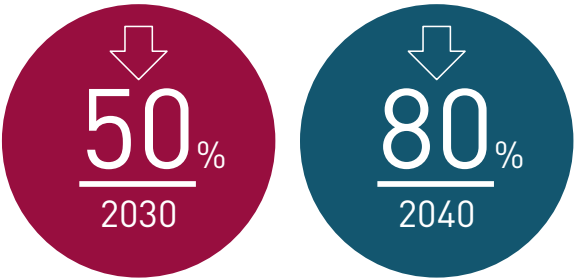
Calculation methods

To calculate our Scope 2 emissions, we used the same consolidation approach as for Scope 1 emissions: operational control over the business units. We calculated the emission values based on measured electricity consumption. We report Scope 2 market-based emissions, incorporating emission factors published by the International Energy Agency (IEA) as well as emission factors for the residual mix of the German grid as published by the Association of Issuing Bodies (AIB). Our Scope 2 emissions are higher compared to the base year because, since 2022, the flow direction in our network has changed, resulting in increased use of an electrically powered compression station that, until now, has not been connected to the public power grid but instead obtains its electricity from a fossil-fuel-fired power plant. By connecting this site to the public power grid—a project scheduled for completion by 2028—we will be able to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in the compression process and significantly reduce our Scope 2 emissions.

This year, the emissions intensity—calculated as the sum of emissions in tCO₂ (Scope 1 +2) per TWh of energy transported, amounts to 693 tCO₂e/TWh.

5.1.3 Emissions Reduction Targets

In 2024, we developed a new long-term emissions reduction target. The reduction of Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions is combined here, as both types of emissions can be directly influenced by our business activities. Considering them together allows us to identify synergies in emissions reduction, plan measures more effectively, and present the company’s overall impact on the climate in a more transparent and holistic manner. As the baseline, we use 2017-2020 average energy consumption to calculate our Scope 1 and 2 emissions. Using these average values allowed us to better balance out fluctuations in individual years and provide a more realistic picture of our emissions.



We aim to reduce our emissions (Scope 1+2) by 50 percent by 2030 and by 80 percent by 2040 com-

pared to our baseline period. Although emissions in 2025 increased compared to the previous year, we are currently achieving a 41 percent reduction compared to the baseline period. We remain optimistic that, under normal transport conditions, we will achieve the 2030 targets while simultaneously preparing for further reductions.

5.1.4 Methane Emissions

70% reduction in methane emissions by 2025***

*** compared to the base year 2015

75% reduction in methane emissions by 2030 ***

*** compared to the base year 2015

We are committed to further reducing our methane emissions. In 2025, we reduced methane emissions by 78 percent compared to the base year 2015. The first target was thus achieved—and even exceeded—in the reporting year. This also applies to the second target: a 75% reduction by 2030. We continue to work on reducing methane emissions, for example by conducting most of the maintenance work on GASCADE and NGT using mobile compressors. However, despite extensive technical measures, a reduction in emissions on a scale comparable to that of previous years is not expected to be achievable. Emissions could rise slightly again as

new compressor stations come online in the coming years. Against this backdrop, we have decided to stick to the 75 percent reduction target by 2030.

In 2025, we once again conducted a comprehensive measurement campaign for the entire pipeline network (including NGT), during which 260,000 measurement points were checked and facility-specific measurements were taken. We are the first German network operator to have carried out this comprehensive measurement for the fourth consecutive year. We have once again received the Gold Standard for reporting our methane emissions under the International Methane Emission Observatory (IMEO) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for the 2024 reporting year. We are also very optimistic that we will once again receive the Gold Standard for the 2025 reporting year, although the final decision is still pending. GASCADE tracks methane emissions from its own and third-party-operated facilities through regular measurements.

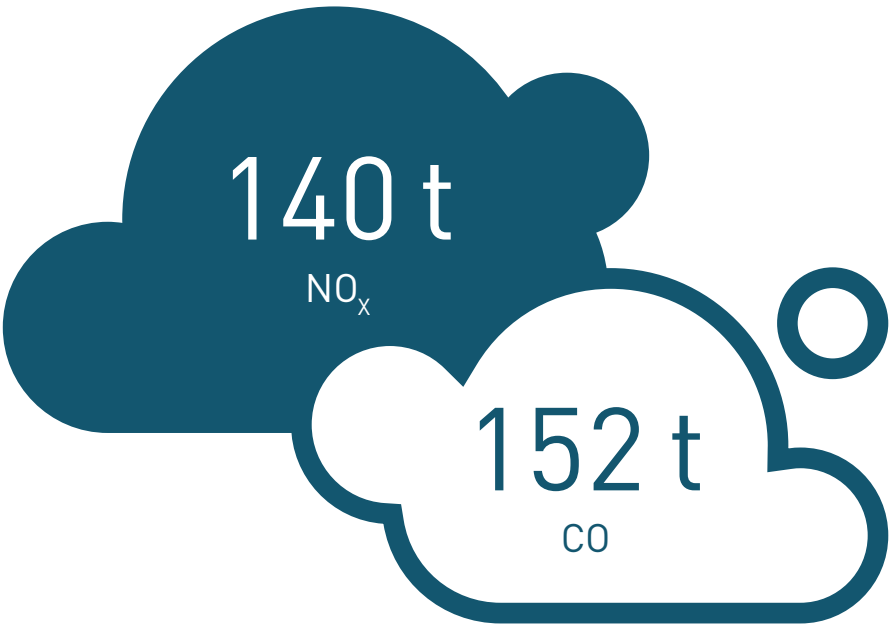
5.1.5 Air Emissions

In addition to CO₂ and methane emissions, we also continuously monitor other air emissions, primarily carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and report on these in accordance with the Federal Immission Control Act (BImSchV). Our HSE department regularly implements measures to improve

combustion processes and reduce process-related air emissions.

Comparison of Air Emissions from 2023 to 2025

Year	2023	2024	2025
NO _x	195 t	75 t	140 t
CO	213 t	127 t	152 t



5.2 Energy
GRI 11-1, 302-1

5.2.1 Energy Management

We have implemented an energy management system (EnMS) that is operated and continuously improved in accordance with the requirements of DIN EN ISO 50001:2018. The goal is to optimize our energy consumption through energy efficiency and resource conservation.

In doing so, we provide targeted support to all business units in implementing measures to reduce energy consumption. The requirements surrounding energy management have increased significantly in recent years. The successful implementation of the resulting measures requires a high degree of technical expertise and collaboration. Against this backdrop, the recertification audit in 2025 was of particular importance to all employees involved. The auditor confirmed: “The audit objectives were met. GASCADE has demonstrated a mature and coherent energy management system.” He was impressed by the effectiveness of the measures implemented across the different departments. It is also worth noting that operational employees have developed a strong awareness of the importance of the energy management system. The successful recertification is another step toward making GASCADE even more sustainable.

5.2.2 Energy Consumption
GRI 302-3

We were able to reduce our total energy consumption compared to the base period. Following a sharp decline in 2024, energy consumption rose again in the reporting year but remains well below the level recorded during the base period. Regardless of any one-time effects, we aim to continuously reduce energy consumption; however, our grid operation and the associated use of compressors depend on the bookings made by our transport customers. We intend to further reduce energy consumption by developing and implementing energy efficiency measures. This year, the energy consumption intensity stands at 0.3 percent. This means that for every unit of energy

transported (kWh), 0.3 percent of that energy is consumed within the organization.

5.2.3 Share of renewable electricity

Our share of renewable electricity in total electricity consumption stood at 44.4 percent in 2025. We are pleased to report that we have made progress in this area compared to the previous year. We intend to continue gradually increasing the share of electricity from renewable energy sources. Plans are underway to phase out electricity procurement from a large fossil-fuel power plant starting in 2028, which will enable us to significantly increase the share of renewable electricity from that point onward (see 5.1.2).

Total Energy Consumption

Energy Sources Used	Energy consumption (kWh)		Share of total energy consumption (%)	
	Base year	2025	Base year	2025
Electricity	39,563,640	170,052,161	1.4 %	11.5 %
Natural gas	2,683,859,674	1,313,840,670	95.5 %	88.5 %
District heating	87,031,996	-	3.1 %	0 %
Diesel/Heating Oil	164,567	163,220	0.006 %	0.01 %
Total	2,810,619,848	1,484,056,051	100 %	100 %

5.2.4 Energy Data and Efficiency Measures

As part of our certified energy management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 50001, we pursue the clear goal of continuously improving energy efficiency at GASCADE and NGT. In doing so, we provide targeted support to all business units in implementing measures to reduce energy consumption. Some measures, which were already reported on in the 2024 Sustainability Report, were continued, e.g., the optimization of gas flow control between Eynatten and Weisweiler. This resulted in a savings

of approximately 6,400 MWh in electrical drive energy. Another example is the optimization of compressor operating regimes, the first phase of which has been completed, as well as other measures explained below:

Development of a Software Solution to Optimize Compressor Operating Regimes

The goal of this measure is to reduce power consumption in the future through optimized and predictive operation of the compressor stations while simultaneously ensuring supply reliability.

The software will help determine optimal grid operation strategies while accounting for complex constraints and changing requirements. It is based on a detailed model of the grid topology that incorporates current data, forecasted future data, and technical and regulatory constraints. Optimization can be performed based on the objective functions of CO₂ emissions, energy consumption, and energy costs. Other key metrics, such as the demand for balancing energy and safety buffers, can be weighted depending on the situation to resolve conflicting objectives.

During the first phase of the project, the technical foundation was laid to compare different network operating modes and evaluate them in terms of energy consumption. The system identifies areas for improvement and helps employees choose com-

pressor operating regimes that consume less energy and produce fewer emissions. To this end, the system also relies on a “library of compressor operating regimes,” in which proven compressor operating regimes are stored for each station and remain available for future optimizations.

This marks the first time a tool has been made available that systematically maps the relationship between grid operation, energy consumption, and emissions. The results form the basis for the next development phase, in which the application will be further expanded for use in day-to-day operations, similar to a “route planner” for grid operations. Overall, the project makes an important contribution to increasing energy efficiency and achieving GASCADE’s sustainability goals.

Digital Energy Data Management and Visualisation

As part of energy management, an application for energy performance assessment was further developed in 2025 and successfully deployed into production. The goal of this initiative is to establish a centralized, digital, and audit-proof infrastructure for collecting, validating, consolidating, and visualizing all relevant energy consumption data (including natural gas, electricity, diesel, and heating oil), thereby meeting the requirements of ISO 50001 and sustainability reporting.



While energy data collection in the past was characterized by a high level of manual effort, numerous data sources, and data discontinuities, the degree of automation was significantly increased in 2025. Relevant source systems were integrated, the data was consolidated centrally in a Data Harbor, and systematic validity and quality checks were established. Of note is the large volume of electricity load profiles and meter readings. We aim to further increase the level of automation in 2026.

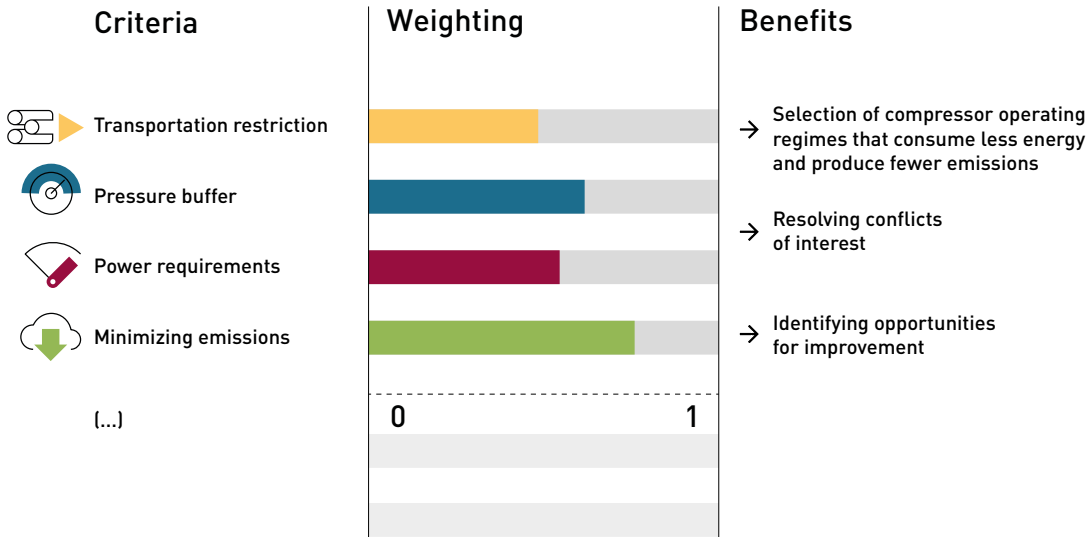
Today, the application enables a transparent, traceable, and historical representation of energy consumption with high temporal granularity, down to hourly and quarter-hourly load profiles. Extensive filtering and analysis functions allow for evaluations by energy source, location, station type, time period, and other master data. A key milestone was its successful deployment during the 2025 annual inventory, as well as the audit-proof provision of energy consumption data for sustainability reporting and other internal and external inquiries. Overall, this initiative makes a significant contribution to transparency, improved data quality, and supporting well-informed energy-related decisions.

Energy Efficiency Through Europe-Wide Cooperation Among Transmission System Operators

In 2025, GASCADE implemented an alternative network operation mode in which, in coordination with neighboring network operators, there was a deliberate and temporary deviation from contractually agreed transfer pressures at selected interconnection points to create additional transport capacity while simultaneously reducing the energy required for compression. Coordination regarding this agreed deviation was handled on a case-by-case basis, including at the bilateral level,



Weighted criteria for optimizing compressor operating regimes (simplified illustration)



and was understood as a mutual compensation or quid pro quo arrangement (including via SWAPs), from which several network operators in Germany, Denmark, Poland, and the Czech Republic were able to benefit. Overall, the new operating mode led to a reduction in energy consumption for compression in 2025.

Modernization of Electricity Metering Technology

As part of the “Modernization of Electricity Metering Technology” initiative, GASCADE’s major consumers were analyzed. New metering technology was installed for selected consumers to ensure a reliable and transparent data foundation for energy management. A prerequisite for using the data retrieval software is that the electricity meters in use are accessible for data retrieval in accordance with current IT security requirements. For new stations, the relevant requirements are already incorporated into the tenders. These are defined by the Metering Technology Expert Team. For existing facilities, the modernization or expansion of electricity metering technology is being carried out gradually over several years. In 2025, the electricity metering technology for key consumers at the Bunde, Rehden, and BGEA Wörth stations was implemented or expanded, among other activities. This makes an important contribution to the optimized control of energy consumption.

New Energy Concepts for New Facilities

As part of the construction of the new Reckrod 2 compressor station, environmental considerations were specifically considered during the planning and construction phases. To increase energy efficiency and utilize renewable energy, the integration of a photovoltaic system and a multi-functional air-to-water heat pump is planned. The photovoltaic system is installed on the roof of the operations building and will be used exclusively for on-site power generation. The electricity generated supplies permanent loads in the operations building; for regulatory reasons, feeding electricity into the public grid is not planned.

To meet the operational building’s heating and cooling energy needs, a polyvalent heat pump is used on a pro-rata basis; it utilizes ambient heat and meets all heating and cooling requirements regardless of the season or climatic conditions. The heat pump, installed outdoors, enables particularly efficient operation because it can couple heating and cooling processes. When there is a simultaneous demand for both heating and cooling, the system operates in heat recovery mode, transferring thermal energy from areas that need to be cooled to those that need to be heated.

In addition, a ventilation system with heat recovery will be installed in the operations building. Furthermore, waste heat from the electrical, instrumenta-

tion and control rooms and the energy center will be used for heat generation. The air handling units used there are equipped with heat exchangers through which heating water, or chilled water from the heat pump can flow, thereby unlocking additional efficiency potential.



Multi-functional heat pump, Reckrod 2

High energy standards are also being implemented in the building's construction: The requirements for structural thermal insulation are being exceeded, which contributes to reduced energy consumption.

A modern energy concept is also being implemented in other new construction projects, namely at the Rehden 2 compressor station, the new building in Kassel, and the Wittenburg compressor station.

5.3 Environment

5.3.1 Environmental Management

In 2023, we decided to establish an environmental management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 14001. Beyond legal requirements, we see genuine added value in systematic environmental management: It helps us identify, assess, and continuously improve environmental aspects not only on a project-by-project basis but company-wide.

In 2024, the focus was on planning and introducing the environmental management system. Our employees developed the necessary expertise to operate the system over the long term. They also identified and assessed the relevant environmental aspects with the goal of fully implementing the environmental management system by the end of 2025.

Since December 2025, the environmental management system has been certified according to

DIN EN ISO 14001:2025 following a successful audit. The auditors explicitly highlighted several positive aspects. These include highly structured and comprehensive documentation of all relevant environmental, energy, and HSE processes, as well as reliable, systematic monitoring of all environmentally relevant activities. We also received praise for the effective management of our offset measures and the use of new technologies, such as satellite monitoring, drones, and methods for detecting ground movements. Another positive aspect was the strong environmental awareness throughout the company.

Through our environmental management system, we have created a framework for implementing the principles enshrined in our HSE policy. We follow the proven "Plan-Do-Check-Act" principle, which also forms the basis of our other management systems. This ensures that environmental measures are effectively implemented and maintained.

Based on legal obligations and the requirements of relevant stakeholders, we focus on measures in the following areas:

- Resource conservation and environmental sustainability during the construction and operation of our pipeline network
- Raising awareness about the responsible handling of all types of waste
- Safe handling of chemicals and hazardous substances with the goal of minimizing the use of

specific hazardous and operational materials as much as possible

- Raising awareness among our employees regarding environmental management, including through internal communication initiatives

5.3.2 Ecology and Biodiversity

To offset the impact on nature and the landscape caused by the construction of the European Gas Interconnector (EUGAL) from Lubmin in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania to the Czech border in Saxony, the company has implemented numerous compensation and mitigation measures (see Sustainability Report 2022). The following section presents the EUGAL compensation measures in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, which were formally accepted in 2025.



Initial condition: Row of trees with spreading branches and hardly any shrubs (2019)

Conversion of a of a tree row into a more natural, hedge-like habitat

East of Klein Bünzow, an approximately 350-meter-long section of a windbreak consisting mainly of non-native trees (primarily hybrid poplar and ash maple) was converted into a near-natural field hedge composed of shrubs and a few large trees. To this end, the row of trees was cleared in the winter of 2020/2021. Subsequently, native shrubs and standard trees suited to the site were planted, protected from wildlife damage by a fence, and maintained and watered for five growing seasons. The field hedge is 10 m wide in total—with a planted strip in the middle and succession strips on both sides. In addition, piles of field stones and wood were created. Once all the planted woody plants have reached a height of 2 m, the wildlife protection fence will be removed. This compensation measure has enhanced the habitat for many animal species: the shrubs provide cover for mammals, field birds, reptiles, and amphibians, as well as flowers for insects and fruit for birds. This enhancement compensates for the impacts on woody biotopes caused by the construction of the EUGAL.



First inspection, April 2021: Field stone pile providing reptiles with opportunities to sunbathe and hide



Final inspection, September 2025: dense field hedge with various native shrub species and a few large trees

Removal of paved surfaces and planting of green areas

To compensate for the complete soil sealing around the EUGAL valve stations and the loss of habitats, four sealed subplots south of Altwigshagen—namely, the foundation slab of a barn and former silo areas—with a total area of approximately 1,300 m² were unsealed and planted with woody plants. Previously sealed areas were converted into woodland and traditional orchard meadows. The unsealing and planting of the plants took place in the

winter of 2020/2021, and formal acceptance was completed in the fall of 2025 following maintenance and irrigation over a total of five growing seasons. For both measures, after the wildlife fence is removed, split oak stakes will be placed at intervals of approximately 20 m around the field hedges or field woodlands to permanently demarcate the project areas from the adjacent agricultural land.



Initial condition: Sealed area in the agricultural landscape



First performance assessment, April 2021: Subplot planted with field trees after soil unsealing; perch for birds of prey in the foreground



First performance inspection, April 2021: Subplot planted with fruit trees after unsealing



Final inspection of the second measure, September 2025: Subplot converted to an orchard meadow

5.3.3 Water and Waste Management

As part of our core business, the transport of energy, our transport companies generate unavoidable waste. This waste is collected by local waste management companies. Paper, plastic, and metal waste are recycled, while residual waste is sent for thermal recycling. Wood waste is processed further by a recycling facility.

To comply with legal and internal reporting requirements, we collect and analyze the necessary data on waste disposal for wood, residual waste, paper, packaging, special waste, and hazardous waste. As part of our newly implemented environmental management system in accordance with DIN EN ISO 14001, we also include waste from our construction sites in our reporting.

In 2025, GASCADE and NGT generated a total of approximately 38,500 metric tons of waste, including about 1,100 metric tons of hazardous waste. This waste was disposed of properly and—depending on its characteristics—partly recycled. The waste figures for GASCADE and NGT are broken down as follows:

	Operation	Construction	Administration	Total
Total	162 t	38,323 t	36 t	38,520 t
of which hazardous waste	29 t	1,153 t	0.1 t	1,182 t
of which non-hazardous waste	132 t	37,170 t	36 t	37,338 t

Wastewater at our sites is disposed of in accordance with local regulations. In the reporting year, the amount of fresh water obtained from the public water supply was 6,676 cubic meters.

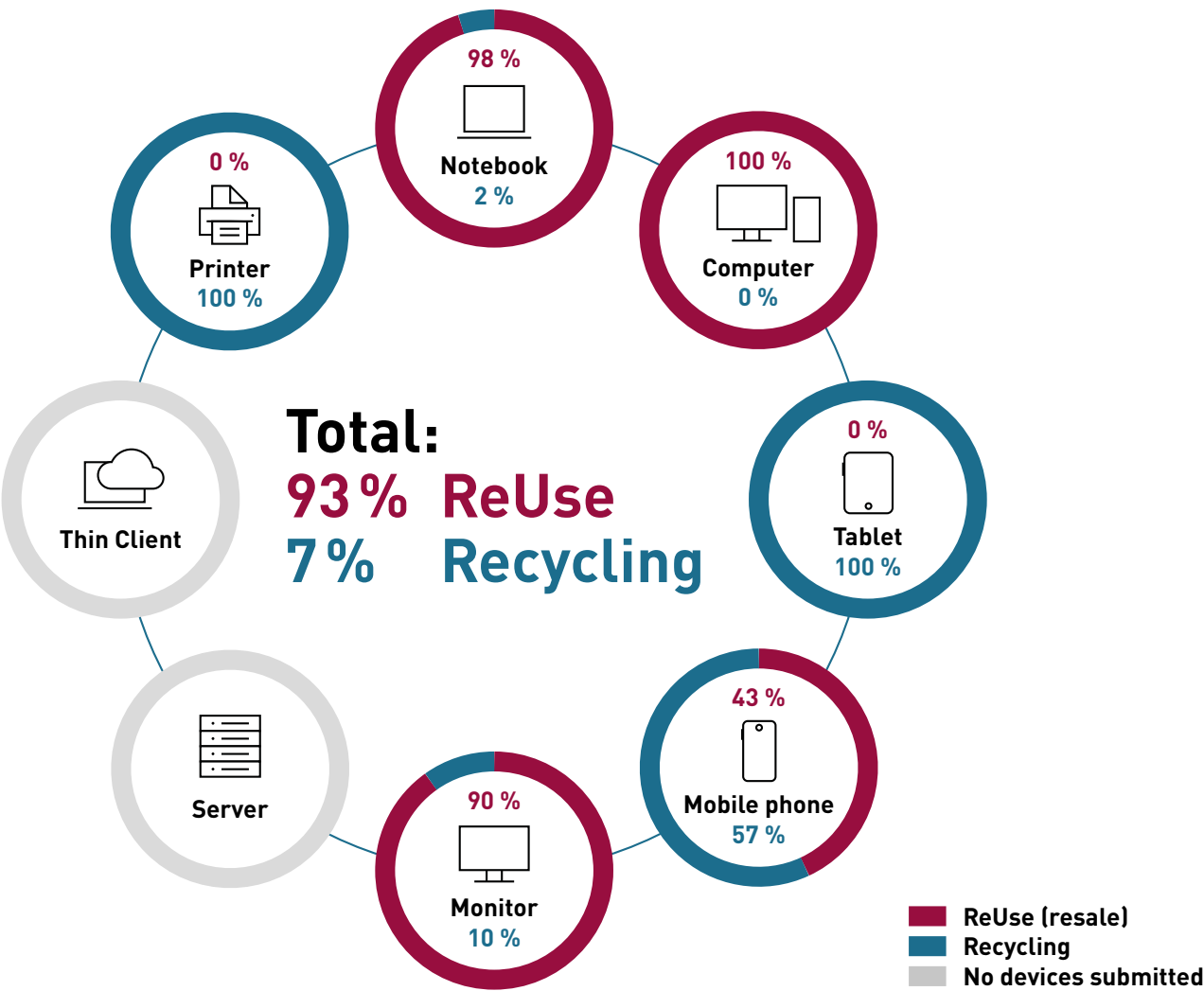


5.3.4 Measure for the refurbishment of IT equipment

GASCADE and NGT prioritize high-quality products when purchasing computers, company cell phones, and IT accessories. However, these devices must be replaced after a certain period of use. To address this, GASCADE and NGT have partnered with the IT company afb Social and Green IT that specializes in extending the lifespan of used IT and mobile devices. As part of this partnership, the service provider processed 680 IT and mobile devices with a total weight of 1.9 metric tons over the course of 2025. After professional data destruction, hardware testing, spare parts procurement, repair, upgrading, and cleaning, 93 percent of these devices were able to be resold. The remaining devices were properly recycled.

Reusing used IT devices reduces the resources needed to manufacture new devices. As a result, resource consumption—such as energy and water—is reduced. According to the service provider’s calculations, our devices resulted in savings of 608,610 liters of water and 334,781 kWh of primary energy consumption over their product life cycle. In addition, approximately 89 tCO₂e fewer greenhouse gas emissions were emitted compared to the production of new devices.

Breakdown of resale and recycling of the submitted devices





6 PEOPLE

With a team of more than 550 employees, GASCADE has implemented some of Germany's largest pipeline projects. In doing so, we benefit both from our more than 35 years of experience in pipeline construction and gas transport and from the high level of innovation and dedication of our employees. People with diverse professional and personal backgrounds work together across disciplines on projects that are of central importance for the safe transport of gas and the success of energy transition.

6.1 Workplace Safety and Accident Statistics

As a certified transmission system operator (TSO) and a responsible employer, we place the highest priority on health, safety, and environmental protection. These principles form the foundation of our actions and always take precedence over economic interests—both for our two companies and for each individual employee.

Our HSE awareness is the result of many years of experience in the construction and operation of transmission networks, as well as regular reviews through analyses, audits, and employee training. In addition, our internal suggestion program plays a key role in the further development of HSE measures and the associated awareness-building efforts.



We take our social responsibility toward our local communities and the public very seriously—and expect the same from our business partners and service providers. At the heart of this are safe and healthy workplaces—for our employees as well as for external partners.

On a positive note, our accident statistics remained stable at a low level in 2025—despite the high number of hours worked.

HSE Guidelines and Occupational Safety Training for Employees

To ensure a high level of occupational safety for all employees, we have developed a range of guidelines tailored specifically to the requirements of their day-to-day work. For employees working on construction sites, a dedicated construction manual is available that covers all relevant safety standards.

Our service providers are subject to the strict requirements set out in our HSE Contractor Guidelines. These guidelines become a binding part of the contract when the contract is awarded and supplement the HSE pre-qualifications conducted on a regular basis.

The HSE Policy takes precedence over all HSE manuals that form part of our HSE management system. The individual manuals are addressed to specific organizational units and areas of activity and have clearly defined titles. We regularly conduct topic-specific training sessions, particularly

on risk assessments as well as operating and work instructions. These training sessions are fully documented. The training schedules for all employees are set out in detail in the respective manuals.

Accident Statistic 2024 (per: 31.12.2024)

	Own employees	Contractors	Overall
FAT (fatality)	0	0	0
LTI (lost time incident)	1	1	2
RWC (restricted work day case)	1	2	3
MTC (medical treatment case)	5	2	7
Working Hours	1,005,156	1,576,286	2,581,443
LTIF rolling average (lost time injury frequency; last 12 months; and 1,000,000 working hours)	0.99	0.63	0.77

Accident Statistic 2025 (per: 31.12.2025)

	Own employees	Contractors	Overall
FAT (fatality)	0	0	0
LTI (lost time incident)	1	1	2
RWC (restricted work day case)	2	2	4
MTC (medical treatment case)	5	2	7
Working Hours	1,105,687	1,054,301	2,159,988
LTIF rolling average (lost time injury frequency; last 12 months; and 1,000,000 working hours)	0.9	0.95	0.93



Our employees' strong commitment to occupational health and safety is also evident. For example, a total of 218 first aid responders are currently registered at the Kassel site, including 207 employees and 11 students. At our operational sites, all employees take part in first aid training every two years.

6.2 Employment Relationships

GRI 2-7, 2-8

587 employees

Our transport companies continue to grow so that we can handle the safe transport of natural gas today and the transport of hydrogen tomorrow. Similar to the previous year, our workforce has grown by nearly seven percent.

Employment Status

Employees at GASCADE and NGT have a secure and long-term future. Nearly 97 percent of employees are on permanent contracts, with the vast majority (91 percent) working full-time.

Both the proportion of employees on permanent contracts and the ratio of full-time to part-time employees remain at a very consistent level compared to the previous year. Significantly more women than men work part-time.

We determine the number of our employees through a census taken as of December 31 of each year. As of that date, one temporary employee was employed at

GASCADE. This person worked for us for the scheduled duration of their assignment, which is why there was no turnover among temporary employees.

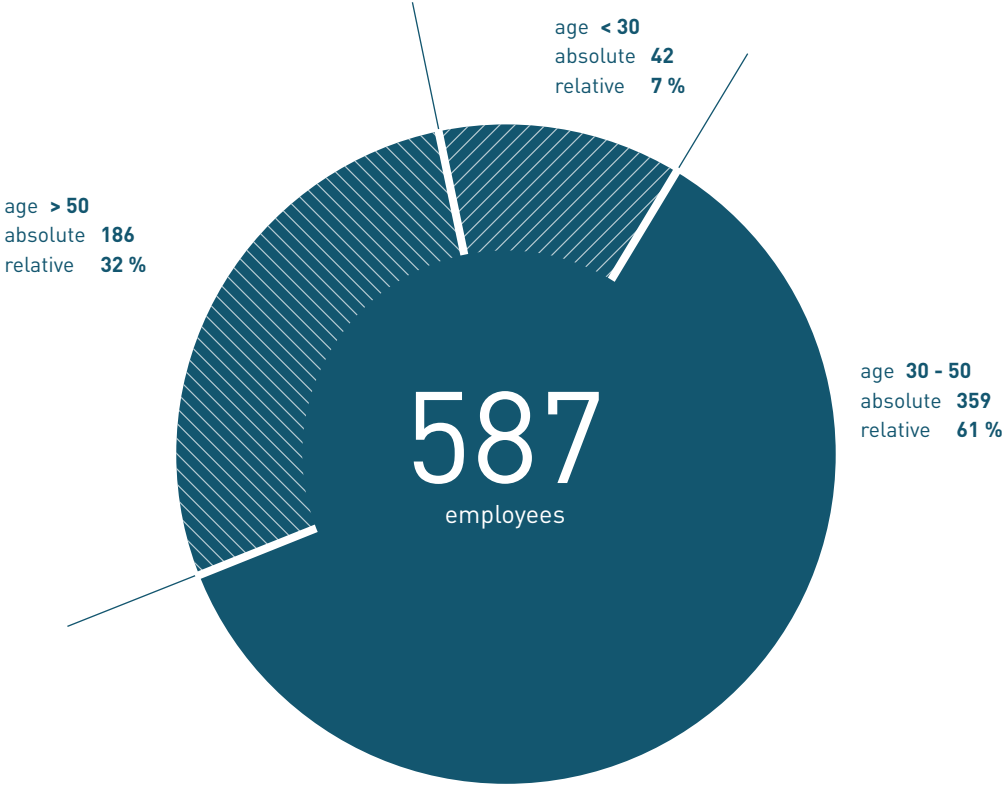
Age Structure

Our age structure has changed since the 2024 reporting year due to a new data collection method. Since we no longer include working students in these statistics, the proportion of employees un-

der 30 is significantly lower compared to other age groups. We have seen an increase in the number of employees in the 30–50 and 50+ age groups.

Sickness Rate and Employees with Disabilities

The sick leave rate stood at 4.7 percent in the reported year, representing a slight increase compared to the previous year. Approximately three percent of our employees have a recognized degree of disability.



Employee Turnover

In the 2025 reporting year, nine employees left the company (excluding working students). The turnover rate is 1.3 percent, representing a further significant decrease compared to the already very low rate of previous years.

Exit	
male	7
female	2
Employee turnover rate	1.29 % (previous year: 2.22 %)

6.3 Employee Participation

GRI 2-30

Both of our companies are committed to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and the protection of employee representatives. We place particular emphasis on trusting and consistent cooperation with all works council bodies.

Our Works Council

Our transport companies have a works council at the Kassel location with nine members. In addition, the East and West operational divisions each have their own works councils, each with five members. The General Works Council has six members, who are delegated from the three works council bodies. The works council is responsible for representing both employees covered by collective bargaining agreements and those not covered by such agreements.

A new works council is elected every four years. The elected body then selects a chairperson and a vice chairperson from among its members. The next scheduled elections took place in the spring of 2026.

The council has concluded numerous company agreements with the employer on the following topics:

- Company pension plan (pension fund)
- Working time regulations
- Remuneration
- IT
- Work-Life-Balance

These company agreements are available to all employees on the intranet. At the Kassel location, there is also a representative body for employees with severe disabilities, which participates in the meetings of the works council and the general works council and has its own agenda item at all meetings. The representative body for employees with severe disabilities advises employees on job applications from people with severe disabilities and those deemed equivalent, assists in designing disability-accessible workplaces, and participates in the meetings of the Occupational Safety and Health Committee.

In addition to the council, there are other forms of employee participation at the transport companies. For example, we conduct regular surveys of our employees, successfully operate an idea manage-

ment program, and are organized under a collective bargaining agreement with the Industrial Union of Mining, Chemical, and Energy Workers (IG BCE).

We have negotiated our own collective bargaining agreement with the IG BCE. The currently valid collective bargaining agreement on wages was in effect until June 30, 2026. It was renegotiated in 2024 together with the bargaining committee. In addition to the employer representative (Head of Human Resources) and the IG BCE bargaining secretary, the bargaining committee includes a total of three representatives of unionized employees.

The terms negotiated in our framework collective bargaining agreement, as well as in the other collective bargaining agreements within our scope of application, apply without exception to all our employees, whether covered by a collective bargaining agreement or not.

6.4 Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Our employees come from various countries and bring a wide range of experience and professional qualifications to the table. This applies to experienced professionals as well as to employees who are just starting their careers. In joint projects, they share their knowledge, complement one another, and thus make a valuable contribution to the success of our initiatives and the achievement of our goals. We foster a corporate culture that is characterized by respect, openness, and tolerance.

We view diversity as a source of creative ideas and a driver of innovation. We are committed to equal treatment and equal opportunity for all employees. We currently employ people from 18 different countries.

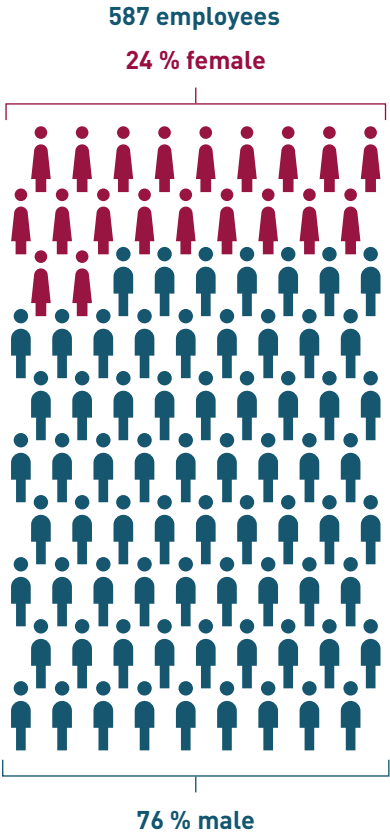
Women make up 24 percent of our workforce; the proportion of female managers stood at 13 percent at the end of 2025 (compared to eleven percent the previous year). This is in line with the average for the energy sector in Germany. Although the trend is slightly upward, we continue to view the development at GASCADE and NGT as an incentive to



attract more women to roles at our transmission companies and to leadership positions.

In addition, we are making our application processes more inclusive overall: Job postings published externally include a commitment to diversity and a call for applications from people of all backgrounds. Job requirements are identified in consultation with managers and communicated in the job postings using language that promotes diversity.

In the area of diversity and inclusion, there is another initiative by our IT department worth mentioning: Through our collaboration with an IT service provider, we support an inclusive company that specifically creates jobs and accessible working conditions for people with disabilities (see also 5.3.4). Through our contract for the refurbishment of old IT equipment, we have thus supported a job for one person with a disability.





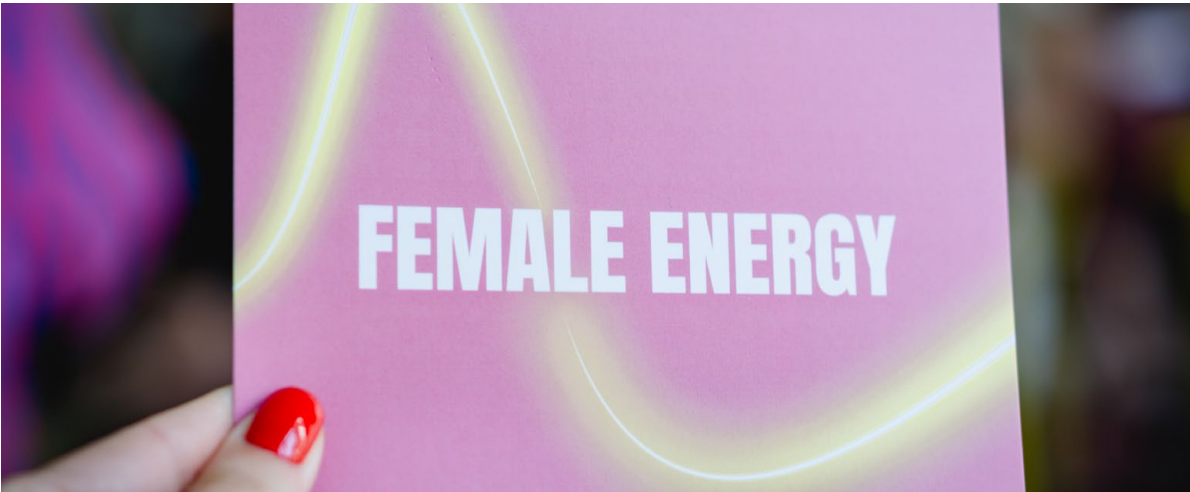
women@ GASCADE

Women@GASCADE – A Women's Network Driving Equal Opportunity

The proportion of women in the energy sector remains low compared to the economy. Through the Women@GASCADE network, GASCADE specifically promotes the visibility, networking, and empowerment of women within the company and the industry. The initiative was founded in 2023 by female employees and has established itself as a permanent platform and driving force for change. By 2025, the network had grown to over 100 women, reflecting the relevance of the issue as well as the positive

response within the company.

Women@GASCADE specifically addresses structural barriers that affect women in their professional lives and creates space for exchange, mutual support, and skills development. By promoting networking and empowerment, the network creates opportunities for women to visibly contribute their perspectives and actively shape both technical and strategic issues. Among other initiatives, a multi-part communication training program helped strengthen women's confidence and presence in professional situations.



The women’s network has an impact both internally and externally. Internally, Women@GASCADE raises awareness of issues such as equal opportunity and promotes a corporate culture that acknowledges and values diverse life experiences and career paths. Externally, the network contributes to positioning GASCADE as a diverse and inclusive employer by addressing social issues and linking them to energy industry challenges.

Against this backdrop, the “Future Dialogue H2: Strong Women. Strong Energy” took place in Kassel for the first time. Organized by Women@GASCADE, the event brought together approximately 100 women from the energy sector—regardless of age, role, or position—to network and engage in a professional exchange on

the challenges and transformation processes in the energy market.

With Women@GASCADE, GASCADE has a dedicated women’s network that operates from within the workforce and contributes to gender equality, the further development of corporate culture, and the company’s long-term development.

	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Management Board / Head of Department	1	6	7	14 %	86 %
Department Management	3	16	19	16 %	84 %
Team Leader	3	23	26	12 %	88 %
Total	7	45	52	13 %	87 %

6.5 Employee Well-being

We place great importance on creating conditions that support a healthy work-life balance. Through flexible work arrangements, we support our employees during parental leave and as they return to work. In 2025, a total of 22 employees took their statutory parental leave, of whom 17 were men and five were women. The figures indicate that the parental leave model is well-established within the company and is also utilized by male employees. In addition, work schedules can be adjusted according to individual life circumstances to allow employees to care for children or family members in need of care.

Our employees can also receive a financial subsidy for childcare. In 2025, each employee could apply for a childcare subsidy of up to 300 euros per month per child in a childcare facility to cover the actual costs incurred. For employees who wish to take a career break, we offer the option of a sabbatical year. In this case, the entitlement to time off for the sabbatical period is accrued in advance during a period of employment.

Valuable work arrangements that also facilitate a healthy work-life balance include mobile working and telecommuting.

6.6 Training and Further Education

At our transport companies, we embrace flat hierarchies and encourage creativity, active participation, and collaboration. It is important to us that all employees can contribute and further develop their professional and personal strengths—supported by our holistic human resources development program. Every year, we offer all employees continuing education in the form of seminars or training courses. In 2025, 332 people took advantage of this opportunity, 80 percent of whom were men and 20 percent women. This represents a slight increase in the number of employees compared to the previous year, and the proportion of women rose slightly once again. The proportions of men and women participating are nearly identical to the gender distribution across the entire company. We would like to continue specifically encouraging women to participate to maintain a balanced participation rate. On average, participants invested about twelve hours in continuing education, comparable to the previous year.

In addition to traditional training programs, we offer two other initiatives: internal internships of up to four weeks in other departments—four employees (three men, one woman) took advantage of this in 2025—as well as temporary assignments in other units with a guaranteed option to return to their previous role. These initiatives strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration by providing insights into the areas of responsibility of other departments.

In addition, employees may, upon request, be seconded to the European industry association ENTSOG in Brussels to facilitate international exchange. The seconded employees also contribute their expertise to the shaping of the European gas market. In the reporting year, employees were also seconded to the hydrogen association ENNOH for the first time. 39 working students are already gaining practical experience in our day-to-day operations while pursuing their studies, which benefits both sides.





6.7 Health and Pension Benefits

Health Management

Occupational health management is an integral part of human resources and occupational safety at GASCADE. Its goal is to provide a holistic and sustainable approach to promoting, planning, and implementing health-related initiatives. Our transport companies also have a health management working group composed of representatives from management and the workforce. Together, they address issues related to the health of our employees.

Since 2015, we have been conducting annual health campaigns with varying themes, giving employees the opportunity throughout the year to learn more about their health through expert presentations, workshops, and activities. In recent years, topics have included heart health, nutrition, allergies, skin health, thrombosis, metabolism, and psychological stress and mental health.

In 2025, the theme was “Let the Pain Subside.” The goal of this health campaign was to explore ways to prevent pain and promote long-term health. The focus was on back, neck, head, and eye pain, which are among the most common work-related complaints. Key areas included exercise, ergonomics, fascia health, an anti-inflammatory diet, as well as the responsible use of pain relievers and alternative treatment options. Throughout the year, online lectures, workshops, counseling services, check-ups, and screenings were offered.

The Mental Health Team provides confidential support to employees across all locations who are experiencing mental health challenges by listening, offering advice, providing guidance, identifying appropriate resources, and, when necessary, facilitating access to internal and external support networks. The Health Day in spring 2025 focused on mental health and featured various activities on managing stress. The “Prevention and Support” working group also fosters a preventive corporate culture, provides information and raises awareness about health risks—particularly regarding addiction—and coordinates counseling and support services in collaboration with external specialist agencies.

Company Sports

To promote an interdisciplinary team spirit, camaraderie among all employees, the rapid integration of new employees, and physical activity as a balance to the workday, we offer a wide variety of sports. The company sports groups—ranging from yoga and back training to soccer and ice hockey continue to operate and enjoy active participation. Since 2025, there has also been a company volleyball group. In addition, we have launched a Germany-wide corporate fitness program, from which our employees at remote locations can also benefit more.

Retirement Planning

In Germany, the state pension system is primarily financed through a pay-as-you-go system by employees subject to social security contributions. At the same time, the federal government encourages employees to make supplementary private pension arrangements. Our employees can enroll in the pension fund to build up additional retirement benefits as part of an employer-sponsored

pension plan. Both of our companies support this. In the event of serious and prolonged illnesses, we also support all employees by paying for sick pay supplements that are scaled according to length of service. In addition, we offer participation in a subsidized program for purchasing an equity ETF, which can serve as another building block for our employees' long-term financial security.

6.8 Social and Local Engagement

Through the "Volunteering at GASCADE" program, we provide a starting point for social sustainability within our company. Employees can dedicate half a workday per year to a selected social or environmental project. GASCADE is responsible for selecting the projects and organizing the volunteer assignments. Employees can choose a date that works for them via an online booking portal.

The Kassel Food Bank remains a partner organization. Given the sharp rise in the cost of living in recent years, many people do not have enough money to adequately provide for themselves and their families. The Kasseler Tafel supports these people in the region by providing food. Helping hands are constantly needed for the daily sorting, repackaging, and distribution of donated goods. These tasks do not require extensive training and are therefore ideal for short-term, impactful volunteer work by individual employees. Once again



during the reporting year, colleagues volunteered to sort and collect goods. In addition, as part of a “Donation Challenge” organized by the Sustainability Department, employees donated a total of 159 kg of rice and pasta to the food bank. These non-perishable foods are in high demand at the food bank but are less likely to be left over at supermarkets. For the third consecutive year, GASCADE employees purchased the Advent calendars—which the food bank in Kassel distributes to children in need during the Advent season — from supermarkets in the region. In 2025, the food bank needed 850 calendars, and

employees donated that number accordingly. Based on an idea from an employee who was completing her in-house internship in the sustainability department, the “Clean Environment at GASCADE and NEL” campaign was launched. The goal of the initiative is to clear the grounds and surroundings of the company headquarters of trash and thus contribute to a clean environment. Volunteers, who can check a calendar for the dates of the group cleanup events, use litter pickers and trash bags to remove debris from sidewalks and green spaces. The collected trash is disposed of in the general waste container on the company

premises. The campaign began in early 2025 and continued throughout the reporting year.

Over the course of the year, our IT department donated refurbished laptops to women’s shelters and support centres, thereby contributing to the digital inclusion of women and children in challenging life situations. The devices enable, among other things, communication with public authorities, job applications and school-related use, helping to support a self-determined new beginning.



Donations and Sponsorship

In 2025, our transport companies donated a total of 74,207 euros to nonprofit organizations and charitable projects. We are very pleased that we were once again able to increase our total donations compared to the previous year. The largest single donation, at around 35,000 euros, was once again the Kassel Mini-Marathon.

In 2025, GASCADE —as in previous years—once again enabled numerous children and young people to participate in the Kassel Mini-Marathon. With 1,100 starting spots, our company sponsors about a quarter of the starting spots for the Mini-Mara-

thon. This once again allowed many young people to take part, whose participation would have been significantly more difficult without this support. In this way, the donation contributes to cohesion and team spirit among students through shared athletic activities.

Other individual initiatives include, for example, projects by fire departments and cultural associations, educational institutions, and sports clubs.

The annual fundraising campaign during the Advent season, organized by the works council, was particularly successful this year. Our employees donated a considerable sum, which was matched

by management to a total of 6,000 euros. This amount was 1,000 euros higher than last year. The funds were used to support two organizations, each receiving 3,000 euros: the “association ‘Soziale Hilfe Kassel e.V.’” and the association “Verein für krebskranke Kinder Kassel e.V.”.

For ten years now, GASCADE and NGT have been supporting the Panama day center run by the association Soziale Hilfe e.V., at the initiative of the Kassel Works Council. Panama offers homeless people a haven with necessities and support in their daily lives. Due to growing demand and rising food prices, the association is in particular need of this donation to continue providing a wide range of assistance to those in need. In addition, for the first time, support was provided to the Association for Children with Cancer in Kassel (Verein für krebskranke Kinder Kassel e.V.), another important local organization that assists families whose lives have often been suddenly upended by cancer. The association will use the donation to fund avatars for the daily school life of sick children, as well as sports, music, and art therapies for those affected and their families.





7 GOVERNANCE

7.1 Compliance and Business Ethics

GRI 2-23, 2-24, 2-26, 2-27

Compliance is a crucial factor in protecting the company and safeguarding its reputation.

It is based on conducting business in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, internal policies, and ethical and moral principles.

This strengthens the trust of business partners, customers, and employees, as well as transparency and reliability within the company. As an essential component of the sustainable, value-based approach of our transport companies, compliance guides our daily work.

Our compliance management system includes a comprehensive program to promote consistent values and proper conduct, thereby helping to protect our companies from harm. It is designed to prevent and detect risks early on to quickly contain or eliminate threats. Structured data protection management is an integral part of the program. All managers and employees are supported through mandatory training to internalize our Code of Conduct and apply it in their daily work. This training takes place within the first six months of joining the company and is refreshed every three years.

Regular audits monitor and confirm the quality and efficiency of our compliance program.

In addition, our employees from the Legal & Risk Management department are available as points of contact for questions and concerns.

Adherence to our compliance with requirements, guidelines, and regulations is also a top priority for management.

We take our social responsibility seriously and expect the same from our business partners and service providers. To this end, we rely on our internal Business Partner Compliance Program.

The Code of Conduct forms a central foundation for our business activities and aligns our companies' sustainability values and goals with the expectations regarding the conduct of employees and third parties. It defines binding standards for how we interact with people, the environment, assets, information, and business partners.

We expect our business partners to adhere to these same standards. We do not tolerate any direct or indirect corruption or improper influence. You can find our Code of Conduct for Suppliers here:

[GASCADE Gastransport: Suppliers](#)

The whistleblower protection system we have introduced and established allows for the secure and, if desired, anonymous reporting of violations

within the company without fear of personal repercussions. Data protection and anonymity are thus always guaranteed.

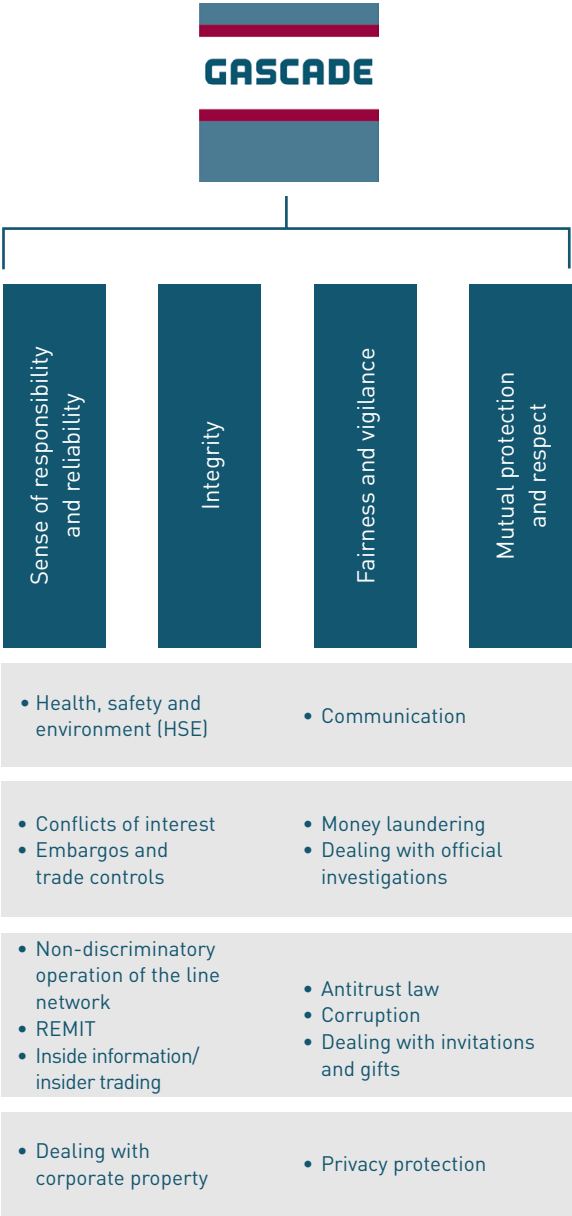
Responsible Procurement

Compliance with environmental and ethical standards is our top priority—not only in our own business operations but throughout the entire supply chain. Our goal is to procure products and services that meet both our business requirements and social and environmental standards.

To ensure this, we have established corresponding guidelines and standards. They are intended to ensure that our suppliers and partners act responsibly. First, we expect our business partners to adhere to our comprehensive Code of Conduct for Suppliers, which is available at via [this link](#). In addition, we implement a specific HSE policy for contractors that clearly defines our requirements for the protection of people and the environment.

We implement the comprehensive requirements of sector-specific procurement law, thereby contributing to the sustainability of our procurement processes.

We work exclusively with suppliers who comply with environmental, social, and labor standards. Transparency and regular audits ensure that these standards are verified, particularly in HSE.



7.2 Quality Management

In addition to compliance and business ethics, quality management plays a central role at GASCADE. As an operator of critical infrastructure, we bear responsibility toward transport customers, business partners, employees, and the environment. Our services must therefore always be provided at the highest possible quality.

Quality management ensures that our requirements are effectively implemented in our day-to-day operations. To this end, we have subjected key business processes to a quality management system aligned with DIN EN ISO 9001, which guarantees compliance with technical standards and regulations. The ongoing digitization of our processes plays a key role in increasing efficiency and transparency.

Regular internal and external audits verify the effectiveness of the system. Certification to DIN EN ISO 9001 underscores our commitment to high-quality processes and results and helps to strengthen trust among our stakeholders and support reliable and sustainable corporate governance.

7.3 Complaint Management

GRI 2-25

As part of the complaint management process, the Capacity Management department records all complaints from customers and business partners annually and analyzes their causes as well as the measures taken. Complaints are defined in accordance with the quality management process as issues that cannot be resolved immediately.

In 2025, five complaints were received: two in the natural gas sector and three in the hydrogen sector, primarily concerning contract initiation, contract signing, and dissatisfaction with negotiation outcomes. Three of these cases were resolved as early as 2025. Regarding the two remaining issues, we remain in ongoing dialogue with the respective business partners to jointly develop solutions and ensure a stable, trusting partnership.

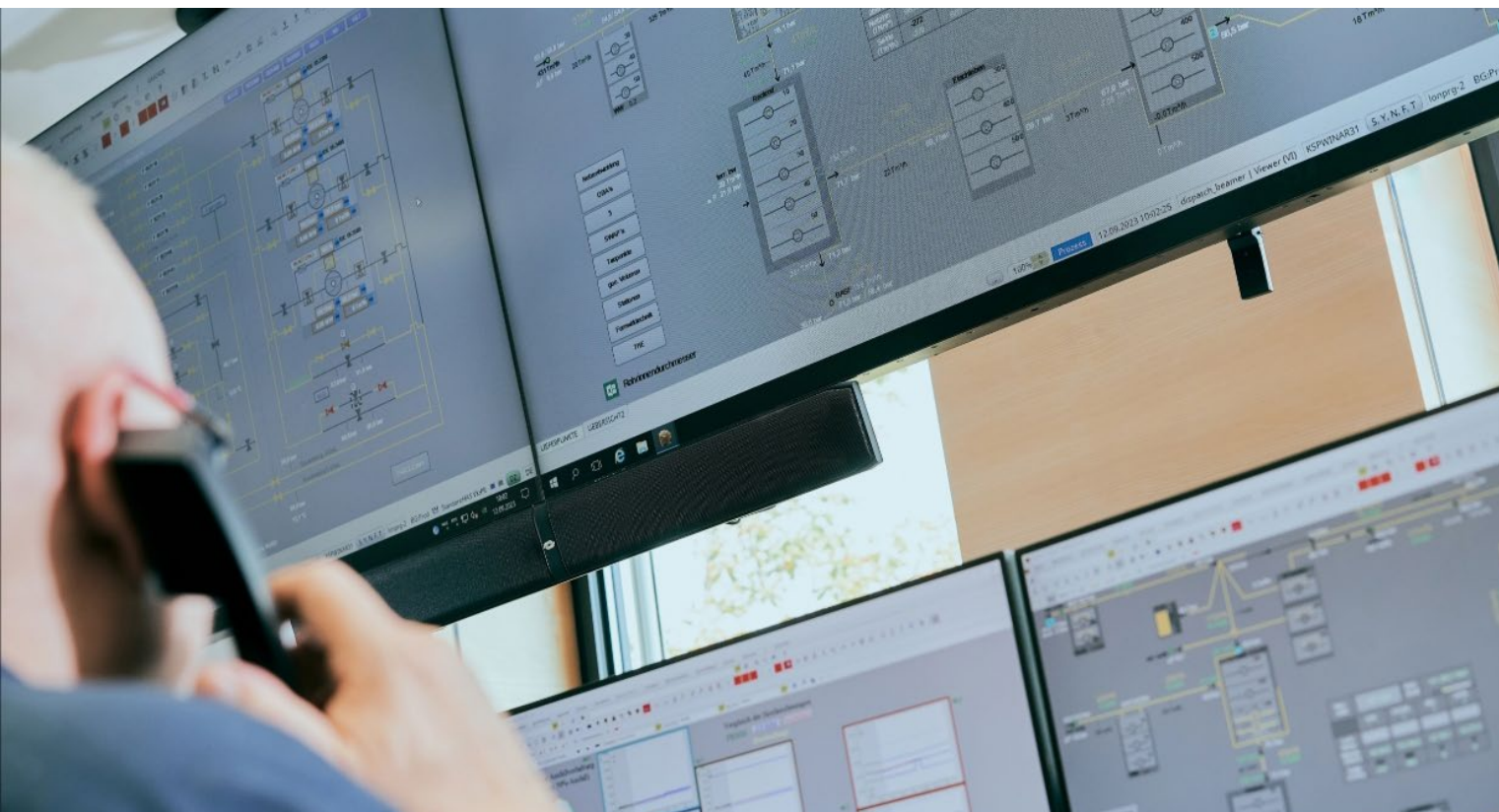
7.4 Information Security

GRI 2-27

Our FNBs are classified as critical infrastructure pursuant to Section 2 of the Ordinance on the Designation of Critical Infrastructure under the BSI Act, are classified as critical infrastructure (KRITIS) in Germany. Protecting our network infrastructure from external threats is a key priority. Our cybersecurity team is dedicated to further developing security measures and raising employee awareness of IT security. As one of the largest natural gas distribution companies in Germany and Europe, we bear a special responsibility in information security. At the end of 2024, a new BDEW technical committee on “Security, Resilience, and Critical Infrastructure” was established to address the security and resilience of critical infrastructure in the energy and water sectors. GASCADE assumes the chairmanship of this committee since 2025.

We have maintained our certifications in accordance with ISO/IEC 27001:2022 and the IT Security Catalog pursuant to Section 11(1a) of the Energy Industry Act. The surveillance audits at GASCADE and NGT were successfully completed and underscore our long-standing commitment to information security.

In the 2025 reporting year, our employees detected and addressed more than 10,600 security incidents. More than 1,300 emails and attachments were re-





viewed. The number of external attacks remained at a high level, with over two million attacks thwarted. Despite the generally tense IT security situation, there were no reportable incidents and no disruptions to business operations resulting from IT security incidents. This once again underscores the effectiveness of our established technical and organizational safeguards.

As part of our ongoing awareness and phishing campaigns, over 3,800 emails were sent to employees in 2025. The average detection rate was over 91 percent. In addition, 629 employees participated in IT security training; the completion rate for these training sessions was 100 percent. This further solidified the high level of awareness within the company.

To further strengthen information security, GASCADE once again conducted a comprehensive IT risk analysis as part of its Information Security Management System (ISMS). The analysis examined 112 generic risk scenarios for 89 asset groups and assessed a total of 1,324 risks. In addition, internal ISMS audits and technical security audits were conducted to ensure the security and integrity of the IT systems. In the area of ISMS supplier management, 34 suppliers and service providers were reviewed, and two on-site audits were conducted.

7.5 Digitalization and Innovation

Digitalization

Since the introduction of our digital transformation strategy in 2024, GASCADE has made significant progress. Digitalization has always been a key priority for our company, and with the strategy we developed, we have placed even greater emphasis on this area. Our digitalization strategy is divided into four key areas of focus: innovations, processes and automation, skills and learning, and organization and culture.

In the area of innovation, the goal is to make effective use of new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and maximize their benefits. Since 2025, internal AI-based chatbots and assistants have been an integral part of our daily work. In addition, we introduced an AI-based intelligent search engine, which locates internal information and documents in a matter of seconds. To advance the topic of AI in a centralized and strategic manner, we have begun establishing an AI management system. This enables the rapid and effective use of AI while ensuring that security, data protection, employee participation, and regulatory requirements are reliably met. As part of our AirDetec project, we are examining the extent to which our pipeline monitoring and analysis processes can be automated using drone technology. In addition, we are evaluating technologies such as mobile, inter-

active whiteboards for location-independent collaboration in practice.

In the area of processes and automation, we are focusing on ongoing automation and the efficient processing of large volumes of data to create added value for our company and ensure the safe transport of natural gas. AI tools already in use today help employees complete tasks more efficiently, draft texts, find information, and develop creative solutions. In addition, we are actively expanding our business intelligence solutions to improve the efficiency of our processes and decision-making.

Through the “Skills and Learning” area of focus, we are actively shaping the digital transformation by building the necessary cross-functional skills. Our employees receive targeted training in digital skills as well as in other specialized areas, such as hydrogen. In doing so, we are continuously working toward an open culture of error that supports sustainable learning. To support employees’ skill development, we are further developing central learning programs. To this end, a project has been launched to introduce a learning management system. An overview of the multifaceted uses of Microsoft 365 applications and internal AI solutions is supplemented by ongoing communication and training opportunities to support their use within the company.

To actively shape the digital transformation, we ensure—within the “Organization and Culture” area of focus—that we continuously evolve as a company and adapt to new requirements. The Applications and Digitalization department serves as a central point of contact for digitalization. Among other things, it ensures that all employees are informed about initiatives, can implement them, and can provide feedback on their design and improvement. In addition, a regular exchange with the digital partners from all departments takes place in the “Round Table: Digitalization” format. These partners serve as a central interface between the departments and IT, thereby promoting effective collaboration within the framework of digital transformation. A social networking platform for internal use has been in intensive use since 2025 and contributes to rapid knowledge transfer and collaboration within our growing company.

These measures and projects reflect our commitment to driving digital transformation at GASCADE and to continuously developing our processes and capabilities through innovation. In addition to the initiatives mentioned, there are many other projects and measures across GASCADE IT that are continuously driving digital transformation forward.

Innovation Management

Our innovation management system has been estab-

lished company-wide and is centrally supported and managed by digital partners from various departments. Innovation management provides the framework for quickly testing and implementing ideas and innovative approaches. It creates the conditions for rapidly testing new concepts and gathering insights for potential next steps.

One innovative idea is the use of LoRaWAN technology to enable energy-efficient data transmission over long distances, thereby significantly reducing our maintenance efforts. Another example is the implementation of a technology for reliable positioning to track components and improve technical documentation. In addition, GASCADE has developed the PipeCutter, a highly specialized and powerful machine that removes inner pipes from casing pipes in locations where conventional extraction is not possible. The PipeCutter was already successfully deployed in 2025 and, in addition to streamlining this process, also improves workplace safety on our construction sites.

Idea Management

Unlike innovation management, idea management focuses exclusively on collecting and evaluating ideas—and not just those related to technical and digital topics. Our idea management program fosters innovation by encouraging employees to send creative suggestions. This helps improve processes while also boosting employee motivation through active participation. A total of 37 ideas were sent to the

network by 33 authors. The implementation rate for these ideas was approximately 21 percent. The goal is to increase this rate even further through leaner processes and decision-making pathways and to accelerate implementation.

2025
37 suggestions for improvement
33 authors
21 percent implementation rate

8 GLOBAL REPORTING INITIATIVE (GRI)-INDEX

Declaration of Application

GASCADE Gastransport GmbH has reported in accordance with the GRI Standards for the period 01/01/2025 - 31/12/2025
GRI 1 applied
GRI 1: Foundation 2021
Applicable GRI sector standard
GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021	2-1 Organizational details	2.1, 2.2				p. 5, p. 7
	2-2 Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	2.1				p. 5
	2-3 Reporting period, reporting frequency and contact point	2.1				p. 5
	2-4 Restatements of information	2.1				p. 5
	2-5 External assurance	2.1				p. 5
	2-6 Activities, value chain and other business relationships	2.1				p. 5-6
	2-7 Employees	6.2				p. 41
	2-8 Workers who are not employees	6.2				p. 41
	2-9 Governance structure and composition	2.2				p. 7

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
	2-10 Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	2.2				p. 7
	2-11 Chair of the highest governance body	2.2				p. 7
	2-12 Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts	2.2				p. 7
	2-13 Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	3.1				p. 9
	2-14 Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	2.1				p. 5
	2-15 Conflicts of interest		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the employment relationships of our supervisory bodies confidentially	
	2-16 Communication of critical concerns		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the working methods of our control bodies confidentially	

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
	2-17 Collective knowledge of the highest governance body		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the personal training and further education of our supervisory bodies confidentially	
	2-18 Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the performance evaluation of our supervisory bodies confidentially	
	2-19 Remuneration policies		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the remuneration of our control bodies confidentially	
	2-20 Process to determine remuneration		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the remuneration of our control bodies confidentially	
	2-21 Annual total compensation ratio		not specified	Restrictions due to a duty of confidentiality	We treat information on the remuneration of our employees confidentially	
	2-22 Statement on sustainable development strategy	1, 3.5				p. 4, p. 14

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
	2-23 Policy commitments	7.1				p. 52
	2-24 Embedding policy commitments	7.1				p. 52
	2-25 Process to remediate negative impacts	7.3				p. 54
	2-26 Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	7.1				p. 52
	2-27 Compliance with laws and regulations	7.1				p. 52, p. 54
	2-28 Membership associations	2.3				p. 7
	2-29 Approach to stakeholder engagement	3.2				p. 10
	2-30 Collective bargaining agreements	6.3				p. 42
Material topics						
GRI 3: Material topics 2021	3-1 Process to determine material topics	3.3				p. 11
	3-2 List of material topics	3.3				p. 11
Material topics (GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021)						
11.1 GHG emissions						
GRI 3: Material topics 2021	3-3 Management of material topics	3.3				p. 11

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
GRI 302: Emissions 2016	302-1 Energy consumption within the organization	5.2				p. 30
	302-2 Energy consumption outside the organization		not specified	Information unavailable / incomplete	Information is currently being collected in a project to record Scope 3 emissions. We cannot foresee an exact date for the first publication.	
	302-3 Energy intensity	5.2.2				p. 30
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	5.1.1				p. 26
	305-2 Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	5.1.2				p. 27
	305-3 Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions		not specified	Information unavailable / incomplete	We do not yet have any reliable information or estimates regarding the financial implications. We are currently unable to predict an exact date for publication.	
	305-4 GHG emissions intensity					p. 27

GRI Standard/ Other source	Source	Location	Omission			Page
			Requirement(s) Omission	Reason	Explanation	
11.2 Climate-related adaptation, resilience and transition to a low-emission economy						
GRI 3: Material topics 2021	3-3 Management of material topics	3.3				p. 11
GRI 201: Economic performance 2016	201-2 Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	3.4	incomplete information	Information unavailable / incomplete	We do not yet have any reliable information or estimates regarding the financial implicati- ons. We are currently unable to predict an exact date for publica- tion	p. 12
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	305-5 Reduction of GHG emissions	3.7				p. 18

Topics from the applicable GRI sector standards that were not classified as material

Topic	Explanation
GRI 11: Oil and gas sector 2021	
11.3 Air emissions	Topic is currently classified as non-significant, as we currently classify the severity of the negative impacts as not significant. The severity is to be prioritized lower compared to the other emissions. However, we will continuously assess the topic and present the most important aspects in our report.
11.4 Biodiversity	The topic is currently classified as non-material, as we currently classify the materiality of the negative impacts as not material. The severity is to be prioritized lower compared to the material topics. However, we will continuously assess the topic and present the most important aspects in our report.
11.5 Waste	The topic is classified as non-material as we do not consider the significance of the negative impacts to be material. The severity is to be prioritized lower compared to the material topics. However, we will continuously assess the topic and present the most important aspects in our report.
11.6 Water and wastewater	The topic is classified as non-material, as we do not consider the materiality of the negative impacts to be significant. The severity is to be prioritized lower compared to the material topics. However, we will continuously assess the topic and present the most important aspects in our report.
11.7 Decommissioning and remediation	We currently consider the probability of occurrence of a negative impact to be low, which is why we currently classify the issue as non-material. We assume that we will continue to use our infrastructure for the transport of climate-neutral gases in the future.
11.8 Asset integrity and critical incident management	We currently consider the probability of occurrence of a negative impact to be low, which is why we currently classify the issue as non-material. However, we will continuously evaluate our management of critical incidents.
11.12 Forced labor and modern slavery	Not applicable as not compatible with the regulatory framework in Germany.
11.13 Freedom of association and collective bargaining	The topic is classified as non-material as there is no materiality.
11.14 Economic impacts	The topic is classified as non-material because it is not material. In the definition of GRI 11.14, the economic impact on a local community must be significant, which we do not consider to be the case for our business activities.

Topic	Explanation
11.15 Local communities	The topic is classified as non-material in its own right, as it is not material. In the definition of GRI 11.15, the impact on a local community must be significant, which we do not consider to be the case for our business activities.
11.16 Land and resource rights	Not applicable, as not compatible with the regulatory framework in Germany.
11.17 Rights of indigenous peoples	Not applicable, as we operate exclusively in Germany.
11.18 Conflict and security	Non-material topic, as we consider the probability of occurrence in Germany to be low.
11.19 Anti-competitive behavior	Not applicable as we are regulated transport companies.
11.20 Anti-corruption	Not applicable as we are regulated transport companies.
11.21 Payments to governments	Not applicable as we are regulated transport companies.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence	IPCEI	Important Project of Common European Interest
AIB	Association of Issuing Bodies	ISMS	Information Security Management System
BDEW	German Association of Energy and Water Industries e.V.	ISO	International Organization for Standardization
BHC	Baltic Sea Hydrogen Collector	IT	Information Technology
BlmSchV	Federal Immission Control Act	KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
BSI	Federal Office for Information Security	KRITIS	Critical infrastructure
CEF	Connection Europe Facility	NEL	Nordeuropäische Erdgasleitung
CGHI	Czech German Hydrogen Interconnector	OAL	OAL Ostsee-Anbindungsleitung
CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive	PCI	Project of Common Interest
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (UK)	PMI	Project of Mutual Interest
DEHst	German Emissions Trading Authority	SEN	Area used for other energy production
DWV	German Hydrogen Association e.V.	TSO	Transmission System Operator
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
EnMS	Energy management system	VST	Association for Secure Transport and Distribution Networks
ENNOH	European Network of Network Operators for Hydrogen	WGTH	W & G Transport Holding GmbH
ENTSOG	European Network of Transmission System Operators for Gas	CH ₄	Methane
ESG	Environment, Social, Governance	CO	Carbon monoxide
ESRS	European Sustainability Reporting Standards	CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
ETF	Exchange Traded Fund	CO ₂ e	Carbon dioxide equivalents
EUGAL	European gas interconnector	tCO ₂ e	tons of carbon dioxide equivalents
e.V.	Registered Association	NO _x	Nitrogen oxides
GHG	Greenhouse gas	GW	gigawatt
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative	ha	hectare
GWP	Global warming potential	km	kilometer
HSE	Health, Safety, and Environment	kWh	kilowatt hour
HyNOS	Hydrogen Network Operators of the Northern Seas	kWh/a	kilowatt hour per year
IEA	International Energy Agency	MWh	megawatt hour
IG BCE	Mining, Chemical, and Energy Industrial Union	t	tons
IMEO	International Methane Emission Observatory	%	percent

DISCLAIMER

This report contains forward-looking statements based on current assumptions and information available at the time of preparation. Factors that cannot be foreseen today may have a lasting impact on these forecasts and cause actual developments to deviate from the estimates provided here. We therefore assume no responsibility for the accuracy of these statements. GASCADE assumes no obligation to update the forward-looking statements contained in this report beyond legal requirements or to adjust them to future events or developments.

LEGAL NOTICE

Publisher

GASCADE Gastransport GmbH
Kölnische Straße 108-112
34119 Kassel

NEL Gastransport GmbH
Kölnische Straße 108-112
34119 Kassel

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BIL eG, Bonn

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GASCADE Gastransport GmbH
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Bernd Schoelzchen, p.4

UmweltPlan Stralsund GmbH (Image: Sealed surface in the agricultural landscape, 2019), p. 30
Graphic based on afb Social and Green IT, p. 32

Publication

September 2026