

Baltic Cooperation on Energy Security: Addressing Emerging Hybrid Threats

On May 21 Gabriel Gorbačevski, Vice Minister of Energy of Lithuania, Jaanus Uiga, Deputy Secretary General on Energy and Mineral Resources at the Ministry of Climate of Estonia, and Līga Kurevska, State Secretary at the Ministry of Climate and Energy of Latvia, participated in the meeting of senior energy officials of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia under the Baltic Council of Ministers (BCM), held in Vilnius, as well as in the meeting of the Baltic Energy Security Group together with representatives from Poland.

During the meetings, the partners discussed current issues related to the preparedness of the Baltic States' critical energy infrastructure for hybrid threats, the implementation of resilience-strengthening measures, and other matters of regional cooperation.

“Our region today is facing the reality of hybrid threats. The incidents that took place in the Baltic Sea during 2023–2025, when strategically important subsea energy infrastructure was damaged, are now being followed by threats posed by unmanned aerial vehicles. This proves that we are working in the right direction and must minimise the vulnerabilities of our critical energy infrastructure,” says Lithuanian Vice Minister of Energy G. Gorbačevski.

The strengthening of physical security and energy resilience is increasingly based on the experience and lessons learned from Ukraine. The Baltic States, together with Poland, are already implementing resilience measures for energy infrastructure, including strengthening the physical protection of critical energy facilities, establishing emergency and crisis reserves of equipment, deploying electronic security measures, installing unmanned aerial vehicle detection and neutralisation systems, strengthening perimeter protection, and preparing to operate under critical conditions. Protection measures also include enhanced video surveillance systems with analytical capabilities, as well as physical protection solutions ranging from sandbag barriers as a cost-effective and practical solution.

“Together with our regional partners, we are prioritising threats posed by unmanned aerial vehicles and the accelerated implementation of security measures. We see counter-drone protection as a necessary and standard security measure for critical infrastructure at the regional level,” agreed energy officials of Baltic states.

Lithuania has already completed the essential preparatory work and, by mid-year, unmanned aerial vehicle detection and neutralisation systems will be installed at key facilities of our energy system. Drone detection and neutralisation systems are currently installed at four strategically important energy facilities in Lithuania, while the installation of an additional five systems will be completed by mid-year. Plans for the further expansion of these systems are also being assessed and prepared.

At the same time, significant emphasis is being placed on rapid recovery capabilities. In this case Latvia is planning investments in mobile transmission towers that can be deployed in case of damaged power line, as well as mobile substations to restore electricity supply where substations are damaged.

Estonia agrees with Lithuania and Latvia that urgent action is needed to ensure the resilience of critical energy infrastructure, reinforce energy independence, and mobilise necessary investments, and is also advancing work in these areas.

The Baltic States are planning significant investments in the protection of critical energy infrastructure. Under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the European Commission has already allocated EUR 113

million to the Baltic States and Poland to strengthen the protection and resilience of electricity infrastructure.

“These are the first steps that must be reinforced through a permanent co-financing mechanism for the strategic energy security sector. The CEF financial mechanism is flexible and can be rapidly deployed, making it highly suitable for swift response and for financing the protection of critical energy infrastructure,” representatives of the Baltic States emphasised jointly.

The meeting of the Baltic Energy Security Group also focused on the establishment of emergency reserves for critical energy equipment. Opportunities for joint action and the establishment of regional equipment reserve storage sites were discussed, which would enable more efficient use of the combined reserve equipment potential accumulated by operators and allow for a faster response to potential disruptions.