

About the LCL sustainability report 2024



On our cover

The wind turbine on the cover of this sustainability report is part of LCL's own renewable energy infrastructure. Installed in 2025, it is one of three turbines that contribute to our goal of generating 40% of our electricity on-site. Today, all our operations are powered by 100% renewable energy. This marks the next step and is an addition to our solar parks that are already in use. The image reflects our tangible and ongoing investment in energy independence and sustainability.

This sustainability report is the third of its kind for LCL. Since our previous report we have made significant progress in driving positive environmental and social impact, while reinforcing good governance.

With this report, we aim to show how we - in the world of data centers - are taking an increasingly conscious and structured approach to our impact on the environment, society, and the broader ecosystem.

At LCL, we believe that sustainability reporting is not a solution in itself — it is a means to create a clear and structured framework that empowers us to take effective action. This report is exactly that: a way to translate our ambitions into measurable progress and share it transparently with our stakeholders. The central theme of our Sustainability Report 'Energy to move forward' reflects our belief that renewable energy is not only a necessity, but a catalyst for digital and societal progress. As trailblazers in our field, we want to inspire, invite and motivate all our stakeholders - customers, partners, suppliers, employees, governments - to join us in shaping a more sustainable future. This report also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to see how our business is evolving and to provide feedback on LCL's sustainability performance.



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Management review

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Message from our Chairwoman and our CEO

The world is evolving at an ever-increasing pace, and so is LCL. With an ambitious sustainability strategy, a dynamic management structure, and a newly established Board of Directors, the company is positioning itself for accelerated growth and lasting impact. How has the first year with a Board influenced LCL's trajectory? What are the biggest achievements, and how does the company navigate challenges such as artificial intelligence, geopolitical shifts, and regulatory evolutions? Chairwoman Els Demeester and Chief Executive Officer Laurens van Reijen have a clear message: ESG, adaptability, innovation, and co-creation are key.

"LCL has the right size and mindset to flexibly execute innovative projects. This dynamic approach strengthens both our sustainability efforts and our innovative spirit."

Els Demeester

- Chairwoman





2024 marked the first complete year with a Board of Directors. How do you reflect on that?

Els Demeester: "Step by step, we have strengthened our governance, both in terms of the number of independent Board members and the overall process. We succeeded not only in forming a diverse Board – covering different professional backgrounds, genders, and styles – but also in fostering a highly open culture. Every Board member contributes at the right moment, providing support, sharing knowledge, and challenging each other when necessary.

We support and challenge the Management Team, but we also keep each other sharp. One of the most surprising yet positive developments was how quickly we identified major expansion opportunities, which we promptly explored in additional Board meetings."

Laurens van Reijen: "For the Management Team, the Board acts as a critical sounding board, offering expert feedback. This ensures that we engage in the right discussions, which in turn benefits our operations. Each Board member has a specialised skill set, and we are learning a great deal from them."

Our sustainability approach

Our sustainability performance

Would 2024 have looked different without the Board?

Laurens van Reijen: "Most likely, yes. Until September 2023, I was essentially the Board. If I needed a second opinion, I would have to look in the mirror. Strengthening our governance in this way was a decision I am very happy with. Because the world is changing fast and we are growing rapidly, we can do with extra hearts and brains."

Els Demeester: "For the phase LCL is in, and given our growth ambitions, establishing a Board was the right move. It also brings more formality and legal responsibility. In our ecosystem – where compliance, legislation, and reporting are critical – it is vital to pay close attention to governance."

Laurens van Reijen: "The company has grown to a size where a single person can no longer handle everything alone. Some warned me that a Board might slow down decision-making and that I would be better off with an advisory council. But after a year, I can confidently say that those fears were completely unfounded. On the contrary, we have often been able to act swiftly."

Els Demeester: "And credit where it's due: Laurens' passion and drive inspire us all to be highly engaged."

What achievements are you most proud of?

Els Demeester: "We should be incredibly proud of the Management Team and the transformation of LCL's culture. Take EcoVadis, for example: thanks to our dedicated team, we immediately received an EcoVadis Gold Medal and, just a year later, climbed to Platinum."

Laurens van Reijen: "Our efforts for sustainability have indeed not gone unnoticed, as demonstrated by the Belfius ESG Award, the Data News Award for Most Sustainable ICT Company, and the Belgian Award for the Best Sustainability Report by IBR."

LCL is moving fast. How do you maintain momentum?

Els Demeester: "At LCL, our business as usual is: there is no business as usual. We have a strong management structure, a dynamic culture, and the right systems and processes to support our growth. However, we need to refine how employees collaborate and take our organisational structure to the next level. On the business side, we have delivered the expected results. Significant investments have been made in infrastructure in recent years, which we can now leverage. At the same time, we are taking the steps to realise future projects."

Laurens van Reijen: "Our financial performance aligns well with our business plan. The key is always to scale the organisation effectively for the future. And, of course, to accurately anticipate what that future will bring and plant the right seeds now. There are many challenges ahead – just consider the geopolitical landscape, which could impact LCL positively or negatively. Or the development of artificial intelligence (Al), which is evolving differently in China, the US, and Europe, with massive investments being announced. We must be prepared to adapt."

How does LCL handle these uncertainties?

Els Demeester: "I have been in the tech industry for over thirty years: change is constant, and disruptive technologies emerge regularly. The speed at which Al is not only creating challenges but also unlocking exponential growth opportunities is breathtaking. Being flexible and ready to meet the yet-unknown future needs of our customers is key."

Sustainability regulations are under increasing pressure. What is LCL's stance?

Laurens van Reijen: "We remain firmly committed to sustainability. We have always been frontrunners; we don't want to trade in that pole position."

Els Demeester: "ESG is, and will continue to be, one of the pillars of our strategy. In fact, good governance and our commitment to a positive ecological and social impact will only become more important."

Laurens van Reijen: "That said, compliance takes time and effort, especially for an SME like ours. We have to navigate CSRD, DORA regulations (Digital Operational Resilience Act), and NIS2 (Network and Information Security Directive). I do have concerns about the European Commission's plans to introduce yet another regulation on data center energy efficiency ratings, which seems redundant given CSRD and the EU Taxonomy. Excessive regulations can stifle innovation, so it's about finding the right balance."



Management review

Our sustainability approach

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Chairwoman Els Demeester and Chief Executive Officer Laurens van Reijen

"Our new LCL Service Hub allows us to operate more efficiently and reinvest the energy saved into personalising our customer relationships."

Laurens van Reijen

- Chief Executive Officer

Els Demeester: "While we may be an SME, we are part of a larger ecosystem and co-create solutions with customers who have high expectations."

How is LCL deepening customer relationships?

Laurens van Reijen: "Customers value transparency. We are deepening and strengthening our core business. After years of preparation, we launched our new LCL Service Hub in 2024, and the feedback has been very positive. It allows us to operate more efficiently and reinvest the energy saved into personalising our customer relationships. The results from our customer satisfaction survey (see page 62) reflect just how much this approach is appreciated."

LCL Energy, a subsidiary of LCL, has taken a more active role in energy production in 2024. Can you elaborate?

Laurens van Reijen: "Our project team was deeply involved in the construction of three wind turbines, which became operational in March 2025. Combined with investments in four additional solar parks and the installation of solar panels on the facades of our LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North data centers, these projects play a crucial role in our ambition to generate 40% of our own energy and contribute to network decarbonisation. They also help stabilise our electricity costs."

Els Demeester: "LCL has the right size and mindset to flexibly execute innovative projects, such as co-developing solar farms with local farmers. This dynamic approach strengthens both our sustainability efforts and our innovative spirit."

Our sustainability approach

Our sustainability performance

sustainability performance highlights

Sustainability is a motivating force that drives action. It shapes the way we grow our business, care for the environment, and contribute to a more resilient digital future. In 2024, we took further steps to embed sustainability across our operations.

A highlight was receiving the EcoVadis Platinum rating in December, a recognition that places us in the top 1% of companies assessed globally. We also made tangible progress in several key areas: sourcing renewable energy, strengthening sustainable procurement practices, deepening employee engagement, and enhancing transparency in governance.

89% **Employee Engagement Index Score**

8.6 **Training days** per employee in 2024 (vs 5.98 in 2023)





100% All purchased electricity is green electricity

68.35% Carbon footprint

reduction versus base vear 2020

new colleagues on a total of 49 employees on the payroll

Presence at staff events



6 NGOs

and not-for-profit associations supported by LCL: Vites, Oxfam, Close the Gap, Lucia vzw. Artsen Zonder Grenzen, het Balanske



LCLat a glance

LCL offers more than 20 years of data center and colocation experience and knowledge.

LCL now operates five independent data centers in Antwerp (LCL Antwerp), Diegem (LCL Brussels-North), Huizingen (LCL Brussels-South), Aalst (LCL Brussels-West) and Gembloux (LCL Wallonia One) where a wide range of national and international telecom operators, companies, service providers and government agencies keep their ICT infrastructure and have access to more than 40 carriers to connect their data.

€29.98

million turnover

40%

EBITDA margin



CUSTOMER
PERFORMANCE
INDEX

78%

CONNECTED TELECOM PROVIDERS



LCL Brussels-West

LCL invested €100 million in two expansion projects in LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North, and €35 million in projects with a sustainable impact in 2023 & 2024.

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By being outstanding in our core activities, we not only pursue financial added value. We also want to make a positive contribution to society by optimising the use of resources and creating value together with and for our different stakeholders.

OUR RESOURCES

HUMAN CAPITAL

- 49 employees
- We have employees of six nationalities:
 Belgian, French, Moldovan, German, Palestinian and Dutch
- Employees followed 8.6 days of training on average
- Realised in 2024:
 - · Ongoing refreshment of safety trainings
 - · Quarterly initiatives to promote health and well-being
 - Implementation of action points resulting from the employee engagement survey
 - · Review and update of job descriptions to include sustainability
 - Development of a training plan for each employee
 - · Annual employee engagement survey conducted

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- 40% EBITDA margin
- LCL has committed investments of €100 million in expansion projects LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North and €35 million in sustainability projects from 2024-2026
- Total equity: €8.178 million
- Total debt: €144.923 million

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Natural gas consumption for building heating: 46,915 kWh
- Fossil fuels (stationery & mobile): 62,008 litres
- HVO100 for processes: 11,256 litres
- Green electricity: 32,785,181 kWh
- Purchased grey electricity: 50,767 kWh
- Water usage: 65.68 m3
- Building footprint: 13,950 m²



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THE WAY WE CREATE VALUE

Together with our partners and customers we set new standards for the co-creation of reliable, available and connected data centers where enthusiasm prevails.

Our goal is to create integrated value and positive impact.

BY BEING OUTSTANDING IN OUR CORE ACTIVITIES, WE WANT TO EQUALLY CONTRIBUTE TO

- 1. Economic value
- 2. Social value
- 3. Environmental value

OUR STAKEHOLDER CENTRIC MODEL IS BASED ON BEING

- A trusted advisor
- The reference for datacenters in Belgium
- A highly agile organisation
- The best connected digital hub
- The leader in sustainable data center operations

OUR CORE VALUES

- Trust
- Respect
- Open-mindedness
- Team spirit
- Commitment

OUR MOST RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS













FOR OUR DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

CUSTOMERS

- Our customer segments: healthcare/ government, media, finance, telecom, IT system integrators
- 143 customers
- · 42 carriers
- Active patches between telecom operators: 1,979
- Intensified partnerships with cloud providers to strengthen hybrid cloud service integration and future-proof digital ecosystems.
- Integrated customer compliance requirements (NIS2, DORA) into our strategic roadmap to ensure continuous alignment with evolving regulations.
- Launched an AI readiness assessment to anticipate and meet future customer demands in data-driven and automated environments

EMPLOYEES

- In 2024, we hired 8 employees: 2 women and 6 men.
- 2 internal moves.

PLANET

- Wind energy expansion: 3 wind turbines successfully installed
- Solar energy deployment:
 1,300 solar panels added in 2024
- HVO100 Implementation: transition underway at 2 sites, reducing emissions from emergency power generators
- Greener fleet transformation: hybrid and electric vehicles account for 59% of the leased company car fleet
- · Cooling systems upgrade

SOCIETY

- €33,000 tax contributions
- Supported 6 NGOs & not-for-profit associations:
 - Oxfam
 - Vites
 - Lucia vzw
 - · Artsen Zonder Grenzen
 - Het Balanske
 - · Close the Gap (LCL is ambassador)

SHAREHOLDERS

€12.05 million EBITDA

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Read our International Brochure.



LCL's focus on internationalisation

LCL's focus on ESG is a strength for international customers

LCL is expanding its international reach by targeting hyperscalers (large cloud service providers) and Al-driven companies. By combining local expertise with robust sustainable solutions, we aim to find the sweet spot between growth, innovation, and responsibility. Robert van Beurden, Hyperscale and Al expert at LCL: "Apart from key aspects such as scalability and efficiency, our unique position as a renowned frontrunner in sustainability certainly attracts attention."



For over 20 years, LCL has been a key player in the Belgian data center market. Why the focus on international expansion?

Robert van Beurden: "The data center industry no longer operates within national boundaries. While LCL has always welcomed international customers, especially telecom operators, we're now seeing a new wave of demand. Al companies, hyperscalers, and global enterprises are looking for scalable, flexible, and sustainable infrastructure. The market doesn't stop at Belgium's borders, and neither do we."

What are these new customers looking for?

"In general, they need reliability and scalability. Hyperscalers and AI developers consume a significant amount of energy. Capacity is obviously an issue but so is how efficiently that energy is used, which is why they are looking for high-performance, sustainable facilities."

How crucial is sustainability in LCL's international positioning?

"It's a game-changer I launched a LinkedIn poll, and 50% of respondents ranked sustainability as their top priority, above cost and scalability. Customers now ask about our energy sources before they ask about connectivity and security. If we were not leading on sustainability, we would be falling behind."

"What also encourages these enterprises to think sustainability-first is that financial institutions are making investment decisions based on ESG credentials. In fact, many banks now offer better financing terms to companies with strong performance in governance and their ecological and social impact."

How does LCL live up to these expectations?

LCL already has a remarkable track record of investing in its own renewable energy production with our own solar panels and windmills, efficiency-enhancing cooling technologies, Al-driven cooling optimisation and eco-friendly backup solutions such as HVO100 to power our emergency generators. Our latest expansion projects at LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North integrate sustainability from the ground up, exceeding the Paris Agreement's targets."

"These efforts have not gone unnoticed, as evidenced by the awards we earned in 2024 and our EcoVadis Platinum medal. Our certifications are valuable assets for our international positioning, as many customers require stringent ESG credentials before considering a partnership."

Does the ambition to expand internationally entail exploiting new data centers abroad?

"We don't plan to build data centers in every country, we expand through strategic partnerships. Rather than going global in a generic way, we offer a highly personalised, compliant, and sustainable alternative for international players entering Europe. Our strength lies in being a local expert with an international reach. Belgium is at the heart of Europe's data hub, positioned between Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Paris, and London. Some customers prefer us over US-based hyperscalers due to stricter European privacy laws."



Operational developments

LCL invests in sustainable growth: an update on our expansion projects

At LCL, growth and sustainability go hand in hand. Strategic expansions at LCL Brussels-North, LCL Brussels-West and LCL Wallonia One not only increase IT capacity. but they also reflect our commitment to innovation and environmental responsibility. This update highlights the latest developments across these three sites.

LCL Brussels-North: construction in full swing

In 2024, LCL began the expansion of its LCL Brussels-North site (BN5), adding 9 MW of IT capacity. The building's design combines technical efficiency with a strong focus on environmental responsibility.

The ground floor will house a fibre room, storage areas, offices, and extra data center space which will be connected to the existing power and cooling infrastructure of the current data center rooms on site. The four upper floors are dedicated to future customer capacity, with large whitespaces. The first phase of this project is on track for completion by the end of the year.

Sustainability remains central to the project. To that end, LCL will install solar panels on the building's facades. The EV charging infrastructure will also be expanded, as all employees will drive electric vehicles in the near future. Finally, traditional concrete walls and panels will be replaced with sheet-metal sandwich panels with glass wool insulation.

Two new data halls at LCL Brussels-West

The new data center in LCL Brussels-West will feature two data halls and offer a total additional IT capacity of 6 MW. In 2024, all major assets, including generators, dry coolers, and chillers, were delivered to the site. The project is now in the commissioning phase, during which all technical systems are being thoroughly tested and approved.

Energy coordination remains a key focus on all sites. In 2025, we will install solar panels on the building's facades and roll out charging stations for electric vehicles across the entire site.

Scaling up renewable energy at **LCL Wallonia One**

In 2024, LCL Wallonia One significantly expanded its solar park, adding 1,300 photovoltaic panels to the existing 2,000 — bringing the total to 3,300. This upgrade increases our on-site capacity by 450 kW and now covers an additional 10% of the site's energy needs. It reflects our strategic ambition to move toward greater energy independence. The solar panels are installed on grassland and on the roof, further reinforcing our commitment to environmental stewardship and responsible land use.



Render of the new data center at LCL Brussels-North



LCL Brussels-West





Financial results

"Every investment decision we make passes our stringent sustainability checks,"

Steve De Craene

- Chief Finance Officer



Steve De Craene, Chief Finance Officer

"Every investment decision we make passes our stringent sustainability checks," says Steve De Craene, Chief Finance Officer at LCL. In 2024, that mindset translated into a sustainability investment roadmap of over €50 million in total up to 2030, with significant resources channeled into sustainable infrastructure, talent development, and regulatory alignment. "ESG is part of how we invest, how we grow, and how we report."

How do you look back on 2024 from a financial perspective?

Steve De Craene: "It was a solid year. We saw revenue growth, driven not only by customer expansion but also with a shift towards long-term recurring contracts. This gives us predictable income, which is essential when we are committing to multi-year sustainability

investments. Expansion and energy capital expenditures played a big role, we invested approximately €60 million on both. Furthermore, we secured financing for two major cooling upgrades in Brussels-North and Brussels-West for €19 million, which will increase our efficiency and creation of environmental value. At the same time, new investments in compliance and reporting were made to voluntarily align with CSRD and EU Taxonomy standards. And last but not least: we continue to invest in our employee base by hiring and developing talent where needed."

What were the most significant investments?

"The biggest items were the ongoing expansion investments at LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North of €48 million in financial year 2024. Both will increase our commercial area at those sites, and business coming out of them will be fully compliant with EU Taxonomy.

In addition, we spent nearly €200,000 on sustainability consulting, and more than €200,000 on training our teams – by far our biggest training budget to date. We also invested in automating internal reporting flows and strengthening financial data quality ahead of stricter ESG assurance requirements."

How has the financial strategy evolved to support sustainability?

"LCL has only one strategy, a customer intimacy strategy, in which finance and ESG are embedded. We measure financial, social and environmental value, and the governance around that. It is our goal to increase the sum of these: our integrated value. Embedding all elements into a single overarching strategy map helps maintain strategic focus. When we consider a project or investment, we always assess the impact on our integrated value and check whether it is on our strategy map. Both are a requirement to get on our project list. To do this, LCL introduced new internal coding for taxonomy-aligned investments and refined how it tracks non-financial KPIs. Non-financial data is now reported quarterly, alongside financial performance. Furthermore, sustainability has also become a Board topic."

What steps has LCL taken for CSRD and EU Taxonomy?

"We're ahead of schedule. We created an analytical logic in our accounting system: a financial and sustainable classification, and we created a process to gather non-financial data. That allows us to report easily on our ESG efforts. We have gone through a CSRD readiness cycle on our

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double materiality assessment and are preparing for full assurance for financial year 2025. For EU Taxonomy specifically, we have completed a gap analysis and mapped all required data to the eligible activities. We have put roadmaps in place to increase our alignment on the mandatory EU Taxonomy KPIs. For example, our major investments need to be taxonomy-checked before execution, or sites where we need to do technical updates to increase alignment on the revenue KPI are prioritised. The foundations are there, now it's about maturing the process."

What are the financial priorities for 2025?

"Completion of the expansion and energy projects is key to our profitability and efficiency, so that will be a focus area for 2025. Next to that, we will focus on increasing our EU Taxonomy alignment, securing financing for additional sustainability projects, and further implementing our sustainable procurement policy. In our sustainable procurement, we'll continue improving supplier ESG scores, closing contract gaps, and expanding spend coverage."

Looking ahead, Steve expects external pressures, both regulatory and market-driven, to increase. "Even if the CSRD timelines shift, our ambition will not change. We want to stay ahead of the curve, because ultimately, we believe it makes a significant difference."

Key financial figures *

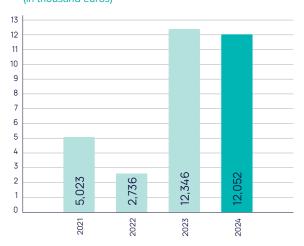
DATA CENTER ASSETS

(in thousand euros)



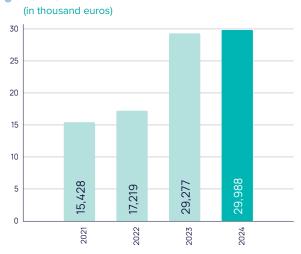
EBITDA

(in thousand euros)



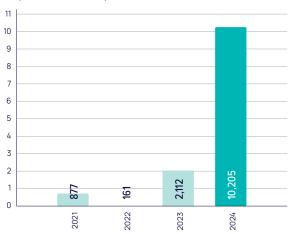
^{*} Based on internal management data

TURNOVER



INVESTMENTS WITH A SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

(in thousand euros)



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Income statement *

(in thousand euros)	2024	2023	2022	2021
TURNOVER	29,988	29,277	17,219	15,428
COST OF GOODS SOLD	-7,866	-8,243	-8,472	-5,343
GROSS MARGIN	22,122	21,034	8,747	10,085
OPERATING EXPENSES	-10,070	-8,688	-6,011	-5,062
EBITDA	12,052	12,346	2,736	5,023
DEPRECIATION	-7,282	-6,648	-3,372	-2,959
EBIT	4,770	5,698	-636	2,064
TAXES	33	34	53	490
INTEREST	-3,461	-3,497	-1,078	-740
EXCEPTIONAL COSTS	-1,206	-736	-400	4,184
NET PROFIT / LOSS	136	1,499	-2,061	5,998

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Balance sheet *

Assets (in thousand euros)	31/12/2024	31/12/2023	31/12/2022	31/12/2021
DATA CENTER ASSETS	156,453	102,342	80,200	51,651
OTHER ASSETS	1,398	1,550	1,768	1,160
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	157,851	103,892	81,968	52,811
CURRENT ASSETS	12,913	16,669	11,612	17,040
TOTAL ASSETS	170,764	120,561	93,580	69,851
Liabilities				
EQUITY	8,178	8,085	3,747	5,851
TOTAL EQUITY	8,178	8,085	3,747	5,851
DEBTS > 1 YEAR	137,606	91,145	70,040	49,318
DEBTS < 1 YEAR	7,317	7,075	7,647	4,046
TOTAL DEBTS	144,923	98,220	77,687	53,364
CURRENT LIABILITIES	17,663	14,256	12,146	10,636
TOTAL LIABILITIES	170,764	120,561	93,580	69,851

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Sustainable finance

In 2024, LCL pushed its sustainable financing strategy further than ever before, structuring over €35 million in green investments across energy, cooling, and infrastructure. "Our guiding principle is simple," says CFO Steve De Craene. "Every euro must create a return on our integrated value."

How does LCL approach sustainable investments?

Steve De Craene: "Generally speaking, there are three types of investments at LCL: expansion, sustainability, and other. For expansion investments, we follow the EU Taxonomy guidelines and implement a green building strategy. The sustainability investments are made along four key axes: CO₂ reduction, Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE) improvement, renewable energy generation, and global warming potential (GWP) reduction. If a project does not move the needle on one or more of these, we will revisit it. For all other investments, we rely on our Sustainable Procurement policy and/or EU Taxonomy to ensure compliance."

What kind of financial structuring supports this approach?

"We make use of green loans and work closely with banks like BNP Paribas Fortis and KBC. These partners understand our sustainability ambition and offer conditions that reward it – for example, with EIB support on interest rates. On top of that, in 2024, LCL also secured a VLAIO subsidy, specifically tied to projects with energy efficiency impact. It's a good example of leveraging public-private synergy."

What about ESG in procurement and supplier relationships?

"In 2024, we implemented a sustainable procurement framework featuring tiered supplier scoring. Every major vendor is now being evaluated on four equally weighted axes: ESG, financial health, service quality, and ISO compliance. If a vendor doesn't meet our targets, we take action."

Sustainability investments

Thanks to our investments in 2024, LCL has taken a new and major step in propelling its own energy supply. Three wind turbines were successfully installed at the beginning of 2025. Each wind turbine has a capacity of 2.3 megawatts and can generate an average of 4,500,000 kWh of wind energy per year. The wind turbines represent an investment of around €13 million. In October 2024, LCL expanded its solar park from 2,000 to 3,300 solar panels.

In 2025, we are taking our renewable ambitions even further. We will be exploring ways to redistribute our locally generated power to other LCL sites and reviewing the possibilities of heat recovery.





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Our governance

Composition of the Board of Directors

As part of our increased focus on good governance, LCL continued to develop the Board of Directors. Three independent directors joined Laurens van Reijen as CEO of LCL in 2023.

In the first trimester of 2024, Danielle De Vogelaer joined the Board of Directors of LCL. The composition of the Board plays a crucial role in maintaining our leadership position and keeping our focus on creating economic and societal value, as well as environmental sustainability. The varied experiences and unique track records of each Board member contribute to a broad knowledge base for both management and employees, as well as other stakeholders including shareholders and the broader community.

The shareholders are looking to further extend the Board, in line with the strategic needs going forward.



Els Demeester

– Chairwoman

With over three decades of international experience at the C-level in the technology industry, Els Demeester boasts an extensive track record as a strategic changemaker. Her passion and expertise span a wide range, from complex stakeholder management to business transformations and customer experience.



Laurens van Reijen – Board member

CEO and founder Laurens van Reijen has built LCL into the reference point for data center companies in Belgium over two decades.

To make LCL and the entire sector as energy efficient as possible and to build a healthy business with maximum positive impact on the environment, he also holds international positions in various sustainability initiatives.



Ingrid Daerden

– Board member

Innovative and sustainable real estate are a well-known playing field for Ingrid Daerden.

The knowledge she gained as a real estate expert at ING Belgium and deepened as Head of Treasury & Project Finance at Cofinimmo has led to her current position as CFO at Aedifica.



Danielle Devogelaer

– Board member

Danielle Devogelaer brings 20 years of experience in the Belgian and European energy landscape to the table, with a particular expertise in electricity. She excels in topics such as energy infrastructure, market design, and industrial transition. As a member of several energy commissions, she contributed to reports on Belgium's long-term energy future and ideal energy mix.



André Autrand

– Board member

As CEO of I4B (The Belgian Infrastructure Fund) and La Compagnie Financière des Infrastructures in Switzerland, André Autrand understands that investments are key levers for building a sustainable and resilient economy. Autrand is committed to all aspects of ESG. Simultaneously, he keeps a close eye on financial matters.

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Board of Directors overview

Since September 2023, the Board of Directors' meetings take place quarterly with a set agenda. In 2024, special attention was devoted to the following topics:

ESG

- Analysis and validation of the Double Materiality Assessment
- Formation of Sustainability Team
- Sustainable procurement policy and initiatives activated
- CSRD gap analysis
- EU Taxonomy assessment initiated
- Awareness creation on the SDGs

HR

- Talent management
- Retention, recruitment, attrition methodology and monitoring
- Remuneration and variable compensation
- Employee engagement survey and action plan

Business plan & strategy update incl.

- · Strategy map validation
- · Organisational design

Sales & marketing

- Market trends
- Sales funnel
- Marketing activities
- Commercial excellence methodology

Projects & operations

- Operational and financial monitoring of the key projects
- Health & safety
- (Budget) planning

Compliance & regulation

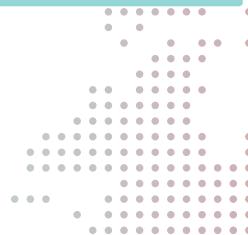
- NIS2 and impact on LCL as an organisation
- Impact and compliance with the new civil codes
- · Ethical code of conduct adoption

Risk management

- Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) policy and mitigation
- Set-up of ERM framework governing rules – risk assessment – monitoring
- Climate risk & vulnerability assessment

Finance, mergers & acquisitions

- · Quarterly results monitoring
- M&A roadmap
- Financial outlook
- Budget approval



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Composition of the Management Team

LCL's Management Team is dedicated to fostering a positive and motivational company culture of innovation and continuous improvement. In steering the strategic direction of our operations as well as in efficiently managing day-to-day activities, they contribute to sustainable long-term business success.



From left to right: Floris Smits, Chief Project Officer; Steve De Craene, Chief Finance Officer; Laurens van Reijen, Chief Executive Officer; Nicolas Coppee, Chief Information Officer; Fabienne Frisson, Chief Human Resources Officer; Baudouin Corlùy, Chief Market Development Officer; Abdellah Mahlous, Chief Operations Officer

LCL's CIO on energy, IT and security

After a decade managing LCL Wallonia One, Nicolas Coppee has stepped into a new role as CIO in 2024. It's a shift that mirrors LCL's growth and ambition. "LCL is evolving, and our IT structure needs to support that transformation," Nicolas Coppee says.

One of his first moves was to decouple IT and Operations into separate departments. Nicolas Coppee: "This allows IT to focus on systems, cyber security, energy and business innovation, while Operations stays fully dedicated to infrastructure and customer service." Energy is now part of the IT mandate. Following ISO 50001 certification at Wallonia One, Nicolas aims to roll out energy management across all sites. Real-time energy monitoring and smarter pricing models are on the radar. "Hourly rates are already happening and soon they may change every 15 minutes," he explains. "We need systems that can respond just as fast."

Renewable energy is another focus. LCL now owns three wind turbines and continues expanding its solar panel capacity. "We produce as much as we can," Nicolas says. "But when renewables fall short, smart energy management makes the difference." The LCL Service Hub, another pilar of Nicolas's department, embodies our digital evolution. It centralises customer interactions, streamlines access requests and will soon offer real-time insights into energy use and emissions. "We want to empower customers to be part of our sustainability journey."

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Abdellah Mahlous, Chief Operations Officer

Vigilance as part of our culture

Nicolas's operational background gives him a unique perspective on IT strategy. "A chiller gets checked, validated and maintained to perform optimally," he says. "IT systems should be treated with the same discipline." He's bringing that rigour to everything from internal processes to cyber security, a top priority at LCL. The company is preparing for NIS2 and DORA and introducing a dedicated cyber security position. Al will support network monitoring, but human expertise remains key. "We also need to keep training people to spot new threats and make constant vigilance part of our culture."

What Nicolas really adores about his recent position is building something new. "We're laying the digital foundations for LCL's future. That's the kind of challenge I love."

COO keeps operations agile and customer-focused

To keep pace with our growth (new customers, expanding infrastructure and sites like LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North) LCL has recently restructured its organisation. A key part of that evolution is the appointment of Abdellah Mahlous as Chief Operations Officer (COO). After 13 years as Operations Manager, Abdellah now oversees a more focused Operations department, following the spin-off of IT and Energy Management into a standalone unit. The aim: more agility, clearer accountability, and stronger customer alignment.

The change has crucial advantages, Abdellah stresses: "This structure gives us more room to innovate and deepen customer relationships," he says. "But strong collaboration between departments remains critical." Daily operational coordination and a shared sense of ownership are central to how teams now interact. Operations focuses on infrastructure and service delivery, while coordination with IT and OT teams happens through regular steering meetings to ensure alignment and transparency. "We want to avoid silos and keep communication fluid," Abdellah adds. "Everyone must stay in sync, especially when customers rely on us 24/7."

Predictive servicing

The transformation is not just internal. LCL is stepping up in areas like compliance and reporting, helping customers respond to rising regulatory demands such as the CSRD. Soon, the LCL Service Hub will offer real-time insights into energy use and carbon footprint. At the same time, investments in asset-based maintenance software allow LCL to move toward predictive servicing, avoiding issues before they happen and extending the life of key systems.

Looking ahead, flexibility is central to LCL's strategy. The rise of Al and new cooling technologies such as liquid cooling are reshaping capacity planning. That's why LCL Brussels-North is being built modularly: ready to evolve with customer needs and technological change. As we continue to grow, the commitment to personal service remains unchanged. "We're growing, but not at the cost of customer intimacy," Abdellah says. "Our customers should still feel they can call and speak to the same trusted contacts. That's what makes us different. That's also what will keep driving us forward."

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Looking to the future

As digital infrastructure becomes increasingly critical to our economy and society, expectations around resilience, transparency and sustainability continue to rise. At LCL, we see this as an opportunity to push further, together with our customers, stakeholders and teams. In 2025 and beyond, we will be building on years of meaningful progress, of which this third sustainability report bears witness. Investments in energy efficiency, risk governance, data quality, social initiatives and responsible procurement have laid a solid foundation. These efforts are part of embedding sustainability into every part of our operations.

That foundation now allows us to look forward with ambition. We will continue to improve the core, strengthening service quality, building even closer customer partnerships, and expanding our offering. We'll ensure that our organisation is operationally ready to support the growth enabled by our recent infrastructure investments. And we'll keep innovating in a market that has changed fundamentally in just a few years.

Customer engagement remains a top priority. As we see increasing interest from larger enterprises, we will continue to differentiate through our customer-first approach, quality of service, and commitment to compliance and sustainability. These are the values that set us apart. We will also deepen our sustainable procurement strategy by broadening supplier evaluation criteria, improving contract coverage, and refining our audit framework. Our aim: to ensure our supply chain reflects the same standards we hold ourselves to.

As a trusted partner to highly regulated industries, we want to help our customers decarbonise and future-proof their operations. Whether through green energy, smarter infrastructure or more sustainable service models, we're committed to enabling their success. At the same time, we will keep investing in our people. Workshops, training, and internal collaboration will continue to anchor sustainability in the daily reality of every department. We want every colleague to feel involved, informed and empowered to contribute.

We believe in action over big words. In strong partnerships. In long-term impact. And most of all: in moving forward. Together.

The Extended Management Team



From left to right, standing: Steve De Craene, Chief Finance Officer; Floris Smits, Chief Project Officer, Valérie Van Roy, Marketing and Communication Manager - Sustainability Manager; Sam Berckmans, IT Systems Manager; Baudouin Corlùy, Chief Market Development Officer; Abdellah Mahlous, Chief Operations Officer; Nicolas Coppee, Chief Information Officer Seated: Joris Robbeets, Service Delivery Manager; Mieke Germonprez, Quality Manager; Laurens van Reijen, Chief Executive Officer; Joke Bruyninckx, Critical Infrastructure Manager; Fabienne Frisson, Chief Human Resources Officer

Our sustainability approach

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Alignment with EU CSRD & EU Taxonomy



Currently, LCL falls under the scope of the voluntary sustainability reporting standard for non-listed SMEs (VSME). Nevertheless, given LCL's high ambitions to provide standardised sustainability information, we have decided to voluntarily set up the current year's report in alignment with the CSRD and in accordance with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS). We have implemented the CSRD and the specific requirements of the ESRS in the separate sustainability statement.

Companies subject to CSRD regulation, are required to disclose under EU Taxonomy and to consider all the economic activities of each of the six environmental objectives (i.e. climate change mitigation and adaptation, water, pollution, circular economy and biodiversity). Then, based on the identified eligible activities, companies need to disclose the percentage of EU Taxonomy eligibility and EU Taxonomy alignment for each of the three KPIs (i.e. Turnover, CapEx and OpEx).

LCL has decided to voluntary disclose on EU Taxonomy as we are committed to sustainability and in doing our part in reaching the EU Green Deal. You can find all information related to EU Taxonomy in the sustainability statement – section 2. EU Taxonomy.



Our sustainability approach

Our sustainability performance

Double materiality assessment LCL

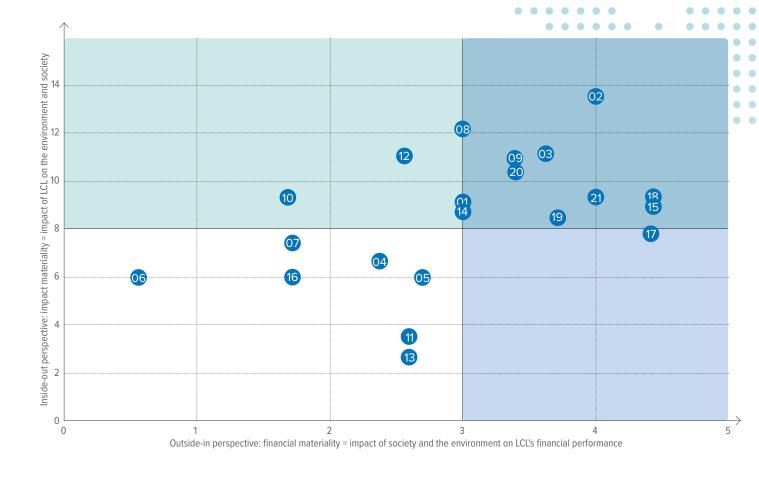
After a first materiality assessment in 2022, LCL stepped up by performing a Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) in 2023. The goal was to identify the most relevant ESG topics for LCL on the basis of impact and financial materiality.

The outcome of the double materiality assessment gave a total of 101 impacts, risks and opportunities (IROs). Each IRO was subsequently assessed in detail, based on predefined evaluation criteria prescribed by the CSRD, resulting in 42 IROs deemed of material importance.

Overall, the double materiality process resulted in 14 sustainability topics of material importance to LCL.

The double materiality matrix on the right-hand side shows the topics that are material and non-material. The boundaries for impact and financial materiality are marked in the matrix. Topics in the white area are considered non-material.

Going forward, we will update the double materiality assessment every three years. The next assessment will be conducted in 2026.



The highest scoring IRO within a topic determined the placement of the topic in the double materiality matrix.

- 01. Climate change adaptation
- 02. Climate change mitigation
- 03. Energy
- 04. Pollution (non-material topic)
- 05. Water (non-material topic)
- 06. Biodiversity and ecosystems (non-material topic)
- 07. Circular economy (non-material topic)

- 08. Employee health, safety and well-being
- 09. Talent management
- 10. Diversity, equity and inclusion
- 11. Workers' social rights (non-material topic)
- 12. Workers in the value chain
- 13. Local communities (non-material topic)
- 14. Sustainable marketing, communication and advocacy
- 15. Customer relationships
- 16. Inclusive services (non-material topic)
- 17. Business ethics
- 18. Reliable and available products & services
- 19. Data security
- 20. Sustainable innovation and partnerships
- 21. Green buildings and offices

DUR VISION

Sustainability framework

ENVIRONMENTAL

Our vision is to be a passionate team that, together with our partners and customers, sets new standards for the co-creation of reliable, available and connected data centers where enthusiasm prevails. That vision forms the fertile ground of our strategy map, with sustainability rooted firmly at the core of all that we do.

OUR **VISION GOVERNANCE** SOCIAL

We have calibrated our sustainability-related goals following the ESG pillars, with strategic priorities derived from the results of our DMA. In addition, two company-specific topics have been included in our framework due to their enabling role in our commercial and impact priorities. The LCL strategy applies to all customer segments, data centers, employees and products and services.

This strategy allows us to align our Customer Intimacy strategy (corporate strategy) with sustainability pillars that respond to the needs of our customers for secure, efficient and sustainable data center solutions.

The description of specific sustainability-related goals and their relationship with specific material IROs can be found in the dedicated ESRS chapters of the sustainability statement.

LCL's relationships with stakeholders play a crucial role in aligning sustainability efforts with our corporate mission. We recognise that the needs of our stakeholders (active and silent stakeholders) have a key role in shaping our strategic direction.

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CORPORATE STRATEGY

CUSTOMER INTIMACY

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

CUSTOMERS

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS

ESRS topic | ESRS E1: Climate change

- · Climate change adaptation
- Climate change mitigation
- Energy



PLANET

SOCIAL TOPICS

ESRS topic | ESRS S1: Own workforce

- Employee health, safety and well-being
- Talent management
- Diversity, equity & inclusion

ESRS topic | ESRS S2: Own workforce

· Workers in the value chain

ESRS topic | ESRS S4: Consumers and end-users:

- Sustainable marketing, communication and advocacy
- Customer relationships
- Reliable and available products & services
- Data security



EMPLOYEES

GOVERNANCE TOPICS

ESRS topic | ESRS G1: Business Conduct

Business ethics



SHAREHOLDER

SECTOR-SPECIFIC TOPICS

- Sustainable innovation and partnerships
- Green buildings and offices



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Embedding ESG into LCL's operations

At LCL we have an integrated approach allowing us to effectively embed sustainability into LCL's internal processes, ensuring consistency, accountability, and alignment with our strategic objectives. This integration is achieved through the following mechanisms.

A dedicated Sustainability Workgroup

Our sustainability governance is anchored with the Board of Directors and the Management Team (MT), which act as the validating bodies responsible for the overall oversight of sustainability matters.

In 2024, LCL set up a dedicated Sustainability Workgroup to help embed sustainability across all departments. The multidisciplinary group brings together colleagues from different teams and meets every two weeks to track progress, flag challenges and explore new opportunities.

This group is tasked with defining the strategic direction for sustainability initiatives, reviewing and approving sustainability goals, and ensuring that ESG considerations are fully integrated into LCL's decision-making processes.

The Sustainability Workgroup operates in close collaboration with the MT, with at least one meeting per month to monitor progress and align on key actions. LCL exercises oversight on company performance, including ESG metrics, through a structured KPI framework.





Our sustainability approach

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Activating sustainability is a shared responsibility

Sustainability is a shared commitment at LCL. In the cockpit of that process are Valérie Van Roy, Sustainability Manager, and Théo Grijspeerdt, Sustainability Coordinator. Together, they help structure and support an approach that is carried by the entire organisation. "We're definitely not driving this alone," says Valérie. "The strength lies in how different teams take ownership."



Théo Grijspeerdt, Sustainability Coordinator

What are your roles, and how do you collaborate?

Valérie: "I help shape LCL's sustainability strategy and work closely with leadership and our internal Sustainability Workgroup to embed it in every department. Since 2023, the role of Sustainability Manager has been part of our Sales & Marketing department, deliberately so, because it reflects how we see sustainability: as a source of added value, internally and externally."

Théo: "I joined LCL in September 2024 to coordinate all ESG reporting and support the wider implementation of sustainability actions. I also serve as a project manager for specific initiatives, from the CSRD rollout to collaborative internal workshops. In day-to-day practice, I focus on driving progress across workstreams, while Valérie ensures our broader direction stays on track."

Why did LCL make sustainability a structural priority?

Valérie: "If you want to be credible, you have to integrate sustainability deep into your operations. That's why we already published two sustainability reports, even though we were not obliged to do so. That's also why we launched a formal Sustainability Workgroup at LCL in 2024, under the leadership of our CEO Laurens van Reijen. From there, we built a system of recurring meetings, clear ownership per topic, and regular board-level reporting. It's the only way to make it stick."

Théo: "It also reflects LCL's ambition. We're a relatively small company, but we voluntarily stepped up to ESRS standards, even before being legally required to do so. We're aiming for transparency and excellence, not just compliance."

How does your ESG governance model work?

Valérie: "The Sustainability Workgroup meets every two weeks. We prepare an agenda, invite internal topic owners to share progress, and include external experts for inspiration. Monthly, I report to the Management Team. Sustainability is also a fixed agenda item at our quarterly Board of Directors meeting. That cadence ensures alignment across all levels."

Théo: "We also make sure decisions flow both ways. The Board and Management Team provide input and strategic guidance, and we translate that back into action. We're not just reporting for the sake of reporting, we measure what matters. Every sustainability initiative is tracked, followed up, and updated on a roadmap."

How do you involve colleagues across LCL?

Théo: "From day one, I was encouraged to reach out to any department. And people responded positively. That's essential: I'm not here to 'own' their work, I'm here to support and structure it. The Workgroup has members from Operations, Finance, Quality & Safety, Project, HR, and IT teams, and it's become a space where people contribute ideas and challenges."

Our sustainability approach

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Valérie: "The Workgroup is where strategy meets reality. Take our energy goals, or our Scope 3 emissions: we can only achieve those if departments like Operations and IT are fully engaged. That's why we build a safe, open environment to discuss and share. We also support this through knowledge sharing and awareness: internal workshops, lunch sessions, and targeted communication help colleagues understand the 'why' and 'how' behind our sustainability efforts. By doing so, we build shared ownership."

What challenges have you faced?

Valérie: "The main challenge is time and perception. Sustainability is still often seen as extra work. But it's not. It's about how you work, how you make decisions, how you invest. We're not there yet, but the shift is happening. Our CSRD preparation, for instance, has already brought sustainability into our operational and financial DNA."

Théo: "Another challenge is maintaining momentum. Launching initiatives is useless if you don't follow through. That's where I come in: keeping our plans on track, ensuring consistency, and helping teams not lose sight of the bigger picture."



What tools or systems support your work?

Théo: "We're rolling out structured data collection systems to support ESG reporting. We already succeeded in gaining Ecovadis Platinum in 2024, and we are now continuing that progress with CSRD-compliant data tracking. The roadmap approach we use helps teams visualise progress, identify blockers, and plan next steps."

Valérie: "The governance system itself is a tool. Having regular interaction, assigned owners per material topic, and recurring updates has transformed how we make decisions. And it highlights the role of each department within the broader sustainability approach."

What are next priorities?

Valérie: "For me, it's deepening the content. We've built the framework, now we have to keep pushing ourselves to go further."



Théo Grijspeerdt, Sustainability Coordinator and Valérie Van Roy, Sustainability Manager



Our sustainability approach

Our sustainability performance



Our sustainability approach

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Sustainability scorecard

In the scorecard below we report on the progress on each of our topics.

MATERIAL TOPIC	KPI	OBJECTIVE		
Climate change adaptation	Define a framework of consideration for the construction of LCL's new buildings and renovations by 2026.			
	Implement at least two climate adaptation measures annually			
Climate change mitigation	Relative reduction of scope 1 and 2 emissions	Reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions		
magation	Absolute scope 1 and scope 2 emissions (tonnes CO2e)	Reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions		
	CO2 per kW	Reduce scope 1 & 2 emissions		
Energy	% self-produced renewable energy	Produce renewable energy to cover 40% of LCL's electricity consumption from all owned sites by 2030.		
		Increase share of self-produced renewable energy		
	Global Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE)	Reduce PUE to 1.3 by 2030		
		Reduce scope 3 emissions		
Water (non-material topic)	Water usage in cubic metres	Measure and reduce water footprint		
Employee health, safety & wellbeing	% participation in health wellness initiatives	Have 100% participation in health wellness initiatives		
surety a wembering	Survey score employee satisfaction (PEI)	Implementation of motivational policies to achieve employee satisfaction in top 20%		
	Total Recordable Injury Frequency (TRIF)	Have 0 physical incidents at work		
	Rate of absenteism	Decrease rate of absenteeism to below 3% by 2025		
	Accident Severity Rate (ASR)	Reduce the Accident Severity Rate (ASR) to as close as 0 (*)		
	Accident Frequency Rate (AFR)	Reduce the Accident Frequency Rate (AFR) to below 1 (**)		
Talent management	Number of average training days per employee per year	Invest in employee skills through at least 6 training days		
	Proportion of staff attending staff events	100% attendance at staff events		
Diversity, equity & inclusion	Number of staff by male / female ratio	Attract diverse profiles		
Workers in the value chain	Contract coverage Tier 1, 2 and 4 suppliers to sign the Code of Conduct	90% of Tier 1, 2 and 4 suppliers by 2026		
Sustainable marketing, communication and	Publication of an annual Sustainability Report and update of the relevant section on the website	Develop annual Sustainability Report + update sustainability section of the LCL website + activate social media plan		
advocacy	Number of Data Center University (DCU) initiatives per year	At least 12 DCU initiatives per year		
Reliable and available products and services	Number of telecom providers associated with LCL	Becoming best connected data center		
Customer relationship	Customer Performance Index (CPI) of at least 79%	Continuous improvement in service delivery		
relationship	Number of new certifications closed	Taking actions to maintain compliance		
Business ethics	We focused on developing a whistleblowing policy to ensure the correct channels and reporting tools are in place. Once these are in place, we'll have a KPI associated.	We focused on developing a whistleblowing policy to ensure the correct channels and reporting tools are in place. Once these are in place, we will have an objective associated.		
Sustainable Innovation	Number of innovation projects	Engage in long-term innovation projects (4 per year)		
and Partnerships	Share of sustainable CapEx/cost vs revenu	Engage in co-creation with customers and suppliers		
Green buildings	Work in progress to assess the impacts of our buildings and better	Work in progress to assess the impacts of our buildings and better understand the pathway to tackle this material topic.		
and offices	understand the pathway to tackle this material topic.			

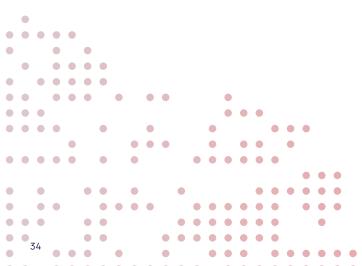
BASE YEAR	STATUS 2022	STATUS 2023	STATUS 2024	TARGET 2030	EXPLANATION
2024	N/A	N/A	Work in Progress		
2024	N/A	N/A	2	2 per year	Our new target challenges us to push further our decarbonisation agenda.
2020	-78.7%	-77.4%	-68.3%	-80%	
2020	331.76	351.37	492.93		
2020	0.06	0.04	0.05		
N/A	4.73%	3.84%	2.96%	40%	We invested in 3 wind turbines which will become operational in 2025. This is a big step forward towards energy self-sufficiency.
N/A	1,010,953 kWh	956,880 kWh	692,147 kWh		This is a sing step formation to reality setting and the control of the control o
2022	1.54	1.551 (excl. Start-up BW2 and BW3-LCL Brussels-West)	1.57	1.3	
2025	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A reduction target will be announced in the Sustainability Report 2025.
2022	344 M3	164 M3	65.68 M3		In 2024 we did not need to add water to our closed water circuits which explains the usage reduction.
2023	Data not yet available	No health initiatives in 2023	In 2024, we organised a sports day for the first time.		More initiatives linked to health and well-being are planned in 2025.
2023	Data not yet available	87%	89%		Using the employee's feedback for continuous improvement is a key factor in the improved score.
2022	3.77 TRIF	3.48 TRIF	1.34 TRIF		
2022	4.5%	2.27%	4.41%		
2023	Data not yet available	0	0		
2023	Data not yet available	0	0		Giving all our employees the opportunity to develop is a priority.
2022	4.58	5.98	8.6		
2022	88.9%	94.12%	98%		
2022	28% women - 72% men	27% women - 73% men	25% women - 75% men		Our Code of Conduct extends our engagement to mitigate ESG impacts across our suppliers.
2024	N/A	N/A	14.29%		Communicating our ESG progress is key to pave the way in our industry.
2022	Objectives completed	Objectives completed	Objectives completed		
2023	Under development	12	20		
2022	42	41	42		Receiving our customers' feedback helps improving the quality of our services.
2022	74%	73%	78%		
2022	2 New certificates obtained	New certificate obtained (ISAE for LCL Wallonia One)	EcoVadis Platinum certificate obtained		As from 2025 we will discontinue reporting on this KPI. We will keep focusing on taking the necessary actions to maintain compliance by renewing existing certifications.
2024	N/A	N/A	N/A		
2023	N/A	4	6		Our 6 innovation projects in 2024: windmills, internaltional positioning, LCL Serivce Hub, sustainable procurement, ERM, DCU for suppliers
N/A	N/A	N/A	34%		
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		

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Our contribution to the SDGs

As a data center, we want to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2023, we mapped out our business model and sustainability strategy to include the SDGs. Rather than addressing all 17 goals, we chose to focus on the following six key SDGs where we can make the most meaningful contribution and drive the greatest impact.





SDG 3 Good health and well-being

To ensure a healthy and safe work environment, we aim for zero workplace incidents. When accidents or potentially dangerous situations do occur, we immediately review and update our procedures to prevent recurrence. LCL monitors all work-related incidents and captures historic data in a quarterly safety report.



SDG 4 Quality education

With the establishment of the independent Data Center University (DCU) in 2023, LCL fulfilled its ambition to share expertise through a neutral online knowledge platform for both IT professionals and laypeople. For more information see page 75. We created a training plan on 3 levels: company level, departmental level and individual level with the aim of ensuring that the skill set per employee is in line with the strategic goals of LCL. We ensure that employees are offered the opportunity to develop and enhance their skills via training, coaching, mentoring programs, among others.



SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy

LCL is increasing the production of green power on site. LCL now owns three wind turbines and continues expanding its solar panel capacity. We aim at generating more of our own green energy, storing it for use at the most convenient times and redistributing excess production to the grid.



SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth

LCL started a partnership with Close the Gap and Digital for Youth in 2023 and still is an ambassador for Close the Gap. Both social-profit initiatives give used ICT from companies a second life in educational projects. We encourage our customers to donate used IT equipment for re-use.



SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities

LCL had its emissions reduction targets approved by the Science Based Targets initiative, as consistent with levels required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. The targets, covering greenhouse gas emissions from our operations (Scopes 1 & 2), are consistent with reductions required to limit global warming to 1.5°C, the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement.



SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals

LCL is constantly looking for opportunities to work with partners on sustainable solutions. This way, we connect LCL to (local) social developments and work together with 6 NGOs and not-for-profit associations.





As climate-related physical and transition risks intensify, data centers — the backbone of the digital economy — may experience increasing exposure to extreme weather events, energy price volatility and regulatory shifts. We conducted a resilience analysis in 2024 to anticipate, absorb, adapt, and build contingency plans to recover from climate-related disruptions while maintaining core functions.

Our resilience analysis was engaged via a climate risk and vulnerability assessment (CRVA) that encompassed all LCL's sites and assets, including five data centers, charging stations, solar parks, and wind turbines, with the primary objective of assessing physical and transition risks related to climate change.

The CRVA utilised climate scenario analysis to evaluate (physical and transition) risks and opportunities. For each scenario, four time horizons were applied: baseline, 2030, 2050, and 2100.

No significant uncertainties were identified in the analysis beyond those inherent to the chosen models.

Based on the outcomes of our resilience analysis, and the incorporation of these ROs in our ERM, LCL will continue to implement mitigation measures, such as flood protection for the wind turbine in Rumst and measures to reduce exposure to flooding at the Brussels South site. These pre-emptive efforts reinforce our commitment to climate resilience and long-term sustainability.

By adhering to high-risk management stan-

dards, we ensure that climate change has minimal impact on LCL's operations. Proactively anticipating risk mitigation solutions allows us to maintain our position as a trusted partner for customers, while also securing ongoing financing opportunities for future sustainability initiatives.

"Our comprehensive approach to physical climate risk assessment sets us apart in the sector. We have assessed all our material assets across multiple climate scenarios, not just to comply with regulations but to genuinely enhance our climate resilience. All relevant risks were identified, and we have already implemented key adaptation measures to stay ahead of potential issues."

Abdellah Mahlous

- Chief Operations Officer

The figure on the right displays all physical hazards that were assessed to be potentially relevant during the screening step. This implies that these hazards could potentially have an impact on the assets in scope, in case of significant exposure.

Hazards indicated in grey are considered as not relevant for this assessment due to the hazard not being relevant for Belgium, for the location or for the area or due to the hazard not being relevant for the eligible activities.



Objective set in 2024: define a framework of consideration for the construction of LCL's new buildings and renovations by 2026.

Objective set in 2024: implement at least two climate adaptation measures annually

Operational measure in 2024: the new highvoltage cabin in LCL Brussels-South has been installed at a height of half a meter to ensure protection in the event of a flood.

SCREENING OF RELEVANT CLIMATE HAZARDS

	CHRONIC	ACUTE	
	Changing temperature	Heat wave	
An=	Heat stress	Cold wave / frost	
	Temperature variability	Wildfire	
TEMPERATURE-RELATED	Permafrost thawing		
.	Changing wind patterns	Cyclone, hurricane, typhoon	
		Storm	
WIND-RELATED		Tornado	
	Changing precipitation patterns and types	Drought	
	Precipitation and/or hydrological variability	Heavy precipitation	
	Ocean acifidication	Flood (pluvial, fluvial, coastal)	
	Saline intrusion	Glacial lake outburst	
, , _	Sea level rise		
WATER-RELATED	Water stress		
	Coastal erosion	Avalanche	
7 7	Soil degradation	Landslide	
	Soil erosion	Subsidence	
SOLID MASS	Solifluction		

For more information, see also our sustainability statement, 3.3. SBM-3.



CO2 footprint LCL

The CO2 footprint, also known as the carbon footprint, is the annual greenhouse gas emissions of an organisation. These emissions result from business activities or the lifecycle of a product. Greenhouse gases can be divided into three categories:

- Scope 1: direct emissions from sources owned, or controlled, by the company (e.g. fuel combustion)
- Scope 2: indirect emissions linked to energy (e.g. purchase of electricity)
- Scope 3: indirect emissions (e.g. purchase of materials, waste disposal, transport) through upstream activities and downstream activities

Since LCL is successfully registered with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), we are a member of the Business Ambition for 1.5°C campaign - an urgent call to action from a global coalition of UN agencies, business and industry leaders, in partnership with the Race to Zero. One of the conditions of our membership is to recalculate and report our emissions on an annual basis. A carbon footprint report was commissioned to Encon in the year 2024, which fulfils the requirements for that year.

In general, the carbon footprint of LCL has reduced by 68.35% between 2020 and 2024.

The carbon footprint of LCL has increased with 141.56 tCO2e between 2023 and 2024. When keeping the reduction target of SBTi (Scienced Based Targets initiative) in mind, LCL is currently still (more than) on track to achieve a 42% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 by 2030.

On the right you will find an overview of the CO2 footprint of LCL at organisation level. The calculation is fully in accordance with the Greenhouse Gas protocol. The applied methodology, practical approach and thresholds have been discussed at length to demonstrate how an accurate footprint of all LCL's business activities has been obtained.

The table on the right shows the comparison of Scope 1 & 2 emissions between 2020 and the years 2023 and 2024.

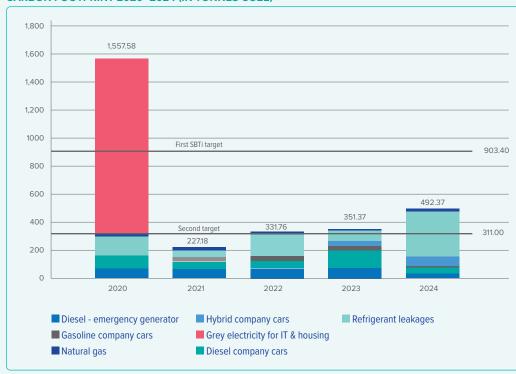
The increase in Scope 1 of LCL is mainly explained by:

 Higher fugitive emissions from refrigerant leakages (see below)

The increase in Scope 2 of LCL is mainly explained by:

• Higher off-site electricity consumption to charge the electric company cars

CARBON FOOTPRINT 2020–2024 (IN TONNES CO2E)



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COMPARISON SCOPE 1 AND 2 EMISSIONS BETWEEN 2020 (BASE YEAR), 2023 AND 2024

	2020 (ba	se year)	202	23	2024		
SCOPE	Tonnes CO2e	%	Tonnes CO2e	%	Tonnes CO2e	%	
Scope 1	317.65	20.39%	350.21	99.67%	484.45	98.28%	
Scope 2	1,229.93	79.61%	1.16	0.33%	8.48	1.72%	
Total	1,557.68	100.00%	351.37	100.00%	492.93	100.00%	

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Scope 1 in detail

STATIONARY EMISSIONS

Stationary emissions are caused by the consumption of fossil fuels in the process operations of LCL. This category has an impact of 9.58% on the carbon footprint of LCL for the year 2024, or 47.20 in tonnes CO2e. Examples of stationary emissions include the consumption of natural gas for building heating, the use of diesel for an emergency generator or sprinkler systems. The stationary emissions of LCL are listed in the table on the right.

MOBILE EMISSIONS

Mobile emissions are emissions that arise from the combustion of fossil fuels in vehicles (passenger cars, delivery trucks, heavy duty trucks, forklifts...) in control of LCL. This category includes the various vehicles in operational control of LCL. However, this category does not consider the commuting of staff without a company car. The impact of commuting is reflected in Scope 3 category 7: employee commuting. The table on the right shows the mobile emissions.

FUGITIVE EMISSIONS

In the case of LCL, fugitive emissions include emissions resulting from refrigerant leakage. These refrigerants have a certain Global Warming Potential (GWP) that represents the degree to which the type of refrigerant will contribute to global warming. The higher the GWP value the more significant the impact of the refrigerant type on global warming. For example, the refrigerant R404a has a GWP of 2,088 which means that a leak of 1 kg of that refrigerant has the same impact as 2,088 kg of CO2.

The table below shows the different fugitive emissions of LCL caused by refrigerant leaks. All leaks cause a total emission of 318.82 tonnes CO2e, resulting in 64.68% of the total Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

In December 2024, we detected two refrigerant leaks on chillers at LCL Brussels-North. Although the number of leak-related incidents has not increased, a chiller leak does have a greater impact due to the larger quantity of gas involved. After thorough checks, all other

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compressors were confirmed safe and fully operational. As part of our ongoing improvement efforts, we've advanced the full chiller replacement to early 2026 and further reinforced our preventive maintenance strategy with proactive component replacements.

Scope 1	Consumption (kWh)			Consumption (litres)			Sum of em	issions (Ton	nes CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 1 & 2 emissions		
Stationary emissions	2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022
* Natural gas consumption for building heating	46,915	37,600	49,982	-	-	-	8.57	6.86	9.10	-	-	-
* Diesel consumption for emergency generators	-	-	-	14,429	30,450	31,702	38.27	78.56	76.17	-	-	-
* HVO100 consumption for processes	-	-	-	11,256	26,714	-	0.36	0.85	-	-	-	-
Total	46,915	37,600	49,282	25,685	57,164	31,702	47.20	86.27	85.27	9.58%	24.63%	25.70%

Scope 1	Consumption (litres)			Sum of e	emissions (Tonne	es CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 1 & 2 emissions			
Mobile emissions	2024 2023 2022		2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022		
* Diesel company cars	15,023	46,327	20,852	39.84	119.52	50.10	-	-	-	
* Gasoline company cars	32,556	25,076	14,596	78.59	65.78	31.50	-	-	-	
> Company cars (hybrid)	26,872	13,115	-	64.87	33.84	-	-	-	-	
> Company cars	5,684	11,961	14,596	13.72	31.94	31.50	-	-	-	
* Diesel van	132	145	-	0.35	0.37	-	-	-	-	
Total	47,579	71,548	35,448	118.43	185.67	81.60	24.03%	53.02%	24.60%	

Scope 1	Sum of volume (kg)			Sum of e	missions (Tonno	es CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 1 & 2 emissions			
Fugitive emissions	2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022	
* Refrigerant leakage R-410a	62.00	35.95	44.37	119.29	69.17	92.64	-	-	-	
* Refrigerant leakage R-134a	89.90	7	43.24	116.87	9.10	61.83	-	-	-	
* Refrigereant leakage R-407c	50.90	-	5.87	82.66	-	10.41	-	-	-	
Total	202.80	42.95	93.48	318.82	78.27	164.88	64.68%	22.35%	49.70%	

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Scope 2 in detail

The Scope 2 emissions are specifically linked to the purchased electricity for the entire electricity consumption of the site(s). Electricity is used to power the servers which are owned by LCL's customers. Additionally, electricity is used for lighting and cooling of the server rooms and other technical installations of LCL.

The table above shows the electricity consumption due to the purchase of green electricity. This green power is produced using renewable sources like solar, wind, or other sustainable technologies. The corresponding emission factor to produce green electricity is 0 kg CO2e/kWh.

	Consumption (kWh)			Sum of Er	nissions (Tonr	nes CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 1 & 2 emissions			
Scope 2 (Market-based method)	2024	2024 2023 2022		2024	2023	2022	2024	2023	2022	
Purchased green electricity for different sites	32,093,125.57	27,227,913.23	21,357,814.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Electricity for hybrid and electric company cars	50.767	8,045.30	N/A	8.48	1.16	N/A	1.72%	0.33%	N/A	
On-site produced PV at Gembloux	692,147.00	984,500.00	1,054,800.00	0	0	N/A	0	0	N/A	
Total	32,835,948.57	28,220,458.53	N/A	8.48	1.16	N/A	1.72%	0.33%	N/A	

The above calculation was performed based on the market-based method, which uses supplier-specific emission factors, and the power generation situation at the sites of LCL. The supplier specific emission factor (0.167 kg CO2e/kWh) was provided by the AIB (Association of Issuing Bodies). in order to calculate the emissions coming from charging the hybrid and electric vehicles. This method reflects the total emission connected to the choices and purchase behavior of LCL.



Scope 3 in detail

Scope 3 emissions are usually more complex to assess correctly than Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. The Scope 3 emissions include all emissions in the up- and downstream of an organisation's value chain. Of the 15 different Scope 3 emission categories, 7 categories turned out to be relevant, these are discussed in detail in this chapter. It is estimated that more than 90% of the total Scope 3 impact was included in the calculation. The table below gives an overview of the different subcategories under the Scope 3 emission category.

	Sum of emissions (Tonnes CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 3	Sum of emissions (Tonnes CO2e)	Sum of % of total Scope 3
Scope 3	2024	-	2023	-
Category 01 - Purchased materials and services	51.90	0.38%	110.02	5.18%
Category 02 - Capital goods	13,053.14	96.97%	1,150.65	54.16%
Category 03 - Fuel- and energy related activities, not included in Scope 1 or 2	368.80	2.73%	820.95	38.64%
Category 04 - Upstream transport and distribution	3.06	0.02%	2.40	0.1%
Category 05 - Waste generated in operations	8.09	0.06%	27.01	1.27%
Category 06 - Business travel	7.61	0.06%	N/A	N/A
Category 07 - Employee commuting	9.70	0.07%	13.65	0.64%

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Raising the temperature, lowering our impact

Upgrading a live data center is no walk in the park, especially when it needs to run 24/7 without compromise. Yet that's exactly what LCL is doing in LCL Brussels-West and will start in LCL Brussels-North in 2025. "We could have taken a minimal approach, but we chose to go all the way," says Floris Smits, Chief Project Officer. Together with Project Manager Adeline Wantiez, he is overseeing the overhaul of the cooling systems. The objective? Better energy performance, lower emissions, and future-proof infrastructure. With zero impact on operational uptime. Adeline: "With every change we make, we anchor sustainability in our technical design."

What is changing at LCL Brussels-West?

Floris Smits: "We are replacing the legacy cooling systems to gradually increase the cold corridor temperature. This allows us to increase the use of free cooling, meaning we use outdoor air to cool our chilled water systems, which in turn cool the data rooms. This significantly reduces the use of energy-intensive compressors. It is a key part of our energy transition and aligns with our SBTi target of an 80% CO₂ reduction by 2030. Raising the temperature improves our PUE, and combined with the use of low-GWP refrigerants, it reduces our overall carbon footprint, which is especially important even when we use green energy. Cooling accounts for a significant portion of a data center's energy consumption. That is why we have been investing heavily in optimising our cooling infrastructure. In 2024, we launched our first major cooling upgrade project in LCL Brussels-West, which is now in full development. The goal is to have it fully operational by 2025. The project represents a big step forward in efficiency. Instead of adding more cooling units as demand increases, we are integrating a centralised cooling system that allows for better temperature control and more stable conditions This new design also reduces the total length of piping, decreasing system complexity and the risk of leaks. Higher stability means higher efficiency, lower energy consumption, and less environmental impact."



Adeline Wantiez, Project Manager

What makes this project so challenging?

Adeline Wantiez: "We are doing the roll-out in a live data center, so we can't simply rip out the old system and replace it. We are working around existing setups that were not designed for this level of integration. Risk elimination and uninterrupted service are evidently our top priorities, so every step requires careful planning and communication with our customers. At LCL Brussels-West, we replace fifteen stand-alone individual units with an integrated system. We drew up a detailed migration plan and review progress after every single step."

What's the environmental impact?

Floris Smits: "Our new systems work less intensively thanks to the increased temperatures. This improves energy efficiency and thus our PUE, which also has a positive effect on our CO_2 emissions — although that impact is more limited since we use green electricity. It's a winwin for LCL and our customers."

Adeline Wantiez: "We are not necessarily using less refrigerant overall, but we do have fewer metres of piping that are prone to leaks, thanks to a more compact and efficient design. That limits the risk of emissions in case of failure. And most importantly, we're switching to low-

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GWP (Global Warming Potential) refrigerants.
Older cooling systems often rely on refrigerants like freon with a high environmental impact.
By moving to sustainable alternatives, we significantly reduce the carbon footprint of our infrastructure."

Floris Smits: "We also consciously avoid technologies that require large amounts of water. Our closed-loop systems are designed to minimise water usage, and we want to keep it that way. City water is too valuable to waste. It's a balance between optimising energy efficiency and ensuring minimal resource use."

Adeline: "Exactly. You can generate electricity from wind or solar, but water is a finite resource."

How do you involve LCL's customers?

Floris Smits: "Collaboration is essential. We see this migration as an opportunity to align better with our customers, technically and strategically. That is why we keep communication lines open throughout the process. We are invited to monthly customer review meetings by our Operations team. There, we present our plans and potential challenges. During the works, customers are especially focused on the process. They want to understand what is happening and how it may affect their own setup. That engagement helps build trust and often improves the outcome."

Adeline Wantiez: "Communication is crucial. We are very open with our customers about what we are doing and why. They know data centers above 500 kW need to reduce their

PUE below 1.3, and that means moving towards higher temperature ranges. If you explain it clearly, they understand. Moreover, this is more than just an infrastructure upgrade. We are helping them reduce their own footprint, which strengthens their ESG reports and gives them a real advantage in stakeholder communication and audits. We are also actively helping customers improve their own energy performance. Simple actions, like correctly placing IT equipment or sealing cable gaps, can have a measurable effect. We give personalised advice and share tips in our newsletters."

The fire protection systems are also updated. What changed?

Adeline Wantiez: "We have completely renewed our fire detection and suppression systems in LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North. We are now using nitrogen-based extinguishing systems with a GWP of zero. They are not just faster to deploy and safer for hardware, they are also far better for the environment."

In 2024, you also had to manage the project of LCL's three wind turbines.

Floris Smits: "It is our most ambitious energproject yet. The three wind turbines became operational in early 2025. It was new territory for us, completely different from building data centers. Permitting alone was a learning curve. But it is a big step in securing green energy for our operations."



Floris Smits, Chief Project Officer

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Sustainable investments in our data centers

Climate change mitigation at LCL is about rethinking how our data centers are powered, cooled and protected. That requires a long-term view, backed by concrete upgrades and technical precision. In 2024, we made significant investments, from replacing high-GWP fire suppression gas to further transitioning from traditional diesel and gas oil to HVO100 biodiesel and optimising cooling strategies. We're also preparing for future climate risks, adapting our design standards with resilience in mind.





At LCL Brussels-North, we previously used HFC gas as a fire suppression agent. While highly effective at extinguishing fires by reducing oxygen levels, its environmental impact in case of discharge would have been substantial.

Over the years, we have never needed to activate the system, but we have acted proactively. In 2024, we replaced 2,996.5 kg of HFC gas with just 865.9 kg of IG100. In 2025, an additional 3,018 kg will be replaced by 476.3 kg of IG100. With this environmentally friendly fire suppression system built into the design of the new expansion, IG100 will be the sole fire suppression system across all LCL Brussels-North's buildings by the end of 2025. IG100 is a sustainable alternative with zero ozone depletion potential, extremely low emissions, and a minimal CO₂ footprint. Its fire suppression performance is virtually identical to HFC gas, but with drastically less environmental impact. This switch alone reduces CO₂-equivalent emissions by 10,000 tonnes.



We are transitioning from standard diesel and gas oil to HVO100, a green alternative that reduces emissions by up to 80% compared to diesel. This transition is being implemented across all sites where feasible. Some generators require only minor modifications, while others need complete replacements. In 2024, we adapted one of our tanks at LCL Brussels-North to support this transition. As a result, 50% of the fuel used on-site is now HVO100. The two remaining tanks are HVO100-ready, and their fuel will be replaced in the next phase of the rollout. In 2025, we plan to convert all fuel tanks at LCL-Antwerp to support HVO100. We work closely with vendors and manufacturers to ensure a smooth transition. The implementation will be phased, as it is neither practical nor environmentally responsible to immediately dispose of existing diesel and gas oil stocks. Of course, any new expansions will immediately adopt HVO100.

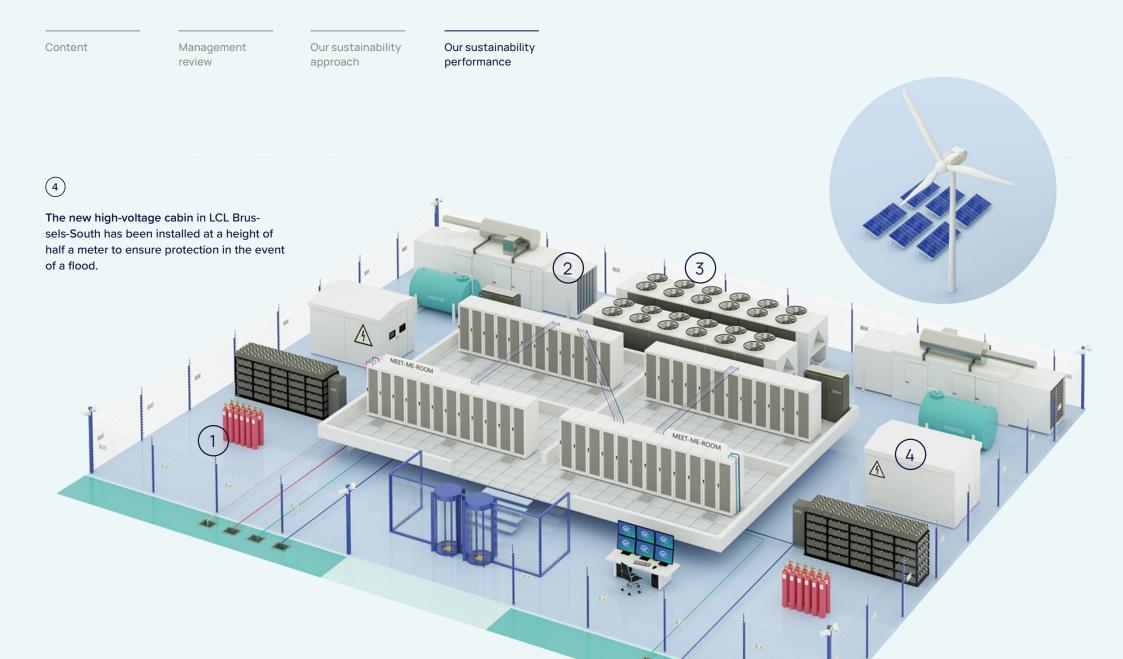
Waste reduction is one of our key long-term goals, with the ambition to operate according to a zero-waste principle. We are already making meaningful strides by using reusable containers for electrical supplies, which are collected after delivery. Some customers also receive their racks in reusable crates, which are returned as well. Thanks to close collaboration with our customers and suppliers, we are making strong progress towards our ambitious goals.



Cooling. Our current challenge is to phase out all refrigerants with a GWP (Global Warming Potential) above 675 by 2030.

Floris Smits, Chief Project Officer: "We're replacing the legacy cooling systems to gradually increase the cold corridor temperature. In 2024, we launched our first major cooling upgrade project in LCL Brussels-West, which is now in full development. The goal is to have it fully operational by 2025. Instead of adding more cooling units as demand increases, we are integrating a centralised cooling system that allows for better temperature control and more stable conditions. Higher stability means higher efficiency, lower energy consumption, and ultimately a reduced carbon footprint. If you can raise operating temperatures even slightly, the energy savings are significant."

Cooling remains one of the most delicate processes in a data center, so we must ensure continuity during this transition. From the initial design phase, we always prioritise sustainability when selecting equipment and defining requirements.





Reducing environmental impact through smarter cooling choices

LCL is actively working to reduce the environmental impact of its cooling systems by lowering their Global Warming Potential (GWP). In line with the EU Taxonomy, we aim to phase out refrigerants with GWP values higher than 675. This involves more than simply installing new systems. It also means carefully planning replacements, retrofits and phasing out older installations where possible. Critical Infrastructure Manager Joke Bruyninckx explains how LCL is putting this strategy into practice.



Joke Bruyninckx, Critical Infrastructure Manager



Cooling is essential in data centers, but it also has an environmental impact. Can you explain why LCL is focusing on reducing the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of refrigerants?

Joke Bruyninckx: "We use two main systems to cool our data centers: water-cooled systems and DX cooling. In DX cooling, refrigerants play a crucial role. Many traditional refrigerants have a high Global Warming Potential (GWP), meaning they significantly contribute to global warming if leaked into the atmosphere. As part of our sustainability strategy, and in line with the EU Taxonomy, we are transitioning to low-GWP refrigerants. Our goal is to completely phase out refrigerants with a GWP higher than 675 by 2030."

What steps is LCL taking to achieve this transition?

"We have a clear roadmap. First, for all new installations, we already work exclusively with low-GWP refrigerants. Where possible, we even aim to use very low-GWP options, some below a GWP of 10. For our existing systems, we're tackling the challenge in three ways:



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- 1. Replacement projects: We're currently looking to replace older DX cooling systems with chiller-based solutions in LCL Brussels-West and LCL Brussels-North. We launched studies in 2024, to prepare for the replacement of the existing cooling systems. For LCL Brussels-West, the design phase has been completed, and implementation is planned for 2025. At LCL Brussels-North, the study is still ongoing, with the new chillers scheduled for installation in early 2026. These two key ongoing projects will convert around 20% of our cooling systems, eliminating 1,300 kg of high-GWP refrigerants. As a result, we will reduce CO₂ equivalent emissions by approximately 2,230 tonnes.
- 2. Retrofitting existing installations: In some cases, we can keep the existing cooling units and switch to a lower-GWP refrigerant. This is the primary approach we follow at LCL Brussels-West. This is not always straightforward, as different refrigerants come with specific technical requirements, such as flammability and cooling capacity.
- 3. Phasing out non-critical cooling systems: In areas where cooling is not essential, we will eliminate older systems completely. At LCL Wallonia One, we're combining two approaches: one project focuses on replacing existing cooling units, while three others involve phasing out non-critical systems. In 2025, several units will be phased out. We're also preparing for a second phase in 2027, when additional FRAH units will reach end of life. A feasibility study for this has already been launched in 2024."

What are the biggest challenges in making this transition?

"The major challenge is that we can't just turn off our data centers to make these changes. Everything needs to happen while our facilities remain operational. That's why we carefully plan every step with our operations team."

How does this initiative align with LCL's broader sustainability goals?

"This is a key part of our ESG strategy. High-GWP refrigerants contribute significantly to global warming, so transitioning to low-GWP alternatives is a tangible way for us to reduce our carbon footprint. The EU Taxonomy provides clear sustainability guidelines, including low-GWP refrigerants, and we want to be ahead of industry standards in this regard."

What's the long-term vision?

"By 2030, we aim to have completely phased out refrigerants with a GWP higher than 675. Since not all migrations have been finalised yet, we can't provide an exact figure. However, we already know that we will reduce the CO₂-equivalent emissions linked to refrigerants in our data centers by at least 50%."



Frugal in water usage

It may come as a surprise that LCL doesn't consider 'water' a material topic, as is the case for most data centers. This is because, with the exception of LCL Wallonia One, we work with closed water circuits in all our data centers. It's a conscious choice aimed at minimising our environmental impact.

These closed circuits also enable us to connect to heat networks that can supply LCL's offices and business premises, as well as proving useful for adjacent industrial and residential applications.



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Harnessing green energy in real-time

Since Elindus enables LCL to directly consume the green energy it generates – from its own wind turbines and solar panels – at the exact moment it is produced, the choice in 2024 for Elindus as our electricity provider was self-evident. Unlike traditional energy contracts where renewable power is fed into the grid and repurchased later, this setup ensures maximum self-consumption, reduces dependency on external suppliers, and significantly lowers costs.

"For data centers, energy sourcing is a strategic decision that impacts sustainability, resilience, and operational efficiency," says Thomas Van Broeck, CEO of Elindus. "With LCL, we crafted a tailored solution that maximises the value of their self-produced energy while ensuring a reliable supply at competitive rates."

Why did LCL choose Elindus as its electricity provider?

Thomas Van Broeck: "LCL has a clear objective: maximise the direct consumption of its own renewable energy. Many companies generate green energy but struggle to synchronise their production with real-time usage. We designed a solution that ensures LCL consumes its wind-generated electricity exactly at the moment it's produced, reducing their reliance

on grid power. We also understand the unique energy needs and core business of data centers: continuous uptime, predictable pricing, and long-term sustainability. LCL wanted a partner who could provide both financial predictability and a solid strategy for green energy integration."

What makes LCL's energy contract with Elindus unique?

"The ability to match self-generated energy with immediate consumption is rare, especially in energy-intensive industries like data centers. Many companies feed their green electricity into the grid and then repurchase it later, which involves inefficiencies and additional costs. With LCL, we structured a contract that enables 'simultaneous consumption': a direct use of their own wind and solar power as it's generated. Another key element is flexibility. LCL's energy needs fluctuate, and our setup allows them to complement their self-generated energy with additional renewable supply when required, without being locked into rigid pricing models."

How does this impact LCL's sustainability strategy?

"This partnership enhances LCL's energy autonomy and sustainability impact. By directly consuming their own wind energy, LCL significantly reduces its carbon footprint and minimises its reliance on fossil-fuel-generated grid power. More broadly, this approach supports Belgium's transition to decentralised, locally produced renewable energy. Large consumers like LCL are proving that companies can take control

of their energy future while contributing to the national green energy shift."

What are the biggest challenges in green energy procurement?

"Balancing sustainability with financial predictability. Businesses want green energy, but they also need stable pricing. Renewable energy markets fluctuate, and traditional contracts don't always account for self-production. That's where custom solutions like the one we designed for LCL come into play. Another challenge is infrastructure. Not every company can generate its own electricity. Data centers like LCL are in a strong position because they have the space and energy-intensive operations that make self-production viable."

What's next for Elindus and LCL?

"The LCL-Elindus partnership is designed for long-term collaboration. As LCL continues expanding its renewable energy capacity, we'll support them in optimising their energy efficiency and exploring new ways to enhance their sustainability strategy. The way we produce and consume energy is evolving rapidly, and corporate energy buyers need agile partners. At Elindus, we're focused on helping businesses like LCL gain more control over their energy sourcing, lower costs, and achieve their net-zero ambitions."



Thomas Van Broeck, CEO Elindus

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From farmland to power hub

One of LCL's three wind turbines now spins on farmland owned by Ruben Devrieze, Managing Partner at Degila, a family-owned property company. The turbine is located in Rumst, where Devrieze's land provided an ideal base for the project. "From my kitchen window, I see the turbine," says Devrieze. "And I must say that I prefer that view over traditional pylons. It's a sign of progress."

Because LCL had no space to install turbines on our own sites, we opted to acquire wind projects from W-kracht (a renewable energy developer) through our subsidiary LCL Energy. As soon as the deal was closed, Laurens van Reijen, CEO of LCL, invited Ruben Devrieze to visit LCL Brussels-North. "It was a great opportunity to learn more about their operations and long-term ambitions in sustainability and infrastructure," says Devrieze. In collaboration with an engineering firm, LCL's internal team took the project forward. The hub of the turbine is positioned at a height of 84 metres, with each rotor blade spanning a diameter of 82 metres.

How did you first hear about the plans to install a wind turbine on your land?

Ruben Devrieze: "The initial discussions started back in 2012. At first, it was just an idea, but as time went on, it became clear that this was a serious project with real potential."

Did you have any concerns about hosting a wind turbine?

"Of course, there is always a moment where you stop and think, 'How will this impact my land?' and 'Will it affect how people see the area?'. But from a sustainability perspective, I knew it made sense. The real challenge was the lengthy permitting process: it took over a decade before we could finally start building."

What was the biggest challenge in getting these turbines up and running?

"Permitting, without a doubt. These things take years – twelve in our case. There was local opposition, administrative hurdles, and even discussions about the historical landscape impact. Two planned turbines were ultimately rejected because they would be 'visible' from an old archway of a nearby castle. To be honest, I find that frustrating. We all know we need more renewable energy, yet even strong projects like this one can take a decade or more. Look at countries like Germany or the Netherlands: there, you see wind turbines everywhere, while in Belgium, we still struggle with slow approvals."

How do you feel about the end result?

"Seeing that turbine finally standing is incredibly satisfying. It took patience, but now it's here and producing green energy. The best part is that LCL is consuming the electricity in real-time, Laurens van Reijen explained to me, which is exactly how renewable energy should work."

What role does sustainability play in your broader land management?

"We're always looking for ways to integrate sustainability. If you own land, you have an opportunity - and in my opinion a responsibility - to think beyond just traditional use. Wind and solar can co-exist with agriculture and other land activities. Besides the wind turbine, we're also focusing on biodiversity and sustainable land use. That is why we have decided to introduce grazing animals under and around the turbine: likely sheep or Scottish Highland cattle. This keeps the land actively maintained without machinery, while also contributing to the ecosystem. I think – I hope – in the next decade, we'll see more landowners integrating energy projects like this, because they just make sense."



Ruben Devrieze, Managing Partner Degila

Inspiring the next generation

We were delighted to welcome the fifth-grade students from primary school Sleutelhof in Rumst for an interactive learning experience. As part of their lessons on energy, they explored our wind turbines, took a guided tour, and discovered how green energy is generated right in their own city.

Their enthusiasm was inspiring, it's great to see the next generation so engaged with the future of sustainable energy. It's always rewarding to witness the local community's support for our projects and their eagerness to learn more. By opening our doors and sharing our expertise, we aim to inspire both today's communities and the great thinkers of tomorrow.



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"Al is not magic. Al is machines. And machines run on energy"

Al's sustainability challenge is anything but theoretical, says Professor Bjorn Cumps, expert in Financial Services Innovation & FinTech at Vlerick Business School. "We've all embraced the idea that artificial intelligence offers smarter solutions, but all too often we remain blind to its hidden cost: a skyrocketing energy footprint. It's time we start using these tools more consciously," he says. As Al advances, so does its appetite for energy. According to Cumps, the only way to keep that growth sustainable is through more conscious usage, greener infrastructure, and smarter regulation.



Bjorn Cumps, Professor of Financial Services Innovation & Fintech, Vlerick Business School

"Asking ChatGPT a question consumes 10 to 15 times more energy than a basic Google search. Multiply that by billions of prompts a day, and it adds up very quickly."

Bjorn Cumps

- Vlerick Business School

Should consumers be concerned about the energy behind AI?

Bjorn Cumps: "Certainly, because many end users consider artificial intelligence and cloud computing to be intangible. To be magic. But it is not magic; it is a machine. And machines require energy. Every time you ask ChatGPT a question or generate an image, you're triggering a huge amount of computing power behind the scenes. Especially with generative Al, you are not simply retrieving existing data like with a Google search, instead you are creating something new, which requires millions or even billions of calculations per prompt. Those calculations demand servers, cooling systems, and constant power."

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How steep is Al's energy curve?

"The numbers are sobering. Every 100 days, the computing power required for AI doubles. Nvidia's CEO recently predicted a 100-fold increase in demand over the next few years. And Google, which aimed to become net zero by 2030, saw its emissions increase by 50% since 2019, mainly due to AI. If you zoom out, this is not sustainable – at least, not at the pace we're moving now."

How does Al's energy footprint compare to familiar digital activities like streaming or searching?

"It's tricky, because we often compare apples to pears. If you watch a 4K video, yes, that is energy intensive. But generating that 4K video with AI in the first place costs far mor energy. Similarly, asking ChatGPT a question consumes 10 to 15 times more energy than a basic Google search. Multiply that by billions of prompts a day, and it adds up very quickly."

Should we rethink how we use AI in everyday contexts, especially for non-essential tasks?

"Let's say: we should think twice, without feeling guilty. If you are generating images or videos 'just for fun', you are using vast computing resources for low-impact activities. That's like leaving all your lights on when you go to bed. We need to apply the same logic to digital tools. Banning usage is not what we should be doing, being conscious is. So, ask yourself questions like: 'Do I really need to generate this?' 'Could I use a smaller model?' 'Is this the best use of energy?'"



Bjorn Cumps, Professor of Financial Services Innovation & Fintech. Vlerick Business School

But don't most people lack the technical knowledge to make that judgement?

"True, and that is where education and design come in. Companies can do a lot more to inform users: pop-ups suggesting smaller models, basic eco-labels, even Al 'budgets' that show your consumption. These are forms of digital nudging, and they work. People will not change unless they understand the impact of their behaviour and unless the tools guide them to better choices."

Where do data centers fit into this picture?

"Data centers are on the frontline. They host the models, provide the infrastructure, and determine how green, or not, Al truly is. Their energy sourcing, cooling systems, and transparency practices are crucial. In Belgium, we already see leaders like LCL going beyond compliance and investing heavily in sustainable practices. That sets an example for others. But we need systemic pressure from regulators, from users, and from competition to raise the bar across the board."

What role should governments and regulators play in curbing the environmental impact of Al?

"They can accelerate transparency requirements. Right now, most users have no idea what kind of infrastructure their Al prompt activates, or whether it's powered by green or grey energy. Europe is leading the way on regulation, but even here, we're not moving fast enough."

Can individual user behaviour actually influence broader industry practices?

"Absolutely. In the end, we vote with our clicks. If enough people start choosing services that are more energy-aware, companies will follow. Think of the rise of organic food or electric vehicles: it started small, but demand changed the system. The same could happen here. Avoid overconsumption. Choose the efficient model. Ask for transparency. Don't use a bazooka to swat a fly."

Is the growing reliance on AI deepening the digital divide between those who can keep up and those who can't?

"That is already happening. On one end, you have companies and workers using AI to become vastly more productive. On the other, people whose jobs are being automated but who lack the skills to switch roles. It is a question of access, but also of education, upskilling and support. AI could widen social inequalities if we do not take the appropriate action."

Do you see signs that organisations or business schools are beginning to take digital sustainability seriously?

"Yes, we are seeing a growing awareness in business schools, among students, and even in policy circles. At Vlerick Business School, we now offer an entire Executive MBA track focused on digital sustainability. We're helping professionals navigate these complex issues – how to use AI to boost productivity without causing environmental damage, and how to make sustainability a core part of digital transformation.

If there is one principle you would like people to adopt when it comes to AI, what would it be?

"Treat AI like electricity: incredibly useful when applied with purpose. Just as we don't leave the lights or oven on unnecessarily, we shouldn't overuse AI tools without reason. Use them where they truly add value and be mindful of when they don't."

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Creating a workplace where people thrive with strong policies and real action

In 2024, LCL reinforced its commitment to employee well-being, talent development, diversity, and ethical business practices, embedding them in its long-term strategy. "Structured policies ensure that initiatives are purpose-driven and aligned with LCL's strategy," says Fabienne Frisson, Chief Human Resources Officer. "This approach strengthens the 'S' in ESG, integrating social responsibility into our core operations and long-term vision."

To turn LCL's vision into concrete progress, we introduced a series of structured policies designed to become the guiding principles for real change, driving measurable impact across LCL. The Employee Well-being Policy, for instance, aims at actively preventing issues from escalating. Our Diversity & Inclusion Policy translates our commitment to a structured programme where bias training, fair evaluations, and cultural contributions are recognised as key factors in performance. Moral leadership became a tangible standard in our Code of Ethics, setting clear expectations not only for employees but also throughout our value chain. These policies create a workplace where employees thrive, develop, and contribute to a sustainable future.

What changes did LCL make to its well-being strategy in 2024?

Fabienne Frisson: "Well-being has always been important, but in the past, our approach was sometimes too reactive: we stepped in when challenges had already surfaced. That needed to change. In 2024, we made well-being an integral part of our long-term strategy, embedding it into company-wide policies, leadership training, and even performance management. One of the biggest shifts was the introduction of a structured bonus policy. For the first time, we linked well-being and safety directly to corporate, departmental, and individual goals. Health, safety and well-being are now formally recognised at the company-wide level, ensuring that they are performance indicators that matter. At the same time, managers are encouraged to integrate sustainability and well-being targets into their objectives, making it clear that this isn't just an HR focus—it's something every leader at LCL is responsible for."

Beyond mental health, what other well-being initiatives stood out in 2024?

"Physical and mental well-being are deeply connected. One of the standout moments of 2024 was our company-wide sports day, organised with the Borlée brothers. The response was overwhelmingly positive. In September, we expanded on this initiative by organising a full-day teambuilding event where employees pushed their limits and enjoyed the chance to improve their health in a fun way. This day we combined sports, outdoor activities, and teamwork challenges. Employees took part in kayaking, followed by interactive team games



Fabienne Frisson, Chief Human Resources Officer



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View the video of our sports day. ₽



in the afternoon. The energy was again incredible: people left the event feeling energised, connected, and motivated."

"Well-being is about movement, but even more about how we work. That's why we introduced brain-friendly working, a programme designed to help employees manage information overload and digital distractions. We all know how overwhelming it can be: Teams messages, emails, notifications... it never stops. So, we trained employees to filter distractions, prioritise tasks, and build healthier work habits. It's about ensuring people don't just work hard, but work smart, protecting both their focus and mental energy."

How is LCL tackling stress and absenteeism?

"Stress and absenteeism often go hand in hand, which is why we introduced a structured absenteeism policy in 2024. At present, absenteeism is not a major concern, but our focus is firmly on prevention rather than crisis response. Managers have been trained to spot early signs of excessive workload and stress, ensuring that employees receive support before it leads to burnout."

"In 2025, we'll launch dedicated stress and burnout prevention training for both managers and employees. This will help leaders identify early warning signs, initiate conversations about workload, and provide real support before issues escalate."

Has the way employees perceive well-being at LCL changed?

"There's more openness in conversations, more willingness to speak up about what they need, and a collective sense that well-being is part of how we operate. It's not one single action, but the combined effect of all the initiatives we've taken that has solidified well-being as a core priority. Health and well-being are no longer confined to HR, they are now considered a shared responsibility throughout LCL, with employees at all levels actively contributing. This shift amplifies the impact of our actions and fosters a healthier, more supportive work environment."

Initiatives in 2024 to promote health and well-being

- · A healthy breakfast
- A sports day with the Borlée brothers, including a sustainable sports outfit for all participants
- A smoking cessation session
- The annual LCL sports day
- Distribution of a Dopper drinking bottle to all staff members
- · A healthy brunch with the Borlées







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LCL significantly expanded its training efforts in 2024. Why this focus on development?

Fabienne Frisson: "We recognise that employees seek more than just a job. They want – and deserve – a workplace where they can grow, develop their skills, and advance their careers. At LCL, we strongly encourage this ambition because it benefits employees and at the same time strengthens our company. That's why in 2024, we made structured learning and development a strategic priority, ensuring that training is a continuous and embedded part of working at LCL."

"Our commitment to learning is reflected in the numbers: we initially set a goal of six training days per employee, but we exceeded that, reaching an average of 8.6 training days. Employees are actively engaging in learning, which confirms that we're building the right culture around development."

"Our Data Center University became the cornerstone of this effort, evolving into a comprehensive training platform that goes far beyond technical skills. In 2024, we expanded the curriculum to include ESG principles, anti-bribery and corruption awareness, customer intimacy, and workplace safety. We worked hard on an all-encompassing sustainability module. New hires consistently praise this initiative. One employee told us: 'The ESG training enabled me to have meaningful conversations about

sustainability from day one. It really helped me feel part of something bigger.' That's exactly the kind of impact we aim for. Learning is about technical expertise, but also about understanding the bigger picture: how each role contributes to LCL's long-term success."

"We also extended our safety training to external suppliers, including security personnel and technical service providers, and customers. Since safety is a priority, everyone working within our facilities needs to be aligned with our standards."

Beyond training, how has LCL redefined career development and performance management?

"A major milestone in 2024 was the transformation of our performance management system. The bonus structure was redesigned to reward more than just individual performance. Instead of focusing solely on personal targets, we now emphasise collaboration across departments, teamwork and shared success, and overall company impact. This approach has broken down silos, fostering a culture where employees work towards collective goals rather than isolated targets. The results are clear: stronger cross-functional collaboration, better knowledge-sharing, and a more unified corporate culture."

"This shift has also boosted internal mobility. More employees are choosing to explore new roles within LCL, rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere. They see a structured path for progression, supported by competency-based learning and transparent career growth opportunities."

How does Mpleo fit into LCL's well-being and HR transformation?

"We introduced Mpleo as a central digital platform to streamline all HR-related matters – training, evaluations, absences, career development - it's all in one place. Employees can now track their learning progress, request training, and stay informed about well-being initiatives. Managers also have customised access based on their level of responsibility, enabling them to monitor team development through structured dashboards. It's a game-changer in terms of efficiency, transparency, and long-term career planning."

"In 2025, we're expanding Mpleo even further, integrating personal development plans with a stronger focus on cyber security and Al skills. This will help employees future-proof their careers in a rapidly evolving digital landscape."

How is LCL ensuring cyber security and compliance training?

"Cyber security has become a major focus area and a core competency for every employee. With NIS2 and DORA regulations coming into effect, we provide continuous training to ensure employees can identify phishing attempts, respond to cyber threats, and stay compliant with evolving regulations."

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Why is Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) a priority for LCL?

Fabienne Frisson: "Our employees are one of our biggest success factors, and we know that a diverse workforce – across gender, background, and age – gives us a competitive advantage. The more perspectives we bring in, the faster we can innovate, problem-solve, and adapt. There was a time when people assumed that LCL, as a highly technical environment, would naturally be male-dominated. That assumption no longer stands unchallenged. By actively opening doors and rethinking outdated norms, we've built a workplace where women are stepping into technical roles and are taking the lead in middle management and on the Board."

LCL has made significant progress in DEI in 2024. What changed?

"At LCL, DEI is about making real change happen, not an exercise in ticking the box. We took a deliberate and structured approach, ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded in how we hire, develop, and assess talent. It's part of how we work."

"In 2024 we started with unconscious bias training for managers, shifting the way leaders make hiring and promotion decisions. Instead of relying on intuition, they now have concrete tools to identify and counteract ingrained biases, ensuring that skills, experience, and potential shape career advancement."

"But training managers is not enough. That's why in 2025 we will roll out dedicated DEI training for employees, taking the conversation beyond theory. We will organise interactive two-hour sessions for employees, where they will work in groups to discuss real-life cases and challenge perspectives."

"We also updated our employee evaluation framework in 2024, integrating our ethical code, sustainability objectives, and customer intimacy values. This means that employees aren't just assessed on individual output, but on how they collaborate, support others, and contribute to a more inclusive culture."

How is LCL addressing pay equity and fair compensation?

"In 2024, we conducted a comprehensive compensation and benefits review, introducing a new job classification framework. This gave us a structured way to ensure fair and transparent salary structures, helping us actively identify and address the gender pay gap. We also introduced a clear, objective salary increase structure, ensuring that compensation progression is tied to performance and contribution within an objective framework. Employees now have a transparent view of how their salaries evolve, based on clearly defined performance criteria."

How is LCL fostering intergenerational collaboration?

"In many corporate environments, youth is equated with potential, while older employees are often seen as being in the later stages of their careers. We're challenging that mindset. Experienced employees are valuable contributors and essential to knowledge-sharing, strategic thinking, and long-term innovation. Mutual exchange strengthens collaboration across generations and reinforces mutual respect."



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Sustainable procurement: a powerful lever

"Procurement is a powerful lever in our journey towards sustainability. Every purchasing decision we make has an impact: financially, of course, but also environmentally and socially," says Steve De Craene, CFO at LCL. In 2024, we launched our sustainable procurement policy to embed environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria into our purchasing decisions. The move was accelerated by insights from LCL's first EcoVadis assessment which identified procurement as a key area for improvement. "That's one of the reasons why we developed a structured supplier framework to ensure sustainability is a non-negotiable part of procurement."

What triggered the decision to formalise sustainable procurement?

Steve De Craene: "Sustainability has always been part of LCL's DNA, but in procurement, it wasn't structured. Although we were making responsible choices, they were often reactive rather than part of a systematic approach. When we received our first EcoVadis rating, it confirmed what we already suspected: procurement was an area where we could do better.

Since we were positively challenged and eager to improve our business, we developed a dedicated sustainable procurement policy, ensuring that ESG considerations became part of every purchasing decision. By embedding sustainability into supplier selection, contract renewals, and tenders, we are making sure that cost isn't the only factor driving our choices."

How did LCL go about implementing sustainable procurement?

Steve De Craene: "The first step was defining a clear policy. In March 2024, we drafted our sustainable procurement policy, which was approved by management in under a month. By June, we had developed a supplier management tool, allowing us to evaluate vendors based on ESG performance, financial stability, service quality, and compliance. At the same time, we categorised vendors into four tiers based on spending and strategic importance. Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers account for 80% of our spend, while Tier 3 consists of smaller suppliers, and Tier 4 includes construction partners who undergo stricter selection processes."

To ensure that our entire supply chain aligns with our ESG goals, Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus joined LCL in August 2024. Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus: "My role is to make sure sustainability becomes a measurable, enforceable reality. Our objective is to change the way we select, evaluate, and collaborate with suppliers. The rest of the year was focused on collecting ESG data from existing suppliers and updating contract templates to reflect our new sustainability expectations."



Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus, Procurement Specialist

"This ethical framework extends beyond LCL's walls. We now require our suppliers to align with our ethical standards, reinforcing that sustainability and responsible business practices are non-negotiable throughout our value chain."

Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus

- Procurement Specialist

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Read our Code of Ethics.



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What does LCL's supplier evaluation process look like?

Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus: "We created a structured evaluation framework that scores suppliers on five key factors: financial stability, service quality, ESG performance, ISO compliance, and total cost of ownership (TCO). These criteria are weighted to ensure that sustainability plays a major role in selection and renewal decisions. As Steve said, we also introduced a tiered supplier model, where we ensure that at least 80% of our procurement spend goes to Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers: trusted partners that align with our sustainability objectives. Our objective is to streamline our supplier base and our needs by reducing tail spend suppliers by 10% annually, strategically consolidating procurement with ESG-aligned partners to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and supplier performance. For new suppliers, we introduced an ESG questionnaire as part of the onboarding process. Vendors with poor ESG scores cannot be approved unless they commit to an improvement plan. Even for existing suppliers, ESG scores are now a factor in contract renewals."

Does sustainable procurement mean higher costs?

Steve De Craene: "That's one of the biggest misconceptions. Many assume that sustainable procurement automatically means spending more, but when you look at TCO, the numbers tell a different story. A supplier with strong ESG credentials often brings long-term savings through higher efficiency, lower waste, and better product lifespan."

"A great example is our recent electricity contract renegotiation. Instead of simply choosing the lowest bidder, we applied our new ESG evaluation criteria. The result? We selected Elindus, a supplier that outperformed others in green energy commitment, transparency, and financial resilience. They weren't the cheapest, but their long-term sustainability credentials made them the best choice. It's a token of how sustainability and financial responsibility can go hand in hand."

What obstacles does LCL face in implementing this new procurement approach?

Hendou Keita-Bartolomäus: "Changing mindsets is a challenge. Procurement has traditionally been about price and availability. Now, we're asking people to consider ESG factors as equally important. We also have to work closely with suppliers, especially smaller vendors, who aren't used to providing ESG-related data. Many of them do not have sustainability reports or policies, so we help them understand our new requirements. One thing that surprised me was how open some smaller suppliers were to make these changes. Many saw it as an opportunity to grow and future-proof their business. Another challenge was data collection. Gathering ESG data from hundreds of suppliers is no small task. But by the end of 2024 we had already mapped 60-70% of our supplier base, with full coverage expected in 2025."

What are the next steps?

Steve De Craene: "Now that the framework, tools and resources are in place, the focus is on deepening impact. We're rolling out ESG audits for suppliers, strengthening supplier engagement, and ensuring that 100% of Tier 1 and Tier 2 vendors fully comply with our sustainability standards. Another priority is integrating ESG into procurement tenders. By 2026, we aim to make sustainability a weighted factor in 100% of procurement decisions."

In 2024 LCL introduced a Code of Ethics. How does it contribute to a stronger workplace culture?

Fabienne Frisson: "A workplace culture is about trust, fairness, and integrity. That's why in 2024, we introduced a structured Code of Ethics, outlining clear expectations for employees, managers, and even suppliers. Our Code of Ethics is structured around our ESG pillars and goes beyond internal guidelines. In parallel, we created a whistleblower policy, ensuring employees and third parties feel safe to speak up without fear of repercussions. Creating a fear-free organisation is essential: people must trust that their voices are valued and that raising concerns will lead to meaningful action, not retaliation."

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Join our initiative. 🗗



Listen to our podcast episode on circularity. ☐





Bridging digital divides with Close the Gap

When LCL partnered with Close the Gap - a social enterprise working to bridge the digital divide - in 2022, it was more than just a donation of retired IT equipment. It marked the start of an active alliance built on shared ambition, tangible impact, and the belief that technology should be an enabler for all. Olivier Vanden Evnde, CEO of Close the Gap: "Of all the companies I've worked with in the past 20 years, few combine scale and soul like LCL. They donate IT hardware, but also open doors, create networks, and bring their entire ecosystem along. That kind of partnership is rare and transformative."

It's been over two years since LCL and Close the Gap teamed up. What's changed since the start?

Olivier Vanden Eynde: "LCL helped us break into a new ecosystem. The data center world was somewhat outside our network until LCL brought us in, introduced us to customers, hosted us at their events, and spotlighted our work in their sustainability report. That visibility was huge. But what really stood out was their sincerity. This clearly wasn't box-ticking. It was real commitment."

What impact did that visibility have?

"It has led to new partners, more donations, and stronger credibility in sectors we hadn't reached before. LCL became a real ambassador, not just in name, but in action. That's how we ended up with connections not only in Belgium, but as far as Nairobi, where even international data center executives working with LCL now know who we are. For a lean impact organisation like ours, that's invaluable."

Beyond visibility, what are some of the key results?

"Since 2022, we've significantly scaled our reach. In Kenya, Congo, and South Africa, we've expanded our local operations, built distribution and training hubs, and launched ambitious joint ventures. One example is Elewa, our Nairobi-based joint-venture coding school and developer agency, where 50 young professionals - many women in tech - are now working full-time as developers for Belgian start-ups, without ever leaving Kenya. It's dignified, local, and future-proof employment."

Close the Gap also works locally in Belgium. Can you share more?

"Yes. Even before COVID, we co-launched DigitalForYouth.be together with DNS.be, a Belgian non-profit giving underprivileged young people access to digital tools and skills. So far, we've reached nearly 30,000 young people in Belgium. It's a direct, national impact we're very proud of. Sustainability and inclusion don't stop at borders."

Have you seen a shift in demand for refurbished IT equipment?

"Absolutely. Refurbishment is a core part of the circular economy, but the supply side is lagging. In Africa, for example, there's no real second-hand market because there's no local manufacturing. That's why corporate donations are so important. They fill a gap while we work on building long-term systems."

What can LCL customers and suppliers do if they want to support your mission?

"Start with your IT inventory. We'll make sure it gets a second life, safely and ethically. But beyond that: engage, host events, visit our operations, bring our story to your teams. Partnerships like the one with LCL work best when they're multidimensional."

What's next for Close the Gap?

"We're continuing to scale. We want to see more tech manufacturing and refurbishment take place in Africa itself, not just collection and export. That means investing in local infrastructure and talent. And thanks to partners like LCL, we're getting there. We're also working on more formal training programmes, internships, and awareness-building in Europe. Because bridging the digital divide starts with empathy and shared purpose."



Olivier Vanden Eynde, CEO at Close the Gap

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Helping AG Insurance make IT greener

As Belgium's largest insurer and a major institutional investor, AG Insurance plays a crucial role in driving sustainability at multiple levels. From responsible investment strategies to green IT policies, sustainable procurement, and data-driven ESG reporting, AG is embedding sustainability across its entire ecosystem. "Of course, sustainability plays an important role in our investment decisions and in our insurance products, but there's more to it: sustainability extends to every aspect of our operations, including IT", says Jolien Sabbe, Head of Sustainability Office. Or as Jolien's colleague Nicolas Ronchain, Head of I&O (Infrastructure & Operations) Programs and Relationship Management, states: "We have a responsibility to ensure that our digital infrastructure aligns with our ESG commitments."



Jolien Sabbe, Head of Sustainability Office and Nicolas Ronchain, Head of Infrastructure & Operations AG Insurance

AG Insurance is serious when it comes to sustainability. By 2030 the insurer aims to reduce its CO2 emissions related to its own operations by 40%. As part of its green approach to IT, AG extended the life cycle of laptops, recycles those that do need to be replaced, and regularly cleans up its data centers, servers and other storage systems. Computer equipment that has reached the end of its life cycle is donated to charitable organisations such as Digital for Youth, a non-profit that provides computers to young people to reduce digital inequality.

AG's collaboration with LCL contributes to this transformation. AG currently houses 50m² of IT infrastructure and 270 active devices in LCL's facilities, leveraging their high-efficiency cooling systems and 100% green energy use to further reduce its IT-related energy footprint. "The importance of this collaboration cannot be

overestimated, because IT is a silent polluter", says Nicolas Ronchain. "Every cloud-based system, every Al operation, and every stored file consumes energy."

AG plays multiple roles in Belgium's sustainability transition: as an insurer, investor, employer, and IT user. How do these responsibilities connect?

Jolien Sabbe: "Sustainability is embedded in our day-to-day activities. As an investor, we are shifting capital toward green bonds, renewable energy projects, sustainable infrastructure and social investments like schools, hospitals and social housing. €12.9 billion of our portfolio is now classified as investments supporting the transition towards a more sustainable world, with a target of reaching more than €15 billion by 2027."

"As an insurer, we actively promote sustainability through products that encourage eco-conscious behaviour by offering for example an ecosystem for electric vehicles. Additionally, with Go4Impact, AG offers an online tool that allows its insurance brokers to calculate the ecological footprint of their activities and reduce it through impactful actions tailored to their office. AG is the first insurer in Belgium to develop such a tool."

"As a responsible company, we conduct business with integrity and respect for the environment and society. Since 2019, AG has been calculating, reducing and offsetting its CO2 emissions from its own activities. Reductions came amongst others through our new AG Campus which was built to the highest



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Jolien Sabbe, Head of Sustainability Office and Nicolas Ronchain, Head of Infrastructure & Operations AG Insurance

responsible-architecture and circular-economy standards. The electricity we consume comes from renewable sources, including 883 solar panels installed on our office buildings and as part of the transition towards electric vehicles, we installed 128 new charging stations at our offices in 2024, in addition to the 34 that had already been installed previously.

Nicolas Ronchain: "IT is the backbone of our business, but it's also an often-overlooked sustainability issue. Data usage is exploding: every new system, every Al-powered tool, every extra terabyte stored in our datacenters or in the cloud has a measurable environmental cost. That's why AG has integrated data retention policies, extended hardware lifespans, and ensured that our core IT operations run on renewable energy-powered data centers like LCL."

AG has been working with LCL for years. What makes them the right partner?

Nicolas Ronchain: "Let's call a spade a spade: as a financial player, our top priorities are security, performance, and resilience at a reasonable cost. Only when our strict conditions in this area are met do we consider sustainability — and yes, today more than ever, that can be a dealbreaker. LCL aligns with our ESG roadmap by operating entirely on renewable energy today, while committing to self-produce 40% of that energy from renewable sources by 2030. The transparency of their carbon reporting is also crucial for us, particularly for our Scope 3 emissions disclosures."

Jolien Sabbe: "Under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), businesses are now required to disclose detailed Scope 3 emissions data. Partnering with LCL allows us to receive precise, verifiable data on our IT footprint, allowing compliancy while making meaningful progress on our sustainability goals."

How can LCL support AG Insurance going forward?

Nicolas Ronchain: "As IT demand grows and sustainability regulations become stricter, we expect LCL to continue innovating in energy-efficient cooling technologies, battery storage solutions, and new green energy integrations such as solar and wind power. We also expect LCL to proactively share best practices on how to further optimize ESG practices in our data centers' hardware and operations. The more proactive they are, the more aligned we can remain in our ESG commitments."



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Sharing the same passion for the customer

Axians Belgium found in LCL the strategic partner who understands its challenges, anticipates future trends, and provides sustainable solutions. "Our philosophy at Axians is 'ICT with a human touch'. We deliver IT solutions in a way that makes customers feel valued, not like just another number. That's why LCL is such a great fit. Their customer intimacy approach aligns perfectly with our vision," says Wilfried Houtput, Business Unit Manager at Axians Belgium, the ICT brand of VINCI Energies.



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Wilfried Houtput, Business Unit Manager at Axians Belgium

Why did Axians choose to partner with LCL?

Wilfried Houtput: "LCL's approach to customer intimacy – some call it customer proximity – fits exactly with our business philosophy. Our go-tomarket slogan, 'ICT with a human touch', reflects how we operate: providing ICT services in a way that ensures customers experience a personal connection, rather than feeling like just another number. By working closely with customers, we better understand their needs and can deliver the best possible solutions. Or as we say: we make sure our customers sleep soundly at night."

Can you leverage your relationship with LCL towards your customers?

"It's something we certainly do. At this moment, customer intimacy plays a bigger role than sustainability in our customers' decision. However, the biggest deciding factor for many customers is LCL's independence. Their neutrality towards internet providers gives our customers a strategic advantage and prevents vendor lock-in. While sustainability is currently less decisive in their decision, we expect this to change in the near future. For Axians itself, sustainability is already top of mind, as it supports our sustainability reporting and market positioning."

Is sustainability becoming a higher priority for your customers?

"Absolutely. When looking at the annual reports of our customers, we see sustainability and energy transition increasingly mentioned alongside IT implementations. That means company management is taking this seriously, and it's on the radar of their own customers as well. Sustainability is becoming a key concern."

What ESG factors matter most in your collaboration with LCL?

"Within Axians, we have a sustainability manager responsible for overseeing our sustainable initiatives and certifications, such as our EcoVadis Gold Medal. By the way, congratulations to LCL on receiving the EcoVadis Platinum Medal. For us, the most important thing is knowing that sustainability is fully embedded within LCL's organisation. The measures they take, such as using 100% green electricity, align with our own

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efforts. Being part of Vinci Energies, we support the energy transition at every step: from production with renewable energy solutions, storage in batteries, hydrogen production, and e-boilers, to transmission, transport, heat recovery, CO2 reduction in production processes, and smart energy management systems to optimally align consumption with energy availability."

IT and sustainability departments can operate separately, potentially missing opportunities as a result. How does Axians manage this?

"It's easy to claim sustainability, but if you really want to understand and control the challenges, you have to go deep into the details. At Axians, we solve this by combining expertise: our sustainability manager is also an IT manager. This ensures a streamlined approach, avoiding gaps between sustainability goals and IT decision-making. However, we still face the challenge of navigating complex regulations."

"That's why I believe in strong partnerships. LCL, for example, makes it clear: if you want your data center facilities to be truly sustainable, you've come to the right place. That's what I expect from a partner."

Is Axians investing in sustainable IT infrastructure, or are you encouraging customers to do so?

"This is mainly an ecological challenge. When it comes to servers and storage systems, we must take the right steps because the impact is significant. For instance, we helped a mutual customer achieve a 15% energy reduction simply by upgrading their storage management system."

"But caution is needed. Replacing old laptops too quickly with energy-efficient models may seem sustainable, but when you factor in the raw materials and production footprint, the environmental benefit is not always clear-cut. Making informed decisions with expert insights is key."

"One area where I strongly believe in LCL's sustainability initiatives is data center cooling. By optimising temperature management, they fundamentally improve efficiency. This kind of structural innovation has a much greater long-term impact."

What do you expect from LCL as a partner?

"Of course, availability is number one, that's the foundation. But beyond that, the real value lies in staying ahead of technological developments and keeping us informed about what's coming next. I appreciate a partnership where I'm not just a customer, but part of the bigger picture. I want to know: What challenges do you see? What strategies are you adopting? What trends should we prepare for? With that knowledge, I can better advise my customers."

"In today's world, continuous improvement is essential. Companies shouldn't have to chase suppliers for updates: suppliers should proactively keep customers ahead of the curve, especially in sustainability and technological innovation."



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What are Axians' key focus areas?

"Cyber security is a top priority. With NIS2 regulations becoming stricter, security is a business-critical requirement. Cyber attacks are unavoidable, alas, so companies must prepare for incidents and ensure fast recovery. Our customers expect business resilience: not just protection but the ability to bounce back quickly."

"More broadly, our vision is to create sustainable, secure, and flexible IT solutions that evolve with our customers' needs. By continuing to innovate and strengthening partnerships like the one with LCL, we ensure that we remain at the forefront, both technologically and environmentally."

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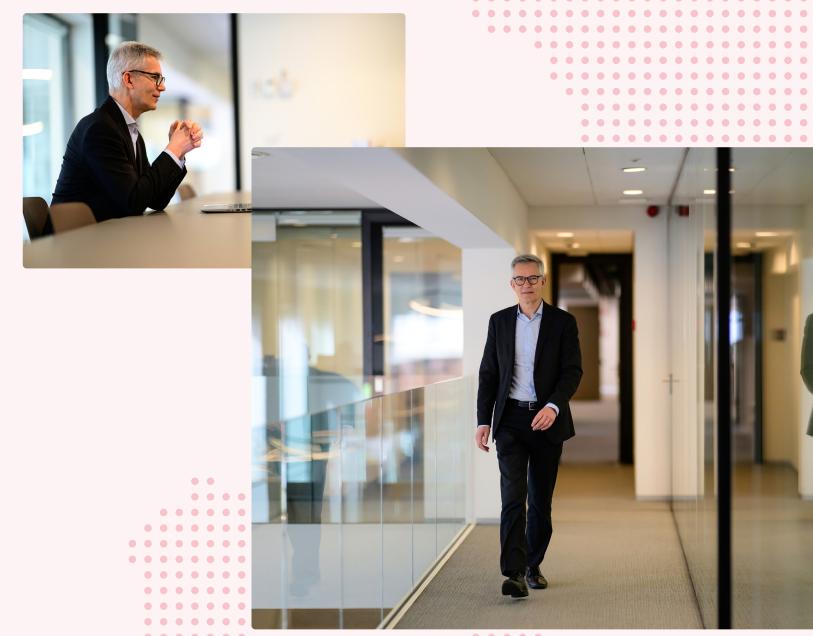
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Strengthening our customer intimacy as a core differentiator

Customer intimacy is a strategic priority at LCL. By investing in service quality, sustainability, and compliance, we are strengthening customer relationships and attracting the attention of domestic and international enterprises seeking a reliable, high-quality data center partner. "We see clear results from our efforts. Our customer satisfaction score has made a nice leap, and we're committed to raising the bar even higher. It is also noteworthy that our international expansion efforts are reinforcing LCL's position in the local market," says Baudouin Corlùy, Chief Market Development Officer at LCL.



Baudouin Corlùy, Chief Market Development Officer

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LCL recently conducted a customer satisfaction survey. What were the key takeaways?

Baudouin Corlùy: "The results confirm that our efforts to strengthen customer intimacy are paying off. This year, using Profact's' rating system, we achieved a significant leap from 73 to 78 – a remarkable improvement. Compared to the industry benchmark, which hovers around 69, our score puts us in a strong position. Of course, we are happy that our customers are noticing the changes we're making and appreciate the service we provide. Being LCL, our ambition is to continue climbing higher. We're seeing the impact of our initiatives in service quality, sustainability, and customer engagement, and that's exactly where we want to be."

What factors contributed to this progress?

"A combination of factors. First and foremost, our Service Delivery and Sales teams have been instrumental in building strong relationships with customers. Feedback from the survey shows that customers appreciate the friendliness, professionalism, and availability of our teams. At the same time, they want even more personalised interaction, which is something we'll continue to improve."

"Another key element is our focus on sustainability. Customers recognise our efforts in reducing environmental impact and maintaining compliance with strict regulations. The fact that we've received external recognition, such as the DataNews Award for Most Sustainable ICT Company of the Year, reinforces that we're heading in the right direction."

What specific initiatives have been most valued by customers?

"One of the biggest successes is the LCL Service Hub. The survey results confirm that customers value this initiative and want us to expand it further. The LCL Service Hub is not just another support platform, it's becoming a key differentiator in customer experience. By centralising and improving our service offering, we're making it easier for customers to get the assistance they need."

"We're also continuously improving our advisory role. Customers seek guidance on connectivity, but as a neutral data center, we cannot favour specific telecom providers. Finding the right balance between offering insights and remaining impartial is an ongoing challenge."

What are the biggest challenges in improving customer experience?

"Communication remains one of the biggest hurdles. An important side note: communication with our customers is not handled solely by the Sales and Marketing team but often also by our colleagues at operations and, at times, through other channels - making it a shared responsibility. A data center is often seen as infrastructure that should simply 'work' without much thought from customers. However, as sustainability and compliance become more critical, companies are realising they need professional support to report on ESG metrics, maintain regulatory compliance, and optimise operations. Take compliance, for example. A large potential customer we've been in discussions with for two years keeps coming back with the same question:

'Are you compliant? Can you prove it?' This shows how essential compliance and transparency have become. Companies need certainty, and that's where we play a crucial role."

In 2024, LCL also set its sights beyond national borders. What is the impact of internationalisation?

"We developed a strong and unique proposition to get on the radar of international customers: hyperscalers, Al companies, big enterprises, etc. And what do we notice? That these efforts are also having a positive impact at home. Thanks to the international positioning campaign we rolled out, new prospects have already come knocking. It's clear that this initiative inspires confidence. It is now up to our Sales team to build on this – a long-term effort."

"We also notice that we are attracting attention from larger and more demanding companies because, in terms of quality, compliance, and ESG performance, we prove what we are capable of and go far beyond others."

Looking ahead, what is your vision for customer engagement?

"We are committed to strengthening customer intimacy as a core differentiator. The market is evolving, and we're seeing larger enterprises showing increasing interest in our services. This confirms that we're on the right path. By maintaining a customer-first approach, staying ahead of compliance requirements, and continuously improving our service offering, we are ensuring that LCL remains a trusted partner for businesses looking for a reliable and sustainable data center."



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Our LCL Service Hub enhances customer interaction

In May 2024, LCL introduced its brand-new LCL Service Hub, replacing its previous online service desk. The goal? To create a more interactive, efficient, and customer-focused platform. The result? A transparent and user-friendly system that goes beyond a traditional service desk and redefines the way customers interact with LCL. Leading the project were Antje Letens, Business Project Coordinator, and Noah Peeters, Customer Officer, who ensured a smooth transition. "Our previous service desk was built with operational efficiency in mind, but it didn't align with the strategy we want to follow today."

Why did LCL decide to replace its previous online service desk?

Antje Letens: "The old platform had several limitations. Customers couldn't easily see the services LCL offered, there was no strong link to our branding, and tracking the progress of requests was difficult. It wasn't interactive and didn't encourage usage. In short, it didn't meet customer expectations, nor did it reflect the level of service LCL wants to provide."

Noah Peeters: "Because this platform is the daily working environment for our Service Delivery team and the central point for all requests and assignments, small fixes wouldn't have done the job. The system contained a vast amount of information and functionalities, so we decided to build an entirely new, tailor-made platform from scratch."

How did you approach the development of the new LCL Service Hub?

Antje Letens: "As Noah said, we didn't just tweak the old system. We started with a blank slate, asking ourselves: what should this platform be capable of, and how should it look? The first step was gathering input. We interviewed our top 10 customers, working closely with the Service Delivery team to identify missing functionalities and key expectations. We also analysed what makes similar platforms successful in the market."

Noah Peeters: "Since we wanted a fully customised application, we brought in an external software development team. These developers didn't have prior experience in the data center



Noah Peeters, Customer Officer and Antje Letens, Business Project Coordinator

industry, so we took them on-site to show them exactly how we operate. This hands-on experience helped them translate our processes into an intuitive digital interface."

Antje Letens: "We worked intensively with UX (user experience) specialists to ensure the platform wasn't just functional, but also intuitive and scalable. We tested multiple versions, refining the interface until it met the needs of both customers and our internal team. From initial planning to full implementation, the entire project took two and a half years."

What are the key improvements of the new LCL Service Hub?

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Antje Letens: "The LCL Service Hub really is a major leap forward compared to our previous platform. One of the biggest improvements is the faster processing of requests, where modifications such as access requests that previously took up to 48 hours for approval can now be handled in under a minute. Another key advantage is the real-time transparency, allowing customers to access up-to-date information anytime without relying on Excel sheets or manual follow-ups. The design is also more user-friendly, featuring interactive dashboards

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that make submitting and managing requests much more intuitive. And while many support platforms rely solely on automated ticketing, we have maintained our focus on personalised support, ensuring that customers still have direct contact with us."

Noah Peeters: "Internally, the LCL Service Hub has streamlined how our Service Delivery teams handle customer requests. By automating processes that were previously manual, we've significantly reduced administrative workload and freed up time for more strategic customer support. This translates to faster response times, greater self-service capabilities for our customers, and a more personalised experience."

Does the LCL Service Hub also improve communication and engagement?

Antje Letens: "Absolutely. LCL's data centers are as much a service as they are infrastructure. Communication with our customers is critical. The LCL Service Hub provides a single point of interaction, ensuring that customers can always find what they need in one place. With real-time tracking, automated notifications, and direct access to Service Delivery teams, customers no longer have to chase updates. This has made collaboration between LCL and our customers more seamless."

How has customer feedback been since the launch?

Noah Peeters: "The initial response has been very positive. Customers appreciate the improved transparency, the faster processing times, and the ability to manage their requests without delays. One of our customers described it as a 'game-changer' in terms of efficiency. The transition to the LCL Service Hub undoubtedly was the right move. Now it is key to keep improving the platform. We are continuously gathering feedback to ensure that the LCL Service Hub evolves with the changing needs of our customers and the industry. We built the system with adaptability in mind, ensuring that we can seamlessly integrate new technologies and functionalities as they become relevant."

Are there already planned upgrades or new features?

Antje Letens: "Definitely, we have an ambitious roadmap for further development. In terms of sustainability, customers will in time be able to track their carbon footprint within the platform, helping them operate more sustainably by suggesting greener alternatives for outdated equipment. On the security side, we are expanding access control features, giving customers even greater control over their security settings and permissions. Another key addition is the new maintenance and facility module, which will allow customers to report and follow up on infrastructure issues directly in the LCL Service Hub. Specific maintenance-related documents will also be made available via the platform for key customers, and planned works will be

clearly displayed. We're also rolling out a satisfaction rating feature to gather more structured feedback and improve how we respond to customer expectations. Finally, several smaller enhancements—based on input gathered throughout the past year—will be implemented to make the platform even more intuitive and valuable."

Noah Peeters: "We're committed to continuously improving the LCL Service Hub, ensuring it remains an indispensable tool for our customers."



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Turning regulation into resilience

"As a data center, you don't get to choose whether you take cyber security seriously," says Nicolas Coppee, CIO at LCL. "When you serve highly regulated sectors, like we do, it is simply a prerequisite for doing business." Hence the collaboration with Apogado, a boutique consultancy that translates legal obligations into practical, actionable measures and bridges the gap between law, policy, and complex IT environments through strategic advice and technical expertise.

"'Apogado' means 'solution' in Esperanto," explains Koert Van Espen, Founder and Managing Partner at Apogado. "That's how we see our role: translating complexity into something operational teams can actually work with." Together with legal consultant Cas Bauwens, the Apogado team is helping LCL prepare for what's ahead: NIS2, DORA, the EU AI Act and beyond. But the aim is much broader: embed cyber security into governance, elevate awareness among teams, and treat compliance as a driver of trust and resilience.

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Koen Van Espen, Founder and Managing Partner and Cas Bauwens, Legal Consultant at Apogado

What made LCL reach out to Apogado?

Nicolas Coppee: "We've always taken security seriously at LCL, but with mounting challenges in general and new laws like NIS2 and DORA, the stakes are changing. Apogado appealed to us because they combine legal insight with operational know-how. That's crucial when you want to turn regulation into a strength instead of a burden."

Koert Van Espen: "What strikes us about LCL is their proactive mindset. They want to get ahead of future challenges. In our dictionary

there's more to compliance than abiding laws and ticking boxes. We strongly believe data and cyber security are about building resilience. LCL shares that vision."

Cas Bauwens: "That said, regulation remains a key driver, especially for companies like LCL, who manage critical infrastructure and serve customers in the financial sector. With NIS2 (focused on cyber security in essential sectors) and DORA (ensuring digital resilience in finance) on the horizon, it's essential to demonstrate not just compliance, but forward-thinking readiness."

What exactly do NIS2 and DORA bring to the table?

Cas Bauwens: "NIS2 is the successor to the original Network and Information Systems Directive, which mainly applied to sectors like energy and transport. The updated version significantly expands the scope. Now, data centers like LCL fall under the 'essential entities' category. That comes with stricter cyber security requirements, ranging from risk analysis to access control and business continuity."

Koert Van Espen: "DORA, the Digital Operational Resilience Act, is focused on financial services. LCL itself isn't a bank, but it supports many of them. So even if the rules don't apply directly, the expectations do. Financial customers are already asking: how do you help us meet our own compliance obligations?"

How do you approach such a complex project?

Koert Van Espen: "Our approach is modular. We don't drop a 300-page document on the table. We start by mapping the regulatory requirements to LCL's specific business context. That means looking at what's already in place, like their ISO certifications and incident protocols, and business continuity plans and identifying where we need to go further."

Cas Bauwens: "One of the most important steps is clarifying accountability. Under NIS2, board members and senior management can be held liable for cyber security failures. That makes governance a strategic asset. Equally important: involving all departments, not just IT

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Listen to our podcast episode on cyber security.

Discover more about NIS2. ₽

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or legal. LCL had already created internal awareness through Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) – a sign of maturity."

Nicolas Coppee: "We already put an ERM framework in place, and cyber security has been identified as a top priority. We've also created a cross-departmental working group and defined clear roles and reporting lines. For example, we now have an internal escalation process for cyber incidents, with defined timeframes and responsibilities."

What are the most common risks companies underestimate?

Koert Van Espen: "Supply chain vulnerabilities. Everyone works with subcontractors, vendors, platforms... but not everyone has a clear view of their digital dependencies. That's risky. Another one is assuming your technical defences are enough. Cyber criminals don't just hack systems, they trick people. Spoofing, deepfakes, highly targeted phishing—they're not always technical threats. They're psychological. That's why we strongly recommend awareness training, simulations, and role-based access reviews."

Nicolas Coppee: "At LCL, we launched phishing simulations, interactive trainings, awareness sessions and quizzes. Not just to inform, but to engage people. Cyber security only works if everyone plays their part."

Do companies differ in how they deal with cyber security?

Koert Van Espen: "Immensely. Some only move when there's pressure from regulators, customers or after an incident. Others, like LCL, act because they want to run a top-notch business. That proactive mindset is incredibly valuable."

Cas Bauwens: "When cyber security becomes part of your DNA, you start asking different questions. You don't just ask 'What do we need to do?' but 'What's the smartest way to do it in our environment?'"

Is AI changing the cyber security landscape?

Cas Bauwens: "It certainly is. The EU AI Act is a gamechanger. Companies will have to audit how they use AI, especially for high-risk applications. You'll need to explain how data was trained, ensure human oversight, and manage vendor risks.

Koert Van Espen: "And then there's the question of sovereignty. Where is your Al infrastructure hosted? Who can access it? The geopolitical aspect of data has never been more relevant."

What does success look like?

Koert Van Espen: "Success is when compliance becomes part of your culture. That's what we're helping LCL build."

Nicolas Coppee: "For us, it's peace of mind: internally and externally. Our customers need to know their data is safe and their partners are dependable. When a financial customer asks

how we comply with DORA, for instance, we can show the facts. That's powerful."

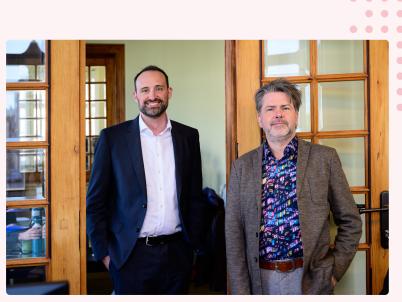
What are LCL's expectations going forward?

Nicolas Coppee: "Our ambition is clear: we want cyber security and compliance to support our growth. That means building frameworks that scale, improving how we work across departments, and staying ahead of customer expectations."

Koert Van Espen: "One of the things we appreciate in working with LCL is that willingness to evolve. Cyber security can feel abstract.

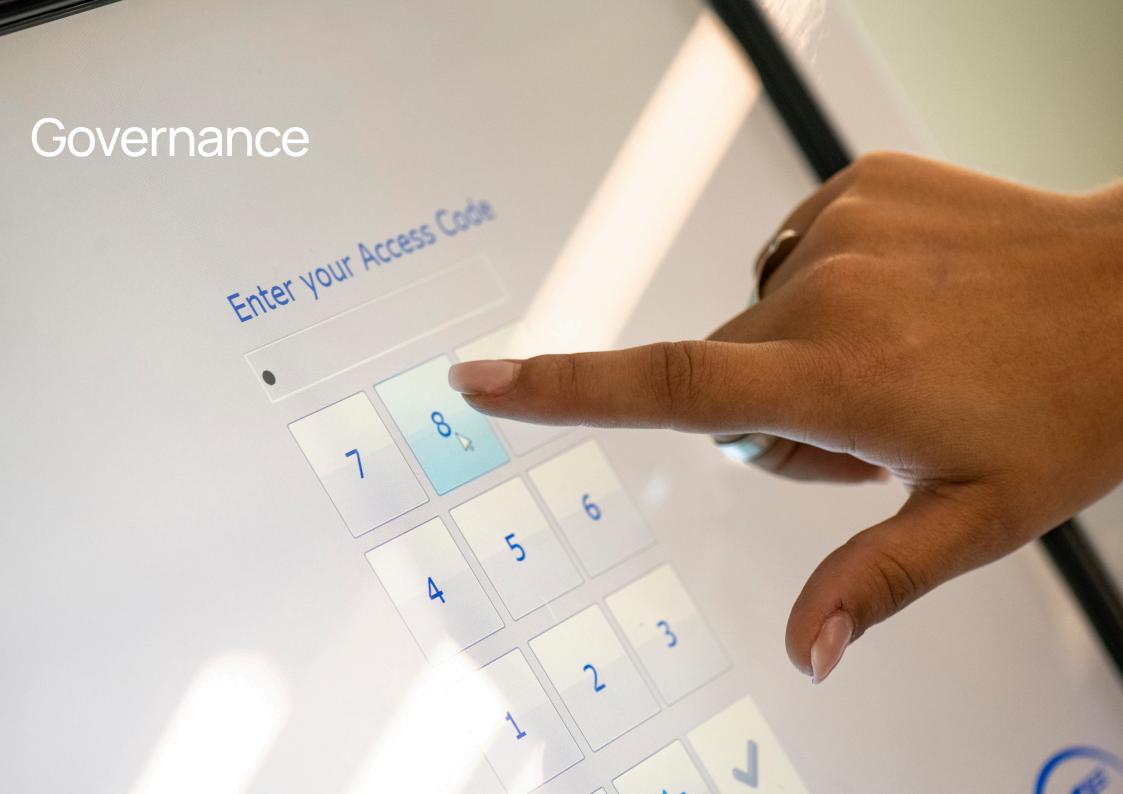
But when you do it well, it connects people, strengthens governance, and reinforces trust.

That's the goal."



Nicolas Coppee, CIO at LCL and Koen Van Espen, Founder & Managing Partner at Apogado

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<u>Discover all</u> <u>our certificates.</u> ₽



Read our Code of Ethics. ₽





Our Code of Ethics: LCL as a safe place to speak up

In 2024, LCL formalised its long-standing ethical principles in a comprehensive Code of Ethics, thereby reinforcing its commitment to transparency, accountability and integrity. Developed by the HR and Procurement teams, the Code sets out clear expectations for employees, customers, suppliers, and partners, covering areas such as human rights, wellbeing, diversity, sustainability, data protection, and fair competition.

At the heart of the initiative is a core ambition: to foster a fear-free organisation. One where questions, concerns, or suspicions can be raised openly and without the risk of retaliation. LCL makes this commitment explicit in the Code by naming trusted internal contacts and providing an external whistleblowing channel. In short: speaking up is encouraged and protected.

Guidance on dilemmas

The Code of Ethics is part of a broader push to embed ethical awareness into daily work. In 2024, we also updated our Anti-Bribery and Corruption (ABC) policy and incorporated it into a newly mandatory training programme. All staff are required to follow the training and formally acknowledge they understand and will adhere to the principles. The training offers concrete guidance on common ethical dilemmas, such as gifts, conflicts of interest, and transparency in dealings.

Alongside this, LCL implemented a formal Whistleblower Policy, ensuring confidentiality and safeguards for both internal and external stakeholders. Whether it concerns suspected misconduct, compliance breaches or ethical concerns: reporting channels are in place. LCL's stance is clear: everyone should feel free to raise concerns and know they will be taken seriously.

These developments reflect our commitment to responsible business and long-term trust. By setting clear standards, creating safe channels for dialogue, and building awareness through training, we aim to anchor ethics in every decision and interaction.

LCL receives certificate of conformity for EU Code of Conduct for Data Centers

The EU Code of Conduct for Data Centers is an initiative by the European Commission that encourages data centers to adopt energy-efficient operations. While not mandatory, it provides concrete guidelines to reduce energy consumption without compromising business continuity.

LCL has successfully completed an audit by Bureau Veritas for compliance with the EU Code of Conduct for Data Centres and has been awarded a Certificate of Conformity. This recognises our commitment to energy-efficient operations.

The certification is the result of a joint effort by all the technical departments at LCL. In the first phase, each subsite completed a questionnaire with 106 questions for Bureau Veritas, the independent audit firm. The answers were then further substantiated with the necessary documentation. This was followed by on-site audits, where LCL's experts and engineers were interviewed.





By making Enterprise Risk Management part of our strategy, LCL turns risks into opportunities

Risk management is all about identifying potential threats? True, but also not true. At LCL, the implementation of the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system in 2024 is both a compliance exercise and a strategic enabler that helps us embed governance, sustainability, and resilience into our core operations.



Els Demeester, Chairwoman and Mieke Germonprez, Quality Manager at LCL

The driving force behind this initiative was Chairwoman Els Demeester, who recognised the need for a structured risk approach as a crucial step towards operational excellence and long-term sustainability. Working closely with her was Quality Manager Mieke Germonprez, who played a key role in translating strategic ambitions into a practical and actionable framework. "If you want to embed sustainability into your organisation, you need to approach risk management proactively. ERM not only helps us identifying risks to react quickly and effectively if they turn into an issue. It also brings new opportunities to innovate, improve governance, and create a more sustainable business model", says Els Demeester.

What is enterprise risk management, and why has LCL decided to implement it?

Mieke Germonprez: "Enterprise risk management, or ERM, is about gaining a complete and structured view of all potential risks and opportunities that could affect our ability to reach our goals. It's a strategic process that helps identify, assess, prioritise, and mitigate risks across the entire organisation. The aim is to strengthen our resilience in the face of uncertainty. At LCL, we already had strong ISO-based risk practices in place, but we wanted to take it a step further. With the ERM system, we're gaining additional insight into all the risks we face: strategic, operational, and emerging."

Why was implementing an ERM system a priority for the Board?

Els Demeester: "When we started shaping the Board, we took a step back to reassess our key responsibilities. A Board has different roles: strategic oversight, financial monitoring, organisational culture, and risk management. From the very start, it was clear that risk management had to be at the core of our governance framework. We needed a structured, transparent approach that would allow us to anticipate risks rather than react to them."

"At the same time, customer expectations were shifting. Some of our key customers were putting risk management high on the agenda asking how we were planning to handle this together as partners. In other words: a solid ERM system was more than an internal necessity, it would also give us a competitive advantage. Our rapid growth and high standards for customer intimacy and satisfaction made it crystal clear that having a strong risk management framework was a logical next step."

"Risk management is not a box-ticking exercise. It's a strategic business discipline to secure the future so LCL stays a resilient organisation."

Els Demeester

- Chairwoman LCL

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How did you approach the implementation?

Mieke Germonprez: "We took a phased and structured approach to ensure the ERM system was built on solid foundations. We started with a broad risk assessment, leveraging data from multiple sources: our ESG double materiality analysis (DMA), various ISO risk and threat analyses, safety trainings and audit findings. These provided a comprehensive view of both strategic and operational risks."

"Because I oversee all ISO certifications, we were able to align the ERM framework closely with our existing standards. But we wanted to go beyond ISO. That's why we brought in an external consultant with extensive experience in setting up ERM systems in other companies. This allowed us to structure the process professionally from day one, define clear mitigation actions, and prioritise the risks that matter most."

"All departments were involved from the start. We organised interviews with middle management and key stakeholders, which helped build ownership across our company. The project officially kicked off in January 2024, with the goal of presenting a fully developed risk overview by September 2024."

"Risk management is an ongoing process. Risks evolve, the industry changes, society and the world at large change, and new challenges emerge. That's why the ERM system is designed to be dynamic and continuously updated."

Mieke Germonprez

- Quality Manager LCL

What were the biggest challenges?

Els Demeester: "One of the biggest hurdles was shifting the perception on risk management. Too often, risk management is seen as just identifying threats, but in reality, it's a tool for creating new business opportunities. That mindset shift was crucial. Another challenge was ensuring ownership and engagement across all levels of our company. Risk management requires input from every team, from Operations to IT and Finance. We needed a process where stakeholders felt responsible for identifying and managing risks, rather than seeing it as a top-down directive." Mieke Germonprez: "To have that buy-in and ensure engagement, we took a collaborative approach. We held interviews with key stakeholders, including Management Team members and department heads. This gave us a comprehensive view of risks across different areas, from financial and operational to IT security and ESG related factors."

What are the key benefits?

Mieke Germonprez: "The ERM system has had an immediate impact, particularly in terms of transparency and strategic decision-making. For example, cyber security emerged as a high-priority risk. With the ERM system in place, we now have clear mitigation actions and a structured approach to address vulnerabilities before they escalate."

"Another key benefit is the ability to track risk evolution over time. We have developed a Power BI dashboard that provides real-time insights into risk exposure, mitigation actions, and progress tracking. This ensures that risk management is not just a theoretical framework but a practical, data-driven tool that supports business decisions."

How does ERM fit into LCL's sustainability strategy?

Els Demeester: "Sustainability and governance are deeply connected to risk management. You can't talk about sustainability without having a structured way to manage risk. ERM helps us anticipate potential ESG challenges, whether that's regulatory changes, environmental risks, or stakeholder expectations. One important outcome of our ERM exercise was recognising the impact of climate-related risks. Not just how external factors affect LCL, but also how our own activities impact the environment. This has now been embedded into our risk framework and will be monitored at Board level on a quarterly basis."

How does LCL ensure that ERM remains an ongoing process rather than a one-time exercise?

Mieke Germonprez: "We have set up a quarterly risk review where we reassess high-priority risks and monitor progress on mitigation actions. Additionally, we conduct a full-scale risk reassessment annually, ensuring that we remain proactive rather than reactive."

Els Demeester: "ERM is fully embedded in our governance processes. At every Board meeting, risk management is a fixed agenda item. We also involve subject-matter experts from within and outside the company to ensure that we stay ahead of emerging risks."

What are the next steps?

Els Demeester: "We will focus on broadening risk awareness across all levels of LCL. We want every employee to understand the role they play in identifying and mitigating risks. Risk management really is about building a culture where risk awareness is second nature. We will also continue refining our cyber security strategy, ensuring we stay ahead of regulatory changes such as NIS2 and DORA. Additionally, we plan to enhance third-party risk management, ensuring that all our partners and suppliers align with LCL's risk standards."





Towards a Nutri-Score for sustainable Al

Artificial intelligence (AI) is evolving at an unprecedented pace. But at what cost? The energy consumption of large AI models is soaring, while concerns about bias, transparency, and ethical governance remain. Can AI be sustainable?

According to Erik Mannens, Professor Sustainable AI at University of Antwerp and Professor Semantic Intelligence at Ghent University, part of the solution lies in the Nutri-Score for AI he developed: a clear rating system that measures sustainability just as we do with food labelling. Making AI truly sustainable requires action across the entire ecosystem. "It's not just up to data centers: chipmakers, AI developers, and businesses all have a responsibility to demand and build more energy-efficient, transparent AI," says Mannens.

Since 2019, you have focused exclusively on sustainable Al. What's your drive?

Erik Mannens: "Because I believe all projects I run definitely should have a positive societal impact. There should be more to business than just maximizing financial profits. So, that's how I approach Al: it can contribute to sustainability, but only if Al itself is developed in a sustainable way. Hence the motto: Al for sustainability

through the sustainability of Al."

"At the Universities of Antwerp and Ghent, we deliberately avoid working on large language models (LLMs) because currently they consume far too much energy, both during training and inference. Instead, we focus on smaller models that, like humans, function with minimal energy and data. Sounds theoretical maybe, but it is already working in practice. For example, we have two projects running with the European Space Agency (ESA), where Al models must function on low-orbit satellites with just 1 Watt of solar power. That requires highly efficient Al, such as Spiking Neural Networks (SNNs), which do not run constantly but are only activated when needed."

Sustainability is about more than energy consumption. How do you define sustainable Al?

"For me, Al must be sustainable for both the planet and people. For the planet, that means energy efficiency and responsible use of resources. For people, it means privacy protection, eliminating bias, ensuring transparency, and the like. Based on these principles, I developed a Nutri-Score for Al. Just like food labelling helps consumers understand how healthy a product is. Al should have a clear rating that shows how sustainable a model is, both in terms of energy consumption and ethical considerations. Right now, this kind of transparency does not exist."

"In the long run, this Nutri-Score should be part of a standardised testing framework to assess AI algorithms objectively. On the human impact side, frameworks from Microsoft and IBM already exist, but they are not yet standardised. In terms of energy efficiency, there is no such thing at all. I expect it will take another ten years before we have proper standardised benchmarks for that."

Al has been around for decades, and suddenly: boom! Why the sudden uptake?

"Simply put: because we can! We now have massive data centers and powerful GPUs that allow us to train ever-larger Al models. Particularly with Nvidia chips, which enable parallel computing at an incredible scale, it has become relatively cheap to use vast amounts of computing power in the West. That drives up consumption. Open-source technology has also contributed. Everyone can now experiment with Al, but that does not mean we are always doing it responsibly."

Is Al increasing social inequality?

"I fear so. Africa and South America risk being left behind. The computing power and infrastructure needed to train AI models are currently concentrated in the West and China. That means AI innovations are primarily being driven by a small group of players. European data centers and businesses can play a role in changing this by making conscious decisions about which AI models they support and how they make their technology accessible."



Does Al have the potential to solve the very sustainability problem it is creating?

"Absolutely. In 2015, I predicted that within ten years, an Al-assisted researcher would win a Nobel Prize. This year, it happened. Twice: one in physics and one in chemistry. The breakthrough by Google DeepMind with Alpha-Fold2, which predicts the three-dimensional structure of proteins, is particularly astonishing. This will accelerate drug development, help combat cancer and antibiotic resistance, and even lead to new biotechnological innovations."

"Al has massive potential. But if we want Al to contribute to sustainability, we must deploy it smarter and move away from the energyhungry models we currently rely on."

What can data centers do to make Al more sustainable?

"Data centers are crucial, but in a secondary phase. The first responsibility lies with chip manufacturers and Al developers. They must create more efficient hardware and algorithms. But data centers can be a powerful lever by demanding better solutions from their suppliers. Data centers can integrate sustainability into their procurement processes, ensuring suppliers are forced to offer greener solutions. That would send a strong message to the entire industry. Additionally, data centers themselves can manage their infrastructure more efficiently."

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What role can LCL play? Aren't the big tech companies the ones setting the rules?

"Until about 18 months ago, I was optimistic, because I believed there was room for more than just the tech giants. They were being forced to comply with stricter privacy regulations and operate with greater transparency. Due to the current geopolitical shift, I see those checks and balances disappearing again. We are in an AI arms race, and that makes it difficult to prioritise sustainability."

"That said, as a frontrunner in sustainability, LCL can raise awareness. Many companies do not realise how big their Al footprint is. They need to understand what it means to run a model like ChatGPT versus using a smaller, more efficient Al. Choose the right tool for the right task. It sounds simple, but it is not happening enough."

"Data centers can be leaders in this transition and mind shift. By being transparent about its own energy consumption and helping customers understand the impact of their Al usage, LCL can drive real change. It is a win-win: businesses can brand themselves as partners of a sustainable data center, and data centers can differentiate themselves by investing in greener technology. LCL can make a difference by helping customers with investing in energy-efficient solutions. That is where the real added value lies."



"By being transparent about its own energy consumption and helping customers understand the impact of their AI usage, LCL can drive real change."

Prof. dr. ir. Erik Mannens

Independent AI Expert and Prof.
 Sustainable AI at the University of Antwerp

Prof. dr. ir. Erik Mannens



LCL is building a neutral knowledge platform with Data Center University

Data centers are often seen as complex and closed-off environments. But the demand for clear, trustworthy information about how they operate and contribute to sustainability is rapidly growing. To meet that need, LCL launched Data Center University (DCU): a comprehensive knowledge platform offering qualitative content for external stakeholders, along with dedicated training modules for both staff and suppliers. With an objective of twelve initiatives per year, DCU ensures an ongoing, measurable impact. We spoke with Valérie Van Roy, Marketing and Communication Manager -Sustainability Manager, about DCU's progress and what lies ahead.

What sparked the idea to launch the Data Center University?

Valérie Van Roy: "Transparency about our activities is a key pillar of any solid sustainability strategy. That's why we openly communicate our efforts through our annual sustainability report. In that same spirit, we launched DCU with a clear mission: to share accessible, neutral knowledge about data centers. We formalised this ambition in our previous sustainability report and linked it to a measurable KPI."

How has DCU grown since?

"Our goal is to grow into a neutral knowledge platform for IT professionals across the globe. In 2024, we published seven in-depth articles, five vodcasts in collaboration with media partners, and one whitepaper, reaching and even surpassing our annual objective. We also partnered with MediaNet Vlaanderen and Kanaal Z for a round table on digital transformation in the media and broadcast sector. This helps us reach a wider audience and keep the conversation going with relevant, qualitative content."

So, it's also about building thought leadership?

"Absolutely. But always with a content-first approach. We're not here to sell. As an independent data center, neutrality is part of our DNA. It starts with being a carrier-neutral data center, where customers are free to choose their own telecom providers, and it extends to how we share information. We want DCU to reflect that identity: a thought leadership platform built on impartial, valuable content both for IT professionals and laypeople."

DCU now also includes internal training. How did that evolve?

"That shift happened naturally. At LCL, we believe in continuous learning. Training is a key part of that, and team members are encouraged to schedule at least six training days each year to support their personal and professional growth. In 2024, we significantly invested in internal training, enabling our colleagues to keep learning at their own pace and on their



Valérie Van Roy, Marketing and Communication Manager - Sustainability Manager

own schedule. We launched a comprehensive, mandatory sustainability training for all employees, that explores ESG from multiple angles and recurs every two years. On top of that, we introduced a 'nice to know' session on brain-friendly working, another way of putting the 'S' in ESG into practice. We also provide annual and updated anti-bribery (ABC) training, ISO-related sessions, and a structured onboarding path for new colleagues."

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What motivated the decision to include suppliers in the DCU ecosystem?

"We actively involve our customers and suppliers in our strategy and vision. Just as training is essential for our employees, it is equally important for our suppliers. That's why, in 2024, we introduced a mandatory 'LCL Safety and Security' training for all suppliers who physically enter our data centers. To manage this efficiently, we integrated our learning platform with our CRM system. When a supplier checks in at the security desk, the system automatically checks whether the training has been completed. Twice a year, they are reminded to retake the training to ensure their knowledge remains up to date."

In your sustainability report, DCU is described as a 'sustainable innovation'. What does that mean in practice?

"We identified several key themes that are important for our company, beyond what is required by the CSRD. 'Sustainable innovations and partnerships' is one of them. Data Center University fits perfectly within that pillar. This is a long-term investment in transparency, knowledge sharing, and sector development. That's why we see DCU as a true innovation. It's more than just a communication tool. We continue to train our people, share knowledge with suppliers, and build partnerships with universities and colleges."

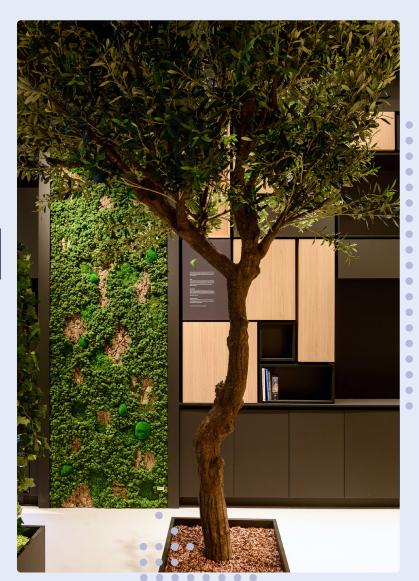
What's next for DCU?

"We're exploring the possibility of a customer-oriented extension of the platform, giving customers easy access to clear and practical information about how data centers work. We're also expanding our partnerships with higher education institutions. We already work with Haute École Louvain en Hainaut (HELHa) and are actively looking to develop more of these collaborations."



Green buildings and offices have been identified as a material topic for LCL. However, we are not yet reporting on this topic, as several relevant construction projects were already in progress when it was first assessed as material. Given the average lead time of approximately four years including design and permitting. We are therefore preparing for the future by taking steps in line with sustainable building standards, although it is currently too early to report concrete outcomes.

In parallel, we are also working to map our Scope 3 emissions in 2025. This will include assessing the carbon footprint of construction materials and processes, which will further inform our approach to green building practices.



Cosy corner at LCL Antwerp

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Discover our awards and recognitions ₽



Awards & recognitions

We consider external recognition as a heads-up and an encouraging sign that we are moving in the right direction. In 2024, LCL received several prestigious awards acknowledging our progress in sustainability, transparency, and integrated governance. These recognitions reinforce our ambition to combine digital growth with environmental and social responsibility.



DataNews Awards for Excellence

Best Sustainability Report

Belgian Awards for Sustainability Reports

At the 23rd edition of the Belgian Awards for Sustainability Reports, hosted by the Belgian Institute of Registered Auditors (IBR/IRE), LCL received the award for Best Sustainability Report in the "Other Organisations" category. The jury praised the structure, clarity, and completeness of our report, highlighting our value creation model and the maturity of our ESG approach.

"LCL's report is highly comprehensive and thorough, demonstrating a mature approach to reporting. It is clear, easy to read, and well-structured, featuring a well-visualised value creation model."

Jury quoteBelgian Awards for Sustainability Reports

Most Sustainable ICT Company of the Year

DataNews Awards for Excellence

In May 2024, LCL was named Most Sustainable ICT Company of the Year at the DataNews Awards for Excellence. The jury commended our multi-year efforts to reduce emissions, increase renewable energy production and improve ESG reporting across all sites. As the only data center player among the finalists, this award reflects the industry-wide recognition of our environmental leadership.

"LCL has managed to convince the jury as a Belgian player that has been working for several years to reduce the carbon footprint of its data centers. Since last year, the company has also been publishing its own ESG report. The jury wishes to reward this focus."

Jury quote
 DataNews Awards for Excellence

Belfius ESG Ambition Award 2024

Best Finance Team Awards

LCL's finance team received the ESG Ambition Award at the Best Finance Team Awards 2024, organised by CFO Magazine in collaboration with Belfius. The award celebrates financial teams that actively help embed sustainability into core strategy and operations. The jury recognised LCL for linking ESG with financial governance in a meaningful way. In 2024, the team introduced a double materiality matrix – voluntarily fully aligned with the CSRD – that integrates both stakeholder expectations and the organisation's impact on people and planet. By taking a forward-looking, data-driven approach, Finance plays a key role in turning ESG from intention into measurable action.

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Stakeholder engagement



Samuel Haller, Head of Sales Smart Infrastructure and Katrien Valkiers, Head of Communications & Sustainability Manager at Siemens Belgium-Luxembourg

Exploring the future of smart infrastructure

"When a data center like LCL sets quite some goals around sustainability and resilience, it looks for partners that can deliver more than just components. We believe we can co-create solutions that are not only technically robust, but also aligned with clear sustainability goals", says Katrien Valkiers, Sustainability Manager at Siemens Belgium-Luxembourg. Or as Samuel Hallier, Head of Sales Smart Infrastructure at Siemens Belgium-Luxembourg, puts it: "Our goal is to support data centers in becoming safer, smarter and more sustainable by combining the real and digital worlds." For Siemens, this means applying digital twin technology, predictive analytics and services, as well as smart automation to help data centers operate with maximum efficiency and minimal environmental impact.

How does Siemens stay ahead of trends and challenges in the data center industry, especially when it comes to sustainability and energy efficiency?

Katrien Valkiers: "At Siemens, we're fully committed to the energy transition. We've reduced our own CO₂ emissions by 60% since 2019 and aim to reduce the emissions in our own operations by 90% by 2030 and compensate residual emissions. These are science-based targets. We invest heavily in innovation, but always with real-world impact in mind. That includes co-developing new sustainable solutions with our partners and remaining fully committed to open, integrable technologies so customers are never locked in."

Samuel Hallier: "For data centers, for instance, we integrate building automation, fire safety, and energy monitoring into one smart system. That enables energy savings and ensures uptime, reliability and operational resilience. We also bring proven technologies from other critical sectors into the data center context, such as Al-powered predictive analytics, digital twin simulations and grid-edge energy management. These digital twins allow operators to mirror their physical infrastructure virtually, enabling safe, real-time testing of new energy strategies, cooling setpoints or load shifting scenarios. It's a game-changer in terms of proactive management. And just as important: we don't offer generic tools. Siemens works in verticals, which means we tailor our technology portfolio to the specific needs of each sector. For data centers, that comes down to combining industrial rigour with IT flexibility, always grounded in the customer's operational reality."

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How does Siemens contribute to the operational efficiency and sustainability of data centers like LCL?

Samuel Hallier: "Even within a limited scope today, we ensure that our technologies – like fire detection or switchgear – are future-ready. Beyond that, we bring a long-term vision: helping customers transition to smarter infrastructure. For example, our White Space Cooling Optimisation (WSCO) can reduce ongoing cooling energy use by more than 20%. Technologies like digital twins allow operators to model thermal upgrades or energy optimisation scenarios before deploying them, minimising risk and maximising returns."

Katrien Valkiers: "LCL takes a lifecycle approach, which we fully support. Our tools could help assess not just how systems perform today, but how they will age and how to plan upgrades accordingly. We help detect inefficiencies before they show up in the energy bill. This is powered by a building management system which enables predictive maintenance and real-time transparency across the entire infrastructure. Those insights we share across other customer environments, from chemicals to pharma and beyond."

What key projects or technologies has Siemens implemented within LCL's infrastructure?

Samuel Hallier: We've delivered low-GWP (Global Warming Potential) fire extinguishing systems with an inert gas consisting of 100% nitrogen (IG100), upgraded detection panels, and middle- and low-voltage switchgear that supports resilient power delivery. These systems were selected for environmental credentials, like reduced leakage risk and optimised component lifespan."

How would you evaluate the collaboration with LCL?

Katrien Valkiers: "What stands out is that at LCL, sustainability is embedded in how they work: how they plan, procure and operate. That mindset creates space for real innovation and is aligned with our philosophy and processes."

Samuel Hallier: "LCL is technically sharp and strategically focused. They know what they want, and at the same time they are open to ideas. LCL consults us on a regular basis and trusts partners to bring their best expertise to the table – just as they do themselves. That makes working together very effective. There's also a genuine appetite to build a more integrated, smart infrastructure."

What new technologies or solutions Siemens is working on to further decarbonise customer activities?

Katrien Valkiers: "Al-based control systems are promising. These technologies allow data centers to optimise energy use in real time and align better with renewable energy availability. We're also exploring microgrid integration and modular energy infrastructure. All of these are geared towards making data centers active contributors to a more stable, decarbonised grid."

Samuel Hallier: "We do more than develop the tools, we're also aligning them with customer needs. That includes predictive maintenance, dynamic simulation and simulation-driven design. The goal is simple: reduce emissions while enhancing performance."



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Dieter Dirickx, Senior Green and Cleantech Advisor and Geneviève Ceulemans, Business Centre Manager at BNP Paribas Fortis

BNP Paribas Fortis powers LCL's green energy transition

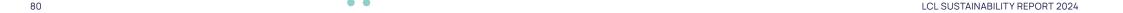
LCL is making a bold move towards energy self-sufficiency by investing €13 million in three wind turbines, which will become operational in 2025. The project, financed by BNP Paribas Fortis, sets yet another benchmark. "A data center producing its own renewable energy is unique in Belgium," says Dieter Dirickx, Senior Green and Cleantech Advisor at BNP Paribas Fortis. "But it's exactly the kind of project we want to support: one that reduces carbon dependence and secures long-term energy resilience."

For BNP Paribas Fortis, sustainability is a key driver in financing decisions. The bank applies strict ESG screening criteria for corporate lending and has committed to aligning its loan portfolio with a net-zero economy by 2050. Geneviève Ceulemans, Business Centre Manager at BNP Paribas Fortis, highlights the strategic importance of this financing deal: "LCL's strong sustainability roadmap, combined with its stable business model, made this project a solid investment. It's a win-win: LCL reduces its reliance on external energy providers, and we support the green transition in a sector with high energy demands."

Why did BNP Paribas Fortis decide to finance LCL's wind turbine project?

Dieter Dirickx: "A project like this ticks all the right boxes. First, LCL is a trusted partner with a strong track record in sustainable operations. Second, the financial structure was solid: we conducted a full risk assessment, ensuring that projected energy production and cost savings justified the investment. A key element was the P90 study, which forecasts wind energy output with 90% certainty. This, combined with high-quality turbine installations and long-term maintenance contracts, made the project bankable. We structured the financing as a Green Loan, aligned with Loan Market Association's (LMA) principles, reinforcing the project's environmental credibility."

Geneviève Ceulemans: "We also assessed LCL's broader sustainability strategy. They are already sourcing 100% renewable energy, optimising cooling efficiency, and setting clear carbon reduction targets. Financing their wind energy production aligns perfectly with our ESG lending framework."



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How does BNP Paribas Fortis evaluate sustainability in corporate lending?

Dieter Dirickx: "Sustainability is integrated into our lending decisions. When assessing credit applications, we evaluate the environmental impact of a company, its social responsibility, and its financial sustainability. We assess whether a company is actively reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy use, whether it upholds strong governance, fair labour practices, community engagement, and whether it can maintain profitability while meeting ESG commitments. Each sector has its own specific ESG benchmarks. In energy, for example, we are reducing exposure to fossil fuel projects while increasing financing for low-carbon alternatives like wind and solar."

Geneviève Ceulemans: "For data centers, the primary challenge is energy consumption. That's why we look at metrics like Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE), renewable energy sourcing, and long-term efficiency improvements. A data center investing in its own renewable energy production, as LCL is doing, is a strong indicator of long-term sustainability."

What are the challenges of financing sustainability projects?

Dieter Dirickx: "Sustainability projects, while essential, come with unique challenges. One of the biggest hurdles is technical risk: ensuring that renewable energy installations, such as wind turbines, operate efficiently over the long term. That's why we conduct extensive quality control, including long-term maintenance agreements and technology assessments. Market risks also play a role. Fluctuating energy prices and uncertain demand can impact the financial viability of green projects. We mitigate this by working with companies like LCL that have a clear energy strategy and predictable consumption patterns."

Geneviève Ceulemans: "Regulatory changes are another factor. The renewable energy sector is evolving rapidly, and government policies can shift, affecting subsidies or taxation. Companies need to be agile, and as a financial partner, we help them navigate these complexities. Reputation is also a consideration. Green financing is under increasing scrutiny, and we need to ensure that every project we finance is genuinely sustainable, avoiding any risks of greenwashing. That's why we align with international standards like the Loan Market Association's Green Loan Principles and demand transparency in ESG reporting from our borrowers."

What is the long-term vision for sustainable finance at BNP Paribas Fortis?

Dieter Dirickx: "By 2027, BNP Paribas Fortis aims to have at least €20 billion in sustainable investments, up from €15 billion today. We're gradually phasing out financing for oil and gas projects while increasing funding for low-carbon sectors like renewables, clean mobility, and green real estate."

Geneviève Ceulemans: "We are also pushing for ESG to be a key factor in 100% of corporate loan applications. Companies that fail to meet sustainability criteria will find it increasingly difficult to secure financing. The shift is clear: businesses that embrace ESG will have better access to capital and stronger long-term growth prospects."

What's next for BNP Paribas Fortis and LCL?

Geneviève Ceulemans: "As regulations become stricter and corporate ESG targets more ambitious, we expect LCL to remain a frontrunner in green IT infrastructure. Future areas of collaboration could include financing battery storage solutions, energy efficiency upgrades, and potentially new sustainable data center developments."

Dieter Dirickx: "LCL's wind turbine project is just the beginning. We want to continue supporting forward-thinking companies that are serious about sustainability, ensuring that financial solutions accelerate the energy transition."

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Sustainability statement

A separate sustainability statement has been prepared in alignment with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). The different chapters of this sustainability statement include the Environmental, Social and Governance topics that were defined as material for LCL during its Double Materiality Assessment (DMA). The sustainability statement can be viewed and downloaded on https://sustainability.lcl.be/en/



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Sustainability Report 2024

Energy to move forward

