

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002298/25
to the Commission
Krzysztof Brejza (PPE)
(6 June 2025)**

Subject: Russian ‘shadow fleet’ — threats to Baltic Sea infrastructure and European security

Multiple Member States have voiced concern over Russia’s ‘shadow fleet’ in the Baltic Sea, which poses a growing threat to critical infrastructure and undermines the EU’s maritime security, transparency and strategic resilience.

Given the Baltic Sea’s pivotal importance for intra-European energy flows, military coordination and trade, and in view of the recent calls by EU Ministers for coordinated measures to address these threats:

1. What specific budgetary allocations, including relevant EU instruments, have been made since 2022 to monitor, deter, or eliminate malign interference in Baltic Sea infrastructure, specifically with regard to Russian hybrid maritime threats, including the shadow fleet?
2. Can the Commission provide up-to-date statistical data or intelligence assessments (where possible declassified) regarding the scope and operational patterns of Russia’s shadow fleet in the Baltic Sea, including the number of vessels, their flag states, ownership structures and any links to sanctioned entities or individuals?
3. What strategic and operational measures — deployed or planned — does the Commission envisage to address the security threat posed by Russia’s shadow fleet in the Baltic Sea, and does it intend to support joint maritime monitoring and situational awareness among Baltic States and; if so, through which instruments and according to what timeline?

Submitted: 6.6.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(20 August 2025)**

The shadow fleet used by Russia and associated security and environmental risks is an issue regularly discussed with EU Ministers that will be subject to additional measures, if needed. So far, the EU has designated 447 vessels as being linked to this fleet and will continue its efforts to disrupt its ecosystem.

The EU continues engaging with flag states particularly regarding their responsibilities, ship safety and environmental risks, and takes active part in the work of the G7/NB8+ Task Force on the shadow fleet.

To monitor the activities of the shadow fleet, the EU uses the maritime information and exchange system established under Directive 2002/59/EC ⁽¹⁾ (VTMIS Directive) hosted in the European Maritime Safety Agency and Member States.

Furthermore, the EU Common Information Sharing Environment and the Maritime Surveillance project of the European Defence Agency ⁽²⁾ allow sharing information among Member States. Finally, the EU naval operations under the EU Common Security and Defence Policy have a new task of monitoring the shadow fleet.

These vessels are often substandard and underinsured. To improve safety and environmental protection, the VTMIS Directive now requires insurance reporting for all ships in EU Mandatory Reporting Systems, including ships in transit. Member States have proposed similar measures at the International Maritime Organisation.

On 21 February 2025, the Commission and High Representative presented EU Action Plan on cable security to strengthen the security and resilience of submarine cables ⁽³⁾.

As a key action, the Commission is working with Member States towards a regional Baltic Sea hub on a real time situational picture and integrated surveillance on submarine cables, funded under the Digital Europe Programme.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2002/59/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ [https://eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/all-activities/activities-search/maritime-surveillance-\(marsur\)](https://eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/all-activities/activities-search/maritime-surveillance-(marsur)).

⁽³⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/joint-communication-strengthen-security-and-resilience-submarine-cables>.