

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-002746/24
to the Commission
Vilija Blinkevičiūtė (S&D)
(4 December 2024)**

Subject: Measures to protect critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea Region

Attacks have been launched on infrastructure in the Baltic Sea since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine almost three years ago, and there has been a recent upswing in the number of attacks. The destruction of critical infrastructure clearly forms part of the hybrid warfare being waged by hostile states and poses a serious threat not only to the security of the countries of the Baltic Sea Region, but also to the security of Europe as a whole.

The Baltic Sea region is extremely vulnerable and still unprotected. Cables and pipelines on the Baltic seabed are extremely vulnerable and require a high level of protection.

Although the Commission has adopted the recommendation on the security and resilience of submarine cable infrastructures, this initiative will only be finalised by 2035, which is far too late given the high risk of hybrid attacks on critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region, such as the Klaipėda LNG terminal.

Could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission intend to respond to the recent attacks and damage to infrastructure in the Baltic Sea?
2. Does the Commission see that there is no longer any room for delay and that urgent measures are needed to protect the Baltic Sea region's submarine and land-based critical infrastructure assets?
3. Does the Commission intend to put forward proposals to improve the EU's readiness to respond to and prevent attacks on critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region?

Submitted: 4.12.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(18 February 2025)**

The Commission and the High Representative released a Joint Statement on the damaged electricity and data cables in the Baltic Sea ⁽¹⁾. Critical infrastructure protection is a task of the Member States; the Commission supports them at various levels.

At the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Baltic Sea Allies Summit, the Commission announced concrete measures to enhance critical infrastructure resilience, emphasising urgent action.

A key element is strengthened cooperation with partners, namely NATO, including its recently announced 'Baltic Sentry' initiative.

The Commission is following up on the recommendation on Submarine Cable infrastructures ⁽²⁾, particularly improving security and resilience through governance and funding. The Critical Entities Resilience ⁽³⁾ and Network Information and Security Directives ⁽⁴⁾ cover the security of critical infrastructure.

The revised EU Maritime Security Strategy ⁽⁵⁾ and the Common Information Sharing Environment ⁽⁶⁾ enhance the surveillance and protection of critical maritime infrastructure.

Through the Connecting Europe Facility projects, the EU is investing EUR 420 million in submarine cables deployment, of which EUR 35.6 million in the Baltic region. EUR 540 million are planned to be invested between 2025 and 2027 to reinforce the EU's connectivity backbone, including better detection through smart cable systems.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/joint-statement-european-commission-and-high-representative-investigation-damaged-electricity-and_en

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L_202400779

⁽³⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AL_202400779

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2022/2557/oj/eng>

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2022/2555/2022-12-27/eng>

⁽⁶⁾ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/ocean/blue-economy/other-sectors/common-information-sharing-environment-cise_en#:~:text=The%20common%20information%20sharing%20environment%20%28CISE%29%20is%20an,and%20national%20authorities%20with%20responsibilities%20in%20maritime%20surveillance

At regional level, Member States are following up on an energy sector stress test, along with dedicated training activities. After recommending ⁽⁷⁾ the assessment of cables' criticality and redundancy, and emphasising the need to improve threat detection, Member States are intensifying regional cooperation to strengthen offshore energy protection and resilience.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/risk-assessment-report-cyber-resilience-eus-telecommunications-and-electricity-sectors>