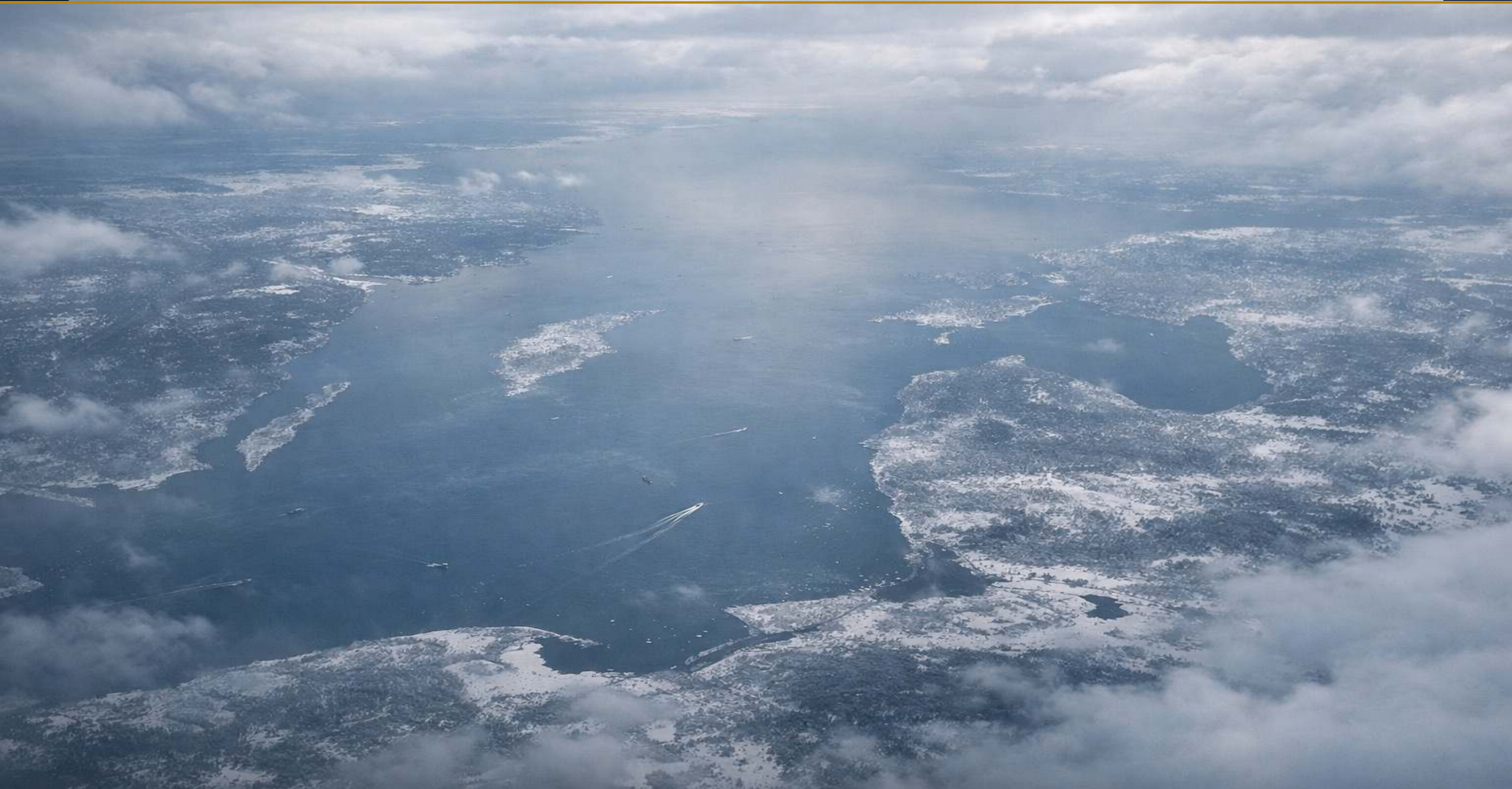
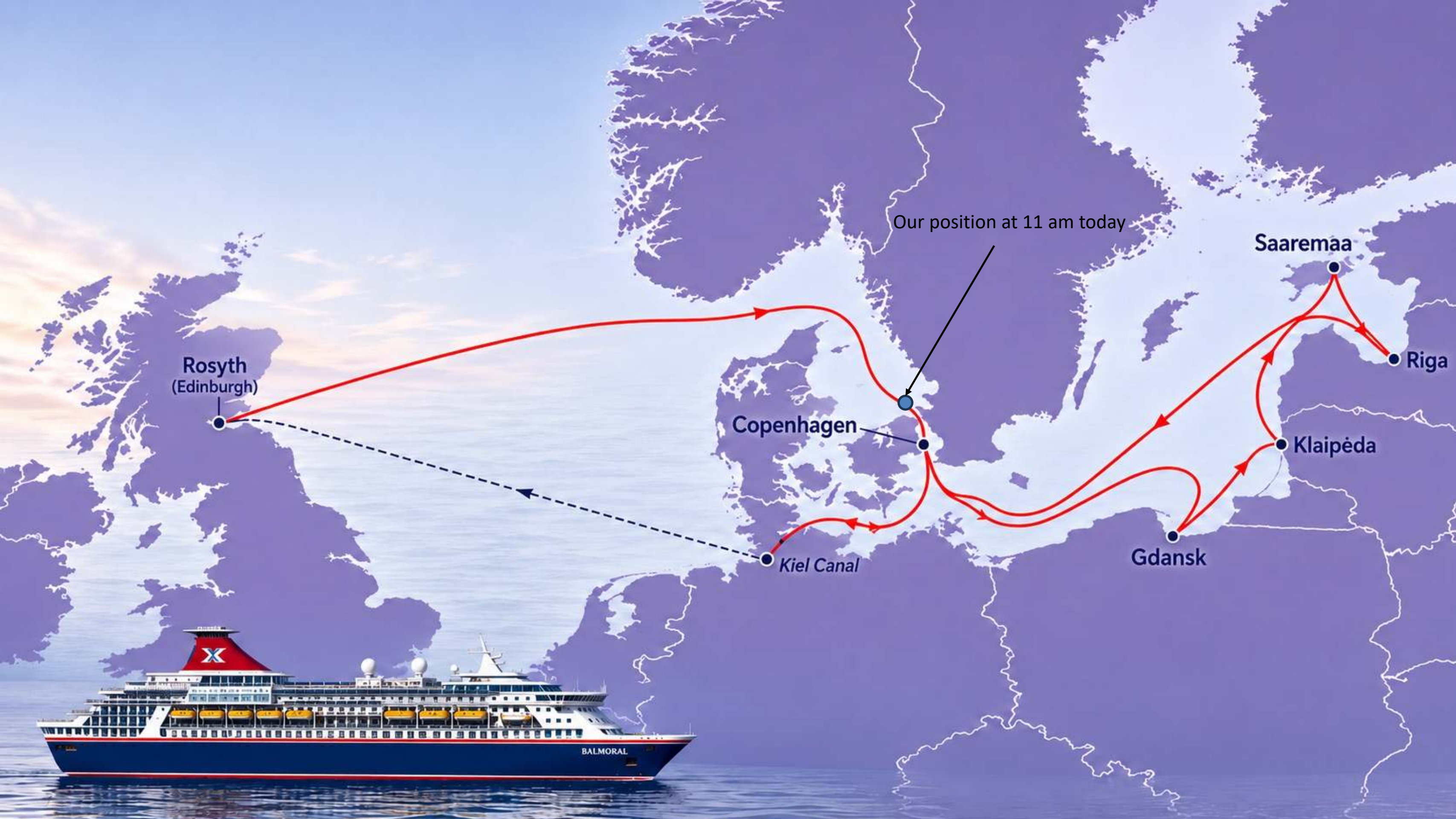




We are entering the Baltic Cauldron ... where Geography meets Geopolitics





It is a Small Sea ... But With Big Consequences

It borders Russia ... connecting 10 Nations



There is an Illusion of Calm Above the Baltic



The Baltic appears peaceful ... ships are in transit

And Beneath the Surface

Energy pipelines, power cables and fibre-optic data links are working seamlessly



Connecting societies ... or so we expect!

There are Key Risks in the Baltic

Geopolitical Tensions
Russian Strategic Interest
Hybrid Warfare Threats



So it is a a good time to think about ...

The Strategic Importance of the Baltic

NATO's Northern Defence Frontier

Analysing the critical role of the Baltic region in the
European Security and Defence Architecture

With
Rear Admiral (Retired) Simon Hardern

My Experience



Why the Region Matters

Geography



Energy



Trade



Alliance Credibility



Around 15% of global seaborne trade originates from, terminates in, or transits through the Baltic Sea

The Baltic - Key to Russian Oil Exports



The Baltic export corridor, particularly Primorsk and Ust-Luga, has become a strategically important target. Together, these two ports alone account for roughly 50% of Russia's total seaborne oil exports





It Has Choke Point Geography

Chokepoint	Daily Transits
Dover Strait	Approximately 400 vessels per day
Gibraltar Strait	300 plus vessels per day
Malacca Strait	Approximately 210 vessels per day
Skagerrak	Estimated 100 to 150 vessels per day

Access to the Baltic runs through the narrow Danish Straits - Skagerrak, Kattegat, Øresund, Great Belt and the Little Belt

This gives NATO and Denmark significant leverage over Russian naval transit to and from the North Sea and so the Atlantic Ocean

What 400 Ships a Day Looks Like



United Kingdom

Dover

Folkestone

Calais

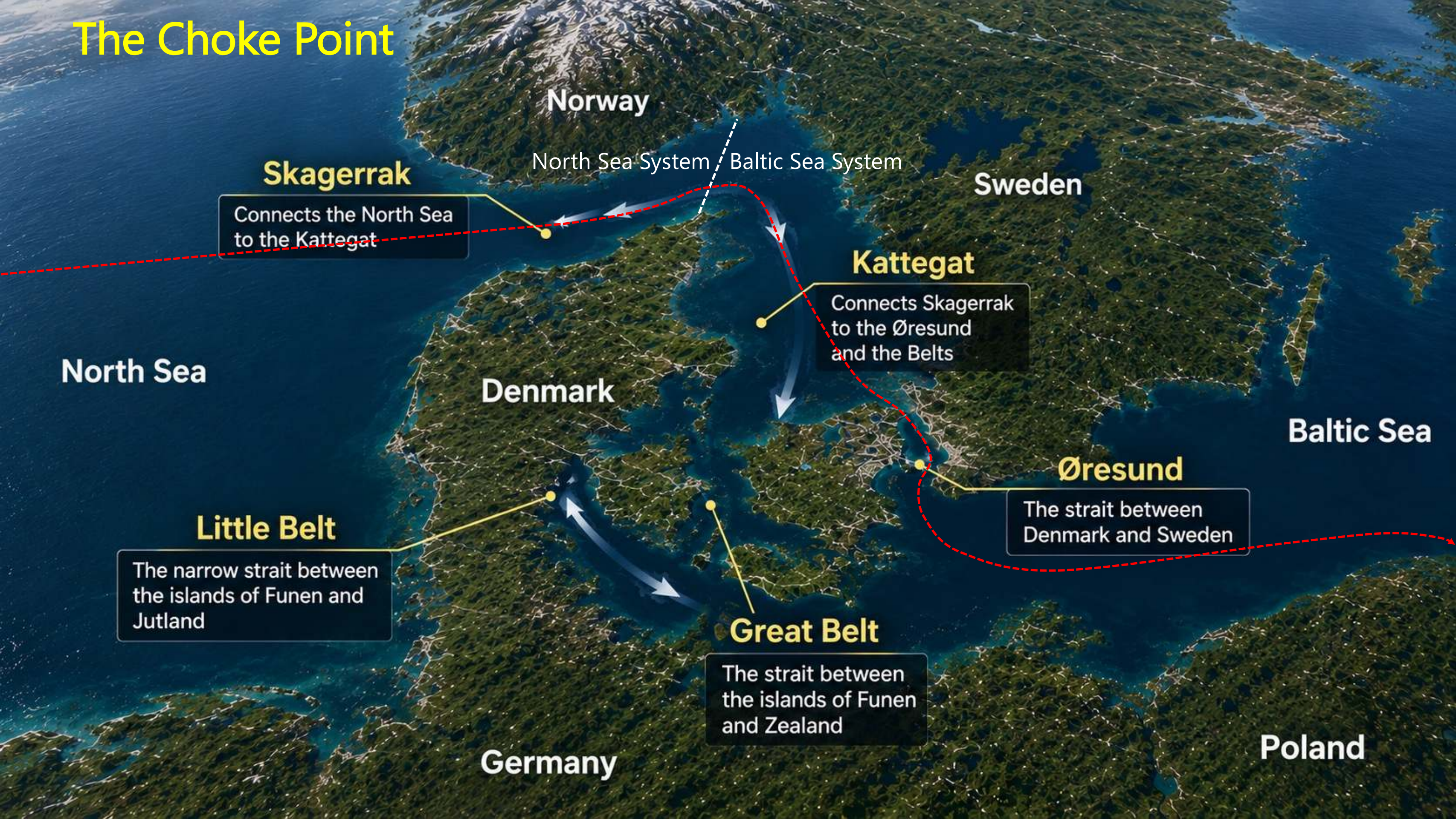


France

Boulogne-sur-Mer



The Choke Point



Norway

North Sea System / Baltic Sea System

Sweden

Skagerrak

Connects the North Sea to the Kattegat

North Sea

Denmark

Kattegat

Connects Skagerrak to the Øresund and the Belts

Baltic Sea

Øresund

The strait between Denmark and Sweden

Little Belt

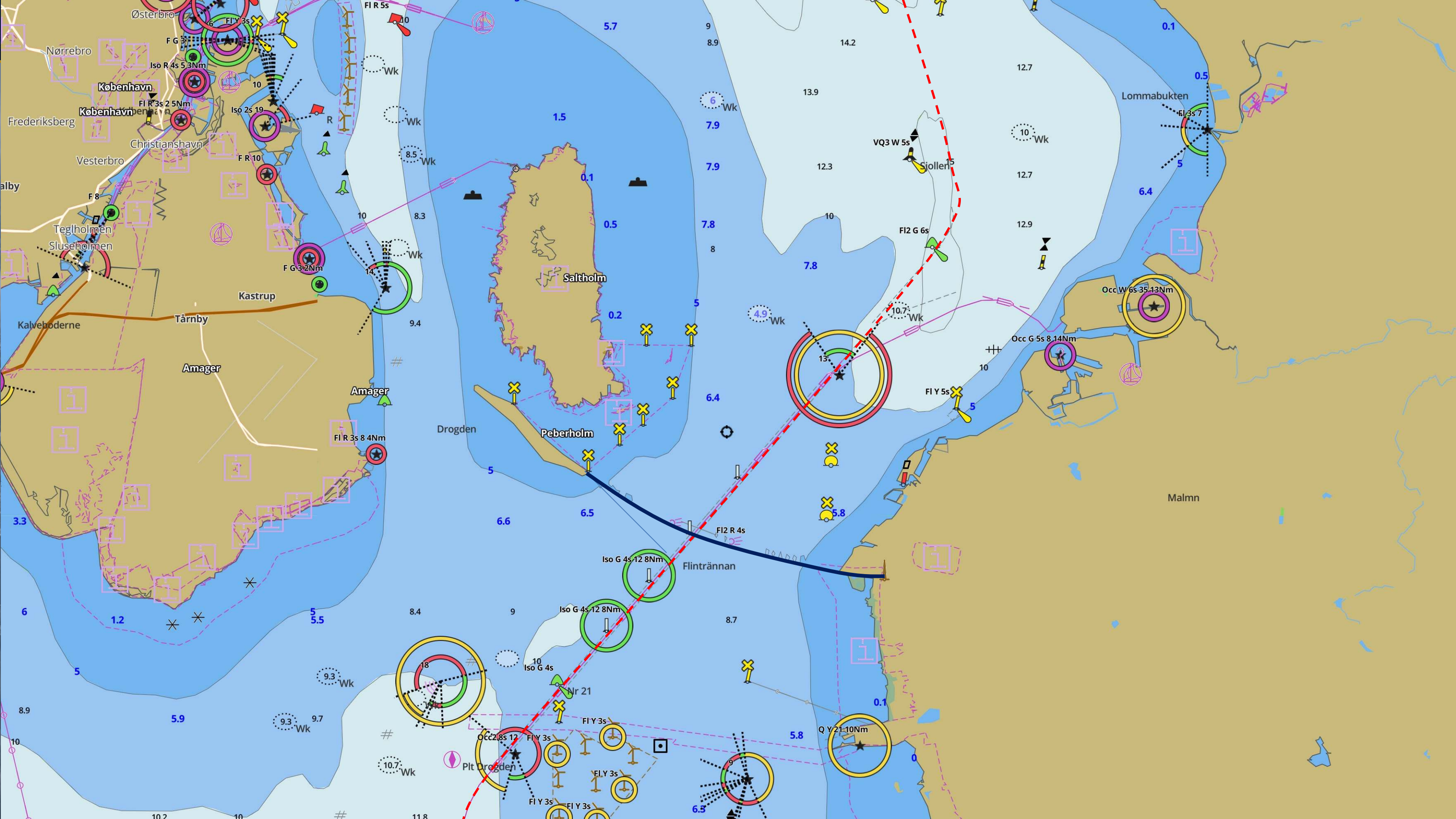
The narrow strait between the islands of Funen and Jutland

Great Belt

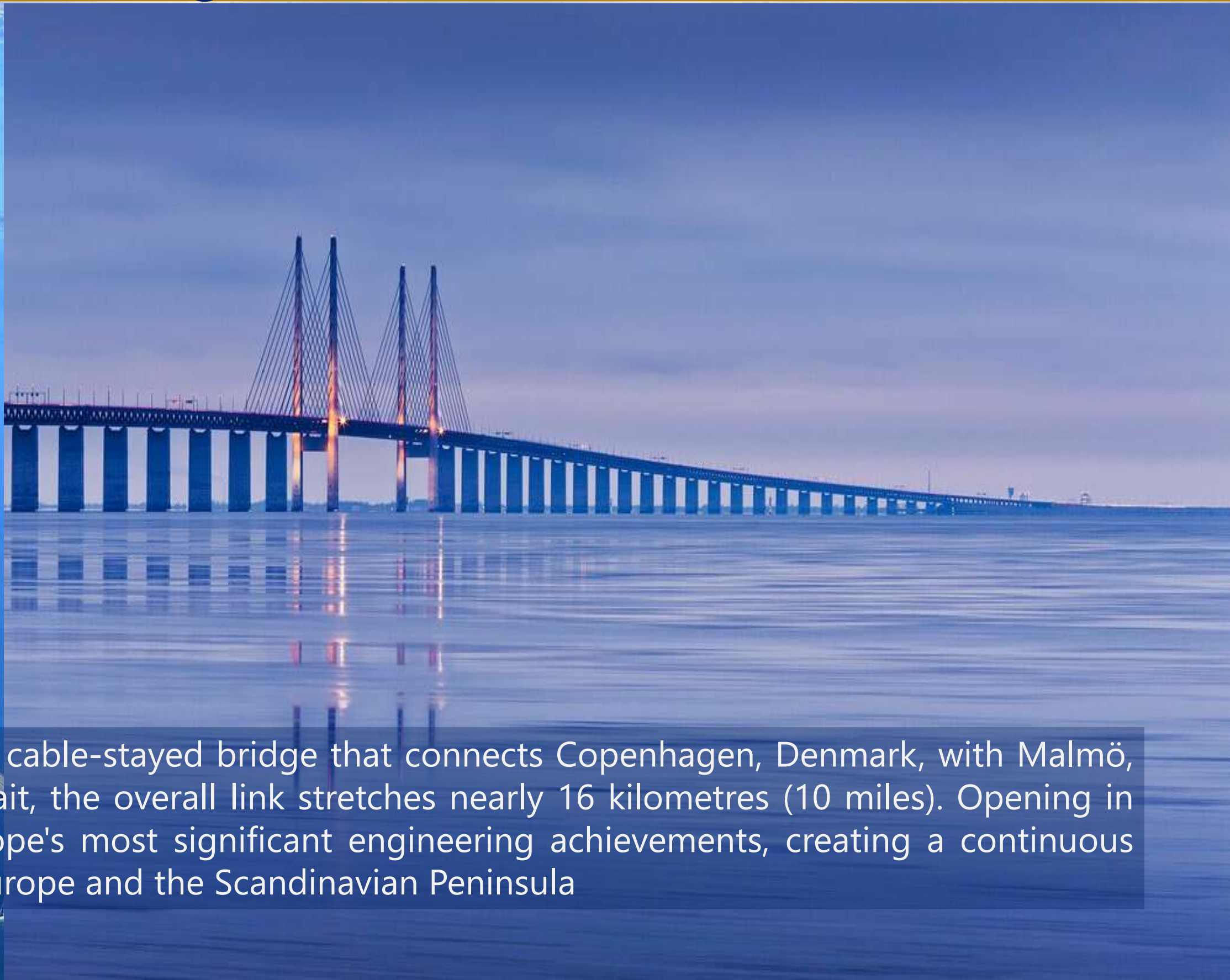
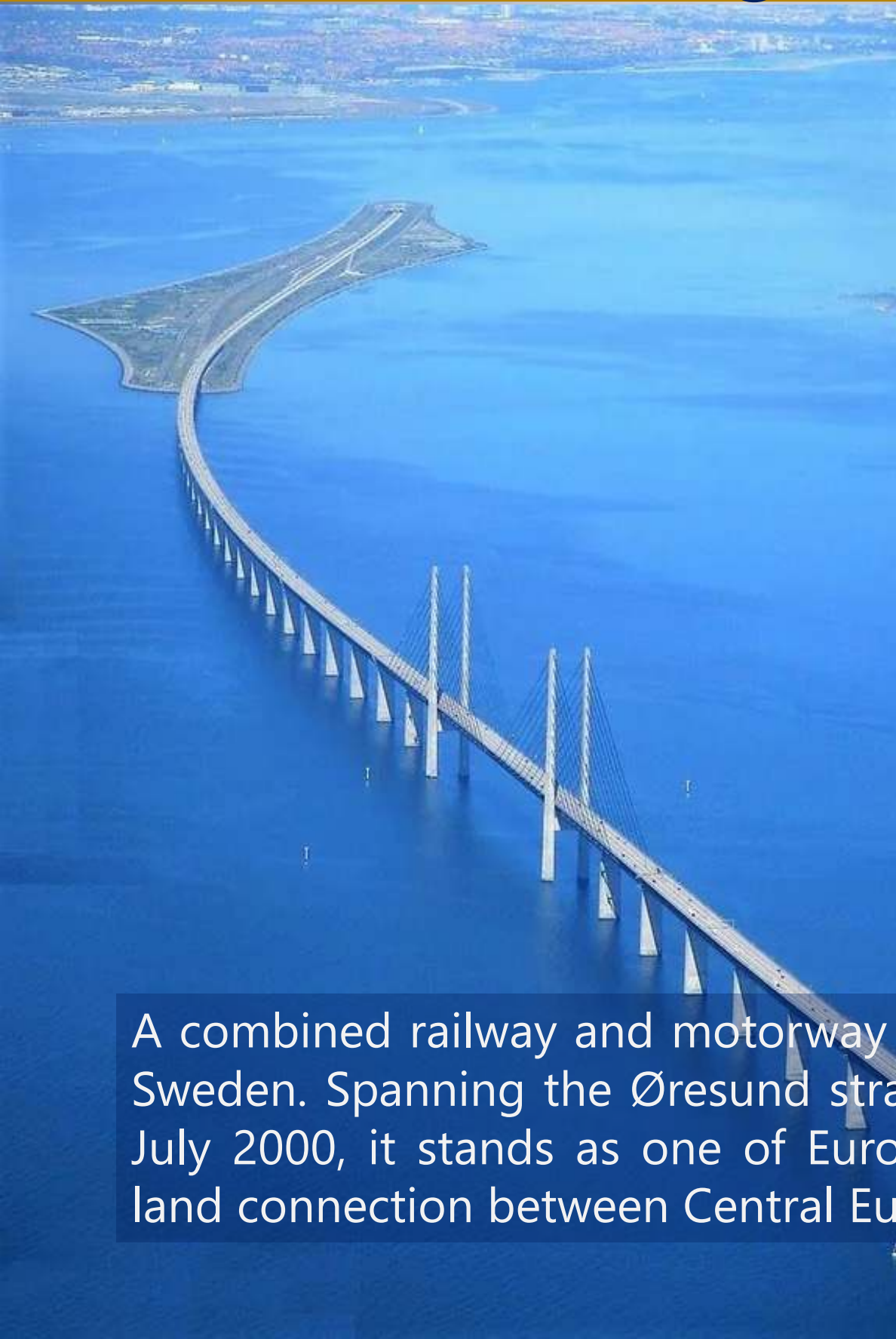
The strait between the islands of Funen and Zealand

Germany

Poland



The Øresund Bridge (The Bridge)



A combined railway and motorway cable-stayed bridge that connects Copenhagen, Denmark, with Malmö, Sweden. Spanning the Øresund strait, the overall link stretches nearly 16 kilometres (10 miles). Opening in July 2000, it stands as one of Europe's most significant engineering achievements, creating a continuous land connection between Central Europe and the Scandinavian Peninsula

The Great Belt Bridge



Opened in 1998, the Great Belt Fixed Link is an 18-kilometre (11 miles) engineering marvel that connects the Danish islands of Zealand (Sjælland) and Funen (Fyn) across the Great Belt strait



The Little Belt



It it a Economic and Logistics Hub

- Key Ports**
- Oslo
 - Gothenburg
 - Copenhagen
 - Kiel
 - Rostock
 - Gdansk
 - Klaipeda
 - Riga
 - Tallinn
 - Helsinki
 - Turku

- LNG Terminals**
- Lysekil
 - Gothenburg
 - Klaipeda
 - Rostock
 - Swinoujscie
 - Tallinn

- Key Facts**
- 15% of global maritime trade passes through the Baltic Sea
 - ~25 million Russian speakers in the region
 - Baltic states are NATO members with critical defence importance

The region hosts major trade routes for Scandinavian, Baltic states, German, and Polish ports, and is increasingly important for energy security (LNG terminals)

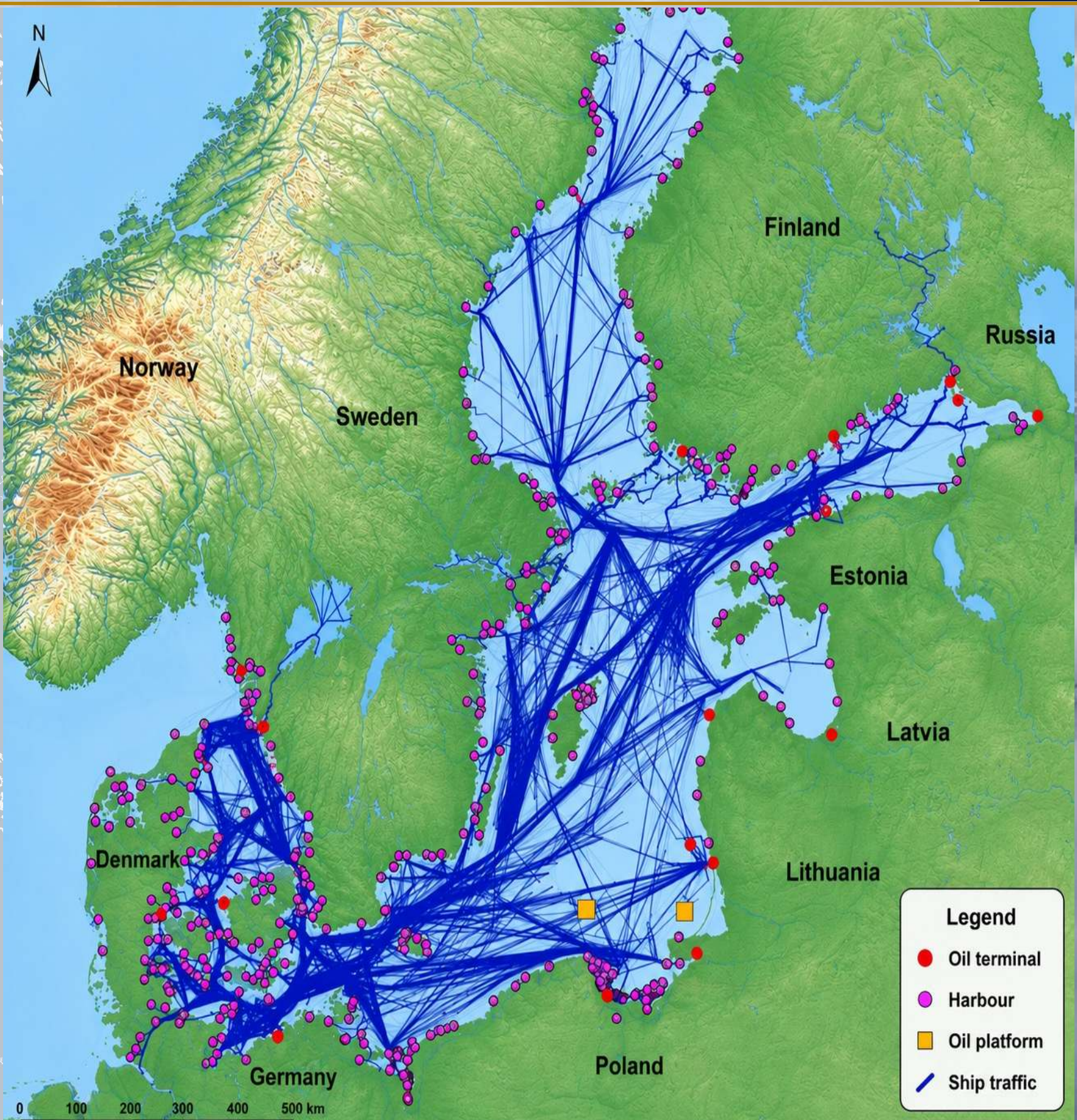
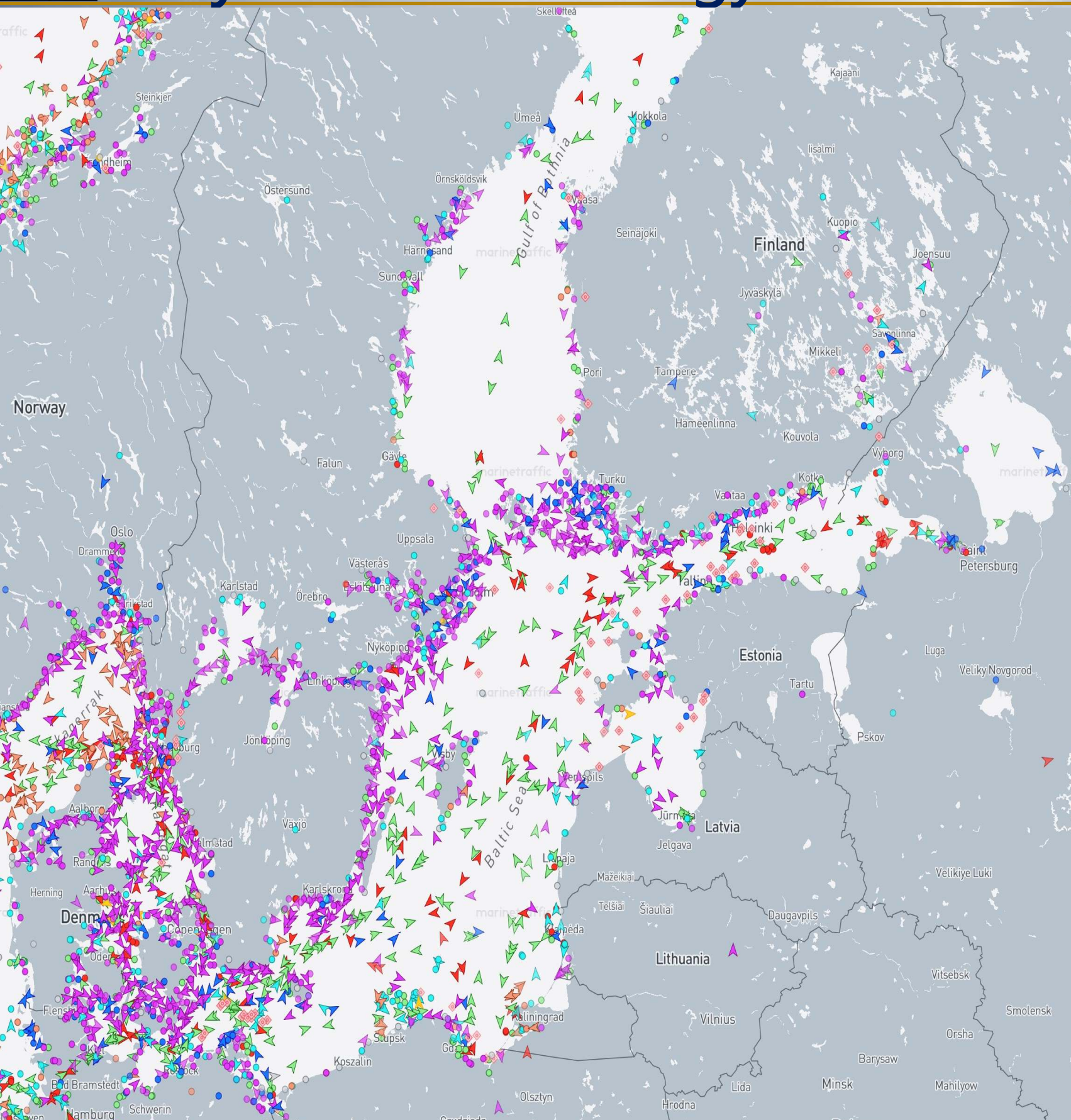


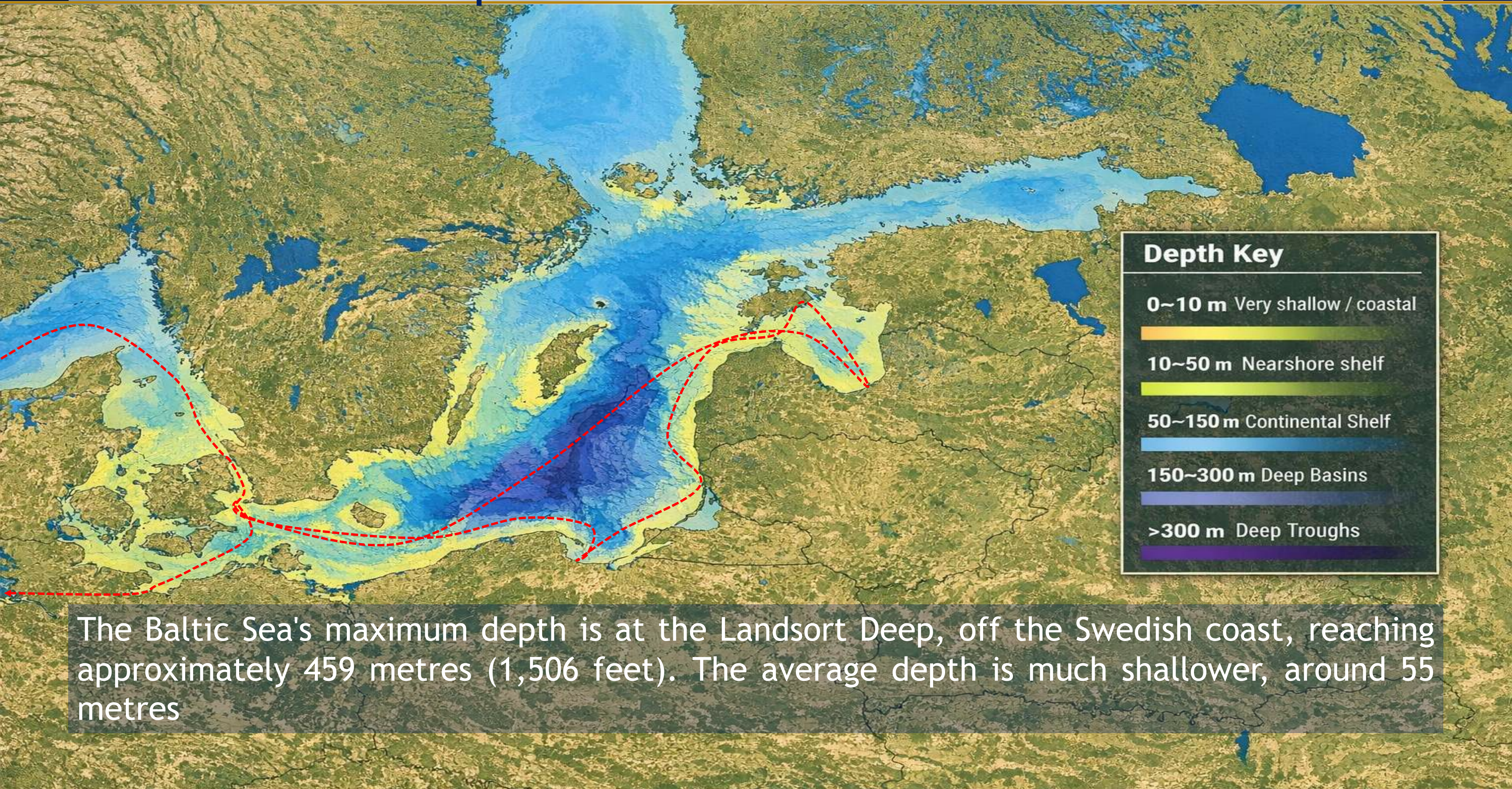
- Strategic Importance**
- Critical trade corridors connecting Europe
 - Energy security through LNG infrastructure
 - Proximity to Russia increases security risks
 - Russian-speaking minorities in all three Baltic states





Busy Trade and Energy Routes





The Baltic Sea's maximum depth is at the Landsort Deep, off the Swedish coast, reaching approximately 459 metres (1,506 feet). The average depth is much shallower, around 55 metres



The Straits have depths often well under 20 metres in places, with some channels closer to 8-9 metres, far too shallow for most submarines to transit fully submerged without risk of grounding or exposing the hull. Width and traffic density. Denmark, Sweden, and NATO maintain extensive sonar arrays, seabed sensors, and routine maritime patrol aircraft and naval patrols across these chokepoints, plus allied submarines and surface units regularly monitor the area.

Submarine Fleets in the Baltic Sea

10 German A212 Class SSKs (operate mainly in the North Sea)



1 Polish Kilo Class SSK
(Ordered 3 new Saab built A26s for delivery by 2038)

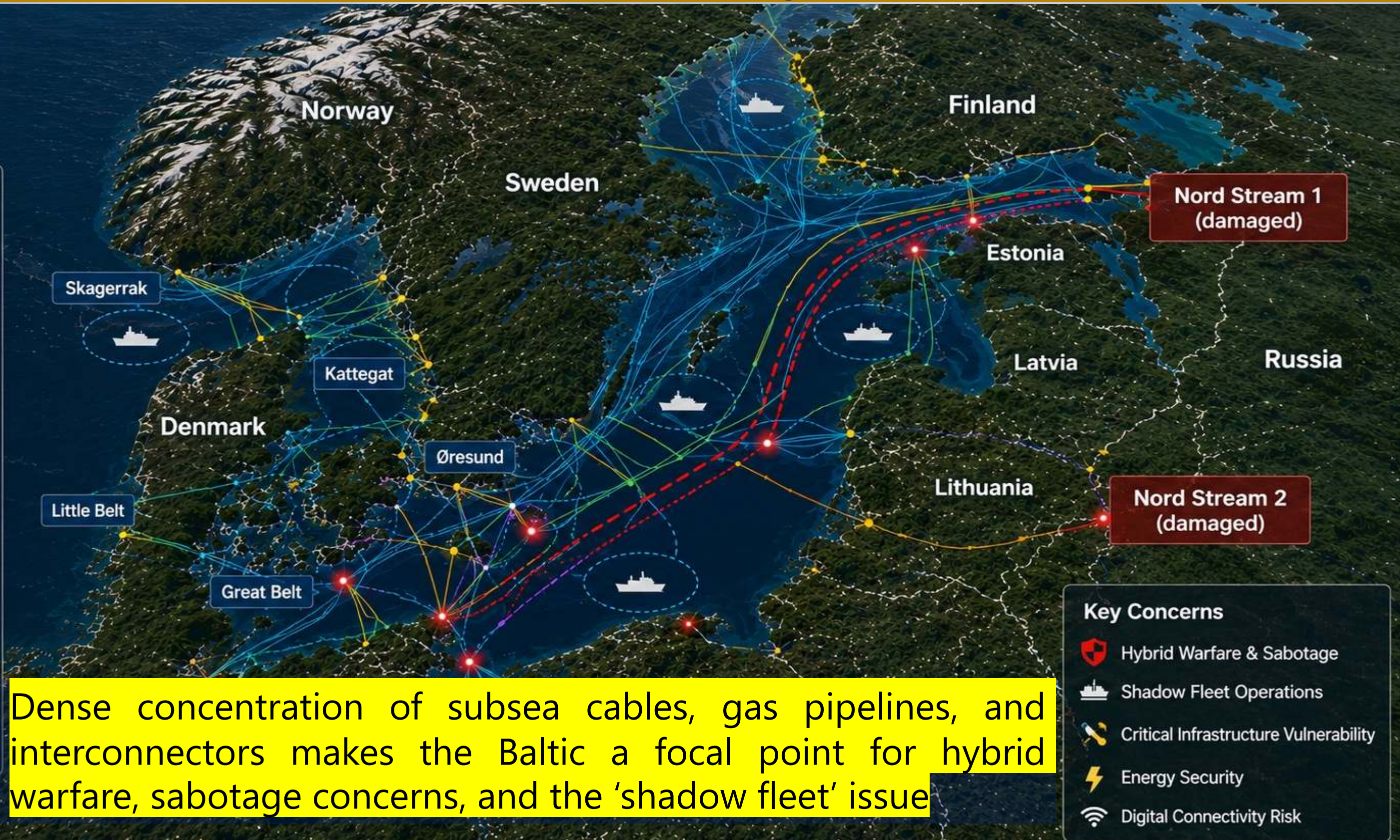


3 Swedish Gotland Class SSKs



2 Russian SSKs





Dense concentration of subsea cables, gas pipelines, and interconnectors makes the Baltic a focal point for hybrid warfare, sabotage concerns, and the 'shadow fleet' issue

The Baltic Sea Underwater Pipeline and Cable Network





- More than 95% of data is carried around the world in (nearly a million miles of) fibre optic cables, carrying terabytes per second rather than megabytes per second by satellite at the speed of light ... important given about 1.7 Mb of data is created per person per second
- For context: 1.6 million km is roughly four times the distance from the Earth to the Moon, or enough to wrap around the equator 37 times; and 90% of all global data has been created in just the last two years

Danish Drone Scourge

Mystery drones menaced four airports in one night just days after Copenhagen Airport sabotage



In September 2025 a Russian Shadow Fleet tanker the Boracay was implicated and directly detained by French authorities. Analysis of maritime tracking data placed the Boracay within 50 nautical miles of Copenhagen



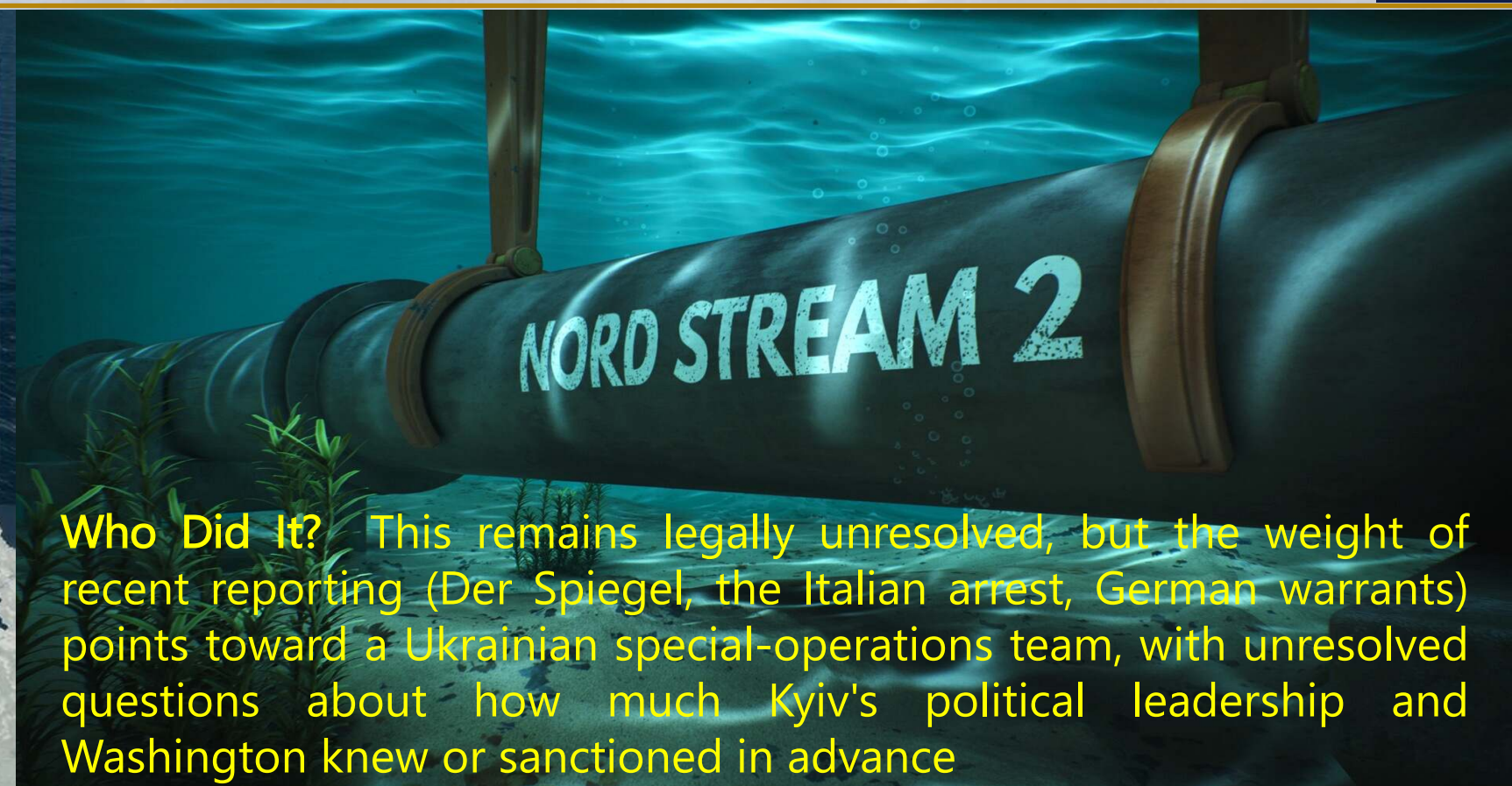
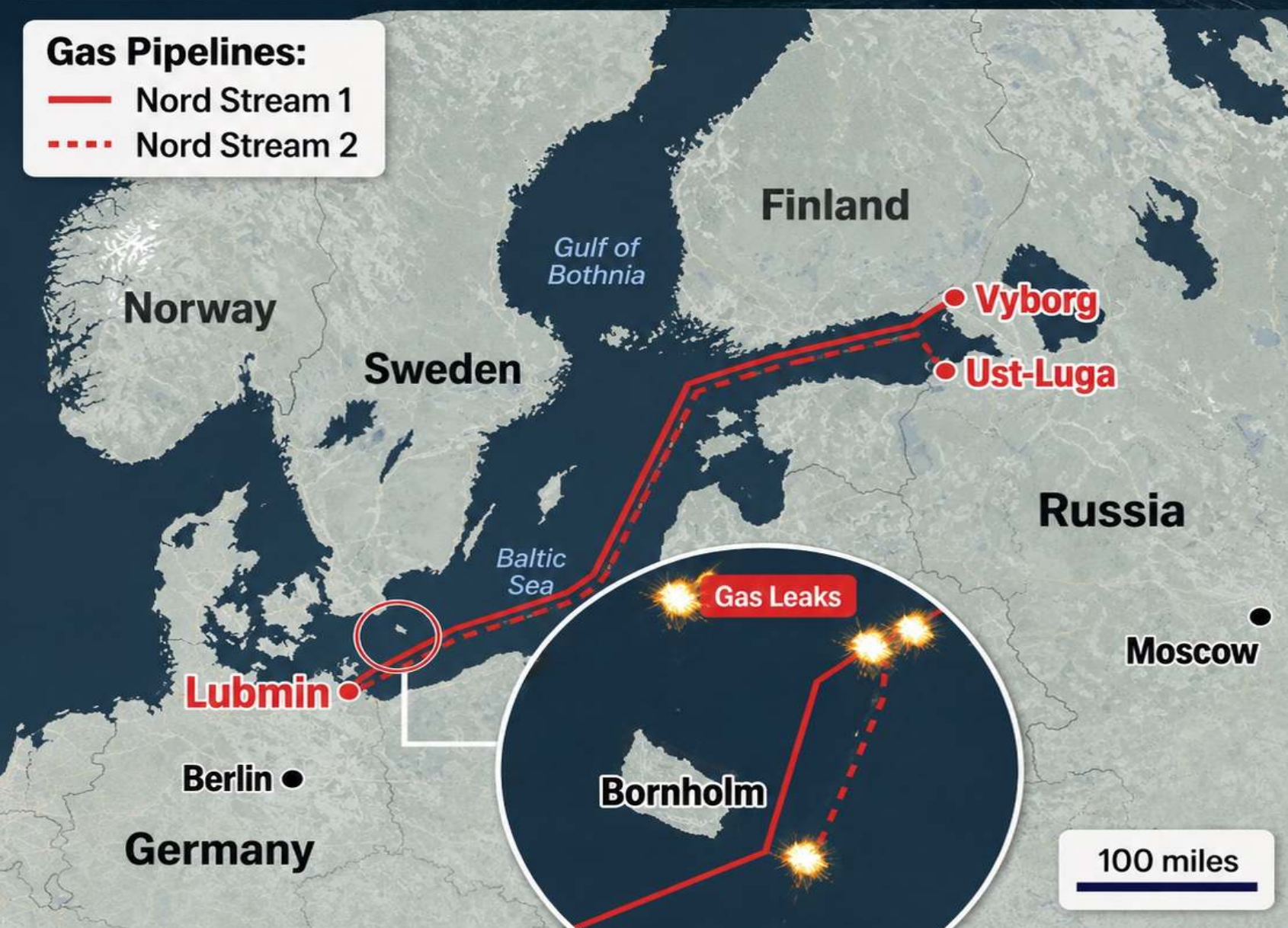
Gas Wars

Russia is feared to have sabotaged the Nord Stream pipelines amid the gas crisis



Gas Pipelines:

- Nord Stream 1
- - - Nord Stream 2



Who Did It? This remains legally unresolved, but the weight of recent reporting (Der Spiegel, the Italian arrest, German warrants) points toward a Ukrainian special-operations team, with unresolved questions about how much Kyiv's political leadership and Washington knew or sanctioned in advance



Russia is Nefariously Undermining Europe



Locations in Europe considered to be sites of Russian directed/back sabotage

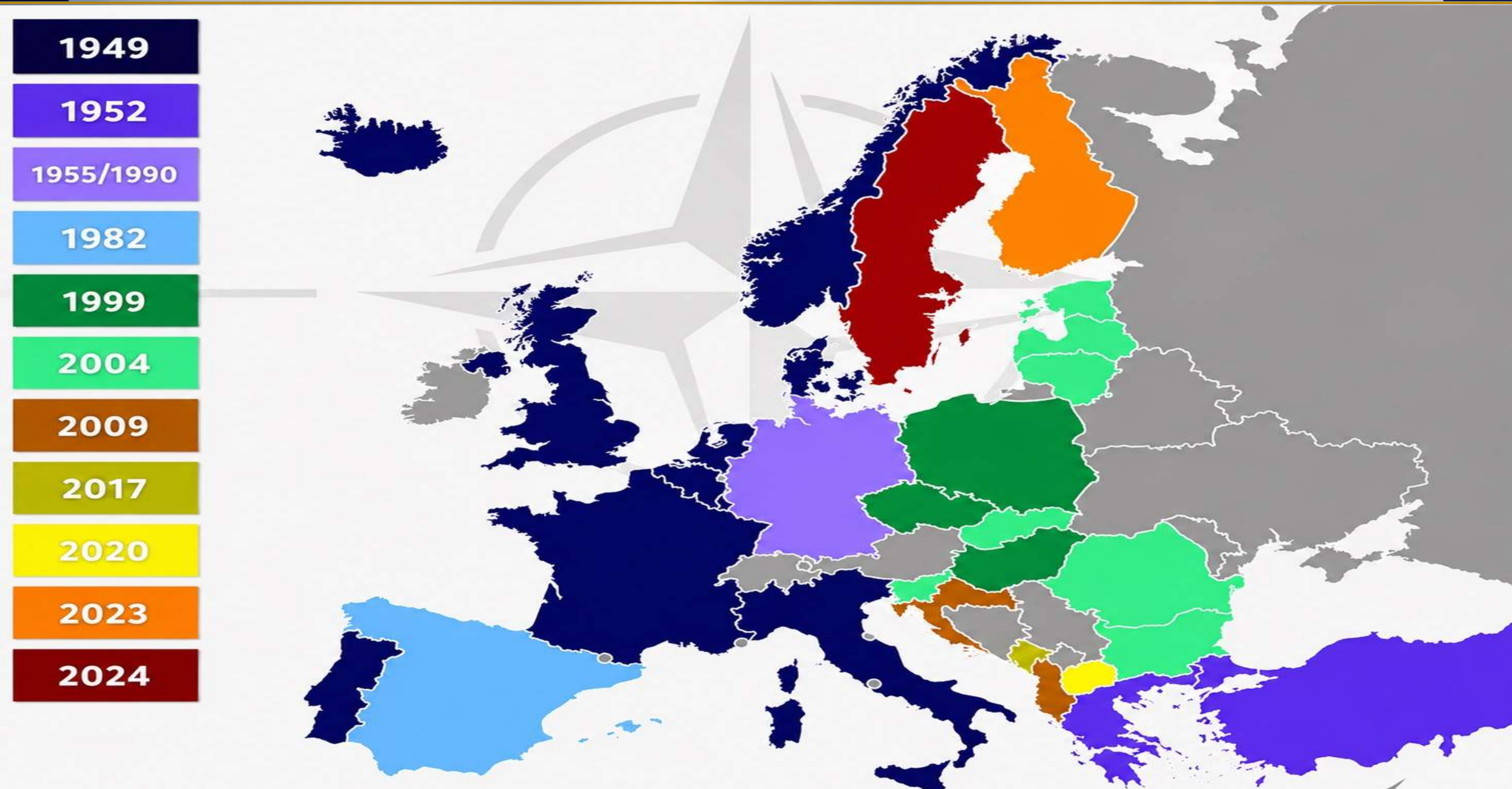
The Baltic Sea is now largely surrounded by NATO territory, with Kaliningrad as the sole non-NATO coastline

This gives the Alliance strategic depth

- Eastern Baltic encirclement
- Control of Baltic Sea choke points
- Enhanced intelligence and surveillance

Russia retains a Baltic coastline through Kaliningrad but, geographically and operationally, that coastline is now the exception - not the rule

That changes the balance of surveillance, reinforcement, and maritime control across the entire region



Population

6.6 : 1

NATO Advantage

GDP (Nominal)

22 : 1

NATO Advantage

Defence Spending

~10 : 1

NATO Advantage

Active Personnel

2.6 : 1

NATO Advantage

Military Aircraft

4.5 : 1

NATO Advantage

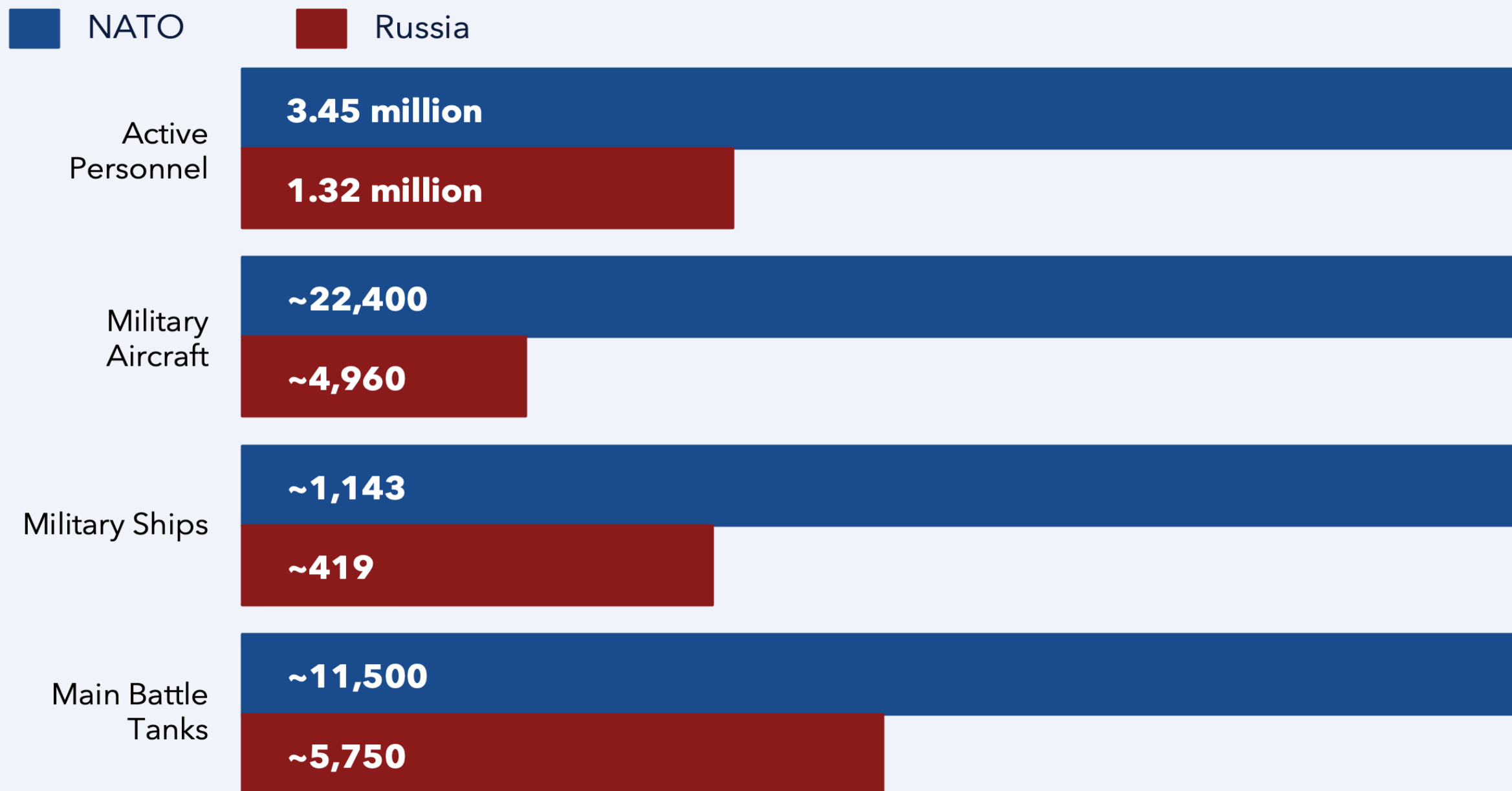
Nuclear Warheads

Parity

Russia ~= NATO



Conventional Military Capability



NATO Defence Spending 2025

~\$1.4 Trillion

Russia Defence Spending 2025

~\$145 billion (NATO Advantage 10:1)





11 strategic ports in the Baltic



Multinational battalions
in four NATO countries



20+ navies and 50+ aircraft
committed to defence



50% of troops from new members

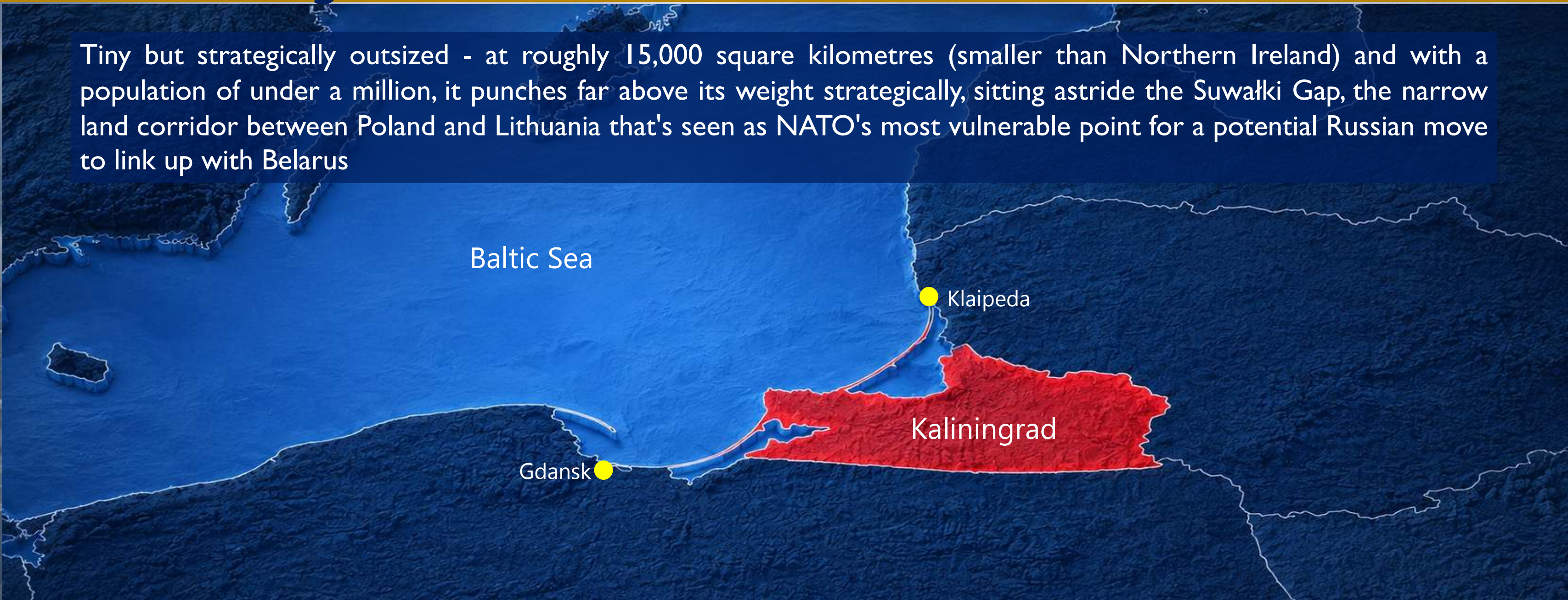


A test case for NATO unity and
deterrence in its new 32-member reality



The Kaliningrad Problem

Tiny but strategically outsized - at roughly 15,000 square kilometres (smaller than Northern Ireland) and with a population of under a million, it punches far above its weight strategically, sitting astride the Suwałki Gap, the narrow land corridor between Poland and Lithuania that's seen as NATO's most vulnerable point for a potential Russian move to link up with Belarus





A Forcing Function? - Ethnic Russians in the Baltic

Country	Russian Population	Share of Total Population
Estonia	Approximately 276,000 (2026)	20% (some estimates put this closer to 25%)
Latvia	Approximately 434,000 (2025)	24%, down from a Soviet-era peak of 34% in 1989
Lithuania	Approximately 144,000 (2024)	5% percent nationally
Finland	102,618 Russian speakers; 33,848 Russian citizens (2025)	1.8% Russian-speaking
Sweden	Approximately 20,000 to 25,000	Roughly 0.2%
Norway	21,504 (2019)	0.4% nationally; 4% in Sor-Varanger





Means NATO Warning Time Has Shrunk



- MiG-31 + Kinzhal deployment
- Have Hypersonic missile capability, providing very much reduced reaction window

Modern conflict is no longer about distance - it is about time

The Hypersonic Missile Threat



As of 3 June 2026, Ukraine demonstrated that it is able to target the Russian Baltic Fleet

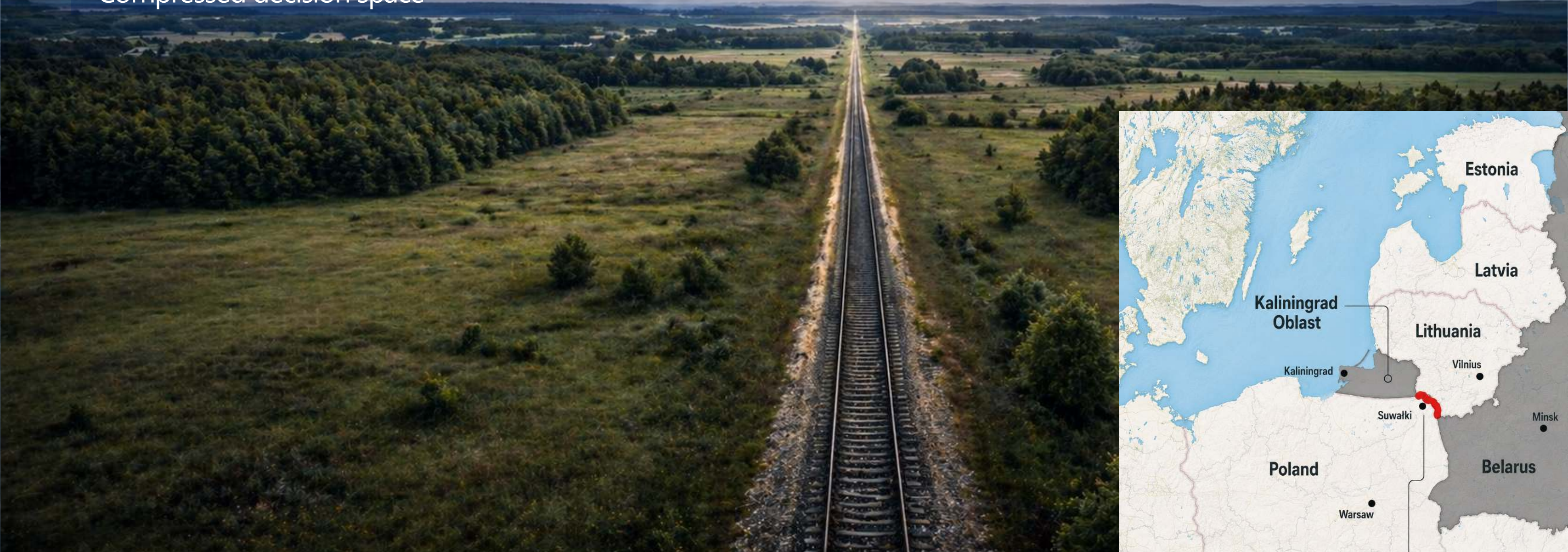


Kaliningrad which so far has been out of reach of Ukrainian UAVs. This sanctuary for the Baltic Fleet is due to the Kaliningrad Region being surrounded by NATO countries. Striking the Baltic Fleet at Kaliningrad would require Ukrainian UAVs to fly over NATO territory, an option which is politically not feasible

The Suwalki Gap - Geography is Power ... but also Risk

A narrow land and rail link between Kaliningrad and Belarus that is only 45 miles (70 km) wide

- Short reinforcement timelines
- Limited depth
- Compressed decision space





Baltic theatre 2024-2026

- Enhanced forward presence scaled up
- Multinational reinforcement plans activated
- Integrated air and maritime surveillance

Layered coverage with:

- Forward-deployed air defence systems
- F-35 and allied air integration
- NATO air policing continuity



From reactive defence to persistent surveillance
Airspace in the Baltic is monitored continuously, not episodically



Collaboration at its Best



Standing NATO maritime groups

- Persistent surface presence
- Submarine detection and tracking
- Protection of sea lines of communication

Control at sea underpins both trade and deterrence



So What is NATO is Doing to Protect Pipelines and Cables?

Increased Presence

More ships and maritime patrol aircraft increase deterrence



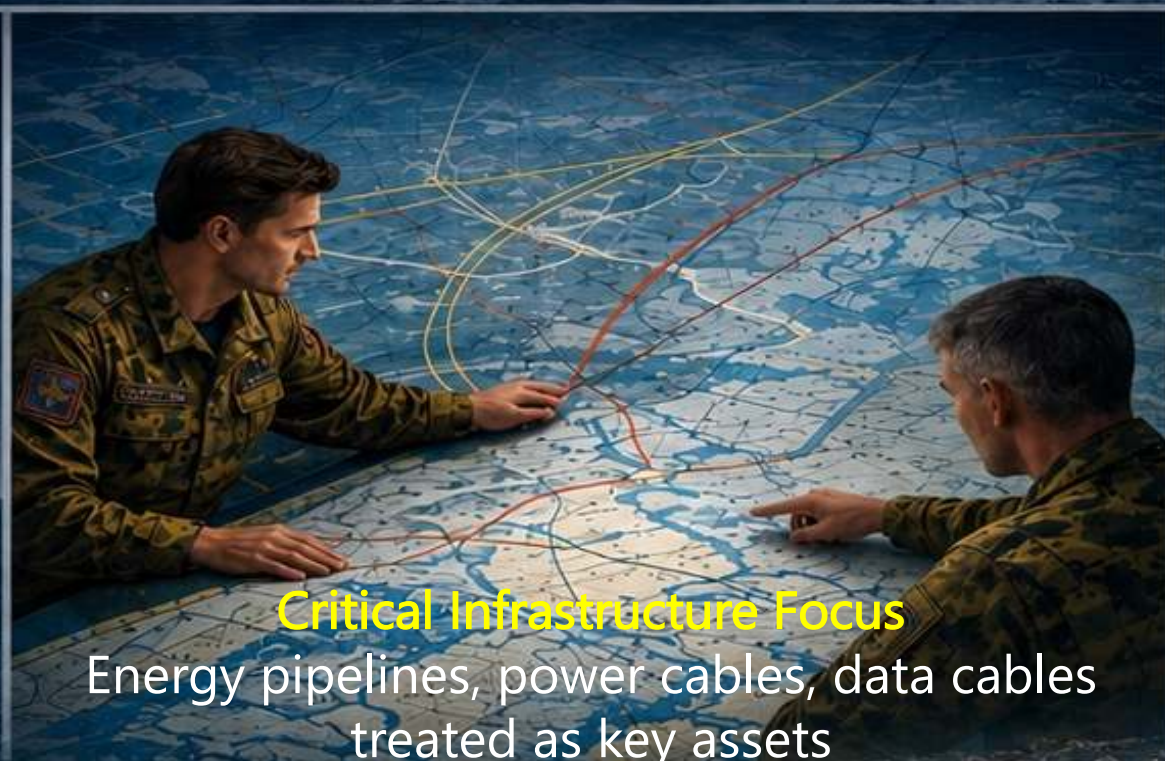
Expanded Undersea Surveillance

ROVs and sea sensors detect suspicious activity



Critical Infrastructure Focus

Energy pipelines, power cables, data cables treated as key assets



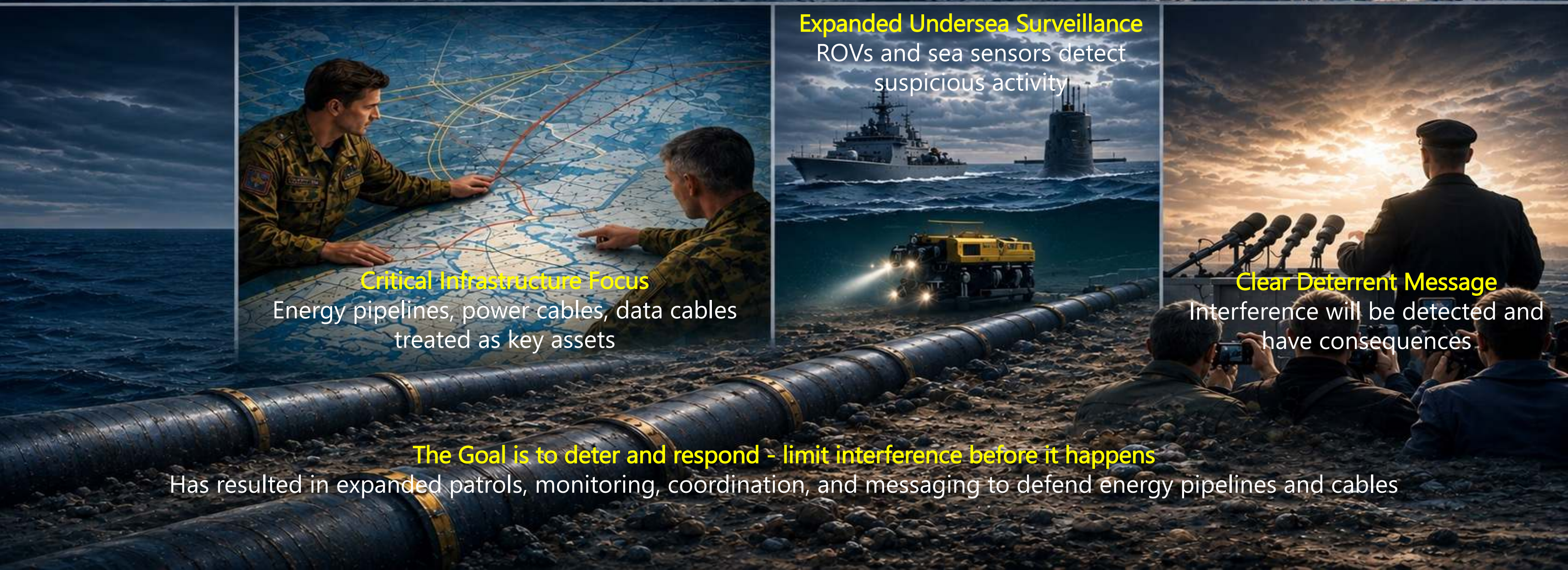
Clear Deterrent Message

Interference will be detected and have consequences



The Goal is to deter and respond - limit interference before it happens

Has resulted in expanded patrols, monitoring, coordination, and messaging to defend energy pipelines and cables



NATO - Bringing Regional Stability Through Deterrence

- Persistent presence
- Clear signalling
- Credible reinforcement
- Alliance cohesion

Deterrence in the Baltic is designed to prevent conflict, not provoke it
The Baltic is heavily monitored, heavily planned for and deliberately stabilised

Invisible Shipping - Real-World Consequences



What Are They?



Aging, poorly-maintained ships operating outside normal oversight



Sail without insurance, under false owners, or flags of convenience



Smuggle sanctioned oil and illicit cargo globally

How They Operate



Turn off AIS to 'go dark'



Ship-to-ship transfers at sea



Constantly rename, reflag and hide ownership

Why We Should Care



Undermine the purpose of sanctions and global laws



Are environmental disasters waiting to happen



Destabilise markets and maritime security

**These ships may be hard to see ...
but their impact on security, trade, and the environment is very real**

- The Ghost (or Shadow) fleet potentially encompasses over 1,200 vessels, controlled by Russia, allies such as Iran or China, or independent operators, but often bearing false registrations, flags, and improper insurance
- According to S&P Global, the shadow fleet comprises around 978 tankers with a combined capacity of approximately 127 million deadweight tonnes - roughly 18.5% of the global oil tanker fleet
- The average age of sanctioned shadow tankers is 21 years, compared with 14 years for the mainstream fleet
- Ships have increasingly adopted identity fraud tactics, including the use of "zombie" IMO numbers and even invented IMO numbers - a ship's unique seven-digit identifier, equivalent to a vehicle VIN



Maritime intelligence company Windward recorded 2,313 Russian-affiliated vessel visits to the Baltic Sea between February 2024 and February 2025 - but only 436 were sailing under the Russian flag

A Typical Ghost Ship Deployment

Typical Voyage Pattern

- Load in Russian Oil Export Terminal (eg, Kronstadt)
- Passage through European waters, switching off AIS
- Possible mid-ocean transfer to another Ghost Ship in the Shadow Fleet
- Passage through Suez Canal and Bab al Mendhab Strait
- Arrival in Mumbai for cargo off-load





© Etat-major des armées / France
French Navy during intercept of the 'Grinch' oil tanker in the Mediterranean on January 22, 2026. (Source: Etat-major des armées/ France)

France Intercepts Russian Arctic Crude Oil Aboard ‘Grinch’ in Global First

Malte Humpert
Total Views: 818
January 22, 2026

French naval forces **intercepted and diverted the Russian-linked oil tanker *Grinch* on Thursday** in the western Mediterranean in the first known case of a crude oil shipment loaded in Russia’s Arctic being seized under Western sanctions.

The interception marks a significant escalation in enforcement of Western sanctions aimed at cutting revenue that sustains Moscow’s war effort.

The *Grinch*, built in 2004, registered under a false Comoros flag and on sanctions lists of the United States, European Union, United Kingdom and other Western governments, had loaded its Arctic crude cargo at Murmansk on Dec. 26, according to maritime tracking data.



19.Nov 2024 11:56:
Yi Peng 3 passing under the Great Belt Bridge on November 19, 2024. (Source: Storebælt Bridge webcam)

Denmark Records 292 Russian ‘Shadow Fleet’ Tankers Passing Through Danish Straits

Malte Humpert
Total Views: 0
February 13, 2026

New data compiled by the Danish Maritime Authority reveals that EU-sanctioned tankers linked to Russia’s so-called “shadow fleet” made 292 voyages through Danish territorial waters in 2025, underscoring the strategic importance of the Danish straits as a gateway to the Baltic Sea.

Denmark’s narrow straits, the Øresund, the Great Belt and the Skagerrak, are vital sea lanes providing access to and from the Baltic for Russian oil exports, including traffic bound for ports near St. Petersburg and Primorsk. Those waters now regularly see tankers that have been cut off from traditional Western insurance and shipping services by sanctions imposed since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

“In 2025, there were 292 voyages with EU sanction-designated tankers in Danish waters,” the authority said according to the AFP. The figure highlights how sanctions aimed at choking off revenue for Moscow’s war economy have been met with creative work-arounds that still allow crude and refined products to transit crucial maritime corridors.



UK Royal Marine Commandos take part in a maritime interdiction operation on the vessel SMYRTOS off the south coast of England, June 14, 2026. The boarding, carried out with National Crime Agency officers, was part of a UK operation targeting vessels suspected of attempting to evade sanctions linked to Russia's war in Ukraine, authorities said. UK MOD Crown/LPhot Hutchins/Handout via REUTERS

UK Boards Russian Shadow Fleet Tanker in First Direct Interdiction Operation

Mike Schuler

Total Views: 0

June 14, 2026

The United Kingdom has boarded a sanctioned Russian shadow fleet tanker in what officials described as the first UK-led operation of its kind, marking a significant escalation in efforts to crack down on Moscow's oil export network.

British authorities said Royal Marine Commandos and National Crime Agency officers boarded the tanker *Smyrtos* in the English Channel during a six-hour operation early Saturday. The mission was supported by Royal Navy vessels, military helicopters and an RAF P-8 maritime patrol aircraft.

Following the boarding, the vessel was directed to an anchorage off England's south coast, where it will remain under investigation.



Arrest of the Russian Ghost Ship Smyrtos

The UK military intercepted and seized the sanctioned Russian shadow fleet oil tanker *Smyrtos* in the English Channel on the night of Saturday 13 June 2026. Following the naval capture, the National Crime Agency (NCA) arrested a 38-year-old Indian national on suspicion of sanctions offences under UK Russia Regulations



The Baltic - What It Tells Us

A small sea, carrying outsized strategic weight

- Geography compresses distance - and warning time
- Russia applies constant military and hybrid pressure
- NATO is stronger, broader and more integrated than ever
- Stability depends on credibility, unity and restraint

**The next decade is unlikely to be quiet -
but it will be defined less by war than by continuous competition**

**In the Baltic, security is no longer about who is strongest -
it is about who manages risk best, every day**



Thank You

Peace depends on our attention

The Baltic Sea is small ... but its global consequences are not

A Voyage Through Time

A Brief History of the Cruise Ship Industry



Tue 28 Jul

With
Rear Admiral (Retired) Simon Hardern

Naval Traditions and Etiquette

Bridging the gap between warships and cruise ships



Thu 30 Jul

www.voyagerstories.com

The Port Briefing Series

Landfall Gdansk

Poland's Baltic jewel - where the Second World War began

Gdansk in a Nutshell

A thousand-year Hanseatic port of amber and grain, twice made and unmade by history - where the war began at Westerplatte, and where, forty years on, Solidarity began to end it

Port Day
Friday 24 July 2026

A short orientation before you step ashore

The Port Briefing Series

Landfall Klaipeda

Lithuania's only seaport - the old German Memel, and gateway to the Curonian Spit

Klaipeda in a Nutshell

A half-timbered Baltic port that spent seven centuries as German Memel and is Lithuanian only since the 1920s - now the ice-free gateway to the great dunes of the Curonian Spit

Port Day
Saturday 25 July 2026

A short orientation before you step ashore

The Port Briefing Series

Landfall Saaremaa

Estonia's great Baltic island - a moated castle, windmills, a meteorite crater and a quiet, wooded calm

Saaremaa in a Nutshell

Estonia's largest and gentlest island - sealed off as a Soviet border zone until 1991, so its windmills, junipers and thatched farms survive almost untouched, crowned by the best medieval castle in the Baltics

Port Day
Sunday 26 July 2026

A short orientation before you step ashore

Dates and times published in the Daily Times and on FredsPortal/TV



Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Orientation

The Port Briefing Series

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

County Waterford - Where Ireland Begins

Port Day
Sunday 5 July 2026

A short orientation before you step ashore

Ireland in a Nutshell

A small, green and famously warm island of storytellers and saints, of Guinness and traditional music - where the welcome is genuine, the talk is an art form, and the rain is the price of all that green

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Day Planner

Provisional Timings for the Day

0630
At Anchor

0700
Tenders Ashore

1915
All Aboard

2000
Departure

05:14
Sunrise

21:48
Sunset

20 km
To Waterford

Free
Ship Shuttle

Watch For - On the Approach

The Hook Lighthouse stands on the far shore - 800 years old, one of the oldest working lights on earth

The red sandstone cliffs and thatched cottages of Dunmore East rise above the little harbour

You anchor off the village - a working fishing port, second only to Killybegs for the Irish catch

Time Ashore

About 12 Hours

a long, full day - the village and the city both

A tender port - allow for the boat queue, last tender before all aboard

Next Port of Call
Dun Laoghaire

dun-LEER-ee - Tue 7 Jul, 0700 - about 110 nm, after a sea day

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Orientation

Where in the World

Ireland

County Waterford

River Suir

River Nore

The Three Sisters

Dunmore East

Ireland's Ancient South East

Ireland's Ancient South East

Dunmore East

Points of Interest

Rivers

Ship's Clock - Local Time

Irish Standard Time - the same clock as the United Kingdom

+1h
vs GMT

Same
as the UK

+5h
vs EST

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Orientation

Size and Scale

Land Area - Thousands, square kilometres / square miles

Netherlands 42 / 16

Ireland 70 / 27

Scotland 78 / 30

United Kingdom 244 / 94

1 / 140
the size of the United States as a whole

One Third
the size of the United Kingdom

Almost
the size of Scotland - the Republic of Ireland

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Orientation

The Facts at a Glance

5.4 million
people in the Republic - about 7 million on the island as a whole

Two Languages
Irish (Gaeilge) and English - road signs come in both

The Euro
the Republic uses the euro - the North keeps the pound

The Harp
the only harp on earth with a musical instrument in its emblem

A Republic
independent since 1922, and a republic since 1949

The Shamrock
St Patrick's three-leafed sprig, worn the world over on his day

The Tricolour
green, white and orange - the white a lasting truce between the green of the Gaelic Catholic and the orange of the Protestant; first flown in Waterford in 1848

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Character

What Ireland Is Known For

The Welcome

Cead míle fáilte - a hundred thousand welcomes - and the gift of the gab

Guinness and the Pub

The black stuff, poured slow, in a snug where the talk never stops

Traditional Music

Fiddles, the bodhran and the tin whistle, in a session in the corner

Forty Shades of Green

A soft, rain-fed landscape of fields, hills and dramatic Atlantic coast

Saints and Scholars

A tiny island that gave the world Joyce, Yeats, Wilde and four Nobel laureates

The Diaspora

Some seventy million people worldwide claim Irish descent - more abroad than at home

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Character

What Waterford Is Known For

Ireland's Oldest City

Founded by the Vikings in 914 - older than Dublin, and proud of it

Waterford Crystal

The world-famous cut glass, made here since 1783 - it drops the Times Square ball

The Viking Triangle

The medieval heart, ringed by 1,000-year-old walls, and Reginald's Tower

The Irish Tricolour

First flown here in 1848 by a Waterford man, Thomas Francis Meagher

The Blaa

BLAH - the soft white bread roll so local it has its own protected status

The Greenway

A 46 km - 29 mi - cycle and walking trail along an old railway to Dungarvan

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Character

A Famous Son of the City

T. F. Meagher

MAH-her

1823 - 1867

Born on Waterford's quay, he gave Ireland its flag and lived one of the most extraordinary lives of the age - rebel, convict, escapee, and an American general

He Gave Ireland Its Flag

He brought the green, white and orange tricolour from Paris and first flew it here in Waterford, in 1848

A Life on Three Continents

Sentenced to death, transported to Tasmania, he escaped to America - honoured today in five countries

A Civil War General

He led the famed Irish Brigade for the Union, then became acting Governor of Montana

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

The Candid Word

Three Things They Will Not Tell You

1

It is a Tender Port

You come ashore by the ship's own boat, so allow for the queue at both ends - and watch the sea state, it can run lively

2

The Village Is Tiny

Dunmore East is lovely but small - if you want Waterford, take the shuttle; do not count on a taxi rank, there is barely one

3

Bring Waterproofs

Soft Irish weather can turn to a downpour in minutes - and the cliff path gets slippery, so come prepared for all four seasons

Don't Mention... calling it part of Britain - this is the Republic, proudly its own nation, and it is euros here, so leave the sterling aboard

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Ashore

Money - What It Buys

The Euro

The Republic of Ireland uses the euro - not the pound, though cards work everywhere

\$1 buys about **€0.88**

£1 buys about **€1.16**

So a 5 euro pint is about 4 pounds 30, or 5 dollars 70

Cards and phones are taken nearly everywhere - a little cash is handy for a small pub or stall

Indicative mid-market rates, July 2026

What You Might Reasonably Pay

Coffee

€3.80

\$4.30 · £3.30

Water

€2

\$2.30 · £1.70

Guinness

€6

\$6.80 · £5.20

City Bus

€1.90

\$2.15 · £1.65

Top Tips to Save

Take the free ship shuttle to Waterford - a taxi is 30 to 40 euros each way, and scarce

Dunmore East and the Waterford Triangle are both free to wander on foot

Reginald's Tower, Ireland's oldest civic building, is only about 5 euros

A blaa from a city bakery is a cheap, authentic and very Waterford lunch

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Origins

Why Here? The Founding

914

Ireland's Oldest City

The Vikings founded Waterford in 914 as a longport - a fortified ship-harbour - on the River Suir (SHOOR), where the Three Sisters open a road to the heart of Ireland

The Norse Haven

The name comes from the Norse Vetrhafn - 'haven from the windswept sea' - and it grew into Ireland's first true city

The Three Sisters

The Suir, Nore and Barrow gave the longships a route deep inland, to trade and to raid across the south east

Reginald's Tower

The Vikings raised the first tower here around 1003 - it still stands, the oldest civic building in Ireland

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

The Turning Point

The Marriage That Changed Ireland

1170 - Strongbow weds Aoife (EE-fa)

When the Norman warlord Strongbow married Aoife, daughter of the King of Leinster, here in Waterford in 1170, he sealed an alliance that opened Ireland to Norman - and then English - rule. A year later Henry II landed here, the first English king to set foot on Irish soil, and made Waterford a royal city. From this one wedding flowed eight centuries of history

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

History - Beat One

Two Hundred Years Ago

1826

A Georgian Port at Its Peak

A thriving Georgian port, shipping butter, beef and bacon to Britain and Newfoundland - and, in 1826, the stage for an election that helped win Catholic Emancipation

1783

Waterford Crystal is founded by the Penrose brothers - the start of a world-famous name

1826

A landmark election - the Catholic Association unseats the mighty Beresfords, a step to Emancipation

1820s

The lifeline to Newfoundland carries Waterford's people and trade across the Atlantic

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

History - Beat Two

A Century to Now

1922

Independence

The Irish Free State is born, and a full republic follows in 1949

1947

Crystal Reborn

Waterford Crystal is revived - its glass now drops the Times Square New Year ball

2017

The Greenway

A 46 km - 29 mi - old railway reopens as a walking and cycling trail to Dungarvan

Today

Reinvented

Ireland's oldest city - the New York Times' only Irish pick in its 2024 places to go

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Ashore

Going Ashore - Tender and Shuttle

Ashore by Tender

The ship anchors in the bay and her boats run you into Dunmore East's little harbour - the village, with its pubs, shops and cliff walks, is right at the pier

On to Waterford

For the city, take the free shuttle, about 25 minutes up the river road. A taxi is 30 to 40 euros and very scarce, so the shuttle is the way to go

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

On Foot

The Best View - and the Walk

The Best View

Walk the Cliffs

Right at the harbour - turn left - is one of the south coast's loveliest cliff paths

The Cliff Walk - red sandstone cliffs above the bay - free, turn left at the harbour

The Hook Across the Water - the 800-year-old lighthouse on the far shore, one of the world's oldest

The Harbour and the Kittiwakes - Nimmo's Victorian pier, its little lighthouse, and the cliff-nesting gulls

Walking the Core

Tender pier to the village

1 km / 0.6 mi · 12-15 min · gentle uphill

The Dunmore East cliff loop

3 km / 2 mi · 60-90 min · moderate, slippery when wet

Shuttle to Waterford

20 km / 12 mi · 25 min · by road, not walkable

Across the Viking Triangle

1 km / 0.6 mi · 15 min · flat cobbles, easy

Dunmore East is for the legs and the lungs; Waterford is flat and compact - bring waterproofs and sturdy shoes

Landfall

Waterford/Dunmore East

Ashore

The Village and the City - Two Ways Ashore

By the Sea

Dunmore East

- The Victorian harbour and its little lighthouse, alive with fishing boats
- Cliff walks and red sandstone coves, with kittiwakes wheeling overhead
- A Blue Flag beach, thatched cottages and a clutch of seafood pubs
- Galleries and craft stalls - the easy, unhurried, salt-air option

The Old City

Waterford

- The Viking Triangle - Reginald's Tower and the cobbled medieval core
- The House of Waterford Crystal - watch the master cutters at work
- The Medieval Museum and Bishop's Palace - 1,000 years of stories
- The Mall, the quays and the pubs - a proper Irish city day

Dunmore East and Waterford on a Budget

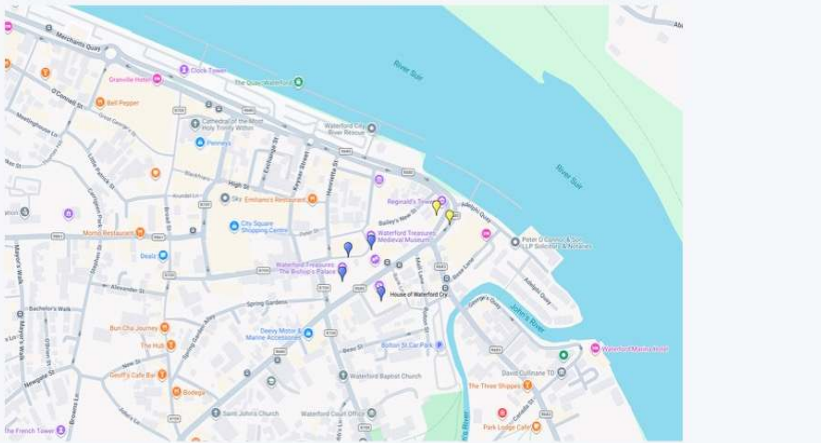
- **Take the Free Shuttle**
Let the ship's bus run you to Waterford - the taxi alternative is dear and scarce
- **Walk the Cliff Path**
The Dunmore East coast walk costs nothing and is the finest thing here
- **Reginald's Tower**
Ireland's oldest civic building, packed with Viking finds, for about 5 euros
- **Wander the Triangle**
The cobbled Viking core of Waterford is free to stroll and full of story
- **Lunch on a Blaa**
Waterford's own bread roll, filled at a city bakery, is a cheap, authentic bite
- **The Beach and Harbour**
Dunmore East's Blue Flag strand and busy quay are free to enjoy all day



One Drink, and One Dish

- **If You Have One Drink**
A Pint of Guinness
The national drink, and it really does taste better this side of the water. Let the barman pour it in two parts and wait for the settle - the mark of a good pint. For a local turn, ask for an Irish whiskey or a Waterford gin
- **If You Eat One Thing**
The Blaa
BLAH
Waterford's own soft, floury white bread roll - so local it carries the same protected status as champagne. Filled with the local rashers, it is the city's lunch. By the harbour, a bowl of Dunmore East seafood chowder is the rival

The Lie of the Land - Waterford



For the Cultured

- **Reginald's Tower**
Ireland's oldest civic building, with the Viking finds from Woodstown - about 5 euros
- **The Medieval Museum**
Ireland's only purpose-built medieval museum - and Henry VIII's only surviving cap
- **The Bishop's Palace**
Georgian Waterford brought to life, and the oldest piece of Waterford crystal
- **House of Waterford Crystal**
The factory tour - watch the blowers and master cutters shape the famous glass
- **The Epic Walking Tour**
A guided loop of the Viking Triangle - a thousand years in a thousand paces
- **Christ Church Cathedral**
Georgian, on the Viking site where Strongbow and Aoife were wed



If You Do One Thing

Walk the Viking Triangle

In the cobbled heart of Ireland's oldest city, a thousand years stand within a thousand paces - Reginald's Tower, the medieval museums, and the spot where Strongbow's wedding changed Ireland. The crystal, and a blaa, are a short stroll away



 Take the free shuttle in - then follow the Viking walls round the old town

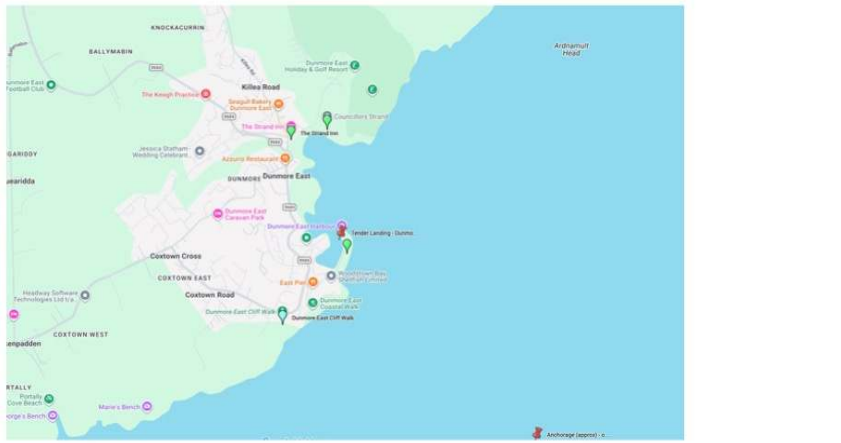
With Fair Winds

- Dunmore East in a Slide
- **Tender into a pretty fishing village** - Dunmore East, salt air and cliffs
- **Take the shuttle to Ireland's oldest city** - Waterford, Viking 914
- **Stand where the tricolour was first flown** - and raise a pint to T. F. Meagher
- **All Aboard 1915 - Sail 2000** it is a tender port, so leave good time for the last boat back

Waterford in Motion



The Lie of the Land - Dunmore East



Prefer It Organised?

Explore with a Ship's Excursion

If you would rather leave the logistics to others, the ship's excursions bring coach transport, an expert local guide and the reassurance that the ship will not sail without you. They are ideal for the sights beyond the city - the Hook Lighthouse, Kilkenny Castle, or the House of Waterford Crystal - or simply for a relaxed, ready-made day ashore



 Book at the Shore Excursions Desk or through the Celebrity app