

**Priority question for written answer P-003328/2022
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy**

Rule 138

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Subject: Protection of vital underwater internet cables after Nord Stream explosions

On 26 September 2022, German authorities confirmed that they had detected a sudden loss of pressure along the Nord Stream 1 and 2¹ pipelines. Investigations conducted by the Danish and Swedish authorities in the days following the attack suggest that the loss of pressure was the result of a deliberate attack on Europe's undersea gas networks. This sabotage is likely to be linked with the Ukraine war².

Although the investigations to identify the perpetrators of the attacks are currently proving to be cumbersome, there is concern about the security and integrity of the underwater infrastructure that is critical for the European economy and society. More specifically, there are 16 underwater cables running under the Atlantic, which connect the US with multiple EU Member States. These cables transfer vast amounts of internet data between the two continents and help facilitate global financial transactions worth approximately USD 10 trillion dollars every day³.

Therefore, I would like to ask the VP/HR:

1. Does the EU have a framework to ensure the security and integrity of critical undersea infrastructure?
2. Has the Commission taken any measures to safeguard the underwater transfer of data and facilitation of financial transactions?
3. What efforts has the Commission made to cooperate in this field with international allies such as NATO?

¹ <https://www.politico.eu/newsletter/brussels-playbook/goodbye-nord-stream-meloni-fallout-draft-dodger-dilemma/>

² <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/09/27/denmark-and-sweden-issue-navigation-warnings-over-nord-stream-gas-leaks>

³ <https://www.nbr.org/publication/submarine-cables/>