

EU's diplomatic strategy and geopolitical cooperation in the Arctic

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The European Parliament adopted by 510 votes to 75, with 80 abstentions, a recommendation to the Council of the Commission and to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the EU's diplomatic strategy and geopolitical cooperation in the Arctic.

Militarisation of the Arctic

Parliament has recommended:

- condemning the increasing militarisation of the Arctic, particularly due to Russia's extensive military restructuring - including the establishment of the Maritime Collegium - which, combined with China's clear interest in the region, further exacerbates regional tensions and undermines regional stability;
- closely monitoring China's growing interest and strategic activities in the Arctic region, within the framework of the "polar silk road";
- fully implementing the Union's sanctions on dual-use technologies destined for Russia's military expansion in the Arctic and to strengthen sanctions against shadow fleet vessels that use flags of convenience to evade sanctions in the Arctic;
- **working together with the Member States and NATO allies** to strengthen deterrent capabilities in response, including through enhanced EU-NATO strategic dialogues on Arctic domain awareness, intelligence sharing and defensive joint exercises in the High North.

Protection of critical infrastructure and international law

In light of recent incidents in the Baltic Sea attributed to the Russian ghost fleet and Chinese vessels, Parliament recommended:

- significantly strengthening the protection of essential underwater infrastructure in the Arctic, in particular **submarine cables and pipelines**, including those located near Greenland, and to strengthen the regulatory framework for sanctions and countermeasures;
- applying and enforcing the obligations set out in the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea**, which are crucial to preserving Europe's digital and energy interconnectivity in the face of geopolitical disruptions;
- developing an **EU and EEA strategy** to monitor and counter Sino-Russian cooperation in the High North, which potentially undermines freedom of navigation and international law;
- promoting Union-led **investments and partnerships** with trusted allies to secure critical Arctic infrastructure and reduce dependence on authoritarian powers;
- publicly condemning the restrictions imposed by Russia on freedom of navigation on the North Sea route, as well as the strengthening of its military infrastructure along this route, and to **support the**

application of international law to counter attempts to legitimise disputed maritime corridors or to exert geopolitical influence under the pretext of scientific or economic cooperation.

Climate change

Given the disproportionate impact of climate change on the Arctic, Parliament recommended **urgently enhancing adaptation strategies** that also have a security policy dimension, support extensive monitoring initiatives and significantly increase investments in research programmes that prioritise the need to balance economic growth while protecting critical ecosystems in the Arctic, in line with the ‘do no significant harm’ principle. The need to respect and promote the **rights of Indigenous peoples** across the Arctic is emphasised.

Natural resources

Given the significance of Arctic natural resources, including hydrocarbons, rare earth elements and fisheries, and together with the Member States, it is recommended to **strengthen consensual partnerships** with Greenland and other Arctic stakeholders, including Indigenous communities, on sustainable resource extraction and processing while strictly adhering to the highest environmental standards.

Iceland and Norway

In the light of the growing support for EU accession in Iceland, Parliament recommended welcoming the intention expressed by local authorities to hold a referendum by 2027 on the resumption of **EU accession negotiations** and pledge to respect the outcome thereof, as democratically expressed by the Icelandic people. It is proposed to engage proactively with the Icelandic Government to promote the benefits of potential EU membership and enhance preparedness for a renewed accession process should Iceland formally reactivate its application.

Parliament recommended recognising Norway as a key EU and NATO ally and considering **deeper cooperation with Norway**, including the possible extension to Norway of Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union and Norway’s potential EU accession. Given Norway’s crucial role in EU energy security, accounting for more than 30 % of EU gas imports in 2024, Members advocated enhancing cooperation on energy resilience and supply diversification as a key tool to achieve EU strategic autonomy.