

Baltic States and Poland



Your countries are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. You presently enjoy unprecedented influence in both, largely as a result of Moscow's muscular foreign policy in what it euphemistically deems as its 'Near Abroad'. The perception of a growing threat from the east has galvanized NATO to strengthen its northern and eastern flank. The NATO Summit in Warsaw, 8-9 July 2016, gave voice to these concerns and has elevated your position at the collective table. In addition, you have the backing of the United States. More importantly, however, you have the sympathy of Germany, the driving force of the European Union. Berlin's ongoing support for Poland's right-wing government, of course, reflects more than a security threat from Russia; rather it signals a closer alignment with Europe's 'northern bloc', of which Poland and Baltic states form part.

Your new influence comes at a price, however. Enforcing a fully non-permissive visa regime (Schengen border controls) is certain to inflame relations with Russia, especially as concerns the Kaliningrad district bordering on Poland and Lithuania. Your region has no unified energy policy and Russia remains your chief source of oil and gas. Lithuania's natural gas terminal in Klaipeda offers the prospect of energy independence, which is desirable given the long history of prejudicial energy contracts with Russia. You will also benefit from the greater transparency in European energy markets.

In considering your actions, don't forget that you can leverage Sweden. Sweden shares profound defense, economic, financial, and cultural connections with the Baltic states and Poland and can be expected to support Baltic initiatives to enforce the rule of law and international legal norms.

Baltic States and Poland:

- Maintain the territorial integrity of the Baltic States and Poland
- Prevent subjugation to Russia through fixed, long-term oil and gas contracts
- Strengthen the Nordic Bloc (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden)
- Increase energy independence by finding additional energy sources
- Exploit fissures in EU/NATO as necessary to preclude the union or alliance from reaching a separate peace with Russia at the expense of the Baltic States and Poland (prevent Western sellout)
- Reject Russia's claim to special prerogatives in its 'Near Abroad' and its use of the phrase to delegitimize sovereign states that used to be part of the Soviet Union
- Press aggressively for preservation of an Europe 'Whole and Free'