

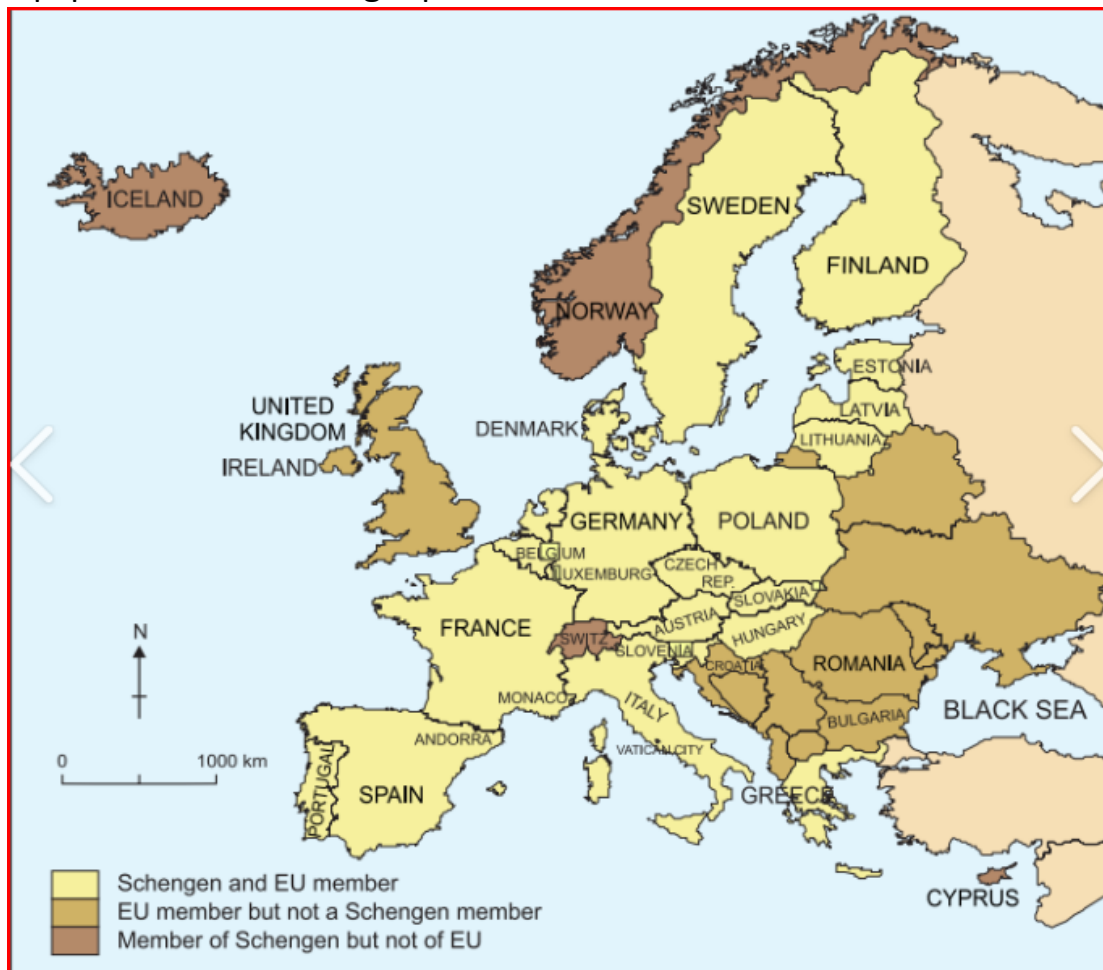
Ukraine: NATO anticipates Russian Attack, preparing for a War

January 16, 2024

Please see a brief BACKGOUNDER on NATO's AWACS on page 3.

January 16, 2024: Berlin, Germany: "Soldiers of Germany have started preparing for a hybrid Russian attack on the NATO's eastern flank," said BILD.

BILD is a **German tabloid newspaper** published by Axel Springer SE. It is the **best-selling European newspaper** and has the **sixteenth-largest circulation worldwide**. BILD is published from Monday to Saturday; on Sundays, its sister paper **Bild am Sonntag** is published instead.



2024: BILD was informed that Putin would order another wave of mobilization, enlarging his army with an additional 200,000 people in the coming months.

May 2024: Russia will mount a spring offensive in Ukraine, pushing back Ukrainian forces.

July 2024: Russia is expected to shift from **covert to overt attacks** against the West, with a focus on **cyberattacks** and **hybrid warfare**, particularly **targeting the Baltic states**. These actions could be accompanied by large-scale **military exercises by Russia and Belarus**.

October 2024: The tension is expected to intensify in October with Russia's potential deployment of troops and medium-range missiles to Kaliningrad.

December 2024: A "border conflict" and riots in the Suwalki Corridor are anticipated tegically important area in Eastern Europe.



Suwałki Gap or the Suwałki corridor; the Polish town of Suwałki

The **Suwałki Gap** is a sparsely populated area around the border between **Lithuania** and **Poland**, and centres on **the shortest path between Belarus** and the **Russian exclave of Kaliningrad Oblast**. Named after the Polish town of Suwałki, this choke point has become of great strategic and military importance since **Poland** and the **Baltic states** joined the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**.

This narrow border stretch between Poland and Lithuania has become a **vulnerability for NATO**. If a military conflict were to erupt between Russia and Belarus (Russia's ally) on one side and NATO on the other, the capture of the **65 km-long strip of land** between Russia's **Kaliningrad Oblast** and Belarus would jeopardise NATO's attempts to defend the Baltic states.

Kaliningrad is Russia's **westernmost region**, or **oblast**. It is an **exclave**, meaning it shares no borders with mainland Russia. It spans an area of 15,000 Km² and has a population of roughly a million.

----A Brief BACKGROUNDER on AWACs----

NATO, the *31-nation military alliance*, Guards its Borders: With **Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACs)** in the sky, NATO peers through the clouds to detect aircraft, UAVs, missiles and ships. The NATO's AWACs detect Russian AWACs. Both the sides know that each side is providing real-time intelligence to its commanders., or AWACS, aircraft. With 26 military personnel

Able to fly for 12 hours without refueling, **circling on auto-pilot at 34,000 feet (10 Km)**, a NATO's **E-3F-type AWAC** can detect **low-flying targets within 400 Km** and **higher-flying targets within 520 Km**, one such AWAC can surveil an area the size of Poland; three can cover all of central Europe. Each AWAC has **46 technical personnel** continuously studying displays, which provide real-time information of the area, covered by the AWAC.

SHIELD: Regular surveillance flights of AWACs, **Surveillance Drones** (MQ-9 Reaper drones) together with **fighter patrols, ground-based radar, missile batteries** and other hardware at NATO's disposal, form what the commander of France's AWACS squadron described as "a shield" against any potential spill-over.
