Atlantic Cable Infrastructure Program (ACIP)

Context

Over 95% of private and government communications, and $10 trillion in daily transaction flow, are transmitted through 16 subsea cables connecting Europe with the United States.[1] Their immense length makes them impossible to guard, making these cables prime targets for hybrid warfare. In 2024, three such cables were cut in the Baltic Sea, causing a loss of $3.5 billion because of prolonged repairs.[2] Recognizing this vulnerability, the European Commission's Action Plan on Cable Security committed €1 billion to submarine cable resilience, while the US House passed the Undersea Cable Control Act to increase national control of subsea cable production.[3] Yet, as long as the repair takes months, every attack will succeed; therefore, the only deterrence is to guarantee the rapid repair of subsea infrastructure.

Structure

The Atlantic Cable Infrastructure Program (**ACIP**) guarantees the rapid recovery of subsea cables by exploiting comparative advantages among European and American Subsea cable manufacturing firms.

Objectives

1. To develop a permanent, transatlantic stockpile of pre-certified subsea cable segments and active components to ensure immediate availability for emergency repairs.
2. Eliminate single points of dependency by diversifying manufacturing and geographic distribution of critical subsea components.
3. Embed **ACIP** into existing NATO infrastructure to enable an automated, coordinated response protocol across the transatlantic region.
4. Reduce cable repair time from 36 months to 12 hours through pre-positioned components and standby vessel deployment.

Implementation

Recommends a joint fund of €200 million under multilateral administration that implements **ACIP** through:

- Leverage transatlantic comparative advantages by incentivizing manufacturers to overproduce the specific components where they hold a competitive lead, at a fraction of standard cost
- Distribution of critical subsea cable components to designated reserve ports across the Atlantic coast
- Rapid deployment of repair vessels via pre-established standby contracts, ensuring every reserve port has a ready-to-deploy vessel

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[1] Murphy, Erin. 2026. “Risk beneath the Waves: Safeguarding Subsea Cables for a Secure Global Network.” Csis.org. March 5, 2026. https://features.csis.org/safeguarding-subsea-cables.

[2] Group Insikt. 2025. “Submarine Cable Security at Risk amid Geopolitical Tensions & Limited Repair Capabilities.” Recordedfuture.com. 2025. https://www.recordedfuture.com/research/submarine-cables-face-increasing-threats.

[3] European Commission. 2025. “IMMC.JOIN%282025%299%20final.ENG.xhtml.3_EN_ACT_part1_v3.Docx.” Europa.eu. 2025. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/ uri=CELEX:52025JC0009.