

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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THE MYTH OF BALTIC MARITIME UNITY: PORT REORGANIZATION REVEALING EAST-WEST DIFFERENTIATION

ARNAUD SERRY

Introduction

“It is difficult to give an unambiguous definition of the Baltic Sea region since it is heterogeneous in terms of language, religion, culture, and history, and is highly diversified in terms of the environment and the economy.” (Klemeshev & al., 2017).

At the beginning of the 21st century, **the Baltic space has completed its reconfiguration**, after a movement which led its eastern border to extricate itself, as far as possible, from the Russian sphere of influence to enter fully into western dynamics.

The **Baltic’s maritime dimension is widely perceived as being a factor of unity** in itself and the same natural constraints create a determinism for ships and men, as is clearly summarized by: “The common bond between the Baltic countries is the sea” (Marcadon, 1998).

In this context, **this communication proposes to draw out the specificities of the Baltic port and maritime world**, particularly **comparing the eastern and western shores**.

A specific enclosed sea

“A restrictive geographic context” (Blanc-Noël, 1992)

Great vulnerability of the marine ecosystem

Closed sea communicating with the exterior by a system of straits

→ The physical features of the Baltic Sea are considered to be the first factors of unity

THE COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC SEA STATES

WHAT ? The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) was established by the region's Foreign Ministers in Copenhagen in 1992

Broad network of cooperation:

- 11 countries and the European Commission
- 10 Observers
- 16 Strategic Partners
- 20 Expert Groups and long-term initiatives

WHO ?

The infographic includes a map of the Baltic Sea region with labels for Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, and Poland. Logos for the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Polish Presidency (2011-2012) are also present.

Differing assessments of the Baltic Sea



The Baltic space: maritime tradition and cooperation

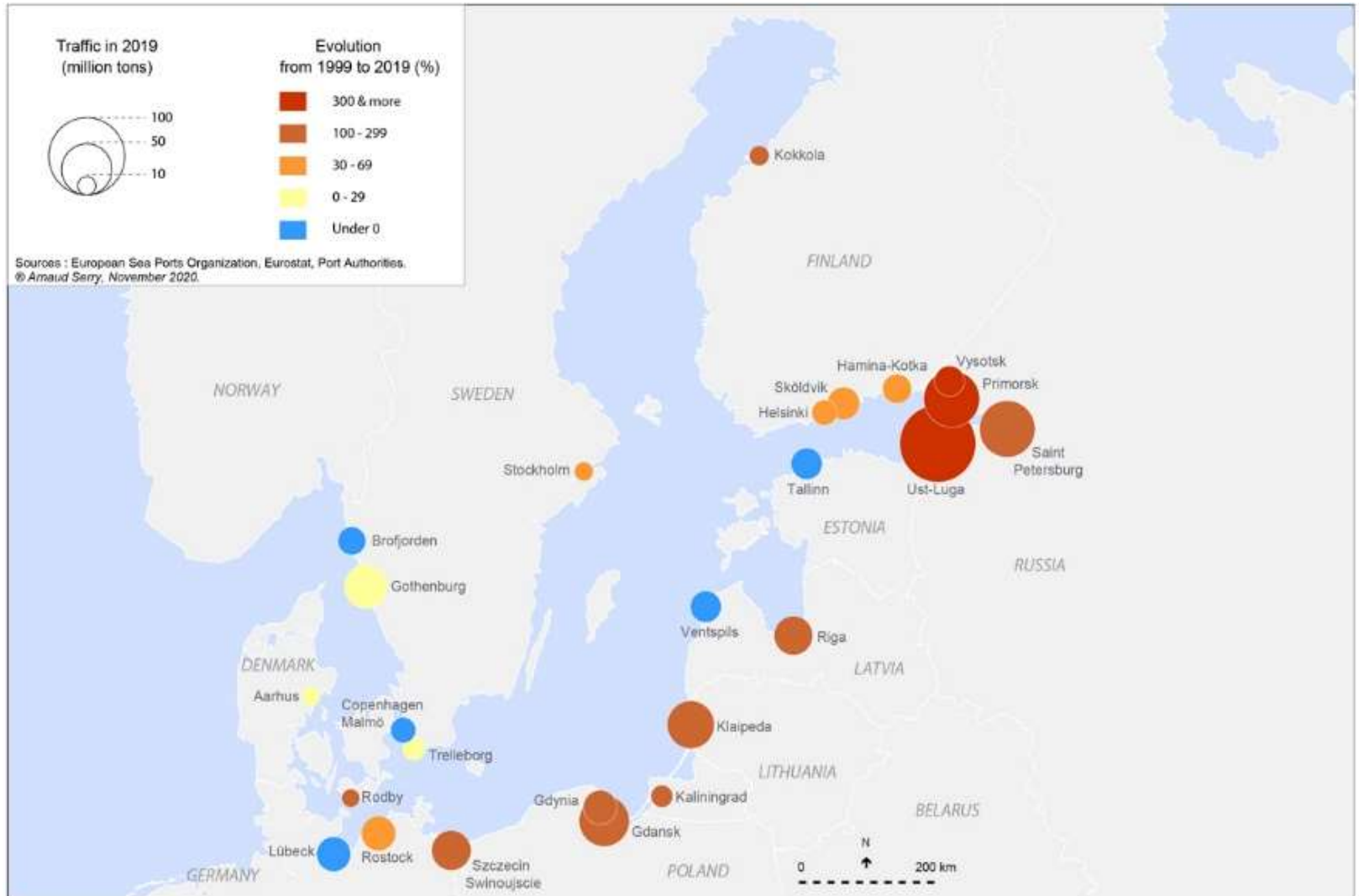
The combination of increased maritime transportation and the sensitivity of the Baltic Sea makes it necessary to establish efficient cooperation tools.

The sea-environment has been the subject of a great number of cooperative projects : Helsinki Convention.

Recollection of the Hanseatic period plays also an essential role here as it was the first instance of unity in the area.



Port traffic: sharing the growth



Regionalization of maritime flows

Three categories of maritime route:

- intra-Baltic routes dominated by links between Nordic ports and western ports in the region.
- Containerised services linking the Baltic ports with the major ports of Western Europe, then by transshipment to the rest of the world.
- Maritime connections by *tramping*; mainly dedicated to Russian bulk, which connect the Baltic directly with overseas ports.



Sources : European Sea Ports Organization, Eurostat, Port Authorities.
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Ports in the Baltic Sea rather than Baltic ports

The Nordic ports, with the exception of Gothenburg, are essentially ports providing regional or national maritime services.

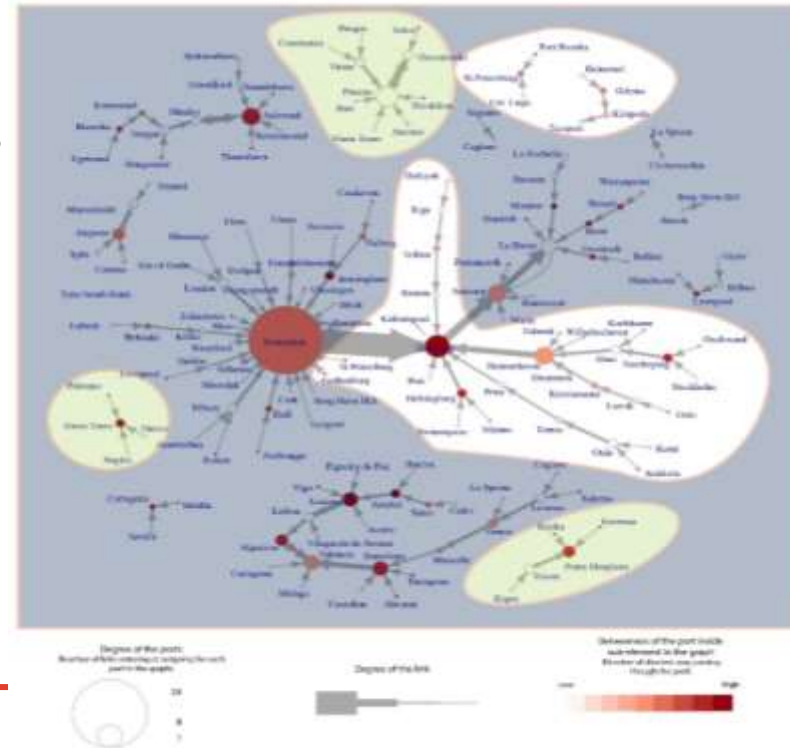
The ports of the southern rim are of two types:

German and Danish ports are medium-sized ports dominated by north to south ro-ro flows.

Polish ports are oscillating between medium-sized ports with an essentially national vocation and shipping hubs.

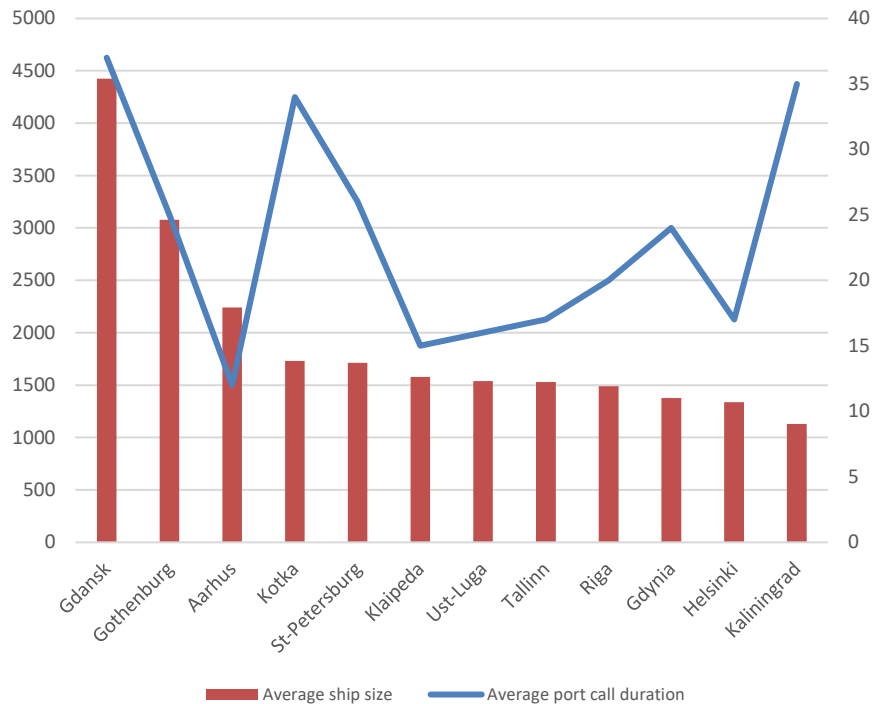
On the eastern shore, the Baltic and Finnish ports have not ceased to be Russia's and Belarus seaboard.

Russia has decided to provide itself with new port capacity

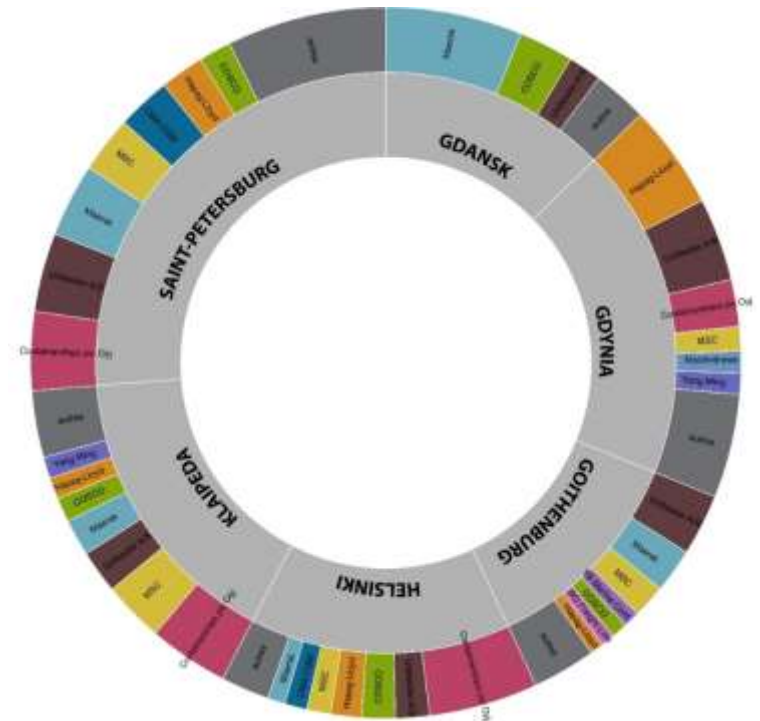


Differentiation in Containerised services

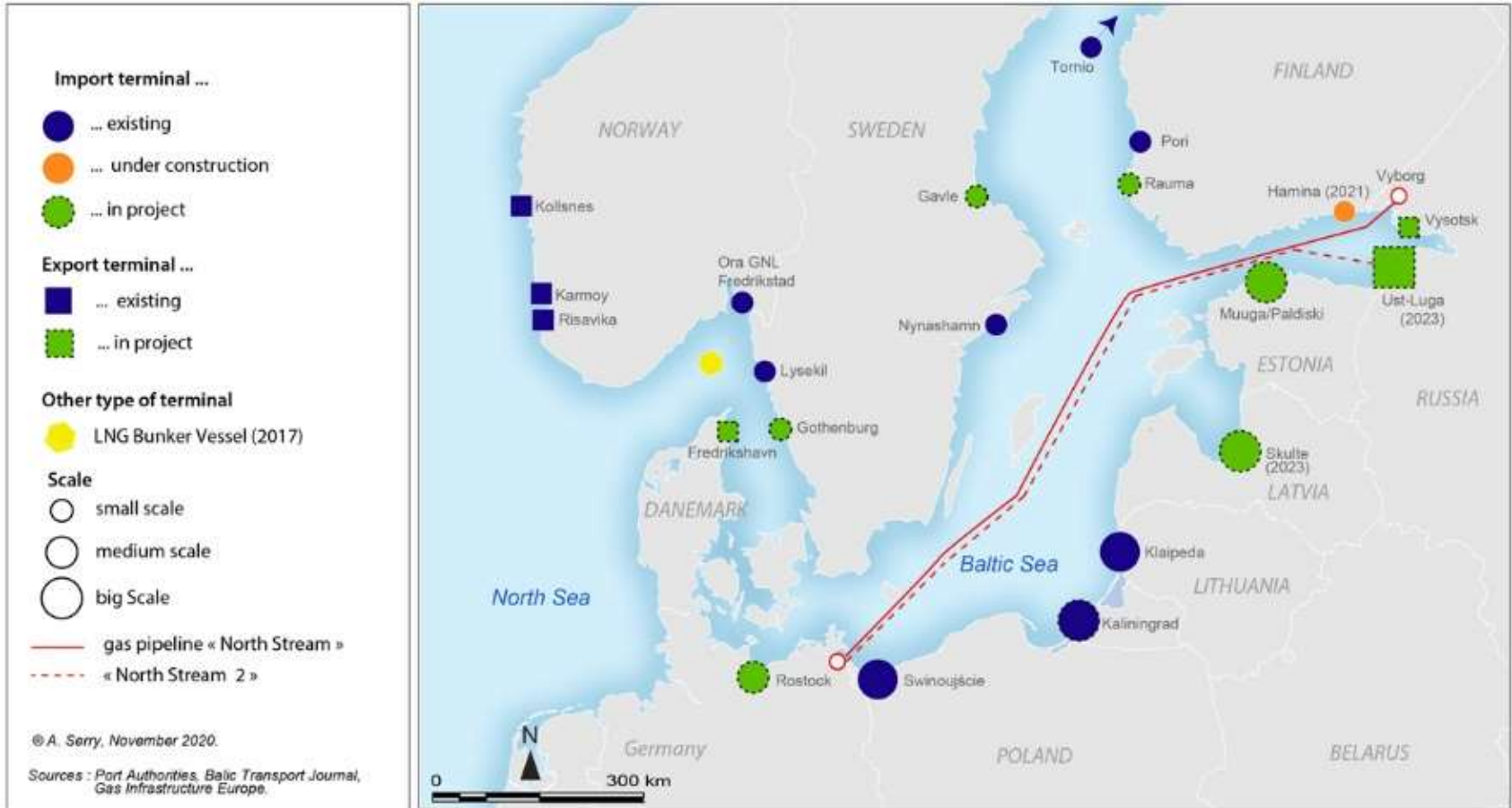
Container ships' capacity and duration of port call



Shipping companies in 2018



Energy flows: vector of port differentiation



Conclusion

Maritime trade undeniably is a common feature of the countries in the Baltic space.

Nevertheless, whether it is a question of the type of traffic, their functions..., there are many differences between the region's ports.

Maritime and port activity is affected more by competition than by complementarity, by multi-scale analysis rather than regional homogeneity.

Contemporary port reorganization in the region strengthens the positioning of ports in the context of globalized maritime trade, rather than in that of the regional integration supported by the sea.

The traffic characterized by the omnipresence of Russia flows, appears likely to weigh heavily on regional economic dynamics, just as on regional and geopolitical diplomacy at this eastern border between the European Union and the Russian Federation.

Thank You for your attention

serryarnaud@gmail.com



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Université Le Havre Normandie / 25, rue Philippe Lebon / Le Havre

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