

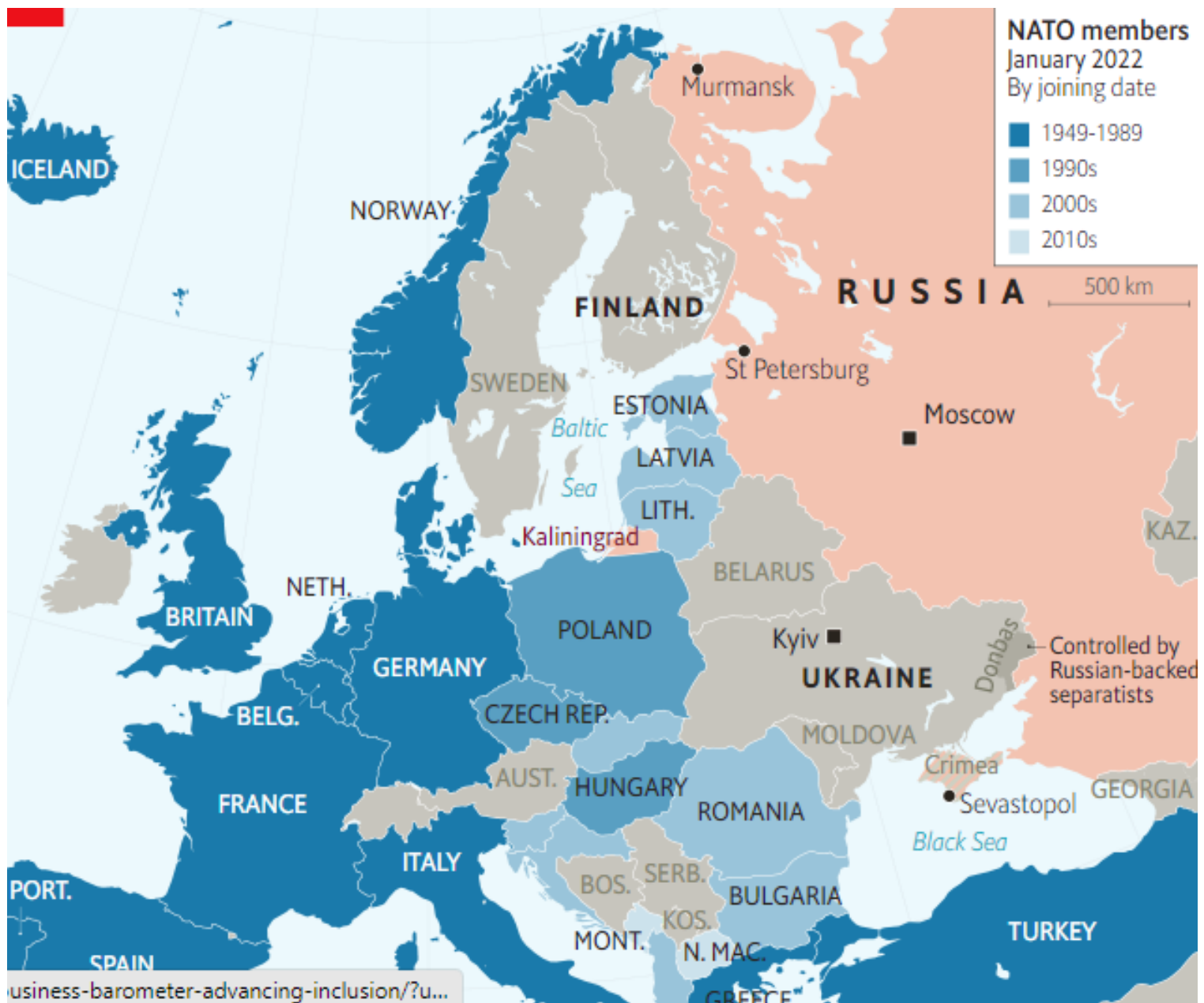
What is 'Finlandization', discussed as a possible option for Ukraine?

By IAS Toppers | 2022-03-22 17:35:00



What is 'Finlandization', discussed as a possible option for Ukraine?

France's President was said to have suggested the model of 'Finlandization' during the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



[Ref: TheEconomist]

What is Finlandization?

- 'Finlandization' refers to the policy of **strict neutrality** between Russia and the West that Finland followed during the Cold War.
- Finland signed the **Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance** with the USSR in April 1948.
- The basic tenets of this principle are:
 - strategic partnership
 - recognition of the inviolability of existing borders
 - respect for territorial integrity
 - mutual commitment not to use its territory to harm the security of each other.

Context

- The treaty became the **basis of Helsinki-Moscow relations**, until a new agreement was signed between both the countries in 1992.
- It lay at the heart of **Finland's foreign policy doctrine**.
- It is known in international relations studies as the "**Paasikivi-Kekkonen line**".
 - This is because it became more prominent during the presidency of Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1946-56) and Urho Kekkonen (1956-82).

Significance of the treaty

- It **protected Finland from being attacked** or incorporated into the USSR like the Baltic and eastern European states.
- It **allowed the country to pursue the path of democracy** and capitalism while staying out of the conflict between the great powers.

Consequence

- **Finland did not participate in the Marshall Plan**, instead chose a neutral path.
 - Marshall plan is a post-War European recovery programme.
 - It promoted the idea of shared interests and cooperation between the US and Europe.
- It took **neutral positions on matters** on which the Soviet Union and the West disagreed.
- It **stayed aloof from NATO** and European military thereby warding off pressure from Moscow to become part of the Soviet bloc or the Warsaw Pact.

Ukraine and Finlandization

- The Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation was signed in **1997**.
- Both nations agreed to "respect each other's territorial integrity and reaffirm the inviolability of the borders existing between them".
- But this was terminated by Ukraine in 2019.
 - **Reason:** Russia's annexation of Crimea has broken all the most important provisions of the treaty.

Feasibility of Finlandization of Ukraine

- Finlandization of Ukraine essentially means Ukraine becoming a neutral buffer between the East and West.
 - Russia's quest for making 'Russian Ukraine' prevents such a neutral position in case of Ukraine.
- Ukraine cannot gain a neutral state unless it is offered by Russia, which is impractical.