

Yes, Germany Needs to Cut Its Dependence on Russian Gas

But that doesn't absolve our leaders from making realistic plans



Image by [Markus Winkler](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Germany's minister of Economics seems to be in panic mode. Today, the second phase in a three-stage gas emergency program [went into effect](#). This is an admittance, that the situation does not at all look rosy. The situation shows, how dependent Germany is on Russian gas.

Gas reserves are running very low. Last week, Russia restricted the throughput of one of the major pipelines by 60%. Gazprom's explanation is that spare parts are stuck in Canada due to the sanctions. Habeck claims that Putin is weaponizing the gas supply. Both scenarios are plausible. Either way, the result is the same.

Germany's foreign minister Annalena Baerbock was extremely arrogant not long ago. "[Germany is willing to pay a very high price](#)". That was the statement. They also claimed that Germany is ready to let go of the oil and gas from Russia.

If I would be sarcastic, I would say that Putin is only assisting to help

these plans along. It is obvious, that we are severely dependent on Russian energy imports. We have been gaslit by Habeck and Baerbock.

The sanctions hurt Germany more than our leaders like to admit. Calling for ever more embargos looks good in the news. In the end, however, it always comes down to the material questions.

- Are there viable short-term alternative sources to Russian gas?
- Is the necessary infrastructure in place to pull it off??
- Have our leaders considered the social consequences?

The answer to all three questions is a resounding NO.

There Are Few Short-Term Alternatives to Russian Gas

So what are the alternatives? Well, in short Germany will need to find other suppliers. Habeck already tried, by kissing the hand of the United Arab Emirates. With little success. Even at the prospect of success, it would not solve anything. We would just exchange dependence from one questionable regime to another. Then again, hypocrisy is a common trait among western politicians. Especially when it comes to human rights.

The material problem is, that other suppliers usually supply LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas). Which is usually derived from Fracking. That is the case for the U.S., for instance. The environmental impact of LNG is much bigger than natural gas from Russia. So, to bridge the supply gap, we will have to compromise our climate goals. Again. But the supply capacity is difficult to scale [further than it already is](#).

And it is way more expensive.

The result will be a sharp increase in energy prices. Energy companies will pass them on to consumers. So, thousands of people will go homeless because they cannot pay their gas bills. Most renters have no influence on their heat source. That includes me. Market forces will not solve it. Real-estate conglomerates will not install heat pumps and green technologies on their own. Thinking that is ridiculous. They will pass on the prices to us.

LNG Gas Requires Infrastructure We Do Not Have

The other issue with LNG gas is, that it requires complex infrastructure. That infrastructure does not exist yet. Most German ports are not ready for it. There are plans to [build it](#). But the failed [BER airport](#) showed one thing. Germany's officials are masters of botching up public infrastructure projects.

Also, distribution is tricky. There are not enough pipelines between East and

West Germany. And the East German ports are equally unready to receive LNG tankers.



Pipelines running between East and West Germany are not exactly abundant. That is a serious bottleneck. Image by Samuel Bailey (sam.bailus@gmail.com) – Eigenes Werk, [CC BY 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/), from [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_gas_pipelines_in_Europe).

In other words, East Germany risks getting cut off from gas supplies altogether. That includes the capital Berlin.

Let's assume the infrastructure in the ports and on the mainland were available. There would still be another bottleneck. It's the tankers themselves. It is not even sure, that the global tanker capacity can deliver what we need. [This article](#) provides an insightful calculation on this. Basically, to cover Germany's needs we would need at least 60 LNG freighters.

That is almost 10% of the entire [global capacity](#). Hardly realistic. Especially since we need it now.

It Is Not Just Private Households That Depend on Russian Gas

When it comes to the point that gas gets rationed, it is not only private households who suffer. Germany has lots of industry that depends on Russian gas in their production. [It will affect almost every sector](#). From an environmental standpoint, it would be a necessary development. At least in the long run.

But these disruptions will have serious social consequences. Industries will shut down. People will lose their jobs. They will lose their homes. They will get ill from the cold. This will further erode whatever democratic institutions we have left. Yes, there will be a high price to pay. And our leaders have no plans to even soften the blow. Instead, they give money to the [fossil fuel industry](#). Or they practice symbolism. [Like giving out cheap train tickets](#). So people can use the non-functional train infrastructure.

Germany's GDP will [shrink by 5%](#). Possibly more. This will exacerbate the already existing global supply shortages. There will be consequences. Prices are going to explode even more. Anyone who still believes that inflation is a hiccup is a fool. There is an inconvenient truth. This crisis reveals how complacent our leaders were. They refused to do anything to cut our dependence on fossil fuels. Now they are scrambling because shit is hitting the fan.

They do not have any solutions. The sanctions were done without thinking it through. They wanted to do virtue signaling. As usual, the poor and marginalized will pay the highest price. This could get very dark.