

# Germany calls nuclear power 'dangerous,' rejects EU plan

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Steam rises from the cooling towers of the Grohnde nuclear power plant near Grohnde, Germany, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2021. Germany on Friday, Dec. 31, 2021 is shutting down half of the six nuclear plants it still has in operation, a year before the country draws the final curtain on its decades-long use of atomic power. Credit: Julian Stratenschulte/dpa via AP

The German government said Monday that it considers nuclear energy dangerous and objects to European Union proposals that would let the technology remain part of the bloc's plans for a climate-friendly future.

Germany is on course to switch off its remaining three [nuclear power plants](#) at the end of this year and phase out coal by 2030, whereas its neighbor France aims to modernize existing reactors and build new ones to meet its future energy needs. Berlin plans to rely heavily on natural gas until it can be replaced by non-polluting sources for energy.

The opposing paths taken by two of the EU's biggest economies have resulted in an awkward situation for the bloc's executive Commission. A draft EU plan seen by The Associated Press concludes that both [nuclear energy](#) and natural gas can under certain conditions be considered sustainable for investment purposes.

"We consider [nuclear technology](#) to be dangerous," government spokesman Steffen Hebestreit told reporters in Berlin, noting that the question of what to do with [radioactive waste](#) that will last for thousands of generations remains unresolved.

Hebestreit added that Germany "expressly rejects" the EU's assessment of atomic energy and has repeatedly stated this position toward the commission.

Germany is now considering its next steps on the issue, he said.

Environmentalists have criticized Germany's emphasis on natural gas, which is less polluting than coal but still produces carbon dioxide—the main greenhouse gas—when it is burned.

Hebestreit said the German government's goal is to use [natural gas](#) only as a "bridge technology" and replace it with non-polluting alternatives such as hydrogen produced with renewable energy by 2045, the deadline the country has set to become climate neutral.

He declined to say whether Chancellor Olaf Scholz backs Economy and

Climate Minister Robert Habeck's view that the EU Commission's proposals were a form of "greenwashing."

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