



EU to Impose Mandatory Electricity Rationing and Price Caps on Russian Gas; Putin Threatens to Cut All Energy Exports

On Wednesday, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen unveiled the EU's plan to address the worsening energy crisis facing the bloc of nations amid "green" measures meant to address climate change and cutbacks in natural gas deliveries by Russia. The plan includes mandatory electricity rationing and a strict price cap on Russian imports of natural gas. In addition to electricity rationing and price caps on Russian gas exports, von der Leyen called for a cap on excess revenues made by renewables and nuclear energy, a solidarity mechanism to capture the "massive" and "unexpected" profits reaped by fossil fuel companies, and an EU aid program to inject extra liquidity into struggling utility businesses.



AP Images
Ursula von der Leyen

According to von der Leyen, Russian manipulation of the natural gas market and other factors have led to both scarcity of electricity and soaring prices for energy in the EU and globally.

"The manipulation of the gas markets has a spill-over effect on the electricity market," von der Leyen [said](#).

"We are confronted with astronomic electricity prices for households and companies and with enormous market volatility," she added. "We must cut Russia's revenues which Putin uses to finance this atrocious war against Ukraine."

Prior to its war against Ukraine, Russia was responsible for 40 percent of all natural gas imports in the EU. Since the war, Russia has shut down the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, cutting supply to the EU by close to 90 percent.

Norway has supplanted Russia as the leading supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for the EU.

"LNG is scarce and can be rerouted to different regions," von der Leyen said. "We [want to] stay competitive for LNG suppliers but make sure that the prices we pay are not extraordinarily high but in a decent range."

Von der Leyen also announced mandatory electricity rationing during peak hours. "This calls for smart reduction in demand. We need a strategy to flatten the peaks which drives the price of electricity," she said.

The European Commission president was pilloried for her use of the "flatten the peaks" terminology,



Written by [James Murphy](#) on September 8, 2022

which many saw as similar to the “flatten the curve” language leaders used during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Climate Lockdowns will be Hell,” wrote Twitter user Liz Churchill.

“If you thought COVID lockdowns were bad, just wait for the climate lockdowns,” wrote Election Wizard.

Speaking in Vladivostok on Wednesday, Russian leader Vladimir Putin called the EU’s plan for a price cap on Russian gas “stupid,” and said that such a move would lead to higher global gas prices and even more economic troubles in Europe.

He threatened to stop all energy imports should the EU go ahead with its plans.

“Will there be any political decisions that contradict the contracts? Yes, we just won’t fulfil them. We will not supply anything at all if it contradicts our interests,” Putin [said](#).

“We will not supply gas, oil, coal, heating oil — we will not supply anything,” the Russian leader threatened.

Putin evoked the Russian folk tale “The Sister-Fox and the Wolf,” saying, in effect, that Europe could be “frozen” should it go ahead with its plans.

“We would only have one thing left to do: as in the famous Russian fairy tale, we would sentence the wolf’s tail to be frozen,” Putin said.

Putin claimed that the EU has no one but itself to blame for the Nord Stream 1 pipeline shutdown, as the pipeline is in need of maintenance and EU nations — most notably Germany — refuse to return a key component for the pipeline’s Portovaya compressor station, which would allow gas to flow again.

“There is an oil leak there — it’s a possibly explosive situation, a fire hazard. The turbine cannot work. Give us a turbine and we will turn on Nord Stream 1 tomorrow. But they don’t give us anything,” Putin claimed.

Germany claims that the turbine is ready to be returned and that Russia is stalling and citing a “paperwork” issue as the reason for not accepting delivery.

Putin is right about one thing. Europe has no one to blame but itself for the energy crisis it currently finds itself in. Forget Russian intransigence — had the bloc of nations been less concerned about its “green” policies and not shut down other sources of cheap and reliable energy such as coal and oil, it would not be in the situation it is today.



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