

## **Is Germany staggering into the EUROPE trap?**

The World Economic Council about the disappearance of old certainties, economical isolation and the consequences of one-sided dependency.

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In 1977 Voyager 1 started its journey into space from Cape Canaveral – the first spacecraft to leave our solar system: In one of its last photographs send to our planet in the year 1990 one can see between many stars a pale blue dot, having the unremarkable size of a pinhead: the earth. If one realises this fact, it becomes completely absurd that we are waging wars.

In recent years, Germany entrusted Russia with its energy supply, the USA with its security, and played into China's hands in economic growth: Is the German economy including the German political elite exceptionally enterprising or simply plain foolishly? The beginning of the pandemic acted only as the matchstick that lit the impending inflation ablaze: The war in Ukraine causes prices to explode, the German population anxiously finds itself in a state which over a very long period could actually lead to the decline of our prosperity. To what extent do the threats of sanctions lose their credibility as leverage by the West? The European pressure put on Germany is enormous, especially France demands a cutoff from Russian gas. Added to this is an evident

omission of the past, which is now hitting the German prosperity curve with all the more fimpact: beyond the pandemic and war, Germany has simply overslept the demographic change.

Peter Nußbaum, chairman of the World Economic Council states: "The German Federal Government is on the wrong track with its gas embargo against Russia. We are facing a shambles made up of years of one-sided dependence: Too few diversified energy sources, the shutdown of nuclear power plants since 2011 because of public opinion –

at the moment, Germany is currently literally floundering in a trap: 48 percent of all households use gas for heating, half of which comes from Russia. The gas transit running to Europe through the region Luhansk is stopped. Without this supply we are gradually falling into a massive predicament. The state can't prevent a collapse with financial aids: Terminals for liquid gas (LNG) will most likely only be usable from 2026. We are in the middle of a bizarre constellation concerning the take-or-pay clause of the gas supply contracts: Germany has to continue to pay Gazprom even if the procurement of Russian natural gas stopped completely. If for example Germany were to procure overpriced LNG-gas from the USA, it would have to continue payments to Russia for "hot air". Gas from Russia is definitely needed, the German economy faces a slump of up to 12 percent! Especially German companies in the gas industry have to be saved from

imbalance through no fault of their own – a political will and smart governmental state structural policy with an energy security plan and a crisis plan for Germany are decidedly called for! What happened to the supply agreements mit Norway and Qatar that the Federal Minister of economy Dr. Habeck once announced?” The West’s hope to end the war with sanctions is simply illusive: the current international situation plays above all else into the hands no other world power than China: Even now the pipeline “Power of Siberia” supplies gas to chinese customers, and a new pipeline called “Power of Siberia 2” on a western route to Peking is proposed – Russia’ money supply is not cut off.

Sapere aude! It is indeed a question of courage. Have the courage to not just use your own reason, but furthermore to perceive the foreign even if it isn’t always comprehensible. Thomas Limberger, chairman of the World Economic Council states: “No grand philosophical explanations are needed, it is obvious that Germany has to use a nationwide competition of the most resounding ideas right now and acutely to prevent catastrophic conditions: The most effective options – especially exemplary by pioneering companies – have to be transparently combined into concrete examples as to how the economy and the citizens can economize gas, electricity and fuel sustainably.” In view of the rising cost of living it would be another drastic approach to solving the problem to again cultivate vegetables, fruit and crops on all land as of yet set-aside – within the EU only Germany doesn’t use this option! Lowering the energy tax and with it the introduction of lower industry energy costs would significantly lower production costs – which are to date not yet implemented promises our Chancellor Olaf Scholz made during his election campaign. Adjust tax rates: Especially for those of low or middle income, meaning those social classes (mind you including pensioners and students!) which are principally negatively affected by the current gas crisis. The immediate implementation of energy saving plans in all public institutions should have already been the first point of order of the German crisis plan: Turn off unnecessary lights, reduce air conditioner usage to the bare necessities (If nothing works, there will still be the climate fairytale of the soccer world cup in Qatar with the key words sustainability strategy and commuter air traffic!). Heating with biomass: Our silos are filled up. The end of old nuclear power in our country was supposed to be the long lasting endeavor of us all, but in the current economic situation our politicians should not discard the option to keep the power plants in operation to economize gas.

The Roman emperor Marc Aurel once said about Alexander the Great that he and his mule took the same way in the end – what are we left with but solidarity? We must not become a party of war. What is needed is to achieve a ceasefire agreed on at the negotiation table – a freezing of the conflict.

Peter Nußbaum & Thomas Limberger  
Chairmen  
Internationaler Wirtschaftssenat e. V.

Thomas Limberger, Peter Nußbaum, Robert Schimanko  
Executive Board  
World Economic Council

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World Economic Council

Unter den Linden 16  
D-10117 Berlin  
Tel. +49 30 4081 7342-0  
Mail: [info@wec.iws.de](mailto:info@wec.iws.de)

Landstraßer Hauptstraße 71/2  
AT- 1030 Vienna  
Tel. +43 171728383  
Mail: [info@wec.global](mailto:info@wec.global)

[www.wec-iws.de](http://www.wec-iws.de)

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