

Germany Planning to Use Spare Nord Stream Pipes for New Floating LNG Facilities

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According to some reports, the German government had been holding secret talks with the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline operators (Nord Stream 2 AG) about using the spare pipes for a new floating liquified natural gas (LNG) import facility located at Lubmin, in northeastern Germany. According to a German Economy Ministry's spokesperson, Berlin has acquired spare pipes meant for a LNG terminal off the German island Rügen – however, contracts have been classified as confidential. There have also been attempts to salvage an object spotted at a location close to Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which could be an explosive device. So far, it has been stated that the item is a maritime smoke buoy, used for visual marking.

Post-Nord Stream Germany aims to build a floating LNG terminal off the aforementioned Rügen island in the Baltic Sea to help secure the country's gas supply, amid fears of further attacks on gas pipelines and energy infrastructure. It remains to be said who in fact Berlin fears would be attacking its infrastructure.

The Russian-German Nord Stream network consists of offshore natural gas pipelines running under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Lubmin (Germany). It includes two separate projects, Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2, each of them in turn consisting of two pipes (total of four). Russia owns the majority (over 51%) of the project, while the rest is owned by German, French and Dutch stakeholders. The whole project was from the very start opposed by [Poland and Ukraine](#) and, more importantly, by Washington, who imposed sanctions on the companies involved – such sanctions were heavily criticized and denounced by major European leaders.

Olaf Scholz, then Germany's vice chancellor and minister of finance, stated in December 2019 that the American sanctions were "a serious interference in the internal affairs of Germany and Europe and their sovereignty." They also certainly played a role in Europe's ongoing [energy crisis](#) which has [served US interests](#) so well. The tale of Washington's pressure against Nord Stream is one of [corruption](#) and intrigue. As I've [written](#), in this tale,

which is also the tale of the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict, American geopolitical goals (pertaining to Moscow's containment and [NATO's expansion](#) in defense of unipolarity) also intertwine with private interests, going all the way up to the Biden family itself.

Nord Stream was, for all purposes, completed in September 2021 and, even though two springs of the pipeline were filled with gas, in December 2021, its commercial operations never started. Because it turns out a shorter route (via Denmark) was approved, there is a spare pipeline remaining.

On 26 September 2022, explosions broke at Nord Stream 1 and 2, rendering three of the four lines inoperable, while also releasing vast amounts of methane into the Baltic Sea. None of the four lines are currently operational, although one of them is operable, according to Moscow. Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist Seymour Hersh has [reported](#) that the explosions were an US covert act of sabotage. Moreover, German lawmakers are [demanding](#) the blasts be properly investigated, while [other voices](#) within the American Establishing itself are echoing such demands. One should always keep in mind that, on February 7, US President Joe Biden himself, during a press briefing, [promised](#): "If Russia invades (...) there will be no longer a Nord Stream 2. We will bring an end to it." When asked precisely how he would carry out such a threat, his reply, with a smile, was: "I promise we will be able to do it." German Chancellor Olaf Scholz was right next to him. This statement, astonishing in itself, echoed Undersecretary of State for Policy Victoria Nuland's [own remarks](#) just two days before. It is no wonder then that so many analysts suspect there is some degree of American involvement in the still unexplained sabotage.

Lubmin's two LNG terminals on the Baltic Sea were rushed into operation after Moscow launched its military campaign in Ukraine in February 2022, amid the global natural gas supply crisis. Russian-German Nord Stream pipelines had in fact long provided over 50% of Germany's gas energy demands. In 2021 alone the European country received about 60 billion cubic meters of natural gas through the now-gone Nord Stream 1 pipeline. The Lubmin terminal, in contrast, is expected to supply Germany' east with up to 5.2 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually.

According to Patrick Graichen, a German's Ministry of Economy state secretary, including such spare pipelines is now being considered for the construction of floating storage and regasification units (FSRU) in Lubmin - regasification being the process of converting liquified gas back to natural gas. Berlin apparently wants to have six of such FSRUs deployed along the northern coast by the end of this year, and there is also a second government project at Lubmin under development - together with Norwegian company Stena Power and German energy company RWE.

Berlin currently backs five FSRUs, two of them already being in operation, at Brunsbützel and Wilhelmshaven. Using existing Nord Stream's pipes for the aforementioned Lubmin FSRU project is indeed much quicker an endeavor than manufacturing and sending new pipes to the location.

It remains to be seen however how successful and effective such projects will turn out to be, as well as how long it will be possible to carry them out while ignoring the elephant in the room, namely Washington's warfare against Germany and its other European "allies" - a campaign which has materialized itself in the sanctions and sabotage against Nord Stream pipelines, as well as in the [subsidy war](#) the US currently wages against the European block.

As German politician Tino Chrupalla has rhetorically asked, does the NATO alliance guarantees security in Europe or rather endangers it? This is the big question looming over Nord Stream's spare pipes.

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