



## EU must not 'backslide' to coal-burning – Commission

### Description

#### **EU: Ursula von der Leyen warned against returning to the use of dirty fossil fuels amid tensions with Russia**

The EU must not revert to using coal and neglect its climate change goals in order to replace Russian gas, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has warned.

*"We have to make sure that we use this crisis to move forward and not to have a backsliding on the dirty fossil fuels,"* von der Leyen told the Financial Times on Monday.

*"It's a fine line and it's not determined whether we are going to take the right turn."*

Von der Leyen said EU nations need to continue *"massive investment in renewables."*

She added that Brussels has *"emergency steps in place"* to respond to the threat of decreasing supplies from Russia, such as energy conservation and prioritizing which industries receive gas.

In March, the commission announced the goal of phasing out Russian gas by 2030. The decision was made as part of sanctions over Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine, which was launched in late February.

EU members such as Germany, however, have repeatedly warned that an immediate ban on Russian energy will badly hurt their economies.

German Economy Minister Robert Habeck said on Sunday that coal-fired power plants have to be used instead of gas to generate electricity, and more gas must be pumped into storage facilities. *"Otherwise, it will be really tight in winter,"* he said. *"That's bitter, but it's simply necessary in this situation to lower gas usage."*

Habeck's comments appear to be a stark departure from the climate change plan unveiled by the government in January, in which Germany's share of renewable energy is to increase to 80% by 2030.

His statement came after Russian gas company Gazprom announced last week that it was reducing

the flow through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline for technical reasons. The Netherlands said on Monday that it would also lift restrictions on coal-burning. A similar plan was rolled out by Austria.

**Category**

1. Economy-Business-Fin/Invest
2. Main

**Date Created**

06/23/2022