

[Germany says no to nuclear](#) [1]

Written by [Max Titmuss](#) [2] | Wednesday 1 June 2011

Germany is a land of environmentalists. The first successful green party in Europe, Die Grünen, won their first seats in the Bundestag in 1983 (compared to Britain's first Green MP in 2010). And much German environmentalism revolves around the rejection of nuclear power. This, when taking into account Germany's history, is not altogether surprising: Germany bowed out of World War II only four months before the first nuclear weapon was dropped on Hiroshima. Afterwards, in the Cold War era, a divided Germany found herself as the potential battleground of a full-scale nuclear war between NATO and the USSR. The seeds of nuclear-rejectionism were planted. After Chernobyl, the German neurosis took another knock.

Then, a few months ago, the fifth most powerful earthquake ever recorded struck Japan, promptly followed by one of the largest tsunamis in history. In the path of these natural disasters was an antiquated, poorly-designed nuclear plant called Fukushima. Was the building reduced to rubble by the earthquake? Nope. Did the subsequent tsunami turn it into radioactive driftwood? Not that either. Were hundreds killed? No. Only one person has been recorded as dying because of the disaster ? of a heart attack.

I'm no expert on nuclear power, but it strikes me that Fukushima stood up remarkably well to the worst that mother nature could throw at it. Granted, the designs were not perfect, but improvements in last 40 years must have more than solved these issues.

However, hysteria is often far more attractive than common sense. Although not under any immediate risk of neither a magnitude 9.0 earthquake nor a tsunami, Germany immediately took its nuclear power-plants offline and ordered a review. Only after a few months of stating that Germany wouldn't abandon nuclear power 'on her watch', Merkel allowed exactly this to happen and committed Germany to decades of increased energy costs and the importation of (nuclear) power.

In deciding to shut down all of its nuclear power-plants by 2022, the Chancellor has finally caved in to environmentalist scaremongering. No concrete plans have been laid out about to replace the 23% of formerly-nuclear energy, although it is almost certain that the emphasis will largely be on renewables. [Business leaders have criticised this](#) [3], stating energy costs could rise by 30%. At a time, of growing inflationary pressures, the German electorate may live to regret such decisions, especially considering that nuclear has a [lower carbon footprint than wind and hydroelectric power. \(PDF\)](#) [4]

The German abandonment of nuclear energy is a sad example of a minority of sanctimonious Luddites reversing human progress. Cheap, nuclear energy, especially for one of the world's greatest industrial powers, is the way forward. Instead, the irrational fears of an objectionable few will result in reduced prosperity for the majority.

Ich bin enttäuscht.

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