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|  Boilergeddon (Germany) 2023

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| Many environmentalists, including the eco-minded politicians in the Green Party in Germany, believe heat pumps will save the world.As National Public Radio [explained](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3Dd02a6192f3-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=2xjRony9B42xUnEdiTOPoIRlX-CrLzoErc1gCjgx3cg&e=), heat pumps draw heat from the outside to warm homes. Powered by electricity, they are around a third cheaper than heating systems that use natural gas. When paired with solar panels, they are even more sustainable, cutting down further on the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.Now, Green Party lawmakers are seeking to ban natural gas boilers and mandate that residents switch over to heat pumps, starting next year. It’s an ambitious plan to deal with an enormous problem, party leaders argue. Germany aims to become carbon neutral – cutting or mitigating the effects of carbon emissions to net zero – by 2045, the Guardian [noted](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3Dcc2d845b8e-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=CYQpSAsuCeMbcir-3acdrusd4m8gOIfAXEKpKBJ1mHg&e=). But around half of German households use natural gas for heat. Another 25 percent use oil.Critics, however, have blasted the plan as too radical and disruptive to people’s lives and the German economy. “People are outraged and furious,” Petra Uertz of the country’s Residential Property Association told the Financial Times in an [interview](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3De0f66a2783-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=2X6VHio1f4d9iE1g5I0ucoFS97SXtRwngtBWDSW8vy4&e=). “They can’t understand why it has to happen so quickly.”A nepotism and cronyism scandal which has tarnished by association German Economy Minister Robert Habeck of the Greens, who is also vice-chancellor, has also soured many Germans towards the boiler plan, [added](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D9f7cb2234a-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=o3yFhP3TT9Nvjz1fmwcBbMitxMorQz1X3CcDlsCbf0I&e=) Reuters.German officials promised they would provide almost $11 billion through 2027 to fund the transition, [wrote](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D28eb223477-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=AQY-j-qQFpxhwxrPRZzxjTjQMbJSlxWEYtyZ9MSgJk4&e=) Bloomberg, but polls continue to indicate that a majority of Germans, while believing that mandating heat pumps may probably be a good idea, isn’t something that should be forced on the country this quickly.The Greens are an important part of the coalition that now runs Germany under the administration of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a Social Democrat. As Agence France-Presse [explained](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3De99ecef3d4-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=DJ7C9LftCbHS-9qlrjhiy3bb-KostNeobDU9l49RANY&e=), the chancellor couldn’t ditch the plan – but he convinced the Greens to cut it back. Now, the ban on boilers will only take effect in municipalities that have drafted heating plans to conserve energy and make the transition to renewable energy sources. These changes mean the mandate would likely come into effect for most Germans in 2028.Still, the damage has been done politically. Support for the Greens has [dropped](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D7d624d7e9e-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=BxtuZGa5g5pUfMCg7w_IaeCm93SLKmeVQU7z4f03U2I&e=) to around 15 percent from a peak of 24 percent last year, Reuters [reported](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D6b134cae05-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=I7rUsbHuu3WfWoFPSTqXL_8JXo4obNt59k7DfZYL8EI&e=). That comes as support for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) is surging: Its approval ratings are now around 18 percent, equal to those of the Social Democrats. It recently [won](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3Dde09a20981-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=FmJFEIErYexcRqb5QXD_GsXsGtT5cDtwFJX8_UIo4WU&e=) its first municipal district in Germany.Lessons from the German experience, meanwhile, are rippling throughout Europe. In France, for example, officials are also seeking to phase out gas-fired boilers and other systems in favor of heat pumps, [wrote](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D7d432e789e-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=GkgFlV_tzpw0eABYZ7g8kmEbMoaHS0H7Nam9_q67ByU&e=) Euractiv. They are now cautioning environmentalists that they don’t want to be too hasty in pushing the technology, however.That’s especially so because Germans, more so than their neighbors, have long been more tolerant of rising prices for energy caused by the [Energiewende](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3Da2953906d8-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=cDhDTJS86CwheW1jO3uHpicEMO6_eaGuLbQmKnDZIsM&e=) (energy turnaround), a plan to phase out nuclear energy – the last reactors [closed](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__dailychatter.us12.list-2Dmanage.com_track_click-3Fu-3Da2e22d7f24f6d1e3464d05be4-26id-3D206e5a6d40-26e-3D43c77bf67a&d=DwMFaQ&c=WO-RGvefibhHBZq3fL85hQ&r=i24jjCgY2IPJBFthF_VCiX63FNG3XUqb9SPnATGQFxQ&m=Ba2E_69GMG9rw59-DAFqD0iqdiPcepjnVyAsXy7Xy5_c6xA3URGvtKspauQWZJ5p&s=jfkVI9EPSdC4iffG2P6YiUR1ujEbqUUjS-vWarXww4E&e=) in April – and replace it with green energy.Germans have for the past decade paid some of the highest costs for electricity in Europe.But with energy prices skyrocketing even higher because of the war in Ukraine, it seems that tolerance has its limits. |

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