

## explainity explains: Nord Stream 2

Nord Stream 2 is a pipeline. From Russia's west coast, covering a distance of more than 1230 kilometers, it transports gas through the Baltic Sea to Germany.

The pipeline runs – just like the first Nord Stream pipeline – exclusively over international waters, so it doesn't belong to any of the surrounding sovereign countries. Nord Stream 2 can allow the transport of up to an extra 55 billion cubic meters of gas every year.

The majority stakeholder of the pipeline is the Russian state-owned company Gazprom. However, it is operated in collaboration with many European partners. The idea for Nord Stream 2 came from former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

As such, the pipeline is a controversial project. On the one hand, there are the advantages: For Germany and Europe, gas is an important energy source, especially regarding the transition to renewable energy.

Coal and nuclear energy are intended to have less and less significance.

By going through the Baltic Sea, the pipeline avoids problematic and expensive transport through transit countries.

On the other hand, many European countries fear that Europe as a whole and especially Germany, being the biggest country in the EU, will become too dependent on Russia.

Therefore, many European countries are wary of the business venture with Russia. They believe that, because of reoccurring political tensions in the past and most likely in the future too, doing business with Russia could cause problems.

And then there is the position of the United States. They would like to sell their own liquid gas to Europe and see Russia as a competitor.

Critics also point out that a pipeline is a potential threat to the environment. Given current climate goals, they doubt that the pipeline will stay relevant long term. The focus they say should be on renewable energy instead of fossil fuels. If that were the case, the projected European demand for natural gas would be much lower than initially thought in 2005.

Therefore, the pipeline will remain a geopolitical issue in the coming years.

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