

German nuclear exit 'would cost up to 2 bn euros'

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An anti-nuclear demonstrator takes part in a protest in the German city of Munich. German Economy Minister Rainer Bruederle said Friday that a switch from nuclear power to alternative forms of energy could cost Europe's top economy up to two billion euros (\$2.9 billion) per year.

German Economy Minister Rainer Bruederle said Friday that a switch from nuclear power to alternative forms of energy could cost Europe's top economy up to two billion euros (\$2.9 billion) per year.

"It could be one to two billion euros," the minister told German radio, cautioning that a precise figure was "difficult to estimate."

Citing internal government projections, the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily earlier reported the costs would be three billion euros annually. "That

order of magnitude seems a little high to me," countered Bruederle.

The minister's comments came as Chancellor Angela Merkel prepared to hold talks with heads of Germany's states to discuss future energy policy in the wake of Japan's nuclear crisis.

Merkel has said the disaster at the Fukushima plant in Japan was a turning point and announced a three-month moratorium on an earlier decision to extend the lifetime of Germany's 17 nuclear reactors.

[Nuclear power](#) is highly unpopular in Germany, and hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets to demand the reactors be switched off.

The [economy](#) and environment ministries have drawn up a joint plan for the accelerated development of [alternative energy](#), which focuses notably on [wind power](#).

"One thing is for sure, it's going to cost money," Bruederle said.

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