

Lithium reserves in Donbas needed for electric vehicles in EU is fuelling Ukraine war, says German MP

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It seems the war in Ukraine is not only about territory, it is also about raw materials.

According to German parliamentarian Roderich Kiesewetter, Europe needs the lithium in the eastern border regions in Ukraine for the manufacture of electric cars. If Russia annexes these regions, Vladimir Putin will have a new economic trump card, he fears.

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The following was originally published by Dutch independent media outlet [Nieuw Rechts](#) in an article titled [‘Is this the real reason for war in Ukraine? “Raw materials needed for electric cars”](#) (translated from Dutch to English using an online tool).

The war in Ukraine has been going on for almost two years. Until now, the focus has always been on territory, but according to German Bundestag member [Roderich Kiesewetter](#) (CDU), important economic interests also play a role. He points to the huge lithium reserves in the Donbas, i.e. the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

These mineral resources are desperately needed for the energy transition in Europe, Kiesewetter claims in a [Q&A session](#) with *Tagesschau*. Lithium is used to make motors for electric cars. The European Union wants all member states to switch to electric cars, and therefore [bans](#) the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035.

Economic interests

According to Kiesewetter, the EU needs lithium from Ukraine. He points out that by far the largest lithium deposits in Europe are located in the eastern Donetsk-Luhansk regions, near the border with Russia. Therefore, the economic costs will be enormous if Ukraine loses these regions to Russia, he claims at *ARD*.

“If Europe wants to complete the energy transition, we need our own lithium reserve,” he tells *Tagesschau*. “That’s why Russia want to take these regions, to make us dependent on them for electric motors.”

EU accession despite persistent corruption

At the beginning of 2023, the then European Commissioner for Climate Change, Frans Timmermans, already claimed that Ukraine has what it takes to become “a leader in modern green energy.” According to him, Ukraine has a “huge potential for solar, wind, hydro and biomethane.”

Meanwhile, President Volodymyr Zelensky is allowed to start accession negotiations with the European Union. This is despite the widespread corruption in the country, about which there is great concern at the US government summit. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen claims that Zelensky is making great progress in the fight against corruption but in his own country he is often held responsible for this, according to sociological research.

Featured image: EU Commission President von der Leyen looks ahead to a future with Ukraine, Le Monde, 3 February 2023



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