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## Energy and climate change in the European Union

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A very large share of the debates on energy in the European Union (EU) and worldwide have in recent times been related to the issue of climate change. There is indeed a direct link between climate change, on the one hand, and energy production and consumption, on the other. Climate change is the modification of the Earth's atmosphere through emission of greenhouse-gases (GHG). Almost all the GHG emissions originate from the energy sector. This is why the issues of energy and climate change should be considered as a nexus.

There is scientific consensus on the need to work against climate change, as its adverse effects on the environment are incompatible with a sustainable future: rising of sea-levels, extreme weather, droughts and lack of drinking water, etc. Given the link between climate change and energy, there is a clear case for action precisely in that sector. The question is how to translate the scientific evidence into a general perception of the need to act, into political will and effective measures.

As climate change is a global problem, the answer to it also needs to be global. On the level of international cooperation, the answer has taken the shape of a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted in 1992, and its Kyoto Protocol of 1997. In order to reach the targets the EU committed itself to under the Kyoto Protocol, the European Commission launched the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) in 2000. Most of the measures under this umbrella for European action against climate change focus on the energy sector. The European Commission announced a major package of proposals and legislation on 10 January 2007. Will this new European Energy Policy be able to overcome the challenges? Will there be a Common Energy Policy?

In this part of the Energy-issue of *Studia Diplomatica*, attention is first drawn to the EU's international commitments regarding climate change, i.e. under the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change. Narrowing the perspective, the legislative framework of the EU concerning energy and climate change is then explained. The concrete

current measures taken against climate change in the energy sector are thereafter analysed, before the paper considers the main measures which are still in progress.

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