



INSTITUTE FOR  
EUROPEAN  
STUDIES

*Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence  
at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

www.ies.be

**Course title:**

Climate and Energy Governance in the European Union

**Type of course:**

Optional (part of the specialisation option "European Economic Governance")

**Course content:**

This course engages with the politics, policies and economics of the climate change and energy domains. Students will acquire an understanding of interconnections among these complex societal issues, will assess how politicians and economists respond to the challenges, and will learn to critically assess these responses. The course analyses EU policies in these fields, including on climate mitigation, decarbonisation, emissions trading, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the internal energy market. In the course, students will learn to assess policy responses through the lenses of economic and political concepts such as cost-benefit assessments, competitiveness concerns, citizen opinion, election cycles, long-term planning, coherence and dependence. Furthermore, having understood the complex interconnections among politics, economics and policies, students will learn to critically assess the assumptions underlying actors' responses. In particular, students will learn how scientific knowledge and methods interact with the policy world and will critically analyse whether this is carried out in an unbiased fashion. Students will identify and question basic assumptions; will learn about the strengths and weaknesses of scenarios as a policy tool; will learn about the role of stakeholders in promoting a particular view; and will thereby develop the skills to assess and evaluate presented 'facts' for their true merit.

**Learning outcome:**

The learning objectives are threefold:

1. To acquire in-depth knowledge of the complex policy issues of climate change and energy, especially in the EU.
2. To understand the complex links and interactions between these policy issues, and the responses to them.
3. To develop advanced critical thinking skills applicable to climate and energy related questions.

Acquiring both such in-depth knowledge and critical skills will equip the student for a career in climate and energy-related fields, as analysts, lobbyists, activists, researchers, and administrators – within and outside government or EU institutions.