

REPORT

Prague Climate Talks: European Green Deal: will it bring structural change?

Tuesday 12th May 2020, 16:00 – 17:30,
online

- **The first Prague Climate Talks debate of this year took place online on Tuesday 12th May from 4pm. This project is co-organised by EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy and Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Prague, under the auspices of the UN Information Centre Prague.**
- **The topic of discussion was the European Green Deal and whether it will bring structural changes. The speakers were Nad'a Johanisová from the Masaryk University in Brno, Lukáš Víšek from the cabinet of Frans Timmermans in the European Commission and Jan Freidinger from Greenpeace. The debate was moderated by Kateřina Davidová from EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy.**
- **The recording of the debate is available on the Facebook page of [EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy](#).**

The discussion was centred around the new initiative of the European Commission, the so-called European Green Deal. What can we expect from it? What opportunities does it offer? How will it affect the developments in the Czech Republic? And how will its implementation be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic?

According to **Lukáš Víšek**, the main strength of the Green Deal and all its associated measures lies in the predictability it gives to the public sector, investors and citizens so that they know which direction will the EU and its economy go until 2030 and it also gives a more long-term perspective to 2050. For the Czech Republic

he sees more opportunities than threats in the Green Deal.

Jan Freidinger also views the European Green Deal positively as a whole, even though Greenpeace have certain reservations to it. Especially the EU's emissions reduction target for the year 2030 is not ambitious enough, according to him. When compared with other countries of the world, however, the European project is unparalleled.

Nad'a Johanisová was the most critical towards the European Green Deal because according to her it does not address root causes of the climate crisis. The document endorses economic growth, which however is one of the factors responsible for the growth of emissions (as consumption grows, so grows production and therefore also emissions). According to Johanisová, it is instead necessary to strive for a sustainable degrowth.

To the question whether the Green Deal will be beneficial for the Czech Republic, all three speakers answered positively. According to Jan Freidinger it will help catch up with the rest of Europe in areas which we are already lagging behinds – for example in energy efficiency of buildings or with water retention measures. Lukáš Víšek mentioned also the area of research and innovations, which will be supported through EU funding. According to Nad'a Johanisová, the European Green Deal is a good framework for restarting the economy after the COVID-19 crisis, however, once the economy is running again, it is necessary to purposefully slow it down to prevent further similar crises and especially the climate crisis.

The viewers on Facebook then asked questions pertaining to for example the Green Deal's support for local farms and farmers as well as the options for European citizens to comment on the emerging

