



# BULLETIN

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## COMMENTARY

Editors: Jacek Foks (Editor-in-Chief), Łukasz Adamski, Beata Górka-Winter, Leszek Jesień,  
Agnieszka Kondek (Executive Editor), Łukasz Kulesa, Marek Madej, Ernest Wyciszkievicz

### **Delors–Buzek Declaration on Energy Community**

by Leszek Jesień

*On the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of the Schuman Declaration the President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek and the former European Commission President Jacques Delors adopted a declaration calling for the creation of a new European Energy Community (EEC). With proper response, in particular from large member states, this project could change the European Union's approach to the energy and climate change challenges. Poland could address the matter of the project in talks with its EU partners.*

Invoking the famous Robert Schuman declaration (owing to which the European Coal and Steel Community had been established to launch the process of European integration) Buzek and Delors adopted on 5 May a summons for the EU member states to address an ambitious project to build an energy community. The object of the project is for the EU to develop a new approach to energy problems, in particular to three major closely inter-linked challenges which are difficult to deal with separately: of the reliance on imports of energy sources from politically and economically unstable countries and regions; of the soaring costs of technology changes required to switch from an economy based on the fossil carbohydrates (oil and gas) and coal; and of counteracting climate change. These problems represent strategic challenges to the entire EU and they are exceptionally difficult to solve in the present institutional and legal environment.

In recent years the EU has agreed ambitious targets to counteract climate change, these being expressed in the 3x20 formula (to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to improve energy efficiency and to increase the share of renewable energy sources by 2020). Moreover, it has adopted three energy packages designed to properly structure its internal energy market. In 2009 it undertook energy technology commitments as part of anti-crisis activities. Work has been underway in the Union on the improvement of mechanisms to respond to disruptions in external energy supplies. Useful as all these measures are, they have yet to be integrated into a synergic whole that will provide both a solution to practical problems and an integration impulse.

The Buzek–Delors declaration addresses the matter comprehensively, starting from the assumption that the energy-related provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon will not suffice to deal with the strategic and global challenges for the EU. The new energy community is meant to be open to all member states and, in the event not all of them should be willing or able to participate, a provision has been made for the employment of an enhanced cooperation formula which enables the project to be launched by a lesser number of participants. The intended objects of the EEC are to develop trans-European energy networks, to increase the use of renewable energy sources, and to act jointly vis-à-vis third states (producers and transit countries)—up to and including the coordination of purchasing. The project also provides for setting up strategic fuel stocks to be jointly maintained and, if and as necessary, drawn on.

The declaration does not propose any institutional arrangements, nor does it refer to concrete mechanisms already in place in the economic sphere of integration. For this reason, the matters addressed therein will need to be laid down more precisely if the initiative is to be followed up. Poland, which proposed in the past a similar energy security treaty concept, should be interested in the implementation of the declaration. Studies, made sufficiently in advance, of the necessary legal, institutional and economic adjustments and of the potential rewards should serve the Polish authorities to decide on the accession to the group of project initiators, should one be formed. Equally important will be the positions of other major partners in the project, in particular of Germany and France. The above three countries' common approach could be the making or breaking of the new EEC initiative.