

Voice of the People

Manuscript
Money – the new member states
TVP3, Bialystok, Poland

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Duration: 4'01

Translation

Money – for the new member states

TVP, Poland

Speaker: (+graphics) On May the 1st a new chapter in the history of the EU has started. Europe has been enlarged by 10 new members. In economic terms they are much weaker than the other 15 member states. The EU has offered them financial aid which, according to Copenhagen agreement, will amount to over 40 billion euros within the first three years.

Krzysztof Jurgiel – senator RP, Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (political party): It is a lot of money on the one hand, but on the other hand it is not. It all depends on how we as a country can manage the funds and take advantage of them. I wish member countries had more decision making power on how the money is distributed.

Beata Antypiuk – Liga Polskich Rodzin (political party of the eurosceptics), a candidate to the European Parliament: The situation is that we are trying to economise as we can to scrap enough money to pay our fee to the EU budget just to get some structural fund money designated for this or that programme in return. I'd rather plan my expenditure myself and spend my own money according to my needs without anyone telling me how much and on what I should spend it.

A man in the street: The fees we pay are interconnected with the funds we get. So the net result will depend on how efficiently we use the funds received. If we are able to take advantage of them the fees will be proportionately lower than the money we get and we won't end up as a net payer. But if we don't use the fund wisely we will pay in more than we receive.

Speaker: Almost half of all the funds will go to Poland – EU's largest new member.

A man in the street: I'd like to know what the money will be spent on. I just want to be sure it won't go into pockets of officials and clerks and that it will reach the people who were really supposed to get it.

Speaker: (+graphics) Poland will get nearly 2 billion euros from the European Social Fund.

Cezary Ołdakowski – European structural funds consultant, HQ of Podlaski region local government: This money is designated for trainings for the unemployed, skill-upgrading programmes and courses for people who want to change their qualifications and jobs altogether like farmers who want to move to the city and find jobs here. This is money for the poorest people as well as students who cannot afford studies. They will get student grants which will enable them to continue their education.

A man in the street: how much money are they going to spend on local investments, new factories, something that will create more jobs?

Speaker: (+graphics) This will be possible with the European Regional Development Fund. Poland will get nearly 5 billion euros.

Cezary Ołdakowski - European structural funds consultant, HQ of Podlaski region local government: European Regional Development Fund is designated to support regional development. There are two aspects of this development. One is the development of infrastructure the region, which means road system, water supply, sewerage system and all that is necessary to attract investors and is in hands of the local authorities. Another aspect is development of local businesses and funds designated for them, for their development, for promoting them as well as the region as a whole. It is the money that will be spent on enlivening business activity in the region by means of all kinds of events such as fairs, exhibitions and so on.

A woman in the street: I'm interested in how the money will be distributed, how it will be used.

Krzysztof Bil – Jaruzelski, Socjaldemokracja Polska (SdPI – political party, euroenthusiasts): When it comes to the structural funds I can say something from the perspective of the local government. It often happens that working on the city budget we argue over one, two or three thousand zlotys. We look very carefully through every proposed investment, we analyse it thoroughly. The fact is that we all would like to have good quality roads here in Białystok, because driving here makes your life a nightmare. The EU funds will make the necessary road works possible. Otherwise we wouldn't be able to afford this kind of investment for years.