

Voice of the People

Manuscript
The Union and democracy in Latvia
TVMV, Denmark

Production-team:

Reporter: Jesper Mortensen

Photographer: Lars Damgaard Nielsen

Editing: Jesper Mortensen

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Translation

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0.01

It is springtime in Riga. Latvia is blooming in line with the days as a member of the European Union are increasing. But along with the membership worries are following - unanswered questions about the future. We have met the Letts in the streets in the days when the membership just had been accomplished.

0.20

Interview Sandra Valeina:

"There are a lot of small countries too, I hope that they will listen to the small countries too or else it will be a bad union."

0.32

It is an important question.

Latvia will have just nine of 732 members in the Parliament and four of 321 votes in the Council of Ministers.

0.42

How will the democracy work with so few members in both Parliament and Council? We will ask one of Latvia's own politicians. Former prime minister Andris Berzins where one of the politicians who got Latvia on track towards EU. He acknowledges that size really matters in Europe.

1.00

Interview Andrejs Berzins (in english)

1.50

Johannes Lebech is the vice president in the ELDR - the coalition of Liberal Party's in Europe at the same time as he is a candidate to the European Parliament. He agrees that there will be a regional coalition.

2.02

Interview Johannes Lebech:

"We have already a collaboration around the Baltic. We have common problems concerning transport of oil through the Baltic Sea. "

2.22

But in a Europe with 25 countries another side of the democracy will be more powerful. The collaboration above national interests between sister parties.

2.31

Interview Johannes Lebech:

"In the future I think we will talk so much about national interests. Instead we will talk about other positions - we will have to ask ourselves if we are liberals, socialists

or conservatives. What is our position in terms of environmental and farming politics - instead of what to do to help Denmark, Latvia, Estonia or Lithuania.”?

2.55

This sunny day in May in Riga it is hard to find a European pessimism.

3.02

Interview Kristine Kamenscikova:

"I think it is a great opportunity for such a small country like Latvia being member and I hope with economy and political aspects that it will be a very good chance for us!"

3.14

It is especially the young and the children, who are participating in the traditional first of May relay race, that are very optimistic. Europe will expand their democratic latitude. Their opportunities.

3.25

Interview Madara Melue:

"I would like to study in abroad countries and my friends will too, and now it is easier than in the past, when we where just Latvia and not in the European union."

3.41

The Latvian people will have loads of opportunities -- but there will also be great demands to the small population of 2,5 million.

3.49

Interview, Rolands Sprincis:

"From one point it is better, from another it is more complicated..We have to learn a lot, to learn the situation."

4.05

The latest 12-13 years the Lets have adopted the democratic rules of the game since the have been independent after the time of the Soviets. Now it is time to adjust the rules to West European level.

4.17

Interview Johannes Lebech:

"Of course there is some kind of backlog. It is countries that have no tradition for democracy and there will be crisis. It will not just be fun to adopt to the European community. But I think that they are willing to do it."

4.36

67 percent of the voting Lets said yes to Europe. The atmosphere in Riga leaves no doubt that they are ready to do hard work to be integrated in the European democracy. Being a part of the Eastern bloc.

4.47

Interview Kaspars Ruklis:

"the younger generation like people of my age and people that are even younger than me they really don't have the after marks of the soviet time they don't remember how it was, they have been brought up in a free country and have learned what democracy is and they will be the ones who will make the decisions and they will be doing all right I think!"

5.12

The neo-democratic states in East can add an experience in fast readjustment to the union. It can be an acquaintance to mutual joy.

5.23

Interview Johannes Lebech:

"We have to remember that the we should not look at the new countries as some that does not understand democracy. We have to listen to them. They have experience from 14 years of adjustment. I think that we can learn a lot from them."

5.57

Together with the other new member states Latvia is ready to add new ingredients to the big European casserole. Now it is up to the current member states to enjoy the meal with their new neighbours.

Duration: 6.08