

Voice of the People

Manuscript
EU and the member states
TVSYD, Denmark

Participants:

No names of the questioners

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Crew:

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Music: Song of Joy from Council of Europe's CD "The European Anthem" 15sec

Duration: 5:55

Translation

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Speak:

0:12

450 million people now live within the borders of the EU.

This corresponds to 7 per cent of the world's population.

People, who have been divided throughout centuries, have experienced two world wars and have lived under the yoke of communism. How can they be united in a common union?

Sync:

0:33

There are a lot of small countries, too. And I hope they will listen to small countries, too. Ok, if it will not be so, it will be a bad union.

Sync:

0:44

To accept some solution to a problem, you must have majority of the countries.

So small countries, obviously, in that respect will be extremely important to secure this support. Without their participation, decisions cannot be made.

1:02

In favour:

Against:

Abstentions:

Adopted.

Speak:

1:08

The number of representatives of each country depends on the size of the country.

The member state with the largest population is without any doubt

Germany with 83 million citizens.

France comes in second with 60 million people.

In comparison, Luxembourg has just about 450,000 people, whereas Malta is the smallest member state with app. 400,000 people, which corresponds to the number of inhabitants of a medium-sized town in Germany.

Sync:

1:39

How are things done in the Western world, and you need to know how things are done in the Eastern world in order to discover the good things in both places and unite it to a common unity.

Sync:

1:52

Well, that is what we do all the time, basically. Reforms of our legal system, of our administration are usually based on experiences of other countries.

For example the very fact that we established a civil service in the country was modelled on solutions which we borrowed from Great Britain and from France.

This is just one of the examples.

Speak

2:24

A large part of the money paid to the EU by the member states is spent on various grant programmes. I.e. programmes where cities in the various countries receive grants to establish special kinds of cooperation in the fields of education, health services and culture.

Sync:

2:43

Well, we have a lot of programmes, structural programmes, programmes supporting the exchange of youths for example. And it is not only for countries within the European Union, but also, and this is extremely important, with countries neighbouring the enlarged union. Which consolidates our neighbourhood and makes our environment, the European Union is in, more friendly.

Sync:

3:15

Is it possible in the long run that they'd establish cooperation between hospitals?

Speak:

3:24

In 2003, the countries within the Union entered into a mutual agreement to start several initiatives even down to county level.

The initiatives are to encourage the exchange of data in relation to diseases.

Why is the number of cancer cases increasing? And why are more men than women dying of heart diseases? These are some of the information the EU tries to discover across the borders.

3:50

And an inter-sectoral cooperation on the health of the Europeans becomes still more urgent as the Europeans become older and older.

4:02

From 1993 to 2003, the number of people aged 65 and older increased by 2% across the entire EU. Germany and Sweden have the largest population of older people, as 17.5 and 17.2 per cent of the population is aged 65 and older.

Slovakia has the smallest number of old people with 11.6 per cent, and Ireland with 11.1 per cent.

Sync:

4:26

With the new structure of the EU with the large number of new countries, many different cultures and many different religious confessions get mixed, and there are many fundamental views on how the world looks and life has to operate, so an obvious question to address would be how to unite these issues at EU-level.

Speak:

4:54

Unlike the United States of America, the United States of Europe has more than 20 different languages.

Sync:

5:01

Well, I think one of the attractions and strengths of the European Union is diversity. So we should cherish the diversity. And we can do that because we are absolutely certain that this diversity could be accommodated in one entity.

We could be one in plurality as the Romans would say. But to develop diversity we must think about local traditions, local produce which is somehow protected by the EU and by local customs and also local languages. This is one of the reasons why we have so many languages in the European Union.