

*Voice of the People*

**Manuscript  
EU and the enlargement  
TVSYD, DK**

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Music: The European Anthem from the Council of Europe CD, track 16    13 sec

## **Translation**

### **EU and the enlargement**

### **TVSYD, DK**

0:11

speaking:

The European Union. Until May 12004, there were 15 member-states. Now, 10 new states have joined the EU. The geographic area of the EU has increased by more than a third.

0:26

sync:

Who is a member. That's the only question, I can think of.

0:30

speaking:

The 10 new member states are the 3 Baltic countries: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The large country of Poland, as well as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia have joined the EU. Furthermore, there are Slovenia and the two small Mediterranean countries, Cyprus and Malta. The enlargement has been long under way.

0:49

sync:

In broad terms, since the middle 90's, so 10 or so years. During that time they've made preparations. They've adopted EU-law, they've adopted EU-customs and so on. And so the whole spectrum of EU-policies now applies there. It did take a lot of negotiations. This was conducted on behalf of the European Union by the European Commission. And I think, by and large we're satisfied that those 10 countries meet the criteria. And that's the result of the negotiations conducted by the Commission.

1:21

sync:

I'm very honoured and privileged today, to have the opportunity as president of the European Parliament to spend a few minutes with you, on a day when you continue your debate started last week, on the question of Estonia and European Union accession.

1:45

Speak:

To become member of the EU, applicant countries must meet a number of criteria laid down in Copenhagen in 1993, and thus called the Copenhagen Criteria.

These are: 1. The political criteria which state that the country must have achieved stability of political institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities.

2. The economic criteria which demand that the country has a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU.

Finally, the criteria for the adoption of all the rules of the EU, the "acquis communautaire", which means that the country must be able to take on the obligations of membership, i.e. adherence to the aims of a political, economic and monetary union.

2:33

Only European countries may be admitted. However, Morocco in Africa applied for membership once, but was turned down on the grounds that the country was not part of Europe.

2:45

sync:

Where will it end? What is the end goal? That I would like to know.

2:49

Speak:

Several countries applied for membership of the European family, but were turned down, because they didn't meet the Copenhagen Criteria. Rumania and Bulgaria, two countries which were first turned down, have been promised that the EU will work on their entry by 2007.

3:10

While Turkey, which applied for membership back in 1987, still has not received a final date for their accession to the Union. The main reason being that they don't meet the EU-criterion regarding human rights.

3:29

sync:

Already it is foreseen that Rumania and Bulgaria will be joining in due course and Slovakia ... I'm sorry, Croatia is also an applicant. And of course, in the longer term there is Turkey. But I don't rule out e.g. Belarus or Ukraine. Who knows, if those countries decide to reform and become fully democratic, there is no particular reason why they shouldn't become eventual members of the European Union. And actually, there is no particular reason why Russia itself, over the long term, shouldn't consider itself a legitimate applicant.

4:06

Europe as such doesn't exist. We've been at war. Europe cannot be united in a common structure over night. It is to be made by concrete measures creating actual solidarity.

4:23

speaking:

This enlargement is only the latest of a number of enlargements, since the formation of the EU in 1952. Then, the EU wasn't called EU, but The European Coal and Steel Community. It was formed by 6 European countries.

In 1973, Denmark joined the Union with Ireland and Great Britain. In 1981, Greece became a member. 5 years later, Spain and Portugal followed. And finally, Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995.

4:55

sync:

If the EU is to be united, the countries must have equal conditions. And we don't have that, as it is in the Eastern European countries right now. The rest of the member countries must help them achieve that, and that will incur large financial costs. And if it will incur large economical costs for the Western European countries ought the Eastern European countries then to have the same influence, if they are unable to make the same contributions?

5:16

sync:

Well, they have as much power in terms of decision-making in the European Parliament by the proportional system of getting members of the European Parliament elected, in the European Commission, because there are commissioners from these new countries, and in the Council of Ministers. There are certain differences in terms of their rights to travel at the present time into the European Union that was. And to take another example, agricultural subsidies. They are less generous in the new countries than in the old ones. But that is something which will evolve over time. As opposed to previous enlargements, the EU has been very reserved towards the new countries regarding financial subsidies and the freedom to travel in the labour market.

6:06

All this in order to protect the old member countries, but also to demonstrate to the new countries that the EU is not an inexhaustible money source. Before the proposal for entry could be sent to a referendum in the new countries, there were a lot of discussions. At one time it was feared that Poland would withdraw due to dissatisfaction with the agricultural subsidies it was awarded. However, everything fell into place and the referendums in all 10 countries showed clearly that the people were in favour of becoming members of the EU.

6:42

sync:

What I'm discovering is that the traditional viewpoint of the Europeans, looking back into European history to for example the Second World War where the great villain was Nazi Germany, and greatly so. These people who are now coming out into European politics, who have spent their lives maybe in prison or in menial jobs, they now want their story to be heard. I've just been talking to the former Prime Minister of Lithuania, Mr. Landsbergis, who is very anxious that we should not forget that the Soviet Union was a tyranny. It did have death camps, it did have concentration camps, it killed its own citizens. So these are some of the factors that will emerge. And I think, it will suddenly rebalance the history of Europe, which I think is a welcome thing.