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The topic of my dissertation is "The Impact of EU Funds on the Regional Development Policy of the Self-Government of the Silesian Voivodeship."

The EU funds are the basic tool for financing the regional development policy in Poland. In my dissertation I present the EU funds subsidy for the Silesian Voivodeship within the pre-accession programmes and within the first (2004-2006) and the second (2007-2013) financial framework.

My dissertation discusses the four first terms of the Silesian Regional Assembly. The analysis is based on a list illustrating the amounts spent on individual voivodeships in Poland:

1. within selected programs
2. from the EU budget funds.

The list includes the following categories of the subsidies from the EU funds:

1. pre-accession programmes such as: Phare, ISPA and Voivodeship Contract,
2. within the framework of the Integrated Regional Operational Programme,
3. from the Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for the years 2007-2013.

The dissertation aims at scrutinising the impact of the EU funds on the regional development policy of the Self-Government of the Silesian Voivodeship. I have formed the following hypothesis: the EU funds have had positive impact on the regional development policy of the Silesian Voivodeship. I used the hypothesis to attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What was the level of using the pre-accession assistance and the EU funds in 2004-2006 and 2007-2013?
2. What was the mechanism of programming the EU assistance as regards granting subsidy for selected projects?

The dissertation is composed of five chapters.

- Chapter One presents the issues related to appointing and functioning of the self-government of the voivodeship. I analyse such elements as the manner of appointing and dismissing the members, tasks and competencies and the operation mode as well as the responsibility for implementing entrusted tasks. The chapter presents political representation of the Management of the Silesian Voivodeship and the Silesian Regional Assembly in individual terms.
- Chapter Two, devoted to the regional development policy, discusses such notions as: policy, region, regional policy, and regional development. I present documents related to the regional

development policy. I describe the history of the creation of the Silesian Voivodeship and – in a form of a chart – I include the most important statistical data from the initial years of opening the terms of voivodeship authorities.

- Chapter Three is devoted to analysing the pre-accession assistance which was the beginning of the regional development policy in the Silesian Voivodeship. I discuss such EU funds as Phare and ISPA. I also emphasise the significance of the Voivodeship Contract and Development Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for 2001-2002.
- Chapter Four discusses the Integrated Regional Operational Programme for 2004-2006. The programme was the most important instrument of the regional development policy in the Silesian Voivodeship and was transposed from the central level. Its main task was preparing the voivodeship for the planned, significantly higher, level of support.
- Chapter Five focuses on the issues related to preparing and updating the following documents: Development Strategy of the Silesian Voivodeship, which is of fundamental significance for the regional development of the voivodeship; the description of Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for the years 2007-2013 and I discuss SWOT analysis.

The text of the dissertation has been illustrated with maps, charts and tables including essential statistical data and the results of my own research.

Summing up, one cannot unambiguously claim that certain effect was possible exclusively due to the use of the EU funds. It is difficult to evaluate the impact of the EU funds, because they are only one of many factors, such as economic changes, macroeconomic policy or technological change. Such impact is complex and does not have the same character; it depends on the structure of financial instruments and the requirements that need to be fulfilled. Another vital factor is the level of development which determines the structure of needs and demand and the quality of institutional system. Regional development is a special type of public administration activity and it has interdisciplinary, complex and long-term character. Effective absorption of the EU funds depends on the relevant know-how and competent representatives of local authorities.

The European Union funds are one of the means of financing regional development policy, however such development does not depend exclusively on the EU subsidy. Pursuant to the thesis of my dissertation, the EU funds have had a positive impact on the regional development policy of the Silesian Voivodeship.