**NIK about broadband Internet**

The construction of the broadband Internet infrastructure is underway, financed by the European Regional Development Fund. A year before the final date of completion of the investment, slightly more than 20 percent of the space was built and commissioned. planned network. EU funding was used in 37 percent. The Minister of Infrastructure, responsible for the investments, reassures that the construction will be completed as planned.

For the construction of broadband Internet access infrastructure, i.e. the creation of a backbone and distribution network, distribution nodes and access networks to which users can be connected, Poland has been granted funding in the amount of over PLN 4 billion from the European Regional Development Fund. As part of three operational programs (Operational Program for the Development of Eastern Poland 2007 - 2013, Operational Program Innovative Economy 2007 - 2013, 16 Regional Operational Programs 2007 - 2013) 90% of contracts were contracted. of the planned co-financing, i.e. PLN 3.9 billion. Poland has until the end of 2015 to complete the investment and settle the expenses. According to the Supreme Audit Office, there is a risk that the construction will not be completed within the set deadline and that the allocated funds will not be used in full.

One year before the project's final completion date, none of the planned investment performance indicators was achieved even in a quarter. By December 2014, 20.5 percent of the buildings had been built and commissioned across the country. planned length of the broadband network, enabling access to broadband Internet 16 percent. planned number of people and 7.5 percent. entities. PLN 1.6 billion was spent from the EU funds, i.e. approx. 38 percent. granted funding.

**Lack of supervision, legal obstacles and tardiness**

The NIK audit showed that delays in the construction of broadband Internet were largely caused by the protracted preparation of the investment. Before starting the construction of the network, it is required to obtain many permits and collect extensive documentation, e.g. geodetic. In addition, the institutions managing the investments did not remove the legal and organizational obstacles quickly enough, which slowed down or even stopped construction, for example, the Mazovian local government waited for a year and a half for the final consent of the European Commission to start building the network in Mazovia. As a consequence, the completion of this investment was postponed to November 2015, i.e. the time when the construction should not only be completed, but also settled. For an equally long time, formal and legal problems reported by companies building networks were resolved by the State Agency for Enterprise Development. For example, in the Podlaskie Voivodeship, the Agency responded for nine months to the request of the company implementing the project.

In many cases, delays in the construction of broadband Internet infrastructure also result from the lack of effective supervision over companies conducting investments. For example, the board of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, despite long delays, did not carry out inspections at the construction site. Supervision was limited to the analysis of settlement documents provided by investment contractors. Only after the Supreme Audit Office pointed out irregularities in supervision, the voivodeship board started ad hoc inspections at the project implementation site.

NIK auditors also note that many investments were started too late. EU funds for the construction of a broadband Internet access network were allocated in the financial perspective for the years 2007 - 2013, plus an additional two years to complete and settle the works. The NIK emphasizes that announcing competitions and selecting projects for implementation only in 2014, i.e. after the end of the financial perspective, poses a risk that they will not be completed and fully settled by the end of 2015. For example, in Wielkopolska, co-financing agreements were selected and signed 22 projects under which it is planned to build nearly 2.5 thousand. km of network, only in the first half of 2014. In addition, the investment, which was supposed to start in the third quarter of last year, did not start until the end of the year due to difficulties with geodetic documentation. In this situation, the implementing company does not have any time reserve in case of possible difficulties at the construction stage.

 **A key year 2015**

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Development ensures that with constant monitoring of the progress of works, the construction of the broadband Internet infrastructure will be completed on time and all funds contracted from the European Union will be distributed by the end of 2015. As noted by the Minister, a large part of the funds will be used in the final phase of project implementation, i.e. in this year.

NIK confirms that the construction of broadband Internet infrastructure is a long-term undertaking, characterized by long-term preparation of projects and implementation of their excellent part in the final phase of the schedule. Therefore, it should be expected that in 2015 the length of the constructed network will increase significantly. Nevertheless, NIK points out that the full implementation of projects does not end with the construction of the network, but with its acceptance, which is a long-term process. In addition, it is also necessary to launch and settle the projects.