



Biography

Jerzy Buzek, born on 3 July 1940 in Śmiłowice (Silesia region) in Poland.

Prime Minister of Poland and Member of the Polish Parliament (Sejm) in the years 1997-2001. He guided Poland into the NATO structures in 1999. He initiated accession negotiations with the European Union in 1997. Founder of the "Foundation for the Family" in 1998 and the Institute of the Civil Society Pro Publico Bono in 2002. Member of The Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarność" since 1980 and Chairman of the 1st National Congress of Delegates of "Solidarność" in 1981. He participated in secret regional and national structures of the Union. He chaired 4th, 5th and 6th "Solidarność" Convention after 1989. Head of the economic workgroup of the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) before the 1997 elections.

Professor. Studied at the Technical University of Silesia, Energy Engineering Faculty. In the years 1971-1972 - research grant at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. Author of approx. 200 research papers and patents. Lectured at the Technical Universities of Silesia and Opole. Member of various academic and technical fellowships. Science Director at the Polish Academy of Science (PAN) in Gliwice until 1997. Representative of Poland at the International Energy Agency - Programme of Greenhouse Gas Effect in the years 1992-1997. Co-founder of Polish-German Science Network for Energy and Environment Protection INCREASE in 1997. Founder of the Consortium for Atmosphere Protection in Silesia in 1994. In the years 2002-2004 Vice-rector of the Polonia University in Częstochowa and founder of the Polonia School of Diplomacy. Doctor honoris causa of the Universities in Dortmund, Seoul and Isparta as well as Technical Universities of Opole and Silesia.

Member of the European Parliament since 2004, elected with the best result in Poland. Vice-president of the European Energy Forum since 2004. The rapporteur for the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Innovation as well as the rapporteur for the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan. Represented the European Parliament during the 2004 elections in Ukraine and supported the Orange Revolution. Holds "MEP of the Year for 2006 in the scientific research and technology category" title awarded by the Parliament Magazine. Prizewinner of "White Coal 2006" awarded by the Polish Engineers. In 2007 President Pötering awarded him with the statuette of a pigeon funded on the occasion of 60. anniversary of adopting the Declaration of Human Rights. According to the Wprost and Rzeczpospolita rankings (2008) he was chosen the best Polish MEP. Committees in the European Parliament: Industry, Research and Energy as well as Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Delegations in the European Parliament: EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee as well as Delegation for relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Inaugural speech by Jerzy Buzek following his election as President of the European Parliament

**Strasbourg, European parliament
Tuesday, July 14, 2009**

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for electing me President of the European Parliament, for me it is both an enormous challenge and a great honour.

Thank you for those who have voted for me. I will do everything not to disappoint your trust.

For those of you who did not vote for me, I will try to convince you to me. I wish to work with all of you, regardless of political convictions. I count on your support.

Thank you Mrs Svenson for taking part in this election, and for our discussions.

Two of our colleagues, Mario Mauro and Graham Watson who stood as candidates, resigned earlier in order to strengthen the unity of our House. This was a profound gesture.

Mario, I know how important for you Human Rights are. In my homeland, Solidarność was born, a great movement for human rights which was possible thanks to the lessons of Pope John Paul II. For me this will also be a priority.

Graham, you spoke about the necessity of change in the European Parliament, of the need for reform. Of the need to involve in the European project our citizens who are becoming more and more indifferent. I will make sure that together we will do everything we can to change this.

Dear Colleagues,

Today is 14 July, the national day of our fellow Members from France, 220 years after a revolution whose message was three words: Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; words which ring out loud and clear in today's European Union.

This is a great day, above all in symbolic terms.

The Members of the European Parliament have decided to confer this great responsibility on a representative of a Central and Eastern European country.

Allow me to speak of my own experience for a moment. Many years ago, I used to dream of becoming a member of the Sejm when Poland became free once again. I now hold the office of President of the European Parliament, which is something I could never have dreamed of back in those days. Which shows how our continent of Europe has changed.

I see my election as a signal to our countries - to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria. I also see it as a tribute to the millions of citizens of our countries who refused to give in to a hateful system. I see myself as a representative of all of those countries.

Twenty years ago, in the summer of 1989, Solidarność won the battle for a free and democratic Poland, sparking off an autumn of change in Europe and the pulling down of the Berlin Wall. Once upon a time, we on one side of the Iron Curtain struggled for freedom and democracy. You, on the other side, helped us politically and through small, but extremely important, gestures of support, sending us aid parcels. And it worked!

For the past five years, we have been working together to build a united Europe. There is no 'us' and 'you'. We can say loud and clear that this Europe belongs to us all.

I spoke earlier of responsibility. Each of us in the European Parliament has been entrusted with a little power. But power means above all responsibility towards our citizens. I am fully aware of the responsibility that I bear. The Union's citizens have placed their trust in us. On the big issues, we need to stand in defence of democracy. On the bread-and-butter issues, the people of Europe expect us politicians to resolve this crisis, and we must set about doing so immediately. People want jobs. The employment issue is our central focus. Our voters want to know that when they turn the gas tap on, the gas will be there. And so energy security is essential. Our citizens are worried that we, like Asia, Africa and the Pacific, will be hit by the effects of climate change. We have to tackle climate change.

Europeans know peace and stability do not depend only on us. Whence the importance of the Mediterranean region, the Eastern Partnership and Latin America, as well as the strategic partnership with the United States and emerging world powers. If we are to tackle all of this with any hope of success, we need the Lisbon Treaty, because the Union needs to be well organised and effective, as does the European Parliament.

Thirty years ago, our Parliament was directly elected for the first time. The new Parliament's President was the Frenchwoman Simone Veil. We must be mindful at all times of the need to create an environment in which women could play a full role in public and professional life without having to sacrifice being mothers or having a family life. Simone Veil said at the time that:

'All the states of the Community today face three major challenges: peace, freedom and well-being, and it seems that only the European dimension can enable them to deal with these challenges'. Those same challenges are still with us 30 years on. We must face up to them.