

CENTRAL ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU

<https://www.cba.gov.pl/en/news/240,The-CBA-detains-Millions-worth-extortions-in-the-construction-of-the-quotlast-mile.html>
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The CBA detains. Millions worth extortions in the construction of the "last mile" Internet

19 suspects, 12 EU projects worth over 90 million PLN, 58 companies and beneficiaries participating in illegal activity - investigation of the Katowice CBA Regional Office and the Regional Prosecutor's Office in Gliwice concerning the extortion of EU grants for the construction of broadband Internet access networks.

At the next stage of investigations, the Silesian CBA agents detained two businessmen from Tarnowskie Góry. One of them is suspected of extortion of EU funds for the amount of approx. 5 million PLN and providing help to extort another 3 million PLN in the implementation of EU projects "Providing access to the Internet at the last mile stage". The second businessman was charged for providing help to extort 5 million PLN and money laundering. The prosecutor's office applied preventive measures: police supervision and bailout.

The illegal conduct detected by the CBA and the prosecutor's office, consisted in repeatedly inflating and issuing fictitious invoices, on such turnover with these invoices, to bypass the obligation to have own contribution and to obtain artificially inflated co-financing. Although the economic events described in the invoices did not occur and their value was repeatedly inflated, each issued invoice was paid by the EU. The subcontractors have settled with the beneficiary for other fictitious transactions, not necessarily related to the implementation of EU projects.

Attempts were made to create the appearance of legality and to fulfill the EU procedures. The group carefully masked their millions worth extortions, but one by one are caught by the CBA agents.

The "last mile" project, in which the role of the implementing institution was had the

Digital Poland Project Center, was to provide the possibility of direct delivery of broadband internet access to inhabitants of areas where conducting this activity on a commercial basis is unprofitable.

Examined investments in the investigation were carried out in the years 2010-2015 in the Silesia voivodeship.

The proceeding is led by the CBA Regional Office in Katowice under the supervision of the District Prosecutor's Office in Gliwice. The case is ongoing.

