



Position of the Brandenburg State Government on the European Commission's Proposal to Create a National and Regional Partnership Plan (NRPP)

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Introduction:

With 2.5 million inhabitants, Brandenburg has a larger population than some EU member states. In stark contrast a NRPP for Germany in the future Multiannual Financial Framework 2028 – 2034 (MFF), now proposed by the European Commission, does not take the specific characteristics of the regions into account. It also interferes significantly with the constitutional responsibilities of the regions/federal states. Both the European Commission and the German federal government are currently observing similar trends across Europe: Metropolitan areas are going to drive regional development almost everywhere, while many rural areas struggle with challenges such as depopulation, aging, and economic weakness. This observation is particularly evident in Brandenburg: The area close to Berlin is growing, while people in areas further away from Berlin are facing numerous challenges. These rural peripheral areas have a special economic structure: Large agricultural businesses, for example, play an important role here and shape the region. These regional characteristics must be an advantage and should not become a disadvantage. A future EU funding policy requires consideration of regional solutions and not a national approach. It requires rather innovation and economic development based on the potential of the regions.

With the following position on the European Commission's proposals for the MFF, the government of the State of Brandenburg wishes to actively contribute to the discussions on the future EU budget and addresses the following considerations primarily to the European institutions and the German federal government. The state government will take a separate position on other elements of the European Commission's proposal, such as the EU Competitiveness Fund.

1. The proposals presented by the European Commission on July 16, 2025, for the design of the MFF and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Cohesion Policy for the 2028 – 2034 programming period **represent a fundamental departure from their previous structure and orientation.** This paradigm shift is going to have unforeseeable implications for the allocation of funds and the design of future administrative structures and procedures for agricultural support and regional development. European funds should continue to invest in economic, social, and territorial projects by strengthening regional and rural development in the longer-term.

2. Future EU funding must respect the federal structure of the Federal Republic of Germany. **The state government rejects the single NRPP proposed by the European Commission in its current form.** Unknown requirements (e.g. reforms) at EU and national level interfere with states responsibility in an unacceptable manner.
3. At the very least, independent **regional plans at the state level** must be made possible in the future, possibly in addition to a national plan. These plans should encompass shared managed EU funds (EAFRD, EAGF, EMFAF, ERDF, JTF, ESF+) that are currently administered by the German states. This is the only way to properly consider the specific challenges and funding needs in Brandenburg, in order to invest EU funds regionally, and to develop **tailor-made solutions**. As a result, regional partnership plans at regional level will reduce the number of funding programmes in the EU, while at the same time – unlike in the European Commission's proposal – respect the specific regional characteristics and the autonomy of the actors in the federal system.
4. The plans must be **flexible** and adaptable to place-based development on the ground. Experience in Brandenburg to date shows that partnership agreements in Cohesion policy are a good example of the distribution of responsibilities between the various levels of government. The highly detailed and comprehensive single national CAP strategy plans, which cover all federal states and regions, on the other hand increase the coordination effort and bureaucracy. The CAP strategy plans are therefore not a good example of efficient program planning and implementation.
5. Although the European Commission aims to strengthen and develop the competitiveness of the Union with the MFF as a whole, **development and innovation** are not defined as primary policy objectives of the NRPP, in contrast to previous regulations for operational programs. However, these are the most important prerequisites for the development of structurally weak regions in particular and should therefore be pursued as priority objectives for Cohesion.
6. **Simplification of EU funding:** The key points outlined by the state of Brandenburg in 2023¹ continue to provide important food for thought on the future of EU cohesion and agricultural policy and remain valid. In addition, the state of **Brandenburg welcomes all activities in the area of EU Cohesion Policy and the CAP that lead to a reduction in bureaucracy** for both recipients and administrations, especially the intermediate bodies, and are thus also aimed at speeding up the processing of funding procedures.

1 <https://mdfe.brandenburg.de/mdfe/de/europa/eu-foerderung-in-brandenburg/zukunft-der-kohaesionspolitik/>

7. **Focus on the essentials:** The proposed shift away from the expenditure-focussed audit towards a performance-based approach based on milestones and targets could represent a genuine simplification. It must not be bypassed by extensive reporting and auditing requirements. Additionally, financial corrections should only be applied in confirmed cases of fraud and corruption.
8. The proposed paradigm shift in EU funding requires a **fundamental re-alignment of structures** everywhere, including in Brandenburg, and would entail new, complex, and time-consuming coordination processes within a relatively short period of time. Therefore, it is essential that negotiations on the **EU regulations are concluded by the end of 2026** and that the current **programming period is extended**. Thereby, authorities and beneficiaries can meet the new requirements properly and invest in projects from 2028 onwards.
9. The state government will **develop, state policy priorities for EU funding** in a partnership-based process, taking into account socio-economic challenges and specific funding needs.

The state government will actively advocate for these state-specific positions in discussions on the future of the MFF and related issues. In view of the dynamic nature of developments, corresponding adjustments remain unaffected.

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