



## Factsheet on 2014–2020 Rural Development Programme for North Rhine-Westphalia/Germany

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) for North Rhine-Westphalia was formally adopted by the European Commission on 13 February 2015, and last modified on 16 September 2019. It outlines North Rhine-Westphalia's priorities for using the € 1.2 billion of public money that is available for the 7-year period 2014-2020 (€ 618.3 million from the EU budget, including € 106.2 million transferred from the German envelope for CAP direct payments, and € 562 million of national co-funding plus € 9.5 million of additional national funding top-ups).

The RDP for North Rhine-Westphalia focuses mainly on two priority areas. Under the first - restoring, preserve and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry – **23% of farmland** will be placed under funded contracts to **improve biodiversity**, **22%** under contracts for improving **water and soil management**. Under the second – social inclusion and local development in rural areas – **61% of the rural population** will be covered by **local development strategies** and **46%** will benefit from improved **services** thanks to fresh investment.

Support for Rural Development is the “second pillar” of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), providing Member States with an envelope of EU funding to manage nationally or regionally under multi-annual, co-funded programmes. There are 118 different rural development programmes in the 28 Member States for the programming period 2014–2020, with 20 single national programmes and 8 Member States opting to have two or more (regional) programmes. The Regulation on support for rural development for the period 2014-2020 addresses six economic, environmental and social priorities, and programmes contain clear targets setting out what is to be achieved. Moreover, in order to coordinate actions better and maximise synergies with the other European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF), a Partnership Agreement has been agreed with each Member State highlighting its broad strategy for EU-funded structural investment.

This document provides a brief overview of how the challenges and opportunities North Rhine-Westphalia is facing, are addressed by the RDP. In the annex, a table indicates the priorities and focus areas – each with their specific targets, and their allocated budget.

### 1. SITUATION AND KEY CHALLENGES

Member States with regional programmes, like Germany, may submit for approval a national framework containing common elements for the regional rural development programmes (RDPs).

Rural development is implemented in Germany through 13 separate regional RDPs, which broadly correspond to the various *Länder* (but with two joint programmes). However, elements common to regional programmes are presented in a National Framework (NF) established at federal level. In addition to this, in Germany a National Rural Network Programme provides the funding for the networking of rural development actors.

North Rhine-Westphalia has 17.9 million inhabitants and is the biggest German Land in terms of population. It is the fourth largest in territory. The region is one of the most densely urbanised in Europe. Agriculture has a share of only 0.5% in the regional gross value added (compared to 1% in Germany as a whole). Only 0.8% of the population live in rural areas. Twenty five percent of the population live in intermediate areas.

The unemployment rate is 6.8% (yearly average 2018)<sup>1</sup> which is about 1.6% above the federal average. Demographic change and loss of business activity in rural areas are ongoing challenges.

In addition, the region faces environmental challenges – related to soil erosion, nitrate pollution in surface and ground waters and pressure on biodiversity.

## **2. HOW THE RDP FOR NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA WILL ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES**

In addressing these challenges, the RDP of North Rhine-Westphalia will fund action under all six Rural Development Priorities – with a particular emphasis on **restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry** as well as **social inclusion and local development in rural areas**. The focus of each priority is explained briefly below.

### Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas

This crosscutting will be addressed mainly through measures supporting training and advisory services for rural people and businesses (especially related to resource efficiency, the environment and climate change): around **10 000 people will be trained**. There will also be support for cooperation in the framework of the **European Innovation Partnership** for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability.

### Competitiveness of agri sector and sustainable forestry

Besides the above-mentioned support for training, **2.1% of farms** will receive funding for **investments** – focused on innovative potential, young farmers, organic farming, animal welfare and resource efficiency. This funding will also cover land consolidation and agricultural access roads. This will be complemented by support for the **European Innovation Partnership**, as well as for **processing and marketing in the forestry sector**.

### Food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture

About **11% of farms** in North Rhine-Westphalia are expected to participate in **animal welfare measures** – related mainly to **summer pasture** and **improved indoor housing** (straw bedding, increased space per animal, natural light).

### Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry

Approximately **23% of farmland** will be placed under funded contracts to **improve biodiversity**, about **22%** under contracts for improving **water and soil management** – related to land management practices including organic farming, crop diversification, winter cover, buffer strips, extensive grassland farming and nature protection. Support for **environmental investments** will complement this contractual support – e.g. in relation to more eco-friendly manure treatment and more resilient forest ecosystems. An amount of 29 million EUR is allocated for **grassland in Natura 2000 areas**.

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<sup>1</sup> Data source : Information and Technology North Rhine-Westphalia – Statistical Office

### Resource efficiency and climate

The RDP will address this priority through support for investments in **more resource-efficient wood harvesting and processing technologies**. The above-mentioned support for **investments in farm modernisation** will also contribute when they improve energy or water efficiency or cut greenhouse gas emissions through more eco-friendly manure treatment. Around **2.3% of farmland** will be under funded contracts to **cut greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions**.

### Social inclusion and local development in rural areas

The programme will fund **Local Development Strategies** drawn up by the Local Action Groups under the LEADER approach: these will cover areas containing **61% of the rural population**. There will also be support for other co-operation projects, village renewal and service improvement (especially for young people and families) and broadband infrastructure. About **46% of the rural population** will benefit from **new or improved services** thanks to fresh investment.

The four **biggest RDP measures** in budgetary terms (total public funding) are:

- € 327 million allocated to Measure 10: Agri-environment and climate measures
- € 196 million allocated to Measure 4: Investments in physical assets
- € 186 million allocated to Measure 7: Basic services and village renewal in rural areas
- € 132 million allocated to Measure 11: Organic farming

## Annex 1: Indicative public support for the Rural Development Programme of North Rhine-Westphalia

North Rhine-Westphalia: RDP strategy summary table with indicative public support			
Focus Area and targets	Measure	€ Total public	%
<b>P1: Knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas <sup>(1)</sup></b>			
1A: fostering innovation, coop, knowledge base 1.54 % RDP expenditure	01 knowledge transfer		
	02 advisory services		
	16 cooperation		
1B: strengthening links (with research, etc.) 15 cooperation operations	16 cooperation		
1C: training 10 000 participants	01 knowledge transfer		
<b>P2: Enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests</b>		<b>160 249 715</b>	<b>13.47</b>
2A: Farm performance 2.10 % of holdings with RDP support	01 knowledge transfer	5 333 333	0.45
	02 advisory services	3 555 555	0.30
	04 investments	141 939 397	11.93
	16 cooperation	9 421 429	0.79
<b>P3: Promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture</b>		<b>121 333 332</b>	<b>10.20</b>
3A: Improving competitiveness 11.00 % of holdings with RDP support	04 investments	21 333 333	1.79
	14 animal welfare	99 999 999	8.41
<b>P4: Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry <sup>(2)</sup></b>		<b>631 591 889</b>	<b>53.09</b>
4A: Biodiversity 23.24 % UAA under contract	07 basic services	39 777 777	3.34
	08 forest investments	32 444 444	2.73
4B: Water management 21.53 % UAA under contract	10 AgEnvClimate	327 036 333	27.49
	11 organic farming	132 777 778	11.16
4C: Soil erosion and management 21.53 % UAA under contract	12 Nat2000 and WDF	28 888 889	2.43
	13 ANC	70 666 667	5.94
<b>P5: Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors</b>		<b>41 666 666</b>	<b>3.50</b>
5C: Renewable energy € 16,8 million investment	08 forest investments	8 444 444	0.71
5D: Reducing GHG and NH3 2.26 % UAA under contract	04 investments	33 222 222	2.79
<b>P6: Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas</b>		<b>222 188 888</b>	<b>18.68</b>
6B: Leader 60.86 % rural population in LDS 46.30 % rural population improved services 36 jobs created	07 basic services	22 266 666	1.87
	19 LEADER	75 600 000	6.36
6C: ICT 2.20 % rural population improved services	07 basic services	124 322 222	10.45
<b>Technical assistance</b>		<b>12 577 777</b>	<b>1.06</b>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC ALLOCATIONS</b>		<b>1 189 608 270</b>	<b>100.00</b>

(1) No financial allocation shown for Priority 1 as the expenditure is distributed across other focus areas

(2) Expenditure under priority 4 is programmed for the priority as a whole, not for individual focus areas