

EAPB Annual Event

“Doing More with EU Funding: Maximising the Leverage of the EU Budget”

Thursday - 27 November 2025

Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia
Rue Montoyer 47, 1000, Brussels, Belgium

Panelists:

- **Mrs Sari Rautio** – Member of the Hämeenlinna City Council and President of the EPP Group in the European Committee of the Regions
- **Mr Zsolt Darvas**- Bruegel Senior Fellow
- **Mrs Lourdes Acedo Montoya**- Head of Unit and Chief Economist, DG Budget
- **Mr Jarosław Dąbrowski** - member of the board, BGK

Moderator: **Anna Gumbau**

Agenda:

18:00 Registration/Sign-in & Welcome aperitif

18:30 Welcome remarks by Rainer Steffens, head of the representation of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union

18:35 Opening speech by Lidwin Van Velden, President of the EAPB

18:40 Panel discussion with representatives of EU institutions, promotional banks, and stakeholders

- Introduction (3–4 min)- Moderator welcomes participants and introduces panelists.
- **Block 1 – The New Budgetary Architecture: Opportunities and Risks** (20 min).
 - Short overview of the new MFF and its three “Headings” (NRPPs, ECF, Global Europe).
 - Panel explores how the reform may simplify the budget but also the risks it poses for cohesion and regional ownership. Short reactions between panelists.
 - 1–2 quick questions from the audience.
- **Block 2 – Financial Instruments as a Default Option** (20 min)
 - Debate on the added value of financial instruments to maximize the impact of EU resources, with grants reserved for specific cases.
 - Discussion on ways to encourage the use of financial instruments in key policy areas, including the introduction of minimum thresholds.
 - 1–2 quick questions from the audience.
- **Block 3 – Simplification, Proportionality and Capacity Building** (20 min)
 - Discussion on how to reduce administrative burdens and avoid gold-plating.
 - Ideas for standardized templates, proportionate audit requirements, and stronger support for smaller institutions.
 - 1–2 quick questions from the audience.
- **Closing Remarks** (2–3 min) Moderator wraps up by highlighting main takeaways from the event.

19:45 Presentation of compendium of financial instruments collected by EAPB members and closing remarks by EAPB Secretary General Marcel Roy

19: 50 Walking dinner