

New EAPB President Gabriela Pantring sets public banks' agenda on defence, housing and green investment

Berlin, 12 June — [Gabriela Pantring](#), CEO of [NRW.BANK](#), has been elected President of the European Association of Public Banks ([EAPB](#)). She takes office at a pivotal moment for Europe, with a focus on strengthening security and industrial competitiveness, bolstering social resilience, and mobilising sustainable finance.

The election took place during the EAPB General Assembly in Berlin, hosted in partnership with the Association of German Public Banks ([VÖB](#)) and Investitionsbank Berlin ([IBB](#)). Their long-standing commitment and close cooperation reflect the EAPB's strong culture of collaboration.

The Assembly opened with a tribute to outgoing President **Lidwin van Velden**, CEO of [NWB Bank](#), who steered the Association through a period of sustained economic and geopolitical turbulence. In her closing remarks, she reflected:

"Public banks exist because markets alone cannot build the future Europe needs. We finance what others will not, stand firm when others retreat, and invest in communities for the long term — not the next quarter. We provide continuity, confidence, and an unwavering commitment to the people we serve. That is what Europe needs from us, and this is what we deliver."

EAPB Secretary General **Marcel Roy** added:

"We will work more closely with EU institutions to develop practical financial solutions that serve citizens and local economies. By combining our members' diverse strengths and engaging constructively with regulators and key stakeholders, we help shape a simpler, more effective policy framework in the public interest."

Three strategic priorities for the new mandate

1. **Security and competitiveness** — Scaling access to finance for SMEs, supporting industrial competitiveness, and contributing to emerging European frameworks for defence-related and strategic investment.
2. **Social resilience** — Expanding access to affordable housing, financing energy efficiency and the broader energy transition, and securing essential public services under growing social and territorial pressure.
3. **Sustainable investment** — Mobilising long-term capital for innovation and productivity, while strengthening public banks' capacity to attract private investment into Europe's green and digital transformations.

In her inaugural address, President **Gabriela Pantring** declared:

"This is Europe's defining moment — and public banks must rise to meet it. We have a collective responsibility and a clear purpose: to strengthen security and competitiveness by backing defence-related investment and the businesses that drive growth; to bolster social resilience through affordable housing and the energy transition; and to mobilise the long-term capital that attracts private investment into Europe's green and digital future. Together with our members and partners across Europe, we will be more than a stabilising force — we will be the engine for lasting change."

Additional Resources:

- [View](#) the new EAPB Board
- [Browse](#) meeting pictures
- [Contact us](#) to request an interview with EAPB President Gabriela Pantring

About EAPB:

The European Association of Public Banks (EAPB) gathers member organisations (financial institutions, funding agencies, promotional and public banks, associations of public banks and banks with similar interests) from 17 European States and countries, representing directly and indirectly the interests of over 90 financial institutions towards the EU and other European stakeholders. With a combined balance sheet total of about EUR 3.4 trillion and a market share of around 15%, EAPB members constitute an essential part of the European financial sector.