

The European Commission officially approved Bulgaria's RDP 2014/2020

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An additional 24 rural development programs have been adopted to promote the EU's agricultural sector.

On May 26, the European Commission approved 24 additional Rural Development Programs (RDPs), aimed at improving the competitiveness of the EU's agricultural sector, protecting rural areas and the climate, and strengthening the economic and social fabric of rural communities up to 2020. The approved programs are expected to create over 40,000 jobs and nearly 700,000 training places to encourage innovation, knowledge transfer, the use of more sustainable agricultural practices, and more stable businesses in rural areas. Funding of 27 billion euros from the EU budget has been secured, along with additional public funds at the national/regional level and/or from private funds. Bulgaria will receive funding of 2,366.7 million euros, which equals 2.38% of the total amount under the EAFRD line. Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural

Development, Phil Hogan, noted: "The programs approved today provide funding for a range of dynamic projects, varying from modernization projects in agriculture and promoting generational renewal in Croatia and Romania to projects expanding broadband networks to sparsely populated areas in Emilia Romagna and supporting organic farming in Sweden, or stimulating the eco-friendly management of 1 million hectares of agricultural land in Ireland. Enhancing knowledge in the EU's agricultural sector is an important aspect of the RDPs. I am pleased that almost all of today's programs will support innovation projects under the European Innovation Partnership."

Rural development support is the so-called 2nd pillar of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, which provides member states with a package of funding for multi-annual programs at national and regional levels. A total of 118 programs are planned across all 28 member states, supported by €99.6 billion in EU funding for the 2014-2020 period through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The new rural development regulation for the 2014-2020 period includes six economic, environmental, and social priorities, and the programs within it contain clear objectives specifying what must be achieved. Furthermore, to better coordinate their actions and ensure maximum synergy with the other European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), a partnership agreement has been concluded with each individual member state.

Source: europa.eu