



Eligible Assets

Sustainability Bonds #11 & #12 – Update

State of North Rhine-Westphalia

June 2025





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Introduction

This document serves to further describe and list all eligible projects for Sustainability Bonds #11 and #12 issued by the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and should be read in conjunction with the State's latest Sustainability Bond Framework.¹ The eligible projects are structured by a selection of the Green Bond Principles 2021 (GBP)² and Social Bond Principles 2023 (SBP)³ Use of Proceeds categories. The selection of projects is based on the State of North Rhine-Westphalia's Sustainability Strategy 2020.⁴ The goal of the Sustainability Strategy is the implementation of the global consensus on sustainable development in the State.

All eligible projects for funding via the Sustainability Bonds located in NRW and have been determined taking into account only the State of NRW's own discretionary spending (net of EU grants, federal grants or other revenues earmarked for specific purposes) to avoid double counting. The State of NRW's personnel costs as well as projects prescribed by federal law are excluded. Thus, only projects that the State provides voluntarily in addition to what it has to provide for are included in the Sustainability Bond. All eligible projects are part of the State of NRW's discretionary spending of the fiscal year 2024 and can thus be traced to the publicly available NRW Budget Plan 2024.⁵ Only the expenditures of the fiscal year 2024 are taken into account. In case a project runs for more than one year, it might thus be part of a number of subsequent Sustainability Bonds. An allocation report with the budget result as well as an impact report will be published in 2025.

The proceeds from the issue of the Sustainability Bonds contribute to the financing of the State budget of North Rhine-Westphalia as a whole. In accordance with the "debt brake" regulations, the State uses the proceeds from the issue of the Sustainability Bonds as part of its general debt management, primarily for the follow-up financing of the State's existing loan liabilities. The proceeds from the issue(s) are ideally allocated to the projects described in this document, for which amounts of at least the net proceeds from the issue(s) of the Sustainability Bond(s) are spent in the State budget.

Each of the 53 projects is mapped to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In case a project addresses more than one SDG, the first icon indicates the predominant SDG. All SDGs are addressed except for SDGs 2, 14 and 17.

The total volume of all eligible projects as in the State's budget plan amounts to EUR 2,765.0. Figure 1 shows the volume assigned to each SDG. If a project relates to more than one SDG, the volume of the project is split up among the respective SDGs according to their relevance. Taking a look at Figure 1 one can see that the highest volumes are dedicated to SDG 4 (35.73%), SDG 11 (25.20%) and SDG 9 (11.07%).

EU Taxonomy

Of the 17 green activities identified across the seven Green Bond categories, 12 have been mapped to 13 specific activities under the EU Taxonomy for sustainable economic activities. 10 of these 12 activities are considered fully aligned with the EU Taxonomy by ISS Corporate reinforcing the environmental integrity and transparency of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia's Sustainability Bonds. Figure 2 shows the share of EU taxonomy aligned projects out of the total assets and separately out of all green projects.

¹ [NRW State Sustainability Bond Framework](#)

² [Green Bond Principles](#)

³ [Social Bond Principles](#)

⁴ [Sustainability Strategy NRW](#)

⁵ [State of NRW Budget Plan 2024](#)

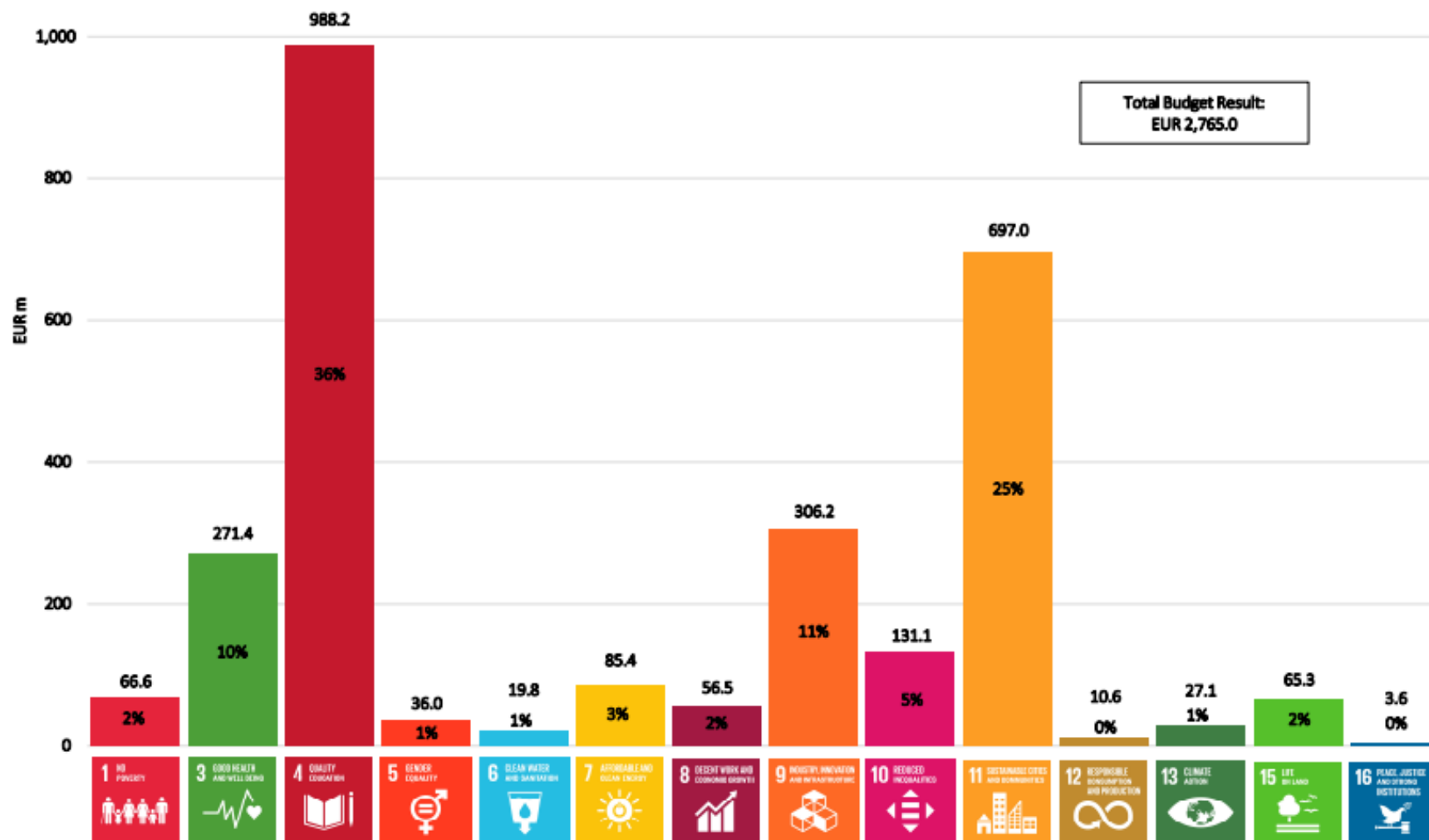


Figure 1: Volume of eligible assets per SDG

Eligible Projects

A. SBP: Affordable basic infrastructure 206.6m (345.2m)⁶

- *Digitalization*



Budget items # 14 500 title groups 64, 65, and 74 and # 06 100 title group 77

27.5m (165.6m)

Target groups: underserved, owing to a lack of quality access to essential goods and services; students/trainees; children/pupils

Digitization is a measure to deal with the major climate and structural policy challenges of our time. Digitalization is based on high-performance fibre optic networks. The State government pursues the ambitious goal of achieving statewide fibre optic networks over the course of the decade. The funds serve to co-finance the gigabit funding of the Federal government.

Fibre optic network coverage is measured based on household coverage. A household is considered to be supplied if fibre optics is available at least "homes passed". In North Rhine-Westphalia, 24% of households can access fibre optic networks (source: GigabitAtlas.NRW, as of December 2022, the coverage by bandwidth can also be viewed here). The creation of fibre optic networks is basically the task of the market. In areas where network operators are unable to develop it economically, the Federal and State governments jointly promote expansion. The eligible areas are determined by the local authorities, who also apply for funding from the relevant district government.

One of the goals is to equip every school with a fibre optic connection. 70% of the main locations of schools in North Rhine-Westphalia are connected to fibre optics, another 27% are connected via current projects. The school authorities can use Federal and State funds to connect schools with fibre optics if the network operators do not expand independently.

The Gigabit.NRW competence centre informs and networks the municipalities for the self-sufficient expansion of fibre optic networks and acts as a contact for the network operators on the framework conditions of the fibre optic expansion. The Gigabit offices in the district governments of Arnsberg, Detmold, Düsseldorf, Cologne and Münster advise the municipalities on the State's funding offers and approve the necessary funds. The municipal gigabit coordinators plan and accompany the self-financing and subsidized expansion on site.

Furthermore, the State finances measures at universities regarding digitalization in the areas of academic studies and teaching, administration and infrastructure. One focus is on cross-university measures to achieve significant and long-term progress in digitalization in higher education.

- *Public transportation for low-income citizens*



Budget item # 10 110 title group 60

39.6m (40.0m)

Target group: people with low socio-economic background

⁶ Throughout this document, each eligible project details the realised amounts allocated, followed by the budgeted amounts in parentheses. Note that the budgeted amounts were preliminary

The State supports transport associations and municipalities who offer season tickets at reduced fares for low-income citizens. Most regions of North Rhine-Westphalia now offer such tickets, covering approximately 85% of all potential beneficiaries.

Social tickets enhance the participation of all citizens in a life that is increasingly determined by mobility. At the same time, the public transport system is strengthened. According to a survey carried out in 2015, approximately 2m people are eligible for social tickets and more than 300,000 people effectively use it. More than 50% of respondents report increased usage of public transport.

Evaluation of social tickets

- **Public transportation for pupils and students**



Budget item # 10 110 title group 74

139.5m (139.6m)

Target groups: children/pupils; students/trainees

According to section 11a of the State's law relating to public transport in North Rhine-Westphalia (ÖPNVG NRW), municipalities and regions get reimbursed for lost income due to reduced fares for pupils, students and trainees. The State also covers additional costs for the improvement of supply and quality in traffic related to pupils and students (Ausbildungsverkehr).

B. SBP: Access to essential services 1,545.1m (1,553.4m)

- **Combating the dangers of addiction**



Budget item # 11 080 title group 71

13.9m (14.8m)

Target groups: general public; children/pupils; aging populations and vulnerable youth

The dimension of the addiction problem remains large. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the proportion of people suffering from addiction relative to the total population is estimated at 20 to 25%. The main problem areas for substance-related addictions are primarily alcohol, tobacco and medication. Among the so-called behavioural addictions, gambling addiction comes first.

Under the motto "Addiction always has a story!", the State government pursues an addiction and drug policy whose aim is to prevent substance abuse and the development of addiction and to raise awareness for an addiction-free life with interactive and diverse offers. The support offered to those at risk of addiction, addicts and their relatives must be at least as diverse as the causes of addiction. The state therefore supports municipalities financially in ensuring a needs-based prevention and assistance network.

With the Action Plan against Addiction NRW, the State is also promoting measures to ensure equal and self-determined participation of people suffering from addiction in social life. In addition to the exemplary development and testing of new evidence-based prevention and assistance approaches at the state level, the action plan also includes the initiation and targeted continuation of structural development processes.

In the current funding phase, which runs until 2026, the State is funding projects in various areas of assistance:

- Caritas Association Duisburg – “My partner gambles” („Mein Partner spielt, meine Partnerin spielt“; support and help for relatives of gambling addicts)
- Direct Addiction help Essen – “One and one makes three” (Suchthilfe direkt Essen e.V. – “Eins und eins macht drei”; avoiding exclusion, impoverishment and negative disease progression in mentally ill and addicted homeless people with unusual behaviour)
- Drug counselling service Lippe – “Come Around” (Drogenberatung Lippe; outreach, social work service in rural areas for a growing group of addicted people with additional psychiatric diagnoses)
- Update Bonn – “mindfulmedia” (against excessive media use among young people)
- Addiction help Diakonie at Sieg and Rhein – addiction counselling (mobile) in rural areas (Suchthilfe Diakonie an Sieg und Rhein; improving access to addiction help services in rural communities)
- Addiction Help Association Duisburg – “Netgirls” (against excessive consumption of social media among girls)
- Cologne Health Department – “Och mer sin Nümaat” (“We also belong to Neumarkt”; offers of help for drug users at Cologne’s Neumarkt)
- Addiction youth counselling Gelsenkirchen – “JuSt Be YOU” (addiction counselling for young people and adolescents)

Detailed information about all projects can be found on the following website:

[Projektdatenbank: Suchtkooperation NRW](#)

Thereby, the State is making an important contribution to combating stigmatization, discrimination and exclusion of those affected.

- *Digitalization of medical care, care structure development and research as well as prevention in the healthcare sector*



Budget item #11 080 title group 75

4.0m (6.3m)

Target group: general public

Digitalization is a strong driver of innovative care structures and at the same time one of the greatest challenges for the healthcare system in the coming years. For the healthcare sector, this means the consistent alignment of electronically supported products and services to the needs of patients and all those involved in the treatment process. The State funds projects to set up the telematics infrastructure in the healthcare sector in North Rhine-Westphalia and telemedicine. Furthermore, the State co-finances projects from the Operational Programme European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) NRW. With more than a million employees, the health industry is the branch with the most jobs and the greatest growth dynamic in North Rhine-Westphalia. Above all, it must also meet the future requirements for high-quality medical care in the interests of the patients.

In addition, the funds serve to strengthen networking within the healthcare system. The budgeted funds are intended to check current projects (e.g. laws, pilot projects, etc.) for effectiveness and efficiency to be able to carry out a structural improvement of the health system on the basis of valid, evidence-based results. In addition, the State finances the development of innovative concepts and measures for health care.

- *Measures to promote health and strengthen the healthcare system*



Budget item # 11 080 title group 81

6.2m (8.9m)

Target groups: general public; children/pupils; migrants and/or displaced persons

The State is responsible for policy-making in self-governing health care. It is committed to a wide range of different measures to reduce life and work-related risks and to promote general health resources and skills of people. The funds are used to finance measures in the following areas: Childbirth, child and youth health, self-help, organizations for the disabled, prevention and health literacy, cancer diseases, health care of migrants, combating transmittable diseases, vaccinations including including educational measures, as well as gender-related health and care policies.

- *Measures to ensure medical care*



Budget item # 11 080 title group 82

2.7m (2.5m)

Target group: general public

The State needs to take measures to prevent a deterioration in medical care. To this end, the State introduces incentives for doctors to settle in areas threatened by undersupply.

- *Psychiatric care*



Budget item # 11 080 title group 83

1.1m (3.0m)

Target groups: general public; children/pupils

The challenges of our modern society as well as crises and pandemics have an impact on mental health and emotional well-being. Mental health is an essential component to ensure a healthy life for all people and to promote their well-being.

The main goal of the organisation of psychiatric care at State level is to enhance the care structure that is oriented towards the needs of those affected, integrated into the community and coordinated, and to promote the participation of mentally ill people in all areas while implementing the UN Disability Rights Convention.

The State promotes model projects for better patient-oriented cross-sector and cross-aid system networking of prevention, the establishment of community psychiatric associations, the strengthening of self-help for mentally ill people and the support of children of mentally ill and addicted parents.

- *Development plan on geriatric care*



Budget items # 11 090 title group 90 and # 11 010 547 17

14.7m (17.8m)

Target group: aging populations and vulnerable youth

The State's Development plan geriatric care is based on the consensus that demographic development places considerable demands on the social infrastructure of the State and, in particular, on the quantity and quality of care and support services for elderly and people in need of care.

As part of the State's Development plan on geriatric care ([Landesförderplan Alter und Pflege](#)), the State supports projects that contribute to the following five superordinate goals:

- Supporting systemic structures
- Promoting/spreading knowledge
- Promoting quality and transparency of advice
- Providing support with (digital) technology/Enable access to (digital) technology
- Enhance broader participation

• *Professional education of geriatric nurses*



Budget items # 11 090 title group 60

-0.1m (2.5m)

Target group: aging populations and vulnerable youth

According to section 5 of the State Law concerning Geriatric Care (Landesaltenpflegegesetz NRW), the State provides financial grants for the training of geriatric nurses.

• *Conservation, remediation and enlargement of university clinics as well as other investments*



Budget items # 06 102 title group 63, # 06 102 891 11, title 891 20 of chapters # 06 103–108, respectively, and title 891 30 of chapters # 06 103–108, respectively

372.0m (350.5m)

Target group: general public

In accordance with the principle of dual financing of hospitals, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia also provides funds for investments in the State's six university clinics. Medical buildings are among the most complex construction projects of all. The State invests in construction measures (new construction and renovation measures), land acquisition, overall planning, initial setup, access and outdoor facilities, special operating equipment and accessories, ancillary construction services, procurement of capital and consumer goods and procurement of large equipment.

The investments are aimed at positioning the State's university clinics at the forefront of medical research and health care across Germany and Europe and at training excellent doctors.

• *Training facilities for the education of special education teachers*



Budget items # 06 131 685 10, # 06 181 685 10, # 06 230 685 10, # 06 240 685 10, # 06 250 685 10 (partially)

21.2m (21.2m)

Target groups: people with disabilities; children/pupils; students/trainees

In order to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities in the area of education, more teachers with a background in special needs education are necessary to meet the deficits in existing facilities. Therefore, the State Government has significantly increased the number of study places for teaching special needs education. Around 250 new bachelor's study places were created for the 2020/21 winter semester. Further 250 places are planned for the next few years. The State and universities have thus created

or secured a total of 750 new places in special education since the beginning of the previous legislative period. This is an essential step on the way to an inclusive school system in North Rhine-Westphalia.

- *Measures to improve the quality of teaching and studying at universities*



Budget item # 06 100 title group 72

300.3m (300.0m)

Target group: students/trainees

From winter semester 2006/07 until summer semester 2011, universities and colleges in North Rhine-Westphalia were allowed to charge tuition fees of up to 500 euros per semester and student to cover expenses for improvements in the quality of teaching and studying. With the objective to provide unfettered access to quality education, the State has abolished tuition fees starting winter semester 2011/12. To improve further the quality of higher education, the State provides funds of the same amount as the previous tuition fee revenues.

- *Return programme for highly qualified young researchers from abroad*



Budget item # 06 040 title group 65

4.2m (7.7m)

Target group: general public

Whether it's exciting projects or thinking outside the box: there are many reasons why young researchers decide to pursue a career abroad. But there are also at least as many reasons to return to North Rhine-Westphalia: with 70 universities and more than 50 non-university research institutions, North Rhine-Westphalia is the largest science location in the heart of Europe.

With the return programme ([Rückkehrprogramm](#)), the Ministry of Culture and Science wants to encourage young scientists to return to North Rhine-Westphalia. Since 2007, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia has made it particularly easy for around 60 promising young researchers to return: with up to 1.25 million euros each over five years, they were able to set up a junior research group at a university in North Rhine-Westphalia as part of the return program. The process is designed in such a way that the funding commitment is made on a personal basis and the young scientists can bring this into the negotiations with the participating universities in North Rhine-Westphalia. In principle, it is possible to agree on future prospects beyond the funding period. This opportunity has been used intensively in the past: the majority of those previously funded now have a professorship.

- *Social work at schools*



Budget item # 05 300 title group 79

57.7m (57.7m)

Target groups: children/pupils; aging populations and vulnerable youth

[School social work](#) is social work in and at school and located at the intersection of school and child and youth welfare. With their valuable work, school social work specialists are an integral part of the multi-professional teams at all types of schools. The field of action of school social work includes, for example supporting the personal and social development of children and young people, advising and supporting children and young people in the school environment, advising and supporting school management, teachers and other educational staff at schools as well as cooperating child and youth welfare specialists, participation and advice in school,

professional and other biographical transitions as well as personal needs, cooperation with legal guardians and participation in the school team for counselling, violence prevention and crisis intervention, coordination with the other in-school and extra-school advisory structures for school networking and advisory tasks.

- *Support for family centres/promotion of cooperation of family formation and counselling centres with family centres*



Budget items # 07 040 633 16 and # 07 030 684 10

79.1m (83.3m)

Target groups: people with low socio-economic background; children/pupils

The purpose of the family centres ([Familienzentren](#)) is to provide information and counselling services to help parents support their children, as well as to combine those services for parents and families. Especially in areas characterized by poverty or inadequate infrastructure, family centres can help promote the social participation of disadvantaged families and by doing so, contribute to the creation of more equal opportunities. Day care centres which have been appointed as family centres receive special support from the State. One funding priority is family centres in social hotspots.

- *PlusKita and language courses at childcare facilities*



Budget item # 07 040 633 15

109.2m (109.6m)

Target groups: people with low socio-economic background; children/pupils; migrants and/or displaced persons

Children from low-income families, with a migration background or from a relatively uneducated social environment have worse educational opportunities compared to other children. The reason is not a lack of abilities, but worse starting conditions and a lack of support. To equalize educational opportunities and provide fair chances for all children from the beginning, day care facilities with a high proportion of families in difficult conditions receive additional support. Since the kindergarten year 2014/2015, these plusKITAs receive a minimum of 25,000 euros additionally per calendar year. North Rhine-Westphalia is currently counting 1,700 plusKITAs, having as main objective the improvement of educational opportunities for children right from the start by targeting educational disadvantages. This is implemented by an individual strengthening of the children's potential. Support focuses on the everyday life of the families: educational concepts and forms of action adapted to the prevailing conditions, cooperation with and empowerment of parents, a reliable contact person in local network structures and special training measures are among plusKITAs' tasks, which go beyond the functions of regular day care facilities.

Language skills belong to the most important skills for successful education and integration into the labour market. To provide a solid foundation for all children, language education should begin as early as possible. Against that background, the State finances language courses at childcare facilities, in particular for children from low-income families or from disadvantaged local communities as well as for children whose first language is not German (www.kita.nrw.de/fachkraefte-fachberatung/sprachliche-bildung).

- *Childcare in special cases*



Budget item # 07 040 633 13

21.5m (17.4m)

Target groups: migrants and/or displaced persons; children/pupils

Among the refugees in North Rhine-Westphalia are numerous children who can benefit from early childhood education in day care centres. Since not all affected children immediately attend a regular childcare centre, there is a need for particular services at an early point in time. The State provides funds for low-threshold day care services beyond the benefits of the Child Education Act, in order to facilitate the transition to institutional day care for children and their parents. In addition, the State supports counselling services for staff.

- *Exemption to contribution for parents for the last two years of day care*



Budget item # 07 040 633 20

477.1m (484.2m)

Target groups: children/pupils; general public

Day care centres are educational institutions preparing children for school and must therefore be accessible to all children. Since August 2020, the last two years of day care before school entrance are free of charge in North Rhine-Westphalia, ensuring that pre-school education, which is not compulsory in Germany, does not depend on the parents' income.

- *Excellence Strategy*



Budget items # 06 100 686 55 and 893 00

24.6m (32.0m)

Target group: general public

The federal and State governments' excellence strategy promotes excellent research and teaching. The [Excellence Strategy](#) aims to sustainably strengthen Germany as a science location and further improve its international competitiveness. With two universities of excellence and fourteen clusters of excellence, North Rhine-Westphalia occupies a leading position nationwide and has expanded its balance by four clusters of excellence compared to the previous excellence decision in 2012.

The Federal Government and the States provide around 533 million euros annually for the Excellence Strategy from 2018 onwards, with a co-financing share of 75% by the Federal government and the remaining 25% by the State where the cluster of excellence or the university of excellence is located.

- *Promotion of innovation*



Budget item # 14 400 title group 61

28.2m (26.4m)

Target group: general public

Innovations are the key to overcoming the challenges of globalization, digitization, demographic change and climate protection. They enable the generation of sustainable competitive advantages and market success. The measures are aimed not only at technical innovations, but also at innovations in the non-technical area (e.g. new processes and business models) and at social innovations.

Numerous fields of innovation are funded. The innovation field "Key Technologies of the Future, ICT" forms a new element of the priority strategy. Contents are, for example: Quantum computing, AI development, robotics, cyber security and industrial transformation.

- ***Foundation for Nature and Sustainable Development***



Budget item # 10 060 686 72

4.0m (4.0m)

Target group: general public

The change to sustainability is one of the central future tasks of our time. A key factor for the success of this demanding process is the broad participation of citizens. This is where the work of the Foundation for Nature and Sustainable Development North Rhine-Westphalia ([Stiftung Umwelt und Entwicklung Nordrhein-Westfalen](#)) comes into play. It promotes civic engagement for sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - the United Nations' global goals for sustainable development.

Every year the foundation supports around one hundred new funding projects. Since it was founded by the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in 2001, the foundation has supported around 1,800 community projects with around 88 million euros.

The focus of our funding activities is information and educational work in the area of sustainable development. The educational concepts "Education for Sustainable Development" and "Global Learning" are of particular importance here. Projects with the following main topics are funded in particular: Environmental, climate and nature conservation, resource conservation, preservation of biodiversity, development policy education and information, intercultural learning in the areas of environment and development, sustainable production and sustainable consumption.

[Annual report 2022 of Foundation for Nature and Sustainable Development](#)

- ***Facilities for environmental education***



Budget item # 10 060 title group 77

3.4m (3.8m)

Target group: general public

The State funds the further development and implementation of a specialist concept to expand and ensure a statewide network structure of environmental education institutions that are target group-related and competent based on the concept of education for sustainable development (ESD; [Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung NRW](#)) work in a target group-related and competency-oriented manner based on the concept of education for sustainable development, and at the same time support ESD education processes in the formal area with their offerings as partners.

C. SBP: Affordable housing 133.2m (112.0m)

- **Urban development programme “Growth and Sustainable Renewal”**



Budget item # 08 500 883 11 (partially)

69.2m (61.2m)

Target group: excluded and/or marginalised populations and/or communities

The programme “Wachstum und nachhaltige Erneuerung” (“Growth and Sustainable Renewal”) focuses on the problems of a shrinking population and a stagnating economic development. Urban districts with a severe loss of functions or a high degree of abandoned or vacant property (residential, commercial, military or railway) are eligible for support under this programme. The goal is to stipulate new initiatives for sustainable urban development. Relevant issues range from urban planning and housing to economic development and social and environmental policies and include the improvement of public space and living environments, upgrading the building stock, dismantling of buildings that are no longer required and measures of water-sensitive urban and open space planning to reduce the "heat island effect".

- **Urban development programme “Social Centres”**



Budget item # 08 500 883 11 (partially)

55.3m (41.1m)

Target group: excluded and/or marginalised populations and/or communities

The programme “Soziale Zentren” (“Social Centres”) addresses various challenges for local communities concerning urban renewal, labour market development, economic structure and growth, infrastructure for children, families and elderly, housing, social and cultural infrastructure, integration and inclusion, schools, promotion of health and sports, prevention of crime and public relations. This programme aims at urban areas and districts that are significantly disadvantaged due to the social composition and economic situation of the residents. The State intends to increase the quality of living and the variety of uses, to integrate all population groups and to strengthen cohesion in the neighbourhood. Most projects implement concrete measures to improve conditions of living and the social environment, such as renewal of playgrounds, schoolyards and parks.

- **State programme for village renewal**



Budget item # 15 030 title group 74

8.7m (9.7m)

Target group: excluded and/or marginalised populations and/or communities

The rural regions in North Rhine-Westphalia are facing particular challenges in terms of demographic development and the entailed effects on the provision of services of general interest, their accessibility and the overall infrastructure. Conceptual and building measures in the villages are funded to improve the quality of life, housing and work, as well as measures that serve to secure the basic needs of the rural population and improve the infrastructure. This enables the localities to adapt to the current economic, demographic and socio-cultural changes.

D. SBP: Employment generation 4.3m (6.6m)

- *Occupational integration of people with disabilities*



Budget item # 11 050 title group 86

1.6m (3.7m)

Target groups: people with disabilities; unemployed

The State government continues to expand workplaces in workshops for disabled people as needed. The funding of the workshop projects is provided jointly by the State, the inclusion offices of the two regional associations, the Regional Directorate of North Rhine-Westphalia of the Federal Employment Agency as well as by the owners. Currently, more than 100 workshops for disabled people in North Rhine-Westphalia employ around 80,000 people.

In addition, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia provides funds for investment in newly created jobs in [integration companies](#)/inclusion companies for severely disabled people. The two regional associations participate in the programme with their own funding and implement it in coordination with the State. Approximately 323 inclusion companies in North Rhine-Westphalia currently provide more than 4,150 jobs for people with disabilities with full access to social security.

- *Environmental economy, sustainable economy*



Budget item # 10 060 title group 63

2.7m (2.9m)

Target group: general public

These funds are intended, among other things, for the development, coordination and implementation of the State's strategy for an environmental economy and measures and activities in the field of environmental economy or sustainable economy.

The Strategy for an environmental economy aims to develop the environmental economy in North Rhine-Westphalia into an impetus for the global green economy. North Rhine-Westphalia should make a significant contribution to achieving the Paris climate goals and to the transformation to a sustainable economy and society. The Strategy for an environmental economy is a cross-departmental policy strategy of the State government of North Rhine-Westphalia and dates back to 2010. The goals of the Strategy for an environmental economy are pursued in five strategic fields of action: Innovations are promoted at the product, process, technology and service level in order to ensure growth and employment in the North Rhine-Westphalian economy. Start-ups as well as small and medium-sized enterprises are supported with market introduction, market development and internationalisation in order to facilitate entry into and growth in the dynamic markets of the environmental economy. Networking, communication and location development serves to ensure mutual visibility and perception of the diverse players in the environmental economy. The synergy effects lead to the development, expansion and strengthening of regional value chains. In order to secure and expand the competitive position of the North Rhine-Westphalian environmental industry in the long term, the training of skilled workers is specifically promoted as the key to the innovation and performance of companies. Finally, the setting of an environmental policy framework and standardization is also an essential field of action, on the one hand to give the necessary legal certainty for the actors involved and on the other hand to provide impetus for the growth market of the environmental economy.

Umweltwirtschaftsbericht NRW 2024

E. SBP: Food security and sustainable food systems 3.8m (4.1m)

- *EU school programme*

Budget items # 15 040 547 11, 685 11 and 686 11



3.8m (4.1m)

Target group: children/pupils

There is no doubt about how important it is for children to have a healthy and balanced diet. The goal of the EU school programme for North Rhine-Westphalia is to introduce as many children as possible to fruit, vegetables and milk and to make their eating habits healthier in the long term.

With many important vitamins and minerals, fruit, vegetables and milk are the right strengthening for children and young people. Therefore, North Rhine-Westphalia participates in the EU school programme, which is funded by EU and State funds. Participating facilities can provide their children with three portions of fruit and vegetables and two portions of milk or yoghurt per week, free of charge. Because a healthy diet should be accessible to everyone. The fruit and vegetable programme addresses primary and special schools in North Rhine-Westphalia. In addition to primary and special schools, the milk programme is also aimed at day care centres.

The EU school programme also includes accompanying measures for nutrition education in and outside of school, such as lessons about a healthy breakfast with fruit, vegetables and milk or chopping fruit and vegetables into manageable portions. The offering is rounded off by a variety of media projects and projects that are aimed specifically at children, parents and educational staff.

F. SBP: Socioeconomic advancement and empowerment 128.0m (177.8m)

- *Fight against poverty and social exclusion*

Budget item # 11 042 title group 95



2.6m (4.7m)

Target groups: children/pupils; excluded and/or marginalised populations and/or communities; people with low socio-economic background; underserved, owing to a lack of quality access to essential goods and services

North Rhine-Westphalia is a State in which the living spaces of rich and poor are often very close to one another. There are poor and rich regions, wealthy and disadvantaged parts of the city. Families who live with their children in spacious houses and benefit from good infrastructure live only a few kilometres away from those for whom Hartz IV benefits are the norm and who receive little positive impulses in their neighbourhood. Many people are often unable to participate in a social life. Children and young people in particular suffer greatly from this form of exclusion, which in most cases also shapes their psychosocial development later in life.

The State of North Rhine-Westphalia is committed at various levels of action and in cooperation with other political actors, trade unions and social associations, voluntary welfare providers, municipalities and municipal umbrella organizations to avoid poverty wherever possible and to combat it where it already exists. The funds are intended, among other things, for the funding programme "Together in the neighbourhood – strengthen children – secure the future", the funding programme "Together in the neighbourhood – initiate, develop and strengthen social planning", team "Fighting poverty and social planning" at the G.I.B. Bottrop, the hardship fund "All Children eat with us", and the conference against poverty.

- *European Social Fund 2021-2027 (State's share)/Programmes "No dead-end qualification"/"No dead-end qualification (compact)"*



Budget items # 11 032 title group 81, # 10 090 title group 84, # 11 029 title group 75 and # 11 029 title group 80

45.8m (72.3m)

Target groups: migrants and/or displaced persons; aging populations and vulnerable youth; children/pupils

The [European Social Fund \(ESF\)](#) is involved in many projects to improve the living situation of people in North Rhine-Westphalia in the 2021-2027 funding phase. The basis for implementation is the "ESF programme 2021-2027. It includes projects in the field of work, integration and education such as advising companies on securing skilled workers, competence development of employees through educational voucher procedures, employee transfer, transformation consulting, funding of ongoing costs for inter-company training of trainees in industry and trade, including funding for central care, municipal coordination, part-time vocational training, examination fees for young people with full-time school-based vocational training, life and working world-related further training in further education institutions, 100 additional training positions for teenagers and young adults with disabilities in North Rhine-Westphalia, workshop year, advice centres for work, basic language courses for refugees as well as competence centres for self-determined living in North Rhine-Westphalia in the field of innovative measures.

The funds are also intended to finance projects under the [Just Transition Fund \(JTF\)](#) with the aim of enabling regions and people to cope with the social, economic and environmental impacts of the transition to a climate-neutral economy. Among other things, measures in the following areas are supported: productive investments in SMEs, including start-ups, leading to diversification and transformation of the economy, investments in environmentally oriented start-ups, investments in research and innovation activities and promoting the transfer of advanced technologies, investments in promoting the circular economy, including through waste avoidance, reduction, resource efficiency, reuse, repair and recycling, investments in the remediation and decontamination of sites as well as in projects to restore and repurpose areas and advisory services related to JTF-financed investments.

"No dead-end qualification" – with this goal, North Rhine-Westphalia designs the transition from school to training and study. The statewide transition system ensures that young people receive support at an early stage with their career orientation, career choice and entry into training or study. The aim is to give all young people the opportunity to pursue vocational training or study as quickly as possible after school and to avoid unnecessary waiting times through effective coordination. Young people and their parents receive sustained support on their way into the professional world. From grade 8 onwards, all pupils receive mandatory, systematic professional orientation. In addition to identifying and promoting potential and job-relevant skills, this primarily includes targeted internships in companies in order to explore different professional fields and enable a competent career choice. By the end of school, an individual connection perspective will be developed with all pupils and documented in a concrete connection agreement.

In order to improve the career orientation and the transition to training and work of young people in North Rhine-Westphalia, there are a number of supportive offers and measures so that pupils have further opportunities to improve their career choice skills even after secondary school level I. Career entry support is aimed at pupils in need of support.

- *Equality and potential development in work and society*



Budget item # 07 060 title group 62

9.1m (9.4m)

Target group: women and/or sexual and gender minorities

The State of North Rhine-Westphalia promotes the development and implementation of measures for equality and the development of potential in the workplace and society with a focus on opening up companies to attract and retain female specialists, development of female leadership potential, equal pay, equality of women and men in the public sector, cliché-free professional and study orientation, social and political participation and women in special life situations.

- *Promotion of equality at universities*



Budget item # 06 100 title group 73

3.3m (4.5m)

Target group: women and/or sexual and gender minorities

The State government promotes equal opportunities between women and men at universities in North Rhine-Westphalia. Both should be able to work equally in science and research. It is an important concern of the State government that performance and competence determine career opportunities in research and universities and not gender. Promoting and demanding the equal participation of women and men in studies, research, teaching and in leadership positions in university administration is a joint task of the universities and the responsible ministry. This also means that research and family can be better combined in the future. Equal opportunities ensure the quality and future viability of North Rhine-Westphalia's universities.

The [professorship programme for women](#) is a measure to retain more women in the academic system after completing their doctorate and to increase their presence at all qualification levels. In what is now the fourth programme phase (2023–2030), a funding volume of 320 million euros is available, half of which is borne by the federal government and half by the states. The programme works on two levels: It increases the number of female professors and also strengthens the equality structures at German universities through specific measures. Universities qualify for participation in the programme through equality concepts that are externally assessed. These concepts include, among other things, measures to promote equality that are specifically tailored to the respective university. Universities that present a convincing equality concept can apply for start-up funding for up to three positions for professorships filled by women for a period of five years.

- *Girls in special situations*



Budget items # 07 040 title group 64

1.2m (1.1m)

Target groups: women and/or sexual and gender minorities; aging populations and vulnerable youth

The State supports youth welfare organisations offering help for girls affected by forced marriage. The funds enable facilities to offer immediate help. Furthermore, additional capacities to accommodate girls threatened or affected by domestic and sexual violence are created in the Rhineland. In addition, preventive support offers are promoted.

- *Protection of children*

Budget item # 07 040 684 31



0.8m (4.8m)

Target group: children/pupils

The State provides funds for the implementation of measures for prevention, protection against and assistance in the event of sexual violence against children and youth in North Rhine-Westphalia. The funds serve in particular for the implementation of projects and events, for the creation and distribution of materials, for financing advanced training and qualification measures, for commissioning scientific expertise and surveys and for public relations.

- *Protection from violence*

Budget items # 07 060 title groups 61 and 63



26.3m (34.1m)

Target groups: women and/or sexual and gender minorities; underserved, owing to a lack of quality access to essential goods and services

Women affected by violence in North Rhine-Westphalia can seek protection or get advice and help in numerous state-funded facilities through the State's support network for women: 69 women's shelters offer women with children refuge, professional advice and support for further independent living. 62 general women's counselling centres provide support in difficult problems and conflict situations through psychosocial individual or group counselling, especially after suffering violence. 56 specialist counselling centres against sexual violence provide women and girls with acute crisis intervention, psychological advice and accompaniment to doctors, police and courts after they have suffered sexual violence. Eight specialized counselling centres for victims of human trafficking take care of those affected and also provide safe accommodation if they are willing to testify against the traffickers. Two specialist advice centres against forced marriage advise those affected and their confidants anonymously and in several languages. Social professionals who deal with the topic professionally can also contact these advice centres. The specialist advice centre for violence prevention and protection against violence against girls and young women with disabilities "Girls Safely Inclusive" at the Bielefeld Girls' House provides an online-based information and advice platform. The centre's area of responsibility includes, among other things, advising those affected, specialists and confidants as well as further developing the cooperation network of support and help offers

Women are not the only victims of domestic violence. Boys and men are also affected. It is important to the State government of North Rhine-Westphalia to provide low-threshold protection and counselling services to men affected by violence. The State government of North Rhine-Westphalia, together with the Bavarian State government, set up a telephone helpline for violence against men as a first component for establishing a support structure. The States of Baden-Württemberg and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania are now also participating in this helpline. The violence against men helpline is aimed at all men who are threatened or affected by violence. People from the men's close social circle, such as relatives, friends and work colleagues, who would like to support the man affected by violence can also contact the violence against men helpline. The offer is also aimed at specialists. The counsellors of the helpline are qualified professionals who have experience in advising men affected by violence. They provide initial psychosocial counselling and crisis intervention and, if requested, refer to protection and counselling facilities – such as violence shelters for men and counselling centres. The advice covers areas such as domestic violence, sexual violence, violence in public spaces, physical abuse in childhood, forced marriage, mobbing, stalking/cyberstalking, psychological violence, and violence related to discrimination.

In addition to the violence against men helpline, those affected can find protection and support in one of the five state-funded shelters for men affected by violence in Bielefeld, the greater Aachen area, Münsterland, Cologne and Düsseldorf. A total of 20 places are available at the five locations as safe housing options for men who have become victims of domestic violence or are in an acute threatening situation.

Protection from violence and violence prevention in NRW

- *Social inclusion of persons with disabilities*



Budget item # 11 050 title group 80

4.1m (4.3m)

Target group: people with disabilities

Inclusion aims to ensure that all people live together on equal terms. People who are considered impaired or disabled should no longer be excluded. Because: Even those who can't count count, even those who can't speak have a lot to say.

With over 170 measures, the new action plan “NRW Inclusive” ([Aktionsplan “NRW inklusiv” 2022](#)), which was adopted in 2022, covers a wide range of life situations: from “family and social network” and “education and training” to “work and material life situation” to “health and health care”.

- *Measures to prevent child and youth poverty*



Budget item # 07 040 title group 70

12.6m (14.6m)

Target groups: people with low socio-economic background; children/pupils;

Growing up in poverty not only means living in a household with little income, but sometimes also having fewer educational opportunities, poorer health status and fewer opportunities to participate in society. In order to enable all children to grow up well and healthily, the State of North Rhine-Westphalia supports municipalities in setting up prevention networks. In the networks, stakeholders from different administrative areas and civil society organizations work together to offer families information, advice and support at an early stage. This creates offers that strengthen families, are in places where families already are, that in particular shape transitions into new life situations and that were developed with the addressees and specialists.

Good examples and further information can be found here: <https://www.kinderstark.nrw/>

- *Measures for children from refugee families and for young refugees*



Budget item # 07 040 title group 68

12.0m (12.3m)

Target groups: migrants and/or displaced persons; aging populations and vulnerable youth

The State finances the improvement of access for minor refugees to the standard offers of youth work and youth social work, measures especially targeted at young refugees to support and promote them as well as the improvement of youth work and youth social work for the integration of minor refugees. North Rhine-Westphalia promotes professional qualification through existing and newly developed offers of youth social work. In addition, the State strengthens projects for young refugees for the prevention of sexual violence and sexual education as well as to well as to democracy education, political education and value dialogue.

- *Promoting integration of migrants living together in diversity*



Budget items # 07 080 title group 68, # 07 090 539 00 and # 07 080 547 12

5.6m (10.1m)

Target group: migrants and/or displaced persons

The funds serve, among other things, for studies, events and information measures in the field of social inclusion Immigrants and measures against racism, measures on anti-discrimination, measures to promote multilingualism ability, the promotion of social counselling work for Sinti and Roma in North Rhine-Westphalia as well as measures in the area of Salafism prevention.

Further, school-related educational offers in the central accommodation facilities in North Rhine-Westphalia are supported.

- *Measures against homelessness*



Budget item # 11 042 title groups 90

4.6m (5.7m)

Target groups: excluded and/or marginalised populations and/or communities; people with low socio-economic background; underserved, owing to a lack of quality access to essential goods and services

The funds are intended, among other things, for the State initiative against homelessness "Finally a HOME!" and the programme "[Help in housing emergencies](#)".

The provision of living space is a fundamental basic need. It is therefore important to prevent homelessness. Because: People who have no living space live on the fringes of society – with no real chance of a decent life. The State initiative "[Finally a HOME!](#)" brings together a variety of different measures to combat homelessness.

According to regulatory law, combating homelessness is the responsibility of municipalities. The State government has been supporting municipalities in this difficult task for many years. With the State initiative against homelessness "Finally a HOME" the State government is tackling the issue of homelessness in all its complexity.

The municipal umbrella associations, the State working group for independent welfare and the regional associations were involved in the conception of the State initiative. The central building blocks of the State initiative are the cooperation agreement with the housing industry, the "carer" projects, projects for "young homeless people" as well as a funding programme to strengthen addiction counselling for homeless people.

The goals of the state initiative are to prevent housing losses, to create living space for people without their own home and to improve the living conditions of homeless people and those at risk of losing their home.

G. GBP: Renewable energy 2.1m (6.0m)

- *Energy storage*



Budget item # 14 300 title group 67

2.1m (6.0m)

EU taxonomy activity 4.11

Energy storage can be used to decouple energy demand and energy conversion, thus contributing to making the supply and use of energy more flexible in the overall system. Storage systems are therefore one of the most

important options for increasing flexibility in the energy supply system. In addition to direct storage options for electricity, other storage options must be used and promoted across sectors as far as possible. The connection of the electricity sector with the gas sector (power-to-gas) is particularly important. The storage of electrical power in the form of heat (power-to-heat) is another important element in the energy system of the future.

H. GBP: Energy efficiency 19.2m (47.5m)

- *Climate protection technologies and low-emission mobility*



Budget item # 14 300 title group 63

12.8m (40.7m)

EU Taxonomy activities 3.1, 7.4

With the module "Climate Protection Technology" – formerly "Market Introduction" – the State promotes the introduction and dissemination of climate protection technologies that use energy efficiently, produce electricity and heat from renewable energy sources and contribute to sector coupling. The subsidized systems make a significant contribution to reducing CO2 emissions and achieving the climate protection goals in North Rhine-Westphalia. Funding is available for marketable products that still require start-up assistance for a limited period of time for the desired economic application. Advisory services and the creation of heating concepts are also funded.

The "low-emission mobility" module is the central instrument for switching to climate-friendly forms of propulsion, such as electromobility and hydrogen mobility. The focus is on expanding the charging infrastructure and supporting local authorities. For example, charging facilities for tenants and employees as well as charging infrastructure for company fleets are promoted. Bidirectional charging will be promoted from 2023. Municipalities are supported in setting up charging infrastructure concepts and converting their fleets to electric vehicles. Other funding items are electric commercial vehicles, cargo bikes and electrolyzers at hydrogen filling stations. In addition, individual projects, e.g. in the field of climate-friendly logistics, can be funded. Two calls for funding for the construction of public charging infrastructure are also planned for 2023. These should be built primarily where drivers are staying for a limited time anyway (e.g. retail, leisure facilities, etc.). The expansion of public charging infrastructure is a key building block for the broad acceptance of electromobility among the population.

- *Enhancement of resource efficiency*



Budget item # 10 060 title group 68

6.4m (6.8m)

The State provides funds for its efficiency agency ([Effizienz-Agentur NRW](#)), projects relating to environmental protection at the company level, resource efficient economy and circular economy.

I. GBP: Pollution prevention and control 155.8m (173.7m)

- *Hydrogen-energy carrier of the future (State's share)*



Budget item # 14 300 title group 74

131.2m (131.2m)

EU Taxonomy activities 3.2, 3.10, 4.14

This project includes State funding for a total of seven major projects to build a European hydrogen economy (Important Projects of Common European Interest, IPCEI). North Rhine-Westphalia covers 30% of the public funding, the federal government covers 70% of the funding. Each major project is also supported by a significant amount of the company's own contribution.

The hydrogen IPCEI projects are a one-time funding boost for numerous projects that cover the entire value chain. The projects were selected through a selection process between the federal and State governments. The EU Commission notifies these projects and ensures compatibility with European state aid law.

This project supports projects in the following areas in North Rhine-Westphalia:

- climate-neutral steel production (tkH2steel)
- green production of basic chemicals (ChemCH2ange)
- Development of supra-regional hydrogen pipelines (GETH2)
- green hydrogen production (GreenMotionSteel)
- hydrogen filling stations for heavy goods traffic (HRS NRW)
- production capacities for electrolyzers (Sunfire 1500 and MAPEVA)

A selection of projects has already received their funding notification (e.g. tkH2steel and Sunfire1500) and further projects will be successively approved over the course of the year. The projects usually have a duration of 4-5 years.

- *Innovation for the climate-neutral energy and economic system of the future*



Budget item # 14 300 title group 69

22.9m (32.7m)

The State funds innovations for a climate-neutral energy and economic system of the future. The extended concept of innovation is used as a basis for the implementation in projects. In addition to the implementation of scientific findings in market-ready products, this also includes innovative processes and solutions that contribute to the goal of climate neutrality. These include, for example, storage technologies, networks, PtX technologies, innovative climate-neutral processes in industry and the use of hydrogen. The programme promotes applied research for technological and social transformation. This means that innovative approaches to transforming the energy system can be implemented quickly.

- *Municipal and social climate protection*



Budget item # 14 300 title group 64

1.7m (9.8m)

Binding municipal heat planning is an essential prerequisite for the concrete, systematic and cost-efficient decarbonization of heat in North Rhine-Westphalia and corresponds to the goal of the NRW coalition agreement, which names municipal heat planning as an integral part of urban development and climate-neutral heat supply. Municipal heat planning is intended to ensure investment decisions in infrastructure are well-

founded and investment security for climate protection measures in municipalities is ensured, as required by the coalition agreement. With the year 2023, the Federal Government creates the legal prerequisites to oblige the municipalities to draw up heat plans. The budget funds are intended to support the North Rhine-Westphalian municipalities in the creation of heat plans, in particular through the comprehensive provision of basic data on heat sources and heat sinks in North Rhine-Westphalia (heat register in the NRW energy atlas), potential analyses and heat studies. In addition, the North Rhine-Westphalian municipalities are supported in the implementation of municipal heating plans, in particular through suitable funding programmes (progres.nrw - climate protection technology). Basic work in the form of CO2 balancing and energy management in municipalities is also supported.

Climate protection education is a constant task in order to open up the connections and possibilities for action to every generation. Therefore, selected educational offers on climate protection and global warming are also financed. Climate protection is a global task. North Rhine-Westphalia supports offers for training and further education for an international target group by financing a project of the UN Climate Secretariat in Bonn, the "ACE-Hub - Action for Climate Empowerment Hub".

J. GBP: Environmentally sustainable management of living natural resources and land use 50.0m (52.1m) (budget)

• *Protection of nature*



Budget item # 10 030 title group 82

50.0m (52.1m)

EU Taxonomy activity 1.1

An import pillar of the State's conservation policy is the Biodiversity Strategy of 2015 ([Biodiversitätsstrategie](#)). It reflects efforts at the national level, where the federal government has submitted the National Biodiversity Strategy (NBS) in 2007. The NBS contains around 330 goals and 430 measures for protection and sustainable use of nature in Germany with a time frame from 2010 to 2050. The Biodiversity Strategy of NRW supplements and specifies the NBS regarding the specific conditions of North Rhine-Westphalia.

The State also provides financial support for private environmental protection facilities ("[Biologische Stationen](#)") and for land acquisitions for conservation purposes. "Biologische Stationen" are rooted in private initiatives for the conservation of nature. Today, these facilities serve as an important link between private and State efforts. The network of "Biologische Stationen" in North Rhine-Westphalia is unique nationwide and plays an important role in the implementation of the conservation work on site. Cooperation with agriculture, forestry and official authorities provides comprehensive support for the existing network of protection areas. Eligible activities also include voluntary conservation projects on site, implementation and support of wildlife conservation projects and education regarding issues of environmental protection.

Through land acquisitions for conservation purposes, highly valuable areas are protected from intensive economic exploitation to allow for a more environment-friendly development (e.g. heath or moorland, grassland, arable, and forestland in protection areas). These parcels of land can serve as "stepping stone habitat areas", allowing for unimpaired wildlife and strengthening the network of areas with favourable conservation conditions.

K. GBP: Clean transportation 455.4m (315.7m)

• *Infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians*



Budget item # 10 140 title groups 61

28.1m (34.9m)

EU Taxonomy activity 6.13

The State provides financial support for projects which improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, particularly on short-haul routes (local mobility, see [Aktionsplan Nahmobilität](#)). The goal is to increase the use of non-motorized transportation especially for short distances. The associated funding programme supports projects that primarily serve non-motorized individual transport. These include, among others, pedestrian traffic facilities, cycling facilities, bicycle parking facilities in public transport areas, public relations and modal split surveys as well as the following website:

- [Radroutenplaner NRW](#) (Bicycle Route Planner)
- [Wanderrouutenplaner NRW](#) (Hiking Route Planner)
- [Radverkehrsnetz NRW](#) (Bicycle Route Network)

More Info: [Nahmobilität](#)

• *Ticket for regional public transportation in Germany (State's share)*



Budget item # 10 110 title group 84

427.3m (280.8m)

By resolution of the Prime Minister's Conference with the Federal Chancellor on November 2, 2022, it was agreed between the federal and state governments to introduce the "Deutschlandticket" as quickly as possible. The "Deutschlandticket" is a monthly cancellable subscription at a price of 49 euros at the time of introduction that can be used on all local public transport within the Federal Republic of Germany (and, if necessary, on individual lines to neighbouring countries). The ticket has been available since May 1, 2023 and is financed equally by the federal and state governments. Therefore, the State contributes half to the compensation of uncovered expenses in local public transport in North Rhine-Westphalia in connection with the Deutschlandticket.

L. GBP: Sustainable water and wastewater management 49.6m (98.0m)

• *Flood protection*



Budget items # 10 050 title group 66 and # 10 080 title group 78

49.6m (98.0m)

EU Taxonomy activity 3.1

Early and environment-friendly flood control is essential in the densely populated and highly industrialized State of North Rhine-Westphalia, especially regarding the river Rhine, but also for many other waters. In times of advancing climate change, the requirements for flood prevention and flood protection continue to increase. To this end, the State has published the 10-point work plan "Flood protection in times of climate change", which will serve as a guideline in the coming years. The complementary flood prevention concept

(Hochwasserrisikomanagement) offers solutions for a wide range of possible flood events on large or small waters. The State's approach features concepts of technical assistance and water retention as well as planning instruments for flood prevention purposes, e.g. designation of floodplains. Natural watercourses and their floodplains can cache sprawling water, thus reducing the wave crest. Ecological restoration of streams and rivers can restore this property and thus contribute to flood prevention.

The special framework plan "Preventive Flood Protection" serves to finance certain flood protection measures of the National Flood Protection Programme (Nationales Hochwasserschutzprogramm (NHWSP)). The NHWSP was adopted in October 2014 by the Conference of Ministers for Environment. To this end, the Federal Ministry for Environment, together with the State ministries responsible for flood protection, has drawn up a list of priority, nationally effective flood protection measures. The special framework plan "Preventive Flood Protection" funds the NHWSP's measures "relocation of dykes" and "projects for controlled flood retention" (e.g. flood polders).

Further information is available at www.bmu.de/themen/wasser-und-binnengewasser/hochwasservorsorge/hochwasserschutzprogramm.

M. GBP: Climate change adaptation 11.9m (14.1m)

- *Climate Action/Regional Climate Adaptation Measures (LIFE)/Adaptation to climate change*



Budget items # 10 060 title groups 65, 67 and 75

1.2m (3.4m)

EU Taxonomy activity 9.3

The funds are intended to finance projects, instruments and measures in the area of climate protection and climate adaptation to achieve the State's climate goals as well as for accompanying awareness-raising, networking and public relations work including events.

The regions of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia are supported in adapting to climate change in accordance with the State's climate policy. The funds are intended to finance advisory and accompanying services, development measures and specific projects at regional level including networking and can be used for co-financing measures within the framework of federal or EU funding out of the ERDF (e.g. LIFE).

In addition to climate protection, adaptation to the unavoidable consequences of climate change is considered the second important pillar of the State's climate policy. Measures will be continued, developed and implemented to adapt to climate change or to develop sustainable areas in the State and e.g. support municipalities, companies and citizens in their activities.

- *Forests restoration*




Budget item # 10 030 title group 78

10.7m (10.7m)

EU Taxonomy activity 1.2

Healthy forests are indispensable for preserving clean air, water balance, soil fertility and biodiversity. At the same time, the forest produces the renewable raw material wood, which is essential for climate protection as



a carbon storage and a value chain based on it, in which this storage function is to be maintained for as long as possible.

In the context of the climate adaptation strategy, the State government therefore developed a cross-proprietary silviculture concept for North Rhine-Westphalia as early as 2015, which aims to develop site-specific and structured mixed stocks and thus makes the forests more stable and adaptable to climate change in the long term.

The combination of storm events, extreme periods of drought and bark beetle infestation has dramatically deteriorated the state of the forest in North Rhine-Westphalia. For the period 2018 to 2020, a damaged wood quantity of 32.37 million cubic meters can be recorded. The tree species spruce, which previously made up a good 30% of the North Rhine-Westphalian forest and has now largely died off, was particularly affected. In total, about 70,000 ha need already to be reforested as a result of the current damage. The bark beetle calamity continued in 2021, so that an expansion of the damaged areas is expected. The reforestation of these calamity areas in accordance with the silviculture concept will be the focus of forestry in North Rhine-Westphalia for the years to come.

Alignment with the EU Taxonomy

Methodology

NRW commissioned ISS Corporate to assess the alignment of the green eligible projects of the Sustainability Bond that are part of the NRW budget plan for 2024 with the EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act. . Expenditures that are part of the budget plan are subject to national laws and regulations. EU regulations are binding and are applied by Member States, including Germany. NRW determined which of its eligible projects would be in scope of the Climate Delegated Acts (June 2021) and the proposed Environmental Delegated Act⁹ and mapped individual projects to the relevant EU Economic Activities as described in the Climate Delegated Acts (June 2021) as well as in the proposed Environmental Delegated Act⁹. The State then examined the compliance of each project with the Substantial Contribution Technical Screening Criteria, and Do No Significant Harm criteria and Minimum Safeguards..

Outcome

ISS Corporate assessed the alignment of NRW's following eligible green projects against the criteria of the EU Taxonomy:

ICMA Category	GPB	Eligible Activities per Sub-Category	Budget item #	EU Taxonomy Environmental Objective & Economic Activity	Alignment
G: Renewable Energy		Renewable Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar photovoltaics 	NA	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Electricity generation using solar photovoltaic technology 	Aligned
		Renewable Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site solar photovoltaics⁷ 	NA	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.6. Installation, maintenance and repair of renewable energy technologies 	Aligned
		Renewable Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy storage (battery storage, power-to-gas and power-to-heat) 	14 300 title group 67	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.11. Storage of electricity 	Aligned
H: Energy Efficiency		Energy Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy efficient technologies 	14 300 title group 63	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Manufacture of renewable energy technologies 	Aligned
		Energy Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-emission mobility 		Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.4. Installation, maintenance and repair of charging stations for electric vehicles in buildings (and parking spaces attached to buildings) 	Aligned
		Sustainable Economy (Energy Efficiency) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of resource efficiency consulting⁸ 	10 060 title group 68	NA	NA
I: Pollution Prevention and Control		Sustainable Economy (Pollution Prevention and Control) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacture of hydrogen and enabling technologies 	14 300 title group 74	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.2. Manufacture of equipment for the production and use of hydrogen 3.10. Manufacture of hydrogen 	Aligned Aligned

⁷ For clarity, this activity excludes any hydropower assets

⁸ This green activity is not aligned with the EU taxonomy

	Sustainable Economy (Pollution Prevention and Control) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of hydrogen 		Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.14. Transmission and distribution networks for renewable and low-carbon gases 	Aligned
	Sustainable Economy (Pollution Prevention and Control) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and development of climate neutral energy systems⁹ 	14 300 title group 69	NA	NA
	Climate Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal and Societal Climate Protection resulting in GHG emissions reduction¹⁰ Municipal and Societal Climate Education and Awareness¹¹ 	14 300 title group 64	NA	NA
J: Environmentally Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources and Land Use	Nature protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of nature 	10 030 title group 82	Protection and Restoration of Biodiversity and Ecosystems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Conservation, including restoration, of habitats, ecosystems and species 	Not aligned ¹²
K: Clean Transportation	Clean Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians 	10 140 title groups 61	Climate Change Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.13. Infrastructure for personal mobility, cycle logistics 	Aligned
	Clean Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidies for public transportation tickets (general public)¹³ 	10 110 title group 84	NA	NA
L: Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management	Flood Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood protection 	10 050 title group 66 and 10 080 title group 78	Sustainable Use and Protection of Water and Marine Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Nature-based solutions for flood and drought risk prevention and protection 	Aligned
M: Climate Change Adaptation	Climate Change Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate action and regional climate adaptation measures 	10 060 title groups 65, 67 and 75	Climate Change Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.3. Consultancy for physical climate risk management and adaptation 	Aligned
	Climate Change Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest restoration 	10 030 title group 78	Climate Change adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2. Rehabilitation and restoration of forests, including reforestation and natural forest regeneration after an extreme event 	Not aligned ¹⁴

⁹ This green activity is not aligned with the EU taxonomy

¹⁰ This green activity is not aligned with the EU taxonomy

¹¹ This green activity is not aligned with the EU taxonomy

¹² The Substantial Contribution Technical Screening Criteria includes (1) general conditions, plus additional conditions related to (initial description of the area, (3) management plan, (4) audit, (5) guarantee of permanence, and (6) additional minimum requirements. The State of NRW does not meet the additional condition on auditing as third party audit to the more that 500 sites is not feasible.

¹³ This green activity is not aligned with the EU taxonomy

¹⁴ The Climate Change Mitigation Do No Significant Harm Technical Screening Criteria includes (1) forest management plan, (2) audit, and (3) group assessment. The State of NRW does not meet the condition on auditing after 10 years, as the last review is done 8 years after the implementation.

Overview of Social and Environmental Eligible Projects

EU Taxonomy alignment out of all Green Projects

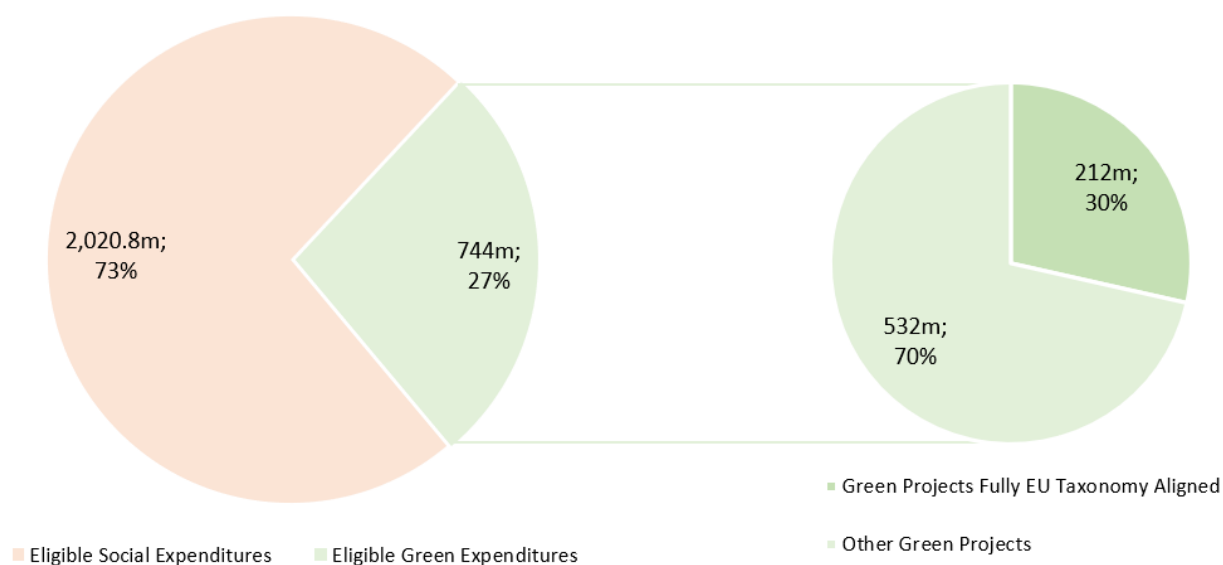


Figure 2: Overview of bonds proceeds allocation by type of project and EU Taxonomy alignment

Out of all green expenditures, the 10 EU Taxonomy aligned activities represent 30% of green expenditures.

Out of all expenditures from the Sustainability Bond, the 10 EU Taxonomy aligned expenditures represent 7.66% of all expenditures.

Appendix

SDGs	Projects types: social (S) environmental (E)		Budget Plan (million EUR)	Budget Result (million EUR)	EUT aligned
A Affordable basic infrastructure			345.2	206.6	not relevant: there is currently no EU taxonomy (EUT) alignment for social activities
9	Digitalization	S	165.6	27.5	
9 11	Public transportation for low-income citizens	S	40.0	39.6	
11	Public transportation for pupils and students	S	139.6	139.5	
B Access to essential services			1,553.5	1,545.0	
3	Combating the dangers of addiction	S	14.8	13.9	
3	Digitalization of medical care, care structure development and research	S	6.3	4.0	
3	Measures to promote health and strengthen the healthcare system	S	8.9	6.2	
3	Measures to ensure medical care	S	2.5	2.7	
3	Psychiatric care	S	3.0	1.1	
3	Development plan on geriatric care	S	17.8	14.7	
3 4	Professional education of geriatric nurses	S	2.5	-0.1	
3 4 9	Conservation, remediation and enlargement of university clinics as well as other investmen	S	350.5	372.0	
4 8 10	Training facilities for the education of special education teachers	S	21.2	21.2	
4	Measures to improve the quality of teaching and studying at universities	S	300.0	300.3	
4 8 9	Return programme for highly qualified young researchers from abroad	S	7.7	4.2	
4 10	Social work at schools	S	57.7	57.7	
1 10	Support for family centres/promotion of cooperation of family formation [...]	S	83.3	79.1	
4 10	PlusKita and language courses at childcare facilities	S	109.6	109.2	
4 10	Childcare in special cases	S	17.4	21.5	
4	Exemption to contribution for parents for the last two years of day care	S	484.2	477.1	
9	Excellence Strategy	S	32.0	24.6	
9 8	Promotion of innovation	S	26.4	28.2	
12 4	Foundation for Nature and Sustainable Development	S	4.0	4.0	
12 4	Facilities for environmental education	S	3.8	3.4	
C Affordable housing			112.0	133.2	not relevant: there is currently no EU taxonomy (EUT) alignment for social activities
11 9	Urban development programme "Growth and Sustainable Renewal"	S	61.2	69.2	
11 8 9	Urban development programme "Social Centres"	S	41.1	55.3	
11 9	State programme for village renewal	S	9.7	8.7	
D Employment generation			6.6	4.3	
8 10	Occupational integration of people with disabilities	S	3.7	1.6	
8 9	Environmental economy, sustainable economy	S	2.9	2.7	
E Food security and sustainable food systems			4.1	3.8	
3 4	EU school programme	S	4.1	3.8	
F Socioeconomic advancement and empowerment			177.9	128.0	
1 10	Fight against poverty and social exclusion	S	4.7	2.6	
4 8	European Social Fund 2021-2027 [...] "No dead-end qualification" [...]	S	72.3	45.8	
5 8	Equality and potential development in work and society	S	9.4	9.1	

5 4	Promotion of equality at universities	S	4.5	3.3	
5 16	Girls in special situations	S	1.1	1.2	
16	Protection of children	S	4.8	0.8	
5 16	Protection from violence	S	34.1	26.3	
10 8 11	Social inclusion of persons with disabilities	S	4.3	4.1	
10 1 3	Measures to prevent child and youth poverty	S	14.6	12.6	
10 4 8	Measures for children from refugee families and for young refugees	S	12.3	12.0	
10	Promoting integration of migrants living together in diversity	S	10.1	5.6	
11 1	Measures against homelessness	S	5.7	4.6	
G Renewable energy			6.0	2.1	2.1
7	Energy storage	E	6.0	2.1	2.1
H Energy efficiency			47.5	19.2	0.0
7 9	Climate protection technologies and low-emission mobility	E	40.7	12.8	0.0
12 7	Enhancement of resource efficiency	E	6.8	6.4	0.0
I Pollution prevention and control			173.7	155.8	131.2
7 9	Hydrogen-energy carrier of the future (State's share)	E	131.2	131.2	131.2
9 7	Innovation for the climate-neutral energy and economic system of the future	E	32.7	22.9	0.0
9 13	Municipal and social climate protection	E	9.8	1.7	0.0
J Environmentally sustainable management of living natural resources and land use			52.1	50.0	0.0
15	Protection of nature	E	52.1	50.0	0.0
K Clean transportation			315.7	455.4	28.1
11	Infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians	E	34.9	28.1	28.1
11	Ticket for regional public transportation in Germany (State's share)	E	280.8	427.3	0.0
L Sustainable water and wastewater management			98.0	49.6	49.6
6 13 15	Flood protection	E	98.0	49.6	49.6
M Climate change adaptation			14.1	11.9	1.2
13 15	Climate Action/Regional Climate Adaptation Measures [...]	E	3.4	1.2	1.2
13 15	Forests reforestation	E	10.7	10.7	0.0
TOTAL			2,906	2,765	212
			Planned	Result	EUT-aligned



Imprint

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