



POSITION PAPER

**of the 'Initiativkreis Europäische Metropolregionen in Deutschland (IKM)'
- Network of European Metropolitan Regions in Germany -**

on

EU Cohesion Policy Post-2013 from the Perspective of European Metropolitan Regions in Germany

Metropolitan regions act as growth engines and regional stimuli for European regional policy. Not only are they capable of boosting the efficacy of objectives in European structural policy through integrated strategies and specific projects, they can also activate additional potential. In global competition they are the cores of crystallisation for creativity, innovation and expertise. As multifunctional areas, metropolitan regions have prominent economic, scientific, cultural and social significance for the particular member state they are in and for the EU.

In line with EU priorities, the main future fields of regional action will be energy, climate, innovation, knowledge and education, demographic change, transport and mobility, regional planning, research and development, social cohesion and integration. The metropolitan regions benefit from well-functioning network structures that embrace these issues. This makes the metropolitan regions suitable as functional territorial units for overcoming the challenges stated.

Networking between metropolitan regions is well-established in Europe. As a result, they provide opportunities for cooperation in trans-national regional development. This supports the process of European development and integration at regional level.

Metropolitan regions have been cooperating successfully in new types of flexible multi-level governance structures for a long time. This is expressed in topic-related cooperation between different government and non-government partners beyond administrative boundaries.

Against the backdrop of a necessity to join resources, cooperation between metropolitan regions and more remote rural areas is also gaining importance. In Germany, this approach is being successfully practised with regional-planning model projects (*Modellvorhaben der Raumordnung – MORO*) and has already been tested in several "greater-area communities of shared responsibility"; this has clearly demonstrated that such large-area cooperation structures are capable of achieving integration and high performance.

Consequently, the level at which the metropolitan regions act provides the ideal platform for optimising the cohesion and combination of EU funding instruments within the meaning of a European added value.



In the light of this, IKM advocates using EU structural funds as well for strengthening the future ability of metropolitan regions to respond to global and new challenges, and for actively supporting them in developing into competitive, energy-efficient and knowledge-based regions.

This produces the following demands on the part of the IKM:

1. Current Objective 2 funding ("Regional Competitiveness and Employment") must be maintained and transitional arrangements set up for territories dropping out of Objective 1 funding.
2. Greater consideration must be given to regional cooperation areas of the type functioning in the way metropolitan regions do. In future, greater allowance must be made for cooperation in territories defined by functional criteria. Administrative and statistically defined territorial delimitations must no longer represent any obstacle to providing support from EU structural funds. For this reason, exemption clauses must be provided in all programmes.
3. Financial incentive systems must be introduced for cooperation projects extending across programme territories.
4. A new Community initiative must be created to fund and promote urban/rural cooperation within the meaning of large-area functional spheres of influence of metropolitan regions along the lines of the MORO approach. This is intended to provide an experimental basis for supporting integrated regional development and projects with strategic significance, also across state and national borders. The metropolitan regions lend themselves as model regions in which the effect of programmes and projects can be evaluated systematically.
5. Competition-based processes must be applied on a broader basis in programme implementation with a view to ascertaining projects that are eligible for funding.
6. Trans-national cooperation must be stepped up as a particular way of permitting measures and projects with European added value. In future, exemption clauses should be handled with a greater degree of flexibility so that consideration can also be given to functional interdependencies, particularly those extending beyond the INTERREG A programme boundaries.
7. Assurance must be given at EU level that it will be possible to combine ERDF, ESF and EAFRD structural funding along the lines of cross-financing.
8. The EU partnership principle must be guaranteed by involving the metropolitan regions and other cooperation areas in drawing up Operational Programmes at an early stage.

Remark: Demands relating to number 2 and 4 are not supported by the capital region of Berlin-Brandenburg.