Jaspers
Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions

JASPERS
Assistance for projects preparation

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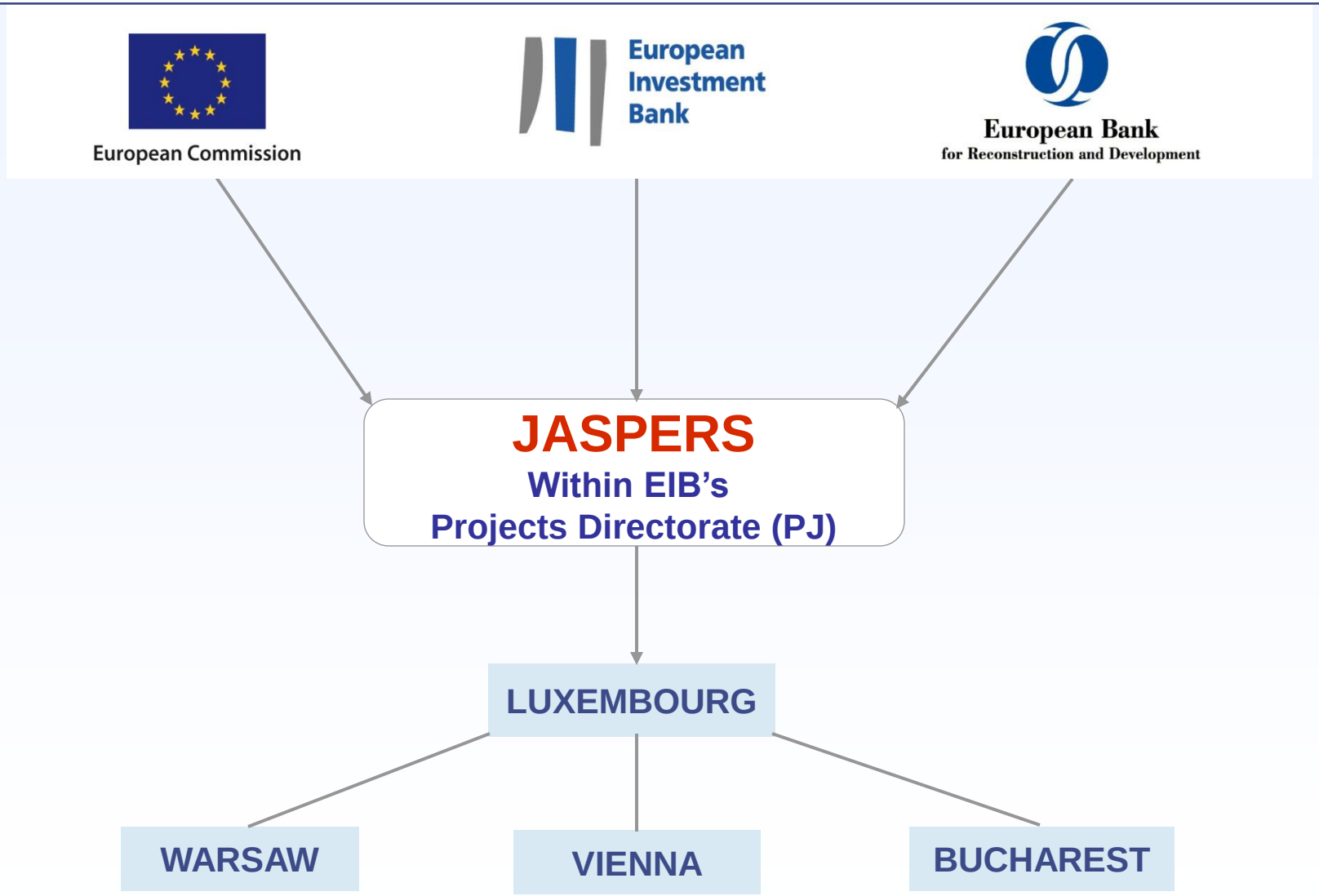
Presentation summary:

- Introduction to JASPERS: origin, mission, organisation
- JASPERS' role and activities for the 2007-2013 financing period
- Overview of the potential role and assistance for the 2014-2020 period

What is JASPERS

- 'Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European RegionS'
- A technical assistance partnership between EC DG REGIO, EIB and EBRD. Managed by EIB.
- Mission:
  - provide technical expertise to help the beneficiaries develop high-quality projects in particular large scale infrastructure in the sectors of transport, environment and energy;
  - assist the beneficiary countries increase their capacity to absorb EU Funds;
  - make the best use of EU funding.
- Value added: EIB and EBRD draw on their past experience and expertise as well as their close cooperation with DG REGIO to help Beneficiaries prepare good proposals that satisfy Community requirements.

JASPERS Structure



JASPERS activities 2007-2013

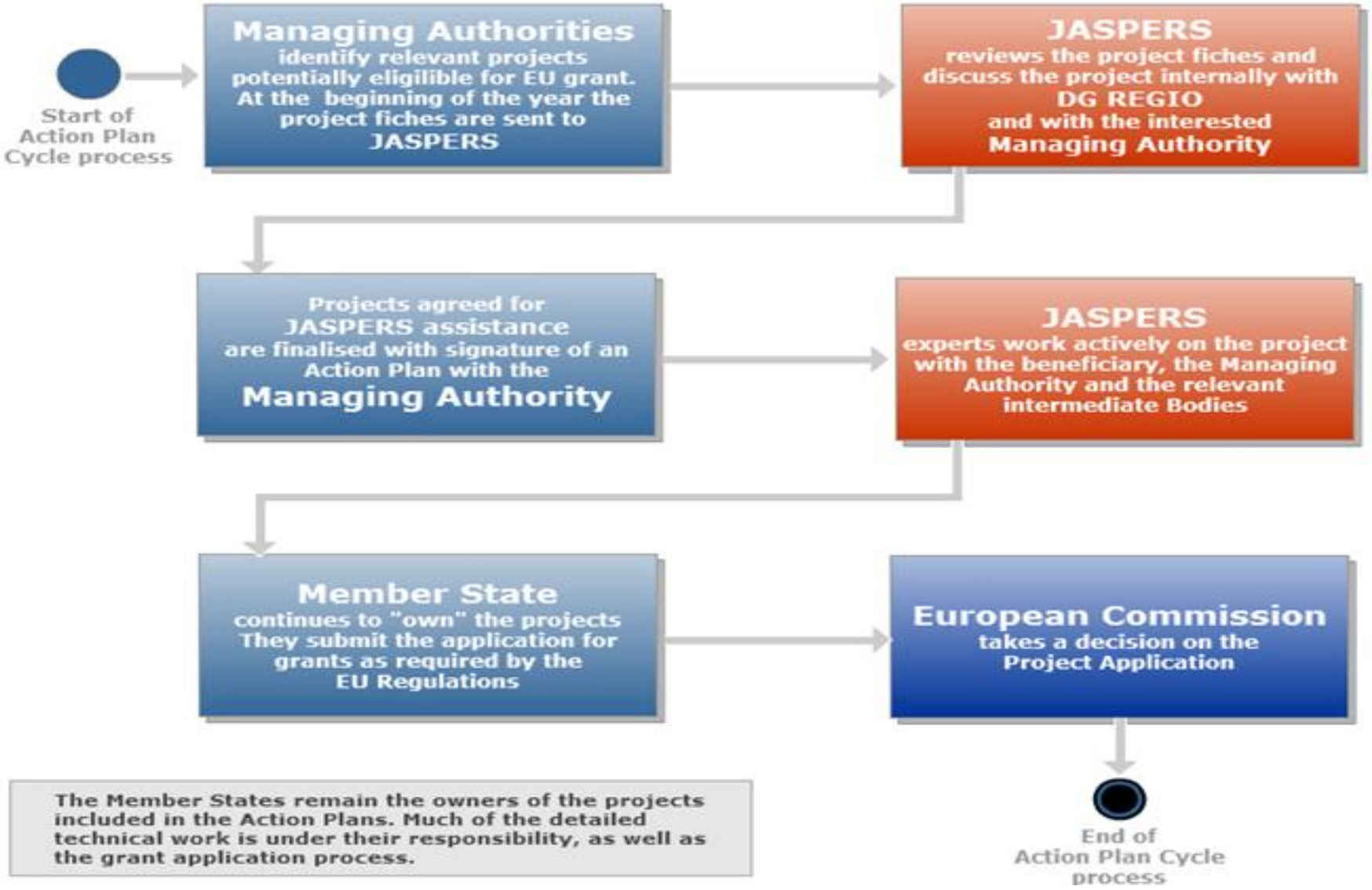
- Beneficiaries:
  - Initial mandate: the 12 'new' Member States (CEE, Cyprus, Malta)
  - Extended then to:
    - Croatia and Greece;
    - Candidate countries: Serbia, fYROM, Montenegro.
- Priorities:
  - Major projects (> € 50 M) supported by CF and ERDF
  - Horizontal issues covering more than one country/sector
  - Other CF and ERDF projects – on a case-by-case basis
- Main sectors:
  - Transport (roads & public transport)
  - Environment (water & waste)
  - Energy and Knowledge Economy

Assistance is provided …

- On the basis of annual Action Plans agreed between JASPERS and each beneficiary country

- Action Plans are discussed/decided in co-operation between
  - The beneficiary country (RO – MEF and Managing Authorities),
  - JASPERS and
  - EC DG REGIO country desks

How it works: The Action Plan Cycle



The assistance is actually about…

- Mainly project preparation
  - Assistance from early stages of project through to the decision to grant assistance
- Light implementation support
  - Implementation support in selected/particular cases
- Capacity development and knowledge sharing
  - Initial PMUs support
  - Thematic workshops, e.g. CBA, EIA, PSC, etc.
  - New: Networking Platform

Sound project preparation means…

- Strategic basis: relevance and prioritisation
  - Does the project answer to a real problem in the sector? Is solving that particular problem a first priority?
- Feasibility of the proposal:
  - Selection of the optimal alternative: options analysis – normally on the basis of conceptual design, including CBA;
  - Preliminary design for the preferred option: detailed alignment, geo/topo surveys, cost breakdown, etc.
  - Economic analysis and funding gap calculations – is the project worth financing / does the project need financing?
  - Environmental impact assessment – including Appropriate Assessment for NATURA 2000 sites.
- Maturity for implementation:
  - Design stage, tender documents, procurement strategy, overall timetable etc.
  - Land acquisition, archaeological surveys, permits etc.
  - PMU: organisation, resources, expertise, procedures etc.

Key project cycle steps & activities

Strategy

- Problem definition/needs analysis at country / sector / city level
- Identification of potential interventions/projects
- Appraisal and prioritisation amongst the projects at country / sector level
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Feasibility

- Define a range of potential alternatives (project level): conceptual design
- Analyse and compare the options: high level cost estimate, traffic and economic analysis.
- Select the preferred alternative: CBA +/- MCA
- Develop and appraise the project proposal: preliminary design, cost breakdown, CBA, EIA.

Financing

- Preparation and submission of the funding application (based on the above justification)
- Review of the funding application (EC etc.) – possible clarifications/iterations
- Financing Decision

Implementation

- Detailed Design, preparation of Tender Documents for works and supervision
- Procurement procedure
- Planning/construction permits
- PMU: organisation, staffing, training, procedures

What can JASPERS practically assist with at each stage:

Strategy

- Scoping the strategy development services: stocktaking of existing data, draft Terms of Reference
- Advise along the development of the strategy on methodology and key deliverables e.g. traffic model, problem analysis, appraisal and prioritisation method, SEA, draft strategy report

Feasibility

- Review / improve Terms of Reference
- Review and guidance on key areas: options analysis, CBA, EIA – usually over a number of iterations

Financing

- Review and assist with drafting the funding application form on the basis of the FS, CBA, EIA, etc.
- Prepare its independent report – the «Completion Note»

Implementation

- Advice on procurement planning e.g. (not on tender evaluations!)
- Review of draft tender documents
- Advice on implementation procedures

JASPERS record 2007-2013

	As of 31/12/2013 (2007 – 2013)		
	Completed	**Submitted**	**Approved**
No. assignments / applications	801	407	310
Total cost (€ billion)	96.97	60.91	56.38
EU grant (€ billion)	n.a.	n.a.	33.36

Source: JASPERS database & DG REGIO 03/02/2014

2007-2013 – examples of projects assisted:

- Roads:
  - Construction of motorway sections along the TEN-T network
  - Construction of bypasses
  - Rehabilitation of national roads
- Railways:
  - Corridor line rehabilitation + upgrading
  - Rail Stations upgrading
  - Rail Safety improvements (e.g. level crossings)
  - Rehabilitation of bottleneck structures (bridges)
- Airports:
  - Sector study – prioritisation of investments
  - Iasi, Oradea, Craiova – improvements (runway, aprons, terminal extension)

2007-2013 – examples of projects assisted:

- Ports and inland waterways:
  - Breakwaters, dredging, road and rail access, passengers terminal, berths rehabilitation
  - Danube: fairway navigation improvements
  - Danube-Black Sea Channel – locks rehabilitation

- Urban Transport:
  - Tram line upgrade + extensions, rolling stock procurement
  - Mobility Master Plans (e.g. Bucharest + the 7 growth poles)
  - Guidelines for preparation of urban transport projects

2007-2013: Key issues - short term

- Low absorption rates – quite a number of causes behind:
  - Project preparation:
    - Delays in contracting FS & design services
    - Delayed decisions (e.g. on the preferred rail speed alternative)
    - Quality of design/geotechnical studies => impacts now during construction
  - Delays in procurement:
    - Delayed decision on the procurement plan/launching tenders = number of lots for works and supervision contracts
    - Huge procurement problems / complaints procedure – in some cases contracts are not awarded > 2 years after tendering
  - Project management capacity:
    - Substantially understaffed (in some cases by a factor of 5!) PMUs + low profile/experience staff
    - Lack of supervision Consultants (the FIDIC Engineer) – improvised internal supervision
    - Significant decision-making problem: management reluctant to take decisions (in particular as regards changes/variations to the contract) due to the fear of financial corrections and personal liability.

2007-2013: Key issues - long term

- Doubtful economic impacts/benefits in return for huge investments (billions) e.g. in the rail infrastructure:
  - Very important problem: operational (in-)efficiency
    - Infrastructure upgrade not an objective in itself
    - Without matching improvements in:
      - Operation of passenger services: availability = frequency/timetable, quality of rolling stock and stations, integration with urban PT, marketing and pricing policies
      - Maintenance of the infrastructure (current financing < 30% of the needs)
    - … practically no improvement in the level of service = no real impact/benefit
- Oversized investments e.g. excessive speed upgrades, oversized stations
  - Are often not actually needed
  - Raise substantially the costs (up to double in some cases)
  - Provide for a future increased burden on O&M budgets.

2007-2013: Lessons learned

- Importance of a sound and stable national transport strategy to understand the needs, prioritise funding and focus energy on preparing and delivering the priority projects
- Good preparation requires:
  - Open analysis to arrive at the optimal alternative vs. pre-defined options/alignments/standards
  - Comprehensive scoping to understand what are all the elements which need to be dealt with in order to achieve the expected benefits (e.g. operational side for railways e.g. rolling stock, timetable, etc.)
  - Time sufficient to e.g. do necessary surveys => shortcuts in preparation are paid back heavily during implementation
  - Planning – e.g. to ensure supervision is contracted not later than works, inter-dependant work sections are time-wise co-ordinated, etc.
  - Staff: in sufficient number and with reasonable expertise
  - Maturity: between project idea and the commencement of the construction on site (real absorption) => normally 5 – up to 10 years!
  - Sustainability: building the infrastructure is the beginning not the end of the story! Sound operation, good and timely maintenance are key for sustainability

Next period ahead: 2014-2020

- New challenges:
  - New functions:
    - The independent quality review (IQR) – art. 101 Regulation 1303/2013
    - More emphasis on horizontal areas such as:
      - Transport Strategies
      - Methodological Guidelines
      - Networking Platform
  - New programmes:
    - IPA => candidate countries
    - CEF => cohesion countries
    - Potential role of JASPERS currently under discussion with DG ELARG and DG MOVE

Next period ahead: 2014-2020

- Strategic planning – Transport Strategy
  - Ex-ante conditionality under the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020
  - DG Regio: basis for negotiation of the transport (component) of the next relevant OP
  - JASPERS Guidance Note on Transport Strategies: principles and step-by-step method
- Romania:
  - General Transport Master Plan (national level) – April 2014
  - Urban Mobility Master Plans (city/metropolitan area level) – by end 2015

Next period ahead: 2014-2020

- General Transport Master Plan - why is it important, including in CEF context:
  - To understand the real needs and problems in the transport sector
    - Infrastructure is only part of the problem in particular for rail services: other problems can be more important
    - TEN-T core network offers a backbone but does not solve all accessibility problems in the country (e.g. in particular in the North-West of the country)
  - To prioritise amongst the priorities
    - Total cost of the core pre-identified projects in the country exceeds by a factor of at least 10 the resources available over the period 2014-2020
    - Therefore there is an obvious need to prioritise amongst the priorities
    - Prioritisation based on demand (traffic), economic benefits, policy elements (accessibility, clean-modes preference, environmental impact)
  - Approach is to do the prioritisation independently from the financing source, allocation of projects per financing sources (OP, CEF, EIB, etc.) would be done in a subsequent implementation plan.

JASPERS Web Site

www.jaspers-europa-info.org

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