

JASPERS

23 March 2006

A new context after 2006

- Enlargement has greatly added to the requirement to prepare projects
- 1 Jan 2004: 3 beneficiaries of the Cohesion Fund + ten ISPA beneficiaries
- 1 May 2004: 13 beneficiary countries
- 1 Jan 2007: 15 beneficiaries
- One third (approx. 300 Billion EUR) of EU budget for Cohesion purposes
- Greatly enlarged resources for new MS
- REGIO country desks identified 525 large projects that require preparation in the coming years
- Problems with quality of projects remain

JASPERS

- JASPERS (Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions)
- A technical assistance partnership to prepare major projects between DG REGIO, EIB and EBRD
- JASPERS is an additional technical assistance resource for the MS and for DG REGIO
- value added: drawing on the experience and expertise of the EIB and the EBRD in a more structured and coordinated way than in the past

Structure

- JASPERS will not be a stand-alone agency
- For administrative purposes, JASPERS is a Unit within the EIB, and though « separate » from the lending activities of EIB, will coordinate closely and draw on Sectoral Expertise/Country Experience of PJ, Ops and Other EIB Services.

Activities of JASPERS

- JASPERS will provide technical assistance as required from early stages of a project through to the final application for Grant Support
- Assistance will cover the technical, economic and financial aspects and any other preparatory work required to deliver a mature project
- Objective: to ensure high quality project applications with a view to rapid approval of Grant Support by the Commission

Activities of JASPERS

- JASPERS: advice, coordination, develop and review project structure, removing bottlenecks, filling gaps, identification of problems not addressed (e.g. state aid, EIA), provide DG REGIO with information on project maturity
- Much of the detailed technical work will remain the responsibility of the beneficiary/Member State
- JASPERS will have its own TA framework contract
- Advice on structuring PPPs

Resources for JASPERS

- Three way partnership to resource JASPERS:
- DG REGIO technical assistance (currently envisaged)
 - 30 professional staff
 - 10 support staff
- EIB: 16 man years of professional staff input
- EBRD: up to 8 man years of professional staff input
- A total of some 54 man-years of professional input each year from early 2006 onward plus 10 support staff
- Staff needs can only be determined in the light of the demand and needs of the beneficiary countries arising out of the Action Plans

Concentration and specialisation

- need to concentrate on priority countries and sectors
- JASPERS will concentrate on:
 - large projects supported by the Cohesion Fund and the ERDF (to be interpreted flexibly in the smaller MS)
 - other Cohesion Fund projects
 - other ERDF projects
- sectors most likely to receive assistance: roads, rail, public transport, water supply, waste water treatment, solid waste
- other types of large project not excluded

Presence in the regions

- JASPERS headquarters will be in Luxembourg
- The majority of JASPERS staff and resources will be based in resident offices or posted to the beneficiary countries
- Office locations: not finally decided but likely to be in:
 - Warsaw for Poland and the Baltic States
 - Bucharest for Romania and Bulgaria
 - Vienna... for Central Europe area
 - Other countries: served from existing EIB/EBRD offices
- final decisions to be made after consultations with the MS to determine demand for JASPERS

JASPERS: free and voluntary

- JASPERS assistance will be provided free of charge to the beneficiary
- There will be no obligation on the Member States to use JASPERS
- There will be no obligation on a Member State which benefits from JASPERS to borrow from the EIB or the EBRD
- There will no obligation on the EIB or the EBRD to lend to projects prepared using JASPERS
- There will be no exclusion of EIB or EBRD lending to projects benefiting from JASPERS

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- JASPERS does not change existing legal responsibilities
- JASPERS is an input to the preparation of applications for EU funding
- Member States are the 'owners' of the project, not JASPERS; they submit the standard applications as required by the Regulations
- preparation of a project by JASPERS does not guarantee approval of the project by the Commission
- the ultimate legal responsibility to grant assistance to a project will remain with the Commission

Management of JASPERS

- Priorities and objectives of JASPERS will be set out each year in an Action Plan agreed between Jaspers and the country
- Close coordination of JASPERS operations with DG REGIO country desks
- JASPERS will be actively managed by a Core Team within the EIB and supervised by a Steering Committee with members from DG REGIO, EIB and EBRD
- Audit: any expenditure by JASPERS which is supported by EU funds will be open to inspection and audit by DG REGIO and the Court of Auditors

Applying for assistance from JASPERS

- Managing Authority acts as central coordinator for each country
- Project preparation: the Managing Authority in the MS can request assistance directly from JASPERS in Luxembourg or to the regional offices of JASPERS when they are established
- Project appraisal: when an application for assistance has been received, DG REGIO can request assistance from JASPERS in Luxembourg
- JASPERS will never appraise a project which it prepared