Broadband Competence Offices (BCOs)

Vladimír Murín/VÚS, n. o.

6. 4. 2016

Bratislava

ESIF financing Broadband 2007-2013

➤ **€ 2.3 bn of ERDF** for broadband infrastructure

 ▪ but some Member States re-programmed fund to other domains (e.g. SK, EL, PL)

➤ **€ 1 Bn of EAFRD** for Broadband *available* under the European Economic Recovery Package (2009)

 ▪ but only 369M actually programmed;

-> a missed opportunity

➤ Lessons from 2007-2013 period:

 ▪ Delayed absorption, re-programming

 ▪ Due to lack of administrative capacity to plan ; in some cases, poor coordination between relevant entities

EU financing Broadband 2014-2020

➢ *Many different EU funding instruments…*

➢ *1. ERDF – BB Funding:……………………………. € 5 bn*

➢ *2. EAFRD - BB Funding:………………………… € 0.8 bn*

➢ *3. Connecting Europe Facility (CEF):…… € 0.15 bn*

➢ *4. EIB / EIF (2014): ……………………………… € 2.4 bn*

➢ *5. European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI)*

… and National & Regional funding .

EU financing Broadband 2014-2020

But, need for a clarity

and a truly helping hand from Europe:

"I cannot just throw 5 acronyms
at a local mayor who wants his community on
the broadband map – and leave it at that"

(Commissioner Hogan – February 2015)

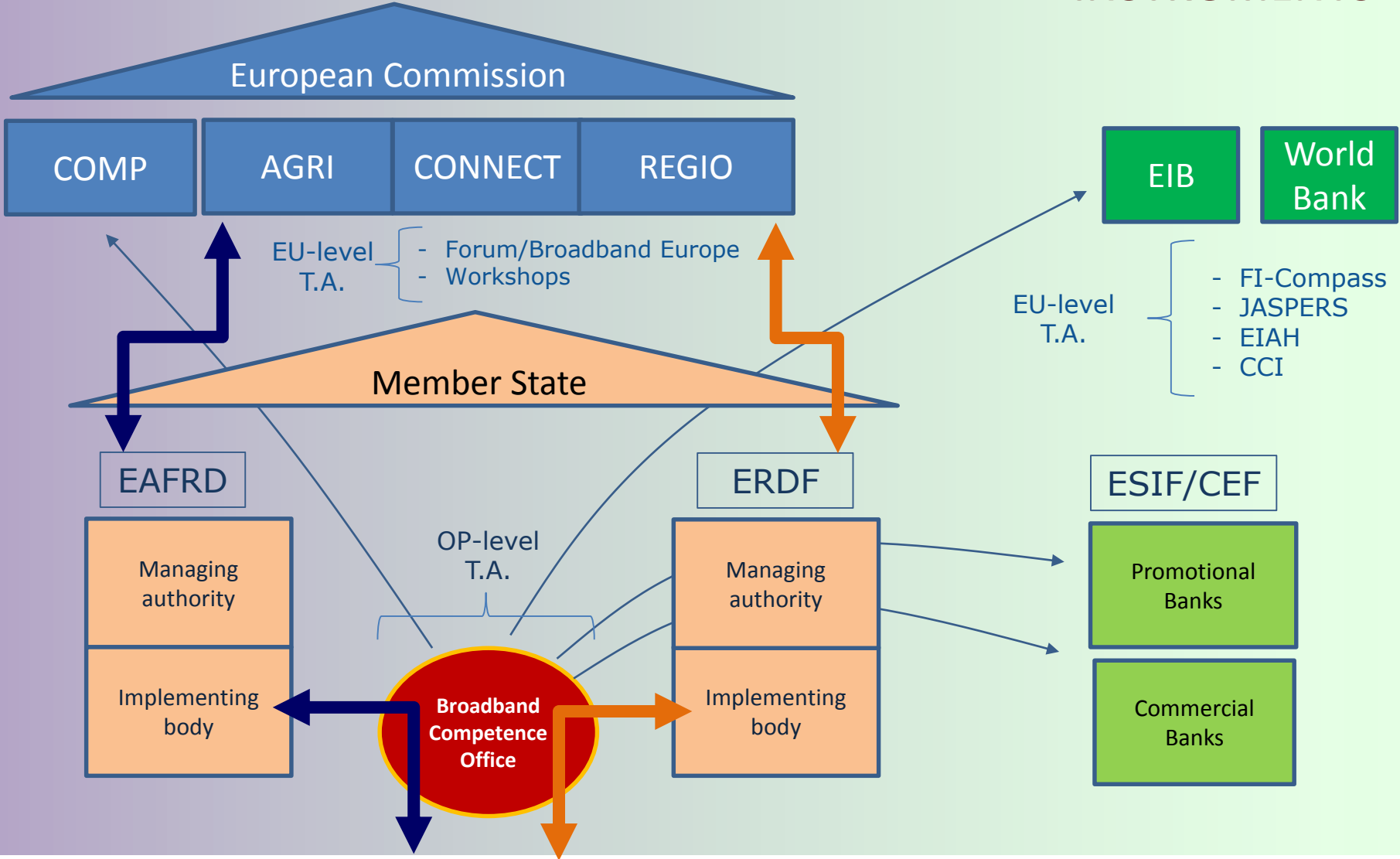# Letter from Commissioners Cretu, Hogan & Oettinger: 16/11/2015

➢ *Voluntary initiative :* some 77 Regions and 22 Member States concerned – though the initiative is open to all.

➢ *30 November*: **Member State (MS) to designate "Contact Person(s)"** to discuss preparatory steps and report progress;

➢ **April 2016: MS to designate BCO members (at national and/or regional level).**

➢ **Financial support from ESIF technical assistance budget or within OPs/RDPs**

BCO: Main Aims

➢ Provide **advice and assistance to stakeholders (citizens, businesses, etc.)** about EU funding opportunities;

➢ Enhance **efficiency and effectiveness of ERDF/EAFRD broadband investments** (planning, implementation, monitoring);

➢ **Coordination between OP and RDP and with other relevant entities** (e.g. Ministry, National Regulatory Authorities, Mapping entities, etc.);

➢ **Promote** the use of **financial instruments** where necessary.

Setting up of BCOs
a few hints

➢ BCOs are <u>not</u> meant to be *additional* administrative structures, but rather to reinforce *existing* ones : expected to be set up within each Implementing Body responsible for the delivery of ESIF measures on broadband

➢ Forms and functions of BCOs may vary depending on the institutional set-up of the Member State or Region: they may operate at different levels of government, etc.

➢ Should the setting up of a BCO require additional resources, the OP/RDP's technical assistance allocation may be used for that purpose.

➢ BCO contact persons will be regularly called to workshops (on average 1 meeting every 6 months) to exchange with other members of the network.

Tasks for the experts
[only for those countries concerned]

➢**Promote the concept of BCOs** and report perception from relevant stakeholders;

➢**Identify gaps and obstacles** preventing a smooth implementation of broadband measures by OPs/RDPs;

➢**Verify information/data available** at European level (Broadband Europe country fiches, ICT monitoring data, etc.) against ground field data.

02/04/2016

More information ?

➢ **EU support to BCOs Network:**

  ▪ *Broadband Europe* website (a dedicated forum for discussion) [https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/broadband-europe]

  ▪ *EU Support Facility* (secretariat of 3-4 persons based in Brussels) will be operational by Summer 2016.

➢ **Activities:**

  * 1-2 meeting/year in Brussels : networking, training/workshops;

  * Regular online exchange of information, sharing of best practices, etc.