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Executive Summary
Executive Summary

Introduction and Scope of Work
AECOM has been engaged by the DG for Regional Policy of the European Commission to carry out an evaluation of the JASPERS initiative from its inception until the end of June 2011. JASPERS was established in late 2005 as a technical assistance facility to increase the capacity of beneficiary countries to make the best use of EU funding. Improvement of the quantity and quality of projects submitted for funding approval was anticipated to increase the benefits of these projects to the new Member States and the European Union as a whole. JASPERS support is extended to projects in a number of sectors including ports, airports, railways, roads, urban infrastructure and services, energy and solid waste, water supply and wastewater, and the knowledge economy.

By the end of 2011 JASPERS had provided assistance to Member States for 541 projects which had reached the stage of being approved for funding by the European Commission. It was providing assistance to a further 351 projects which were at various earlier stages of development. The total value of the projects which had reached the stage of approval with JASPERS assistance was almost €64bn. By the end of 2011 JASPERS had 89 staff, and it had annual running costs of €32m.

This document is the Second Intermediate Report on the evaluation. It presents the results of Tasks 3 and 4 of the evaluation, as defined in the DG for Regional Policy’s invitation to tender. Task 3 consisted of the preparation of a set of case studies of Major investment projects and Task 4 consisted of the analysis of feedback from Member States and Beneficiaries.

Task 3 of this evaluation consisted of 10 case studies of Major JASPERS assisted projects which had been approved for funding by the DG for Regional Policy. The objective of these case studies was to provide an analysis of the effect of JASPERS technical assistance on the timing, quality, project development and preparation for submission to the DG for Regional Policy of Major projects. Each case study examined a major JASPERS assisted project and compared it to another Major project which had not received JASPERS assistance but which was, in all other respects, comparable to the JASPERS assisted project. These case studies:

- Compared the length of time the comparable JASPERS assisted and non-JASPERS assisted projects took to be approved by the DG for Regional Policy;
- Identified the key issues which arose during the planning process of the case study projects;
- Established how these issues were resolved; and,
- Evaluated other factors that had a significant influence on project development.

The pairs of projects chosen for each of the ten case studies were selected on the basis that:

- The projects chosen had to be broadly representative of the JASPERS supported Major projects in terms of sectors, as different technologies and planning processes may be involved;
- There should be a broad coverage of Member States, to account for the effect of differing project planning capacities;
- There should be a substantial JASPERS involvement in the projects selected, as this would create a better opportunity for learning from the case studies; and,
- There should be comparable non-JASPERS supported projects for comparative timeline analysis.
Task 4 of this evaluation consisted of face to face interviews and workshops with key JASPERS stakeholders in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. These interviews and workshops were intended to refine and extend the findings from Tasks 1 to 3 on the impact of JASPERS. In particular, they are intended to analyse the impact of JASPERS on the administrative capacity of these Member States. Specifically these interviews and workshops identified:

- The key lessons learned in each country from participation in the JASPERS initiative;
- The mechanisms are in place to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS staff to project applicants and Member State authorities in general;
- Whether projects are encouraged to learn from each other within Member States;
- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer between JASPERS and project applicants; and,
- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer within Member States.

In addition the interviews and workshops were used as an opportunity to:

- Test preliminary findings from Task 2 “Links between specific areas of JASPERS advice and the DG for Regional Policy project assessment process”, Task 3 “Case studies” and Task 4.1 “Desk research”;
- Explore the reputation and value added of JASPERS in the Member States; and,
- Discuss the future direction of the JASPERS initiative with regard to preparation of projects for the 2014-2020 programming period, strategic and horizontal support (for example preparation of sector strategies), capacity building (including institutional support) and project implementation support.

Results of Case Studies
A number of general lessons can be drawn from the case studies on the impact of JASPERS. The principal results are:

- In many cases JASPERS was involved in the process of project development relatively late. Often its involvement was confined to the preparation of an application for funding for the DG for Regional Policy. However there are clear illustrations from the case studies of how JASPERS assistance with the preparation of applications speeds up the process of the DG for Regional Policy considering applications and deciding to fund the projects. The Czech railway, Slovenian road, Polish rail, Polish road 2 and Polish Water and Wastewater 2 cases are all examples of this impact of JASPERS work.
- The case studies also illustrate the impact of JASPERS assistance on projects going beyond the projects in question, to have a positive impact on project that were not the subject of specific JASPERS assistance. The Czech rail case study is an example of this type of impact.
- The case studies reveal a recognition among Member States that late involvement of JASPERS may miss an opportunity to improve the quality of projects themselves, and moves by Member States to involve JASPERS earlier in the development of projects. For example the Slovenian road case study indicates a desire amongst the Slovenian authorities to involve JASPERS in project development at an earlier stage.
- The case studies show the flexibility of JASPERS in finding useful support to give where its usual support with the development of a specific project is less relevant. For example, the Romanian case studies describe the alternative sources of technical support such a private consultants and the DG for Regional Policy available to beneficiaries and authorities in Romania, and describe how JASPERS tailored its assistance to the needs of Romania.
• The second Polish road case study demonstrates that even support for the preparation of applications forms can involve JASPERS in complex and sensitive areas such as the design and impact of new road pricing systems.

• Finally the Polish knowledge economy case study shows how JASPERS is developing new techniques and guidance to address novel issues as new forms of project emerge.

Results of Desk Research
The review of Action Plans confirmed the extent to which Member States seek JASPERS assistance at a late stage in the development of individual projects. In the vast majority of cases JASPERS assignments are planned to at least include a review of an application for funding for a Major investment project. A full 96 per cent of the 1,202 assignments identified in Action Plans include a review of an application form by JASPERS. In fact, a full 70 per cent of these assignments only concern a review of an application form.

Feedback for JASPERS assistance from both beneficiaries and the DG for Regional Policy desk officers has been overwhelmingly positive. Combined, Highly Successful and Successful ratings made up 90% of the feedback in every category in the beneficiary feedback forms. In 5 of the 9 categories in the DG for Regional Policy feedback forms the combined ratings of HS and S account for 80% or more of the feedback. The feedback from the DG for Regional Policy desk officers was slightly more critical of particular issues than the feedback from the beneficiaries, though the overall tone was still extremely positive.

Among the negative elements of the issues raised in the feedback, there were no recurring issues or trends, with most projects receiving low scores for very particular and often unique issues.

Feedback from interviews and workshops
A large amount of useful feedback was obtained from an extensive programme of interviews and workshops. Bi-lateral meetings and interviews took place with stakeholders from Beneficiaries, other Member State bodies, the DG for Regional Policy and JASPERS. A series of workshops was held for Member States where representatives of groups of Member States were brought together to discuss the preliminary results of the evaluation and assess the impact of JASPERS. This activity yielded valuable insights on:

• The validity of preliminary findings;
• The reputation and value added of JASPERS;
• Key lessons arising from the JASPERS initiative;
• Mechanisms to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS to Member States;
• Capacity for projects to learn from each other;
• Factors limiting knowledge transfer; and,
• The future direction of JASPERS.

The feedback from stakeholders on each of these areas is summarised in the subsections below:

Testing Preliminary Findings
The preliminary findings with regard to timelines established that the time taken for the DG for Regional Policy to decide on a JASPERS assisted major project was less than that for an unassisted project.
While most Member States accepted that JASPERS had had a beneficial effect on the DG for Regional Policy Decision duration, the authorities in the Czech Republic and Hungary did not perceive this to be the case. In their view, the fact that the DG for Regional Policy desk officers often queried the same issues, on which JASPERS had advised, led to interruption delays. This, in addition to the fact that JASPERS involvement created delays in the process of developing applications, meant that the overall project planning duration was extended for JASPERS assisted projects.

Other Member States, while sharing the Czech and Hungarian authorities’ views on the apparent duplication of JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy effort, nevertheless believed that JASPERS involvement has a beneficial effect on the project planning and decision-making duration.

The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS
Member States, almost without exception, have a very positive view of the quality of the advice offered by JASPERS and the personnel involved. JASPERS officials are regarded as co-operative, flexible, and having good communication skills. The quick response time of JASPERS and its willingness to undertake site visits and face to face consultations were regarded as particularly valuable.

At the same time, it is recognised by several Member States that the quality of JASPERS advice was somewhat deficient in the early stages of the JASPERS initiative. In this regard, problems with the quality of advice on environmental matters were cited on a number of occasions, although progress was seen to have been made in this area too. Another issue cited was the difficulty of providing high quality advice, in some circumstances, in the absence of a full understanding of national legislative frameworks.

Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
The general view of the Member States is that JASPERS had contributed significantly to the development of comprehensive and mature applications for funding. As indicated above, the majority view is that this speeded up decision-making and, ultimately, absorption of funding. According to Member States, this impact would have been further enhanced if the DG for Regional Policy had attributed greater weight to JASPERS inputs. JASPERS inputs into understanding EU legislation and requirements, project appraisal, environmental issues, and funding eligibility issues were particularly noted.

Because of the late stage of involvement of JASPERS in the project planning process, the impact of JASPERS on the quality of project themselves was more limited. However, it was recognised that on some occasions, JASPERS had identified issues in the design of projects that had required Members States to revisit feasibility studies and review aspects of project design. Another valuable contribution of JASPERS had been support in developing a programmatic approach. This occurred where the DG for Regional Policy questioned the strategic context of a project and the Member State was required to engage in ex-post development of a programme or master plan. This allowed managing authorities to deflect beneficiaries from pursuing projects that were poor value for money. Indeed, the role of JASPERS in interpreting the potential for projects to gain funding was seen as a means of de-prioritising projects that had poor strategic basis or were poor value for money.
The contribution of JASPERS to improving the project planning process in general was highly regarded. In this context, it should be noted that some Member States had at the outset a poor understanding of the project planning process and JASPERS was instrumental in advising on suitable approaches.

**Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to Member States’ Authorities**

The Members States acknowledged that transfer of technical knowledge had occurred through project related JASPERS assistance. In particular, the focus on advice at the application stage had led to a much greater understanding of both EU legislation, the requirements the funding eligibility appraisal process, cost-benefit techniques, and EIA procedures. An increase in the knowledge base among beneficiaries and sectoral managing authorities as a result of JASPERS assistance was widely noted.

However, transfer of knowledge in relation to overall project planning was seen to have been restricted by the involvement of JASPERS at a stage when the feasibility study had typically been completed. Another issue raised was that where the feasibility study and application was progressed by beneficiaries, the latter were often involved in developing projects on an intermittent basis, which hindered the transfer of knowledge through project-related JASPERS assistance.

The Member State authorities highlighted the role of horizontal assignments as a vehicle for knowledge transfer. Horizontal activities such as the development of guidance documentation and training were highly valued. Some Member States in turn took specific steps to disseminate JASPERS acquired knowledge to the wider project planning community nationally e.g. through training activities and nationally specific guidance documents.

**Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other**

Member States tended to work through either national or broad sectorally-based managing authorities (e.g. in relation to transport and environmental projects). This approach facilitated knowledge transfer across projects. The relevant authorities were charged with the task of ensuring that cross project learning took place and beneficiaries within sectors learned from preceding projects.

At the project beneficiary level, the acquisition of knowledge was enhanced where national organisations such as roads administrations or railway companies were responsible for project development and where several projects were progressed.

One specific initiative which facilitated cross-project learning was the adoption of a “model project” approach in several countries that had large numbers of projects seeking funding. Under this approach, JASPERS assistance was sought for a particular project and the knowledge gained was then applied to subsequent projects. This process was facilitated where a number of virtually identical projects were being brought forward e.g. county level solid waste projects. In one case, this approach was further enhanced by the appointment of the same external consultant to more than one feasibility study.

In general terms, Member States believed that increased international transfer of knowledge across projects was possible and that current initiatives to develop this aspect of learning should be promoted.
Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
Where Member States bring forward relatively few projects, the scope for transfer of knowledge is limited. In half of the Member States, the lack of JASPERS staff with local language skills was cited as a factor, particularly with respect to transfer of knowledge to beneficiaries, where knowledge of English is not as prevalent.

Staff turnover was seen as a barrier among a minority of Member States. There was a general view that this issue was of greater importance in the past, but that the problem had diminished of late. It was also the view of a number of Member States that where individual stakeholders lost staff, it was often to other actors in the project planning community, so that acquired skills were not lost to the overall system.

Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
With regard to the role of JASPERS in the development of programmes and master plans, most Member States took the view that JASPERS support in this area would be valuable. However, there were concerns that such support should be initiated by the Member State and should be advisory in nature. It was stressed that project prioritisation and programme development is ultimately a matter for the Member State. A minority of Member States indicated that in practice there were a number of political and institutional barriers to expanding JASPERS role in this fashion.

Early involvement of JASPERS in individual project planning received general and less circumscribed support. This could involve advising on the terms of reference for feasibility studies and monitoring feasibility study progress. However, Member States were adamant that involving JASPERS in this way needed to be accompanied by measures to ensure that the JASPERS input was given full weight by the Commission and the process of Commission officials raising issues that JASPERS had implicitly improved should cease.

A number of larger Members States were of the view that reliance on JASPERS at funding application stage could diminish. This view was not universally held however, with smaller Members States indicating the need for JASPERS continued and significant support in this area. It was also the view of Member States that the new programming period would result in a different mix of projects, and that JASPERS support at the funding application stage would be important at least initially.

It was recognised that JASPERS could face challenges in ensuring that it had the required skill mix to deal with the new sectors and projects that would arise in the next programming period.

A common theme among Member States is that JASPERS input was needed in the post project planning stage and, in particular, in respect of procurement issues.

There was a widespread view that JASPERS should emphasise horizontal assignments to a greater degree, with increased training activities being referenced. The need for JASPERS to focus on cross-national transfer of learning and resources was noted.

There was a general view that while the nature of JASPERS support could and should change somewhat, the level of JASPERS involvement would not diminish. There was recognition that the resources available to JASPERS were limited and that JASPERS would have to prioritise its future actions carefully.
Section A: Introduction
Section A: Introduction

AECOM has been engaged by the DG for Regional Policy of the European Commission to carry out an evaluation of the JASPERS initiative from its inception until the end of June 2011. A kick-off meeting for this evaluation took place in Brussels on 6th January, 2012. On 16th March 2012 an Inception Report for this evaluation was compiled and delivered to the DG for Regional Policy. The Inception Report set out the detailed methodology that AECOM has adopted for the evaluation. A First Intermediate Report, presenting the results of Tasks 1 and 2 of the evaluation was completed and delivered to the DG for Regional Policy on 14th May, 2012.

This document is the Second Intermediate Report on the evaluation. It presents the results of Tasks 3 and 4 of the evaluation, as defined in the DG for Regional Policy’s invitation to tender. Task 3 consisted of the preparation of a set of case studies of Major investment projects and Task 4 consisted of the analysis of feedback from Member States and Beneficiaries. These tasks are described in more detail below.

This Section of the Report first sets out a brief summary of the context in which this evaluation is taking place. It goes on to:

- Describe the objectives of this evaluation;
- Outline the work undertaken to complete Tasks 3 and 4; and
- Outline the structure of this report.

A1 Context

JASPERS was established in late 2005 as a technical assistance facility to increase the capacity of beneficiary countries to make the best use of EU funding. Improvement of the quantity and quality of projects submitted for funding approval was anticipated to increase the benefits of these projects to the new Member States and the European Union as a whole. JASPERS support is extended to projects in a number of sectors including ports, airports, railways, roads, urban infrastructure and services, energy and solid waste, water supply and wastewater, and the knowledge economy.

By the end of 2011 JASPERS had provided assistance to Member States for 541 projects which had reached the stage of being approved for funding by the European Commission. It was providing assistance to a further 351 projects which were at various earlier stages of development. The total value of the projects which had reached the stage of approval with JASPERS assistance was almost €64bn. By the end of 2011 JASPERS had 89 staff, and it had annual running costs of €32m.

Projects seeking support under the European Regional and Cohesion Funds must comply with the Implementing Regulations, of which Commission Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 is the most relevant. In particular, Annex XXI of that Regulation sets out the application form that must be completed for project grant assistance. JASPERS provides technical support to Member States in the completion of this application process. Each beneficiary Member State draws up an annual Action Plan of proposed JASPERS assignments. A Managing Authority operates in each Member State and is the first point of contact for agencies seeking JASPERS support. The technical issues covered include: reviewing cost-benefit analyses, reviewing feasibility studies, reviewing tender documents, support in preparing application forms, support in carrying out environmental impact assessments, review of project development, and the assessment of strategies or development of guidelines.
JASPERS assignments relate to major projects, non-major projects and horizontal assignments. Major projects are defined as those with a total cost of at least €50m for transport projects and €25m for environment and other projects. Since 2009, all projects with a total cost of at least €50m are major projects. Non-major projects are projects below €50m in value. Horizontal assignments are not related to a specific project. The JASPERS technical assistance offered is in the early stages of the project development.

JASPERS is a partnership between the European Commission (EC), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW) and has an annual budget in the region of €35m. By the end of 2010, JASPERS had undertaken 399 assignments, of which major projects accounted for 77%, while small projects and horizontal assignments accounted for 23%.

A2 Objectives of the Study

The Call for Tenders for this Study stated that the purpose of this evaluation is to establish the impact of JASPERS, from 2005 until the end of June 2011, on the quality and timeliness of the preparation, submission, approval and implementation of major projects in the countries which joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007. Thus, the Call for Tenders, in referring to quality and timeliness relates back to the JASPERS’ objectives as set out in the original concept paper for JASPERS.

There is a further requirement to obtain evidence of improved technical capacity on the part of Members States through identification of the extent to which the nature of the advice sought has changed over time, the extent of learning on the part of Members States and mechanisms to transfer technical knowledge to project applicants and Member States. Finally, those carrying out the study are asked to discuss the future direction of the JASPERS Initiative with regard to preparation of projects for the 2014-2020 programming period, strategic and horizontal support, capacity building and project implementation support. The discussion of the future direction of JASPERS is a minor objective of this study.

In addition to setting out the overall objectives of this study the Call for Tenders specified in details the Tasks that the evaluator was to complete. These were:

- Task 1: Construction of timelines for JASPERS assignments and approval of projects by the DG for Regional Policy and statistical analysis of these timelines;
- Task 2: Examining the links between specific areas of JASPERS advice and the DG for Regional Policy project assessment process;
- Task 3: Preparation of 30 Case Studies. Each case study is to examine the impact of JASPERS by comparing a project that received JASPERS support with a comparable project that did not receive JASPERS support;
- Task 4: Analysis of feedback from Member States and project beneficiaries. This Task is to include desk research, interviews with the DG for Regional Policy and JASPERS personnel as well as visits to key stakeholders in Member States and a series of workshops for representatives of Member States.

This Second Interim Report sets out the results of Tasks 3 and 4.
A3 Outline of Tasks 3 and 4

Task 3 of this evaluation consisted of 10 case studies of Major JASPERS assisted projects which had been approved for funding by the DG for Regional Policy. The objective of these case studies was to provide an analysis of the effect of JASPERS technical assistance on the timing, quality, project development and preparation for submission to the DG for Regional Policy of Major projects. Each case study examined a major JASPERS assisted project and compared it to another Major project which had not received JASPERS assistance but which was, in all other respects, comparable to the JASPERS assisted project. These case studies:

- Compared the length of time the comparable JASPERS assisted and non-JASPERS assisted projects took to be approved by the DG for Regional Policy;
- Identified the key issues which arose during the planning process of the case study projects;
- Established how these issues were resolved; and,
- Evaluated other factors that had a significant influence on project development.

The pairs of projects chosen for each of the ten case studies were selected on the basis that:

- The projects chosen had to be broadly representative of the JASPERS supported Major projects in terms of sectors, as different technologies and planning processes may be involved;
- There should be a broad coverage of Member States, to account for the effect of differing project planning capacities;
- There should be a substantial JASPERS involvement in the projects selected, as this would create a better opportunity for learning from the case studies; and,

There should be comparable non-JASPERS supported projects for comparative timeline analysis.

Task 4 of this evaluation consisted of face to face interviews and workshops with key JASPERS stakeholders in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. These interviews and workshops were intended to refine and extend the findings from Tasks 1 to 3 on the impact of JASPERS. In particular they are intended to analyse the impact of JASPERS on the administrative capacity of these Member States. Specifically these interviews and workshops identified:

- The key lessons learned in each country from participation in the JASPERS initiative;
- The mechanisms are in place to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS staff to project applicants and Member State authorities in general;
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- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer between JASPERS and project applicants; and,
- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer within Member States.
In addition the interviews and workshops were used as an opportunity to:

- Test preliminary findings from Task 2 “Links between specific areas of JASPERS advice and the DG for Regional Policy project assessment process”, Task 3 “Case studies” and Task 4.1 “Desk research”;
- Explore the reputation and value added of JASPERS in the Member States; and,
- Discuss the future direction of the JASPERS initiative with regard to preparation of projects for the 2014-2020 programming period, strategic and horizontal support (for example preparation of sector strategies), capacity building (including institutional support) and project implementation support.

A4 Structure of this Report

The remainder of this Second Intermediate Report is structured as follows:

- Section B describes the work done to complete Task 3 and the results obtained;
- Section C describes the work done to complete Task 4 and the results obtained;
- Section D draws together the conclusions from AECOMS work on Tasks 1 and 2 of this evaluation;
- Appendix 1 contains the 10 case studies prepared for Task 3; and,
- Appendix 2 reproduces the presentation of preliminary results, conclusions and recommendations presented to participants at the Workshops held as part of Task 4.
Section B: Task 3 Case Studies
Section B: Task 3 Case Studies

B1 Introduction

Task 3 of this evaluation consisted of 10 case studies of Major JASPERS assisted projects which had been approved for funding by the DG for Regional Policy. The objective of these case studies was to provide an analysis of the effect of JASPERS technical assistance on the timing, quality, project development and preparation for submission to the DG for Regional Policy of Major projects. Each case study examined a major JASPERS assisted project and compared it to another Major project which had not received JASPERS assistance but which was, in all other respects, comparable to the JASPERS assisted project. These case studies:

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- There should be comparable non-JASPERS supported projects for comparative timeline analysis.

The process of choosing the case studies was described in detail in the Inception Report for this evaluation. The result of this process was the selection of the pairs of projects set out in Table B.1 for case study analysis.
### Table B1. Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCI</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>DG for Regional Policy Description</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>€m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008CZ161PR001</td>
<td>Czech Rep</td>
<td>Electrification of Letohrad – Lichkov Railway</td>
<td>Rail</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009CZ161PR010</td>
<td>Czech Rep</td>
<td>Electrification of Zábřeh-Šumperk Railway</td>
<td>Rail</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008SI161PR002</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Slivnica - Draženci Motorway (19.85 km)</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008SI161PR001</td>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Beltinci - Lendava Motorway (17.2km)</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009RO161PR046</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Waste management (WM) in Suceava County.</td>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009RO161PR036</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Integrated waste management system in Cluj County</td>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009RO161PR015</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Water infrastructure in Bacau County</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009RO161PR019</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Mures County.</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>137</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007PL161PR001</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Modernisation of Wroclaw – Poznan railway (161km)</td>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
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<td>2010PL161PR005</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Modernisation Warszawa-Wschodnia and Gdynia Główna railway (63 km)</td>
<td>Railways</td>
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<td>2011PL161PR013</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Regional road from national road 94 to the regional road 4555. (8.4km)</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
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<td>2010PL161PR002</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>New expressway section of S19 between interchange Stobierna and Rzeszów Wschód (6.9km).</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011PL161PR003</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Construction of Expressway S7, section Elblag (S22) - Miłomlyn. (51km)</td>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>595</td>
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<td>2010PL161PR004</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Reconstruction of the Powązkowska and Marki section of the S8 Expressway (11.7km)</td>
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<td>665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009PL161PR048</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Water and sewage infrastructure in the city and district of Końskie</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009PL161PR019</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Water and sewage infrastructure for the municipalities of Białystok and Wasilkow</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
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<td>2007PL161PR005</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Water and sewage infrastructure in Nowa Sol.</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
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<td>2009PL161PR008</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Water supply and sewage infrastructure for the town of Sochaczew</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
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<td>2009PL161PR035</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Establishment of a Center of Biology and Chemical Sciences</td>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
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<td>2007PL161PR015</td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Establishment of a leading Central European biomedical research centre</td>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
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</table>
These case studies are set out in full in Appendix 1 to this Report. Table B.2 below sets out summary details of the number of Interruption Letters issued in relation to the case study projects. Table B.3 overleaf summarises the timescales for each of the case study projects. Section B2 below summarises the main features of each case study. Section B3 concludes this section of the Second Intermediate Report by drawing together the findings from these case studies.

### Table B.2 Case Study Interruptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Study</th>
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<th>Non JASPERS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Czech Railways</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Slovenian Roads</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Romanian Solid Waste Management</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Romanian Water and Wastewater</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>8 Polish Water and Wastewater 1</td>
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<td>10 Polish Knowledge Economy</td>
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Source: AECOM
### B.3 Table of Case Study Durations (Days)

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</table>

Source: AECOM
B2 Case Study Summaries

Summaries of the 10 case studies carried out as Task 3 of this evaluation are set out in the sub-sections below:

B.2.1 Case Study 1 Czech Railways

This case study compared two major rail investments in the Czech Republic, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted electrification of the Zábřeh – Šumperk Railway (CCI 2009CZ161PR010);
- The non-assisted electrification of the Letohrad – Lichkov Railway (CCI 2008CZ161PR001).

JASPERS reviewed:

- The Feasibility Study and Cost Benefit calculation for this project;
- The application for funding to be submitted to the DG for Regional Policy;
- Annexes to Chapter F – Natura 2000 Sites Declaration, Screening Report, Non-Technical Summary, Building Permits; and,
- The Economic and Financial model underlying the Feasibility Study and application.

Following this review and discussion with the relevant authorities, JASPERS proposed:

- Some improvements in presentation of the project feasibility;
- Adjustment of some specific elements in Cost Benefit calculations; and,
- Focusing the technical description and clarifying EIA related issues in the Application Form.

The application for funding for the JASPERS assisted project was dealt with in 493 days by the Commission. The Commission needed 586 to consider the application for funding for the non-JASPERS project. It is clear from discussions with the Czech Republic authorities that there are a variety of factors which have affected the timescales on these projects, and that the apparent 93 day time saving from the use of JASPERS may understate the effect of JASPERS on the quality of funding applications and the speed with which they can be considered by the DG for Regional Policy. In particular:

- Although the two projects are broadly similar, the Czech Republic cautioned that they were not identical;
- The Czech Republic authorities have been receiving advice from both JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy in relation to preparation of Cost Benefit Analyses and Feasibility Studies for all Major rail projects. Therefore although the non-assisted project did not officially have JASPERS technical assistance, it is clear that advice received on other projects has been applied to the non-assisted project;
• JASPERS advice was not sought in relation to responding to Interruption Letters received on the JASPERS assisted project, therefore their input to the assisted project is limited solely to undertaking a screening of the pre-application documentation;
• The Beneficiary (the Czech Railway Infrastructure Authority “SZDC”) had a variety of projects which they were progressing in parallel, the time taken for SZDC to respond to the DG for Regional Policy and JASPERS comments, could be impacted by conflicting project priorities on resources;
• The Czech Republic authorities believe that the quantity of supporting documentation required and technical requirements has been increasing throughout the 2007-2013 OPP and therefore time required to produce the required information is increasing.

The case study illustrates how JASPERS can assist in enhancing the quality of submissions, with the Czech Republic authorities recognising the benefit of utilising JASPERS knowledge of how the DG for Regional Policy like information presented. The case study also highlights that the beneficiary’s technical capacity and understanding of the DG for Regional Policy requirements is increasing as they apply the knowledge learnt on one project to other projects which they are undertaking.

B.2.2 Case Study 2 Slovenian Roads
This case study compares two similar major motorway projects in the north east of Slovenia, one of which received assistance from JASPERS. The projects are:
• The JASPERS assisted A5 motorway between Beltinci and Lendava (CCI 2008 SI 161 PR 001); and,
• The non-assisted A4 motorway between Slivnica and Draženci (CCI 2008 SI 161 PR 002).

The projects were identified alongside three other motorway projects in the Slovenian Operational Programme for Environmental and Traffic Infrastructure, covering the period 2007-2013.

JASPERS undertook a thorough review of the Application Form and Annexes – particular attention was given to the CBA, project risk assessment, project justification and project definition. During the course of the period, JASPERS made a number of key recommendations, which included:
• Maintain a checklist approach in the Application Form and provide addition information in the relevant annexes;
• Enhance the description of the project in order to facilitate project monitoring;
• Definition of project objectives – accessibility, transfer of transit traffic from the secondary road network, reduced environmental impacts, road safety and level of service;
• Definition of environmental mitigation measures;
• Provision of details on the operation of the project;
• Linking the project to the objectives of the Operational Programme; and,
• Improvements to the proposed risk management and risk analysis in the Cost Benefit Analysis.

DG for Regional Policy took three months to approve the JASPERS assisted project (from the submission date), compared with one year and two months for the non-JASPERS project. The EC opened an
infringement procedure against Slovenia owing to concerns that the introduction of a vignette system (in place of distance based road tolls) would be discriminatory to foreign drivers. As a result, the EC did not consider the application until the issues has been resolved. If the infringement procedure period is not taken into account, the period from the application date to approval was approximately 7 months for the non-JASPERS project.

There was consensus amongst the Slovenian authorities that JASPERS assistance reduced the time taken by the DG for Regional Policy to approve the application compared to the counterfactual. This was primarily a result of faster response times to queries, a more constructive dialogue in relation to issues raised and the quality of the technical support, which limited the number of queries from the DG for Regional Policy. It was not considered that JASPERS assistance impacted on the lead-in time to submit the application to the DG for Regional Policy.

As the JASPERS assisted project was under construction when the assistance commenced, there was no scope for the support to impact on the quality of the project, although there are recent example from other projects where JASPERS has advised on aspects that will impact on project quality.

The case study identifies that the contrasting experience from the two projects directly shaped the strategy for future applications, as Slovenia now uses JASPERS assistance for all major projects. At the same time, it is anticipated that the level of support will reduce over time through knowledge transfer. The extent to which the level of support reduces will depend to some extent on the scale of changes to future guidelines for project applications. To assist knowledge transfer, JASPERS has run horizontal assignments relating to Cost Benefit Analysis and has produced guidelines for Feasibility Studies – the Slovenian authorities have used the knowledge transferred to inform the development of guidelines for minor projects, which will improve future project development and delivery.

The type of support provided to Slovenia and the point of engagement is changing, with JASPERS now providing assistance at an earlier stage, e.g. through reviewing Feasibility Studies at the time of production. It is also proposed that JASPERS will review the relevant Operational Programmes for the next programming period (2014-2020). These changes are expected to reduce the number of issues raised in the course of the Application Form reviews and provide an opportunity for the quality of projects to be enhanced.

**B2.3 Case Study 3 Romanian Solid Waste Management**

This case study compared two solid waste projects in Romania. These were:

- The JASPERS assisted Integrated Waste Management System in Cluj County (CCI 2009 RO 161 PR 036); and
- The non-assisted Integrated Waste Management System in Suceava County (CCI 2009 RO 161 PR 046).

The two projects are very comparable, as they address broadly the same problems, have a similar financial scale and involve broadly the same investment solutions.
JASPERS became involved in the Cluj project after the Feasibility Study had been completed. The JASPERS assignment was to review the Draft Applications to the DG for Regional Policy and the documents that supported that application.

The Romanian Evaluation Group for Major projects worked via a system of Correction Protocols. This involved the issuing of the Draft Application Form and background studies to the members of the Evaluation Group and the seeking of comments from them through a series of Correction Protocols. Eight such Protocols were issued for the Cluj Project and JASPERS were involved in six of these. JASPERS undertook four missions and meetings during the course of its involvement.

The impact of JASPERS on project quality depends in part on what would have occurred in the absence of JASPERS involvement. Consideration of a non-JASPERS supported project helps to understand this counterfactual situation. In the absence of JASPERS support, it is clear that the Romanian authorities relied on a standardised planning process that was applied across all solid waste projects. This process had a number of strong aspects:

- A strong strategic planning framework at national and regional levels;
- County Master Plans at the pre-feasibility stage;
- The recruitment of external technical assistance to help monitor the Master Plans and project Feasibility Studies;
- The awarding of multiple Feasibility Studies to each Feasibility Study consultant, facilitating learning on the part of the consultant;
- The establishment of an Evaluation Group, inclusive of various stakeholders.

Project planning also benefited from the active involvement of the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer. JASPERS involvement came too late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the projects. Key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the Feasibility Studies. The Romanian authorities did not seek JASPERS help on the case study project until after the completion of the Feasibility Study.

The Romanian authorities had separate technical assistance to help ensure the quality of these studies. This suggests that even earlier involvement of JASPERS might not have yielded substantial benefits in terms of project quality, but simply duplicated this assistance. Having said this, even with late involvement, JASPERS had the capacity to influence aspects of the detailed design of projects at the procurement stage. The case study provides an example of this in relation to the design of the Cluj landfill site.

With regard to the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, this amounted to three months (91 days) in respect of the JASPERS assisted Cluj project, but a little over two months (68 days) for the Suceava project. It should be noted that the decision duration for both the case study projects was well below that for the average of all solid waste JASPERS assisted major projects (215 days) and for non-JASPERS assisted major projects (219 days). Thus, while it took longer for the DG for Regional Policy to make a decision on the JASPERS supported case study project, this was in the context of very short decision
periods for the case study projects by comparison with solid waste projects generally. In fact, the decision period for all Romanian solid waste projects, at 96 days, was well below that for all solid waste projects.

The strong project planning process is undoubtedly the major reason why the DG for Regional Policy decision period was found to be relatively short for Romanian solid waste projects generally, the case study projects being no exception. Other reasons for the short decision period include the very similar nature of solid waste management projects at the county level in Romania and the active role take by the DG for Regional Affairs Desk Officer.

However, there is support for the view that JASPERS support contributed to short decision durations. In this context, the role of the horizontal assignments should be highlighted, particularly the provision of guidelines for Cost Benefit Analysis and completion of the Application Form for solid waste projects specifically. JASPERS undoubtedly reduced the probability of errors being made which could have delayed the decision process. It is noteworthy, in this regard, that neither of the applications in respect of the case study projects was interrupted and that the while the non-JASPERS supported project was the subject of queries from the DG for Regional Policy, the JASPERS supported project was not.

The case studies provide some pointers to the future role of JASPERS. The Romanian authorities have indicated that, because the throughput of projects will slow in the future, it is not their intention to engage external consultants to monitor master planning and project planning. They anticipate that they will need the support of JASPERS in this role. Additionally, the contribution of JASPERS horizontal assignments suggests that this is an effective and efficient means of improving the quality of project planning and easing the application process.

B2.4 Case Study 4 Romanian Water and Wastewater
This case study compared two Water and Wastewater projects in Romania. These were:

- The JASPERS assisted Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Mureș County (CCI 2009 RO 161 PR 019); and,
- The non-assisted Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Bacău County (CCI 2009RO161PR015).

The case studies completed in Romania included a detailed examination of the Romanian process for identifying and developing projects which differed in important respects to that in other Member States. These issues are described more fully in Case Study 3 Romanian Solid Waste Management.

JASPERS became involved in the Mureș project after the Feasibility Study had been completed. The JASPERS assignment was to review the Draft Applications to the DG for Regional Policy and the documents that supported that application.

The Romanian Evaluation Group for Major Projects worked via a system of Correction Protocols. This involved the issuing of the Draft Application Form and background studies to the members of the Evaluation Group and the seeking of comments from them through a series of Correction Protocols. A total of six Correction Protocols were issued during the project duration. During the period of JASPERS
involvement, three of these Correction Protocols were issued. In addition, JASPERS undertook three missions/meetings during the course of its involvement.

For the specific project considered in this case study, JASPERS involvement came somewhat late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the project. Whilst key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the Feasibility Studies, it is noted that for the Mureş project, the involvement of JASPERS did lead to some revision to the Feasibility Study, and subsequent revision of the Masterplan. The Intermediate Body did note that earlier involvement of JASPERS would have further reduced the timescale for the project as such a correction would have been avoided.

Comparing the assisted and non-assisted project, it is evident that the non-assisted project was the subject of one communication from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer raising issues of substance prior to application, and a further Interruption Letter post-application. It is considered that the project preparation team may not have fully addressed the issues raised pre-application to the satisfaction of the DG for Regional Policy, although it is not clear whether this was due to an unwillingness to address the issues, a difference of opinion, or a lack of understanding as to how the issues should be addressed. We understand that following the Interruption Letter, JASPERS were requested to provide some input to deal with the issues raised – despite the project being non-assisted.

Turning to timelines, there is strong support for the view that JASPERS support contributed not only to short decision durations, but also to shorter project preparation durations (mainly through reductions in the time taken to complete Feasibility Studies). The longer duration of the Bacau project (974 days as opposed to 744 days for the Mureş project) suggests that JASPERS may have facilitated a more efficient project planning stage – even accounting for the need to review some key items in the Feasibility Study. Furthermore, the decision period for the assisted project was notably lower (85 days) than the non-assisted project (127 days). The longer decision period for the non-assisted project was due mainly to the issuing of a communication by the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer on issues which had not been satisfactorily addressed in the project design.

**B.2.5 Case Study 5 Polish Railways**

This case study compared two Major rail investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted modernisation of a section of the Warsaw – Gdynia railway (CCI 2010PL161PR005); and,
- The non-assisted modernisation of a section of the railway between Wroclaw and Poznań (CCI 2007PL161PR001).

This was the first Polish railway project where JASPERS assistance was sought. During initial discussions between JASPERS and the Polish authorities it emerged that completing this application for funding for this project raised a number of complex issues which would have to be addressed in all applications for tending for rail projects. In particular, completing an application for funding would require the Polish authorities to:
Estimate future operating and maintenance costs for the upgraded line as an input for the Cost Benefit assessment and financial assessment of the project;

Estimate the track access charges that the beneficiary, the Polish Rail Infrastructure Company (PKP PLK), will be able to apply for use of the upgraded infrastructure. This value is also needed to complete the economic and financial appraisal of the project;

Complete a funding gap calculation for the project in a context where the beneficiary, PKP PLK will own the upgraded railway tracks and charge train operating companies for use of these tracks;

Complete an economic and financial assessment of a project to upgrade rail infrastructure; and

Present the results of this work and the rest of the project development work in the form required for an application for funding to the DG for Regional Policy.

JASPERS, assisted by consultants PWC and Scott Wilson, carried an exercise to complete all these tasks for this project. The results of this work were used as a model for all subsequent applications for funding for rail projects.

The application for funding for the JASPERS assisted project was dealt with in less than a year by the Commission. The Commission needed two and a half years to consider the application for funding for the non-JASPERS project. It is clear that these projects cannot be directly compared i.e. that this difference in the times taken to reach a decision is not a direct reflection of the impact of JASPERS. However this case study shows how JASPERS help can reduce the time taken to develop a project to the stage where Commission funding can be made available.

JASPERS assistance significantly reduced the time taken to develop the Warsaw-Gdynia project. JASPERS did not add to the time taken to prepare the application, and it reduced the time that the Commission took to reach a Decision on this project compared to a counterfactual where JASPERS assistance was not used. In addition this JASPERS assignment was also useful for the development of subsequent rail projects.

The length of time taken to reach a Decision on the Wroclaw-Poznań project was due to specific features of the project, and was not entirely due to the absence of JASPERS assistance. However this project provides useful insights into the sort of issues that give rise to Interruption Letters from the Commission. In particular, it makes it clear that these Interruptions often result solely from the presentation of the application. JASPERS is clearly well placed to improve the presentation of applications to ease and speed their consideration by the Commission.

In addition, the project demonstrates that addressing issues and questions concerning a project once an application for funding has been made to the Commission is inherently time consuming. JASPERS assistance provides a valuable opportunity to deal with issues quickly and efficiently in advance of an application for funding to the Commission.

This case study illustrates how JASPERS assistance at the stage when a Member State has completed its appraisal of a project, and is formulating an application for EU funding, can significantly reduce the time taken for the Commission to consider the application for funding, and the total time taken to develop the project from need identification to implementation.
B.2.6 Case Study 6 Polish Roads 1
This case study compared two Major road investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted construction of a section of the S19 motorway between Stobierna and Rzeszów (CCI 2010PL161PR002); and,
- The non-assisted construction of a segment of the regional road from national road 94 to regional road 4555 (8.4KM) (CCI 2011PL161PR013).

Both projects are still under consideration by the DG for Regional Policy at the time of writing (August 2012). This delay to relate to the introduction of a new system of road charging by the Polish authorities and does not arise from project specific factors.

The JASPERS assignment included the review of the Feasibility Study (including Cost Benefit Analysis), environmental documents and decisions and the draft application, in order to ensure an adequate justification of the project from the technical, financial and environmental point of view. JASPERS assisted with the finalisation of the application and attached documents (Feasibility Study and EIA documentation) and provided input and advice in particular relating to the following aspects addressed in the documents:

- Description of the project;
- Description of the objectives;
- Management during operation;
- Demand analysis;
- Project maturity;
- Economic Cost Benefit Analysis;
- Financial analysis;
- Risk analysis;
- Sustainability of the project;
- Environmental impact; and
- Financing plan.

This case study is an example of JASPERS being involved relatively late in the process of project development. Design had been completed before JASPERS became involved in the assisted project. This limited the ability of JASPERS to contribute to the quality of the project. JASPERS assistance was limited to the analysis of the project, and the presentation of this analysis to the DG for Regional Policy. However, this case is a useful example of the complexity of the issues that can arise in this process of analysis and presentation, and the value of JASPERS assistance in completing this process.

The DG for Regional Policy's examination of the JASPERS assisted project was suspended following the introduction of a proposed new system of road charges in Poland. The introduction of a new system of road charges will affect the assessment of a funding application to the DG for Regional Policy. In particular the introduction of a road charging system will affect the financial analysis of a road project, specifically the calculation of the funding gap for the project. This in turn will affect the amount of funding for which the
The examination of this application by the DG for Regional Policy, along with that of a number of other road projects in a similar situation, was suspended until the final form of the new road charging system was determined. This process was completed in mid-2012. In JASPERS presented a supplementary Completion Note on this project setting out its revised financial and economic assessment following the introduction of the new road pricing system. JASPERS assisted Poland and the DG for Regional Affairs to quickly reassess this road projects in the light of a new charging regime for road projects.

The beneficiary of the S19 project noted the reassurance of having JASPERS review the application, and the confidence this provided in terms of the application being approved. On a technical basis, JASPERS were considered to be effective and provided expert advice on issues such as CBA and environmental concerns, particularly working with the beneficiary in addressing differences in environmental legislation between the Polish authorities and the Commission. However, this emphasised the main role of JASPERS being perceived as being support in the preparation of Application Forms that meet Commission standards and present information in the appropriate and digestible way.

B.2.7 Case Study 7 Polish Roads 2
This case study compared two Major road investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted reconstruction of the Powazkowska - Marki section of the S8 Expressway (CCI 2010PL161PR004); and,
- The non-assisted construction of Expressway S7, section from Elblag (S22) to Milomlyn (CCI 2011PL161PR003).

JASPERS assisted in the finalisation of the application and attached documents and provided input and advice in particular related to the following aspects addressed in the documents:

- Description of the project;
- Demand analysis;
- Economic Cost Benefit Analysis;
- Risk analysis;
- Sustainability of the project;
- Environmental impact; and,
- Financing plan.

Recommendations generated by JASPERS included ensuring that:

- Sufficient funds are made available during the implementation and maintenance;
- An acceptable tolling level for HGVs be decided which may require further justification/analysis;
- Post completion monitoring of traffic and environmental impact be completed;
- Road safety audits conducted as per EC Directive;
Clear and up-to-date description of project history were provided; and,
Clear reference to the assessment of Natura2000 is made, and a statement of whether the assessment met the requirements of the Habitat Directive.

The time taken to reach a funding decision was 190 days for the JASPERS assisted project compared to 341 days (at time of writing as project presently interrupted) reported for the non-JASPERS supported project. The duration of the JASPERS support was over 400 days, a relatively long period compared to other supported projects in Poland. However, the benefit of JASPERS support was also evident in the lack of Interruption Letters received for the S8 project.

The scope of JASPERS support for the S8 project was comprehensive, covering demand analysis, Cost Benefits assessments, risks and the review of all environmental documentation and analysis. A formal review was also undertaken of the initial Feasibility Study as well as all documents to be used in public consultation activities in the lead up to submitting the funding application. JASPERS also provided more general advice to the Polish authorities, including recommending improvements to the referencing system used in applications and the use of more clearly articulated monitoring indicators.

B.2.8 Case Study 8 Polish Water and Wastewater 1
This case study compared two Major Water and Wastewater investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted investment in the water and wastewater system in Bialystok and the Municipality of Wasilków (CCI 2009PL161PR019); and,
- The non-assisted investment in the water and wastewater system in the city and district of Końskie (CCI 2009PL161PR048).

The input of JASPERS to the project at Bialystok was in the context of recommending changes to the application, and came too late to have any influence on the design of the project. Initially, JASPERS assistance was sought to check the quality of the application with their involvement envisaged to take a short period of time. However, as events transpired the scope of the work widened to include the following two elements:

- A review of the Feasibility Study and Application Form, including advice on its content; and,
- Advice on the Cost Benefit Analysis including changes in the economic evaluation.

The suggested JASPERS changes were mostly incorporated into the revised analysis.

The decision time taken for the project in receipt of JASPERS assistance was longer than that which was not assisted. This case study compares the planning process for each project and seeks to assess what impact JASPERS may have had.
The assisted project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the municipalities of Bialystok and Wasilków. The project’s aims are to increase connection rates, improve service standards and reduce environmental impact. The main elements of the improvements to infrastructure will focus on extension and reconstruction of the sewer, water supply and rainwater networks.

The second project relates to waste water management in the city and district of Końskie. The poor quality of the existing system leads to a large incidence of accidental water loss in the system. The infrastructure to be provided will consist of extensive renovation and provision of the sewerage network, refurbishment of an existing sewage treatment plant, and extensions to the water supply and drainage network.

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007 and was completed in 2009. JASPERS assistance was sought in July 2009 for the project at Bialystok which lasted only 42 days. Critically, this meant that JASPERS had no input into the design of the project itself – only into its presentation. An application was made to the Commission in August 2009. 346 days elapsed before a funding decision was taken by the Commission in August 2010.

Planning for the project at Końskie also commenced in 2007 but it was completed quicker. The Application was submitted to the Commission in January 2010 and a decision to grant funding was given in October of the same year, 270 days later.

The input of JASPERS to the project at Bialystok was in the context of recommending changes to the application, and came too late to have any influence on the design of the project. Nevertheless, it was seen by the project participants to have significantly speeded up the acceptance time of the project. Most of the JASPERS advice was heeded in preparing the Application. Furthermore, members of the JASPERS team continued to support the project after the initial assignment in answering questions raised by the Commission after the Completion Note had been issued. The participants in the assisted project believe that the input of JASPERS significantly reduced the time the Commission took to make a decision. This is supported by the extent of assistance offered by JASPERS.

The application for funding for the waste water management project in the city and district of Końskie did not receive JASPERS assistance, which is an exception to the general practise of involving JASPERS. Assistance was not sought for this project for two principal reasons:

- It was felt that not all projects could reasonably be expected to be granted JASPERS assistance given the available resources; and,
- The Końskie project was well advanced and well prepared when a decision was taken by the Polish authorities to select it for application.

The promoters of the Końskie project pointed out that they had benefitted indirectly from the JASPERS programme because they had information from other, similar projects that had received JASPERS assistance. They then prepared their own application taking into account suggestions made by JASPERS on other projects. They had also attended training sessions in which JASPERS experts presented.
This case study showed that even where JASPERS is of assistance in reducing decision times, other unassisted projects can adhere to the same timelines when properly managed and when there is knowledge transfer from other JASPERS activity.

**B.2.9 Case Study 9 Polish Water and Wastewater 2**

This case study compared two Major Water and Wastewater investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted investment in water and wastewater system in Sochaczew (CCI 2009PL161PR008); and,
- The non-assisted investment in the water and wastewater system in the Town of Nowa Sól and adjacent municipalities (CCI 2007PL161PR005).

The scope of JASPERS involvement was a quality assessment of the project proposal and the grant application. Therefore, it came after the design stage of the project and related to the application phase onwards.

The actual JASPERS inputs covered the following aspects:

- Review of several versions of the Feasibility Study and Application Form including advice on its content;
- Advice on the option analysis;
- Advice on the investment costs rationalisation;
- Advice on the procurement strategy;
- Advice on the financial and Cost Benefit Analyses including amendments in the methodology for determining the funding gap rate and improvements in the economic evaluation of the project;
- Advice on the sensitivity and risk analyses; and,
- Advice on the affordability and sustainability issues.

The projects were comparable in terms of their content and scale, but the time taken to reach a funding decision was not significantly shorter for the project that received JASPERS assistance. This case study examines whether the assistance of JASPERS is likely to have shortened the decision time relative to what it might otherwise have been.

The JASPERS assisted project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the city of Sochaczew. The existing water and sewer infrastructure and service standards in the city vary. The water supply system is comprehensive but some of the infrastructure is aged. The combined sewers are the oldest part of the network and are in a relatively bad shape. The company also operates a rain water network and two wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs). The main project elements are the extension and modernisation of the sewer network and the modernisation of the main WWTP. The unassisted project concerns the upgrading, expansion and reconstruction of the water treatment and sewage infrastructure in the Nowa Sól. One hundred km of new sewers will be constructed, along with storm water facilities and numerous pumping stations. The project will also allow for expansion and
reconstruction of the Water Treatment Plant in Nowa Sól and the modernisation, upgrading and expansion of the water supply network.

Planning for the assisted project in Sochaczew commenced in 2007 and JASPERS assistance was sought in mid-2009 which lasted for a period of 175 days. The Feasibility Study for the assisted project had already begun before JASPERS assistance was sought, and spending on the project had commenced. The application for JASPERS assistance was made on the basis that the project was regarded as crucial. The scope of JASPERS involvement was a quality assessment of the project proposal and the grant application. The principle activities of the JASPERS experts included site visits, meetings and a review of key documents. JASPERS had also had a strategic input advising the project, as initially conceived, be broken up into two stages; something that the Polish authorities believe was highly beneficial. An application was made to the commission in March 2010, but an Interruption Letter was issued in mid-May. A decision was given to fund the project in May 2011, 434 days after the application was made.

In general, the involvement of JASPERS was regarded as positive and the various bodies were appreciative of their involvement. They believed that their application was significantly improved because of JASPERS. Technical assistance in particular had been very beneficial, especially the international perspective brought by the JASPERS team. They also speeded up the process of getting approval, as without their participation the application would have contained errors.

Planning for the project at Nowa Sól commenced in 2004, shortly before Poland acceded to the European Union. It was the subject of two applications: one in 2006 and another in 2009. The Nowa Sól project was considered a high priority, and the National Environmental Protection Fund also considered JASPERS assistance for it – but the project was already in the final stages of national verification when the opportunity to involve JASPERS arose, and it was felt that the project was too far advanced to qualify. The application was the subject of two formal Interruption Letters as well as a number of other queries. A decision was finally granted in May 2010, 475 days after the initial application.

The relevant Polish authorities are of the view that JASPERS participation would have helped the Nowa Sól project too. Many of the issues raised by the Commission in their Interruption Letter and subsequent queries regarding the project at Nowa Sól concerned items such as the organisation and content of the Application Form, Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Assessment. Similar problems had been identified by JASPERS staff who had assisted on other projects at a pre-application stage. It is therefore likely that participation by JASPERS at a pre-application stage would have rectified many of the problems that subsequently led to an Interruption Letter being issued. However, it would be speculative and in all probability unlikely that no Interruption Letter would have been issued if JASPERS assistance had been sought: This is because the Interruption Letter asked technical questions with respect to sludge treatment which were unexpected, and similar questions were also asked about Sochaczew. The Polish authorities suggested that this interest by the Commission in sludge treatment had not been foreseen on the JASPERS assisted project either.

In general, the JASPERS assistance related to the presentation of the Sochaczew project in the application stage, and so there was no opportunity for JASPERS to improve the quality of the underlying project. Nevertheless, participants were of the view that JASPERS did have an impact in terms of a faster
decision time. This in turn allowed for earlier funding and hence completion of the project. Secondly, the participants spoken to suggest that JASPERS might have shortened the time for a decision on the unassisted project at Nowa Sól had they been involved.

B.2.10 Case Study 10 Polish Knowledge Economy
This case study compared two major investments in research facilities in Poland, both of which were developed with JASPERS assistance. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted development of the Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CePT) (CCI 2007PL161PR015); and,
- The non-assisted development of the Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III) (CCI 2009PL161PR035)

The Centre of Preclinical Research and Technology (CePT) is a biomedical research centre that is intended to be set up by a consortium of ten academic groups. The catalyst for the new co-ordinated approach was the launch of a common R&D project to upgrade infrastructural resources and equipment, while at the same time reorganising research activities. The project’s key objectives are to jointly use the new research equipment and laboratories so as to achieve synergies at a scientific level. It is hoped that this will in turn lead to excellence in research activities that would establish the centre as a leader in the environmental sciences.

Jaspers offered extensive input to the CePT project during the preparation phase of the Project, including the following:

- Ad hoc services on institutional, organisational, financial and technical issues related to the project;
- Advice at concept stage;
- Involvement in the definition of Consortium Agreements;
- Assistance in TOR development for Consultancy;
- Assistance in the development of the schedule for the project’s preparation and implementation; and,
- Review and assessment of the Feasibility Study. The JASPERS Task Manager in association with experts from COWI Consultants provided comments to the Feasibility Study and this led to a revised version of the Feasibility Study.

Nevertheless, an Interruption letter was issued by the DG for Regional Policy on the 13th August 2009. Advising that further work was required to improve the quality of the application, and in particular, the financial and Cost Benefit Analysis. A total of 23 points were raised ranging from a need to show support for interaction between the research and industrial sectors to a requirement for cooperation agreements between Warsaw Medical University and the other members of the project consortium.

JASPERS brought important insights to the Polish administration into the process of identifying the areas that these new institutes should target, in particular what areas would be likely to be of private firms in research and technology based industries. JASPERS supported the beneficiaries as they sought specialist consulting help to formulate a research strategy for these new institutes. As a result of this commercial
focus it was possible to predict, and place a value on, the amount of commercially viable research that could be carried out by these new institutes. This in turn allowed a valuation of the benefits of these projects for the purposes of a funding application to the Commission.

The second project is designed to establish the Centre for Bio-Chemical Sciences (CENT III), as a research centre based in the Biology and Chemistry Departments of the beneficiary, the University of Warsaw - Uniwersytet Warszawski (UW). The project consists of investment in infrastructure and equipment (performed in two phases), as well as associated organisational changes. The CENT III Project consists of the construction of a new building dedicated fully to hosting the Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences, and its furnishing with advanced scientific equipment suitable for the planned research programme. The construction of the physical infrastructure will be accompanied by the development of new organizational and management rules.

The CENT III project emerged from a national competition that gave co-financing commitments to successful projects. Only then was the project put forward and eligible for JASPERS assistance. Assistance was focussed on a review of the documents already prepared and the presentation of the project to the Commission. JASPERS assistance covered:

- A Review of the Feasibility Study
  - Revision of definition of objectives and project deliverables;
  - Advice on definition of products and results, as well as their indicators;
  - Advice on organisation of the Centre and the Project, especially as regards the technology transfer functions.

- Cost Benefit Analysis
  - Review of CBA components;
  - Verification of applied methodology in relation EU policies and guidelines, and those of the Ministry of Regional Development; and,
  - Commissioning a survey of scientists on their vision of possible research findings and applications.

- Review of Grant Application draft
  - Advice on content of the Application Form;
  - Review of the GA contents in terms of compliance with application needs.

Many changes were introduced to the project management system and the proposed management structure in order to increase the commercial orientation of the project.

Fundamental changes were made to the Cost Benefit Analysis, the quantification and monetisation of economic benefits, and the sensitivity analysis. An additional option was included in the analysis; a new qualitative risk analysis was undertaken (including the division between risks at the project implementation and operation stages); and changes were undertaken to the structure and length of the application.

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007. Project planning was completed in 2010 for the first project. The second project was completed in two phases, one of which ended in 2008, the other in 2010.
JASPERS assistance for both projects was lengthy: it lasted 630 days for the CEPT project and 442 days for CENT III.

Considerable resources were put into the preparation of both projects, but nevertheless the time taken by the Commission to decide to fund the projects took almost a year in both cases. The Application for the CePT project was made on the 30th June 2009. On the 13th August 2009, an Interruption Letter was received in relation to the project that requested additional information and clarification. The letter outlined further work required to improve the quality of the application, and in particular, the financial and Cost Benefit Analysis and the potential applications of the research in the marketplace. The time taken to reach a decision on the CePT project was 342 days, and was 336 days on the CENT III project.

This case study compares two ostensibly similar projects, both of which received JASPERS assistance. Considerable resources were put into the preparation of both projects, and JASPERS was involved for a lengthy period on both projects, and particularly early on in the CePT project. The time taken by the Commission to reach a decision to fund the projects was similar. Critical to each was the need to submit a particularly convincing body of evidence as to the benefits that the project would bring. Despite the involvement of JASPERS in the preparation of the Cost Benefit Analysis the Commission was unhappy with the initial application for CePT and noted specifically aspects of the Cost Benefit Analysis with which it was unhappy.

B3 Lessons Learnt from Case Studies

A number of general lessons can be drawn from these case studies on the impact of JASPERS. A number of these are set out below:

- In many cases JASPERS was involved in the process of project development relatively late. Often its involvement was confined to the preparation of an application for funding for the DG for Regional Policy. However there are clear illustrations from the case studies of how JASPERS assistance with the preparation of applications speeding up the process of the DG for Regional Policy considering applications and deciding to fund the projects. The Czech railway case, Slovenian road case, Polish rail, Polish road 2 and Polish Water and Wastewater 2 cases are all examples of this impact of JASPERS work.

- The case studies also illustrate the impact of JASPERS assistance on projects going beyond the projects in question, to have a positive impact on projects that were not the subject of specific JASPERS assistance. The Czech rail case study is an example of this type of impact.

- The case studies reveal a recognition among Member States that late involvement of JASPERS may miss an opportunity to improve the quality of projects themselves, and moves to involve JASPERS earlier in the development of projects. For example the Slovenian road case study indicates a desire amongst the Slovenian authorities to involve JASPERS in project development at an earlier stage.

- The case studies show the flexibility of JASPERS in finding useful support to give where its usual support with the development of a specific project is less relevant. For example the Romanian case studies describe the alternative sources of technical support such a private consultants and the DG for Regional Policy available to beneficiaries and authorities in Romania, and describe how JASPERS tailored its assistance to the needs of Romania.
• The second Polish road case study demonstrates that even support for the preparation of applications forms can involve JASPERS in complex and sensitive areas such as the design and impact of new road pricing systems.
• Finally the Polish knowledge economy case study shows how JASPERS is developing new techniques and guidance to address novel issues as new forms of project emerge.
Section C: Task 3 Analysis of feedback from Member States and Project Beneficiaries
Section C: Task 4: Analysis of Feedback from Member States and Project Beneficiaries

C1: Introduction

Background
This section of the report sets out and analyses the feedback received from Member States and project beneficiaries as a result of Task 3 of this evaluation. Specifically it sets out the results of:

- An analysis of the Action Plans agreed by JASPERS and Member States;
- An analysis of the feedback forms on JASPERS completed by Member States and project beneficiaries;
- Interviews with key stakeholders in ten Member States;
- Interviews with DG REGIO desk officers;
- Interviews with JASPERS staff in the Luxembourg, Warsaw, Bucharest and Vienna JASPERS offices; and,
- A series of workshops for Member States held in Warsaw (Lithuania, Latvia Estonia and Poland), Budapest (Hungary and Slovenia), Prague (Czech Republic and Slovakia) and Bucharest (Romania and Bulgaria).

Layout
The remainder of this Section is set out as follows. Section C2 gives an overview of applications for funding for major projects from each of the ten Member States Section C3 sets out the results of the desk research carried out for this Task, i.e. the analysis Action Plans and feedback forms. Sections C4 to C13 set out the results of the interviews and workshops, organised by Member State. Finally Section C14 draws together the results and conclusions from Task 4.

C2: Overview of JASPERS work for Member States

This evaluation is mainly concerned with the work of JASPERS in 10 Member States: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. AECOM interviewed stakeholders in each of these Member States and organised workshops where representatives of these member States discussed the impact of JASPERS and recommendations for its future direction. Each of these has been assisted by JASPERS over the period since JASPERS was established. However, it should be noted that the degree of interaction of each of these Member States with JASPERS varies greatly. The use of JASPERS varies from Poland which benefitted from 156 JASPERS assignments over the evaluation period to smaller Member States such as Latvia which was the subject of only 11 JASPERS assignments. The number and type of JASPERS assignments for each Member State is set out in Table C.1 below:
Table C.1: Number of Projects and Assignments by Member State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>Major Projects</th>
<th>Non-Major Projects</th>
<th>Horizontal Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JASPERS Assisted</td>
<td>JASPERS Unassisted</td>
<td>JASPERS Assisted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: there were four horizontal assignments that were not Member State specific.

C3: Desk Research

As part of the examination of feedback from Member States, AECOM reviewed the Action Plans agreed between Member States and JASPERS and the Feedback Forms completed at the end of JASPERS assignments. The results of these reviews are set out below:

C.3.1 Action Plans

Each year Member States agree “Action Plans” with JASPERS. These set out the assignments that JASPERS is to complete for the Member State in question. AECOM reviewed these Action Plans for evidence of the impact of JASPERS on each Member State. Data describing each Action plan were collated and analysed to identify trends in:

- The number of JASPERS assignments over time, in total and for each Member State;
- The subject matters of JASPERS assignments over time, and differences between Member States and sectors.

Complete sets of Action Plans exist for the years from 2009 to 2011 inclusive. These Action Plans refer to a total of 1,202 assignments agreed between JASPERS and Member States. There has been a tendency
for the number of assignments to decline as the end of the current programming period is reached. In 2009 Action Plans identified 406 assignments for JASPERS, the following year the number of assignments reached a peak of 448. By 2011 the number of JASPERS assignments identified in Action Plans had declined to 348.

Member States vary widely in their planned level of use of JASPERS. Large member States with extensive EU funded programmes of investments are, as one might expect extensive users of JASPERS support. Poland agreed a total of 391 assignments with JASPERS between 2009 and 2011, and Romania agreed a total of 259 assignments over the same period. In both cases the level of requests remained largely constant over time with a slight peak observed in 2010. Between them these two Member States accounted for 54 per cent of assignments identified in Action Plans.

In contrast, Latvia's Action Plans only identified 11 assignments for JASPERS, and other Member States' Action Plans identified significantly smaller numbers of assignments than those for Poland or Romania.

Table C.2 below sets out the number of assignments agreed in Action Plans for each Member State and year between 2009 and 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>All Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>406</strong></td>
<td><strong>448</strong></td>
<td><strong>348</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,202</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

The spread of assignments between sectors reflects the significance of sectors in the investment programmes of member States. The Water and Wastewater, Road and Railway sector each account for approximately one fifth of the assignments identified in Action Plans. Table C.3 below sets out the sectors involved for each assignment where a sector was specified in an Action Plan.
Table C.3 Number of Assignments in each Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airports</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ports and Waterways</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Transport</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

Actions Plans specify the subject of each assignment. The review of Action Plans confirms the extent to which Member States seek JASPSRS assistance at a late stage in the development of individual projects. In the vast majority of cases JASPERS assignments are planned to at least include a review of an application for funding for a Major investment project. A full 96 per cent of the 1,202 assignments identified in Action Plans include a review of an application form by JASPERS. In fact, a full 70 per cent of these assignments only concern a review of an application form.

This emphasis on the review of applications forms and later has persisted since 2009, and has shown a tendency to increase over time. As Table C.4 below shows the percentage of assignments that only concerned a review of an application form increased from 70 per cent to 77 per cent between 2009 and 2011.

Table C.4 Subject of JASPERS Assignments by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of JASPERS Assignments (%)</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>All Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of Application Form only</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several topics including review of Application Form</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics other than review of Application Form</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM
This concentration on using JASPERS for assistance in relatively late phases of project development is observed across all Member States. Table C.5 below sets out the relevant percentage shares for the 10 Member States considered as part of this evaluation.

**Table C.5 Subject of JASPERS Assignments by Member State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of JASPERS Assignments (%)</th>
<th>BG</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>HU</th>
<th>LV</th>
<th>LT</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>PO</th>
<th>RO</th>
<th>SK</th>
<th>SI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of Application Form only</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several topics including review of Application Form</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics other than review of Application Form</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

**C.3.2 Feedback Forms**

This section contains an analysis of the JASPERS Performance Feedback forms, as submitted by the beneficiaries of JASPERS assistance and the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers responsible for each project. The purpose of the analysis is to assess the overall quality rating of JASPERS assistance for individual projects from the details of the feedback forms. The summary below was made from the 97 Beneficiary and the 44 DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer feedback forms received.

The format of the forms is basically the same, with a common scale for rating the different aspects of JASPERS assistance. This scale ranges from Highly Successful (HS), to Successful (S), to Partially Successful (PS), and finally to Failure (F). The main difference between the forms was the fact that the two respondents, the Beneficiary and the DG Regional Policy Desk Officer, were asked to rate the success of JASPERS assistance on their particular project on similar, but slightly different, criteria. Not every instance of JASPERS assistance was relative to all criteria, in which case the Beneficiary or the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer left the entry blank. The feedback forms also permit respondents to provide additional comments to accompany the rating in each category.
C.3.2.1 Feedback from Beneficiaries

Project Beneficiaries were asked to rate the success of JASPERS assistance in terms of:

- Achievement of objectives; both original objectives and additional objectives that arose during the assignment.
- JASPERS inputs into project preparation; including structure and scoping, technical feasibility, economics & financial analysis, procurement and implementation arrangements, environmental impact analysis (EIA), and drafting of the application.
- JASPERS inputs to Horizontal Tasks.
- The responsiveness of the JASPERS team.
- The coordination between JASPERS and respective national authorities.

Beneficiaries were also asked whether they would use JASPERS again and if they would recommend others to use them. They were also given the opportunity to make suggestions for future improvements to JASPERS assistance.

Table C.6 below shows a summary of the feedback from the Beneficiaries of JASPERS-assisted projects. Any unfilled entries on feedback forms were discounted so that the percentages in the table show the relative proportions of aggregate scores in each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Forms</th>
<th>97 Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highly Successful (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original objectives of JASPERS action</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional objectives arising during assignment</td>
<td>40.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure &amp; Scoping</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical feasibility</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic &amp; financial analysis</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement &amp; implementation arrangements</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting of the application</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS input to Horizontal Tasks</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness of team</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table C.6 clearly shows, the overall opinion of JASPERS assistance among beneficiaries is overwhelmingly positive. Scores of HS or S make up for 90% or more of the aggregate score in each of the feedback categories. The overall achievement of objectives by JASPERS was rated as ‘Highly Successful’ in 64.9% of responses, and as ‘Successful’ in 28.7%, indicating that even within the positive responses, the majority of beneficiaries rate the JASPERS assistance with the maximum score. Similar results exist for most of the other categories, with the exception of the ratings for procurement & implementation arrangements, which were almost evenly split between HS and S.

Table C.7 shows a summary of the responses to the last question on the beneficiary feedback form; would you use JASPERS again and recommend others to use them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you use JASPERS again or recommend others to use them?</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Maybe (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from C.7, the vast majority of beneficiaries rate JASPERS highly enough that they would use it again and recommend it to others. Only 1.4% of beneficiaries said that they definitely would not use JASPERS again, leaving 8.6% of responses who were undecided. What was most common in the case of a ‘Maybe’ answer was a single small problem that the beneficiary stated they would like to see resolved before they used JASPERS again.

A frequent comment or issue raised by the beneficiaries is that they would like faster response times and quicker information flows from the JASPERS teams assisting on their projects in relation to questions from the beneficiaries and to verification of documents. Another common issue was a desire from the beneficiaries for more local knowledge and expertise among the JASPERS teams, to make projects design and implementation more tailored to the specific circumstances of the beneficiary; and for project assistance to be carried out in the local language, to save from wasting time translating project documents. Finally, a common methodology for R&D related project assistance was mentioned, and some calls were made for checklists to be generated at the commencement of JASPERS assistance, outlining the work to be performed during the course of the assistance.

C.3.2.2 Feedback from DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers

DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers were asked to give:

- A general assessment of JASPERS activity; which covers the quality and adequacy of JASPERS progress meetings relating to the project/sector, quality and usefulness of any JASPERS horizontal activities, the responsiveness of the JASPERS team, and the coordination with the DG for Regional Policy.
- An assessment of JASPERS inputs to the project; covering the achievement of JASPERS objectives, the usefulness of the JASPERS completion note in the DG for Regional Policy project appraisal process, the impact of JASPERS involvement on improving the project quality, impact of JASPERS
activities on the project approval timing, and the responsiveness of JASPERS to questions/issues identified or raised by the DG for Regional Policy.

Table C.8 below shows a summary of the feedback reports from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers responsible for each project that received JASPERS assistance. The percentages in the cells for each category are relative percentages, excluding any responses from the count if they contained an ‘N/A’ rating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Forms</th>
<th>44 Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highly Successful (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assessment of JASPERS Activity</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality and adequacy of JASPERS progress meetings</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness of JASPERS team</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination with DG REGIO</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of JASPERS inputs to the project</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of JASPERS objectives</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of JASPERS completion note</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of JASPERS involvement on project quality</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of JASPERS activities on the project approval</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from C.8, the overall feedback from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers is strongly positive. In many categories, the ratings of HS and S make up for 90%+ of the responses received. The ratio of Highly Successful to Successful ratings is less consistent in the DG for Regional Policy survey, with some categories featuring higher counts of HS ratings, some with higher counts of S ratings, and some with nearly even splits.
One fact worth noting is that the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers’ feedback for the first section of the form, ‘General Assessment of JASPERS Activity’, was strongly positive, with combined scores of HS and S accounting for 90% of feedback in three of the categories, and 88.5% in the other. In contrast to this, the scores in the second section of the feedback form, ‘Assessment of JASPERS inputs to the project’, were less consistent. In some categories, the positive responses only account for 75%, and in one case 64%, of the responses received. These lower ratings are generally explained by greater numbers of ‘PS’ ratings rather than high numbers of ‘F’ ratings.

The four categories with significant proportions of PS or F ratings were:
- Achievement of JASPERS objectives (25% Partially Successful)
- Usefulness of JASPERS completion note in the REGIO project appraisal process (15.9% Partially Successful)
- Impact of JASPERS involvement on improving the project quality (24.4% Partially Successful)
- Impact of JASPERS activities on the project approval timing (31% Partially Successful)

Comments were infrequent and arose largely when the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers perceived a problem with JASPERS performance. The comments attached to these lower ratings illustrate a range of different issues, which in their opinions have hindered the success of JASPERS assistance. Some of these issues can be unique to the country, or even to the project in question. Some are explicitly criticisms of JASPERS assistance, while others are issues outside of JASPERS control which nevertheless restrained the JASPERS assistance from being completely successful. Examples of these issues are: limited achievement of objectives due to ex-post nature of JASPERS assistance, inconsistencies between the economic and financial CBAs, feasibility studies and CBA requiring further improvements, limited potential for impact due to lack of readiness for prompt reaction at national level, and a number of unique local issues.

On some occasions the DG for Regional Policy comments explain that the lack of success is attributable to factors beyond the scope of JASPERS, such as a weak project application document being submitted despite the official JASPERS opinion that the application form was not mature enough and would require improvements. Other DG for Regional Policy desk officers acknowledge that cooperation with the beneficiary in question may have been particularly difficult, or that the beneficiaries may not have provided answers to direct questions.

C.3.2.3 Conclusions

From the data in the three tables above it is apparent that the feedback for JASPERS assistance from both beneficiaries and the DG for Regional Policy desk officers has been overwhelmingly positive. Combined Highly Successful and Successful ratings made up for 90% of the feedback in every category in the beneficiary feedback forms; and in 5 of the 9 categories in the DG for Regional Policy feedback forms the combined ratings of HS and S account for 80% or more of the feedback. The feedback from the DG for Regional Policy desk officers was slightly more critical of particular issues than the feedback from the beneficiaries, though the overall tone was still extremely positive.

Among the negative elements of the issues raised in the feedback, there were no recurring issues or trends, with most projects receiving low scores for very particular and often unique issues.
C.4 Feedback from Member States and Project Beneficiaries

C4.1 Background
The invitation to tender for this evaluation specifies that face to face interviews and workshops should be carried out with key JASPERS stakeholders in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. These interviews and workshops are intended to refine and extend the findings from Tasks 1 to 3 on the impact of JASPERS. In particular they are intended to analyse the impact of JASPERS on the administrative capacity of these Member States. Specifically these interviews and workshops identified:

- The key lessons learned in each country from participation in the JASPERS initiative;
- The mechanisms are in place to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS staff to project applicants and Member State authorities in general;
- Whether projects are encouraged to learn from each other within Member States;
- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer between JASPERS and project applicants; and,
- Factors affecting or limiting knowledge transfer within Member States.

In addition the interviews and workshops were used as an opportunity to:

- Test preliminary findings from Task 2 “Links between specific areas of JASPERS advice and the DG for Regional Policy project assessment process”, Task 3 “Case studies” and Task 4.1 “Desk research”;
- Explore the reputation and value added of JASPERS in the Member States; and,
- Discuss the future direction of the JASPERS initiative with regard to preparation of projects for the 2014-2020 programming period, strategic and horizontal support (for example preparation of sector strategies), capacity building (including institutional support) and project implementation support.

This Section of the Report provides an overview of the feedback from each Member State, combining the information obtained from both interviews with authorities in Member States and the workshops.

It should be noted that the feedback is that provided to AECOM. Member State feedback is summarised and reported as received by the consultants. The Member State statements set out here are not necessarily endorsed by the consultants. Naturally, Member State authorities provide feedback from the perspective of a beneficiary of JASPERS support. Other stakeholders might have a different perspective. In particular, the feedback does not necessarily represent AECOM’s opinion of the impact of JASPERS.

C.4.2 Bulgaria

C4.2.1 Introduction
During a one day visit to Bulgaria on 11th June 2012, AECOM held a meeting with the Central Co-ordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance.

In addition, AECOM organised a workshop in Bucharest on 8th August, 2012 attended by officials from Romania and Bulgaria. Bulgaria was represented at the workshop by officials from the:
• Central Co-ordination Unit of the Ministry of Finance;
• Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications;
• Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works; and
• Ministry of Environment and Water.

C4.2.2 Bulgarian Involvement with JASPERS
Bulgaria made significant use of JASPERS, receiving assistance for 10 major and 12 non-major projects as well as 8 horizontal assignments. All major projects brought forward by Bulgaria were JASPERS assisted. With regard to project related advice, the Bulgarian authorities sought JASPERS assistance very largely at the project application stage.

With regard to major projects, seven were in the transport sector and three in environment. For non-major projects, JASPERS assistance was most often sought for solid waste projects.

C4.2.3 Testing Preliminary Findings

Project timelines
When presented with analysis on project timelines, the Bulgarian authorities indicated that a comparison of the time taken for JASPERS assisted and non-assisted projects could be misleading because of the “leakage” of JASPERS advice from one project to another. A very significant factor could be the fact that JASPERS advice is not taken. The Bulgarian authorities suggested that this could be the case in up to 25% of Bulgarian projects. It was noted by the Bulgarian authorities that such a comparison between JASPERS and non JASPERS projects could not be made in respect of Bulgaria, as all major projects were JASPERS assisted.

It was also recognised that there had been delays in reaching the final project application stage. Primarily, these delays have occurred where the ultimate beneficiary lacked the capacity to support the progression of the project. The existence of institutional issues within Bulgaria was also cited as a factor.

Preliminary design stages have generally been undertaken by the beneficiaries with little JASPERS support, therefore impact of JASPERS on timing speeding up the early stages of project development has been limited.

Assistance with the reviewing projects and the project appraisal process was not thought to have significantly brought forward the timing of applications: in some cases, this stage has been extended because of delays in beneficiaries responding to comments from JASPERS. Where delays had occurred, there was an acceptance that they were necessary to ensure that the project applications were of sufficient quality.

When the JASPERS initiative commenced, the Bulgarian authorities had anticipated that the assistance given would reduce the DG for Regional Policy decision duration. Although some projects have benefitted with respect to timing, there have been a number of applications where, despite input from JASPERS throughout the appraisal process, additional issues have been raised by DG for Regional Policy. Interruption queries have sometimes contradicted advice from JASPERS and where this has occurred the
timescales have actually increased. The managing authorities believed that the JASPERS review of projects should have served to limit the instances where interruption queries were issued.

**C4.2.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Bulgaria**

The Bulgarian authorities had a very positive opinion of the quality of JASPERS support. Although there had been some areas where the authorities considered assistance from JASPERS had been stronger than others, overall the initiative was described as having a positive impact and was perceived to have met the expectations of the Bulgarian authorities.

The willingness of JASPERS to work co-operatively with the Bulgarian authorities was particularly noted. It was acknowledged that initially there were issues with communication and co-ordination between Bulgarian and JASPERS officials. These problems are now seen to be resolved and lines of communication were described as being ‘very good’. The Bulgarian authorities indicated that the opening of a local JASPERS office in Sofia had played a significant role in improving the relationship between JASPERS officials and staff from the Member State and this had assisted in project development and wider support.

The Bulgarian authorities appreciate the continued support of JASPERS and wishes to continue to work with JASPERS as they develop and submit further Major projects to the DG for Regional Policy. The authorities consider JASPERS to be a reliable partner and have recently held a stakeholder meeting which endorsed the continued use of JASPERS.

It was noted that on occasion JASPERS were reluctant to advise on certain projects that were politically sensitive and that there was a need for Member States to be given early warning of such instances, so that they can plan to proceed without JASPERS support.

**C4.2.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative**

The Bulgarian authorities considered that the greatest value of JASPERS support was in relation to the appraisal process and the preparation of project applications in general. JASPERS has greatly assisted Bulgaria to develop well prepared project applications. A further key area of assistance has been the input provided by JASPERS in developing templates to be used by beneficiaries in devising their applications. The provision of ‘typical’ responses to requirements set by the Commission has assisted with reducing the time taken to develop responses and enhanced the quality of the responses.

JASPERS has also provided support for non-Major projects, under the €50million threshold, in the Transport and Environment sectors. The authorities did not consider that the scale of the project was the primary reason for requesting or receiving support and has therefore approached JASPERS for projects that were complex or unusual. Overall, JASPERS was considered a ‘reliable partner’ for supporting the development of non-Major projects and in enhancing their performance.

There was an identified need to improve the procurement processes and Bulgaria sought assistance from JASPERS to improve these processes. In particular, there were issues relating to consistent delivery and quality of projects in the different municipalities. JASPERS has therefore been instrumental in developing a procurement strategy (including guidance on contracts) that provides the municipalities with the necessary capacity to improve reliability when implementing projects.
The most significant change in the approach to project planning of the Bulgarian authorities has been the requirement set by the European Commission to develop projects as part of a project management cycle. Since 2006, JASPERS has supported the evolution of administrative and institutional structures within Bulgaria through direct assistance in these areas. The Transport and Water sectors have seen the most significant reforms following guidance relating to the establishment of institutions for these sectors. This has facilitated improvements to the overall institutional structures and links between representatives and stakeholders.

The managing authorities also referred to support provided by JASPERS in assisting with co-ordinating administration across Operational Programmes and geographies (including cross-border issues). An example of this was in JASPERS attendance at tripartite meetings to discuss issues relating to the implementation and development of projects.

C4.2.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Bulgarian Authorities

The Bulgarian managing authorities acknowledge the contribution that JASPERS advice relating to projects has made to increasing the project planning knowledge base. This was particularly valuable in Bulgaria where knowledge of and adherence to formal project planning processes was somewhat lacking. JASPERS support was critical to ensuring that projects could meet the quality standards required by the European Commission. JASPERS was thought to have played a central role in developing key analyses, such as for cost benefit analysis.

A further example of knowledge transfer and capacity building identified related to Urban Transport Projects. Assistance from JASPERS was highlighted as being a significant factor in developing the necessary skills and experience in this sector.

The Bulgarian authorities indicated JASPERS has also assisted in developing knowledge and skills to support project development through horizontal assignments. Support was provided by JASPERS on a number of areas across the Operational Programmes, including training and development and research. These horizontal assignments, carried out throughout the support programme, were considered to have assisted with aspects of project planning where knowledge was less developed. As a result of the horizontal input from JASPERS, capacity within the Bulgarian Operational Programmes has been enhanced for the future.

The development of national guidelines for cost-benefit analysis was highlighted as an area where JASPERS assistance had been of particular value. Although it took a year to develop, it was emphasised that this has been ‘very useful’ and an area that would have been problematic without JASPERS support.

However, the scope for a transfer of knowledge to the consulting industry in Bulgaria was suggested to be less significant, as predominantly the project planning undertaken in the transport and environment sectors was contained within the public sector.
C4.2.7  Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other
The Bulgarian authorities suggested there was potential for improving the exchange of information including between Member States. A desire for greater dissemination of guidance was also identified. The Bulgarian authorities also referred to existing knowledge transfer, but hoped that proposals recently developed will provide greater structure and fluidity to facilitate a more consistent transfer of information. The Bulgarian authorities also suggested that earlier JASPERS involvement in developing horizontal support would increase the likelihood of quality improvements.

C4.2.8  Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
When asked about potential barriers to the transfer of knowledge within the member state the Bulgarian authorities did not consider that there had been any significant issues that had inhibited knowledge gain. The rate of staff turnover in the Managing Authority, Intermediate Authorities and the beneficiaries was not thought to have impacted upon knowledge transfer. Language was not considered an issue.

C4.2.9  Bulgarian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
The Directorate highlighted that the Bulgarian Government seek to co-operate with JASPERS at the earliest opportunity. Operational programmes and project beneficiaries were seen to benefit from the sustained support provided both in terms of project development and also through horizontal and structural support.

In Bulgaria, initial Project Feasibility and Preliminary Design has generally been undertaken by the beneficiaries, with JASPERS involvement increasing once the appraisal process had begun and through detailed design and project costing. The Bulgarian authorities considered that most appropriate point at which to involve JASPERS will always depend on the individual circumstances of a project and be subject to the decision of the Managing Authority. Early involvement was thought to benefit projects, as it increases opportunities for support and reduces the likelihood of errors occurring.

A successful example of an early involvement was in the field of Solid Waste where early JASPERS assistance, including participation on steering groups, greatly assisted with project development. The development of typical responses for project submissions was an area where earlier development would have been beneficial. It was, however, acknowledged that the timescales involved in producing these inputs reflected the scale of the analysis that was required.

The value of projects within the existing project pipeline is greater than the available resources. Therefore work is required to select the most suitable and progressed projects and develop these projects as applications. The managing authorities considered that JASPERS could assist with identifying projects across sectors to be taken forward as Major Projects for the next programming period.

The managing authorities anticipated that the Member States use of JASPERS was likely to evolve in the future to best reflect the changing requirements of the different sectors. For the next set of operational programmes, the Bulgarian authorities are seeking to refine its approach to strategy development including a reduction in the number of priorities across sectors and this would assist with developing more targeted objectives for the programmes. In order to address this need, the Bulgarian authorities require JASPERS assistance to carry out supporting analysis and research.
Overall, Bulgaria did not see the input from JASPERS decreasing. Instead, a more ‘joined up’ approach is desired that co-ordinates the intelligence gathering required to develop the operational programmes, support with selecting projects and the more conventional assistance with project development. In addition, the Bulgarian authorities saw a continued role for JASPERS in providing horizontal assistance to develop capacity and guidance to improve consistency. Although increased knowledge within the operational programmes should reduce the need for JASPERS support for established topic areas. Where new guidance or conditions are introduced by the Commission it is anticipated that there will be a continued need for support.

A further priority was the maintenance of a local JASPERS office in Sofia. Currently there are three members of staff based in the Sofia office including staff representing the Environment and Transport sectors. It was emphasised that once this arrangement had been put in place communication and co-ordination between the member state and JASPERS greatly improved. The need for a local presence was described as being significant, as it enabled JASPERS staff to better understand local issues. From the perspective of the Member State, it also demonstrated a greater commitment to issues in Bulgaria and enhanced the relationship with JASPERS officials.

The managing authorities emphasised that they consider JASPERS to be a very useful instrument for developing projects and for enabling timely implementation. Although there are elements of project development that Bulgaria will need less assistance with, the Directorate envisages that they will continue to seek JASPERS support on project planning and the application process. JASPERS support will continue to be particularly important for larger projects which have greater significance for the overall programme.

The delegates from Bulgaria acknowledged that they were considering broadening the areas in which they liaised with JASPERS including assistance with project phasing and input into strategic documents. Thus far, JASPERS has been reluctant to take a strong lead in strategic elements as they have avoided involvement in aspects of work that could be considered political, i.e. where a Member State such as Bulgaria has indicated that JASPERS involvement would not be considered appropriate. However, it was considered that support for Member States on strategic elements, in particular along corridors and across national barriers, is an area where additional support would be particularly beneficial, if political constraints are overcome.

Stakeholders in Bulgaria have also expressed a desire for greater involvement from JASPERS in the implementation of projects.

C4.3 Czech Republic

C4.3.1 Introduction
During a visit to Prague in June 2012, AECOM met with representatives from:

- The Ministry of Regional Development which is the Managing Authority for the Czech Technical Assistance and Integrated Operational Programmes;
- The Ministry of Transport, the Managing Authority for the Czech Transport Operational Programme;
- The Railway Infrastructure Administration, a key beneficiary; and,
The “National Coordination Authority” unit of the Ministry of Regional Development.

A workshop for the Czech Republic and Slovakia on this evaluation was held in Prague on 14th August 2012 which was attended by representatives of:

- The Ministry of Regional Development;
- The Railway Infrastructure Administration;
- The Ministry of Transport;
- The Ministry of Environment; and,
- The “National Coordination Authority” unit of the Ministry of Regional Development.

C4.3.2 Czech Involvement with JASPERS

The Czech Republic brought forward 35 Major projects during the evaluation period, 32 of these received JASPERS assistance. These projects were in the areas of rail, roads, urban transport, solid waste, water & wastewater and the knowledge economy. In addition the Czech Republic sought JASPERS assistance on 5 non-major projects and JASPERS carried out 3 “horizontal” assignments for the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic's use of JASPERS appeared less intensive than that of other Member States. The average length of a JASPERS assignment for Czech was 362 days, compared to an average across all member States of 489 days. In addition, JASPERS assignments for the Czech Republic covered fewer topics than those for other Member States, an average of 2.9 topics per assignment compared 4.9 topics per assignment for the Member States as a group.

DG for Regional Policy took longer to decide on Czech application than those from other Member States. The average DG for Regional Policy Decision period for the Czech Republic was 370 days compared to an overall average of 272 days. The average DG for Regional Policy decision duration for projects that had not received JASPERS assistance was significantly higher at 499 days.

C4.3.3 Testing Preliminary Findings

Czech stakeholders were very strongly of the opinion that JASPERS did not speed up the process of obtaining DG for Regional Policy approval. In fact, there is a strong sense of frustration about this. Their perception of the application process was that JASPERS involvement in the preparation of an application and the provision of a Completion Note was supposed to reassure the DG for Regional Policy as to the quality of a project, and reduce the amount of examination that the DG for Regional Policy would have to carry out itself. From their point of view, this promised benefit of JASPERS involvement did not materialise. Instead the DG for Regional Policy would carry out a fresh examination of the application and issue Interruption Letters which contradicted the advice received from JASPERS.

C4.3.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in the Czech Republic

As described above, the Czech Republic is frustrated by what is sees as a failure by the DG for Regional Policy to give due credit for JASPERS “approval” of projects when it considers applications for funding.
However, it is acknowledged that the quality of presentation of the project application form has improved significantly since JASPERS have been involved. In addition, JASPERS has contributed to an increased understanding of EU requirements for transport modelling and cost benefit appraisal.

**C4.3.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative**

It is worth noting the way in which the Czech Republic uses EU funding for Transport projects. The Czech Republic has a “State Fund of Transport Infrastructure”. Each year Parliament approves, “Investment Plans” prepared by the Ministry of Transport and allocates domestic revenues to this fund. The current process is for the Czech Republic to progress project development though to implementation with finance from the Fund. Retrospective applications for EU funding for major projects are then made to reclaim EU contributions to the projects. The EU co-financing received is then allocated to the “State Fund of Transport Infrastructure” for subsequent projects. As a result, applications for funding for Major projects often relate to projects that have commenced or are completed by the time the application is made. Typically, the project will have been completed by the time JASPERS involvement starts.

Stakeholders said that Czech authorities had not previously been familiar with Cost Benefit Analysis or with Feasibility Studies in the form expected by the DG for Regional Policy. A great deal had been learnt about these techniques from their interactions with JASPERS.

The Czech Authorities had not used Multi Criteria Assessment for project selection and prioritisation in their Operational Programmes and other strategies for infrastructure investment. JASPERS are providing assistance to include this technique in future planning, by providing technical support to the Czech authorities as they prepare a new transport Master plan.

The Czech authorities were not initially aware that JASPERS assistance was available when dealing with Interruption Letters. This has been corrected and the authorities are now receiving useful help in dealing with Commission Interruption Letters.

JASPERS is getting involved at an earlier stage with the development of some projects. They are starting to get involved in the Feasibility Study stage of projects. The Managing Authority singled out the example of the proposed Prague – Pilzen Rail project which incorporated at 20km long rail tunnel. JASPERS assisted the Managing Authority in explaining to the beneficiary that the project was not realistic, in terms of its fundability and its value for money from a cost benefit perspective. The project remains in the transport plan, but it is acknowledged that project planners need to look at alternative solutions.

**C4.3.5 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Czech Authorities**

In addition to its work on individual Major projects, JASPERS is advising the Czech Republic on “horizontal” projects related to development of new National Transport Master Plan and National Guidelines for Cost Benefit analysis.

The Railway Administration pointed out that JASPERS organises seminars as part of its support to Feasibility Studies. These are attended by railway staff and their consultants.
JASPERS helped The Ministry of the Environment to develop a model for cost benefit assessment as a horizontal assignment. The Ministry holds seminars to train local authorities in the use of this model, and its use is obligatory when a local authority makes a bid for funding for a project to the Ministry. (Funding is allocated to environmental projects carried out by local authorities based on competitions where a range of local authorities bid for funding for a project in their area).

**C4.3.6 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other**
Regular meetings are held, between the Managing Authorities and Beneficiaries to coordinate the development of projects and exchange information.

The railway administration actively tries to capture knowledge from JASPERS assisted projects for use on other projects. Every rail corridor has one project used as model project. JASPERS assistance is sought for this project and it is then used for all other projects in the corridor.

**C4.3.7 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer**
Staff turnover at the Managing Authority or other parts of the administration was not believed to be a problem and was not felt to be a barrier to transfer of knowledge.

Both the Managing Authority and the final beneficiary raised the issue of the lack of Czech speakers in the JASPERS team. The requirement to communicate in English leads to a preference for communications with JASPERS to be undertaken in writing, rather than face to face meetings. This partly explains why fewer meetings are held with JASPERS on Czech Republic projects.

The requirement for communication to occur in English also places an administrative burden on the Czech Republic. It is felt that the appointment of a Czech speaker into the JASPERS team would assist in improving communication between JASPERS and Czech Republic and understanding of the role of JASPERS.

There were also concerns that at least some JASPERS staff were insufficiently familiar with Czech legislation and local conditions, and that shortages of resource in JASPERS can lead to delays in the development of projects.

**C4.3.8 Czech Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS**
The main issue with JASPERS for the Czech authorities is the relationship between JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy and the role of both parties in the Project Approval process. It had been believed by the Czech authorities that a JASPERS Completion Note, would be sufficient for the DG for Regional Policy to approve a project, this has not proved to be the case, with a perceived tendency for the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officers to raise Interruption Letters which contradict the advice which has been provided by JASPERS.

Member States are being advised to increasingly make use of JASPERS assistance for both "projects" and "horizontal" projects by the DG for Regional Policy, which the Czech Republic are doing. However, the concern is that this will just continue to increase the workload for Member States, with little impact on
project timelines unless the DG for Regional Policy take notice of the Completion Notes produced by JASPERS.

Although the rail administration is happy to involve JASPERS in individual projects as early as the Feasibility Study, it maintains that strategic planning (in other words the selection and prioritisation of potential projects) must remain the responsibility of Member State authorities. The Transport Ministry is open to JASPERS advice and input on strategies, but not to obligatory input or decision making by JASPERS. They point out that the main reason that JASPERS was not involved in strategic planning for the current programming period was that the bulk of this planning took place before JASPERS was even in existence. The Environmental Managing Authority was open to receiving JASPERS assistance with strategic planning on a strictly voluntary basis. It pointed out that for such assistance to be relevant for the next programming period starting in 2013 it would have to start very soon.

Concerns were expressed that it had become effectively compulsory to involve JASPERS in individual projects over the course of the programming period. There was a fear that offering JASPERS help with strategic planning could change into a situation where JASPERS involvement in strategic planning became compulsory.

C4.4 Estonia

C4.4.1 Introduction
During a visit to Tallinn in June 2012, AECOM met with representatives from the Ministry of Finance (Managing Authority for Environmental projects) and the Ministry of Economic Policy (Managing Authority for Transportation projects). Estonia was represented at the workshop in Warsaw on 8th August, 2012 by a representative of the Ministry of Finance.

C4.4.2 Estonian Involvement with JASPERS
Estonia brought forward 12 major projects during the evaluation period (up to the end of June 2011). Of these, six received JASPERS assistance. In addition, Estonia sought JASPERS assistance on two non-major projects. JASPERS carried out four “horizontal” assignments for Estonia.

C4.4.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
DG for Regional Policy took an average of 195 days to decide on the applications from Estonia that had not received JASPERS assistance, compared to an average of 264 days for JASPERS assisted applications. The number of projects concerned was not large enough for the First Intermediate Report to reach conclusions on the impact of JASPERS on Estonian projects. However, it is worth noting that the bulk of the JASPERS assisted projects were in the Road and Knowledge Economy sectors, while the bulk of the non-assisted projects were in the Environmental sector. This means that it is not possible to directly compare the two durations.

However, Estonian stakeholders were certain that JASPERS assistance leads to applications being approved by the DG for Regional Policy more quickly than they would have been in the absence of such assistance. They were surprised by the observation that average approval times for JASPERS assisted
projects were actually longer than those for non-assisted projects. They agreed with the hypothesis that this must be due to the different sectors represented in the two sets of projects.

**C4.4.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Estonia**

The Ministry of Economic Policy were very positive about JASPERS. Their initial assessment was that they could not think of anything negative to say about JASPERS. Further discussions identified some minor issues in relation to:
- The timing of JASPERS assistance;
- The resources JASPERS had available for Estonia; and,
- The need to deal with JASPERS in English.

JASPERS were considered to have too many projects to deal with but they always delivered. Their use did generate work for the managing authority but this was acceptable, given the considered benefit of enhanced applications, more successful applications and ‘quality stamp’ from JASPERS.

JASPERS was considered good in communicating with the beneficiaries. There were comments that they did not link as well with the Managing Authorities who felt left out of the discussions at times. This was particularly towards the end of the application process, where managing authority involvement was needed and knowledge needed to be built up quickly.

JASPERS representatives were not always available, due to their workload. In general, however, there was good cooperation.

**C4.4.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative**

The standard approach to JASPERS assistance in Estonia was to arrange for them to review a draft application form and its supporting documents and to hold informal discussions with the DG for Regional Policy prior to ensure that as many issues as possible were dealt with in advance of a formal application. The key lessons learnt from JASPERS have related to the presentation of projects to the Commission. JASPERS assistance has improved the presentation of applications and given the Estonian authorities an insight into what the Commission looks for in an application, and into which parts of draft applications that should be developed more before being submitted to the Commission. Lithuanian stakeholders accepted that this limited the possibility of JASPERS improving the quality of projects. JASPERS was asked for help earlier in the project development process in two particularly complex projects: a tunnel in Tallinn and a major hospital project. The Ministry of Economic Policy is confident that enough knowledge and experience has now been gained for beneficiaries of transport projects to make at least some applications without JASPERS assistance.

**C4.4.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS staff to the Estonian Authorities**

The Road Administration acts on a national basis and so is involved in all projects in its sector. Environmental projects are split between a number of beneficiaries including municipalities and water supply companies.
The Ministry of the Environment acts as an Intermediate Authority for environmental projects, and an “Environmental Investment Centre” has been established as an Implementing Body. If an Implementing Body learns something from the involvement of JASPERS, it is expected to use this new knowledge to improve the guidance that it provides to beneficiaries.

The capture of knowledge by consultants involved in JASPERS assisted projects is also considered a key method of transferring knowledge and expertise to Estonia.

The provision of training workshops by JASPERS was well received by the Ministry of Economic Policy for transportation projects. However, Estonia had to request these sessions. The workshops were considered to be good, and built on the high standard and expertise of the roads industry in the country. A major reason for commissioning these was the use of technical language in cost benefit assessments and to ensure that beneficiaries and consultants were all using the right technical terms.

A similar exercise was completed for the environmental sector on cost benefit analysis. The use of horizontal assignments was very useful for the environmental sector, due to the open competition for funding that was in place. This promoted good practice/knowledge sharing without being unfair to any of the participants in the competitive process to select projects.

C4.4.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other
As described above, projects learn from each other in Estonia through beneficiaries being responsible for several projects, and through the guidance given by Implementing Bodies.

C4.4.8 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
No such barriers were identified by the stakeholders. In particular they specified that staff turnover was not an issue in Estonia in this respect.

C4.4.9 Estonian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
Transportation beneficiaries are now considered good enough to submit most applications to the DG for Regional Policy without JASPERS support. This will change the use of JASPERS by the Estonian managing authorities in the future.

As noted above, in Estonia JASPERS is typically used to review a draft application and supporting documents for a project that is, necessarily, at an advanced stage of development. In discussions the Estonian authorities were open to the idea of involving JASPERS earlier in the process of project development, and could see that this increased the opportunity for JASPERS advice to improve the quality of a project. They were particularly receptive to receiving earlier help in non-transportation projects, where skills sets and experience levels are lower.

Estonia could see a role for JASPERS in helping to set the terms of reference for feasibility studies and helping to manage the relationship with the consultant carrying out the Study. They pointed out that if certain standards were required for terms of reference that these could also be set out by the Commission.
According to the Estonian authorities, areas of potential need in the future including public transport and ITS (smartcards etc). The sharing of best practice through presentations on such issues and inter-modal hubs will be needed. This again implies earlier involvement of JASPERS in needs identification and pre-feasibility study. The Ministry of Economic Policy noted that they are looking to broaden the range of beneficiaries in the future (2013+) and JASPERS could therefore have an increased knowledge transfer role in the next programming period.

The merits of involving JASPERS in the strategic planning of infrastructure, including identifying the needs that should be developed into projects, were discussed at the Warsaw workshop. The input from Estonia was that strategic planning was necessarily the responsibility of the Member State in question, and that they did not see a potential role for JASPERS in strategic planning of infrastructure.

The workshop also discussed the possibility of JASPERS identifying ways that each Member State could maximise the transfer and use of knowledge and technical capacity from JASPERS. This would include JASPERS suggesting horizontal and training assignments that it should carry out for the Member State. Estonia was open to the idea of receiving such suggestions from JASPERS, but emphasises that they should be suggestions rather than being in any way mandatory.

C4.5 Hungary

C4.5.1 Introduction
During a two day visit to Hungary on 17th-18th June 2012, AECOM held meetings with the Hungarian National Development Agency, with officials for the Managing Authority Co-ordinating Unit, the Evaluation Unit, and the Managing Authority for Transport Operational Programmes attending.

In addition, AECOM organised a workshop in Budapest on 8th August, 2012 attended by officials from the same organisations.

C.5.2 Hungarian Involvement with JASPERS
Hungary made substantial use of JASPERS, receiving assistance for 31 major and two non major projects as well as two horizontal assignments. All major projects brought forward by Hungary were JASPERS assisted. With regard to project related advice, the Hungary authorities sought JASPERS assistance very largely at the project application stage. The Hungarian use of JASPERS for non-major projects was low relative to major projects.

With regard to major projects, 16 were in the transport sector and 15 in environment.

C4.5.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
When presented with analysis on project timelines, the Hungarian authorities expressed the view that some Member States may have sought help from JASPERS for the more simple projects. This would mean that the reduced the DG for Regional Policy decision period for JASPERS supported projects would not reflect the impact of JASPERS. They were also of the view that involvement of JASPERS adds to the whole project planning timeline.
The Hungarian authorities also expressed surprise that there were any major projects that had not been supported by JASPERS. Their understanding was that all major projects had to be submitted to the JASPERS process.

C4.5.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Hungary
The Hungarian authorities were very positive about the value of JASPERS, particularly in respect of their impact on Hungary’s project planning capacity. Also the flexibility and co-operative working spirit of JASPERS was much appreciated. The scope of JASPERS activities in Hungary has expanded over time, which is an indicator of approval. There is a clear intention to involve JASPERS even more in the next programming period, which is also a clear sign of satisfaction.

The Hungarian authorities also believed that a positive completion note would greatly speed-up the DG for Regional Policy decision process, but found themselves answering the same questions all over again. Also the DG for Regional Policy often employed their own experts: resulting in two sets of experts paid by the same body. This was a particularly difficult situation for beneficiaries to understand: beneficiaries could spend years working with JASPERS and then have to go through the same process with the DG for Regional Policy and or their experts. The Hungarian authorities are of the view that the capability of some desk officers to appraise projects needs to be upgraded.

C4.5.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
The Hungarian authorities took the view that he impact on project quality depending on the stage of the planning process at which JASPERs became involved. If only involved at a late stage, JASPERS has a big effect on project presentation, but the earlier they are embedded the more fundamental improvements they are able to make. It is rare that JASPERs involvement changes the project fundamentally. However, they have sometimes been able to involve JASPERS in the preparation of the brief for feasibility studies and this has proved very valuable.

JASPERS contribution to the project application process was particularly positive in terms of advice on CBA, modelling (traffic), cost estimation and particularly environmental assessments. Environmental issues were particularly problematic as Hungarian legislation was not aligned with EU requirements until 2011. JASPERS was invaluable in helping to interpret the EU environmental requirements.

According to the Hungarian authorities, JASPERs involvement in project planning at an earlier stage often had the effect of making the beneficiaries aware of the DG for Regional Policy in respect of the type and structure of project that would be accepted for funding. This meant that, sometimes, poor projects would be dropped at an early stage. The Hungarian authorities note that informal contacts with officials, on the part of JASPERS personnel, have proved a fruitful approach and are not usually recorded.

C4.5.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Hungarian Authorities
The Hungarian authorities were of the view that transfer of technical knowledge has occurred through the involvement of JASPERS in the project planning and application process. JASPERS role in project development has now changed to more of a quality controller, as Hungarian capacity to prepare project applications has increased. However, they still need a high quality check, or sometimes face new requirements (e.g. in state aid for a rolling stock procurement) and this is provided by JASPERS.
Initially, JASPERS assistance was required with ‘normal’ projects in transport and environment. More recently, JASPERS has been involved in more unusual projects (e.g. a cultural centre).

There were few horizontal assignments undertaken by JASPERS in Hungary. In particular, there were very few in the Environment sector, as Hungarian preference was for all learning to be done within the context of projects. This will change in the future and the Hungarian authorities wish to see the role of horizontal assignments expanded.

C4.5.7  Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other
The fact that the Hungarian authorities have amalgamated their managing authorities into one institution - the National Development Agency - has facilitated cross project learning at one level. However, there is much room for improvement in this regard. When new projects come along, their proponents often have little knowledge of the project application process. Member States need to have a more pro-active approach to disseminating learning including that arising from JASPERS involvement.

The Hungarian authorities consider that it is a strength of JASPERS that they work across member states. Sometimes JASPERS form a very strong opinion based, for example, on benchmarking data that the Member State does not have access to. The Hungarian authorities would very much like to see a sharing of information, particularly on benchmark capital costs.

C4.5.8  Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
Staff turnover has been an issue with respect to the environment sector, but not in transport. However, it was also commented that while the staff are lost to the managing authority, most leave to join another body within the system, whether at beneficiaries, intermediate authorities or consultants. So, the body of knowledge within the system is increasing.

The Hungarian authorities had mixed views on whether the need to work in English was an impediment. Interpreters, if used regularly, became very proficient in the technical as well as language aspects.

C4.5.9  Hungarian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
The Hungarian authorities see the value of having JASPERS involved at the earliest possible stage of planning. Strategy is the responsibility of the Ministries, so it is not up to the National Development Agency whether JASPERS are involved. However, after years of trying, an inter agency committee has been formed to prepare the transport strategy and JASPERS are involved. However, the Hungarian authorities stressed that the development of strategies and establishment of priorities are ultimately a matter for the Member States.

The Hungarian authorities considered that there were dangers in pressurising JASPERS into a more pro-active role, e.g. in terms of identifying Member State needs. Currently, JASPERS is a demand driven process and the Member States "own" the initiative. If JASPERS is more proactive, then a doubt arises as to whom they are working for.

The next programming period is likely to have higher thresholds for major projects, which will naturally take some projects out of 'major' category. The Hungarian authorities are happy that they have capacity
to deal with this increase in non-major projects. There has been more and more involvement in horizontal programmes. In the next period there is a clear intention to involve them in strategy development.

There should be much greater emphasis on horizontal assignments and already the Hungarian authorities have identified the need for such assignments in the R&D sub-sector. The Hungarian authorities agreed that there was greater scope for JASPERS to transfer knowledge across Member States and mechanisms should be put in place to do this. Training was also important and JASPERS involvement in training should be enhanced.

There was also a view that the system must change so that the DG for Regional Policy take notice of the completion note, so that it speeds up approval, and eliminates repetition. However, the Hungarian authorities believe that the role of JASPERS should not be changed so that they become an arm of the DG, as this would fundamentally change the working relationship.

C4.6 Latvia

C4.6.1 Introduction
AECOM met with officials from the Latvian Ministry of Finance, the Managing Authority for Latvia’s national Operational Programmes in Riga on 12th June, 2012. The following Latvian authorities took part in the workshop in Warsaw on 8th August:

- The Ministry of Finance;
- The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development; and,
- The Ministry of Transport.

C4.6.2 Hungarian Involvement with JASPERS
Latvia is among the smaller Member States in terms of the scale of infrastructure investment. This is reflected in the number of Major projects developed by Latvia, and the extent of its use of JASPERS. During the evaluation period, Latvia made seven applications for funding for Major projects. All of these received JASPERS assistance. In addition, JASPERS completed three horizontal assignments for Latvia during the evaluation period.

C4.6.3 Testing preliminary findings
As with Lithuania, there were only a very limited number of Major projects in Latvia that received JASPERS assistance and proceeded to a Commission Decision. Latvia did not develop any Major projects without JASPERS assistance. As a result, Tasks 1 and 2 did not lead to preliminary findings with respect to the impact of JASPERS in Latvia.

The average time taken for the DG for Regional Policy to reach a decision on an application from Latvia was 337 days compared to an average across all Member States of 272 days. Given the small sample of Latvian projects, no conclusions were drawn from this observation in the First intermediate Report. In addition the Managing Authority explained that a long project timeline for Latvia may not be reflective of the capacity of the managing authority or of beneficiaries. Projects were regularly suspended as the funds for project preparation were limited as a result of the financial crisis that started in the second half of 2008. In addition, there is often a requirement for studies to be repeated from scratch when a
significant timescale has passed. The Managing Authority also pointed out that Latvia has a high proportion of road projects which generally take longer to prepare.

The Managing Authority did not believe that JASPERS advice had an effect on the time taken for the DG for Regional Policy to reach a Decision on their applications for funding. In common with many other Member States, they felt that the DG for Regional Policy did not pay due attention to the work of JASPERS in its consideration of applications.

C4.6.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Latvia

The quality of JASPERS input was described as ‘variable’. The Managing Authority has had some experiences in the past of particular experts where the quality of advice was deemed to be poor – leading to complications and delays following submission of completed application forms to the DG for Regional Policy. Following complaint, the Managing Authority found both JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy to be very responsive, and issues were resolved quickly. The quality of input is currently much improved. As a result, the Managing Authority sees input from Jaspers as now being ‘very much positive’. The Managing Authority attributes some of this improvement to recent changes in the team of JASPERS experts dealing with Latvia. This team now includes experts with experience in Poland and appears to have stronger links with the DG for Regional Policy, giving it better insight into key issues in projects that might raise concerns for the DG for Regional Policy.

The Managing Authority felt that the involvement of Jaspers had not changed the time taken in project preparation. Nevertheless, there was agreement that the quality of projects submitted to the DG for Regional Policy was substantially improved. It was felt that although there has been some horizontal assignment activity, that this could be increased. Stakeholders believed that JASPERS assistance was reducing the time that the DG for Regional Policy took to consider applications for funding compared to a hypothetical situation without JASPERS assistance.

C4.6.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative

A persistent issue for Latvia has been the need to place individual projects in the context of an overall strategy for a sector. JASPERS and the Commission have found at least some individual projects presented for assistance or approval do not seem to be part of an overall strategy for the sector in question. The best practice in the development of public investments is to develop a strategy for a sector, for example a national transport plan, before proceeding to identify and develop individual projects. The overall strategy will identify areas where the need for transport or environmental services are not being met, or will not be met in the future. On this basis, the strategy will identify, in broad terms, the infrastructure investments that are needed. Once this strategy process is complete the development of individual projects can proceed. Project development consists of identifying the economically optimal technical solution that addresses each of the needs identified in the strategy.

If an applicant finds it difficult to identify where a project fits into an overall strategy, this suggests that this sequence of decision making has not been followed. This creates a risk that, whatever the merits of the individual project in question, that there are other potential projects that have not been developed and which should be considered more urgent.
JASPERS has been emphasising the importance of strategic planning to the Latvian authorities. One way it has done this has been to decline or resist involvement in projects that are not part of an accepted National Development Plan or Master plan. This created a practical difficulty for the Managing Authority, as the preparation of such plans can be outside its control. The wider message that moving from strategic planning to the development if individual projects, is the best way to identify and develop projects may not yet be fully accepted by all stakeholders.

The Latvian authorities indicated that they have a significant pipeline of potential projects and that they intend to develop strategic plans that incorporate these projects in time for the next programming period. They indicated that they would make the strategic decisions about the form of these plans, and the projects to be included, themselves. However JASPERS advice might be sought on the presentation and justification of these strategic plans to the DG for Regional Policy.

C4.6.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Latvian Authorities

The Managing Authority plays very much an administrative/programming role in the preparation of projects for the DG for Regional Policy. Although responsible for requesting Jaspers assistance, the technical ability within a project rests within JASPERS, the beneficiary and the consultant on the project. The main line of communication is between JASPERS and the beneficiary. As such, the Managing Authority's involvement in the detail of projects is relatively hands-off, although the Managing Authority, JASPERS and the beneficiary do meet regularly to update on performance.

Overall, the lines of communication with JASPERS are well established, and beneficiaries have additional informal links with JASPERS to assist with various technical or procedural issues that may arise. The Latvian authorities have taken the view that the preparation of projects is very much the responsibility of the beneficiaries. Although they provide programming support, they do seek to delegate as much of the technical input to the beneficiaries as possible. The Managing Authority has chosen not to seek external Technical Assistance for its own administrative and programming work, but instead relies on JASPERS for support and assistance.

For the next programming period, the Managing Authority stated an intention to reduce its reliance on JASPERS for its work major projects that were deemed to be relatively uncomplicated.

C4.6.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other

Many of the beneficiaries operate on a national, rather than local, scale. This makes it possible for the same beneficiary, and indeed the same staff, to work on more than one project with JASPERS assistance, and for knowledge gained on a JASPERS assisted project to be applied to other projects. Overall Latvian stakeholders find that there has been an increase in capacity in beneficiaries and the consultants that work for Beneficiaries.

In addition, the Managing Authority has prepared guidance documents and advice noted on specific areas where they have gained JASPERS advice. This has led to knowledge transfer into all those involved in project preparation.
C4.6.8  **Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer**  
Staff turnover is not an issue that restricts capacity building. As noted above, the relatively small number of institutions dealing with projects helps with knowledge transfer.

C4.6.9  **Latvian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS**  
The experience to date has been to bring Jaspers into the project at CBA/Application preparation stage, rather than at the earlier Master planning and Feasibility Study stages. There is recognition that the support brings greater added value when brought into the project earlier, although for many of the current projects the earlier tasks had already been completed at the time when JASPERS assistance became fully available. For the next programming period, there is an intention to seek advice earlier in the project planning process.

JASPERS currently has no involvement in the implementation stage of projects, or in the ex-post stages of projects. This is something that the Latvian authorities would like to see as a future role within JASPERS.

In common with many other member States, Latvia is concerned that when the DG for Regional Policy considers applications, it often revisits issues that have already been examined fully by JASPERS. They suggest that this could be remedied through more contact between the DG for Regional Policy, JASPERS and Latvia, in advance of applications being made.

The Latvian authorities also made the following specific requests for future assistance from JASPERS:

- Provision of seminars, conferences, training on key issues that are relevant to project preparation – either by country or by sector;
- Provision of advice on the implementation of projects using PPP/Financial Instruments, in order to align the advice with current policy at EU level. This would be needed very early in a project. According to the Latvian authorities, JASPERS have refused this support on the basis of insufficient capacity in this area on the basis that this is an EIB task;
- Provision of advice on ICT evaluation and implementation; and,
- Continuity of JASPERS advice from project planning through to and including ex-post evaluation.

C4.7 Lithuania

C4.7.1  **Introduction**  
Lithuanian officials from the Ministry of Finance participated in the Warsaw workshop of 8th August, 2012:

C4.7.2  **Lithuanian Involvement with JASPERS**  
Lithuania, by virtue of its size, has relative low level of infrastructural investment compared to other Member States. This is reflected in the number of Major projects developed by Lithuania, and the extent of its use of JASPERS. During the evaluation period, Lithuania made six applications for funding for Major projects. All of these received JASPERS assistance. In addition, JASPERS completed five horizontal assignments for Lithuania during the evaluation period.
C4.7.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
There were only a very limited number of Major projects in Lithuania that received JASPERS assistance and proceeded to a Commission Decision. Lithuania did not develop any Major projects without JASPERS assistance. As a result, Tasks 1 and 2 did not lead to preliminary findings with respect to the impact of JASPERS in Lithuania.

C4.7.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Lithuania
Lithuanian officials were appreciative of the support received from JASPERS. Their level of satisfaction indicated that they found that JASPERS had a positive impact for them.

C4.7.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
The Lithuanian managing authority explained that they expect two types of impact from JASPERS assistance: improvements in the quality and maturity of applications and a reduction in time taken for the Commission to approve applications for funding.
Their view was that JASPERS has made significant contributions to the quality and maturity of applications. This has been particularly useful in cases where the beneficiary had a great deal of technical expertise in the subject matter of the project but might not be familiar with the process of project development. The Lithuanian authorities referred in particular to the Major project to establish a National Centre for Physical and Technological Sciences.

Lithuanian officials are also confident that JASPERS has had a positive impact on the time taken by the Commission to examine funding applications from Lithuania.

The Lithuanian authorities, in common with many Member States, did criticise what they regarded as a lack of consistency between JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy. They regard a JASPERS completion note as being, at least in part, an assessment of the project in question on behalf of the Commission. They are surprised if the DG for Regional Policy raises an interruption based on an issue which they believe has been cleared by JASPERS. They referred to one project where JASPERS stated in its Completion Note that the project in question did not raise State Aid issues. When an application was made to the Commission, State Aid issues were raised in an interruption letter.

Lithuanian authorities quoted the example of a project establishing a National Centre for Physical and Technological Sciences. This project gained essential knowledge from JASPERS that enabled them to plan the project and make the case for it to the Commission.

The principal beneficiary in this project was Vilnius University, acting in partnership with Vilnius Gediminas Technical University and three state research institutes. The object of the project was to provide appropriate research facilities to Lithuanian scientists to allow research to be carried out to the highest standards, and to make it possible for promising new scientists to compete their training and make their career in Lithuania.

While the project could only be led by experts from the universities and research institutes, JASPERS was able to bring valuable insights into the areas of research that might have future commercial applications and to the process of placing a money value on the benefits of the project. In this case
JASPERS intervention could have improved the underlying quality of the project, by refining the strategy for the new research centre, and also improved the presentation of the project to the Commission by assisting the beneficiary to express the impact of the project in the form of a cost benefit analysis.

C4.7.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Lithuanian Authorities
Lithuania made extensive use of horizontal assignment to capture relevant technical knowledge from JASPERS. JASPERS is currently carrying out a project for the Managing Authority for Environmental projects to develop a national water strategy to 2020. A similar horizontal assignment is being carried out in the field of transport. JASPERS was unable to fulfil all of Lithuania's requests for horizontal assignments due to limited resources, and the wide ranging nature of some of the requests.

C4.7.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other
The fact that there were a number of road projects has allowed the relevant authority to build up a certain expertise in this sector. They anticipate needing less assistance from JASPERS for road projects in future. Conversely, they have not yet been able to develop significant experience of developing environmental projects, and anticipate needed ongoing JASPERS assistance with individual environmental projects into the next programming period.

C4.7.8 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
The Lithuanian Operational Programmes only contain a total of 10 Major projects, spread over a wide variety of sectors. This makes it difficult for the Lithuanian authorities to build up capacity based on experience with individual projects.

C4.7.9 Lithuanian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
One stakeholder stated that that the Commission should “trust” JASPERS more as they are both EU institutions. This was a reference to the perception that the Commission reopens issues that have been “cleared” in a JASPERS Completion Note when it considers funding applications. This type of concern would be addressed by the current proposals that JASPERS take a more formal role in the approval of projects. Conversely other stakeholders maintained that JASPERS should be a source of help and support for Member States rather than assessing their projects. One official stated that Lithuania trusts its own institutions to identify good projects. In this analysis JASPERS priority is to assist Lithuania to make the best possible case for funding, and to act as a source of information on the project and on general conditions in Lithuania for the Commission.

It was clear from all stakeholders that Lithuania has involved JASPERS at an early stage in the development of at least some projects and has had positive results. JASPERS has also been involved successfully in the development of strategies and Operational Programmes. However, the Lithuanian stakeholders emphasised that any JASPERS involvement in developing strategies could only be purely advisory, for example informing them of best practices in developing strategies. Actual decision making as to which projects to include in an investment strategy, must be an exclusive competence of a Member State.
In discussing recommendations for the future role of JASPERS, Lithuanian officials made the very relevant point that any new tasks for JASPERS must be accompanied by the necessary resources and skills for JASPERS.

C4.8 Poland

C4.8.1 Introduction
During a two day visit Warsaw on 5th and 6th June, AECOM held a series of meetings with officials of:

- The Ministry of Regional Development, the Managing Authority for the Polish Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme;
- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, the Intermediate Authority for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The Ministry of the Environment, the Intermediate Authority for EU funded environmental projects in Poland;
- The “Centre for European Transport Projects” an Implementing Body established to assist project beneficiaries;
- The National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, an Implementing body for water and environmental projects;
- PHP PLK S.A. the Polish national rail infrastructure company, Beneficiary;
- GDDKIA, the Directorate General for National Roads and Highways, Beneficiary
- Białystok, Końskie and Sochaczew Local Authorities, Beneficiaries; and,
- University of Warsaw, Beneficiary.

These meetings concerned six case studies and general questions on the impact of JASPERS on the administrative capacity of Poland. These general questions comprised:

- General questions on the impact of JASPERS;
- General Questions on non-Case Study projects; and,
- Specific Questions arising from our work on Tasks 1 and 2

AECOM also met two of the DG REGIO desk officers dealing with Poland and interviewed senior staff of the JASPERS office in Warsaw. In addition, AECOM carried out a workshop in Warsaw on 8th August, 2012 attended by officials from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Poland was represented at the workshop by officials from:

- The Ministry of Regional Development;
- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy;
- The Centre for European Transport Projects;
- The National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management;
- GDDKIA, the Directorate General for National Roads and Highways; and
- PHP PLK S.A. the Polish national rail infrastructure company.
C4.8.2 Polish Involvement with JASPERS
The First Intermediate Report for this evaluation describes the scale of each Member State’s involvement with JASPERS in detail. It is worth emphasising at this stage that Poland is far from typical of the ten Member States considered in detail as part of this evaluation. It is significantly larger than most of the others, and accounted for a disproportionate share of the major projects for which individual applications for funding were made to the DG for Regional Policy. Of the 346 applications for funding for major projects made with JASPERS support during the evaluation period, nearly half (124) were from Poland. Poland also accounts for a large share of the Major projects where applications for funding are made without JASPERS support. During the evaluation period 82 major projects received a positive funding decision from the Commission without the benefit of JASPERS assistance. Three quarters of these non-JASPERS-assisted projects (62) came from Poland. Poland also has considerable resources for the development of projects and the preparation of applications, and significant experience in the development and implementation of large capital investments. It should be noted that, despite this, all stakeholders acknowledged Poland’s need for technical assistance during the period. The DG for Regional Policy pointed out that issues do arise with the preparation of projects by the Polish authorities.

C4.8.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
The results of Task 1 demonstrated that the DG for Regional Policy took less time to process funding applications from Poland for Major projects that had received JASPERS assistance than it did for non-JASPERS Major projects. AECOM had reached a preliminary conclusion that this reflected a positive impact of JASPERS on the development of these projects. This preliminary conclusion was supported by feedback from Member States and the case studies in this Task.

The Polish Managing Authority attributes this timing benefit to the DG for Regional Policy being more trusting of applications that have received JASPERS support, and this leading to faster Decision times. If JASPERS had sufficient resources, the Polish Managing Authority would involve it in most if not all Major projects. JASPERS is currently involved in approximately half of the major projects that have either been developed or are under development by the Polish authorities.

C4.8.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Poland
All of the people we spoke to had a very positive general opinion of JASPERS. The key benefit of JASPERS was felt to be the support it gives to beneficiaries. It was emphasised Beneficiaries have other supports available, such as access to local consultants who can help with the process of obtaining construction permits. The need for JASPERS help varies by sector:

- Roads: The consensus among the Polish stakeholders was that the road authority is now able to prepare projects and applications without JASPERS assistance.
- Rail: Conversely the rail beneficiary is still in need of JASPERS assistance with individual projects and this is expected to persist well into the next programming period.
- Waste: Waste projects are now being developed with private partners. This raises new issues for the Beneficiaries, other Polish authorities and indeed the Commission itself. Some form of advice and support from JASPERS will be needed in the future to deal with these issues.
• Knowledge Economy: These projects raise unique issues, particularly of State Aid. In some cases private firms can seek funding as part of these projects, in nearly all cases some private firms will benefit from the project. JASPERS has had early success helping the Polish authorities to develop these projects, as seen in Case Study 10. However it will have to continue to develop new skills and knowledge to deal with new issues emerging in these projects.

The Managing Authority made the point that the quality of JASPERS advice can vary from expert to expert.

C4.8.5  Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
The Polish regard the key added value from JASPERS, as opposed to other source of technical help, as being its insight into the likely attitude and concerns of the Commission with respect to an application. Since the DG for Regional Policy does not have the resources to engage with the Polish authorities in the preparation of the numerous major projects in its Operational Programmes, JASPERS advice is extremely useful. In theory if the DG for Regional Policy had sufficient resources to engage with the Polish authorities in the preparation of projects, there might not be a need for JASPERS, in the opinion of some Polish stakeholders.

There is a good level of knowledge about JASPERS in the Managing Authority, Intermediate Authorities and Implementing Bodies. Some beneficiaries may be less aware of JASPERS and the assistance it can offer. However, beneficiaries must make applications via an implementing body and intermediate authority, so JASPERS will be brought to the attention of all relevant Beneficiaries where relevant.

As with other Member States, Polish stakeholders pointed out that for JASPERS to function effectively that it must have a successful working relationship with both Polish officials and with the Desk Officers dealing with Poland in the DG for Regional Policy. In order to achieve this, JASPERS must adapt its working methods and the assistance it offers to the capacities and priorities of the Member State, and of the relevant Desk Officers in the DG for Regional Policy. Polish stakeholders praised the way in which JASPERS had adapted itself to the needs of the Polish administration and of the DG for Regional Policy officials dealing with Poland.

Polish Beneficiaries, Implementing Bodies, Intermediate Authorities and the Managing Authority felt that JASPERS was particularly useful in assisting them in presenting projects effectively to the Commission. The Polish authorities felt able to identify potential projects, develop them and choose which ones should be implemented. Although JASPERS help with these aspects of project development could be useful, the key value of JASPERS for Poland was its insight into the Commissions priorities and the help it could give in presenting a project to the Commission in an application for funding.

Another area where JASPERS had brought new and useful knowledge and skills to the Polish administration is the development of projects in the area of the knowledge economy. Case Study 10 in Section 3 is an example of these projects. The two projects discussed in this case study involved public investment to establish new research institutes attached to Polish universities. The idea behind these was to build on the existing deep expertise of Polish university researchers in the areas of medicine, and
chemical and biological sciences, to carry out more applied research that could be commercialised, either by the institutes themselves or by private firms licensing the intellectual property developed. JASPERS brought important insights to the Polish administration into the process of identifying the areas that these new institutes should target, in particular what areas would be likely to be of private firms in research and technology based industries. JASPERS supported the beneficiaries as they sought specialist consulting help to formulate a research strategy for these new institutes. As a result of this commercial focus it was possible to predict, and place a value on, the amount of commercially viable research that could be carried out by these new institutes. This in turn allowed a valuation of the benefits of these projects for the purposes of a funding application to the Commission.

A number of stakeholders pointed out that the work done by JASPERS, and hence the knowledge transferred from JASPERS to Poland, has changed over the programming period. JASPERS initial priority was explaining certain aspects of Polish regulatory procedures to the Commission so that it could properly assess funding applications from the Polish authorities. In particular, JASPERS helped the Commission to understand the significance of the various decisions taken by the Polish environmental authorities which was attached to an application for funding. The EIA Directive had been implemented in Poland in a way that led to a need for several separate impact assessments and permissions from environmental authorities for different parts of a single project. The Commission needed to understand the Polish system to ensure that it provided the same level of protection and safeguards as a single EIA of the project as a whole.

In the earlier part of the programming period, JASPERS advice on cost benefit analysis was especially valuable for beneficiaries and other Polish authorities. The various beneficiaries and public authorities had extensive prior experience in the development of investment projects on a purely domestic basis and for project part funded by the Instrument for Pre Accession States. However, cost benefit analysis had not played a large part in the development of these projects, so the Polish authorities started the programming period with a relatively limited knowledge of cost benefit analysis. The calculation of funding gaps had also presented problems early in the programming period, and JASPERS help had allowed the Polish authorities to develop the necessary skills in this area.

C4.8.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Polish Authorities

Polish officials had particular praise for fieldwork carried out by JASPERS staff. They had found that visits to specific projects by JASPERS staff were a particularly valuable source of additional technical knowledge. The technical knowledge transferred would go beyond the specific project that was the subject of the visit. For example designers would gain valuable insights into approaches in other Member States from the JASPERS staff, and this new knowledge could be very widely applicable. The Polish National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water management also believed that interactions between JASPERS staff and Polish design engineers promoted awareness of and adherence to international quality standards, and encouraged Polish engineers and project promoters to seek internationally recognised quality certifications. In general, interaction between JASPERS staff and Polish engineers, particularly as part of “field work” by JASPERS staff, promoted the adoption of best international practices by Polish engineers for all of their work.
Poland has had positive experiences with Horizontal Assignments as a way to build the knowledge base and capacity of the Polish public service. Examples of horizontal assignments included:

- JASPERS had developed a useful guide to cost benefit analysis, usually referred to as the “blue book;
- A comprehensive “case study” of the Polish gas sector, predicting future use etc. This is being used as reference material by consultants preparing projects in the sector
- A seminar for rail sector beneficiaries to pass on lessons from experience securing approval for road projects.

The Polish authorities had already identified a number of priority areas for future horizontal assignments, for example.

- Guidance on financial and economic analysis of projects that generate revenue, e.g. public transport services, water charges, waste charges; and, related to this,
- Treatment of projects that are to provide a “Service of General Economic Interest” (i.e. will be in receipt of an ongoing subsidy to allow them to provide a non profitable service that is considered socially necessary).
- How to treat compensation for the Public Service Obligation in the financial and economic analysis. Address question of whether a private firm can be entrusted with a SGEI.

C4.8.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other

The two implementing bodies in Poland for the Infrastructure and Environment Operational Programme play a key role in ensuring that projects learn from each other. These bodies are:

- The Centre for European Transport Projects; and,
- The National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management.

The role of these bodies includes ensuring that useful knowledge gained from JASPERS support in one project is applied wherever it is relevant. For example, the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management holds a general meeting with all beneficiaries twice a year. Significant points arising in each project and issues arising in competing application forms for each project are discussed by all beneficiaries. This process ensures that key learning and insights from one projects, including those gained from JASPERS assistance, are disseminated to all beneficiaries.

In the Polish Knowledge Economy sector JASPERS is undertaking a Horizontal Assignment involving the transfer of technical know-how and sharing this know-how within the community of Beneficiaries. This includes JASPERS meeting with groups of beneficiaries in order to share experiences and offer advice. This secures a sharing of knowledge between projects.
C4.8.8  **Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer**

In common with several other Member States, there was a broad consensus among Polish stakeholders that JASPERS working only in English acts as an impediment to the transfer of knowledge from JASPERS to the Polish authorities. This created difficulties when Polish officials or Polish consultants working on project development had to communicate with JASPERS in writing, rather than being able to have informal oral contacts in a common language.

Many stakeholders also found that some JASPERS staff did not have sufficient knowledge of Polish national laws and practices to ensure that their advice was practical in a Polish context. They were particularly concerned that JASPERS would propose solutions to issues that arose in a Polish project, based on successful experience in projects in other Member States. However these solutions might not be possible under the Polish legal system or might simply be incompatible with prevailing norms and practices in Poland. An example was given of Polish practices for the supervision of construction sites. In Polish practice, project supervisors are typically employees of the main construction contractor. In some other Member States the project supervisor is completely independent of the contractor, and the services of the project supervisor are obtained through a separate tendering process. In some projects JASPERS staff were concerned that construction and project supervision services were being procured through the same tendering process and would be provided by the same firm. These JASPERS staff would strongly recommend splitting the tender into two lots to procure a completely independent site supervisor. This recommendation was not necessary to ensure compliance with the relevant EU rules on site safety and supervision and would not be practical to implement in the Polish market.

The Managing Authority made the point that it takes responsibility for many aspects of preparing applications for EU funding, so much relevant knowledge about this aspect of project preparation is accumulated by the Managing Authority and applied to all major projects.

There was a consensus that prior to the current programming period that staff turnover was an issue for the Polish authorities. This used to cause a number of problems with the development of investment projects, including a loss of experience and knowledge as the personnel dealing with investments changed. The Polish authorities do not believe that staff turnover in Polish institutions is an issue in the current programming period. Turnover of staff is at a low level. Staff movements that do take place are often within institutions, so that knowledge gained by a public servant in one post can be used in another. The Managing Authority even suggested that staff turnover in the DG for Regional Policy now presents a greater problem for project development.

C4.8.9  **Polish Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS**

With respect to the current Operational Programme, the types of advice and assistance that Poland requires from JASPERS are evolving as the programming period progresses. Most major projects in the current Operational Programme have been prepared and are being assessed at a national level. Polish institutions now want help from JASPERS on procurement and project implementation. In particular, there is a need for JASPERS help on the complex procurement and implementation issues that arise in Knowledge Economy projects.

The Polish authorities also recognised the potential for JASPERS to give useful guidance on the
preparation for the next funding period from 2014 on.

As described above the Polish authorities see that main role of JASPERS as being to assist in the presentation of projects, which have already reached an advanced stage of development, to the Commission. They expect JASPERS involvement in the preparation of applications to speed the process of obtaining Commission approval for these projects. They were disappointed that projects that had been, in their view, “approved” by JASPERS went on to be examined in detail by the Commission. In this context they welcomed proposals for JASPERS to play a more formal role in the approval of projects.

The Polish authorities felt that JASPERS sometimes interpreted its mandate in a narrow way and concentrated on reviewing applications at the expense of contributing to projects at an earlier stage of development. They valued the contributions that JASPERS was able to make to projects when they were at an early stage of development and wanted a clarification that this work formed part of JASPERS role.

For this funding period, the majority of JASPERS work had been on projects at a late stage of development. Typically the design work would be completed, and JASPERS would be involved in presenting the project to the Commission in an application for funding. The Polish authorities agreed that, in principle, this limited the scope for JASPERS to improve the quality of projects themselves, as opposed to improving the presentation of projects in applications. They pointed out that, due the long preparation period needed for any large infrastructure projects it was inevitable that many of the projects funded in the 2007-2013 period would have to have started development well in advance of the launch of JASPERS in 2007. They intended to involve JASPERS more in the early stage of project development for projects in the next funding period. The Polish Authorities also intended to involve JASPERS in the preparation of the Operational Programmes for the next programming period. The authorities emphasised that the selection of potential projects for inclusion in an Operational Programme must be an exclusive competence of a Member State, and that any involvement of JASPERS would have to be on a purely advisory basis. Nonetheless they expected that JASPERS advice would improve the selection of projects.

C4.9 Romania

C4.9.1 Introduction

During a three day visit to Romania on commencing on 6th June 2012, AECOM held a series of meetings with officials of:

- The Ministry for European Policy; and
- The Ministry for Environment and Forests – the Managing Authority for solid waste, wastewater and water projects which formed the bulk of the projects advanced by Romania.

Meetings were also held with the regional offices (intermediate bodies) at Cluj, Mures and Bacau of the Department of Environment and Forests and with Cluj and Bacau County officials and Aquaserv (Mures County) who were the beneficiaries for the case study projects. These meetings concerned two case studies and general questions on the impact of JASPERS on the project quality and administrative
capacity of Romania. AECOM also met the DG for Regional Policy desk officer dealing with Romania and interviewed senior staff of the JASPERS office in Bucharest.

In addition, AECOM organised a workshop in Bucharest on 8th August, 2012 attended by officials from Romania and Bulgaria. Romania was represented at the workshop by officials from the:
- Ministry of European Policy;
- Ministry of Environment and Forests;
- Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure;
- Romanian National Company for Railways; and
- Ministry of Economy, Commerce and Business Environment

C4.9.2 Romanian Involvement with JASPERS
Romania made extensive use of JASPERS, receiving assistance for 56 major and 26 non-major projects as well as 29 horizontal assignments. Accordingly, Romania may be viewed as the major user of JASPERS within the Member States. Romania was by far the most frequent user of JASPERS for horizontal assignments account for over one third of such assignments. With regard to project related advice, the Romanian authorities sought JASPERS assistance very largely at the project application stage.

With regard to major projects, 36 were in the environment sector and 10 in transport. For non-major projects, JASPERS assistance was most often sought for knowledge economy projects.

Romania was notable in bringing forward 10 major projects without JASPERS assistance.

C4.9.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
Project timelines

When presented with analysis on project timelines, the Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forests emphasised the need to consider the longer-term involvement of JASPERS and time taken to develop projects which are not reflected in the DG for Regional Policy durations for Major Projects. It was highlighted that developing a project up to the stage of submitting an application can take a number of years and can be influenced by a wide range of factors that may cause delay. Specific issues relating to different sectors and the size of sample were also thought to influence timescales for Major Projects.

Romanian delegates highlighted that delays as a result of the DG for Regional Policy interruptions were still occurring, although AECOM analysis identified that the average durations for these interruptions fell by a third over the evaluation period. It was suggested that as well as receiving JASPERS support in responding to these interruptions, a further factor behind reductions in delays may have been that JASPERS support resulted in interruptions being less demanding. Less complex interruption queries were potentially greater in significance than reducing the number of interruptions.

In Romania, the DG for Regional Policy for Regional Policy durations for non-assisted projects were actually less than for JASPERS assisted projects. FB highlighted that there were three possible factors that may have influenced this occurrence:
Due to the number of environmental projects, JASPERS did not have the capacity to assist with all projects; therefore, for half of the projects Romania’s Ministry of Environment outsourced work to specialist consultants. JASPERS had played a role in these projects but as there was no Completion Note, this was not reflected in the analysis;

Projects selected for JASPERS assistance were more likely to be challenging than non-assisted projects; and

At the start of the programme period the durations for projects were longer as the Romanian authorities and JASPERS developed capacity in new areas. As many of the environment projects have been similar, consultants working on non-assisted projects benefitted from this learning process.

For these reasons, the Romanian authorities considered that wider contextual factors should be acknowledged when discussing project timescales and that value could be gained from considering the whole lifespan of a project, rather than just the timescales relating to Commission.

 Interruption Queries

The analysis of projects had shown that the number of interruptions had decreased over time, but that the subject of the queries did not necessarily relate to areas where JASPERS had assisted. However, and it was acknowledged by the Romanian authorities that it was a learning process for all of those involved. In particular, it was highlighted that there were a significant number of interruptions relating to environmental matters which resulted in Romanian Ministries commissioning their own reviews in this area.

C4.9.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Romania

The Romanian authorities had a generally a positive opinion of the quality of JASPERS support. However, there was a view that the quantity and quality of support in the JASPERS start up phase was deficient. This was due in their opinion to the fact that JASPERS were in a start up phase and to the large number of projects that the Romanian authorities had developed to application stage.

As JASPERS consolidated however, their view is that the quality of advice that they offered improved. It is now deemed “acceptable” particularly for transport and environment issues. JASPERS have outsourced expertise where they felt deficient. It was, however, acknowledged that issues relating to quality need to take into account the availability and quality of information provided by Member States.

In the next planning period 2013 to 2020, the emphasis will shift to energy and competitiveness, and there was concern that JASPERS strengths might not be aligned to these issues.

JASPERS support on environmental issues was a particular problem in the early stages of the Programme Period. It is considered that the ability of the Member State and JASPERS to respond to stringent environmental requirements depends on the capacity within the organisations respective environmental teams. The quality of advice from JASPERS on environmental issues has improved substantially in recent times.

It was also felt there was a disconnect between the DG for Regional Policy and the DG Environment, who have provided detailed assessments of projects from an environmental viewpoint. It was considered that
greater co-ordination and earlier recognition of the environmental requirements would assist Member States and JASPERS.

Representatives from Romania suggested for some topics or projects, JASPERS appeared to be less willing to provide support. The Romanian authorities considered that the ongoing relationship with JASPERS would benefit from a more open and flexible approach that takes into account the respective capacities of the Member States and also JASPERS. It was emphasised that it is vital that the Member States are made aware as soon as possible of the level of expertise and available support within JASPERS to avoid delays in the application process. Member States also suggested that they would rather have sustained and comprehensive support for a proportion of projects, and in areas where JASPERS has capacity, rather than a piecemeal approach across the full range of projects.

Romanian authorities suggested that where JASPERS is not able to fully address queries from Member States then beneficiaries should be provided with sufficient notice so that they can seek additional support. Overall it was considered that there was now perhaps more realistic expectations of the support available from JASPERS and that the Romanian Ministry of Environment saw JASPERS as one of a number of tools to assist project development.

C4.9.5  Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative

The early view of the Romanian authorities was that JASPERS were the eyes and ears of the Commission, so there was not full trust. Also, because many projects were in an advanced stage of planning when JASPERS support commenced, the focus of that support was very much on the project application process. These factors limited the capacity of JASPERS to influence project quality.

JASPERS was regarded as having a particularly positive impact on project timing and absorption of funding. Projects under the Ministry for Environment and Forestry were subject to monthly meetings of an Evaluation Group to include Ministry officials, the feasibility study consultants and separate technical consultants appointed by the Ministry. JASPERS were usually involved and this process proved to be very successful, as problems with the project planning and the application form were ironed out prior to submission. Also the DG for Regional Policy official often did an informal review of the documentation before the application was submitted. Romania achieved very good project progress and approval rates in 2010 and 2011 as a result of these arrangements. The contribution of JASPERS to getting the application form right was particularly noted.

The Romanian authorities noted that the role of JASPERS is changing, with greater impacts on project quality. This is because of somewhat earlier involvement in project planning. The Romanian Ministry of Economy, Commerce and Business Environment provided a number of examples of energy projects where they believed that project quality had been improved by earlier JASPERS support. This JASPERS support related to:

- State Aid Issues – JASPERS has provided valuable expertise relating to State Aid for a broadband infrastructure project along with wider technical support. In addition, JASPERS assisted with developing submissions for eight large combustion plants.
- Research and Development - JASPERS provided extensive support on a research and development project for a new bridge. Technical assistance was provided throughout the application period and it is
considered to have helped reduce the time taken to submit the application and reduced the number and difficulty of interruption queries. The process of JASPERS assistance was enhanced through early involvement.

- Discussions with Financial Institutions - JASPERS assisted the Ministry in discussions with the European Investment Bank and the World Investment Bank relating to funding absorption. DM acknowledged that there was a lack of knowledge in this area within the Ministry and as such JASPERS assistance was invaluable.

C4.9.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Romanian Authorities

Given the relative late involvement of JASPERS in the project planning process, the potential for transfer of knowledge through project work was limited. Also that fact that the Ministry for Environment and Forestry appointed external consultants to provide technical advice obviously impact on JASPERS role.

However, both the Ministry for Environment and Forestry and the regional intermediate bodies made reference to the strong support role provided by JASPERS in the context of horizontal assignments. The work requested from JASPERS followed the Romanian Government Ordinance HG No.28 of 2008, which set out methodological rules for the elaboration and approval of technical and economic documentation for investment projects.

The Romanian authorities suggested there was potential for improving the exchange of information including between Member States. A desire for greater dissemination of guidance was also identified.

C4.9.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other

It was considered that considerable cross project learning had occurred, particularly in respect of environmental projects. This was due to a number of factors:

- The fact that many projects on the environment sector were identical, with water, wastewater and solid waste projects being developed for almost all Romanian counties;
- The recruitment of external technical expertise in addition to JASPERS to manage feasibility studies; and
- The awarding of multiple feasibility studies to each feasibility study consultant, facilitating learning on the part of the consultant.

With respect to the JASPERS involvement, as this was confine largely to the project application process, it was largely knowledge in this area that was transferred.

C4.9.8 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer

Staff turnover is not a huge issue for Romanian officials centrally, more so in intermediate bodies. The fact that beneficiaries were not included in the project planning process (except to review documents) is a barrier to transfer of knowledge to them. It should be understood that the decision not to involve them relates to the fact that local authorities were disparate and not large enough to engage in planning.
There was a process of setting up water companies to achieve the required scale and giving one local authority a lead role in planning solid waste projects.

Language barriers were not regarded as significant, as much of the planning was organised centrally where English speaking capability was readily available. This could change, if beneficiaries became more central to the process.

### C4.9.9 Romanian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS

The Romanian authorities were of the view that the new programming period offered opportunities to extend the scope of JASPERS involvement in relation to project planning. Indeed, this was already happening through involvement of JASPERS in advising on strategic plans and programmes and on the terms of reference for feasibility studies. With regard to strategies and programmes, it was emphasised that these were ultimately a matter for decision by the Member States.

The Romanian authorities indicated that they would not be acquiring external technical assistance in addition to JASPERS for the future. Thus, they would be more reliant on JASPERS. However, it was suggested that based upon the experience gained from the initial programme period, Romania’s Ministry of Environment will not seek to use JASPERS on every project. JASPERS should therefore focus less on individual projects and instead seek to provide high-level horizontal expertise to be used by beneficiaries and consultants. Provision of templates and guidance would provide greater scope for beneficiaries to complete applications with greater independence.

The Romanian authorities suggested that overall the interaction between JASPERS and Member States could be strengthened through clearer definition of roles and responsibilities, lines of communication and requirements for information. Prompter feedback is considered desirable as although there are existing forms, a more direct and flexible approach would support changing circumstances, such as changes in JASPERS personnel, and enable Member States to respond earlier. Where new staff are recruited by JASPERS, early contact with Member States would enable the JASPERS official to gain familiarity with local conditions and improve working relationships. Improved channels of communication between JASPERS appointed consultants and Member States would also help address current barriers when providing feedback.

MD suggested that a degree of flexibility was required for timescales to account for delays caused by JASPERS. Preference was therefore given to setting timescales for delivery internally. There was also a further request for earlier acknowledgement from JASPERS where they lacked the capacity or resources to assist Member States.

It was considered that the scope for JASPERS to influence organisational structures would be more limited as there are significant political factors and established structures that would need to be considered.

It was suggested that JASPERS could play a more proactive role in training to ensure that training and guidance is in place to provide beneficiaries with the necessary skills to address issues before they arise. Existing examples of forward planning included an action relating to training in this year’s Romanian
environment Action Plan. An ex-ante agreement is also in place for the Member State covering EIA training.

The Romanian authorities acknowledged that JASPERS does not have the resources to provide training on all areas, especially if provided with additional responsibilities elsewhere. Resources should therefore be concentrated on areas where there is greatest benefit, with particular value gained from transferring technical knowledge and providing expertise in areas which are less developed (e.g. new technologies, climate change adaption and renewable energy sources).

C4.10 Slovakia

C4.10.1 Introduction
During a one day visit to Slovakia on the 6th June 2012, AECOM held meetings with officials from the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works.

In addition, AECOM organised a workshop in Prague on 14th August, 2012 attended by officials from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Slovakia was represented at the workshop by officials from the:

- Ministry of Environment; and
- Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works.

C4.10.2 Slovakian Involvement with JASPERS
Slovakia made moderate use of JASPERS, receiving assistance for 16 major and five non major projects as well as two horizontal assignments. All major projects brought forward by Slovakia were JASPERS assisted. With regard to major project related advice, the Slovakian authorities sought JASPERS assistance largely at the project application stage only.

Of the 16 major projects, nine were in the transport sector and seven in environment.

C4.10.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
The Slovakian authorities found it difficult to prove that JASPERS had reduced the time take to approve projects, as they as they did not have a comparable set of projects to benchmark against. However, their view was that benefits in terms of reduced timelines had probably arisen.

In the view of the Slovakian authorities, a major source of delay was a failure of JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy to co-ordinate. The DG for Regional Policy often interrupted the process on issues that JASPERS had already approved.

C4.10.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Slovakia
Overall the Slovakian authorities are very happy with the support received from JASPERS. The co-operative and open dialogue that has occurred between organisations has led to faster project development and submissions to the DG for Regional Policy.

There is a view that JASPERS officials have been helpful. JASPERS staff has responded promptly to queries for the Slovakian authorities. Personal visits from JASPERS staff were highlighted as being
positive aspects of the assistance and there was thought to be a good relationship between Slovakian staff and JASPERS staff.

C4.10.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
JASPERS support has made a significant contribution to improving the quality of projects. JASPERS input has been particularly useful for specific issues where there is less knowledge and experience within Slovakia or for new issues such as those relating to air quality.

The Slovakian authorities indicated that there have been instances where JASPERS involvement has led to changes to the scope or design of projects. It was suggested that early involvement is more likely to influence the design of projects and is more beneficial to projects as it reduces the likelihood of having to modify the design at a later date.

JASPERS has provided input on cost estimation although the extent of support has varied by project. The provision of benchmarks by JASPERS was valued. However, it was also acknowledged that it can be difficult to compare projects.

C4.10.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Slovakian Authorities
JASPERS has provided significant and consistent levels of support and advice throughout the programme. This has occurred through assistance that has led to improved Major project submissions and development of knowledge and skills within Slovakia. The Slovakian authorities considered that overall the input from JASPERS has been of great value to project development and increased capacity amongst Slovakian staff.

An example of an area where JASPERS support has proved invaluable is in relation to cost-benefit analysis. The complexities of the DG for Regional Policy requirements and limited experience within Slovakia had resulted in weaker responses in this area. JASPERS provided horizontal support including the development of a cost-benefit manual to guide future submissions. Although the timescales for developing the manual were significant it would have taken longer if the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Public Works undertook this task independently. It was considered that the technical input from JASPERS had resulted in guidance that has led to significant improvements in quality, reduced timescales and increased capacity in this area.

Horizontal support has been ongoing throughout the programme period and was described as being “very useful”. JASPERS has provided information to the managing authority which can then be disseminated amongst project staff. Of particular value has been assistance with feasibility studies (non project specific) and other research used to inform project development. Assistance with developing capacity in Environmental Impact Assessments was cited as an example of where transport projects have benefitted.

C4.10.7 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other
The Slovakian authorities suggested that possibly of greatest value was JASPERS ability to share knowledge from other member states. Experience from other countries has been utilised by the Ministry of Transport to enhance the planning of their projects.
C4.10.8 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
The Slovakian authorities indicated that language barriers have made communication more difficult. Staff mobility is also a problem. Lack of knowledge of national legislation, and particularly environmental legislation, has hindered the possibility of transfer of knowledge in that area.

C4.10.9 Slovakian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
The Slovakian authorities indicate that anticipate that they will continue to use JASPERS in the same manner as they have in the past. Slovakia was uncertain as to whether they would reduce the amount of assistance they sought: although they have developed capacity in some areas, if there are new issues or revisions to the DG for Regional Policy’ requirements, then additional support may be sought.

The Slovakian authorities reiterated that currently support provided by JASPERS is productive as JASPERS are able to promptly respond to queries. If there is a widening of JASPERS brief, it is essential that there is sufficient capacity within JASPERS to provide the same level of support.

The Slovakian authorities suggested that closer co-ordination between JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy would reduce uncertainty and delay and that JASPERS should have a more prominent role in setting eligibility and approval criteria. If JASPERS led the development of the application forms, this would decrease the number of instances where suggestions made by JASPERS were overruled by the DG for Regional Policy.

The Slovakian authorities believe that there are practical obstacles to early involvement, such as stage of planning process and political opposition. Within these constraints, they are seeking to involve JASPERS at earlier stages. Already, they have involved JASPERS in strategy development e.g. in development of a national waste strategy.

The Slovakian authorities will continue to need JASPERS support for project applications. Having said that, they would like to see JASPERS involve in more horizontal assignments, such as in training.

Procurement was identified as being an area where further assistance from JASPERS would be advantageous.

C4.11 Slovenia

C4.11.1 Introduction
During a one day visit to Slovenia on the 13th June 2012, AECOM held meetings with the Hungarian National Development Agency, with officials from the:

- Ministry of Economic Development and Technology;
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning; and
- Slovenian Motorway Company.

The Slovenian authorities were unable to attend a workshop in Budapest on 8th August, 2012 due to the absence of staff on annual leave.
C4.11.2 Slovenian Involvement with JASPERS
Slovenia made moderate use of JASPERS, receiving assistance for eight major and ten non major projects as well as two horizontal assignments. Only one major project brought forward by Slovenia was unassisted by JASPERS. With regard to major project related advice, the Slovenian authorities sought JASPERS assistance at the project application stage only.

Of the major projects, four were in the transport sector, three in environment and one in the knowledge economy.

C4.11.3 Testing Preliminary Findings
With regard to the impact of JASPERS on timelines, the Slovenian authorities drew attention to their experience on the Silvnica – Drazenci motorway project. JASPERS support was sought for the Beltinci – Lendava motorway project, but not for the Silvnica – Drazenci section. At the time, Slovenia considered that JASPERS support was not required for the Silvnica – Drazenci motorway as their view was that sufficient knowledge had been gained from the Beltinci – Lendava project. In reality, Silvnica – Drazenci took longer to reach the approval stage than expected – this mainly resulted from technical issues raised following an independent check of the application form (the review was undertaken by a private consultancy, commissioned by the DG for Regional Policy). The response time to the DG for Regional Policy queries was also longer than for the JASPERS assisted project.

C4.11.4 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS in Slovenia
The focus of JASPERS support for major projects has been on the preparation of application form. The Slovenian authorities’ view of JASPERS assistance is very positive. Slovenia has benefited from the quality of the technical advice provided and the level of service in terms of response time to queries is regarded as very good.

Experience from previous projects where JASPERS raised issues relating to feasibility reports in the process of reviewing the application forms has prompted Slovenia to seek to extend the role of JASPERS in terms of individual projects. Addressing issues relating to feasibility is clearly challenging at the application form stage, so it is considered to be beneficial to involve JASPERS earlier. It is now considered that the best time to involve JASPERS is at the feasibility stage of a project. Slovenia is now issuing feasibility reports to JASPERS for projects prior to the submission of the application form. The advice provided by JASPERS in relation to scheme feasibility has also been found to be valuable and informative.

C.11.5 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
Given the focus of JASPERS on the latter stages of the project development process, the Slovenian authorities consider the scope for influencing the quality of projects was limited.

C.11.6 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to the Slovenian Authorities
The Slovenian authorities drew attention to horizontal assignments as a conduit through which technical knowledge was transferred from JASPERS. Reference was made to a workshop held in Slovenia on cost benefit analysis, which included presentations from JASPERS staff. Knowledge was also transferred
through the production of Slovenian guidelines for non-major projects, which, it is anticipated, will improve future project development and delivery.

It was also noted that while Slovenia will continue to use JASPERS support for all major projects, it is anticipated that the level of support required will reduce following knowledge transfer and the build up of internal capacity. It was stressed that the technical requirements and expectations in terms of quality have increased markedly since 2007. If this change had not arisen it is likely that JASPERS assistance would no longer be required.

C4.11.7 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
The Slovenian authorities note that language barriers can present a problem. Only one member of JASPERS staff dealing with Slovenia is Slovenian. Procedures that are specific to Slovenia are also a barrier to involving JASPERS earlier in the project development process.

Staff turnover was not seen to be a barrier to knowledge transfer.

C4.11.8 Slovenian Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
As identified above, JASPERS input is regarded by the Slovenian authorities as valuable, in terms of reviewing feasibility studies and supporting the development of application forms. However, it is considered that issues relating to the scope and design of individual projects should be dealt with by the Member State. Slovenia would like to receive continued in-depth support from JASPERS in the analysis and presentation of projects for approval and funding.

At a more strategic level, Slovenia is intending to involve JASPERS in the preparation of the Operational Programmes (in a reviewing capacity) for the next programming period - this was not undertaken for the period 2007-13. It is anticipated that the comments received will relate more to the quality of the document itself rather than challenging the inclusion of individual projects. Slovenia intends to continue to prepare the national programmes independently of JASPERS.

C4.12 Overview of the Feedback from Member States and Project Beneficiaries

C4.12.1 Introduction
This Section draws together the feedback of the Member States and beneficiaries with regard to the issues raised in the consultation process. It is worth repeating that this feedback is reproduced as it was received from the Member States. These statements are not endorsed by AECOM.

C4.12.2 Testing Preliminary Findings
The preliminary findings with regard to timelines established that the time taken for the DG for Regional Policy to decide on a JASPERS assisted major project was less than that for an unassisted project.

While most Member States accepted that JASPERS had had a beneficial effect on the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, the authorities in the Czech Republic and Hungary did not perceive this to be the case. In their view, the fact that the DG for Regional Policy desk officers often queried the same issues, on which JASPERS had advised, led to interruption delays. This, in addition to the fact that JASPERS
involvement created delays in the process of developing applications, meant that the overall project planning duration was extended for JASPERS assisted projects.

Other Member States, while sharing the Czech and Hungarian authorities’ views on the apparent duplication of JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy effort, nevertheless believed that JASPERS involvement has a beneficial effect on the project planning and decision-making duration.

A number of Member States cautioned against relying exclusively on the statistical analysis of timelines for the following reasons:

- The fact that JASPERS assisted projects might differ from unassisted projects in terms of their complexity: contradictory views were expressed by different Member States viz. that JASPERS assisted projects would tend to be simpler and more complex.
- JASPERS advice was sometimes rejected by managing authorities or beneficiaries, so that the completed application forms for JASPERS assisted projects could be deficient through no fault of JASPERS;
- Advice on JASPERS assisted projects tended to spillover to unassisted projects and this would bias the estimated benefit of JASPERS downward;
- Projects in different sectors were more complex than others, so that there was a need to analyse the impact of JASPERS on a sector by sector basis, otherwise counterintuitive results in terms of decision durations would occur; and
- Projects that were not assisted by JASPERS could have acquired technical assistance from other sources – a factor that the statistical analysis did not encompass.

C4.12.3 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS
Member States, almost without exception, have a very positive view of the quality of the advice offered by JASPERS and the personnel involved. JASPERS officials are regarded as co-operative, flexible, and having good communication skills. The quick response time of JASPERS and its willingness to undertake site visits and face to face consultations were regarded as particularly valuable.

At the same time, it is recognised by several Member States that the quality of JASPERS advice was somewhat deficient in the early stages of the JASPERS initiative. In this regard, problems with the quality of advice on environmental matters were cited on a number of occasions, although progress was seen to have been made in this area too. Another issue cited was the difficulty of providing high quality advice, in some circumstances, in the absence of a full understanding of national legislative frameworks.

C4.12.4 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative
The general view of the Member States is that JASPERS had contributed significantly to the development of comprehensive and mature applications for funding. As indicated above, the majority view is that this speeded up decision-making and, ultimately, absorption of funding. This impact would have been further enhanced if the DG for Regional Policy had attributed greater weight to JASPERS inputs. JASPERS inputs into understanding EU legislation and requirements, project appraisal, environmental issues, and funding eligibility issues were particularly noted.

Because of the late stage of involvement of JASPERS in the project planning process, the impact of JASPERS on the quality of the project itself was more limited. However, it was recognised that on some
occasions, JASPERS had identified issues in the design of projects that had required Members States to revisit feasibility studies and review aspects of project design. Another valuable contribution of JASPERS had been support in developing a programmatic approach. This occurred where the DG for Regional Policy questioned the strategic context of a project and the Member State was required to engage in ex-post development of a programme or master plan. This allowed managing authorities to deflect beneficiaries from pursuing projects that were poor value for money. Indeed the role of JASPERS in interpreting the potential for projects to gain funding was seen as a means of de-prioritising projects that had poor strategic basis or were poor value for money.

The contribution of JASPERS to improving the project planning process in general was highly regarded. In this context, it should be noted that some Member States had at the outset a poor understanding of the project planning process and JASPERS was instrumental in advising on suitable approaches.

The role of JASPERS in enhancing Members States project planning capability was recognised and is further treated below.

**C4.12.5 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to Member States’ Authorities**

The Members States acknowledged that transfer of technical knowledge had occurred through project related JASPERS assistance. In particular, the focus on advice at the application stage had led to a much greater understanding of both EU legislation, the requirements the funding eligibility appraisal process, cost-benefit techniques, and EIA procedures. An increase in the knowledge base among beneficiaries and sectoral managing authorities as a result of JASPERS assistance was widely noted.

However, transfer of knowledge in relation to overall project planning was seen to have been restricted by the involvement of JASPERS at a stage when the feasibility study had typically been completed. Another issue raised was that where the feasibility study and application was progressed by beneficiaries, the latter were often involved in developing projects on an intermittent basis, which hindered the transfer of knowledge through project-related JASPERS assistance.

The Member State authorities highlighted the role of horizontal assignments as a vehicle for knowledge transfer. Horizontal activities such as the development of guidance documentation and training were highly valued. Some Member States in turn took specific steps to disseminate JASPERS acquired knowledge to the wider project planning community nationally e.g. through training activities and nationally specific guidance documents.

**C4.12.6 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other**

Member States tended to work through either national or broad sectorally-based managing authorities (e.g. in relation to transport and environmental projects). This approach facilitated knowledge transfer across projects. The relevant authorities were charged with the task of ensuring that cross project learning took place and beneficiaries within sectors learned from preceding projects.

At the project beneficiary level, the acquisition of knowledge was enhanced where national organisations such as roads administrations or railway companies were responsible for project development and where several projects were progressed.
One specific initiative which facilitated cross-project learning was the adoption of a “model project” approach in several countries that had large numbers of projects seeking funding. Under this approach, JASPERS assistance was sought for a particular project and the knowledge gained was then applied to subsequent projects. This process was facilitated where a number of virtually identical projects were being brought forward e.g. county level solid waste projects. In one case, this approach was further enhanced by the appointment of the same external consultant to more than one feasibility study.

In general terms, Member States believed that increased international transfer of knowledge across projects was possible and that current initiatives to develop this aspect of learning should be promoted.

C4.12.7 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
It has been noted above that where Member States bring forward relatively few projects, the scope for transfer of knowledge is limited. In half of the Member States, the lack of JASPERS staff with local language skills was cited as a factor, particularly with respect to transfer of knowledge to beneficiaries, where knowledge of English is not as prevalent.

Staff turnover was seen as a barrier among a minority of Member States. There was a general view that this issue was of greater importance in the past, but that the problem had diminished of late. It was also the view of a number of Member States that where individual stakeholders lost staff, it was often to other actors in the project planning community, so that acquired skills were not lost to the overall system.

C4.12.8 Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
With regard to the role of JASPERS in the development of programmes and master plans, most Member States took the view that JASPERS support in this area would be valuable. However, there were concerns that such support should be initiated by the Member State and should be advisory in nature. It was stressed that project prioritisation and programme development is ultimately a matter for the Member State. A minority of Member States indicated that in practice there were a number of political and institutional barriers to expanding JASPERS role in this fashion.

Early involvement of JASPERS in individual project planning received general and less circumscribed support. This could involve advising on the terms of reference for feasibility studies and monitoring feasibility study progress. However, Member States were adamant that involving JASPERS in this way needed to be accompanied by measures to ensure that the JASPERS input was given full weight by the Commission and the process of Commission officials raising issues that JASPERS had implicitly improved should cease.

A number of larger Members States were of the view that reliance on JASPERS at funding application stage could diminish. This view was not universally held however, with smaller Members States indicating the need for JASPERS continued and significant support in this area. It was also the view of Member States that the new programming period would result in a different mix of projects, and that JASPERS support at the funding application stage would be important at least initially.

It was recognised that JASPERS could face challenges in ensuring that it had the required skill mix to deal with the new sectors and projects that would arise in the next programming period.
A common theme among Member States is that JASPERS input was needed in the post project planning stage and, in particular, in respect of procurement issues.

There was a widespread view that JASPERS should emphasise horizontal assignments to a greater degree, with increased training activities being referenced. The need for JASPERS to focus on cross-national transfer of learning and resources was noted.

There was a general view that while the nature of JASPERS support could and should change somewhat, the level of JASPERS involvement would not diminish. There was recognition that the resources available to JASPERS were limited and that JASPERS would have to prioritise its future actions carefully.
Section D: Conclusions
Section D: Conclusions

D1 Introduction
This Second Intermediate Report documents the results of Tasks 3 and 4 of an evaluation of JASPERS commissioned from AECOM by the DG for Regional Policy of the European Commission. The main elements of these Tasks were:

- Preparation of 10 case studies of Major projects. Each case study considered a project developed with JASPERS assistance and a comparable project developed without JASPERS assistance;
- Desk based analysis of the Action Plans agreed between Member States and JASPERS and the feedback forms on JASPERS completed by Member States and officials from the DG for Regional Policy; and,
- Feedback from stakeholders obtained from a programme of interviews and workshops.

Preliminary results of each of these are set out in the sub-sections below:

D2 Case Studies
A number of general lessons can be drawn from the case studies on the impact of JASPERS. The principal results are:

- In many cases JASPERS was involved in the process of project development relatively late. Often its involvement was confined to the preparation of an application for funding for the DG for Regional Policy. However there are clear illustrations from the case studies of how JASPERS assistance with the preparation of applications speeding up the process of the DG for Regional Policy considering applications and deciding to fund the projects. The Czech railway, Slovenian road, Polish rail, Polish road 2 and Polish Water and Wastewater 2 cases are all examples of this impact of JASPERS work.
- The case studies also illustrate the impact of JASPERS assistance on projects going beyond the projects in question, to have a positive impact on project that were not the subject of specific JASPERS assistance. The Czech rail case study is an example of this type of impact.
- The case studies reveal a recognition among Member States that late involvement of JASPERS may miss an opportunity to improve the quality of projects themselves, and moves by Member States to involve JASPERS earlier in the development of projects. For example the Slovenian road case study indicates a desire amongst the Slovenian authorities to involve JASPERS in project development at an earlier stage.
- The case studies show the flexibility of JASPERS in finding useful support to give where its usual support with the development of a specific project is less relevant. For example the Romanian case studies describe the alternative sources of technical support such a private consultants and the DG for Regional Policy available to beneficiaries and authorities in Romania, and describe how JASPERS tailored its assistance to the needs of Romania.
- The second Polish road case study demonstrates that even support for the preparation of applications forms can involve JASPERS in complex and sensitive areas such as the design and impact of new road pricing systems.
- Finally the Polish knowledge economy case study shows how JASPERS is developing new techniques and guidance to address novel issues as new forms of project emerge.
D3  Desk Research
The review of Action Plans confirmed the extent to which Member States seek JASPERS assistance at a late stage in the development of individual projects. In the vast majority of cases JASPERS assignments are planned to at least include a review of an application for funding for a Major investment project. A full 96 per cent of the 1,202 assignments identified in Action Plans include a review of an application form by JASPERS. In fact, a full 70 per cent of these assignments only concern a review of an application form.

Feedback for JASPERS assistance from both beneficiaries and the DG for Regional Policy desk officers has been overwhelmingly positive. Combined Highly Successful and Successful ratings made up 90% of the feedback in every category in the beneficiary feedback forms; and in 5 of the 9 categories in the DG for Regional Policy feedback forms the combined ratings of HS and S account for 80% or more of the feedback. The feedback from the DG for Regional Policy desk officers was slightly more critical of particular issues than the feedback from the beneficiaries, though the overall tone was still extremely positive.

Among the negative elements of the issues raised in the feedback, there were no recurring issues or trends, with most projects receiving low scores for very particular and often unique issues.

D4  Feedback from interviews and workshops
A large amount of useful feedback was obtained from an extensive programme of interviews and workshops. Bi-lateral meetings and interviews took place with stakeholders from Beneficiaries, other Member State bodies, the DG for Regional Policy and JASPERS. A series of workshops was held for Member States where representatives of groups of Member States were brought together to discuss the preliminary results of the evaluation and assess the impact of JASPERS. This activity yielded valuable insights on:

- The validity of preliminary findings;
- The reputation and value added of JASPERS;
- Key lessons arising from the JASPERS initiative;
- Mechanisms to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS to Member States;
- Capacity for projects to learn from each other;
- Factors limiting knowledge transfer; and,
- The future direction of JASPERS.

The feedback from stakeholders on each of these areas is summarised in the subsections below:

D4.1 Testing Preliminary Findings
The preliminary findings with regard to timelines established that the time taken for the DG for Regional Policy to decide on a JASPERS assisted major project was less than that for an unassisted project.

While most Member States accepted that JASPERS had had a beneficial effect on the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, the authorities in the Czech Republic and Hungary did not perceive this to be the case. In their view, the fact that the DG for Regional Policy desk officers often queried the same issues, on which JASPERS had advised, led to interruption delays. This, in addition to the fact that JASPERS
involvement created delays in the process of developing applications, meant that the overall project planning duration was extended for JASPERS assisted projects.

Other Member States, while sharing the Czech and Hungarian authorities’ views on the apparent duplication of JASPERS and the DG for Regional Policy effort, nevertheless believed that JASPERS involvement has a beneficial effect on the project planning and decision-making duration.

A number of Member States cautioned against relying exclusively on the statistical analysis of timelines for the following reasons:

- The fact that JASPERS assisted projects might differ from unassisted projects in terms of their complexity: contradictory views were expressed by different Member States viz. that JASPERS assisted projects would tend to be simpler and more complex.
- JASPERS advice was sometimes rejected by managing authorities or beneficiaries, so that the completed application forms for JASPERS assisted projects could be deficient through no fault of JASPERS;
- Advice on JASPERS assisted projects tended to spill over to unassisted projects and this would bias the estimated benefit of JASPERS downward;
- Projects in different sectors were more complex than others, so that there was a need to analyse the impact of JASPERS on a sector by sector basis, otherwise counterintuitive results in terms of decision durations would occur; and
- Projects that were not assisted by JASPERS could have acquired technical assistance from other sources – a factor that the statistical analysis did not encompass.

D.4.2 The Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS

Member States, almost without exception, have a very positive view of the quality of the advice offered by JASPERS and the personnel involved. JASPERS officials are regarded as co-operative, flexible, and having good communication skills. The quick response time of JASPERS and its willingness to undertake site visits and face to face consultations were regarded as particularly valuable.

At the same time, it is recognised by several Member States that the quality of JASPERS advice was somewhat deficient in the early stages of the JASPERS initiative. In this regard, problems with the quality of advice on environmental matters were cited on a number of occasions, although progress was seen to have been made in this area too. Another issue cited was the difficulty of providing high quality advice, in some circumstances, in the absence of a full understanding of national legislative frameworks.

D4.3 Key Lessons arising from the JASPERS Initiative

The general view of the Member States is that JASPERS had contributed significantly to the development of comprehensive and mature applications for funding. As indicated above, the majority view is that this speeded up decision-making and, ultimately, absorption of funding. According to Member States, this impact would have been further enhanced if the DG for Regional Policy had attributed greater weight to JASPERS inputs. JASPERS inputs into understanding EU legislation and requirements, project appraisal, environmental issues, and funding eligibility issues were particularly noted.
Because of the late stage of involvement of JASPERS in the project planning process, the impact of JASPERS on the quality of the projects themselves was more limited. However, it was recognised that on some occasions, JASPERS had identified issues in the design of projects that had required Members States to revisit feasibility studies and review aspects of project design. Another valuable contribution of JASPERS had been in developing a programmatic approach. This occurred where the DG for Regional Policy questioned the strategic context of a project and the Member State was required to engage in ex-post development of a programme or master plan. This allowed managing authorities to deflect beneficiaries from pursuing projects that were poor value for money. Indeed the role of JASPERS in interpreting the potential for projects to gain funding was seen as a means of de-prioritising projects that had poor strategic basis or were poor value for money.

The contribution of JASPERS to improving the project planning process in general was highly regarded. In this context, it should be noted that some Member States had at the outset a poor understanding of the project planning process and JASPERS was instrumental in advising on suitable approaches.

The role of JASPERS in enhancing Members States project planning capability was recognised and is further treated below.

D4.4 Mechanisms to Transfer Technical Knowledge from JASPERS to Member States’ Authorities

The Members States acknowledged that transfer of technical knowledge had occurred through project related JASPERS assistance. In particular, the focus on advice at the application stage had led to a much greater understanding of both EU legislation, the requirements the funding eligibility appraisal process, cost-benefit techniques, and EIA procedures. An increase in the knowledge base among beneficiaries and sectoral managing authorities as a result of JASPERS assistance was widely noted.

However, transfer of knowledge in relation to overall project planning was seen to have been restricted by the involvement of JASPERS at a stage when the feasibility study had typically been completed. Another issue raised was that where the feasibility study and application was progressed by beneficiaries, the latter were often involved in developing projects on an intermittent basis, which hindered the transfer of knowledge through project-related JASPERS assistance.

The Member State authorities highlighted the role of horizontal assignments as a vehicle for knowledge transfer. Horizontal activities such as the development of guidance documentation and training were highly valued. Some Member States in turn took specific steps to disseminate JASPERS acquired knowledge to the wider project planning community nationally e.g. through training activities and nationally specific guidance documents.

D4.5 Capacity for Projects to Learn from Each Other

Member States tended to work through either national or broad sectorally-based managing authorities (e.g. in relation to transport and environmental projects). This approach facilitated knowledge transfer across projects. The relevant authorities were charged with the task of ensuring that cross project learning took place and beneficiaries within sectors learned from preceding projects.
At the project beneficiary level, the acquisition of knowledge was enhanced where national organisations such as roads administrations or railway companies were responsible for project development and where several projects were progressed.

One specific initiative which facilitated cross-project learning was the adoption of a “model project” approach in several countries that had large numbers of projects seeking funding. Under this approach, JASPERS assistance was sought for a particular project and the knowledge gained was then applied to subsequent projects. This process was facilitated where a number of virtually identical projects were being brought forward e.g. county level solid waste projects. In one case, this approach was further enhanced by the appointment of the same external consultant to more than one feasibility study.

In general terms, Member States believed that increased international transfer of knowledge across projects was possible and that current initiatives to develop this aspect of learning should be promoted.

D.4.6 Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer
It has been noted above that where Member States bring forward relatively few projects, the scope for transfer of knowledge is limited. In half of the Member States, the lack of JASPERS staff with local language skills was cited as a factor, particularly with respect to transfer of knowledge to beneficiaries, where knowledge of English is not as prevalent.

Staff turnover was seen as a barrier among a minority of Member States. There was a general view that this issue was of greater importance in the past, but that the problem had diminished of late. It was also the view of a number of Member States that where individual stakeholders lost staff, it was often to other actors in the project planning community, so that acquired skills were not lost to the overall system.

D.4.7 Views on the Future Direction of JASPERS
With regard to the role of JASPERS in the development of programmes and master plans, most Member States took the view that JASPERS support in this area would be valuable. However, there were concerns that such support should be initiated by the Member State and should be advisory in nature. It was stressed that project prioritisation and programme development is ultimately a matter for the Member State. A minority of Member States indicated that in practice there were a number of political and institutional barriers to expanding JASPERS role in this fashion.

Early involvement of JASPERS in individual project planning received general and less circumscribed support. This could involve advising on the terms of reference for feasibility studies and monitoring feasibility study progress. However, Member States were adamant that involving JASPERS in this way needed to be accompanied by measures to ensure that the JASPERS input was given full weight by the Commission and the process of Commission officials raising issues that JASPERS had implicitly improved should cease.

A number of larger Members States were of the view that reliance on JASPERS at funding application stage could diminish. This view was not universally held however, with smaller Members States indicating the need for JASPERS continued and significant support in this area. It was also the view of Member States that the new programming period would result in a different mix of projects, and that JASPERS support at the funding application stage would be important at least initially.
It was recognised that JASPERS could face challenges in ensuring that it had the required skill mix to deal with the new sectors and projects that would arise in the next programming period.

A common theme among Member States is that JASPERS input was needed in the post project planning stage and, in particular, in respect of procurement issues.

There was a widespread view that JASPERS should emphasise horizontal assignments to a greater degree, with increased training activities being referenced. The need for JASPERS to focus on cross-national transfer of learning and resources was noted.

There was a general view that while the nature of JASPERS support could and should change somewhat, the level of JASPERS involvement would not diminish. There was recognition that the resources available to JASPERS were limited and that JASPERS would have to prioritise its future actions carefully.
Appendix 1: Case Studies
Case Study 1: Czech Republic Railway Modernisation

Electrification of Zábřeh-Šumperk Track Section, (JASPERS assisted)

Electrification including pre-electrification adaptations of the railway line Letohrad – Lichkov state border (non-JASPERS)
Executive Summary

This case study compared two major rail investments in the Czech Republic, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

The application for funding for the JASPERS assisted project was dealt with in 493 days by the Commission. The Commission needed 586 to consider the application for funding for the non-JASPERS project. It is clear from discussions with the Czech Republic authorities that there are a variety of factors which have affected the timescales on these projects, and that the apparent 93 day time saving from the use of JASPERS may understate the effect of JASPERS on the quality of funding applications and the speed with which they can be considered by DG REGIO. In particular:

- Although the two projects are broadly similar, the Czech Republic cautioned that they were not identical;
- The Czech Republic authorities have been receiving advice from both JASPERS and DG REGIO in relation to preparation of Cost Benefit Analyses and Feasibility Studies for all Major Rail projects. Therefore although the non assisted project did not officially have JASPERS technical assistance, it is clear that advice received on other projects has been applied to the non assisted project;
- JASPERS advice was not sought in relation to responding to Interruption Letter received on the JASPERS assisted project, therefore their input to the assisted project is limited solely to undertaking a screening of the pre application documentation;
- The SZDC (the Railway Infrastructure Authority of the Czech Republic) had a variety of projects which they were progressing in parallel, the time taken for SZDC to respond to DG REGIO and JASPERS comments, could be impacted by conflicting project priorities on resources;
- The Czech Republic authorities believe that the quantity of supporting documentation required and technical requirements has been increasing throughout the 2007-2013 OPP and therefore time required to produce the required information is increasing.

The case study illustrates how JASPERS can assist in enhancing the quality of submissions, with the Czech Republic authorities recognising the benefit of utilising JASPERS knowledge of how DG REGIO like information presented. The case study also highlights that beneficiary’s technical capacity and understanding of DG REGIO requirements is increasing as they apply the knowledge learnt on one project, to other projects which they are undertaking.
1. Introduction

This case study compared two major rail investments in the Czech Republic, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2009CZ161PR010 Electrification of Zábřeh-Šumperk Track Section (JASPERS assisted); and
- CCI 2008CZ161PR001 Electrification including pre-electrification adaptations of the railway line Letohrad – Lichkov state border (non-JASPERS)

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted Project: Electrification of Zábřeh-Šumperk Track Section

This project concerned a 13.46km section of single track railway line between Zábřeh na Moravě and Šumperk in the Olomouc region. A project map is shown in Figure 1:

**Figure 1: Project Map Zábřeh-Šumperk** (Source: JASPERS completion note)

Prior to this project, the single track railway line Zábřeh na Moravě and Šumperk had a maximum allowed speed of 80km/h between Zábřeh – Bludov and 70 km/h between Bludov and Šumperk. Stations were unable to offer safe and comfortable access to services for passengers, including access to platforms (passengers had to cross rail tracks), boarding to
the trains from platforms of a safe height, and accessibility for passengers with reduced mobility.

Following completion of the project, the line has the following characteristics:

- Axle load 22.5t
- Infrastructure gauge: GC (according to UIC)
- Maximum speed: 100 km/h
- Electrification system: 3 kV DC
- Station interlocking systems: 3rd category (according to national standard), electronic

The project consisted of the modernisation of the 13.46 section of the railway line and included the following items:

- Renewal of the subbase
- Construction of drainage
- Reconstruction of the railway substructure
- Reconstruction of 12 bridge structures and 15 culverts
- Reconstruction 12 railway level crossings and 2 railway pedestrian crossings
- Electrification of railway line
- Construction of new substation in Šumperk and switching substation in Zábřeh
- Construction of anti-noise barriers
- Reconstruction of the platforms at Zábřeh na Moravě, Posrtřelmov, Bludov and Šumperk.

The total cost of the project, excluding VAT, is estimated to be €62.2m, of which €56.6m is deemed to be eligible costs, as reported in the final application Table H.1.

The economic internal rate of return was forecast to be 6.85%, as reported in the Application Form, however JASPERS note in the ACN that a number of potential benefits were not quantified and that JASPERS considered that the project is more robust than indicated by the economic indicators presented. The benefits quantified in the application are set out in the Table below:

**Table 1: Economic Benefits of the Zábřeh-Šumperk Track Section**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>€m</th>
<th>% of total benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Railway operating cost savings</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road infrastructure saving</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time savings</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External costs</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Value</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Benefits (present value)</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Final Application Form
2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Electrification including pre-electrification adaptations of the railway line Letohrad – Lichkov state border

This non-JASPERS project is similar to the JASPERS assisted project. It concerned the electrification and modernisation of a 23km section of the railway line between Letohrad – Lichkov the state border with Poland.

Prior to the implementation of this project, the non electrified single track between Letohrad – Lichkov had running speeds of 60-70 km/h, reducing to 40 km/h in Lichkov. The main objective of the project is to bring the technical condition of track, related buildings and equipment in line with European standards and parameters. In meeting these standards the project:

- Provides journey time enhancements for both passenger and freight rail movements;
- Improves safety through new signalling / telecommunication equipment and improved new platforms at stations
- Improves access passengers with disabilities
- Reduces noise through noise reduction measures incorporated in the design.

Following completion of the project, the line has the following characteristics:

- Axle load 22.5t and load-carrying capacity D4
- Increase of the line speed up to 75-90 km/h and elimination of local speed restrictions
- Electrification system: 3 kV DC
- Station interlocking systems: 3rd category

The project consisted of the modernisation of the 23km section of the railway line and included the following items;

- Renewal of the subbase
- Construction of drainage
- Reconstruction of the railway substructure
- Reconstruction of 10 bridge structures and 86 culverts
- Reconstruction 23 railway level crossings
- Electrification of railway line
- Construction of a new 3kV converter station in Jablonné and a new 3kV sectioning point in Lichkov
- Construction of anti-noise barriers
- Reconstruction of the platforms at Verměřovice, Jamné nad Orlicí and Mladkov.

The total cost of the project, excluding VAT, is estimated to be €80.0m, of which €61.0m is deemed to be eligible costs, as reported in the final application Table H.1.

The economic internal rate of return was forecast to be 11.34%, as reported in the Application Form. The benefits quantified in the application are set out in the Table below:
Table 2: Economic Benefits of the Letohrad – Lichkov state border

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€m</th>
<th>% of total benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Railway operating cost savings</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road infrastructure saving</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time savings</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External effects</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual Value</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits (present value)</td>
<td>98.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Final Application

3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for both projects commenced before the establishment of JASPERS, with both projects following the route where construction was financed initially from the “State Fund of Infrastructure”, with retrospective applications for EU funding being undertaken during the construction phase.

At the commencement of the 2007-2013 OP, the Czech Republic had a number of well developed rail modernisation projects ready for implementation, including both of the projects, subject of this case study. Planning for the JASPERS assisted project commenced in 2005, with design studies completed by 2008. The Environmental Impact assessment was completed in 2006. Feasibility studies including CBA were undertaken in April 2008, with construction commencing in June 2008 and was completed in December 2009. JASPERS involvement started in September 2009, were they were asked to review Draft application, in advance of submission to DG REGIO.

Planning for the non-JASPERS assisted project commenced in 2002, with Preliminary Design documentation approved by the Railway Infrastructure Administration in 2004 and design studies completed, including Project documentation by August 2005. Initial Environment Impact Assessment was completed in 2004, with further Natura 2000 assessment completed in 2007. Feasibility studies including Cost Benefit analysis were undertaken in 2007, with updates to these studies being conducted in 2009. Construction of the project commenced in August 2007 and the project was completed on 30/06/2009, and therefore similar to the JASPERS assisted project, the initial application to DG Regio was submitted during the construction phase of the project, with funding for the construction coming from the Czech Republic “State Fund of Infrastructure”
Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Electrification Zábřeh-Šumperk (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>Electrification Letohrad-Lichkov (Non-JASPERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Studies End</td>
<td>10/10/2005</td>
<td>31/08/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility Study Start</td>
<td>01/04/2008</td>
<td>01/06/2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
<td>27/02/2008</td>
<td>31/05/2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Duration</td>
<td>870 days</td>
<td>1,369 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS start date</td>
<td>30/09/2009</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS end date</td>
<td>20/05/2010</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS duration</td>
<td>233 days</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO application</td>
<td>31/05/2010</td>
<td>28/05/2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Decision</td>
<td>06/10/2011</td>
<td>04/01/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Duration</td>
<td>493 days</td>
<td>586 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Defined as period to preparation of tender documentation
4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Electrification Zábřeh-Šumperk project

JASPERS assisted with the project to Electrify and modernise the section of railway network between Zábřeh-Šumperk. The project was already under construction when JASPERS assistance commenced and therefore JASPERS role was limited to screening the project documentation produced by the beneficiary in advance of submission to DG REGIO.

JASPERS Completion Note, indicates that “due to the screening character of the JASPERS action, no meeting was held between the beneficiary and JASPERS experts beyond routine programme meetings.

The JASPERS assignment lasted approximately eight months. As part of this assignment JASPERS reviewed:

- The feasibility study and cost benefit calculation for this project;
- The application for funding to be submitted to DG REGIO;
- Annexes to Chapter F – Natura 2000 Sites Declaration, Screening Report, Non-Technical Summary, Building Permits; and
- The Economic and Financial model underlying the feasibility study and application.

On the 30th September 2009, JASPERS received the project documentation for review. JASPERS provided comments in November 2009, with a second set of comments issued in January 2010 following SZDC’s reply to JASPERS November comments. The Final Draft documentation was submitted to JASPERS in March 2010 and JASPERS issued ACN on 20th May 2010.

In summary the JASPERS Completion Note notes “that the overall project study and its environmental aspects was comprehensive. JASPERS proposed:

- Some improvement in presentation of the project feasibility
- Adjustment of some specific elements in CBA calculations
- Focusing the technical description and clarifying EIA related issues in the application form

DG REGIO received an application for funding for the Electrification Zábřeh-Šumperk project on 31st May 2010. DG REGIO issued one interruption letter on 1st July 2010. JASPERS assistance was NOT sought in responding to issues raised in the Interruption letter, with the Czech authorities liaising directly with DG REGIO to clarify and respond to issues raised.

It is evident from the Interruption letter, that Czech Republic officials, DG REGIO and JASPERS had met on a number of occasions to discuss the technical content and presentation of Feasibility Studies and CBA, for Major Rail projects in the Czech Republic. (not specifically this project)
“it would have been appreciated if this application had taken account the Commission’s observations on previous major railway projects, thus substantially reducing the number of comments in this interruption letter.”

The issues raised in the Interruption Letter are summarised below:

- There are various comments in relation to missing information and presentation of information in the Application Form;
- As the project was already completed and operating when DG REGIO received the application, they questioned the inclusion of a contingency allocation in the cost estimate and requested a detailed justification as to why contingencies should be included in the (eligible) costs. (Note, this is an area where JASPERS had provided advice to the beneficiary, with the ACN note indicating their advice was based on position letter of DG REGIO on the Letohrad-Lichkov project)
- Further clarification sought justifying the 1.6 MEUR identified for technical assistance in the cost breakdown
- Various comments on the Feasibility Study suggest that DG REGIO had not reviewed/received the updated 2010 Feasibility Study and associated updated CBA spreadsheets, which JASPERS had reviewed.

The Czech Republic formally resubmitted their application on 30th June 2011, with accompanying response to the Interruption letter. A Commission Decision granting funding to the project was taken on 6th October 2011.

As a result of these issues 493 days elapsed from the submission of an application of funding to DG REGIO to the adoption of a Commission Decision granting funding. The application was being actively considered by the Commission for 129 of these days. For 364 days the Commissions consideration of the application was “interrupted” while it waited for responses from the Czech Republic authorities to various queries.

4.2 Application process for non-JASPERS project

The initial application for funding for the Letohrad - Lichkov was made on the 28th May 2008. On 17th June 2008, DG REGIO requested that the beneficiary supply a number of annexes which were missing from the application. These were provided on 23 June 2008 and on 24 June 2008, the Czech Republic authorities were informed that the approval procedure was interrupted.

DG REGIO had a number of questions and concerns about this application for funding and two Interruption Letters were sent to the Czech Republic Authorities. These were as follows:

- Interruption Letter of 24th June 2008: In this letter DG REGIO raised concerns about the following
  a) Comments on Economic and Financial Analysis
    1. Traffic forecasts (explanation of differing figures)
b) Comments on Technical parameters of the project
1. Installation of ERTMS not indicated for this particular line within Czech ERTMS National Implementation Plan. But, to receive 30% EU funding both the ERTMS and GSM-R system must be included in the project.
2. The project should fully comply with all technical specifications for interoperability.

c) Comments on the Environmental Aspect of the project
- Environmental Impact Assessment not appended to the application, as well as evidence of screening exercise
- Interruption Letter of 14th September 2009. In this letter DG REGIO raised the following concerns
  - Table describing the timetable of the project implementation (needs updated)
  - Investment costs (unclear what figures relate to exactly)
  - Traffic model (no detailed information provided)
  - Financial model (unclear figures, contingencies not included, exchange rates inconsistent, inconsistent assessment years and discounting)
  - Economic analysis (values projected in CZK rather than EURO)
  - Sensitivity and risk analysis (more detail needed)
  - Cost of measures taken for correcting negative environmental impacts (inconsistency in values quoted)
  - Interoperability issues – ERTMS/ETCS (acceptable)
  - Environmental Issues (brief explanation required about mitigation measures)

A final decision was received on 4th January 2010.

As a result of these issues 586 days elapsed from the submission of an application of funding to DG REGIO to the adoption of a Commission Decision granting funding. The application was being actively considered by the Commission for 164 of these days. For 422 days the Commissions consideration of the application was “interrupted” while it waited for responses from the Czech Republic authorities to various queries.
5. Views of Czech Republic Authorities

On 19th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Czech Republic authorities in Prague at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of:

- The National Coordination Authority, part of the Ministry of Regional Development and responsible for coordinating EU Funded Projects in Czech Republic
- The Managing Authority for Transportation Projects, part of the Ministry of Transport
- SZDC, the Czech Republic Rail Infrastructure Manager, the Beneficiary for these projects.

The majority of the comments below were provided by SZDC, the project beneficiary, with additional feedback provided by the Managing Authority

5.1 Overview of SZDC Strategy at Start of 2007 – 2013 Operational Programme Period

At the start of the 2007-2013 Operational Programme, SZDC had a number of broadly similar, well developed, rail projects which they wanted to deliver during the early stages of the OP. These projects would be initially funded from the “State Fund of Transport Infrastructure”, with retrospective applications for EU funding. SZDC’s plan was to work with DG Regio and JASPERS to establish a “Template” project (Benešov - Strančice) which would provide best practice, and be applied to other projects which were being taken forward in parallel. Neither of the projects which are the focus of this case study are the initial “template” project, however both have been influenced by the work undertaken on the “template” project.

If JASPERS assistance was sought for a project, it was limited to the review of Draft Application Forms in advance of submission to DG Regio, as projects were mature and often actually under construction.

5.2 Rationale for JASPERS Involvement

In line with the strategy of developing the template project, with JASPERS/DG Regio assistance and applying the advice on parallel projects, JASPERS input was not officially sought for the non assisted project. SZDC’s view however is that JASPERS advice was effectively sought on this project as they applied the approach which was followed for the “Template” project. The initial application to DG Regio, in section I.4 identified that JASPERS had provided technical assistance on this basis. DG Regio advised that this should be changed to no JASPERS assistance in one of their Interruption Letters.

Although the both the assisted and non assisted projects where constructed and operational broadly at the same time, the EU funding application process for Zábřeh-Šumperk, the assisted project, was after the non assisted project. By the time that the Draft application had been produced for Zábřeh-Šumperk by SZDC in September 2009, there was growing advice from DG Regio that JASPERS should be involved the application process and therefore SZDC officially sought JASPERS advice on this project.
The MA advise that they now seek JASPERS assistance for all projects.

5.3 JASPERS Assistance

The main objective of JASPERS inputs was screening of project documents in advance of final submission to DG Regio. The ACN for the project indicates that JASPERS felt that the overall project study and assessment of environmental aspects was comprehensive, with JASPERS proposing the following changes to the project documentation:

- Suggestions on how to improve the presentation of the project feasibility
- Adjustments to some of the specific elements in the CBA calculations and
- Advice on the presentation of the technical description of the project and EIA related issues.

The final beneficiary and MA agreed that JASPERS assistance led to an improvement in the quality of the project documentation, noting that JASPERS have greater understanding of how DG Regio want information presented.

Despite the inclusion of JASPERS ACN with the project documentation submitted to DG Regio, they were not surprised when they received an Interruption Letter, and some of the comments raised were in relation to issues which JASPERS had provided advice on.

It took one year from receiving the Interruption Letter for the Czech authorities to resubmit the application. During this time there was further informal communication with DG Regio to resolve outstanding issues. JASPERS assistance responding to the Interruption letter was NOT sought, as at the time the Czech authorities believe that it was relevant to seek JASPERS advice as the Interruption letter had been received from DG Regio. It is now standard practice to liaise with JASPERS when responding to Interruption letters.

5.4 Impact on Timeframes

The Czech Republic authorities emphasised that they felt it was difficult to judge impact on timelines for overall project approval by DG Regio, due to technical differences between projects, but critically they felt that DG Regio technical requirements and therefore the workload associated with project documentation had been increasing throughout the OP period. In general however the officials present did not think that the involvement JASPERS in the assisted project had impacted on overall time taken for DG REGIO to consider the application, compared to projects where JASPERS assistance was not sought.

5.5 Weaknesses in JASPERS Support

Both Final Beneficiary and Managing Authority raised concerns about the lack of Czech speaking staff in the JASPERS team. This leads to a preference for communication to be undertaken in writing, rather than face to face meetings, potentially leading to increased time
to resolve issues. It was felt that if there were Czech speakers in the JASPERS team, informal discussions could lead to improved efficiency.

It was noted that the advice provided by JASPERS sometimes differed from that provided by DG REGIO a cause of frustration, this is then exacerbated on projects which are also seeking EIB funding, where further EIB experts can have a different set of guidelines.

Concerns were raised whether JASPERS had the technical capacity to deal with the huge task they had, leading to delays in providing responses.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study compares two broadly similar projects, one of which received JASPERS assistance where the application for funding was dealt with by the Commission in 493 days, and a second which did not receive JASPERS assistance where the Commission approved in 586 days. It should be noted that JASPERS assistance was not sought in relation to responding to issues raised in DG REGIO’s Interruption Letter and that their advice was solely in the phase from Draft Application Form production to initial submission to DG REGIO.

The JASPERS assisted project however included additional 233 days of time where JASPERS provided support in the period from production of Draft Application Form to submission to DG REGIO. The time taken from the Czech Republic producing Draft Application Form, to final DG REGIO approval was therefore longer for the assisted project than the non assisted project.

The Beneficiary and Managing Authority have made it clear that they do not believe it is possible to directly compare the two projects. i.e. that this increase in time taken when JASPERS were involved is not a direct reflection of the impact of JASPERS, because of the increasing technical requirements from DG REGIO during the period which have resulted in increased workload associated with project documentation.

The Beneficiary and Managing Authority are also of the view that JASPERS effectively provided technical assistance on the "non assisted" project, as the methodology adopted was in line with the “template” project which was prepared with assistance with JASPERS and DG REGIO.
Case Study 2: Slovenia Motorway Network

Motorway A5: Beltinci - Prince (Beltinci – Lendava) - JASPERS assisted

Motorway A4: Slivnica – Gruškovje (Slivinca – Draženci) - non-JASPERS
Executive Summary

This case study compares two similar major motorway projects in the north east of Slovenia, one of which received assistance from JASPERS. The projects are:

- Motorway A5: Beltinci - Prince (Beltinci – Lendava), 2008 SI 161 PR 001, JASPERS assisted; and
- Motorway A4: Slivnica – Gruškovje (Slivinca – Draženci), 2008 SI 161 PR 002, non-JASPERS.

The projects were identified alongside three other motorway projects in the Slovenian Operational Programme for Environmental and Traffic Infrastructure, covering the period 2007-2013.

DG REGIO took three months to approve the JASPERS assisted project (from the submission date), compared with one year and two months for the non-JASPERS project. The EC opened an infringement procedure against Slovenia owing to concerns that the introduction of a vignette system (in place of distance based road tolls) would be discriminatory to foreign drivers. As a result, the EC did not consider the application until the issues has been resolved. If the infringement procedure period is not taken into account, the period from the application date to approval was approximately 7 months for (non-JASPERS project).

There was consensus amongst the Slovenian authorities that JASPERS assistance reduced the time taken by DG REGIO to approve the application compared to the counterfactual. This was primarily a result of faster response times to queries, a more constructive dialogue in relation to issues raised and the quality of the technical support, which limited the number of queries from DG REGIO. It was not considered that JASPERS assistance impacted on the lead-in time to submit the application to DG REGIO.

As the JASPERS assisted project was under construction when the assistance commenced, there was no scope for the support to impact on the quality of the project, although some recent examples are quoted in the case study where JASPERS has advised on aspects that will impact on project quality.

The case study identifies that the contrasting experience from the two projects directly shaped the strategy for future applications, as Slovenia now uses JASPERS assistance for all major projects. At the same time, it is anticipated that the level of support will reduce over time through knowledge transfer. The extent to which the level of support reduces will depend to some extent on the scale of changes to future guidelines for project applications. To assist knowledge transfer, JASPERS has run horizontal assignments relating to Cost Benefit Analysis and has produced guidelines for feasibility studies – the Slovenian authorities have used the knowledge transferred to inform the development of guidelines for minor projects, which will improve future project development and delivery.

The type of support provided to Slovenia and the point of engagement is changing, with JASPERS now providing assistance at an earlier stage e.g through reviewing feasibility studies at the time of production. It is also proposed that JASPERS will review the relevant Operational Programmes for the next programming period (2014-2020). These changes are expected to reduce the number of issues raised in the course of the Application Form reviews and provide an opportunity for the quality of projects to be enhanced.
1. Introduction

This case study compares two similar major motorway projects in Slovenia, one of which received assistance from JASPERS. The projects are:

- Motorway A5: Beltinci - Prince (Beltinci – Lendava), 2008 SI 161 PR 001, JASPERS assisted; and
- Motorway A4: Slivnica – Gruškovje (Slivinca – Draženci), 2008 SI 161 PR 002, non-JASPERS.

The projects were identified alongside three other motorway projects in the Slovenian Operational Programme for Environmental and Traffic Infrastructure, covering the period 2007-2013. The case study contrasts the progression of the two projects through the review process, focusing on the development of the respective Application Forms and supporting documents, where the JASPERS’ assistance focussed. It seeks to ascertain the impact of JASPERS support in terms of the time taken for funding approval to be given – it also explores the impact of experience from the two projects in terms of knowledge transfer and proposals for developing future applications for EC funded infrastructure projects in Slovenia.

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted Project: Motorway A5: Beltinci - Prince (Beltinci – Lendava)

The project included the construction of a 17.2km section of four lane motorway between Beltinci and Lendava, which is close to the Hungarian border in the north east of Slovenia. The section forms part of the Trans-European Corridor 5 between Barcelona and Kiev.

The project was proposed in response to the following problems/issues:

- Increase in Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) transit traffic following the accession of Slovenia to the EU – this had impacted adversely on journey times for local and longer distance traffic and increased conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists on the existing GI-3 road;
- The road safety record on the existing route between Beltinci and Lendava was poor, with 362 traffic accidents in 2006; 12 of these were classified as Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI);
- Levels of Service on the existing route were forecast to diminish as traffic growth exceeds the capacity of the road; and
- High levels of noise and emissions from traffic was a particular issue for settlements along the existing G1-3, where properties are located in close proximity to the carriageway.

The objectives of the project can be summarised as follows:

- Increase network capacity to provide for the forecast increase in levels of traffic;
- Enhance connections with the rest of the motorway network in Slovenia and to neighbouring Hungary;
- Support regional and economic development of the Prekmurje region and further development of Slovenia;
- Reduce the time related costs of using the existing route; and
- Deliver environmental improvements in the villages and towns along the current road.

The project involved the construction of 10 overpass bridges, 9 motorway bridges and 14 overpasses/underpasses to secure the safe passage of wildlife. The scheme also included two interchanges and 1,000 metres of noise protection barriers.
The total cost of the project was estimated at €116m, (including VAT), with €42m from the EC. Revenues generated by road tolls were calculated based on the distance based tolling system that was in place at the time. The proposals to introduce a vignette system were identified in the Application Form, but the impact of this on revenues was not estimated at the time and a lower grant rate was accepted as a result.

The Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) was 1.90 - the Net Present Value was calculated at €95.9m, with an economic rate of return of 14.65%. Time savings comprised the largest proportion of the identified economic benefits (87%), with savings in operating costs comprising 13%.

2.2 Non-JASPERS Project - Motorway A4: Slivnica – Gruškovje (Slivinca – Draženci)

This project is very similar in both type and scale to the JASPERS assisted project - it comprised the construction of a 19.85km section of motorway between Slivnica and Draženci, which is also in the north east of Slovenia. The section forms part of the Trans-European Corridor 10 between Graz and Zagreb (via Maribor).

The project was developed in response to the following problems identified in the Application Form:

- Unsuitability of the existing single lane roads (G1-1 and G1-2) for the high volume of longer distance traffic using the routes;
- Poor safety record of the road network – between 2002 and 2006, 149 KSI accidents were reported on the network between Slivnica and Draženci;
- Levels of Service and journey times on the existing routes were forecast to deteriorate significantly in the period 2010 to 2029 as a result of traffic growth; and
- Noise and air quality issues in villages and towns on the existing route, particularly from HGV traffic.

The objectives of the project can be summarised as follows:

- Enhancing connections between Croatia and mid and northern Europe (via Slovenia), improving accessibility between Slovenia and the rest of Europe, and developing inter-regional connections within Slovenia
- Improving road safety – the scheme was expected to reduce fatalities by 50% and heavy injuries by 40%;
- Reduce issues relating to noise, severance, air quality and accident risk in the densely populated villages on the existing routes; and
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The project involved the construction of 23 overpass bridges, 5 motorway bridges, 1 viaduct, 5 underpasses and 1 culvert and 2 intersections and a service station.

The total cost of the project was estimated at €278m, (including VAT), with a €88m contribution from the EC. The higher cost of the project was mainly a function of the requirement for more overpass and underpass structures owing to the number of crossing points with the local road network. In the final version of the Application Form, revenues generated by road tolls were calculated based on the distance based tolling system that was to be introduced in 2012 – no revenues were claimed for 2010 and 2011 as a result of the vignette system that was introduced in 2008.

The Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) was 1.22 - the Net Present Value was calculated at €47.5m, with an internal rate of return of 8.65%. Time savings comprised the majority of the identified economic benefits (97%), with the remainder relating to reduced operating costs.
3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for both projects commenced prior to JASPERS being established in 2007. The planning period for the Beltinci – Lendava (JASPERS assisted) project began with the production of a feasibility study, which commenced in following Slovenia’s accession to the EU in 2004. Planning for the Slivnica – Draženci (non JASPERS) project began in 2006.

In the case of the JASPERS assisted project, a draft of the Application Form for funding was prepared in 2006 prior to the introduction of new guidelines for cost-benefit analysis for infrastructure projects covering the period 2007 – 2013. After considering the implications of the new guidelines, and following advice from the EC, the Slovenian authorities requested assistance from JASPERS, whose support commenced in July 2007 – by this point the planning phase of the project has been completed and construction started in late 2006. An initial Application Form was received by JASPERS in October 2007, who worked with the Slovenian authorities over a 260 day period to enhance the Application Form. JASPERS support ended in February 2008 and a Completion Note was issued by JASPERS on 16th April 2008. The application was submitted to DG REGIO later the same month, and approval was granted in July 2008 (duration 91 days).

The project planning period for the non-JASPERS project was completed in December 2007, with construction commencing in late 2008. An Application Form was submitted to DG REGIO in September 2008. In October 2008, the EC opened an infringement procedure against Slovenia owing to concerns that the introduction of a vignette system (in place of distance based road tolls) would be discriminatory to foreign drivers. An Interruption Letter was issued later the same month which stated that the EC would not be in a position to consider the funding application any further until the issues had been resolved. Funding approval was granted in November 2009, 423 days after the application was made (the infringement period lasted 211 days).

The planning durations are confirmed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motorway A5: Beltinci - Prince (Beltinci – Lendava) (JASPERS assisted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility Study Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS end date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Duration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Including preparation of tender documentation

It is clear that DG REGIO took much less time to approve the JASPERS assisted project, compared with the non-JASPERS assisted project (91 days compared with 423 days in total, but 211 days if the infringement period is not included).
4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Motorway A5: Beltinci - Lendava project

JASPERS’ engagement in the project lasted approximately 8 months, covering the period July 2008 to February 2009. JASPERS worked closely with the following organisations in Slovenia:

- The Ministry for Economic Development and Technology – the Managing Authority.
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning, formerly the Ministry of Transport – this intermediate body.
- DARS Motorway Company – the beneficiary.

Four meetings between JASPERS and the Slovenian authorities took place in Ljubljana between July 2007 and March 2008.

JASPERS undertook a thorough review of the Application Form and Annexes – particular attention was given to the CBA, project risk assessment, project justification and project definition. During the course of the period, JASPERS made a number of key recommendations, which included:

- Maintain a checklist approach in the Application Form and provide additional information in the relevant annexes;
- Enhance the description of the project in order to facilitate project monitoring;
- Definition of project objectives – accessibility, transfer of transit traffic from the secondary road network, reduced environmental impacts, road safety and level of service;
- Definition of environmental mitigation measures;
- Provision of details on the operation of the project;
- Linking the project to the objectives of the Operational Programme; and
- Improvements to the proposed risk management and risk analysis in the CBA.

The Completion Note was issued by JASPERS in April 2008 and the application was sent to DG REGIO later the same month. The note stated that a satisfactory position had been reached in relation to the key aspects of the Application Form and a summary of the project was documented, covering engineering issues, the financial and economic analysis, environmental impact assessment, procurement and risk analysis. Finally, JASPERS recommended that a standard manual for Cost Benefit Analysis, covering financial analysis, economic analysis and risk and sensitivity analysis should be provided based on experience from the project. The introduction of a risk management system for future projects was also recommended.

In May 2008, a query was raised by DG Environment relating to the impact of the project on a NATURA 2000 site – clarification was subsequently provided by Slovenia in June 2008 that the project did not impact on the site; it transpired that the misunderstanding resulted from an error in the translation of the Environmental Impact Report. DG REGIO approved funding for the project in July 2008 (91 days after the application was received). No Interruption Letters were issued in relation to the project.

4.2 Application process for non-JASPERS project (Motorway A4: Slivnica – Gruškovje – Slivinca – Draženci)

DG REGIO’s engagement with the project spanned a period September 2008 and November 2009 (423 days). The review process was suspended for 211 days as a result of an infringement procedure being opened against Slovenia – as identified previously, this related to the introduction of a vignette system in place of distance based road rolls.
Following notification of the infringement procedure on 2nd October, an Interruption Letter (30th October 2008) was issued which stated that the EC would not be in a position to consider the funding application any further until the issues, which had national and European level implications, had been resolved. The letter identified that it was not credible to assume (in the project application) that the vignettes system would only be transitory in nature, since no formal timetable was in place for the introduction of the new tolls system. It was identified that adjustments were therefore required to the cost-benefit analysis and funding gap calculation to reflect the operation of the vignette system for a period after opening. At this point, the Slovenian authorities were also made aware that the Application Form was to be reviewed by an external consultant (commissioned through DG REGIO) – following this, a further letter was issued by DG REGIO on 21st November, which outlined more detailed questions relating to the project.

The Managing Authority submitted a formal response to both letters on 28th May 2009. This confirmed that an amendment to the Public Roads Act had been made in response to the infringement procedure and that the changes were accepted by the National Assembly on 26th May 2009. The original version of the Act only contained provisions to make six monthly and annual vignettes available, which the EC and neighbouring countries considered to be discriminatory to foreign drivers. In response to these concerns, Slovenia made provisions in the amendment to introduce weekly and monthly vignettes and allow the toll collection system for HGVs to remain unchanged.

The letter also included an explanation of changes that had been made in response to DG REGIO’s specific comments on the initial Application Form. These can be summarised as follows:

- **Vignettes to be considered in CBA, financial and risk analysis** – the revised Application Form assumed that there would be no revenues from tolls in 2010 and 2011 (when the vignettes system would be in place). It was proposed that distance based tolling would resume in 2012 (under new EU regulations). This resulted in a slight reduction in the level of Community assistance. In the risk analysis, the potential impact of the economic crisis was considered in terms of reduced toll revenues, in addition to a delay in the transition to distance based tolling.
- **Number of underpass and overpass structures** – it was explained that the number of structures was higher than would normally be expected owing to the requirement to retain access to agricultural land for farmers and the number of crossings with the existing road network.
- **Number of deviations** – it was stressed that a number of deviations to the existing road network were required to retain connections, including access to agricultural land. The comparatively low cost of these works (4.5% of the total investment cost was highlighted).
- **Archaeological heritage** – clarification was provided in relation to the procedures followed and the results of the excavations undertaken prior to construction.
- **Contingencies** – the allocation was reduced from 7% of the eligible construction cost to 3%, reflecting advanced stage of the scheme (in terms of construction) by 2009.

DG REGIO approved funding for the project on 12th November 2009, 423 days after the original version of the application has been received.

5. **Views of Slovenian Authorities**

5.1 **Overview**
AECOM met with representatives from the relevant authorities in Slovenia on 13th June – the meeting was held at the Ministry for Economic Development and Technology in Ljubljana and was attended by the following:
• The Ministry for Economic Development and Technology – the Managing Authority responsible for EU infrastructure projects in Slovenia;

• Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning, formerly the Ministry of Transport – this intermediate body responsible for EU transport projects in Slovenia; and

• DARS Motorway Company – the beneficiary responsible for the construction and management of the motorway network in Slovenia.

All of the representatives from the above authorities were very positive regarding the quality of the technical assistance received from JASPERS and the level of service in terms of response time to queries and document reviews. Support has been provided in all of the areas where assistance has been requested. Prior to JASPERS being established, previous experience of obtaining technical support through DG REGIO had not been positive - assistance was available to Slovenia through a framework agreement with private consultancy firms, but the quality of the support was poor.

5.2 Experience from the JASPERS supported project

As identified previously, the possibility of obtaining assistance with the Beltinci – Lendava motorway project was initially suggested by the EC, which highlighted that funds had been made available to provide technical assistance (via JASPERS) in the development of Application Forms. A meeting was held with JASPERS in April 2007, where it was agreed that the project should receive support (the project was not included in the original JASPERS action plan). The technical requirements of the new CBA guidelines for infrastructure projects (2007 – 2013) were a key factor in the decision of the Slovenian authorities to use JASPERS.

The support provided in relation to the CBA requirements was considered to have been important in funding approval for the project being granted in the timescales. The Slovenian authorities identified that a further key benefit related to the guidance provided in terms of enhancing the overall quality of the Application Form. Slovenia did not have significant experiencing in presenting the required information in the way that was expected and JASPERS’ advice assisted greatly in this regard. As identified in the Completion Note, this included the definition of clear objectives for the project and linking the project effectively to the objectives of the Operational Programme.

5.3 Experience from the non-JASPERS project

The Slovenian authorities chose not to use JASPERS for the Slivinca – Draženci motorway as their view was that sufficient knowledge had been gained from the Beltinci – Lendava project. In reality, the Slivinca – Draženci project took longer to reach the approval stage than expected. As identified previously, the infringement procedure resulting from the vignette system proposals, which ran concurrent to the project application, clearly had a major impact on the timescales for reaching the approval stage. Whilst this issue would still need to have been addressed by the Slovenian authorities if JASPERS had been engaged in the project, it is considered that JASPERS may have foreseen and advised on the implications for the project at an earlier stage, which would have reduced the delays in the review process.

Additional delays were seen to have resulted from the technical issues raised following an independent check of the Application Form (undertaken by a private consultancy, commissioned by DG REGIO). The response time of DG REGIO to queries regarding the issues raised was longer than for JASPERS and the level of technical assistance much less. Slovenia has now decided to use JASPERS support for all major projects following their experience on this project.
5.4 Specific impacts of JASPERS

The Slovenian authorities considered that JASPERS support in the Beltinci – Lendava project was effective in securing funding approval within a shorter timescale than would be the case in the counterfactual scenario. This was thought to be a result of faster response times to queries and the quality of the technical support, which limited the number of queries from DG REGIO. The delays that did arise during the JASPERS supported project were primarily on the part of the Slovenian authorities. It was not considered that JASPERS assistance impacted on the lead-in time to submit the application to DG REGIO.

The opportunity for JASPERS to enhance the quality of the project was very limited owing to its advanced stage at the point when their support commenced. There was therefore little or no impact on aspects such as the project scope, design, phasing or procurement.

There are some emerging examples from other projects where JASPERS assistance has impacted on these aspects. In the case of the flood protection in the Savinja river basin project, input from JASPERS resulted in the scope of the project being reduced following issues related to its state of readiness.

In the case of a project to upgrade the system for monitoring and analysing the water environment, comments from JASPERS led to a change in the proposed procurement arrangements. It was initially proposed that the works should be split into 40 separate tenders – this was reduced to 20 following the comments.

5.5 Knowledge transfer and capacity building

JASPERS carried out two workshops on CBA in Slovenia, which the authorities considered to be important in terms of knowledge transfer. JASPERS also prepared the guidelines for preparation of feasibility studies for environmental projects (waste, waste water and water supply projects) and for railway projects. The knowledge transferred has informed the production of Slovenian guidelines for minor projects, which will improve future project development and delivery.

5.6 Interface with DG REGIO

The primary role of DG REGIO desk officers has been to review applications for individual projects. There is a good working relationship and advice is sought to ascertain their thoughts on the queries raised relating to specific projects; contact is relatively informal in nature. There are four key staff that provide the main points of contact for Slovenia and their resources are sometimes stretched.

5.7 Future role of JASPERS

JASPERS support has typically been sought in reviewing the project Application Forms, but this is now moving towards involvement in reviewing feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments – this follows experience where issues have been raised in relation to the studies in the course of the Application Form reviews.

Whilst JASPERS input is considered valuable in terms of reviewing feasibility related issues, there was a consensus amongst the authorities that issues relating to the scope and design of individual projects should be dealt with by the Member State. Specific national procedures and processes would present a barrier to JASPERS being able to contribute constructively and efficiently. At a more strategic level, Slovenia is intending to involve JASPERS in the preparation of the Operational Programmes (in a reviewing capacity) for the next programming period. It is anticipated that the
comments received will relate more to the quality of the document itself rather than challenging the inclusion of individual projects. Slovenia intends to continue to prepare the national programmes independently of JASPERS.

The Slovenian authorities consider that the technical requirements and expectations in terms of quality of Application Forms have increased markedly since 2007 – if this change had not arisen it is likely that JASPERS assistance would no longer be required. Looking forward, whilst Slovenia will now use JASPERS support for all major projects, it is anticipated that the level of support required will reduce following knowledge transfer and the continued build up of internal capacity.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study has compared the passage of two similar motorway projects (one which received JASPERS assistance), through the application process.

In terms of timescales, the project planning durations showed that it took DG REGIO three months to approve the JASPERS assisted project (from the submission date), compared with one year and two months for the non-JASPERS project. If the infringement procedure period is not taken into consideration, the period was approximately 7 months (non-JASPERS project). There was consensus amongst the Slovenian authorities that JASPERS assistance reduced the time taken by DG REGIO to approve the application compared to the counterfactual. This was primarily a result of faster response times to queries, a more constructive dialogue in relation to issues raised, and the quality of the technical support, which limited the number of queries from DG REGIO. It was not considered that JASPERS assistance impacted on the lead-in time to submit the application to DG REGIO.

As the JASPERS assisted project was under construction when the assistance commenced, there was no scope for the support to impact on the quality of the project, although some recent examples are quoted where JASPERS has advised on aspects that will impact on project quality.

The case study has identified that the contrasting experience from the two projects directly shaped the strategy for future applications, as Slovenia now uses JASPERS assistance for all major projects. JASPERS assistance was not used for the Slivinca – Draženci motorway as it was considered that sufficient knowledge had been gained from the Beltinci – Lendava project. Whilst it is likely that the infringement procedure would in any case have generated delays to the funding application, the extent of the delays may have been less if JASPERS were engaged in the project. It is clear that the response time of DG REGIO to queries regarding the issues raised (following an independent check of the Application Form) was longer than for JASPERS and the level of technical assistance much less.

Whilst JASPERS assistance is now being used for all major projects, it is anticipated that the level of support will reduce over time as knowledge transfer is disseminated. The extent to which the level of support reduces will depend to some extent on the scale of changes to future guidelines for project applications – for example, the changes to the CBA guidelines was a key factor in JASPERS assistance initially being sought.

The type of support provided to Slovenia and the point of engagement is changing, with JASPERS now providing assistance at an earlier stage e.g through reviewing feasibility studies at the time of production. It is also proposed that JASPERS will review the relevant Operational Programmes for the next programming period (2014-2020). These changes are expected to reduce the number of issues raised in the course of the Application Form reviews and provide an opportunity for the quality of projects to be enhanced.
Case Study 3: Romania Solid Waste

Integrated Waste Management Project in Cluj County (JASPERS Supported)

Integrated Waste Management Project in Suceava County (not JASPERS Supported)
Executive Summary

This case study relates to two solid waste projects in Romania, which were chosen based on their similarities. These are:

- Integrated Waste Management System in Cluj County (2009 RO 161 PR 036) Supported by JASPERS; and
- Integrated Waste Management System in Suceava County not Supported by Jaspers (2009 RO 161 PR 046);

The two projects are very comparable, as they address broadly the same problems, have a similar financial scale and involve broadly the same investment solutions.

The impact of JASPERS on project quality depends in part on what would have occurred in the absence of JASPERS involvement. Consideration of a non-JASPERS supported project helps to understand this counterfactual situation. In the absence of JASPERS support, it is clear that the Romanian authorities relied on a standardised planning process that was applied across all solid waste projects. This process had a number of strong aspects:

- A strong strategic planning framework at national and regional levels;
- County Master Plans at the pre-feasibility stage;
- The recruitment of external technical assistance to help monitor the Master Plans and project feasibility studies;
- The awarding of multiple feasibility studies to each feasibility study consultant, facilitating learning on the part of the consultant;
- The establishment of an Evaluation Group, inclusive of various stakeholders.

Project planning also benefited from the active involvement of the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer.

JASPERS involvement came too late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the projects. Key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the feasibility studies. The Romanian authorities did not seek JASPERS help on the case study project until after the completion of the feasibility study.

The Romanian authorities had separate technical assistance to help ensure the quality of these studies. This suggests that even earlier involvement of JASPERS might not have yielded substantial benefits in terms of project quality, but simply duplicated this assistance. Having said this, even with late involvement, JASPERS had the capacity to influence aspects of the detailed design of projects at the procurement stage. The case study provides an example of this in relation to the design of the Cluj landfill site.

With regard to the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, this amounted to three months (91 days) in respect of the JASPERS assisted Cluj project, but a little over two months (68 days) for the Suceava project. It should be noted that the decision duration for both the case study projects was well below that for the average of all solid waste JASPERS assisted major projects (215 days) and for non-JASPERS assisted major projects (219 days). Thus, while it took longer for DG for Regional Policy to make a decision on the JASPERS supported case study project, this was in the context of very short decision periods for the case study projects by comparison with solid waste projects generally. In fact, the decision period for all Romanian solid waste projects, at 96 days, was well below that for all solid waste projects.
The strong project planning process is undoubtedly the major reason why the DG for Regional Policy decision period was found to be relatively short for Romanian solid waste projects generally, the case study projects being no exception. Other reasons for the short decision period include the very similar nature of solid waste management projects at the county level in Romania and the active role take by the DG for Regional Affairs Desk Officer.

However, there is support for the view that JASPERS support contributed to short decision durations. In this context, the role of the horizontal assignments should be highlighted, particularly the provision of guidelines for cost-benefit analysis and completion of the application form for solid waste projects specifically. JASPERS undoubtedly reduced the probability of errors being made which could have delayed the decision process. It is noteworthy, in this regard, that neither of the applications in respect of the case study projects was interrupted and that while the non-JASPERS supported project was the subject of queries from DG for Regional Policy, the JASPERS supported project was not.

The case studies provide some pointers to the future role of JASPERS. The Romanian authorities have indicated that, because the throughput of projects will slow in the future, it is not their intention to engage external consultants to monitor master planning and project planning. They anticipate that they will need the support of JASPERS in this role. Additionally, the contribution of JASPERS horizontal assignments suggests that this is an effective and efficient means of improving the quality of project planning and easing the application process.
1. Introduction

The Terms of Reference for the study require the development of at least ten case studies, which would provide a comparison between JASPERS supported major projects and non-JASPERS supported major projects. The objective is to provide an analysis for major projects of the effect of JASPERS technical assistance on the timing, quality, development and preparation of submission to the DG for Regional Policy. The Inception Report for this Study provided by the consultants identified pairs of case study projects for analysis. Of the ten case study pairs, six were set for Poland, two for Romania and two for other Member States. This reflects both the scale of project development in Member States and the availability of Non JASPERS assisted major projects. This Technical Note presents the case study relating to two solid waste projects in Romania, which were chosen based on their similarities. These are:

- Integrated Waste Management System in Cluj County (2009 RO 161 PR 036) Supported by JASPERS; and
- Integrated Waste Management System in Suceava County not Supported by Jaspers (2009 RO 161 PR 046);

This Technical Note is laid out as follows: Section 2 provides a brief overview of the planning context of the two projects and provides details on the project content. The project planning process and durations for the two projects are analysed in Section 3. Section 4 sets out the role of JASPERS in relation to the JASPERs supported project (Cluj). Finally, Section 5 evaluates the impact of JASPERS in the context of the non-JASPERS supported project (Suceava).

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 Background

Prior to accession to the European Union, Romania’s waste management practices did not meet the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive and fell short of acceptable engineering and environmental standards. Particular problems included:

- Low levels of waste collection;
- Non-compliant landfills;
- Low levels of separation and recycling of waste; and
- Inadequate treatment of biodegradable waste and low levels of composting.

The Romanian authorities addressed these issues through a strategic planning process which incorporated a National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS), a National Waste Management Plan (NWMP) and Regional Waste Management Plans.

A Sectoral Operational Programme Environment (SOP ENV) was developed to set out the objectives and priorities for environmental investments in Romania in the period 2007-2013 in the context or European Union funding. Priority Axis 2 of that Programme related to solid waste management. The objective of this Axis was the development of sustainable waste management systems, by improving waste management and reducing the number of historically contaminated sites in minimum of 30 counties by 2015. The SOP ENV identified 15 integrated waste management priority projects, which included the two case study projects under consideration here.
For the period under review, twelve major and five non-major waste management projects were being prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The investment components of these projects were virtually identical to those of the case study projects discussed below.

2.2 Integrated Waste Management System in Cluj County (JASPERS Supported Project)

Cluj County is a county in the North Western Region of Romania, with a population of 688,000 inhabitants. This project, which was JASPERS supported, sought to resolve significant environmental and operational problems relating to waste generation and management and to develop an integrated waste management system for Cluj County as a whole. The existing waste management system suffers from a number of deficiencies:

- Less than one hundred per cent collection of waste, especially in rural areas;
- Some collection by non-authorised operators;
- Selective collection implemented in a few areas only – 21 per cent of the total population;
- Existing collection equipment was old and technologically deficient;
- Non selective collection of waste;
- Low levels of recycling; and
- Waste disposal to six non-compliant urban landfills.

The aim of the project was to develop a waste management system in full compliance with EU and National environmental principles and legislation. The investment comprised four components as follows:

- Waste Collection: purchase of 21,000 home composters; selective collection through the purchase of 7,820 bins, construction of three transfer stations; purchase of haulage trucks;
- Selective collection of special waste streams e.g. hazardous waste through purchase of special containers.
- Waste Treatment: Construction of one sorting plant and of one Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) plant
- Waste Disposal: Construction of one county landfill; closure and remediation of six non-compliant landfills.
- Technical Assistance: for project management and works supervision.

The total cost of the projects was estimated at €76.5m including VAT, of which eligible expenditure was €53m. The project was to generate revenues from landfill charges and household tariffs. Due to the affordability cap on household tariffs, the capital costs of the project were only partially covered.

The economic benefits of the project comprised resource cost savings (e.g. through recycling of materials), reductions in Greenhouse Gas Emissions (from landfills), and reductions of disamenities and health risks. The net present value of the project was €91m with an internal rate of return of 22.0%.

The Managing Authority for the project was the Ministry for Environment and Forests, the intermediate body was the regional office of the Ministry (SOP Environment Cluj-Napoca), with the beneficiary being Cluj County Council.
2.3 Integrated Waste Management System in Suceava County (Non-JASPERS Supported Project)

Suceava County is a county in the North Eastern Region of Romania, with a population of 706,000 inhabitants. This project, which was not JASPERS supported, sought, like the previous project, to resolve significant environmental and operational problems relating to waste generation and management and to develop an integrated waste management system for Suceava County as a whole. The existing waste management system suffers from a number of deficiencies:

- While the current collection rate is close to one hundred per cent, there is no selective collection service;
- Existing collection equipment is obsolete;
- There are low levels of recycling; and
- All existing landfills are non-compliant.

The aim of the project was to develop a waste management system in full compliance with EU and National environmental principles and legislation. The investment comprised the following components:

- Two new compliant landfills;
- One new sorting plant;
- Three transfer stations;
- Purchase of 44,000 home composters;
- Closure and remediation of seven existing landfills; and
- Technical Assistance: for project management and works supervision

The total cost of the project is €64.0mm including VAT, of which €47.7m is eligible for funding. The project was to generate revenues from landfill charges and household tariffs.

The economic benefits of the project comprised benefits of an extended waste collection service, resource cost savings, reductions in Greenhouse Gas Emissions), and reductions of disamenities and health risks. The net present value of the project was €69m with an internal rate of return of 24.3%.

The Managing Authority for the project was the Ministry for Environment and Forests, the intermediate body was the regional office of the Ministry (SOP Environment Bacau), with the beneficiary being Suceava County council.

It is clear that these two projects are very comparable, as they address the same problems, have a similar financial scale and involve broadly the same investment solutions.

3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

3.1 Comparison of Planning Durations

Planning for both projects commenced in 2008, with the Cluj project having a planning period of two years and two months and the Suceava project two years and six months (see Table 3.1).

As may be seen, JASPERS became involved in the Cluj project relatively late in the process, approximately a year and five months into the project planning phase. By the time of JASPERS
involvement, the feasibility study, inclusive of the design elements, had been completed. Nevertheless, the JASPERS involvement in the project planning lasted for over one year.

With regard to the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, this amounted to three months (91 days) in respect of the JASPERS assisted Cluj project, but a little over two months (68 days) for the Suceava project. It should be noted that the decision duration for both the case study projects was well below that for the average of all solid waste JASPERS assisted major projects (215 days) and for non-JASPERS assisted major projects (219 days).

Thus, while it took longer for DG for Regional Policy to make a decision on the JASPERS supported case study project, this was in the context of very short decision periods for the case study projects by comparison with solid waste projects generally. In fact, the decision period for all Romanian solid waste projects at 96 days was well below that for all solid waste projects. ¹

**Table 3.1: Project Planning Durations**

<table>
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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Cluj County Project (with JASPERS)</th>
<th>Suceava County Project (without JASPERS)</th>
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(a) Including preparation of tender documentation

The difference of an additional 23 days in the decision period for the JASPERS project as opposed to the non-JASPERS must be viewed as relatively small in the context of the speed with which the decisions for both projects were made. It should also be noted that both statutory and personal holiday arrangements could have an impact on the durations, which are in terms of elapsed days. For example, with regard to the JASPERS supported project, the decision period encompassed the Easter holiday period in 2011.

¹ It should be noted that samples sizes are small in that there were only 24 solid waste projects in the period under review of which 18 were JASPERS supported.
Neither of the projects was formally interrupted by DG for Regional policy. However, the Suceava (non-JASPERS) project was the subject of a list of queries from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer. These related to clarifications of the detail of the project itself, the institutional framework, the CBA and procurement.

3.2 Planning of the Cluj County and Suceava County Waste Management Projects

Planning of these projects by the Romanian authorities was conducted within the context of a strategic approach established through the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS), the National Waste Management Plan (NWMP) the Regional Waste Management Plan and the county Integrated Waste Management Master Plan. The Master Plans outlined the key parameters that would determine the design of the county waste management projects. These included the division of the county into waste management zones, the approach to waste collection and separation (number of separate bins per household), the number, capacity and siting of transfer stations, the number and location of landfills, and the nature of waste treatment. Thus, many of the key design decisions were effectively made at the stage of the Regional Waste Management Plan, but were subject to review and validation in the course of the feasibility study.

Another feature of the approach taken by the Romanian authorities was that that feasibility study consultants were procured centrally by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and multi-project contracts were awarded. This meant that the feasibility study consultants involved in a particular project also had a number of under feasibility study assignments for other counties.

An Evaluation Group was put in place by the Ministry for Environment and Forests in respect of both projects. This comprised the representatives of the Ministry, the regional office of the Ministry, the beneficiary (County Council), and the feasibility study Consultant. The Group also included an external technical consultant (a consortium headed by Ramboll) appointed by the Ministry. This appointment arose because the Ministry anticipated that during the period 2008-2009, a large number of projects would be reaching the stage where a feasibility study had been completed and the drafting of an Application Form would commence. The Ministry considered that the JASPERS office in Bucharest would not have the capacity to support all of these projects, so additional external technical assistance was commissioned.

The feasibility study for Cluj County was undertaken by a consortium led by KOCKS Consult GmbH). This consortium was awarded contracts in relation to four other county waste management projects. The consultants were contracted to undertake three assignments for each project:

- in the pre-feasibility stage – assessment of the current situation and development of a Master Plan;
- in the feasibility stage - preparation of studies and elaboration of documents to support the Application for EU co-financing;
- in the tendering stage – preparation of tender documents for works and services contracts and support during tendering and contracting.

The consultancy assignment was conducted under the auspices of ISPA and commenced in 2007. During the pre-feasibility stage, the works are to be included in the application for funding and the design parameters have been defined. Also, during the pre-feasibility stage the Consultant worked closely with the local beneficiary in order to identify the appropriate locations for the central waste management facility as well as the transfer stations.
An Evaluation Group was established and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry’s technical assistance consultants (Ramboll) attended. JASPERS became involved when the feasibility study had been completed and the application for EU-co-funding was being prepared.

The feasibility study for the Suceava project was undertaken by a consortium led by C&E Consulting and Engineering. As well as the Suceava project, the consortium was commissioned to develop projects in four other counties. The same consultants had also developed the waste management Master Plan for the county, which was completed in 2008. As a result, the Master Plan formed a starting point for the preparation of the feasibility study and indicated preferred design approaches. A part of the data and many of the analyses and conclusions presented in the feasibility study were drawn directly from the work done in preparing the Master Plan.

An Evaluation Group was established and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry’s technical assistance consultants (Ramboll) attended. The intermediate body for this Region (SOP Environment-Bacau) has indicated that they also availed of JASPERS support informally on this project. The study also benefited from the horizontal guidance which JASPERS supported, as outlined in Section 4.2 below.

3.4 Role of DG for Regional Policy

Another feature of the planning process for Romanian projects has been the direct involvement of DG for Regional Policy. The relevant Desk Officer liaised closely with the Romanian authorities, conducting a number of missions at which waste management project planning was discussed. In this manner, the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer kept abreast of project planning and offered advice on the components of the project and their potential acceptability to the DG. This included an informal vetting of the Application Form for both the case study projects prior to their submission.

4. Scope of JASPERS Support for the Cluj County Waste Management Project

4.1 Project Related Support

It is clear that JASPERS became involved in the Cluj project after the feasibility study had been completed. The JASPERS assignment was to review the Draft Applications to DG for Regional Policy and the documents that supported that application.

The Evaluation Group worked via a system of Correction Protocols. This involved the issuing of the Draft Application Form and background studies to the members of the Evaluation Group and the seeking of comments from them through a series of Correction Protocols. Eight such Protocols were issued for the Cluj Project and JASPERS were involved in six of these. JASPERS undertook four missions and meetings during the course of its involvement.

JASPERS made specific contributions in the following areas:

Demand analysis: JASPERS reviewed the existing and projected waste generation and concluded that a conservative approach had been adopted. They recommended that monitoring of waste generation should take place, with a view to taking corrective action, if the growth in waste production was higher than anticipated.
Option Analysis: The main strategic decisions relating to the facility were made in the context of the Cluj County Waste Management Plan, which was developed in 2008. These included:

- The division of the County into waste management zones;
- The location of the waste management infrastructure;
- The type of collection system to be implemented; and
- The waste treatment practices that would be employed.

The feasibility study confirmed the broad approach of the Waste Management Plan in respect of facilities viz. a central facility close to Cluj-Napoca, with three transfer stations, the location of one being altered from the Management Plan. With regard to waste collection options, the feasibility study opted for a 2-bin collection for 640,000 inhabitants, 4-bin collection for 30,000 inhabitants and a different 4-bin collection system for a further 115,000 inhabitants. A simple MBT/Composting approach to waste treatment was proposed.

It is clear that the development and appraisal of options and the identification of the preferred options for collection and treatment were undertaken prior to JASPERS involvement. The JASPERS review concluded that "sensible selections of technical options for waste collection, transport, treatment and disposal have in general been made". 2

Project Cost Estimates: JASPERS reviewed the cost estimates and concluded that while the cost estimates were generally in the range of costs for similar projects, the cost for the new landfill were on the high side. This was attributed to the additional works required to ensure full protection of groundwater.

Financial and Funding Gap Analysis: JASPERS reviewed the financial and funding gap analyses. It noted the affordability limit of 1.8% set for tariffs would be exceeded in respect of poorer urban households and indicated that the functioning of the tariff system should be monitored in future and viable tariff schemes that reduce the burden on the poor without affecting financial stability should be explored. The poor financial performance and large funding gap associated with the project was noted and ascribed in part to the fact that the project contains significant non-revenue generating components viz. the closure of six existing non-compliant landfills.

Economic Analysis: the economic analysis contained in the feasibility study was approved by JASPERS. This is unsurprising as JASPERS had supported the development of Guidelines for Cost-Benefit Analysis of solid waste projects that the feasibility study consultants had employed. These Guidelines extended to the elaboration of a spreadsheet based model for CBA. 3 Thus, it is clear that the major contribution of JASPERS to the project planning took place in the context of a horizontal assignment (see next Section for a discussion of the role of horizontal assignments).

Environmental Impact Assessment: JASPERS reviewed the Application Form and the Supporting Documents relating to EIA procedures and compliance with Natura 2000. Proposals for improvement in Section F of the Application form were made. A particular issue that JASPERS raised related to compliance with the IPPC Directive 2008. The landfill is an IPPC installation and it must comply with the technical specifications set out in the Annex I of that Directive. JASPERS were concerned that the landfill was not in full compliance and recommended that the operator should apply a 0.15 metre layer of gravel on the slopes of the landfill.

2 See: JASPERS Completion Note. March 2011.
Project Implementation: the project is to be implemented by the project beneficiary – Cluj county Council. The Council acts on behalf of the Inter Community Development Association (IDA), which was set up in September 2009 to organise waste management at the county level. A

Project Implementation Unit has been set up within the County Council. JASPER was approving of the proposed institutional arrangements. However, it noted that the PIU would need to be strengthened, especially through the recruitment of procurement expertise.

Procurement and Timetabling: JASPER found the arrangements satisfactory, but indicated that construction delays might occur for the Landfill and the MBT plant.

Risk and Sensitivity Analysis: The risk and sensitivity analyses were approved by JASPER as it had been conducted as per the CBA guidelines.

4.2 Horizontal Related Support

Both the Ministry for Environment and Forestry and the regional intermediate body made reference to the strong support role provided by JASPER in the context of horizontal assignments. The work requested from JASPER followed the Romanian Government Ordinance HG No.28 of 2008, which set out methodological rules for the elaboration and approval of technical and economic documentation for investment projects.

The JASPER contribution included support for the following elements:

General Guidelines for Cost Benefit Analysis of Projects to be Supported by the Structural Instruments (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2008)

This Guidance outlined the steps to be followed in conducting a CBA. Generic advice was given on objective setting, options analysis, financial analysis, calculation of the funding gap, user charges and affordability, financial sustainability, establishing economic prices, treatment of externalities, and sensitivity and risk analysis.


This Guidance built on the General Guidelines to make them specific to the solid waste sector. For example, it identified the specific economic benefits that arise from waste management and proposed values to be placed on these benefits. It provided a template for a spreadsheet based CBA methodology.

Both the feasibility study Consultant for the JASPER supported project and the non-JASPER supported project had these guidance documents available to them. This meant that the feasibility studies were developed with the project Application Form in mind. In particular, the feasibility studies followed both Romanian and EU guidance on project appraisal. This meant that the feasibility studies were both relevant to the Application Form and the technical analyses had been conducted in a manner compatible with EU requirements.

Guidelines for Filling in the Application Form for Solid Waste Projects (JASPER, 2009)
The Guidelines followed the format of the Application form and gave detailed guidance as to how to complete each element of the form.

4.4 Views of the Intermediate Body and Cluj County Council on the Planning of JASPERS Supported Project

The Intermediate Body, while noting that JASPERS was called in to review the Application Form only, considered their contribution essential. The JASPERS input on cost-benefit analysis and the procurement procedure were especially valued. The latter apparently took place after the Application was made and is an aspect of JASPERS which has proven valuable: the existence of a local JASPERS team has led to the development of relationship between JASPERs and the intermediate body, which has made JASPERS advice available on an informal basis. The quality of the advice from JASPERS was regarded by the Intermediate body as good.

A notably positive feature was that there was an informal evaluation process which involved a mission from the DG for Regional Policy. JASPERS was instrumental in facilitating this and ensuring a positive outcome. The particular contribution of JASPERs through the horizontal assignments was highly valued. One of the key benefits of JASPERS was the assurance that if JASPERS had reviewed the Application Form and found it acceptable, there was the risk of a negative or much delayed decision by DG for Regional Policy was minimised.

With regard to the beneficiary, it is a feature of the planning of solid waste projects in Romania that the beneficiary is excluded from the Evaluation Group. This means that the beneficiary had no direct involvement with JASPERS and is thus not in a position to assess its contribution. They had the opportunity to comment in writing on the draft application forms through the Correction Protocols.

In discussions with Cluj County Council and the intermediate regional body, it emerged that one of the obstacles to implementation was that the Feasibility Study was often not specific enough in terms of the design parameters for facilities. This, together with some uncertainties arising from the procurement legislation in Romania had tended to delay implementation.

5. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

The terms of for the Evaluation of JASPERS require an assessment of the impact of JASPERS support on project quality and timelines. The key timeline is the DG for Regional Policy decision duration.

The impact of JASPERS on project quality depends in part on what would have occurred in the absence of JASPERS involvement. Consideration of a non-JASPERS supported project helps to understand this counterfactual situation. In the absence of JASPERS support, it is clear that the Romanian authorities relied on a standardised planning process that was applied across all solid waste projects. This process had a number of strong aspects:

- A strong strategic planning framework at national and regional levels;
- County Master Plans at the pre-feasibility stage;
- The recruitment of external technical assistance to help monitor the Master Plans and project feasibility studies;
- The awarding of multiple feasibility studies to each feasibility study consultant, facilitating learning on the part of the consultant;
• The establishment of an Evaluation Group, inclusive of various stakeholders.

Project planning also benefitted from the active involvement of the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer.

This strong project planning process is undoubtedly the major reason why the DG for Regional Policy decision period was found to be relatively short for Romanian solid waste projects generally, the case study projects being no exception. Well planned projects are likely to proceed through the DG for Regional Policy appraisal process more quickly. Other reasons for the short decision period include the very similar nature of solid waste management projects at the county level in Romania and the active role taken by the DG for Regional Affairs Desk Officer.

JASPERS involvement came too late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the projects. Key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the feasibility studies. The Romanian authorities did not seek JASPERS help on the case study project until after the completion of the feasibility study.

The Romanian authorities had separate technical assistance to help ensure the quality of these studies. This suggests that even earlier involvement of JASPERS might not have yielded substantial benefits in terms of project quality, but simply duplicated this assistance. Having said this, even with late involvement, JASPERS had the capacity to influence aspects of the detailed design of projects at the procurement stage. The case study provides an example of this in relation to the design of the Cluj landfill site.

Turning to timelines, there is support for the view that JASPERS support contributed to short decision durations. In this context, the role of the horizontal assignments should be highlighted through the provision of guidelines for cost-benefit analysis, and completion of the application form for solid waste projects specifically, JASPERS undoubtedly reduced the probability of errors being made which could have delayed the decision process. It is noteworthy, in this regard, that neither of the applications in respect of the case study projects was interrupted and that the while the non-JASPERS supported project was the subject of queries from DG for Regional Policy, the JASPERS supported-project was not.

The case studies provide some pointers to the future role of JASPERS. The Romanian authorities have indicated that, because the throughput of projects will slow in the future, it is not their intention to engage external consultants to monitor master planning and project planning. They anticipate that they will need the support of JASPERS in this role. Additionally, the contribution of JASPERS horizontal assignments suggests that this is an effective and efficient means of improving the quality of project planning and easing the application process.
Case Study 4: Romania Water Supply and Wastewater

Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Mureș County (JASPERS Supported)

Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Bacau County (not JASPERS Supported)
Executive Summary

This case study compared two Water and Waste Water projects in Romania. These were:

- The JASPERS assisted Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Mureș County (CCI 2009 RO 161 PR 019); and,
- The on-assisted Extension and Rehabilitation of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Bacau County (CCI 2009RO161PR015).

The case studies completed in Romania included a detailed examination of the Romanian process for identifying and developing projects which differed in important respects to that in other Member States. These issues are described more fully in Case Study 3 Romanian Solid Waste Management.

For the Mureș project, JASPERS involvement came somewhat late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the projects. Whilst key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the feasibility studies, it is noted that for the Mureș project, the involvement of JASPERS did lead to some revision to the Feasibility Study, and subsequent revision of the Masterplan. The Intermediate Body did note that earlier involvement of JASPERS would have further reduced the timescale for the project as such a correction would have been avoided.

Comparing the assisted and non-assisted project, it is evident that the non-assisted project was the subject of one communication from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer raising issues of substance prior to application, and a further interruption letter post application. It is considered that the project preparation team may not have fully addressed the issues raised pre-application to the satisfaction of DG for Regional Policy, although it is not clear whether this was due to an unwillingness to address the issues, a difference of opinion, or a lack of understanding as to how the issues should be addressed. We understand that following the interruption letter, JASPERS were requested to provide some input to deal with the issues raised – despite the project being non-assisted.

Turning to timelines, there is strong support for the view that JASPERS support contributed not only to short decision durations, but also to shorter project preparation durations (mainly through reductions in the time taken to complete Feasibility Studies). The longer duration of the Bacau project (974 days as opposed to 744 days for the Mureș project) suggests that JASPERS may have facilitated a more efficient project planning stage – even accounting for the need to review some key items in the feasibility study. Furthermore, the decision period for the assisted project was notably lower (85 days) than the non-assisted project (127 days). The longer decision period for the non-assisted project was due mainly to the issuing of a communication by the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer on issues which had not been satisfactorily addressed in the project design.
1. Introduction

The Terms of Reference for the study require the development of at least ten case studies, which would provide a comparison between JASPERS supported major projects and non-JASPERS supported major projects. The objective is to provide an analysis for major projects of the effect of JASPERS technical assistance on the timing, quality, development and preparation of submission to the DG for Regional Policy. The Inception Report for this Study provided by the consultants identified pairs of case study projects for analysis. Of the ten case study pairs, six were set for Poland, two for Romania and two for other Member States. This reflects both the scale of project development in Member States and the availability of non-JASPERS assisted major projects. This case study presents the case study relating to two water supply and wastewater projects in Romania, which were chosen based on their similarities. These are:

- **Extension and Rehabilitation of WWI (Water and Wastewater Infrastructure) in Mureș County (2009 RO 161 PR 019), supported by JASPERS; and**
- **Extension and Rehabilitation of WWI in Bacau County, not supported by JASPERS.**

This case study is laid out as follows: Section 2 provides a brief overview of the planning context of the two projects and provides details on the project content. The project planning process and durations for the two projects are analysed in Section 3. Section 4 sets out the role of JASPERS in relation to the JASPERS supported project (Mures County). Finally, Section 5 evaluates the impact of JASPERS in the context of the non-JASPERS supported project (Bacau County).
2. Description of the Projects

2.1 Background

In 2004, the situation was that only 52% of the Romanian population was connected to the drinking water and sewage system and 71% of the wastewater was not or insufficiently treated (MoE, 2007).

After its accession to the EU in January 2007, Romania started to receive economic support via the Cohesion Fund which grants the poorest EU Member States financial help in environment and transport infrastructure fields. In order to prepare for the drawdown of funding from the European Commission, a Masterplan for water and wastewater investment was approved by the Romanian government in 2009. This Masterplan contained:

- A description and inventory of existing water and wastewater systems;
- Population projections, service area projections, present and planned land use, water demand projections, and future water quality demand;
- Water supply quantity and quality projections and new source identification;
- Improvements needed to meet future water demand; hydraulic modelling approaches to estimate long-term needs with documentation of each option;
- Justification of selection of particular system improvement (based on needs, cost effectiveness, constructability, reliability, operation, maintenance, etc);
- Recommended system improvements;
- Maps showing improvement components and service areas; and
- Documentation and description of costs of system improvements.

As part of the Masterplan, the Priority 1 Axis agglomerations were identified and proposed for implementation under the Cohesion Fund programme. This Priority Axis addressed the issue of limited efficiency of public water services mainly due to a large number of small operators, many of them dealing with different other activities (public transport, urban heating, local electricity, etc.) and due to long term under-investments, weak management, lack of long term development strategies and business plans. The total EU contribution to this Priority Axis was €2.77bn for the programming period 2007-2013.1

The extension and rehabilitation of water and wastewater projects for Mures County and Bacau County are two such projects within Priority Axis 1 of the 2007-2013 Operational Programme ‘Environment’.

2.2 Extension and Rehabilitation of WWI in Mureş County (JASPERS Supported)

Mureş County covers an area of 6,714 sqkm and is located in north-central Romania catering for a population of 581,000 persons (2009 census). The County’s largest City, Târgu Mureş, caters for some 22% of the total population at 128,000. Prior to implementation of the Wastewater Infrastructure (WWI) projects, some 87% of the population in the project’s urban areas were connected to the water supply networks and only 30% in rural areas; the sewerage connection rate was 70% in urban areas and only 0.6% in rural areas.

The elaboration of specific components for Mureş County was undertaken through a screening process at masterplan stage. Some more detailed analysis of centralised versus de-centralised

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systems was undertaken as part of the feasibility studies based on a comparison of NPV of investment and O+M costs.

Within the scope of the Cohesion Fund application, and as part of Priority Axis 1 for the 2007-2013 Programming Period, the following components were thereby included in the WWI project for Mureș County:

**Component 1:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply and wastewater systems in WSZ / Agglomeration "Târgu Mureș". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 19.4 M EUR;

**Component 2:** Extension and rehabilitation of wastewater systems in Agglomeration "Reghin". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 8.9 M EUR.

**Component 3:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply and wastewater systems in WSZ / Agglomeration "Sighișoara". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 9 M EUR;

**Component 4:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply and wastewater systems in WSZ / Agglomeration "Târnăveni". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 11.5 M EUR;

**Component 5:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply and wastewater systems in WSZ / Agglomeration "Luduș". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 15.4 M EUR;

**Component 6:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply and wastewater systems in WSZ / Agglomeration "Iernut". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 6.4 M EUR;

**Component 7:** Extension and rehabilitation of water supply system in WSZ "Cristuru Secuiesc". The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 3.3 M EUR;

**Component 8:** Rehabilitation of main trunk Voiniceni –Sarmășu. The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 9.9 M EUR;

**Component 9:** New main trunk Band – Pânet. The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 2.8 M EUR;

**Component 10:** New treatment plant and main trunk Niraj Valley. The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 6 M EUR;

The net total of physical investments amounts to €92.6m. This was uplifted to allow for contingencies, technical assistance, publicity, works supervision and other project related fees. The project total cost (including ineligible costs) is €137.4m. Total eligible costs were €110.9m of which the EU grant was €84.5m.

The project would generate revenues from water charges and wastewater charges. Due to the affordability cap on household tariffs, the capital costs of the project were only partially covered and hence external investment was necessary for successful project delivery.

The economic benefits of the project result from improvements to water bodies, and cost savings generated by the project implementation to households in terms of costs that would have been paid for the operation of septic tanks. The net present value of the project was €203m with an Economic Benefit to Cost ratio of 22.46%.

The Managing Authority for the project was the Ministry for Environment and Forests, the intermediate body was the regional office of the Ministry (SOP Environment Sibiu), with the beneficiary being Compania Aquaserv S.A. Târgu Mureș. Aquaserv SA were established in 2007 to manage water and wastewater infrastructure delivery and operation across a number of districts. It is currently responsible for water supply and sanitation for a population of approximately 300,000 persons.
2.2 Extension and Rehabilitation of WWI in Bacau County (not JASPERS Supported)

Bacau County covers an area of 6,621 sqkm and is located in north-eastern Romania catering for a population of 584,000 persons (2011 census). In this regard, both the county size and population are remarkably similar to Mureș County. Approximately 196,000 persons live in the Bacau Metropolitan area.

In preparing the water and wastewater feasibility studies for Bacau County, five agglomerations were defined, namely Bacau, Comanesti-Moinesti, Buhusi, Darmanesti and Târgu Ocna.

The identification of projects to address water supply and wastewater deficiencies in Bacau County was undertaken through the development of a Masterplan. The Bacau County Masterplan was completed in January 2009 and approved by Bacau County Council in July 2009. It is noted that this Masterplan was undertaken with Technical Assistance provided under EuropeAid.

The feasibility studies for Bacau County examined the alternative of centralised versus de-centralised systems. The decision on a centralised or a de-centralised system was based on an economic analysis with the help of a calculation of the net present values for all possible solutions. For wastewater, the solution with one central treatment plant for several agglomerations turned out to be the most cost efficient solution for all investigated agglomerations. Also, this was reported to lead to more efficient maintenance and operation costs. For water supply, only a centralised system was defined in the masterplan, due to the location of the supply source. No de-centralised options for water supply were therefore considered in the feasibility study.

Within the scope of the Cohesion Fund application, and as part of Priority Axis 1 for the 2007-2013 Programming Period, the following components are included in the WWI project for Bacau County:

**Bacau:**
The agglomeration Bacau contains the capital Bacau City as well as the settlements Crihan, Padureni, Trebes, Valea Budului, Margineni, Barati, Letea Veche, Dealu, Mare, Magura, Hemeius and Lilieci. Furthermore, the settlement Saucesti will join the cluster of Bacau in phase 2 (compliance date 2018) and the settlements Fantanele, Sohodol and Bogdan Voda in phase 3. Works comprised:

- Provision of one wastewater treatment plant for the whole cluster; and
- Necessary Rehabilitation of WTP Caraboaia which is a common part of several communes and cities.

The cost of works is estimated at approximately 26.7 M EUR (2009 Cost Base Year excluding contingencies);

**Comanesti-Moinesti:**
The agglomeration of Comanesti-Moinesti comprises the towns Comanesti and Moinesti and the localities Lunca Asau, Asau, Straja, Ciobanus, Podei and Gazarie. The works comprised:

- A new WWTP in Moinesti North and one WWTP in Moinesti South;
- A combined sludge dewatering for Moinesti-North and Moinesti-South at Moinesti-North;
- In the city of Moinesti streets will be connected to the existing water supply system, increasing the connection rate from 84% to 90%; and
- PS Vasiesti including RSV Hangani will be decommissioned.
The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 14.0 M EUR (2009 Cost Base Year excluding contingencies);

**Buhusi:**
The agglomeration of Buhusi comprises only the town Buhusi itself. The settlements Blagesti, Buda, Valea Lui Ion, Tardenii Mari and Racova will join the cluster in phase 2 (compliance date 2018). The works comprised:

- A new WWTP (with the existing plant abandoned) and extension of the existing collection system; and
- In the city of Buhusi one long street will be connected to the existing water supply system, thereby increasing the connection rate from 85% to 90%.

The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 14.1 M EUR (2009 Cost Base Year excluding contingencies);

**Darmanesti:**
The agglomeration Darmanesti includes the settlements Darmanesti, Darmaneasca and Lapos. The cluster is joined in phase 3 by the settlements Salatruc, Pagubeni and Plopu. The works comprise a new WWTP and construction of a new collection system. The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 18.6 M EUR (2009 Cost Base Year excluding contingencies);

**Târgu Ocna:**
The agglomeration Targu Ocna includes the town Targu Ocna and Valcele. The cluster will be joined in phase 3 by the settlements Poieni and Bogata. The works comprise construction of a new WWTP (with the existing plant dismantled) and extension of the existing collection system. The cost of this scheme is estimated at approximately 11.0 M EUR (2009 Cost Base Year excluding contingencies);

The net total of physical investments amounts to €84.6m. This was uplifted to allow for contingencies, technical assistance, publicity, works supervision and other project related fees. The project total cost (including ineligible costs) is €146m. Total eligible costs were €118.0m of which the EU grant was €91.4m.

The economic benefits of the project result from improvements to water bodies, cost savings to customers, and benefits associated with access to drinking water. The net present value of the project was €201m with an Economic Rate of Return of 18.9%.

The Managing Authority for the project was the Ministry for Environment and Forests, the intermediate body was the regional office of the Ministry (SOP Environment Bacau), with the beneficiary being Compania Regionala de Apa Bacau CRAB.
3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

3.1 Comparison of Planning Durations

As shown in Table 3.1, the planning for both projects commenced in mid 2008. The Bacau project began some 3 months prior to the Mureş project, and finished some 3.5 months after completion of the Mureş project. As such, the feasibility and planning period for the Bacau (non-assisted) project was some 30% (or 230 days) longer than the Mureş project (assisted by JASPERS).

JASPERS became involved in the Mureş project relatively late in the process, approximately eighteen months into the project planning phase. During the eight months of involvement in the project, the main input by JASPERS was therefore in the completion of the application forms.

It is noted that the final stages of the feasibility studies for Bacau coincided with the establishment of the Beneficiary entity (in September 2010) and this may have accounted for the extended duration of the studies. Notwithstanding this, it is noted that following a Mission to the MS by DG for Regional Policy in September 2010, which set out a requirement for the inclusion of a number of further ‘technically necessary investments’ in the application, which were expected to have a ‘significant impact on tariff levels’. This may have contributed significantly to the extended duration of the feasibility studies for the non-assisted project.

With regard to the DG for Regional Policy decision duration, this amounted to 85 days for the JASPERS project, but 127 days for the non-assisted project. In addition, it is noted that the decision period of 85 days for the JASPERS project included the Christmas holiday period. The additional duration for the non-assisted project resulted in part from the communication of a number of ‘issues’ relating to the application form by DG for Regional Policy following a Mission in April 2011.

From the information available, it is considered that the Bacau project was deemed to be technically less challenging by the Managing Authority than the Mures project, as in the latter there was a perceived need for more detailed analysis of alternative solutions – particularly in the area of centralised versus localised infrastructure for a number of areas. Indeed, this may have supported the decision to deliver this project without JASPERS assistance.

Table 3.1: Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Mureş County Project (with JASPERS)</th>
<th>Bacau County Project (without JASPERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility Study Start</td>
<td>01/09/2008</td>
<td>01/06/2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
<td>15/09/2010</td>
<td>31/01/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Duration (days)</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS Start Date</td>
<td>04/03/2010</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS Completion Date</td>
<td>17/11/2010</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS Duration (days)</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In total, the non-assisted project exceeded the timescale for the assisted project by a total of 272 days (230 days for planning and 42 days for DG for Regional Policy decision.  It is evident that the increased duration for the non-assisted project was associated with technical issues raised by DG for Regional Policy on two occasions (one pre-application and one post-application).

Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the DG for Regional Policy decision period for both projects is significantly less than the average decision period for WWI projects. For the JASPERS assisted project, the decision period of 85 days compares to an average for all Jaspers assisted WWI projects of 215 days, and the 127 days for the non-assisted project compares well to the average decision period for non-assisted WWI projects of 3245 days.

3.2 Planning of the Mureș County and Bacau County Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Projects

Planning of these projects by the Romanian authorities was conducted within the context of a strategic approach. A Masterplan for water and wastewater investment in Romania was approved by the Romanian government in 2009 (See section 2.1 of this report). Local Water and Wastewater Masterplans were then prepared by the Municipality – these set out the series of investment priorities and are approved at County level.

The Master Plans outlined the key parameters that would determine the design of water and wastewater investment projects. These include the definition of individual agglomerations, the definition of problems to be addressed and objectives of the investment. By defining boundaries at masterplan stage, the feasibility studies are subsequently constrained to identifying solutions wholly within those boundaries.

In the preparation of the feasibility studies for both projects, technical assistance was procured to support project preparation by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (EuropelAid/123053/D/SER/RO). It was a condition of procurement that feasibility study consultants involved in a particular project also had a number of other feasibility study assignments for other municipalities.

An Evaluation Group was put in place by the Ministry for Environment and Forests. This comprised the representatives of the Ministry, the regional office of the Ministry, the beneficiary (County Council or acting authority), and the Technical Assistance consultants in respect of both projects. For the Jaspers assisted project, Jaspers also sat on the evaluation group. For the non-assisted project, the Evaluation Group also included an external technical consultant (a consortium headed by Ramboll) appointed by the Ministry. This appointment arose because the Ministry anticipated that during the period 2008-2009, a large number projects would be reaching the stage where a feasibility study had been completed and the drafting of an Application Form would commence. The Ministry considered that the JASPERS office in Bucharest would not have the capacity to support all of these projects, so additional external technical assistance was commissioned.
Technical Assistance for Mureş County was provided by a consortium led by Eptisa, who have experience in a number of similar projects across Romania. This consortium was awarded contracts in relation to four other county waste management projects. A consortium led by ILF was appointed to provide Technical Assistance to Bacau. In both projects, this Technical Assistance covered:

- **Pre-feasibility Phase:** Development of a Masterplan for Water and Wastewater Sector covering the complete county
- **Feasibility Phase:** Development of the Application for CF funding covering the defined priority measures including development of supporting documents like Feasibility Study, CBA and EIA
- **Tendering Phase:** Development of the Tender Documents covering the defined priority I measures (work tenders) and priority measures (service tenders)

### 3.4 Role of DG for Regional Policy

Another feature of the planning process for Romanian projects has been the direct involvement of DG for Regional Policy. The relevant Desk Officer liaised closely with the Romanian authorities, conducting a number of missions at which the WWI projects were discussed. In this manner, the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer kept abreast of project planning and offered advice on the components of the project and their potential acceptability to the DG. This included an informal vetting of the Application Form for both the case study projects prior to their submission.

### 4. Scope of JASPERS Support

#### 4.1 Mureş County Waste Management Project

It is clear that JASPERS became involved in the Mureş project after the feasibility study had been completed. The JASPERS assignment was to review the Draft Applications to DG for Regional Policy and the documents that supported that application.

The Evaluation Group worked via a system of Correction Protocols. This involved the issuing of the Draft Application Form and background studies to the members of the Evaluation Group and the seeking of comments from them through a series of Correction Protocols. A total of six correction protocols were issued during the project duration. During the period of JASPERS involvement, three of these correction protocols were issued. In addition, JASPERS undertook three missions/meetings during the course of its involvement.

JASPERS made specific contributions in the following areas:

**Project Objectives:** JASPERS concluded that although the projects support the project objectives, that there were a number of other components to be undertaken outside the current project that are necessary in order to achieve full compliance. This represented a risk to the MS ultimately achieving with WWI Directives.

**Options Analysis:** The consideration of options focused on the requirement to rehabilitate versus new construction, and the decision regarding centralised versus regionalised systems. Although JASPERS suggested that the option analysis was correct and objective, it is noted that JASPERS involvement only commenced on the project following completion of the feasibility stage, and hence the re-visiting of any decision in this regard would have led to significant delay to project implementation. It is noted that for the Mureş project, that the issues of option analysis were raised
by DG for Regional Policy in their review of the application – suggesting that the basis for decisions as presented in the application form and supporting documentation were not sufficiently elaborated.

**Engineering Feasibility:** JASPERS reported that there were no significant issues of concern regarding the engineering feasibility. Notwithstanding this, the JASPERS reports do set out a requirement for a more rigorous method for dealing with water quality in long trunk mains. This issue results from the use of long trunk mains connecting regional to centralised water supply networks, as an alternative to a series of more localised systems. Whilst JASPERS suggest that this issue should be considered at design stage, it is suspected that this issue may not have been addressed or possibly considered in sufficient detail when undertaking the options analysis – the involvement of JASPERS at the feasibility study stage may therefore have possibly led to a different outcome in terms of the engineering solution. Likewise, JASPERS also raised issues regarding the constructability of long gravity sewers as proposed in the final solution – suggesting the use of trenchless technologies as an alternative to traditional construction. JASPERS also suggested that further analysis of the quality and quantity of industrial discharges into wastewater systems was required at the design stage. Some minor comments on the future sludge management strategy were also issued which may, following detailed design, lead to some modifications in the disposal strategy.

**Project Cost Estimates:** JASPERS reviewed the cost estimates and concluded that the cost estimates were within the range expected for the project.

**Demand Analysis:** JASPERS reviewed the demand analysis for water supply and wastewater, and concluded that the analysis provided adequate forecasts of demand over the period.

**Tariff and Affordability:** JASPERS noted the average affordability limit of 4% set for tariffs would be exceeded only slightly, but by 2016 the tariffs would fall below this 4% threshold. Nevertheless, JASPERS note that there are other investments required to achieve the full objectives, and that these (financed by local contributions) are not included in the tariff structure. JASPERS recommended that monitoring of the impact of tariffs on the poorer households would be necessary, along with the consideration of mechanisms to improve affordability for such households (e.g. VAT exemption).

**Economic Analysis:** JASPERS conclude that the Economic CBA has been carried out in line with the principles and rules set out in the Council Regulation 1083/2006 for the current programming period of the Cohesion Fund (2007 – 2013) and the basic methodological principles laid out in the EC Working Document nr. 4 “Guidance on the methodology for carrying out Cost – Benefit Analysis”. In addition to these main documents, the Consultant has followed closely the recommendation of the “Guidelines for CBA of Water and Wastewater Projects”, as prepared by the Ministry of Environment with JASPERS support, and agreed with the EC the economic analysis contained in the feasibility study was approved by JASPERS.

**Financial Analysis:** The financial analysis (FA) has been carried out applying the “incremental method” and based on a period of analysis of 30 years (2010-2039), using EUR in constant 2009 prices and applying a real discount rate of 5%, as required by DG for Regional Policy and by Romanian guidance. JASPERS confirm that the methodology used in the financial analysis is in accordance with required standards, confirming the project as affordable and financially sustainable.

**Environmental Impact Assessment:** Some project’s components (from Targu Mures, Sighisoara, Iernut and Valea Nirajului agglomerations) are located inside or in the vicinity of Natura 2000 sites. JASPERS suggested that there was a lack of justifications of Natura 2000 Declarations issued by EPA Mures for the project’s components which are crossing or are in the vicinity of the above mentioned Natura 2000 sites The AF was revised to incorporate this comment.
Financing Plan: JASPERS suggested that additional information be provided to set out how commercial financial support for the project may be repaid. Providing such information could assist in supporting the case for financing, an/or reducing the financing costs of the loan.

Project Implementation: A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) has been set up within the County Council. JASPERS suggest that this unit should evolve into a Programme Management Unit given the scale of future investments, and that it should be enhanced with additional skill in site supervision and monitoring personnel.

Procurement and Timetabling: JASPERS found the arrangements satisfactory, but indicated that the PIU may need to staff up, and that additional technical assistance provided as projects are delivered. JASPERS also note that there is limited room within the programme for delays in access to cohesion funding.

Sensitivity and Risk: The sensitivity analysis was undertaken to the satisfaction of JASPERS. Nevertheless, JASPERS felt that the risk analysis felt that different scenarios could have been defined for O&M costs, as the risk analysis was limited to performance indicators only rather than considering cash flow risks.

4.2 Bacau County Waste Management Project

Although a non-assisted project, we understand that there was some limited interaction between the Intermediate Body and JASPERS on the Bacau projects. This activity comprised some informal communications on certain aspects of the project with JASPERS staff (reflecting the good working relationship that has been built up with the JASPERS team in Bucharest), in addition to attendance at one project review meeting with the Managing Authority in order to support preparation of responses to DG for Regional Policy following submission of the AF.

It is noted that although there is no record of a formal interruption of the Bacau project by DG for Regional Policy during the decision period, there was strong direction given following the Mission of 11th April 2011, as follows:

"The clarification note attached to the former application could not be accepted, as critical issues raised during the appraisal were unsatisfactorily addressed. In this respect, the Commission underlined the responsibility of the beneficiary, in endorsing the project, being ultimately responsible for the content and the quality of the application sent (whereas the clarification note entails replies labelled "from the consultant"), but also the managing authority, which should duly check and validate the documents sent to the Commission."

Records show that the application was resubmitted approximately 1 month following the Mission Report which addressed the issues raised. We understand that some limited JASPERS support was sourced informally in preparing the response to the issues raised.

4.3 Horizontal Related Support
Both the Ministry for Environment and Forestry and the regional intermediate bodies made reference to the strong support role provided by JASPERS in the context of horizontal assignments (this is the case for both the JASPERS assisted and the non-assisted project). The work requested from JASPERS followed the Romanian Government Ordinance HG No.28 of 2008, which set out methodological rules for the elaboration and approval of technical and economic documentation for investment projects. The JASPERS contribution included support for the following elements:

**General Guidelines for Cost Benefit Analysis of Projects to be Supported by the Structural Instruments (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2008)**

This Guidance outlined the steps to be followed in conducting a CBA. Generic advice was given on objective setting, options analysis, financial analysis, calculation of the funding gap, user charges and affordability, financial sustainability, establishing economic prices, treatment of externalities, and sensitivity and risk analysis.

**Cost Benefit Analysis of Water and Wastewater Projects to be supported by the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional Development Fund in 2007 – 2013 (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2008)**

This Guidance built on the General Guidelines to make them specific to the water and wastewater sector. For example, it identified the specific economic benefits that arise from access to drinking water, improved surface water quality, resource cost savings to consumers and business, and externalities. The guidance proposed values to be placed on all these benefits, and provides a template for a spreadsheet based CBA methodology.

Both the feasibility study Consultant for the JASPERS supported project and the non-JASPERS supported project had these guidance documents available to them. This meant that the feasibility studies were developed with the project Application Form in mind. In particular, the feasibility studies followed both Romanian and EU guidance on project appraisal. This meant that the feasibility studies were both relevant to the Application Form and the technical analyses had been conducted in a manner compatible with EU requirements.

5. **Views of the Intermediate Body and Mureș County Council on the Planning of JASPERS Supported Project**

Both the Intermediate Body and the Managing Authority in Mureș County report good working relationships with JASPERS, drawing on support both formally (through project meetings, formal document reviews and horizontal tasks), and informally through regular communication by telephone.

The Intermediate Body report that the involvement with JASPERS led to changes in the Feasibility Study at a late stage, and this required a subsequent revision to the County masterplan. Although somewhat disruptive, the Intermediate Body recognise the improvements that this brought to the project, and would have valued earlier involvement in the Feasibility Study by the JASPERS team. In all, the IB suggested that the project did proceed much quicker than would have been expected in the absence of JASPERS.

The particular contribution of JASPERS through the horizontal assignments was highly valued. One of the key benefits of JASPERS was the assurance that if JASPERS had reviewed the Application Form and found it acceptable, the risk of a negative or much delayed decision by DG for Regional Policy was minimised.
A notably positive feature was that there was an informal evaluation process which involved a mission from the DG for Regional Policy. JASPERS was instrumental in facilitating this and, perhaps more importantly, providing support to the IB in responding to the issues raised by the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer during the Mission.

There was little interaction between JASPERS and the Beneficiary of the Mureș project. As such, capacity building was focused mainly on the Intermediate Body through the various project reviews and ongoing communication. The Beneficiary did have the opportunity to comment in writing on the draft application forms through the Correction Protocols.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

The terms of reference for the Evaluation of JASPERS require an assessment of the impact of JASPERS support on project quality and timelines. The key timeline is the DG for Regional Policy decision duration.

The impact of JASPERS on project quality depends in part on what would have occurred in the absence of JASPERS involvement. Consideration of a non-JASPERS supported project helps to understand this counterfactual situation. In the absence of JASPERS support, it is clear that the Romanian authorities relied on a standardised planning process that was applied across all water and wastewater projects. This process had a number of strong aspects:

- A strong strategic planning framework at national and regional levels;
- County Master Plans at the pre-feasibility stage;
- The recruitment of external technical assistance to help monitor the Master Plans and project feasibility studies;
- The awarding of multiple feasibility studies to each feasibility study consultant, facilitating learning on the part of the consultant; and
- The establishment of an Evaluation Group, inclusive of various stakeholders.

Project planning also benefitted from the active involvement of the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer at pre-application stage.

This strong project planning process is undoubtedly the major reason why the DG for Regional Policy decision period was found to be relatively short for Romanian projects generally, the case study projects being no exception. Well planned projects are likely to proceed through the DG for Regional Policy appraisal process more quickly. Other reasons for the short decision period include the very similar nature of water and wastewater projects at the county level in Romania and the active role taken by the DG for Regional Affairs Desk Officer.

For the Mureș project, JASPERS involvement came somewhat late to have a substantial influence on the quality of the projects. Whilst key design elements for the projects had been largely decided at the Master Plan stage and validated by the feasibility studies, it is noted that for the Mureș project, the involvement of JASPERS did lead to some revision to the Feasibility Study, and subsequent revision of the Masterplan. The Intermediate Body did note that earlier involvement of JASPERS would have further reduced the timescale for the project as such a correction would have been avoided.

Comparing the assisted and non-assisted project, it is evident that the non-assisted project was the subject of one communication from the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer raising issues of substance prior to application, and a further interruption letter post application. It is considered that the project preparation team may not have fully addressed the issues raised pre-application to the
satisfaction of DG Regio, although it is not clear whether this was due to an unwillingness to address the issues, a difference of opinion, or a lack of understanding as to how the issues should be addressed. We understand that following the interruption letter, JASPERS were requested to provide some input to deal with the issues raised – despite the project being non-assisted.

Turning to timelines, there is strong support for the view that JASPERS support contributed not only to short decision durations, but also to shorter project preparation durations (mainly through reductions in the time taken to complete Feasibility Studies). The longer duration of the Bacau project (974 days as opposed to 744 days for the Mureş project) suggests that JASPERS may have facilitated a more efficient project planning stage – even accounting for the need to review some key items in the feasibility study. Furthermore, the decision period for the assisted project was notably lower (85 days) than the non-assisted project (127 days). The longer decision period for the non-assisted project was due mainly to the issuing of a communication by the DG for Regional Policy Desk Officer on issues which had not been satisfactorily addressed in the project design.

In this context, the role of the horizontal assignments should be highlighted through the provision of guidelines for cost-benefit analysis, and completion of the application form for solid waste projects. Specifically, JASPERS undoubtedly reduced the probability of errors being made which could have delayed the decision process.

The case studies provide some pointers to the future role of JASPERS. The Romanian authorities have indicated that, because the throughput of projects will slow in the future, it is not their intention to engage external consultants to monitor master planning and project planning. They anticipate that they will need the support of JASPERS in this role. Additionally, the contribution of JASPERS horizontal assignments suggests that this is an effective and efficient means of improving the quality of project planning and easing the application process.
Case Study 5: Polish Railway Modernisation

Modernisation of the E65 railway line between Warsaw and Gdynia, Ciechanów section (JASPERS assisted)

Modernisation of E59 railway line between Wroclaw and Poznań, Stage II (non-JASPERS)
Executive Summary

This case study compared two major rail investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2010PL161PR005 Modernisation of the E65 railway line between Warsaw and Gdynia, Ciechanów section (JASPERS assisted); and,
- CCI 2007PL161PR001 Modernisation of E59 railway line between Wroclaw and Poznań, Stage II, Section between Wroclaw and Dolnośląskie region (non-JASPERS).

The application for funding for the JASPERS assisted project was dealt with in less than a year by the Commission. The Commission needed two and a half years to consider the application for funding for the non-JASPERS project. It is clear that these projects cannot be directly compared i.e. that this difference in the times taken to reach a decision is not a direct reflection of the impact of JASPERS. However this case study shows how JASPERS help can reduce the time taken to develop a project to the stage where Commission funding can be made available.

JASPERS assistance significantly reduced the time taken to develop the Warsaw-Gdynia project. JASPERS did not add to the time taken to prepare the application, and it reduced the time that the Commission took to reach a Decision on this project compared to a counterfactual where JASPERS assistance was not used. In addition this JASPERS assignment was also useful for the development of subsequent rail projects.

The length of time taken to reach a Decision on the Wroclaw-Poznań project was due to specific features of the project, and was not entirely due to the absence of JASPERS assistance. However this project provides useful insights into the sort of issues that give rise to Interruption Letters from the Commission. In particular, it makes it clear that these Interruptions often result solely from the presentation of the application. JASPERS is clearly well placed to improve the presentation of applications to ease and speed their consideration by the Commission.

In addition, the project demonstrates that addressing issues and questions concerning a project once an application for funding has been made to the Commission is inherently time consuming. JASPERS assistance provides a valuable opportunity to deal with issues quickly and efficiently in advance of an application for funding to the Commission.

This case study illustrates how JASPERS assistance at the stage when a Member State has completed its appraisal of a project, and is formulating an application for EU funding, can significantly reduce the time taken for the Commission to consider the application for funding, and the total time taken to develop he project from need identification to implementation.
1. Introduction

This case study compared two major rail investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2010PL161PR005 Modernisation of the E65 railway line between Warsaw and Gdynia, Ciechanów section (JASPERS assisted); and,
- CCI 2007PL161PR001 Modernisation of E59 railway line between Wroclaw and Poznań, Stage II, Section between Wroclaw and Dolnośląskie region (non-JASPERS).

The time taken to reach a funding decision was significantly shorter for the JASPERS assisted project and this case study examines the extent to which this was because of JASPERS support in the development of the project. The case study also highlights JASPERS work which was used in a number of similar projects.

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted Project: Modernisation of a Section of Warsaw-Gdynia Railway

This project concerned a 60km section of the rail line between Warsaw and Gdynia. A schematic diagram of the relevant section of railway is set out in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Sections of the Warsaw-Gdynia Railway
Prior to this project, the last significant investment in this section of railway took place in 1982-1985 when it and the adjoining sections were electrified. Subsequent to this the only significant investment in this section of line was the replacement of the turnouts in Ciechanów station.

The line was originally designed for maximum speeds of 120kmh. However deterioration of the infrastructure over time means that average speeds over the line had dropped to between 62kmh and 79kmh. In addition, platforms were old and unpleasant. As a result of this, rail passengers were receiving an unacceptably low level of service. The relative attractiveness of rail travel was expected to decline further as the infrastructure continued to deteriorate and as road connections improved.

This project will bring the infrastructure up to a standard representing current best practice. Maximum speeds on the line for passengers trains will reach 160kmh, giving an average speed for passenger trains of up to 146kmh. With suitable, tilting, rolling stock this maximum speed could be as high as 200kmh. The safety of the service would also be increased, and its environmental impact on the area around the line would be lessened.

This improvement in the line was to be achieved by a range of capital investments in the line including:

- Upgrading the equipment for electrification of the line;
- Upgrading rails to the UIC 60 standard of continuously welded tracks on reinforced concrete sleepers;
- Upgrading points to the UIC 60 standard;
- Standardising and increasing platform height (55cm) and length
- There are 47 level crossings on this section of railway. 46 of these will be replaced with overpasses, and one will be modernised;
- There are currently 3 pedestrian crossings on this section of railway. All of these pedestrian crossings and one passenger bridge will be removed. As a replacement 8 new pedestrian underpasses will be built; and,
- Providing improved station equipment.

The total cost of this work, excluding VAT, is estimated to be €422m.

This improvement in the quality of train services will produce considerable benefits for travellers and the economy and society as a whole. These benefits and their approximate monetary values are set out in the Table below:
Table 1: Economic Benefits of the Ciechanów Railway Section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time savings for existing rail users</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time savings for travellers switching to rail</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car costs saved by travellers switching to rail</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road accident costs avoided</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in pollution and greenhouse gases</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits (present value)</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Modernisation of Wrocław-Poznań Railway Stage II

This non-JASPERS project is similar to the JASPERS assisted project. It concerned the modernisation of a 59km section of the railway line between Wrocław and Poznań. As with the JASPERS assisted project, the line has suffered from underinvestment which has led to reductions in the maximum train speed possible on the line. The investment project will allow maximum speeds for passenger services to increase to 160kmh, and eventually to 200kmh.

As with the JASPERS assisted project, achieving this objective requires a number of capital investments including:

- Relaying line with a straighter geometry to allow speeds up to 200kmh;
- Renewal of stations, and revising track layout in stations to eliminate crossovers;
- Upgrading traffic control technology;
- Installing a fibre optic communications link along the line;
- Upgrading traction power system to allow for higher speeds, including provision of new overhead power lines and new or upgraded transformer stations;
- There are 37 level crossings on this section of railway. 16 of these will be replaced and 21 will be modernised;
- Structural work includes the modernisation of 22 bridges and overpasses, one new underpass, modernisation of 3 pedestrian underpasses and elimination of one footbridge.
- Increasing of platform heights to 55cm or 76cm and provision of facilities for disabled passengers at stations,

The total cost of this work, excluding VAT is estimated to be €842m, or €670m in present value terms.
As with the JASPERS assisted project, upgrading this section of rail line will produce significant benefits for travellers and the economy and society as a whole. These benefits and their approximate monetary values are set out in the Table below:

### Table 2: Economic Benefits of Modernising the Wroclaw-Poznań Railway Stage II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traveller Time Savings</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Benefits</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator Benefits</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Benefits</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits (present value)</td>
<td>898</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

3. **Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects**

Planning for both projects commenced before the establishment of JASPERS, and indeed, before the accession of Poland to the EU. The Polish national railway company had long been aware of a need to modernise much of the rail network. The company started work on a feasibility study for the modernisation of the Warsaw-Gdynia railway in May 2003. Work started on a feasibility study for the modernisation of the Wroclaw-Poznań railway at the beginning of 2004. Subsequently the railway company developed a national strategy for railways which was completed and adopted by the Council of Ministers at the end of 2008. Both of these projects were included in this strategy.

Planning for the non-JASPERS project proceeded quickly, and in 2005 an application for funding was made to the Commission under the 2000-2006 round of funding. This application was subsequently withdrawn due to environmental concerns, and the project was developed further before being submitted to the Commission for funding approval in 2008. The project to modernise a section of the Warsaw-Gdynia railway received JASPERS assistance with development starting in April 2009. By April 2010 additional development work with the assistance of JASPERS was completed, and the project was ready for an application for funding to be made to the Commission.

An intermediate body for transport projects, the Centre for European Transport Projects (CÚPT) was established in March 2007 to assist with the development of all transport projects for the 2007-2013 round of funding. CÚPT assisted in the development of both of these projects. In particular it was involved up to the point where they were approved in principle by the Managing Authority and could proceed to an application for funding being made to the Commission. Both of these projects are part of the Infrastructure and

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1 "Masterplan for railway development planning until 2030” adopted by Council of Ministers December 2008
Environment Operational Programme for Poland, approved by the Commission at the end of 2007. Both of these projects were

Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Section of Warsaw-Gdynia Railway (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>Wrocław-Poznań Railway Stage II (Non-JASPERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility Study Start</td>
<td>19/5/2003</td>
<td>1/1/2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
<td>17/6/2009</td>
<td>31/12/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Duration</td>
<td>2,221 days</td>
<td>2,556 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS start date</td>
<td>29/4/2009</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS end date</td>
<td>23/4/2010</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS duration</td>
<td>359 days</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO application</td>
<td>5/5/2010</td>
<td>27/2/2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Duration</td>
<td>323 days</td>
<td>939 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Including preparation of tender documentation

4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Warsaw-Gdynia project

JASPERS assisted with the project to modernise a section of the Warsaw-Gdynia railway. This was the first Polish railway project where JASPERS assistance was sought. During initial discussions between JASPERS and the Polish authorities it emerged that completing this application for funding for this project raised a number of complex issues which would have to be addressed in all applications for tendering for rail projects. In particular, completing an application for funding would require the Polish authorities to:

- Estimate future operating and maintenance costs for the upgraded line as an input for the cost benefit assessment and financial assessment of the project;
- Estimate the track access charges that the beneficiary, the Polish Rail Infrastructure Company (PKP PLK), will be able to apply for use of the upgraded infrastructure. This value is also needed to complete the economic and financial appraisal of the project;
- Complete a funding gap calculation for the project in a context where the beneficiary, PKP PLK will own the upgraded railway tracks and charge train operating companies for use of these tracks;
- Complete an economic and financial assessment of a project to upgrade rail infrastructure; and
• Present the results of this work and the rest of the project development work in the form required for an application for funding to DG REGIO.

JASPERS, assisted by consultants PWC and Scott Wilson, carried an exercise to complete all these tasks for this project. The results of this work were used as a model for all subsequent applications for funding for rail projects.

JASPERS worked closely with:

• The Beneficiary, the Polish Rail Infrastructure Company (PKP PLK);
• The Managing Authority, the Ministry of Regional Development;
• The Intermediate Authority the Ministry of Infrastructure; and,
• The “Centre for European Transport Projects” an Implementing Body for this Operating Programme.

The JASPERS assignment lasted approximately one year. For the first seven months of the assignment JASPERS met the Polish authorities on average twice a month. For the final five months of the assignment the frequency of meetings increased to weekly. As part of this assignment JASPERS reviewed and/or edited:

• The feasibility study and cost benefit calculation for this project;
• The application for funding to be submitted to DG REGIO;
• The Environmental Impact Assessment Report;
• The Environmental impact Decision taken by Mazowickie Province; and,
• The Economic and Financial model underlying the feasibility study and application.

DG REGIO received an application for funding for the Warsaw-Gdynia project on 5th May 2010. Additional documents were sent to DG REGIO later that month, and DG REGIO acknowledged receipt of a complete application for funding on 28th May 2010. The Commission did not have any questions or concerns about this application, and no Interruption Letters were issued to the Polish Authorities. A Commission Decision granting funding to the project was taken on 24th March 2011.

4.2 Application process for non-JASPERS project

The initial application for funding for the Wroclaw-Poznań Railway Stage II was made on the 27th February 2008. DG REGIO had a number of questions and concerns about this application for funding and a number of Interruption Letters were sent to the Polish Authorities. These were as follows:

• Interruption Letter of 11th April 2008: In this letter DG REGIO raised concerns about the application of the Habitats Directive to the project, the application of the EIA Directive to the project and the application of the SEA Directive to the project.

• Interruption Letter of 16th May 2008: This letter referred to the application for funding for this project that had been made in the previous funding period and requested
details and explanations of changes made to this project between that application and the current application. The letter also raised on number of detailed issues on the current application, including:

- How the application reflected the intention in the national rail strategy to make the E-59 rail line passenger only;
- The discount rate used;
- The exchange rate used;
- The treatment of subsidies in the financial appraisal; and,
- The co-financing rate used in the application.

- Interruption letter of 27th January 2009: Reiterated concern that application did not take account of intention in national rail strategy to make the E-59 line passenger only.
- On 3rd September 2009, DG sent an email message to the Polish authorities acknowledging receipt of information and explanations on 4th August 2009. DG REGIO asked that the Polish authorities submit a revised application form to the Commission, incorporating these extra elements and changes.
- An Interruption Letter of 4th March 2010: This letter acknowledged receipt of an updated application from the Polish authorities on 26th February 2010, but asked for certain details and output indicators to be restored to the application.

As a result of these issues 939 days elapsed from the submission of an application of funding to DG REGIO to the adoption of a Commission Decision granting funding. The application was being actively considered by the Commission for 459 of these days. For 480 days the Commission’s consideration of the application was “interrupted” while it waited for responses from the Polish authorities to various queries.

5. Views of Polish Authorities

On 5th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish authorities in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of:

- The Ministry of Regional Development, the Managing Authority for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, the Intermediate Authority for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The “Centre for European Transport Projects” an Implementing Body established to assist project beneficiaries; and,
- PHP PLK S.A. the Polish national rail infrastructure company, the Beneficiary for these projects.

All of the officials present were positive about the role of JASPERS in developing investment projects to the stage where an application can be made for EU funding. Poland obtains JASPERS assistance for approximately half of its “major” investment projects. Officials
indicated that JASPERS would not have the resources to assist in all of their major projects and, as a result, they prioritise larger, more complex projects for JASPERS assistance. If JASPERS had more resources the Polish authorities believe it would be useful to seek its assistance for a larger proportion of major projects. In the case of the non-JASPERS project discussed here, a decision was taken not to seek JASPERS assistance as the project had been the subject of an application for Commission funding during the 2000-2006 funding period. It was not considered worthwhile to seek JASPERS assistance for a project that had already been considered by the Commission. In general JASPERS is used in Poland to assist in preparing applications to the Commission for funding.

Typically, JASPERS is involved in projects at a late stage in Poland. JASPERS assistance is used to assist in preparing the application for Commission funding, and generally in presenting the project in a way that will allow the Commission to reach a funding decision in the shortest possible time. Normally, projects will only be discussed with JASPERS once the Polish authorities have reached a formal decision that the project should proceed. Such a decision by the Polish authorities is often based on a competition between a number of different projects purposed by different beneficiaries. Projects will have reached an advanced stage of development at this stage. Designs will be finalised, planning and environmental permits will have been obtained, procurement may have started and economic and financial appraisal of the project will have been completed. JASPERS input is confined to further analysis and presentation of information in a way that will facilitate the examination of the project by the Commission.

The JASPERS assisted project in this case study is typical of this approach to the use of JASPERS. The Polish Authorities and JASPERS had initially intended that JASPERS would simply review and proposed changes to a draft application form for EU funding and its supporting documents. When this review was underway it became apparent that completing the application for EU funding raised a number of difficult issues and that further analysis would be needed to provide the Commission with the information it would require to consider the application for funding. As described above, the results of this analysis would be useful in completing later application for funding for rail projects. The work done by JASPERS and its consultants related to:

- Estimating future rail operating and maintenance costs;
- Estimating future track access charges;
- Completing a funding gap calculation for a railway infrastructure company;
- Completing the economic and financial appraisal of a project to upgrade rail infrastructure; and
- Presenting the results of this work and the rest of the project development work in the form required for an application for funding to DG REGIO

All of this work relates to the appraisal of a project at an advanced stage of development, and the presentation of this appraisal work in a way that will facilitate the work of DG REGIO.

The Polish officials were aware of some instances where JASPERS had assisted in the earlier stages of project development. JASPERS has been able to give useful advice in the conduct of public procurement, in particular on incorporating quality criteria into tender
processes, which has ensured that beneficiaries obtain better value for money when they procure infrastructure work. In addition, JASPERS involvement in the early stages of the preparation of a feasibility study Pomeranian Metropolitan Railway\(^2\) helped ensure that the correct technology was chosen at the option choice stage of project development. However this type of involvement is not regarded as the main priority of JASPERS in Poland.

For the current case there was a clear consensus among the Polish stakeholders that the JASPERS assistance to the Warsaw-Gdynia project had greatly speeded the process of obtaining EU funding for this project. All stakeholders also agreed that the work done by JASPERS in context of this process had been very useful in making later applications for funding for rail projects. JASPERS had worked in parallel with the national authorities in preparing the application for funding and had not increased the project planning duration. JASPERS input into the project planning had led to the Commission taking a Decision to fund the project in a shorter time that would otherwise have been the case.

However, it was pointed out that this project was not a typical JASPERS assignment. Due to the importance of this assignment as a model for future rail projects, significant resources had been devoted to preparing the application by the Polish authorities and by JASPERS. JASPERS impact on project timelines might be less in more typical JASPERS assisted projects where JASPERS is not able to devote as many resources to the project as was the case here. In particular, Beneficiaries and Intermediate Authorities sometimes find that there preparation of an application is delayed while they wait for input from JASPERS. These potential additions to the projected preparation duration have to be set against the reduction in the time taken for the Commission to reach a decision on an application in assessing the total impact of JASPERS on a project.

The non-JASPERS project considered in this case spent approximately two and a half years being considered by DG REGIO. The Polish authorities were anxious to make it clear that this was not a typical project, and should not be used as a measure of project durations where JASPERS assistance was not used. As they pointed out, this project raised a number of difficult environmental issues, and was unusual in being carried forward from a previous funding period. For these reasons it is not possible to directly compare the time taken for the Commission to reach a decision to fund this project with the time taken in the JASPERS assisted project.

The Managing Authority pointed out that until 2008 Polish national environmental legislation did not exactly transpose the relevant EU Directives and that this led to difficulties in developing projects for EU funding. Differences arose in the following areas:

- Under the old Polish rules a single project would need several different permissions from different environmental authorities for different parts of a single project;
- The processes for grants of permission by environmental authorities subject to conditions, and for documenting and enforcing these conditions differed from those envisaged in EU legislation;

\(^2\) A new local rail service between Gdansk, Gdansk Airport and Gdynia. EU funding for this major infrastructure project was announced in May 2011.
Rules for public consultation when considering the environmental impact of projects differed from those envisaged in EU legislation.

In their experience, projects developed under the old Polish environmental laws met all of the requirements for funding from the EU. Difficulties arose in communicating this in applications, and this could give rise to interruptions and delays in funding decisions. The Polish authorities acknowledged that the assistance of JASPERS had been valuable in learning how to present information on the environmental impact of projects, and the work of the Policy environmental authorities in funding applications.

The Managing Authority, supported by the other stakeholders stated they would value more resources for JASPERS. In their opinion JASERS does not currently have the resources needed to meet their needs for assistance on a timely basis.

The Managing Authority supports suggestions that DG REGIO should rely on JASPERS when considering applications; in particular where JASPERS indicates that an aspect of an application does not give rise to concerns, DG REGIO might limit its attention to this area. All stakeholders were certain that giving JASPERS a more formal role as a body that vets applications on behalf of the Commission would not weaken its role as a trusted provider of advice to Polish Beneficiaries and other authorities.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study compares two ostensibly similar projects, one of which received JASPERS assistance where the application for funding was dealt with by the Commission in less than a year, and a second which did not receive JASPERS assistance where the Commission needed two and a half years to consider the application for funding.

The Beneficiary and other Polish authorities have made it clear that these projects cannot be directly compared i.e. that this difference in the times taken to reach a decision is not a direct reflection of the impact of JASPERS. However the case study does provide a good example of how JASPERS help can reduce the time taken to develop a project to the stage where Commission funding can be made available.

On examination it is clear that JASPERS significantly reduced the time taken to develop the Warsaw-Gdynia project. JASPERS did not add to the time taken to prepare the application as it was able to work in parallel with the Member State authorities. All the Polish stakeholders are certain that JASPERS assistance reduced the time that the Commission took to reach a decision on this project compared to a counterfactual where JASPERS assistance was not used. In addition this JASPERS assignment was also useful for the development of subsequent rail projects.

With respect to the non-JASPERS project it emerges that the time taken to consider the application for funding is due to specific features of the project, and not solely to the absence of JASPERS assistance. However, this non-JASPERS project provides useful insights into the sort of issues that give rise to Interruption Letters from the Commission. These Interruptions often resulted solely from the presentation of the application. For example, in
one case the Commission wrote to remind the Polish Authorities that they could only respond to an interruption letter with a revised application, rather than with a document that only addressed the points raised in an Interruption Letter. This type of Interruption could be avoided simply by having the advice of a body familiar with the formal and procedural aspects of making an application for funding to the Commission. JASPERS is equipped to fulfil, at least, this function.

In addition, as the non-JASPERS project illustrates, addressing issues and questions concerning a project once an application for funding has been made to the Commission is inherently time consuming. DG REGIO has limited resources to examine issues and to communicate its concerns to a Member State. This communication must take the form of a formal letter from a Director in DG REGIO to the Member State’s Managing Authority. The Managing Authority must then pass on the concerns to the relevant parts of the Member State administration, such as the Beneficiary and any Implementing Bodies, and co-ordinate the preparation of a revised application that addresses the Commission’s concerns. This process may be repeated more than once if DG REGIO identifies further questions or concerns. All of this increases the time needed to move from the application to a Commission Decision to fund the project. Issues and questions can be identified and dealt with much more quickly where the Beneficiary and other Member State officials involved in project development are working directly with someone who is familiar with the Commission’s requirements and can work together to address the issues in a co-operative, informal manner before preparing an application for funding. The use of JASPERS assistance allows outstanding issues in project development to be dealt with in the way before applications for funding are made to the Commission.

In summary, the two projects in this case study illustrate how JASPERS assistance at the stage when a Member State has completed its appraisal of a project, and is formulating an application for EU funding, can significantly reduce the time taken for the Commission to consider the application for funding, and the total time taken to develop the project from need identification to implementation.
Case Study 6: Polish Road Construction

Construction of S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów

Construction of a segment of the regional road from nat road no 94 to the regional road no 455 (8.4KM)
Executive Summary

This case study compared two Major road investment projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- The JASPERS assisted construction of a section of the S19 motorway between Stobierna and Rzeszów (CCI 2010PL161PR002); and,
- The non-assisted construction of a segment of the regional road from national road 94 to regional road 4555 (8.4KM) (CCI 2011PL161PR013).

Both projects are still under consideration by the DG for Regional Policy at the time of writing (August 2012). This delay to relate to the introduction of a new system of road charging by the Polish authorities and does not arise from project specific factors.

This case study is an example of JASPERS being involved relatively late in the process of project development. Design had been completed before JASPERS became involved in the assisted project. This limited the ability of JASPERS to contribute to the quality of the project. JASPERS assistance was limited to the analysis of the project, and the presentation of this analysis to the DG for Regional Policy. However, this case is a useful example of the complexity of the issues that can arise in this process of analysis and presentation, and the value of JASPERS assistance in completing this process.

The DG for Regional Policy's examination of the JASPERS assisted project was suspended following the introduction of a proposed new system of road charges in Poland. The introduction of a new system of road charges will affect the assessment of a funding application to the DG for Regional Policy. In particular, the introduction of a road charging system will affect the financial analysis of a road project, specifically the calculation of the funding gap for the project. This in turn will affect the amount of funding for which the project will be eligible. The examination of this application by the DG for Regional Policy, along with that of a number of other road projects in a similar situation, was suspended until the final form of the new road charging system was determined. This process was completed in mid 2012. In JASPERS presented a supplementary Completion Note on this project setting out its revised financial and economic assessment following the introduction of the new road pricing system. JASPERS assisted Poland and the DG for Regional Affairs to quickly reassess this road projects in the light of a new charging regime for road projects.

The beneficiary of the S19 project noted the reassurance of having JASPERS review the application, and the confidence this provided in terms of the application being approved. On a technical basis, JASPERS were considered to be effective and provided expert advice on issues such as CBA and environmental concerns, particularly working with the beneficiary in addressing differences in environmental legislation between the Polish authorities and the Commission. However, this emphasised the main role of JASPERS being perceived as being support in the preparation of application forms that meet Commission standards and present information in the appropriate and digestible way.
1. **Introduction**

This case study compared two major road construction projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- Construction of S19 Stobierna – Rzeszów (JASPERS assisted); and
- Construction of a segment of the regional road from national road 94 to the regional road no 455 (8.4KM) (non-JASPERS assisted).

Both projects are under consideration by the DG for Regional Policy at the time of writing (August 2012).

2. **Description of the Projects**

2.1 **JASPERS Assisted Project: Construction of S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów**

This project comprised of the construction of 6.9 km of the new expressway section of S19 between the interchanges of Stobierna and Rzeszów Wschód. In addition, the project included a 1.4 km section of the DK19 between the interchanges of Rzeszów Wschód and the administrative border of Rzeszów. The S19 corridor links the Podlaski Region (Białystok) in the North with Pokarpace Region (Rzeszów) in the South. The purpose of the project was to improve the traffic flow, safety, capacity and quality of the S19 road corridor for transit and domestic traffic in the context of Priority Axis 8.2 of the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment. A project map is presented in Figure 1.

Prior to the project, the existing main road DK19 (National Road no 19), did not meet the growing traffic demand due to its limited capacity and design quality. The capacity, safety, traffic management and environmental protection standards on the DK19 and surrounding network were also lagging behind, therefore national and international transit traffic experienced problems with capacity and journey time reliability. Apart from GDDKiA, the direct beneficiaries of the project included the population living in the immediate proximity of the new and existing road network, as well as local and transit road users. The project implementation was also forecast to contribute to improvements in the living conditions in local communities, including a significant improvement in traffic safety.

The main technical design parameters of the S19 section were stated as:

- road class: "S";
- design speed: 100 km/h;
- pavement bearing capacity: 115 kN/axle;
- number of traffic lanes: 2+2 and 2+1 (depending on section);
- traffic lane width: 3.50 m;
- safety lane width: 2.50 m;
- central reserve width: 4.0 m; and
- hard shoulders: 1.50 - 2.50 m.

The main design technical parameters of the DK19 section were stated as:

- road class: "GP";
- design speed: 70 km/h;
- pavement bearing capacity: 115 kN/axle;
• number of traffic lanes: 1+1;
• traffic lane width: 3,50 m; and
• hard shoulders: 1,50 m.

In addition the project included the following elements:
• construction of interchange “Jasionka” and single level crossing in Stobierna;
• construction and reconstruction/realignment of nearby service roads and local public roads;
• construction of structures including bridges, flyovers, viaducts, pedestrian passes;
• construction of culvers;
• construction/relocation of utilities; and
• environment protection measures including e.g. acoustic barriers, greenery, animal passes etc.

Figure 1: Project Map of S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów
The total cost of the project, excluding VAT, was estimated to be €105.6m, as reported in the application. The economic internal rate of return was forecast as 9.2% and economic net present value was 139.3 MEUR. All significant aspects of the economic analysis were carried out in line with EU requirements, with the following notable outputs:

- The positive benefits for users were forecast to be i) reduced cost of time (71%, in terms of discounted cash flows) and ii) accidents (29%);
- Vehicle Operating Cost (VOC) and environmental costs were forecast to increase. Increased VOC corresponded to around 92% of VOT savings; and
- As a consequence, the project was forecast to start generating positive economic effects only in year 2022.

As stated in an addendum to the original completion note (July 2012) the forecast cost for the project estimated in 2009 turned out to be above the price obtained when the project was procured by tender. The amount of the awarded contract for the execution of the works of EUR 54.1 million was circa 45% lower comparing to the initial estimate. Based on the costs of the signed works contracts, the total current project cost included in the application is EUR 71.3 million.

2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Construction of a segment of the regional road from nat road no 94 to the regional road no 455 (8.4KM)

The non-supported project consisted of the construction of a section of new bypass around Wroclaw, required due to the poor condition of existing infrastructure. Traffic was previously routed through the city centre with few alternative routes available, leading to congestion and associated impacts. The lack of a bridge crossing over the Oder river was also a major constraint on the network. The national road no.8, with traffic heading to and from Warsaw, was also routed through the city centre; the project to construct the A-8 Motorway Bypass of Wroclaw (AOW) was being implemented in parallel, to provide a connection of the national road no. 8, in the north-western part of the city, also covering the construction of the inner-city bypass road (Figure 2). The new bypass on the south eastern side of the city was considered a high priority by the Wroclaw agglomeration authorities, providing enhanced access to the communities of Czernica and Siechnice.
Together with the Motorway Bypass, the road ring around Wroclaw will be developed to relieve the city centre and support the inner-city bypass. The system of bypass roads is to re-direct the transit traffic outside the city (AOW and BLD) as well as to facilitate connections between individual districts of the city (BLD and the inner-city bypass). From the perspective of the scope of construction works, the project covered the:

- construction of three bridges (including the bridge over the Oder river of the span of 286 m as well as the bridge over the Olawa river of the span of 120 m);
- construction of two trestle bridges;
- construction of two-level interchange (flyover) over the national road no. 94;
- construction of over-line bridge across Odrzanska street in Lany;
- construction of flyover above the railway track 277 Wroclaw Brochow - Opole Proszowice as well as railway track 764 Siechnice - Wroclaw Brochow;
- construction of two roundabouts at the junction with the regional road no. 455;
- construction of animal passages;
- construction of culverts;
- construction of noise-barriers; and
- reconstruction of the colliding system, construction of drainage system.

The cost of the project, excluding VAT, was reported as €66.7m.

3. **Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects**

Planning for both projects commenced before the establishment of JASPERS, and indeed, before the accession of Poland to the EU.

Work started on the S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów feasibility study in the 1990’s, leading to the identification of alternative routes in 2005. Two main alternative routes were identified and
refined by 2008, when the EIA was prepared. The S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów project received support from JASPERS from June 2009, starting with a review of the draft application and revised versions in December 2009, January/February 2010. An initial version of the application was submitted to the Commission in April 2010 leading to two interruption letters relating to cost benefit analyses. In July 2011, Electronic Toll Collection systems were introduced on Polish motorways, expressways and some national roads, generating a requirement to re-assess the cost-benefit impacts of the S19 improvements. The beneficiary also took the opportunity to use 2010 traffic count data for the re-analysis, compared to the 2005 data used in the original application. A construction contract was signed in February 2010, with a forecast completion data of October 2011; completion was delayed until the summary of 2012.

The initial planning works for the Wroclaw bypass commenced in the 1990’s, leading to the application and approval of environmental Conditions in 2006. The project was also split into four elements in 2006 to reflect the scale of investment. The first construction permit was received in 2008, with further permits being issued in 2009, and construction was ongoing between 2009-12 and is scheduled for completion in 2013.

**Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Construction of S-19 Stobierna – Rzeszów (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>Construction of a segment of the regional road from nat road no 94 to the regional road no 455 (Non-JASPERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Study Start</td>
<td>18/7/2006</td>
<td>6/1/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
<td>14/12/2009</td>
<td>29/6/2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Duration</td>
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<td>2,000 days</td>
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<td>JASPERS start date</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASPERS end date</td>
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<td>JASPERS duration</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS re-examination start</td>
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<tr>
<td>JASPERS re-examination end</td>
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<td>DG REGIO re-application</td>
<td>21/6/2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Stobierna – Rzeszów project

The JASPERS assignment included the review of the feasibility study (including cost-benefit analysis), environmental documents and decisions and the draft application, in order to ensure an adequate justification of the project from the technical, financial and environmental point of view. JASPERS assisted with the finalisation of the application and attached documents (Feasibility Study and EIA documentation) and provided input and advice in particular relating to the following aspects addressed in the documents:

- Description of the project;
- Description of the objectives;
- Management during operation;
- Demand analysis;
- Project maturity;
- Economic Cost Benefit Analysis;
- Financial analysis;
- Risk analysis;
- Sustainability of the project;
- Environmental impact; and
- Financing plan.

The documents reviewed in detail by JASPERS were:

- Draft Application (draft initially prepared in June 2009 and revised in December 2009 and January 2010) with following attachments:
  - Feasibility Study including Cost Benefit Analysis;
  - EIA report including non technical summary (NTS) prepared at the stage of environmental decision;
- Reports from public consultations and opinions attached to the application;
- Final version of the application received on 08 February 2010, to be submitted to the Commission, basis for the present Action Completion Note; and
- Updated application submitted in June 2012 containing updated cost-benefit calculations.

The reviews of consecutive drafts of the funding application took place between June 2009 and February 2010. The initial review of the draft application led to the first conclusions and JASPERS recommendations on 3 July 2009. Review of the revised draft lead to comments presented on 16 December 2009.
The JASPERS assignment lasted just under one year (312 days). DG REGIO received an application for funding in April 2010. DG REGIO acknowledged receipt of a complete application for funding on 20\textsuperscript{th} April 2010. On the 4\textsuperscript{th} June 2010 DG Regio sent a letter to the Polish authorities requesting information on the EIA and permitting procedure, particularly the impacts of the projects on specified specie populations. A response was provided by the Polish authorities on the 17\textsuperscript{th} September 2010, resulting in another letter from DG for Regional Policy on the 12\textsuperscript{th} October 2010. This second letter highlighted concerns with the costs for the project, and requesting a detailed breakdown. A further letter was issued on the 6\textsuperscript{th} July 2011 stating that the application was to be withheld until the required information was provided.

Following the revision of Polish electronic toll collection policy and the revision of the application and supporting documentation in 2012, JASPERS reviewed the methodology and draft application; the approach was based on that applied to improvements on the A1 and which had been approved by JASPERS. The updated review of the S19 application included consideration of the following documents:

- Updated traffic forecast;
- Updated CBA description;
- Updated CBA excel spreadsheet;
- Updated tables section E of the grant application; and
- Updated tables section H of the grant application.

The conclusion of JASPERS in June 2012 was that demand, economic and financial analyses were undertaken in line with EU requirements, and that technically and environmentally the project was sound and economically justified.

4.2 Application process for non-JASPERS project

The initial application for funding for the construction of a segment of the regional road project was made in November 2011. No feedback or correspondence had been received by the beneficiary by June 2012 other than a letter confirming receipt of the application in March 2012.
5. **Views of Polish Authorities**

On 5th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish authorities in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of:

- The Ministry of Regional Development, the Managing Authority for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, the Intermediate Body for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The “Centre for European Transport Projects” an Implementing Body established to assist project beneficiaries; and,
- Representatives of the beneficiaries for the two projects.

The majority of the following comments were provided by the JASPERS supported project beneficiary, although selected feedback from the non-supported project is included where available.

5.1 **Rationale for JASPERS Involvement**

Poland obtains JASPERS assistance for approximately half of its “major” investment projects. Officials indicated that JASPERS would not have the resources to assist in all of their major projects and, as a result, they prioritise larger, more complex projects for JASPERS assistance. If JASPERS had more resources the Polish authorities believe it would be useful to seek its assistance for a larger proportion of major projects.

The S19 project was part of the programme of infrastructure investment developed at the national level (the 2008-12 National Roads Programme). Following budget constraints the focus of the project was narrowed from the reconstruction of the whole S19 on the eastern border, to the section between Stobierna and Rzeszów and the links to the A4 motorway. The decision to involve JASPERS in this work was based on the size of the larger S19 project and their experience in submitting applications for cohesion funding.

In the case of the non-JASPERS project, the preparatory work and Feasibility Study were undertaken some time before the decision to obtain co-financing and the submission of an application in 2011. At the decision point to submit an application\(^1\), and with all technical documents prepared, the priority was considered by the beneficiary and Managing Authority to be the time period until approval. JASPERS support was therefore not sought, although the beneficiaries noted that support on technical issues prior to 2010 could have been beneficial. The beneficiary is undertaking a new project at the present date, but was non committal on whether JASPERS support would be sought as it was unlikely to be defined as a large project. However, they stated that they were entirely open to using JASPERS in the future.

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\(^1\) This decision was instigated by delays in the project due to complications with the environmental elements. This delay resulted in further consultation with DG Regio and the MA, leading to the decision to seek co-financing.
5.2 Impacts of JASPERS
The beneficiary of the S19 Stobierna – Rzeszów project noted that no delays were experienced in JASPERS support and that they had received good (by which is it assumed sound technical) advice throughout. The beneficiary felt that the involvement of JASPERS, throughout the application period resulted in the fast tracking of projects to funding; JASPERS were seen to ‘rubber stamp’ the applications on behalf of the Commission.

It was evident that the role of JASPERS was to support the post feasibility study period of application preparation and review. No request was made by the beneficiary for technical assistance prior to the completion of the feasibility study. Indeed, it was the stated understanding of the beneficiary that the mandate of JASPERS was the verification of technical documentation in preparation of applications, and not the direct involvement in designing and developing projects.

Representatives of the non-supported project beneficiary noted that although they did not have direct experience of JASPERS, they were aware that such support could reduce the DG for Regional Policy application review period. The beneficiary also stated that they had used JASPERS indirectly, through the application of the views and good practice from other regional projects, and also the use of guidance from JASPERS such as the Blue Books; the consultants commissioned to deliver the Feasibility Study in 2010 applied Blue Book approaches.

5.3 Areas of Technical Support
The EIA was a key area of support from JASPERS received by the beneficiary, particularly given the changes in EU environmental legislation during the project period; a central challenge was the alignment of information from the national methodology with the requirements of DG Regio. JASPERS also supported the beneficiary in presenting environment information within the application in the appropriate fashion.

JASPERS also provided support on the issue of HGV tolling and the correct assessment of costs and tolling systems; electronic for HGVs and manual for cars. The beneficiary used available best practice data on the estimates of manual collection costs as no direct data was available. JASPERS were unhappy with this approach but accepted this position based on the recognition that it was the most sensible and cost-effective methodology. The beneficiary also used guidance on the methodology for undertaking cost-benefit analysis, prepared by the Commission (Working Document No.54).

The issue of the project costs reducing at the application stage was a consequence of JASPERS and DG Regio disagreeing of cost parameters. The beneficiary and JASPERS agreed that changing the costs as requested by DG Regio would have no material impact on the project costings. This highlighted the importance of DG Regio and JASPERS confirming underlying assumptions prior to requesting Managing Authorities or beneficiaries to change applications.

5.4 Weaknesses in JASPERS Support
The beneficiary of the S19 project noted that the roads team with JASPERS was low on resources in 2010, but that this had subsequently been resolved. It was also noted that guidance provided by JASPERS sometimes differed from that provided by DG Regio, making it challenging for beneficiaries to complete technical requirements. A concern was also noted in terms of DG Regio issuing requests for increased technical detail, particularly around the issues of costs or environmental impacts, despite beneficiaries and JASPERS being happy with the contents of applications. This reflected a noted tendency for DG Regio to increase their requirements during application review procedures. The experts at JASPERS were commended for their role in predicting DG Regio requirements and needs.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study compares two ostensibly similar projects, one of which received JASPERS assistance where the application for funding was dealt with by the Commission, and a second which did not receive JASPERS assistance. Through discussions with the MS authorities and beneficiaries it was apparent that the two projects were not directly comparable, as the non-supported project did not seek JASPERS support as the technical documents were already prepared when the decision was made to seek co-financing; indeed the construction of the road was already underway. The non-supported project submitted an application on November 2011 but was yet to receive any feedback from the Commission.

However the case study does provide a good example of how JASPERS help can assist in developing a project to the stage where Commission funding can be made available. It is evident that the review of the S19 application by JASPERS ensured that all technical and economic aspects were in-line with EU methodologies. This was particularly beneficial during the revision of the application to accommodate the introduction of electronic toll collections and the updating of cost-benefit analyses.

It has not been possible to draw any further conclusions from this case study due to the lack of feedback information from the Commission on the non-support project, since its submission in November 2011.
Case Study 7: Polish Road Construction

Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki

Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olsztynek (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Miłomłyn
Executive Summary

This case study compared two major road construction projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki (JASPERS assisted); and
- Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olszynek (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Milomłyn (non-JASPERS assisted).

The time taken to reach a funding decision was 190 days for the JASPERS assisted project compared to 341 days (at time of writing as project presently interrupted) reported for the non-JASPERS supported project. The duration of the JASPERS support was over 400 days, a relatively long period compared to other supported projects in Poland. However, the benefit of JASPERS support was also evident in the lack of interruption letters received for the S8 project.

The scope of JASPERS support for the S8 project was comprehensive, covering demand analysis, cost-benefits assessments, risks and the review of all environmental documentation and analysis. A formal review was also undertaken of the initial Feasibility Study as well as all documents to be used in public consultation activities in the lead up to submitting the funding application. JASPERS also provided more general advice to the Polish authorities, including recommending improvements to the referencing system used in applications and the use of more clearly articulated monitoring indicators.
1. **Introduction**

This case study compared two major road construction projects in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki (JASPERS assisted); and
- Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olsztyn (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Milomlyn (non-JASPERS assisted).

The S8 was not considered by those stakeholders interviews to be a good example for the assessment of JASPERS as it was the only project of its type and therefore not comparable with other investment. The time taken to reach a funding decision was 190 days for the JASPERS assisted project compared to 341 days (at time of writing as project presently interrupted) reported for the non-JASPERS supported project.

2. **Description of the Projects**

2.1 **JASPERS Assisted Project: Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki**

The project comprised the reconstruction of a 11.7km section of the S8 Expressway between the interchanges of Powazkowska and Marki [in blue in Figure 1], which was part of the northern expressway ring road of Warsaw. The project (also known as urban expressway Trasa Armii Krajowej) together with the S8 section Konotopa-Powazkowska (under construction [in yellow in Figure 1]) will link the with A-2 motorway west of Warsaw, thus creating a bypass for the west-north/east transit traffic. The project is part of the TEN-T network and part of former Trans European Corridor no 1 linking Warsaw-Kaunas-Riga-Tallin and Hellsinki (Via Baltica). The total cost of the project, excluding VAT, was €664.6m.

The existing road network in Warsaw is mostly based on radial roads which require the transit traffic to cross through the city centre. Although Trasa AK is one of few exceptions its technical quality and capacity does not allow for an efficient and optimal utilisation by transit and local traffic. In general, the lack of proper high volume bypass roads results in additional congestion coming from the agglomeration traffic between the districts of Warsaw. In addition, national and international west-east and west-north transit traffic has increased significantly over the last decade. The lack of capacity on the existing network results in high congestion and environmental costs and undermines Warsaw competitiveness and economic growth agenda. The S8 project consisted of the upgrade to expressway standard with the main design technical parameters of the project being as follows:

- road class: "S" (express road);
- design speed: 70 km/h (main carriageways) and 60 km/h (slip roads on the bridge);
- number of traffic lanes: 2x3;
- number of traffic lanes on the bridge: 2x5 (2x2 - main carriageways and 2x3 for slip roads);
- pavement bearing capacity: 115 kN/axle;
- traffic lane width: 3,50 m (3,0 m – slip roads on the bridge);
- safety lane width: 2,50; and
• central reserve width: 5.00 - 7.00 m.

In addition the project included:
• the widening of the bridge over Vistula River;
• 9 interchanges (5 interchanges are actually to be reconstructed and 4 remain the same);
• partial reconstruction of service roads;
• reconstruction/realignment of nearby roads; and
• environment protection measures including e.g. noise barriers, greenery, etc.

The project for technical reasons was split into two stages (both included under the project application):
• Stage 1: upgrade of the section S8 interchange Modlińska – interchange Marki; and
• Stage 2: upgrade of the section S8 interchange Powązkowska – interchange Modlińska.

The construction works have been in progress since September 2009 on the stage 1 interchange Modlińska to interchange Marki, with a target completion date of April 2012. The upgrade of the section between Powązkowska and interchange Modlińska will be launched once the Northern Bridge (Most Północny, located circa 2 km north of the project) which was planned for January 2012 with target completion date by December 2014.

Figure 1: Project Planned Network
2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olszytnie (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Miłomłyn

The S7 express road construction and re-construction was part of the TEN-T, connecting Gdańsk, Elblag, Olszytnie, Warsaw, Kielce, Krakow and Rabka of the state border in Chyżne and continue running through Slovakia to Budapest (Hungary). The overall objective of the planned road S7 Elblag - Miłomłyn is to raise standards and improve traffic safety and operation of roads in the TEN-T network, as well as the basic road system between major Polish cities, including Warsaw, through the construction of the expressway network. The specific objectives of the project also covered:

- Improving traffic flow;
- Generating shorter travel time in transit and in the connections between the major cities of the country; and
- Improving traffic safety and operability of the cities within the TEN-T.

The project included the construction of two S7 express roads with a combined projected length of 50.26km. In addition, the project included the development of required road junctions, the construction of an access road and the construction of 11.48km of noise barriers. The proposed expressway S7 was characterized by the following technical parameters:

- Class of S;
- Design speed of 100 km / h;
- Surface load of 115 kN / axle;
- Cross section of 2x2 lanes;
- Reserve width of the bands 6.0 m, 12.0 m;
- Lane width of 3.50 m;
- Emergency stopping lane width of 2.50 m;
- Lateral inclination of the road 2.0 - 2.5%;
- Shoulder width of 1.25 -1.85 m soil;
- Inclination roadside soil 6 - 8%; and
- 4.7 m vertical gauge.
3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for both projects commenced before the establishment of JASPERS, and indeed, before the accession of Poland to the EU.

The S8 project Feasibility Study was completed prior to JASPERS involvement, which stated in March 2009, with the scheme being part of the national investment programme. The JASPERS review was ongoing for over 400 days, including support on technical documentation and the presentation of the application submitted on the 25th May 2010. The Commission acknowledged receipt of the complete application on the 2nd June 2010.

The S7 non-assisted project was submitted in January 2011 and has been interrupted twice for clarifications. A decision is still outstanding on this project at the time of writing. Support was not sought from JASPERS as the project was considered to be less challenging technically than others, including the S8 expressway. A revised application is due for submission in the near future.

Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olsztynek (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Milomlyn (Non-JASPERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End of Project Planning Phase (a)</td>
<td>31/12/2009</td>
<td>31/8/2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Duration</td>
<td>650 days</td>
<td>545 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS start date</td>
<td>15/3/2009</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS end date</td>
<td>26/4/2010</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS duration</td>
<td>407 days</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO application</td>
<td>25/5/2010</td>
<td>27/1/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission Decision</td>
<td>1/12/2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Duration</td>
<td>190 days</td>
<td>341 at present as interrupted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) End of project planning is taken as being end of the preparation of tender documents
4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Warsaw Expressway S8 Powazkowska-Marki project

The JASPERS assignment included the review and comments on the draft applications, Feasibility Study (including cost-benefit analysis) and the environmental documents and decisions in order to ensure an adequate justification of the project and compliance with the EU requirements. JASPERS assisted in the finalisation of the application and attached documents and provided input and advice in particular related to the following aspects addressed in the documents:

- Description of the project;
- Demand analysis;
- Economic Cost Benefit Analysis;
- Risk analysis;
- Sustainability of the project;
- Environmental impact; and
- Financing plan.

JASPERS reviewed formally the following documents:

- Draft Application (initial draft prepared in March 2009 and revised draft of March 2010) with following attachments:
  - Feasibility Study and Results of feasibility studies;
  - EIA reports including non technical summary (NTS) and reports prepared at the stage of location decision and construction permit; and
  - Reports from public consultations attached to the application.

For this project the main review took place in March-June 2009 with respect to draft application, feasibility study as well environmental documents. The reviews of final documents related to the final draft of grant application took place in March and April 2010. The final version of the application, received on 16 March 2010, and was submitted to the Commission on the 25th May 2010, constituted the basis for the Action Completion Note. Recommendations generated by JASPERS included ensuring that:

- Sufficient funds are made available during the implementation and maintenance;
- An acceptable tolling level for HGVs be decided which may require further justification/analysis;
- Post completion monitoring of traffic and environmental impact be completed;
- Road safety audits conducted as per EC Directive;
- Clear and up-to-date description of project history were provided; and
- Clear reference to the assessment of Natura2000 is made, and a statement of whether the assessment met the requirements of the Habitat Directive.

Two general observations were also made by JASPERS on this project:

- The need for a clear referencing system to supporting documents; and
- Confusion was generated relating to monitoring indicators. JASPERS offered to help the Polish authorities to revise the list of important monitoring indicators.
4.2 Application process for non-JASPERS project

The initial application for funding for the non-assisted S7 project was submitted in January 2011, and subsequently received two interruption letters as detailed below:

- **12th July 2011 Interruption letter**, raising the following issues:
  - The environmental impact assessment under Art.6 of the Habitats Directive was not completed. Specifically, one the Natura 2000 sites had recently been enlarged, meaning that some of the existing subprojects needed to be reassessed in terms of their impact;
  - The assessment of the impact on protected species as per Art. 12 of the Habitats Directive had not been included, as well as the mitigation measures proposed; and
  - The environmental assessment on one particular section of the route was considered to be ‘rather general’ and based on assumptions that it would not have a negative impact on the Natura 200 sites. There was no information on whether alternatives had been considered. Clarification was therefore requested.

- **23rd August 2011 Interruption letter**, raising the following additional issues further to the 12 Jul letter:
  - Electronic tolling arrangement – the new Regulation (01/07/11) raised the level of tolls from 0.10 to 0.20-0.53 PLN/veh/km. The toll proposed in the project (0.10) was therefore not correct and the discrepancy needed to be explained. The revenues and funding gap also need to be corrected. The level of tolls would also have an impact of the traffic forecasts and the socio-economic impact and this needed to be reflected in the application;
  - Socio-economic analysis – the presentation of costs and benefits ‘had been done incorrectly’ and did not stem from the Feasibility Study. The same items were shown on the costs and benefits side of the relevant tables. It was also commented as surprising that negative Vehicle Operating Cost and Environmental External cost benefits were reported – it would be expected that these would be positive for such a scheme; and
  - Road Infrastructure Safety Management – more detailed information was requested on the implementation of the Road Infrastructure Safety Management procedures.

The Polish authorities responded to these issues on the 28th November 2011, although the current application status is reported to be with the Polish authorities for further correction. At the time of evaluation, a duration of DG Regio review of 341 days was reported, of which 85 were actively DG Regio and 256 days elapsed during periods of updating by the applicant.
5. Views of Polish Authorities

On 5th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish authorities in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of:

- The Ministry of Regional Development, the Managing Authority for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy, the Intermediate Body for EU funded transport projects in Poland;
- The “Centre for European Transport Projects” an Implementing Body established to assist project beneficiaries; and,
- Representatives of the beneficiaries for the two projects.

The majority of the following comments were provided by the JASPERS supported project beneficiary, although selected feedback from the non-supported project is included where available.

5.1 Rationale for JASPERS Involvement

The rationale for requesting JASPERS assistance on the S8 and not on the S7 was linked with the complexity of the former and the area through which the project ran. The S7 was considered likely to be less technically challenging. Another reason for seeking support, particularly due to the technically difficult environmental issues, was the constraint within the beneficiary technical capabilities.

5.2 Impacts of JASPERS

The provision of assistance from the Polish office of JASPERS was welcomed, as officers had experience and knowledge of the local network and conditions. The language barriers were not present and therefore discussions progressed quickly. Continuity of involvement by JASPERS staff was also highlighted as important.

5.3 Areas of Technical Support

Although the beneficiary acknowledged that institutions learnt from one another and through previous JASPERS involvement, there remained issues of poor data presentation delaying applications; in particular CBA tables were unclear and uncertainty remains as to whether costs could appear in the benefits side with net benefit being positive or negative. Support from JASPERS to address such matters was welcomed by the beneficiary.

Road safety assessments were not a technical area of input from JASPERS as Polish Directives required beneficiaries to consider this directly. For these two projects, road safety issues and technical reviews had already been undertaken at the regional level; although concerns were raised at the ability of beneficiaries to deliver such work at the district level.

The method adopted for initial CBA, and the updating of previous analyses for the S8, was agreed between the regional beneficiary and the Managing Authority. The EU Blue Book
was considered out of date and in need of revision. These revisions are needed from first principles according to the beneficiary, in time for the 2014 – 2020 programme. Their requirements included:

- Assumptions adopted and the mechanisms for changing these; and
- Accident costs, unit values (the link with traffic forecasts also needs consideration as an error in these presently generates a significant change in accident related costs). The present costs are also not reflective of the actual costs in Poland and the nature of their road network.

5.4 Weaknesses in JASPERS Support

There were reportedly only 1.5 Full Time Equivalent road experts within the Polish office of JASPERS and this was not considered sufficient by the beneficiary. Further horizontal assignments across beneficiaries were requested, which would in turn build capacity and alter the scope of potential JASPERS involvement. There are presently 31 highways projects therefore a quasi-horizontal approach had been established in Poland for undertaking CBA. The beneficiary noted that JASPERS should be involved in this process with a particular focus on the environmental element of applications.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

On face value, the JASPERS assisted project has benefited from the support, resulting in the application being approved in 190 days with no interruption letters issued by the Commission. The involvement of JASPERS in reviewing the draft application in March 2009 and then again through to March 2010 resulted in all technical issues being addressed and in accordance with the expectations and presentation of the Commission. In comparison, the non-assisted project has received two interruption letters addressing issues of the EIA, electronic tolling, social analysis and road safety management, and it remains interrupted after nearly a year of being considered.

However, without details of the nature, programme (especially timescales and duration of feasibility studies) and challenges within the ‘Construction of Expressway S7, Episode Elblag (S22) - Olszynek (S51), the section Elblag (S22) – Miłomłyn’ project it is difficult to draw conclusions as to the precise impacts of JASPERS assistance.
Case Study 8: Modernisation of Polish Water Supply and Sewer Systems

Expansion and modernization of the water supply and wastewater system in Bialystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków (JASPERS assisted)

Waste water management in the city and district of Końskie (non-JASPERS assisted).
Executive Summary

This case study compared two major water supply and sewer system investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- **2009PL161PR019 Expansion and modernization of the water supply and wastewater system in Bialystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków (JASPERS assisted); and,**

- **2009PL161PR048 Waste water management in the city and district of Końskie (non-JASPERS assisted).**

The decision time taken for the project in receipt of JASPERS assistance was longer than that which was not assisted. This case study compares the planning process for each project and seeks to assess what impact JASPERS may have had.

The assisted project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the municipalities of Bialystok and Wasilków. The project's aims are to increase connection rates, improve service standards and reduce environmental impact. The main elements of the improvements to infrastructure will focus on extension and reconstruction of the sewer, water supply and rainwater networks.

The second project relates to waste water management in the city and district of Końskie. The poor quality of the existing system leads to a large incidence of accidental water loss in the system. The infrastructure to be provided will consist of extensive renovation and provision of the sewerage network, refurbishment of an existing sewage treatment plant, and extensions to the water supply and drainage network.

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007 and was completed in 2009. JASPERS assistance was sought in July 2009 for the project at Bialystok which lasted only 42 days. Critically, this meant that JASPERS had no input into the design of the project itself – only into its presentation. An application was made to the Commission in August 2009. 346 days elapsed before a funding decision was taken by the Commission in August 2010.

Planning for the project at Końskie also commenced in 2007 but it was completed quicker. The Application was submitted to the Commission in January 2010 and a decision to grant funding was given in October of the same year, 270 days later.

The input of JASPERS to the project at Bialystok was in the context of recommending changes to the application, and came too late to have any influence on the design of the project. Nevertheless, it was seen by the project participants to have significantly speeded up the acceptance time of the project. Most of the JASPERS advice was heeded in preparing the Application. Furthermore, members of the JASPERS team continued to support the project after the initial assignment in answering questions raised by the Commission after the Completion Note had been issued. The participants in the assisted project believe that the input of JASPERS significantly reduced the time the Commission took to make a decision. This is supported by the extent of assistance offered by JASPERS.
The application for funding for the waste water management project in the city and district of Końskie did not receive JASPERS assistance, which is an exception to the general practise of involving JASPERS. Assistance was not sought for this project for two principal reasons:

- It was felt that not all projects could reasonably be expected to be granted JASPERS assistance given the available resources
- The Końskie project was well advanced and well prepared when a decision was taken by the Polish authorities to select it for application.

The promoters of the Końskie project pointed out that they had benefitted indirectly from the JASPERS programme because they had information from other, similar projects that had received JASPERS assistance. They then prepared their own Application taking into account suggestions made by JASPERS on other projects. They had also attended training sessions in which JASPERS experts presented.

This case study showed that even where JASPERS is of assistance in reducing decision times, other un-assisted projects can adhere to the same timelines when properly managed and when there is knowledge transfer from other JAPSERS programs.
1. Introduction

This case study compared two major water supply and sewer system investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and the other without. The projects in question are:

- **CCI 2009 PL161PR019** The expansion and modernization of the water supply and wastewater system in Bialystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków (JASPERS assisted); and,
- **CCI 2009 PL161PR048** Waste water management in the city and district of Końskie (non-JASPERS assisted).

The decision time taken for the project in receipt of JASPERS assistance was longer than that which was not assisted. This case study compares the planning process for each project and seeks to assess what impact JASPERS may have had.

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted: The expansion and modernization of the water supply and wastewater system in Bialystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków

The project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the municipalities of Bialystok and Wasilków in the north east of Poland. The project's main aims are to increase connection rates, improve service standards and reduce environmental impact.

The Bialystok water supply system is already adequate to meet consumption needs and satisfies drinking water quality requirements following recent upgrading of its two water treatment plants. However, the distribution network is mainly constructed of cast iron pipes (40%) with reportedly 35% and 22% of the network being more than 40 and 30 years old, respectively. Therefore, problems are anticipated in the condition of the pipes. Water losses are relatively low at around 18% of water production.

The sewer network in Bialystok has a total length of around 413 km, of which only 16 km is combined sewers: the sewer network therefore essentially operates as a separate system. There is a separate rainwater system of a length of 302 km. The sewer network mainly comprises stone clay pipes and is relatively new with only 25% and 16% of the network aged above 40 and 30 years, respectively. However, despite this infiltration and other intrusions account for between 40% and 45% of flows received at the wastewater treatment plant.

The project contains three main elements that aim to address these inadequacies:

i. Extension and Reconstruction of the Sewer Network: The project will include the extension and reconstruction of the sewer network so as to increase the number of inhabitants connected by 5,389 through the extension of the sewer network of 38.5 km. Additional reconstruction works of 21.1 km are also included in the project to improve the performance of the network.

ii. Extension and Reconstruction of the Water Supply Network: An additional 1,442 inhabitants will be connected to the water supply network through the intended 24 km extension of the network. The project also includes the upgrade and renovation of the existing water supply network of 18km with the work including the replacement of asbestos and cement pipes.
iii. Extension of the Rainwater Network: The objective of this component is to reduce the hydraulic flow to the wastewater treatment plant that can become overloaded during storm events. The project involves the extension of the existing network by 9.9 km.

The project has a total eligible capital cost of €42.1 million, of which approximately €35 million is for physical works concerning plant construction and machinery works. Upon completion it is envisaged that the project will achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure compliance with Urban Wastewater Directive (EC/91/217), Drinking Water Directive (EC/98/83) and the Water Framework Directive (EC/2000/60);
- Provide comprehensive coverage of water supply (99%) and wastewater (99%) services
- Ensure the long term sustainability of service provision.

The associated benefits of the project and their approximate monetary values are set out in the Table below:

Table 2.1: Economic Benefits of the investment in Białystok and in the Municipality of Wasiłków

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrections for externalities *</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments for transfers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial benefits</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

* “Corrections for externalities” is the value placed on the environmental benefits of the water and waste water systems. According to the completion note these are 50% the benefits of wastewater and 50% the benefits of fresh water supply. These were initially valued based on the increase in property values. Following JASPERS suggestion this valuation was redone based on cost savings for consumers compared to the cost of septic tanks and the cost of obtaining drinking water from bottled water and wells. Remaining benefits represent surplus on operating the plants. JASPERS also noted that the CB was done in current rather than constant prices which had the effect of overstating NPV. Even allowing for this the project delivered a worthwhile social return.

2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Waste water management in the city and district of Końskie (non-JASPERS assisted)

The second project relates to waste water management in the city and district of Końskie, Poland. The project was implemented in the city itself, as well as surrounding towns and villages that form the municipality including Kornica, Pročwin, Gracuch, Jeżów, Modliszewice, Barycz, Rogów, Dyszów, Pomyków, Piła, Górny Młyn, Koczwar, Końskie Precincts 2 and 3, Izabelów, Brody, Old and New Kazanów, Sierosławice, Wincentów, Old and New Dziebaltów, Old and New Sokółów, Nieświąń and Młynek Nieświąński.

This project contributes to achieving the objectives of the Operational Programme for Infrastructure and Environment, under the water and sewage priority. The main objective of this priority is to provide water and sewage investment in agglomerations with populations above 15 thousand.

The agglomeration is currently served by two Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTPs): Kornica to the north and Poludniowa to the south. The main shortcomings of the existing system are a low
degree of agglomeration equipment in the bulk drainage system, and the poor technical condition of the sewerage collectors. These result in a large incidence of accidental water loss in the system.

The Kornica Waste Water Treatment Plant was built in the 1970s and has not undergone any modernisation since. The project foresees the modernisation and further development of this plant as the main waste water treatment plant for the agglomeration.

Once the treatment facilities at Kornica have been upgraded, the Poludniowa WWTP is to be closed down and transformed into a pumping station. Water from the catchment area of the Poludniowa WWTP in the south will be pumped into the northern basin for processing at Kornica.

Total operating expenses for the project amount to €16M, with a further €44M in capital expenditure. The infrastructure will consist of the following: a 134.3 length of sewerage network, a 5.4km length of upgraded sewerage system, the newly refurbished sewage treatment plant at Kornica, a 3.5 km length of modernized water supply and a newly constructed length of drainage network of approximately 9.1 kms.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the new infrastructure will be the residents of the catchment area as well as the small businesses in the area. It is expected that approximately 13,000 additional households will have the option of connecting to the system. The associated benefits of the project and their approximate monetary values are set out in Table 2.2. Note that the benefits were initially valued based on estimates of the increase in land values associated with the project. This amounted to a poorer presentation of the benefits of the project that JASPERS advice would have readily identified.

Table 2.2: Economic Benefits of the investment in the city and district of Końskie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pricing adjustments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiscal Adjustments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing emissions of untreated sewage</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The increase in the price of land</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM
3.0 Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007 and was completed in 2009. JASPERS assistance was sought in July 2009 for the project at Białystok which lasted only 42 days. An application was made to the commission in August 2009. 346 days elapsed (during which two interruption letters were issued) before a funding decision was taken in August 2010.

Planning for the project at Końskie also commenced in 2007 but it was completed quicker. The Application was submitted to the Commission in January 2010 and a decision to grant funding was given in October of the same year, 270 days later.

Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>The expansion and modernization of the water supply and wastewater system in Białystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>Waste water management in the city and district of Końskie (non-JASPERS assisted)</th>
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<td>DG REGIO Duration</td>
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4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the water supply and wastewater system project in Białystok and in the Municipality of Wasilków

The input of JASPERS to the project at Białystok was in the context of recommending changes to the application, and came too late to have any influence on the design of the project. Initially, JASPERS assistance was sought to check the quality of the application with their involvement envisaged to take a short period of time. However, as events transpired the scope of the work widened to include the following two elements:

- A review of the Feasibility Study and Application Form, including advice on its content
- Advice on the cost-benefit analysis including changes in the economic evaluation.

The suggested JASPERS changes were mostly incorporated into the revised analysis.

The principle activities of the JASPERS experts included a review of key documents: the Draft Application Form; Feasibility Study; Financial Model; Environmental Declarations; Final Application Form and Final Feasibility Study. These were subsequently discussed with the project beneficiary, the consultant responsible for the preparation of the project, the national Managing Authority and Implementing Bodies (Narodowy Fundusz Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej).

In July 2009, JASPERS experts conducted a site visit and attended a presentation of the project. This allowed them to review the project concept. A Guidance Note with comments on the structure of the project and on the content of the Application Documents was issued in July 2009. There was also direct communication in July and August of the same year regarding comments on the revision of the application form.

The comments of the JASPERS team were largely positive:

- The objectives were compliant with the philosophy of the Operational Programme: Infrastructure and Environment as well as the EU Directive 91/271/EEC and EC/98/83.
- The overall technical concept seemed correct and the capital costs of the project were considered appropriate and eligible under the Operational Programme.
- No environmental issues were found that the JASPERS experts considered material.
- No significant issues were seen in the proposed procurement procedure.

The experts did make a number of suggestions with regard to the Financial and Economic Analysis. The demand projections used for the project scenario were considered as a reasonable basis for project development and analysis, but the experts noted that the economic evaluation was not in keeping with standard practise for EU projects. An elaborate methodology was applied to determine the net economic benefits of the project, and as part of the JASPERS intervention substantial changes in the proposed methodology (mainly replacing the identified benefit use of increased property values with actual resource cost savings incurred) were suggested. These changes were mainly included in the final presented analysis. However, it was subsequently found (on detailed investigation of the CBA spreadsheet) that the economic evaluation has been undertaken in current prices (this is not stated in the methodology outline), and not as normally and correctly applied in constant terms. The removal of the inflation assumption led to a marginal deterioration in economic viability, but the project was still shown to realise an adequate economic rate of return and hence could be considered acceptable.
4.2 Application process for non - JASPERS project

On the 18th Jan 2010, the Ministry of Regional Development, Poland received a letter from the European Commission acknowledging receipt and application admissibility of the project. However, on the 4th Mar 2010 the Commission issued an Interruption letter requesting answers to the following:

- A detailed explanation of the option analysis and rationale upon which the decision to close the Poludniowa WWTP was taken. The first stage of the Poludniowa waste water treatment plant was constructed in 2002 with the principle element being the “Hydrocentrum” reactor. Prior to the current project the plant was working at 50% of its design capacity. A further extension of the plant (with a second reactor) was taken into account when initially deciding on the location of the plant. By contrast, the Kornica plant had been built in the seventies and had not undergone any modernisation in the intervening years.
- Correction to inconsistencies in the data relating to the load and the capacity of the WWTPs in the application form and Annex 5.
- The project guaranteed connection of a household to the system only up to the border of the property: the additional cost of a connection within the boundary of private property was the responsibility of each customer. The interruption letter requested an explanation of what measures would be taken to mitigate the risk that the uptake of connections by households would be reduced due to the high cost.

A decision was taken on the 3rd December 2010.

5 Views of Polish Authorities

On 6th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish authorities in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of the Environment, the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, and the beneficiaries in Bialystok and Końskie.

The two projects discussed in this case study had been part of a competitive national selection process that is operated in Poland for all water and sewer projects. The process assesses and ranks a list of strategic projects. Smaller projects, in areas with less than 15,000 residents, are implemented from alternative funds. Larger projects, that are to be put forward in applications for European funding, are selected on the basis of merit. Furthermore, prior to the applications being made for funding of the two projects that are the subject of this case study, the Ministry for the Environment had previously completed a horizontal task where all large water and sewer projects would be evaluated for pre-assessment by JASPERS. The Ministry of the Environment in Poland, in co-operation with the National Environmental Protection Agency also sought JASPERS assistance with the applications themselves for almost all big projects.

After an initial site visit by JASPER experts, the project managers received regular guidance on how to improve documentation, which they subsequently did. The project team were of the view that the input of JASPERS heavily influenced the final versions of the documents. They also commented that one reason for the initial shortfall in the content of some draft documents was that the application forms for submitting projects at a national level prior to their being chosen for application for European funding did not allow them to present as full a picture of the project as did the European application process.

JASPERS had commented on the fact that the cost-benefit analysis contained in the economic evaluation has been undertaken in current prices and not in constant prices as is normally and
correctly applied. Nevertheless, the project managers did not change their calculations to constant prices in the final version of the application forms. They are confident that the approach taken in the final application was valid for a number of reasons:

- The guidelines of the European Commission are not legally binding, and Member States have the right to deviate from such guidelines. JASPERS had assisted the Polish authorities in preparing environmental guidelines before the publication of the existing EU guidelines in 2008. These national guidelines were adhered to in preparing the application forms because they were longer standing and also seen to have merit.
- The difference produced by using constant rather than current prices was small
- Current prices were in some respects a better evaluation technique because there is specific inflation in the water treatment sectors.

The input of JASPERS was seen to have significantly speeded up the acceptance time of the project. The JASPERS team visited on the 8th July 2009 and on the 2nd September 2009 the authorities were signing the contracts for financing. The project managers also stated that members of the JASPERS continued to support them after the initial assignment in answering questions raised by the Commission after the Completion Note had been issued.

The application for funding for the waste water management project in the city and district of Końskie did not receive JASPERS assistance, which is an exception to the general practise of involving JASPERS. Assistance was not sought for this project for two principal reasons:

- It was felt that not all projects could reasonably be expected to be granted JASPERS assistance given the available resources
- The Końskie project was well advanced and well prepared when a decision was taken by the Polish authorities to select it for application.

The project managers stated that the questions in the Interruption Letter of March 2010 were not difficult to answer because they had a good in-house technical capacity, had already conducted a complete analysis of the various options and they had had a lot of public consultation. In addition, the commune had also taken upon itself the task of completing additional works that went beyond the project.

The Polish participants interviewed were asked how they thought JASPERS might be improved. They were of the view that JASPERS was focussed on the preparation of applications for funding, and that a key strength of the JASPERS support was that it flagged issues in advance and prevented potential problems from arising. However, they had a number of other suggestions for extending the reach of JASPERS’s activity:

- The services offered by JASPERS should be extended to offer aid at other stages of projects, such as during implementation.
- Aid should be provided regarding public procurement. For example, they had experienced delays immediately prior to tender when inconsistencies arose between national and EU procurement procedures.
- They would also welcome more specific, focussed training sessions.
- The staff of JASPERS had their own resource issues and internal timelines to adhere to, and because of this they did not always prioritize work on various assignments in the same order that the Polish authorities would have liked them to do. This led to uncertainty with regard to when JAPERS tasks would be completed on key projects. They would welcome greater integration of JASPERS timelines with those of the national bodies, but thought that this would be difficult when both entities were under separate authority.
- More projects should avail of JASPERS assistance at the very early stages of a project. In 2006, the implementing agencies for complex projects were asked if they wanted to become
involved with JASPERS at the beginning of projects, but in practise most projects became involved at the latter stages of evaluation.

There was no consensus amongst those interviewed as to whether alternatives to JASPERS support could be sourced from consultants. Some suggested that consultants could offer adequate support in many instances, and offered an alternative path of external assistance for organisations. However, the beneficiary of support on the JASPERS assisted project disagreed. They believed that no external consultants could have offered the service offered by JASPERS on complex projects.

6 Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study examined two relatively similar water projects in Poland, one of which received JASPERS assistance and one of which did not. The decision time taken for the project in receipt of JASPERS assistance was longer than that which was not assisted. However, the project managers of the assisted project stated their belief that the input of JASPERS significantly reduced the time the commission took to make a decision. This is supported by the extent of assistance offered by JASPERS (some of which was actually offered after the issuing of a completion note). Critically, the assistance of JASPERS came late in the project planning stage. This meant that JASPERS had no opportunity to improve the quality of the underlying project; its help related only to the presentation of the project in the application stage.

The promoters of the Końskie project pointed out that they had benefitted indirectly from the JASPERS programme because they had information from other, similar projects that had received JASPERS assistance. They prepared their own application taking into account suggestions made by JASPERS on other projects. They had also attended training sessions in which JASPERS experts presented. Therefore, at least some of the credit in the shorter time taken to reach a decision may have resulted from indirect knowledge transfer from the JASPERS program.
Case Study 9: Modernisation of Waste Water Treatment in Poland

CCI 2009PL161PR008 Improvement of Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew – Stage 1 (JASPERS assisted)

CCI 2007PL161PR005 Water and Wastewater Management of the Town of Nowa Sól and the Adjacent Municipalities (non-JASPERS)

Executive Summary
This case study compared two major water investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2009PL161PR008 Improvement of Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew – Stage 1 (JASPERS assisted)
- CCI 2007PL161PR005 Water and Wastewater Management of the Town of Nowa Sól and the Adjacent Municipalities (non-JASPERS)

The projects were comparable in terms of their content and scale, but the time taken to reach a funding decision was not significantly shorter for the project that received JASPERS assistance. This case study examines whether the assistance of JASPERS is likely to have shortened the decision time relative to what it might otherwise have been.

The JASPERS assisted project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the city of Sochaczew. The existing water and sewer infrastructure and service standards in the city vary. The water supply system is comprehensive but some of the infrastructure is aged. The combined sewers are the oldest part of the network and are in a relatively bad shape. The company also operates a rain water network and two wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs). The main project elements are the extension and modernisation of the sewer network and the modernisation of the Main WWTP.

The unassisted project concerns the upgrading, expansion and reconstruction of the water treatment and sewage infrastructure in the Nowa Sól. One hundred km of new sewers will be constructed, along with storm water facilities and numerous pumping stations. The project will also allow for expansion and reconstruction of the Water Treatment Plant in Nowa Sól and the modernisation, upgrading and expansion of the water supply network.

Planning for the assisted project in Sochaczew commenced in 2007 and JASPERS assistance was sought in mid 2009 which lasted for a period of 175 days. The Feasibility Study for the assisted project had already begun before JASPERS assistance was sought, and spending on the project had commenced. The application for JASPERS assistance was made on the basis that the project was regarded as crucial. The scope of JASPERS involvement was a quality assessment of the project proposal and the grant application. The principle activities of the JASPERS experts included site visits, meetings and a review of key documents. JASPERS had also had a strategic input in advising that the project, as initially conceived, be broken up into two stages; something that the Polish authorities believe was highly beneficial. An application was made to the commission in March 2010, but an Interruption letter was issued in mid May. A decision was given to fund the project in May 2011, 434 days after the application was made.

In general, the involvement of JASPERS was regarded as positive and the various bodies were appreciative of their involvement. They believed that their application was significantly improved because of JASPERS. Technical assistance in particular had been very beneficial, especially the international perspective brought by the JASPERS team. They also speeded up the process of getting approval, as without their participation the application would have contained errors.

Planning for the project at Nowa Sól commenced in 2004, shortly before Poland acceded to the European Union. It was the subject of two applications: one in 2006 and another in 2009. The Nowa Sól project was considered a high priority, and the National Environmental Protection Fund also considered JASPERS assistance for it – but the project was already in the final stages of national
verification when the opportunity to involve JASPERS arose, and it was felt that the project was too far advanced to qualify. The application was the subject of two formal interruption letters as well as a number of other queries. A decision was finally granted in May 2010, 475 days after the initial application.

The relevant Polish authorities are of the view that JASPERS participation would have helped the Nowa Sól project too. Many of the issues raised by the Commission in their interruption letter and subsequent queries regarding the project at Nowa Sól concerned items such as the organisation and content of the Application Form, Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Assessment. Similar problems had been identified by JASPERS staff who had assisted on other projects at a pre-application stage. It is therefore likely that participation by JASPERS at a pre-application stage would have rectified many of the problems that subsequently led to an interruption letter being issued. However, it would be speculative and in all probability unlikely that no interruption letter would have been issued if JASPERS assistance had been sought: This is because the interruption letter asked technical questions with respect to sludge treatment which were unexpected, and similar questions were also asked about Sochaczew. The Polish authorities suggested that this interest by the Commission in sludge treatment had not been foreseen on the JASPERS assisted project either.

In general, the JASPERS assistance related to the presentation of the Sochaczew project in the application stage, and so there was no opportunity for JASPERS to improve the quality of the underlying project. Nevertheless, participants were of the view that JASPERS did have an impact in terms of a faster decision time. This in turn allowed for earlier funding and hence completion of the project. Secondly, the participants spoken to suggest that JASPERS might have shortened the time for a decision on the unassisted project at Nowa Sól had they been involved.

1. Introduction

This case study compared two major water investments in Poland, one developed with JASPERS assistance and one without. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2009PL161PR008 Improvement of Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew – Stage 1 (JASPERS assisted)
- CCI 2007PL161PR005 Water and Wastewater Management of the Town of Nowa Sól and the Adjacent Municipalities (non-JASPERS)

The projects were comparable in terms of their content and scale, but the time taken to reach a funding decision was not significantly shorter for the project that received JASPERS assistance. This case study examines whether the assistance of JASPERS is likely to have shortened the decision time relative to what it might otherwise have been. It does so by examining the available documentation and by considering the views of the relevant participants offered in the course of its preparation.
2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted Project: Modernisation of Improvement of Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew – Stage 1

This project covers the improvement of water supply and sewage disposal infrastructure for the city of Sochaczew that has a population of 37,900 and is located 50 km east of Warsaw, Poland. At present, there is a 99% rate of service connection to the water supply infrastructure, but only around 66% of the population are connected to the city’s sewer system. The project seeks to increase the connection rate to the sewerage network to around 95%. On top of the investments to be undertaken under the project, there is a long-term investment plan adopted by the city and the company which foresees a 98% target connection rate to the wastewater services in the city by 2015.

The existing water and sewer infrastructure and service standards in the city of Sochaczew vary:

- The water supply system is comprehensive but some of the infrastructure is aged. The company has introduced a long term modernisation programme of the water supply and distribution infrastructure, but these investments are not part of the current project to be presented for EU-funding.

- The sewerage network has a total length of around 58 km with 18 km of combined sewers. The combined sewers are the oldest part of the network and are in a relatively bad shape. It is the main reason for the relatively high level of infiltration when compared to international standards. The company has introduced a long term programme of replacing the most deteriorated sewers, but future improvements will remain limited if no additional effort is undertaken in the coming years to address the infiltration issue.

- The company also operates a rain water network 50 km in length. Storm waters are directly discharged to receivers or after pre-treatment (5 separators for sand and oil). No retention tanks and pumping stations are incorporated into the storm water system.

- The company operates two wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs): the Main WWTP is located at 600-Lecia Street and a second plant is located at the settlement of Korczaka. They are presently treating the wastewater originating from more than 60% of the Sochaczew agglomeration. Both plants meet the required discharge standards. There are also three independent tanks operated by the company that do not meet the required standard. There are also three smaller WWTPs in the project area belonging to other entities.

The main project elements are as follows:

- Extension and modernisation of the sewer network: The proposals comprise a 91.3 km extension of the sewer system to provide services to an additional 11,138 inhabitants and modernisation of 3.4 km of existing network.

- Modernisation of the Main Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP): The main components comprise the replacement and modernisation screens, sand catchers and secondary radial-flow tanks, coverage of the sludge storage place and the modernisation of power supply.

The main objective of the project is to ensure environmental integrity and compliance with the Urban Wastewater Directive (EC/97/271) and National Plan of Wastewater Treatment through increasing access to wastewater services via extended sewerage networks. The projects’ total investment costs amount to € 56.6 million including VAT. The project’s eligible capital cost amount to € 44.0 million: these consist of implementation costs of €9M, capital expenditure of €30M, and traffic problems associated with the project of €4M. The benefits of the project and their approximate monetary values are set out in the Table below:
Table 2.1: Economic Benefits of investment in Sochaczew – Stage 1

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<td>Property Tax</td>
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<td><strong>Total Benefits</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
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Source: AECOM

2.2 Non-JASPERS Project: Modernisation of Water facilities in Nowa Sól

This project concerns the upgrading, expansion and reconstruction of the water treatment and sewage infrastructure in the Nowa Sól area of Poland. It is funded under the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment, Cohesion Fund Priority Axis Water and Wastewater.

Nowa Sól City is located in the south-eastern part of Lubuskie and is the third most populous in the province. The city is surrounded to the west, south and east of the city limits by the rural municipality of Nowa Sól, and to the north by the municipality of Otyń. The upgrading of infrastructure takes place across this entire area.

The Sewage Treatment Plant at Nowa Sól will be expanded and rebuilt. 101.8km of new sewer will be constructed, along with five new storm water drainage tanks, five new sewage pumping stations and 64 sanitary sewer pumping stations.

In the area of water supply, the project will allow for expansion and reconstruction of the Water Treatment Plant in Nowa Sól. This will serve the entire area and will allow for the closure of a second water treatment plant that currently serves Otyń. It will also allow for the modernisation and upgrading of 38.3 km of the water supply network, and its expansion by a further 10.8 km.

The primary objective of the project is to strengthen economic and social cohesion by improving the water and sewage infrastructure in the Agglomeration of Nowa Sól, more specifically:
- To provide a sewer network for wastewater collection and processing in a treatment plant that allows it to be cleaned to the level required by the Directive 91/271/EEC and of the Minister of Environment of 24 July 2006.
- To allow for the disposal of sewage sludge through technology, and its further processing in accordance with Directive 75/442/EEC,
- To provide the residents with urban water quality intended for human consumption that is compliant with Council Directive 98/83/EC.

The benefits that are expected to result, and their approximate monetary values, are set out in the Table below:

Table 2.2: Economic Benefits of investment in Nowa Sól
3. Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for the assisted project commenced in 2007 and JASPERS assistance was sought in mid 2009 which lasted for a period of 175 days. An application was made to the commission in March 2010, but an Interruption letter was issued in mid May.

Issues raised in the letter related to the following:
- Water and infiltration rates – more information was required on what type of additional measures would be undertaken to reduce water losses. Projected levels of unaccounted for water and infiltration rates were not explicitly shown in the application.
- Financial sustainability – tariff levels were of concern, especially for low income households. Additional sources of financing should be found if cash flow shortfalls arise as a result.
- Timetable – information of potential delays and their impact should be given.
- Risk Analysis – only qualitative analysis of risk has been included in the application. An explanation was required as to why a quantitative analysis has not been included.
- Agglomeration load – inconsistent agglomeration loads were stated at certain years. This needed to be clarified.
- Closure of Boryszew WWTP would mean that future investment at the MOS WWTP would be required. Further detail was requested to explain this decision.

A decision was given to fund the project in May 2011, 434 days after the application was made.

Planning for the project at Nowa Sól commenced in 2004, shortly before Poland acceded to the European Union. It was the subject of two applications: one in 2006 and another in 2009. JASPERS assistance was not sought, principally because it was felt that the project was already well advanced. The application was the subject of two formal interruption letters as well as a number of other queries. A decision was finally granted in 2010, 475 days after the initial application.
Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

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<th>CCI 2007PL161PR005 Water and Wastewater Management of the Town of Nowa Sól and the Adjacent Municipalities (non-JASPERS)</th>
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4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to the Improvement of Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew – Stage 1 (JASPERS assisted)

JASPERS assisted with the project (Stage 1) to improve Water and Wastewater Management in Sochaczew. The scope of JASPERS involvement was a quality assessment of the project proposal and the grant application. Therefore, it came after the design stage of the project and related to the application phase onwards.

The actual JASPERS inputs covered the following aspects:
- Review of several versions of the Feasibility Study and Application Form including advice on its content;
- Advice on the option analysis;
- Advice on the investment costs rationalisation;
- Advice on the procurement strategy;
- Advice on the financial and cost benefit analyses including amendments in the methodology for determining the funding gap rate and improvements in the economic evaluation of the project;
- Advice on the sensitivity and risk analyses;
- Advice on the affordability and sustainability issues.

The principle activities of the JASPERS experts included a review of key documents: Application Form; Feasibility Study; Financial Model; Environmental Declarations; Revised Project Documents and Final Project Documents. These were subsequently discussed with the Project Beneficiary, the
consultant responsible for project preparation, the national Managing Authority and the Implementing Bodies (Narodowy Fundusz Ochrony Środowiska i Gospodarki Wodnej and the Ministry of Environment).

In June 2009, JASPERS experts conducted a site visit and attended a presentation of the project. This allowed them to review the concept of the project, and to discuss and comment on the project itself. Later that same month, the first of two review meetings was held in which JASPERS comments were presented to NFOS, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry Of Regional Development. A Guidance Note was issued in June 2009 with comments on the project structure and the content of the Application Documents. A second review meeting was held in July 2009 with the Beneficiary, the city of Sochaczew, the consultants and NFOS. Between May and November of 2009 there was also ongoing communication on several issues following requests from the beneficiary.

The JASPERS review of the project highlighted that the project objectives were compliant with the criteria spelled out in the underlying Operational Programme: Infrastructure and Environment as well as the EU Directive 91/271/EEC.

With regard to engineering issues, the JASPERS team were of the view that the option analysis undertaken for the choice of the best solution for the whole system was correct, and that the appropriate option had been selected. The technical concept also seemed correct. However, in some instances a better description and rationale for the proposed measures could have been provided in the Application Documents. Nevertheless, the presented documents were considered broadly acceptable. JASPERS also commented that the capital costs of the construction works seemed high compared to recent works in Poland and compared to other European countries.

The overall approach to the financial and economic analysis was considered a reasonable basis for project development and evaluation. The JASPERS experts pointed out that the Cost Benefit Analysis correctly considered ineligible VAT included in the investment costs as well as a real estate tax paid over the assets developed within the project as transfer payment, and therefore made a correction for that.

In relation to the benefits, the JASPERS team made a number of observations:

- Reduced healthcare costs were seen as a benefit that would result from the costs savings on healthcare due to the reduced illnesses caused by the reduction in the number of septic tanks used in the area. The benefit was quantified using average healthcare costs and an assumption that illness rates would fall by 3%. The JASPERS team noted that these benefits were 3% difficult to capture but that they were not considered unreasonably high.

- Environment Benefits: The benefits have been valued (following the national standards for Poland) in terms of a reduction in pollutants for which an economic value is applied. The JASPERS team noted that international practice normally takes a different approach and assigns user (utility values) and non-users values to environmental improvements. Nevertheless, a lower quantification of environmental benefits would still yield satisfactory economic returns for the project under consideration.

- It was difficult to establish a direct correlation of the project to improvements in regional development and the local construction industry.
As in other project submitted for funding in Poland, the team noted the exception to the commonly applied methodology for CBA that stipulates that an analysis should be carried out in constant prices; and this is in principle requested by the EC. In the case of the Sochaczew project, the economic evaluation was undertaken in current prices, which is in line with national guidelines for Poland and thus could be acceptable provided that it is consistently used for similar projects in the country. A decision was taken to retain the evaluation in current prices, and the JASPERS Completion Note did state that the removal of the inflation assumption could lead to a marginal deterioration of the economic viability which should not be considered important, and that the project still realised an adequate economic rate of return.

The financial analysis, sustainability and funding gap analysis were undertaken broadly in accordance with the EC regulations. JASPERS’ comments on the methodology and assumptions were largely incorporated into the analysis. The results of the projected financial analysis showed the Project to be financially sustainable and affordable with EU financial support.

The environmental procedures and evaluation were considered acceptable. So too was the financing plan and the proposed institutional arrangements for implementation. With regard to procurement and timelines, the proposed contract principles were considered reasonable and the number of works contracts applied was consistent with sector practice.

4.2 Application process for and Wastewater Management of the Town of Nowa Sól and the Adjacent Municipalities (non-assisted)

The project at Nowa Sól is unusual in that it was the subject of two applications. The first version of the application was registered by the European Commission on 17 March 2006 (under the reference number: 2006/PL/16/C/PE/001). It was determined that - in institutional terms - the project was not ready to proceed at that time.

The Application and Annexes were subsequently updated with the main aims being to verify aspects of the investment and the institutional preparation of the project. Compared to the Feasibility Study forwarded to the European Commission in 2006, the later application made significant changes with respect to the following: the material scope of the project; the financial schedule; the methodology for calculating the rate of co-financing required; the project organization, and other aspects of the project.

Project planning ended in January 2008 and an application for funding was made in January 2009. DG REGIO had a number of questions and concerns about this application for funding and an Interruption Letter was issued to the Polish authorities on 19 March 2009. The letter made the following initial comments:

- The application form was not well organised. Most of the information concerning the environmental issues had been identified in the feasibility study, but were not then included in the application form.
- Within the application, all of the relevant information regarding the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive, the Water Framework Directive and the Drinking Water Directives had not been included.
- A map showing the present borders of the agglomeration was missing.
- References and calculations regarding the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive had incorrectly taken account of the population number rather than the population equivalent.
- The chosen sludge management solution should have been justified.

A further letter was sent on 14th May 2009, seeking clarification and supplementary information on the following:
• Confirmation that infiltration would be at an acceptable level that would pose no threat to the hydraulic capacity of the WWTP.
• The complete chapter on demand analysis was not included in the updated Feasibility Study, and a number of discrepancies identified as concerns required clarification.
• Information on the sewage sludge management within the WWTP was missing.
• Clarification was needed that salary costs had not been counted twice in the feasibility study.
• With regard to the financial and economic analysis, there were a number of items requiring clarification:
  • investment costs need to be verified.
  • updated institutional analysis is missing.
  • recommended that a sensitivity test for higher energy prices be undertaken.

• There were also issues regarding the Environmental Impact Assessment.
  • The relevant documentation was incomplete
  • There was confusion regarding the procedures that ultimately led to the opinion that the project would affect a Natura 2000 site and clarification was requested concerning the procedures conducted.
  • Evidence was requested justifying the decision that the planned investment would not have a negative effect on Natura 2000 sites
  • With regard to the second component of the project (the water supply system), additional information was required relating to the screening decision of the competent authorities that did not assume that the project would have a significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.

A decision was taken to fund the project on 23 May 2010.
5. Views of Polish Authorities

On 6\textsuperscript{th} June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish authorities in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of the Environment, the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, and the beneficiaries in Sochaczew and Nowa Sól.

The Feasibility Study for the assisted project had already begun when JASPERS assistance was sought, and spending on the project had already commenced. The application for JASPERS assistance was made on the basis that the project was regarded as crucial. The Nowa Sól project was also considered a high priority, and the National Environmental Protection Fund also considered JASPERS assistance for it – but the project was already in the final stages of national verification and it was felt that the project was too far advanced to qualify.

With regard to the Sochaczew project, a number of comments were made:

- JASPERS had a strategic input early on in advising that the project, as initially conceived, be broken up into two stages. The Polish authorities believe that this was a highly beneficial and sensible thing to do. They are currently trying to progress the second stage of the project for funding.

- Some of those involved in the Polish bodies were not keen to extend the economic evaluation period from 25 to 30 years, but others felt that it was a good idea since it gave peace of mind regarding the long-term viability of the project. The economic evaluation was undertaken in current prices, which is not the preference of the European Commission, but a decision was taken not to use constant prices since the use of current prices is acceptable provided that it is consistently used for similar projects in Poland.

- The interruption letter of May 2010 pointed out that the risk analysis associated with the project should ideally be based on a quantified probability distribution estimate. However, the letter did acknowledge that a qualitative analysis was acceptable if it proved difficult to come up with sensible assumptions on the probability of critical variables. The Polish authorities did not change their approach to risk analysis following this communication, but participants did state that a key lesson was learned from the JASPERS advice on the needed to better manage risk.

- In general, the involvement of JASPERS was regarded as positive and the various bodies were appreciative of their involvement. They believed that their application was significantly improved because of JASPERS. Technical assistance in particular had been very beneficial, especially the international perspective brought by the JASPERS team. They also speeded up the process of getting approval, as without their participation the application would have contained errors.

- In order to optimise the benefits of JASPERS’ involvement, their advice on specific projects was circulated through national agencies and disseminated to other projects.
In relation to the project at Nowa Sól and adjacent municipalities, it was felt that JASPERS participation would have helped the Nowa Sól project for a number of reasons:

- By drawing attention to a lack of detail regarding certain aspects.
- The preparation of the Nowa Sól project was very difficult – especially the environmental aspects. The Polish promoters already had environmental approvals, but decided to redo their work as there had been what they regard as a change in demands from the Commission. It was at this stage that external help from JASPERS would have been particularly welcome.
- The Feasibility Study was prepared by external consultants and the Polish authorities relied heavily on the experience of the consultants in this regard. In 2008, the Ministry of the Environment also provided assistance with the preparation.

With regard to the Nowa Sól application, the Managing Authority pointed out that in addition to the two sets of formal reservations contained in the interruption letter of March 2009 and the subsequent letter in May 2009, a further three informal reservations were communicated. The application was not redrafted in response to these; only clarification was required. Other participants stated the belief that none of the Commission's comments could be defined as reservations, and that they were only requests for clarification.

The interruption letter for Nowa Sól asked technical questions with respect to sludge treatment, and similar questions were also asked about Sochaczew. The Polish authorities suspect that these questions, which were largely technical, came from a new interest by the Commission with regard to how hazardous waste from sludge treatment should be used.

With regard to both projects, the participants commented that sometimes people are reticent about what the input from JASPERS will reveal, but this is a misconception. They regard the JASPERS participation as not being in any way controlling but rather supportive and constructive in resolving problems.

In general, participants did not see the inconsistencies between EU and national guidelines as overly problematic. The authorities did not always stick to national guidelines just because they were the norm: for example, even though the Polish guidelines did not require public consultation on certain aspects of projects they had nevertheless conducted these as they knew that the Commission had such a preference. In addition, they also pointed out that nationals laws can often be far more liberal or demanding that EU requirements, and so following national processes is not always easier.

There has been knowledge transfer to Poland as a result of their participation in JASPERS. Problems that they used to find formidable are no longer so. They need to keep learning so ongoing interaction is important. Nowa Sól participants (i.e. non-assisted) pointed out that engaging in the application process was itself a learning process, and that even though they themselves had not been assisted by JASPERS, they would still find the process easier if they were to repeat a similar project.

The working knowledge of JASPERS is English, and information sent to the beneficiary is in English. If a national language was the working language it would be a major benefit as they could more easily disseminate the JASPERS input to wider groups and future beneficiaries etc.
6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study compares two ostensibly similar projects, one of which received JASPERS assistance where the application for funding was dealt with by the Commission in 434 days, and a second which did not receive JASPERS assistance where the Commission needed 475 days to consider the application for funding.

Many of the issues raised by the Commission in their interruption letter and subsequent queries regarding the project at Nowa Sól concerned items such as the organisation and content of the Application Form, Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Assessment. The letter pointed out that in many instances the Commission was aware that certain information existed, but that it had been mistakenly excluded from the documentation. Similar problems had been identified by JASPERS staff who had assisted on other projects at a pre-application stage. It is therefore likely that participation by JASPERS at a pre-application stage in the Nowa Sól project would have rectified many of the problems that subsequently led to an interruption letter being issued. However, it would be speculative and in all probability unlikely that no interruption letter would have been issued if JASPERS assistance had been sought: The interruption letter asked unexpected technical questions with respect to sludge treatment, and similar questions were also asked about the Sochaczew project (which was assisted). The Polish authorities suggested that this interest in sludge treatment by the Commission had not been foreseen on the JASPERS assisted project either. However, it might have been possible to significantly shorten the decision-time relating to other aspects of the Interruption Letter.

In general, the JASPERS assistance related to the presentation of the Sochaczew project in the application stage, and so there was no opportunity for JASPERS to improve the quality of the underlying project. Nevertheless, participants were of the view that JASPERS did have an impact in terms of a faster decision time. This in turn allowed for earlier funding and hence completion of the project.
Case Study 10: Knowledge Economy - The Provision of Scientific Research Facilities in Poland

CCI 2007PL161PR015 Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CePT) (JASPERS assisted) and

CCI 2009PL161PR035 Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III) (JASPERS assisted)
Executive Summary

This case study compared two major investments in research facilities in Poland, both of which were developed with JASPERS assistance. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2007PL161PR015 Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CePT) (JASPERS assisted); and
- CCI 2009PL161PR035 Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III) (JASPERS assisted)

The Centre of Preclinical Research and Technology (CePT) is a biomedical research centre that is intended to be set up by a consortium of ten academic groups. The catalyst for the new co-ordinated approach was the launch of a common R&D project to upgrade infrastructural resources and equipment, while at the same time reorganising research activities. The project’s key objectives are to jointly use the new research equipment and laboratories so as to achieve synergies at a scientific level. It is hoped that this will in turn lead to excellence in research activities that would establish the centre as a leader in the environmental sciences.

The second project is designed to establish the Centre for Bio-Chemical Sciences (CENT III), as a research centre based in the Biology and Chemistry Departments of the beneficiary, the University of Warsaw - Uniwersytet Warszawski (UW). The project consists of investment in infrastructure and equipment (performed in two phases), as well as associated organisational changes. The CENT III Project consists of the construction of a new building dedicated fully to hosting the Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences, and its furnishing with advanced scientific equipment suitable for the planned research programme. The construction of the physical infrastructure will be accompanied by the development of new organizational and management rules.

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007. Project planning was completed in 2010 for the first project. The second project was completed in two phases, one of which ended in 2008, the other in 2010. JASPERS assistance for both projects was lengthy: it lasted 630 days for the CePT project and 442 days for CENT III.

Considerable resources were put into the preparation of both projects, but nevertheless the time taken by the Commission to decide to fund the projects took almost a year in both cases. The Application for the CePT project was made on the 30th June 2009. On the 13 August 2009, an interruption letter was received in relation to the project that requested additional information and clarification. The letter outlined further work required to improve the quality of the application, and in particular, the financial and cost benefit analysis and the potential applications of the research in the marketplace. The time taken to reach a decision on the CePT project was 342 days, and was 336 days on the CENT III project.

This case study compares two similar projects, both of which received JASPERS assistance. Considerable resources were put into the preparation of both projects, and JASPERS was involved for a lengthy period on both projects, and particularly early on in the CePT project. The time taken by the Commission to reach a decision to fund the projects was similar. Critical to each was the need to submit a particularly convincing body of evidence as to the
benefits that the project would bring. Despite the involvement of JASPERS in the preparation of the cost benefit analysis the Commission was unhappy with the initial application for CePT and noted specifically aspects of the CBA with which it was unhappy. These issues were only resolved with the support of JASPERS, and the approach developed was applied in the later CENT III project.
1. Introduction

This case study compared two major investments in research facilities in Poland, both of which were developed with considerable assistance from JASPERS. The projects in question are:

- CCI 2007PL161PR015 Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CEPT) (JASPERS assisted);
- CCI 2009PL161PR035 Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III) (JASPERS assisted)

Both projects are of comparable scale in terms of cost and complexity, with eligible expenditure of 359M PLN (€88M) and PLN 281M (€69M) respectively. Both projects received JASPERS assistance and the time taken to consider each application was almost identical.

2. Description of the Projects

2.1 JASPERS Assisted Project 1: The Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CEPT)

Under a project entitled Centre of Preclinical Research and Technology (CePT) the Applicant and its nine partners, who jointly comprise the CePT Consortium, intend to establish a leading Central European biomedical research centre consisting of ten closely co-operating environmental scientific core facilities.

The total costs of the CePT project is 388 M PLN (€95 M), including eligible expenditures of 359 M PLN (€88M) and non-eligible expenditures of 29 M PLN (€7M). 85% of eligible expenditure will be covered from the funds of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the remaining 15% from the State Budget of the Republic of Poland. Non-eligible expenditures will be covered by the funds of individual CePT Consortium Members.

The Catalyst for the new co-ordinated approach was the launch of a common R&D project, involving the upgrading of infrastructure resources and equipment, as well as a re-organisation of the research activities to accelerate the development of scientific knowhow. The project's key objectives are to achieve synergies at the scientific level which will in turn lead to an excellence in research.

To implement the Research Programme ten research institutes, some of the best biomedical centres in Poland, started to cooperate closely as the CePT scientific consortium and created joint management bodies responsible for setting common research trends and managing and coordinating scientific activities. The Beneficiary is the Medical University of Warsaw, which also acts as co-ordinator of the project.

The need for investment stems from the fact that the undertaking of modern research in Poland in the preclinical field is hampered by obsolete equipment, inadequate laboratories
and a fragmented approach to research undertaking. Major development barriers, which prevent members of the CePT Consortium from optimising the use of human capital at their respective institutions, include:

- A lack of modern research equipment in their laboratories
- Limits to the inflow and employment of young, talented scientists who graduate with MA and PhD degrees due to insufficient and inadequate equipment
- Research units that are prevented from launching more advanced, innovative and interdisciplinary research projects due to equipment that is not of the highest standard as well as a lack of sufficient laboratory space for implementation of the planned research

The research agenda is in line with current research capabilities of the institutes, which are amongst the most advanced research centres in Poland. The project addresses three research areas or stages: fundamental research on pathogenesis; new diagnostic methods; and new therapeutic approaches. The CePT Research Programme focuses on three scientific biotechnology areas, where currently there are no leading institutes in Poland: cardiovascular diseases; cancer; and diseases of the nervous system.

The expected benefits of the project cannot all be quantified, but some aspects can, as shown in the table below:

**Table 2.1: Economic Benefits of investment in The Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CEPT)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€ '000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates with the academic title of doctor</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the differences in pay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates of the professional title of magister</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the differences in pay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New posts for scientific staff</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New posts for other staff</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(offset in future expenditures through the implementation of the Project)</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who use R &amp; D infrastructure</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(savings in average unit cost falling on the student's life)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implemented value of patents (400 thousand EUR. / Pcs.)</td>
<td>12,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits</td>
<td>14,018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

Most of the quantified benefits relate to the higher salaries earned by higher educated staff, new posts and savings in the costs of tertiary education associated with the facilities. However, it is the anticipated value of patents that are applied in industry that are assumed to deliver the greatest quantifiable value. The total value of quantified benefits is low relative
to the cost of the project. However, the Feasibility Study and Application Form point out that there are many unquantified benefits associated with the project. These relate to the following:

- Increasing the international competitiveness of Polish science which will have the effect of significantly improving opportunities for extending scientific cooperation between research centres, yielding measurable results in the form of published scientific papers and expert evaluations, obtained patents and scientific research grants as well as signed cooperation agreements with industry.
- The CePT project shall also increase the use of existing scientific resources and shall provide new sustainable jobs in the area of advanced technologies.
- Extensive research has been planned by CePT in scientific areas associated with medicine, thus improving the health and living conditions of people.
- The undertaking shall improve the quality of education as three out of nine Partners in the CePT Project are higher education institutions.
- CePT shall also facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology between scientific institutions and enterprises thus building a real partnership between business and science.

2.2 JASPERS Assisted Project 2: Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III)

The Project is designed to establish the Centre for Bio-Chemical Sciences (CENT III), as a research centre based in the Biology and Chemistry Departments of the beneficiary, the University of Warsaw - Uniwersytet Warszawski (UW). The project consists of investment in infrastructure and equipment (performed in two phases), as well as associated organisational changes, which are intended to facilitate the achievement of the project's objectives.

The total value of the investment is 294 M PLN (€72M), of which eligible expenditures amounts to 281 M PLN (€ 69M). 85% of funding will come from the European Regional Development Fund, with the remaining 85% coming from the state budget.

The project is an element of a bigger modernization and development program of the Ochota Campus, which covers the development of scientific and higher education facilities for both the University and other institutions including the Warsaw Medical University - Warszawski Uniwersytet Medyczny (WUM), and the Polish Academy of Science - Polska Akademia Nauki (PAN).

In the Ochoto Campus, the University of Warsaw runs three investment projects, under the common umbrella of the Centre of New Technologies (CeNT). The projects consist of two educational parts (CeNT I and CeNT II), and a third research and development component, CENT III. CeNT I and CeNT II were more advanced in development and the EU approval procedure when CENT III was put forward for application.
In addition to the CENT III project, the Ochota Campus will also host the Centre for Preclinical Research and Technology (CePT) which is the first of the two projects examined in this case study. It was financed from the Innovative Economy Operation Programme, in which the University of Warsaw plays the role of a partner, next to the Warsaw Medical University and selected Polish Academy of Science’s institutes. Warsaw is also the location for a CEZAMAT project, focused on nanotechnologies, which is promoted by the Technical University together with some PAN institutes.

The CENT III Project consists of the construction of a new building dedicated fully to hosting the Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences and its furnishing with advanced scientific equipment suitable for performing studies framed by the planned research programme. The building will be composed of two parts constructed in two phases of the Project (see: page 200 of the Feasibility Study). The construction of the physical infrastructure will be accompanied by the development of new organizational and management rules. The Centre will also be open for new scientists who are expected to grant significant value to it.

The primary objective of the project is to increase the volume of technology transfer from science to the economy through the establishment of a leading European centre conducting high quality research in the areas of biology and chemistry. The Centre will conduct advanced research studies oriented towards three fundamental areas of study: new sources of energy, environmental protection and the chemistry of biologically active compounds. The industrial sectors associated with the defined research profile of CENT III and the potential client-base of the Centre’s research results are the pharmaceutical, medical, energy, electrochemical and food sectors, as well as the ecological industry.

Table 2.2: Economic Benefits of investment in Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>€ ’000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional employment in the new companies (so-called spin-off)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercialization of products through the company’s spin-off</td>
<td>41,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercialization of products produced by the sale of licenses</td>
<td>10,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained and submitted patents</td>
<td>2,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained doctorate degrees</td>
<td>1,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued 32,790 scientific publications every year</td>
<td>10,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Benefits</td>
<td>66,692</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AECOM

In addition to the benefits quantified above, a long list of non-quantifiable benefits was also presented in the Application form. All of the benefits fit to the objectives of the Operational
Programme, but their quantification and monetisation was in some instances impossible or very difficult. JASPERS suggested that this made valuation of expected outcome conservative, and that the intervention might more cost-effective then the figures showed.

3 Overview of Project Planning for the Two Projects

Planning for both projects commenced in 2007. Project planning was completed in 2010 for the first project. The second project was completed in two phases, one of which ended in 2008, the other in 2010. JASPERS assistance for both projects was lengthy it lasted 630 days for the CEPT project and 442 days for CENT III. It also took place early on in the projects in such as way as to influence the design of the projects:

Table 3.1 Project Planning Durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCI 2007PL161PR015 Centre of PreClinical Research and Technology (CEPT) (JASPERS assisted)</th>
<th>CCI 2009PL161PR035 Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III) (JASPERS assisted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Start** | **Completion Date of Initial Cost Benefit**
01/08/08 | **Feasibility Study Start**
01/07/08 |
| **End of Project Planning Phase (a)** | 31/03/10 | Tendering Occurred in Stages (Construction Contract)
Stage 1: 31/12/10 – 30/11/10
Stage 2: 01/03/12 – 30/06/12 |
| **Planning duration** | 607 days | 913 days |
| **JASPERS start date** | 04/10/07 | 30/09/09 |
| **JASPERS end date** | 25/06/09 | 16/12/10 |
| **JASPERS duration** | 630 | 442 |
| **DG REGIO application** | 30/06/09 | 31/12/10 |
| **Commission Decision** | 07/06/10 | 02/12/11 |
| **DG REGIO Duration** | 342 | 336 |
The Application for the CePT project was made on the 30th June 2009. On the 13 August 2009, an interruption letter was received in relation to the project that requested additional information and clarification. The letter outlined further work required to improve the quality of the application, and in particular, the financial and cost benefit analysis. The time taken to reach a decision on the CePT project was 342 days. The decision time for the CENT III project was very similar at 336 days.

4. Impact of JASPERS Support

4.1 JASPERS assistance to CCI 2007PL161PR015, The Centre of Pre Clinical Research and Technology (CEPT)

Jaspers offered extensive input to the project during the preparation phase of the Project, including the following:

- Ad hoc services on institutional, organisational, financial and technical issues related to the project
- Advice at concept stage
- Involvement in the definition of Consortium Agreements
- Assistance in TOR development for Consultancy
- Assistance in the development of the schedule for the project’s preparation and implementation
- Review and assessment of the Feasibility Study. The JASPERS Task Manager in association with experts from COWI Consultants provided comments to the Feasibility Study and this led to a revised version of the Feasibility Study. Major issues addressed concerned:
  - The presentation of objectives and the scientific programme;
  - The demand analysis and benchmarking in such a way as to position the project in the Polish Bio-Technology market;
  - Advice on the appropriate institutional set-up and State Aid;
  - The approach to the financial and economic analyses in the Feasibility Study;
  - Advice on organisational issues and project management;
  - The strategic planning of research and methods for the integrated activities.
  - Input in the form of working notes related to 'Snapshot of the Polish Biotechnology Sector' and 'Commercialisation issues'.

Thirteen meetings were held between members of the JASPERS team and the Polish bodies from October 2007 to May 2009. The principle documents reviewed were the Feasibility Studies, Application Form and Consortium Agreement. The Feasibility Study and Application were substantially improved, once all JASPERS recommendations were taken into account. Special attention was paid to sound presentation, justification of the investment in strategic and economic terms as well as to the process leading to the technical definitions.

The project application states that the Beneficiary spared no effort to incorporate all of the recommendations provided by the Jaspers Initiative into the modified version of the Feasibility Study. Nevertheless, an Interruption letter was issued by DG REGIO on the 13th August 2009. Advising that further work was required to improve the quality of the
application, and in particular, the financial and cost benefit analysis. A total of 23 points were raised ranging from a need to show support for interaction between the research and industrial sectors to a requirement for cooperation agreements between Warsaw Medical University and the other members of the project consortium.

JASPERS brought important insights to the Polish administration into the process of identifying the areas that these new institutes should target, in particular what areas would be likely to be of private firms in research and technology based industries. JASPERS supported the beneficiaries as they sought specialist consulting help to formulate a research strategy for these new institutes. As a result of this commercial focus it was possible to predict, and place a value on, the amount of commercially viable research that could be carried out by these new institutes. This in turn allowed a valuation of the benefits of these projects for the purposes of a funding application to the Commission.

4.2 Application process for CCI 2009PL161PR035 The Centre for Biological and Chemical Sciences of the University of Warsaw – Ochota Campus (CENT III)

The CENT III project emerged from a national competition that gave co-financing commitments to successful projects. Only then was the project put forward and eligible for JASPERS assistance. Assistance was sought on the following aspects of the project:

- Consultation concerning verification and optimization of basic application documents (including monitoring of the documentation’s conformity with EU and national regulations and guidelines);
- Feasibility study (particularly including financial analysis and economic consultation of project assumptions within the planned research programme);
- Application (including consultation during the preparation of the Application to EC concerning the confirmation of assistance);
- Functional programme
- Technical documentation
- Environmental documentation.

The assistance was requested in order to shorten both the consideration process by the EC and the signing of the conditional subsidy agreement for the Project.

Four JASPERS Experts were involved. Twelve documents and their respective attachments received in Polish were reviewed and subsequently discussed with the Project Beneficiary. A total of eight meetings were held in addition to a wider series of meetings with 16 scientific team leaders. The JASPERS inputs covered the following aspects:

- A Review of the Feasibility Study
  - Revision of definition of objectives and project deliverables;
  - Advice on definition of products and results, as well as their indicators
  - Advice on organisation of the Centre and the Project, especially as regards the technology transfer functions

- Cost Benefit Analysis
  - Review of CBA components;
Verification of applied methodology in relation EU policies and guidelines, and those of the Ministry of Regional Development;

Observing slow progress in improving the financial and economic analyses, JASPERS together with the Beneficiary concluded that deeper intervention in this part of the documentation was needed. As a result JASPERS became involved in surveying the scientists on their vision of the research findings and applications. A consulting company, Ernst and Young, was employed to assemble the final version of both the financial and economic analyses (CBA).

- Review of Grant Application draft
  - Advice on content of the application form;
  - Review of the GA contents in terms of compliance with application needs

Following the recommendations of JASPERS presented in various documents as well as during the working meetings, the Beneficiary, together with the JASPERS experts, and with the support of an external expert, made significant effort to redesign the Project, from the initial drafts.

Many changes were introduced to the project management system and the proposed management structure in order to increase the commercial orientation of the project.

Fundamental changes were made to the cost-benefit analysis, the quantification and monetisation of economic benefits, and the sensitivity analysis. An additional option was included in the analysis; a new qualitative risk analysis was undertaken (including the division between risks at the project implementation and operation stages); and changes were undertaken to the structure and length of the application.

5. Views of Polish Authorities

On 6th June 2012 AECOM met representatives of the relevant Polish participants in Warsaw at a meeting convened by the Ministry of Regional Development. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Regional Development and the University of Warsaw. Participants made the following general comments on the JASPERS program:

- The progress of the work was reasonably timely but the JASPERS recommendations were not given all at one time; some participants wondered if these remarks could have been given earlier, which would have made the process of JASPERS cooperation more efficient. Others present stated that they had similar experience on other projects. However, there was acknowledgement that new issues can constantly arise that come to light due to changing requirements of the Commission or the experiences of JASPERS staff on other projects. Therefore, most of the later comments made by JASPERS could not have been provided any earlier. Furthermore, participants felt that had JASPERS staff not made these later comments then interruption letters would have followed.

- Participants felt that it would have helped if JASPERS or the Managing Authority had explained to the Intermediary Body (The Ministry of Science and Higher Education)
why delays were occurring, and that these were beyond their control. In general, participants felt that the approval process within the European Commission was slow.

- On the issue of the permanent transfer of knowledge regarding the funding process, the participants stated that the core experts were stable within the Ministries and the relevant academic institutions. When relevant personnel do move it tends to be between the various institutions within Poland and so there is no loss of expertise. However, participants felt that there was a high turnover of staff within the European Commission, with new staff not being familiar with the key issues.

The participants made the following comments in relation to the CENT III project.

- The input from the JASPERS team was substantial. Participants noted in particular the work done on the issue of demarcation between projects, financial analysis and risk analysis.

- An early CBA had been prepared, but a new model was prepared once JASPERS became involved. The valuation of benefits was done with the very active participation of JASPERS, whose Task Manager worked closely with the leading scientists involved to identify potential benefits. The experience of the participants was that the CBA proved the most difficult aspect of the application process, especially the task of monetising benefits.

- JASPERS advised on how the centre should be managed in a way that would provide a modern R&D centre with good links to business and the commercial market. The essence of the advice was that it should not be managed in the way of a traditional academic institution and that it should be more commercially focussed.

- The Polish authorities saw the involvement of JASPERS as very positive, and identified the commitment of the Task Manager as significant. JASPERS often offered options and were always constructive. The participants also felt that the availability of local advisers was beneficial.

6. Evaluation of the Impact of JASPERS

This case study compares two ostensibly similar projects, both of which received JASPERS assistance. Considerable resources were put into the preparation of both projects, and JASPERS was involved for a lengthy period on both projects, and particularly early on in the CePT project. The time taken by the Commission to reach a decision to fund the projects was similar. Critical to each was the need to submit a particularly convincing body of evidence as to the benefits that the project would bring. Despite the involvement of JASPERS in the preparation of the cost benefit analysis the Commission was unhappy with the initial application for CePT and noted specifically aspects of the Cost Benefit Analysis with which it was unhappy. These issues were only resolved with the support of JASPERS, and the approach developed was applied in the later CENT III project.
Appendix 2: Workshop Slides
JASPERS Evaluation

Workshop for Member State Authorities
Agenda

• 9.30 – 9.40: Introductions
• 9.40 – 10.00: Terms of Reference for this Evaluation
• 10.00 – 11.30: Results of Tasks 1 and 2
• 11.30 – 11.45: Break
• 11.45 – 12.30: JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Findings
• 12.30 – 1.00: JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Recommendations
• 1.00 – 2.00: Lunch
• 2.00 – 3.00: JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings
• 3.00 – 3.15: Break
• 3.15 – 4.00: JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Recommendations
• 4.00 – 4.30: Wrap Up
Terms of Reference for Evaluation
Context

• Study Objectives
  – JASPERS’ impact on quality and timeliness of “preparation, submission, approval and implementation” of major projects
  – JASPERS’ impact on technical capacity of Member States

• JASPERS’ Objectives
  – Quality and timeliness of project preparation
  – Leading to absorption
  – In future may increase emphasis on capacity building
Task 1: Construction and Analysis of Timelines

- Member State develops Project
- JASPERS Assistance Project
- Kickoff Meeting
- Member State finalises application
- Completion Note
- DG REGIO examines application
- Funding Application
- Member State responds to any interruption letter(s)
- Interruption Letter
- Revised Application
- DG REGIO examines application
- Multivariate Analysis

• e.g. Major Projects in Receipt of JASPERS Assistance

• Analysis
  – Description
  – Cross Classification
  – Multivariate Analysis
Task 2: Links between JASPERS Advice and DG REGIO Project Assessment

- Examination of Completion Notes and Interruption Letters
- Measuring Scope of JASPERS Advice: Topics
- Measuring Scale of JASPERS Advice: Duration
- Basic analysis of Completion Note and Interruption Letter topics
- Correlation between topics for individual projects
- Deeper Analysis of a sample of projects
Task 2: Links between JASPERS Advice and DG REGIO Project Assessment

- Scope based on generic list of topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topics related to the stages of project lifecycle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project concept and programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project feasibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project cost Estimation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Benefit Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition and State Aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding and Financing Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with other EU Regulations and Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Topics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vetting of the overall application for funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing the ERDF/Cohesion Fund Application Form itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mention of physical change to the project (e.g. design alteration, downsizing, different route)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 3: Case Studies

• Compare matched pairs of JASPERS and non-JASPERS projects
  – Time for Decision
  – Issues Arising
  – How Issues Resolved
  – Evaluate Other Factors influencing project development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Railways</th>
<th>Roads</th>
<th>Solid Waste</th>
<th>Water and Wastewater</th>
<th>Knowledge Economy</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Poland</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Slovenia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Task 4: Analysis of Feedback from Member States and Beneficiaries

- Desktop Analysis
- Interviews with DG REGIO desk officers
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Member State Workshops
Results of Tasks 1 and 2
## Profile of Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major JASPERS-assisted</th>
<th>Major non-JASPERS-assisted</th>
<th>Non-major JASPERS</th>
<th>JASPERS Horizontal Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Projects/Assignments</strong></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td><strong>No Member States</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Top 3 Member States</strong></td>
<td>Poland (24.2%)</td>
<td>Poland (75.6%)</td>
<td>Romania (28.6%)</td>
<td>Romania (33.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Romania (24.2%)</td>
<td>Romania (12.2%)</td>
<td>Poland (20.9%)</td>
<td>Poland (21.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Czech Rep (13.9%)</td>
<td>(Estonia 7.3%)</td>
<td>(Bulgaria 13.2%)</td>
<td>(Bulgaria 9.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Sectors</strong></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Top 3 Sectors</strong></td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>Roads (25.6%)</td>
<td>Solid Waste (28.6%)</td>
<td>Other (36.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(32%)</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roads (20.8%)</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
<td>(22%)</td>
<td>(20.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railways (13.9%)</td>
<td>Other (14.6%)</td>
<td>Railways (16.5%)</td>
<td>Energy (17.2%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average Project Size</strong></td>
<td>185.3</td>
<td>112.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Largest Project Sector</strong></td>
<td>Roads (€344.0)</td>
<td>Roads (€189.5)</td>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(value of project €m)</td>
<td>(€34.6)</td>
<td>(€34.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smallest Project Sector</strong></td>
<td>Solid Waste (€61.7)</td>
<td>Solid Waste (€48.1)</td>
<td>Ports and Waterways</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(value of project €m)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(€4.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% of Projects Supported</strong></td>
<td>Bucharest (29.0%)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>Bucharest (42.9%)</td>
<td>Bucharest (42.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vienna (38.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vienna (24.2%)</td>
<td>Vienna (10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw (31.6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Warsaw (25.3%)</td>
<td>Warsaw (36.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Luxembourg (1.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Luxembourg (7.7%)</td>
<td>Luxembourg (10.3%)</td>
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</table>
**DG REGIO Durations for Major Projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major JASPERS-Assisted Projects* (a)</th>
<th>Major Non-JASPERS-Assisted Projects (b)</th>
<th>Difference (a – b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DG REGIO Decision Duration</strong></td>
<td>272</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>-114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DG REGIO Active Decision Duration</strong></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DG REGIO Interruption Duration</strong></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>-74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## DG REGIO Durations for Major Projects by Member State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>Major JASPERS-Assisted Projects (a)</th>
<th>Major Non-JASPERS-Assisted Projects (b)</th>
<th>Difference (a – b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>-205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>-87</td>
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</table>
## DG REGIO Durations for Major Projects by Project Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Major JASPERS-Assisted Projects (a)</th>
<th>Major Non-JASPERS-Assisted Projects (b)</th>
<th>Difference (a – b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water and Wastewater</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Transport</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>-231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>-147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DG REGIO Durations for Major Projects by Project Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Size</th>
<th>Major JASPERS-Assisted Projects (a)</th>
<th>Major Non-JASPERS-Assisted Projects (b)</th>
<th>Difference (a – b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=€100m</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>-147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;€100m and &lt;= €200m</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;€200m</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>-345</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Multivariate Regression Analysis

• Differing Composition of JASPERS Assisted & Non JASPERS Assisted Projects

• Regression Analysis accounts for simultaneous effect of Member State, Sector, Project Size, and JASPERS Assistance on DG REGIO Duration

• JASPERS Assistance reduces DG REGIO Duration by 86 Days
## Measures of the Scale of JASPERS Support (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Average No of Topics Covered by JASPERS per Project</th>
<th>Average No of Meetings attended by JASPERS per Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member States</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other Member States</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sectors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Waste Water</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Sectors</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Measures of the Scale of JASPERS Support (2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Average No of Topics Covered by JASPERS per Project</th>
<th>Average No of Meetings attended by JASPERS per Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JASPERS Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=€150m</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;€150m</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Decision Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=2009</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;=2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Projects Analysed</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>115</td>
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</table>
**Scope of JASPERS Support: Topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Concept and Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Cost Estimation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand Analysis &amp; Modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Benefit Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk &amp; Sensitivity Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition and State Aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding and Financing Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation &amp; Structures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JASPERS Support by Topic

- Project Concept/Programming: 30.4%
- Project Design: 21.4%
- Demand Analysis/Modelling: 9.5%
- Cost Benefit Analysis: 24.4%
- Environmental Issues: 74.4%
- Risk/Sensitivity Analysis: 29.2%
- Competition/State Aids: 18.5%
- Funding/Financing Issues: 8.3%
- Procurement: 35.1%
- Assistance in Answering Interception: 10.1%
- Project Implementation & Structures: 24.4%
- Assistance in Answering Interception: 10.7%
JASPERS Support by Date and Topic
JASPERS Support by Project Size and Topic

![Bar chart showing JASPERS Support by Project Size and Topic](chart.png)
### Average Number of Topics in Interruption Letters (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Average No of Topics in Interruption Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other Member States</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Waste Water</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Economy</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Sectors</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solid Waste</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>
# Average Number of Topics in Interruption Letters (2)

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=€150m</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;€150m</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG REGIO Decision Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=2009</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;=2010</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>112</td>
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</table>
DG REGIO Interruptions by Topic

[Bar chart showing interruptions by topic with specific percentages for each category.]
DG REGIO Interruptions by Date and Topic
DG REGIO Interruptions by Project Size and Topic
### Overview of Decided Major Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>JASPERS Assisted</th>
<th>Non JASPERS Assisted</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DG REGIO Interrupted</strong></td>
<td>138* (82.1%)</td>
<td>33 (82.5%)</td>
<td>171 (82.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not DG REGIO Interrupted</strong></td>
<td>30 (17.9%)</td>
<td>7 (17.5%)</td>
<td>37 (17.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>168 (100%)</td>
<td>40 (100%)</td>
<td>208 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of JASPERS Support and DG REGIO Interruptions

![Comparison of JASPERS Support and DG REGIO Interruptions](chart)
## JASPERS “Success Rate”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>No of Projects for which JASPERS Assisted on Topic</th>
<th>No of Projects Free from DG REGIO Interruption on Topic</th>
<th>JASPERS Success Rate on Topic (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Concept and Programming</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Design</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Cost Estimation</td>
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## Member State “Success Rate”

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<th>Project Area</th>
<th>No of Projects for which JASPERS did not Assist on Topic</th>
<th>No of these Projects free from DG REGIO Interruption on Topic</th>
<th>Member State Success Rate on Topic (%)</th>
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Qualitative Review

• Review of 20 Projects where overlap was significant

• Overlap arose because:
  – JASPERS had limited scope to advise on the topics
  – JASPERS advice ignored by the Member State
  – Difference of opinion between JASPERS and DG REGIO
Conclusions

• Timelines provide evidence of JASPERS impact

• Most common topics raised with JASPERS were:
  – Cost Benefit Analysis
  – Funding and Financial Issues
  – Project Concept & Programming
  – Environmental Issues

• Most common topics raised by DG REGIO were:
  – Environmental Issues
  – Funding and Financial Issues
  – Cost Benefit Analysis
  – Project Design
Conclusions

• Environmental & Project Design Issues were raised more frequently by DG REGIO than supported by JASPERS

• Comparison of topics provides additional evidence of JASPERS impact
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality Findings
Stages of Project Development

• Simplified model of project development

1. Identify Needs
2. Prioritise Needs
3. Pick a Solution
4. Appraise and Decide on Solution
5. Implement Solution

National Strategy, Operational Programme

Feasibility Study

Business Case, Major Project Application

Tender Documents
How JASPERS can have an Impact

- Scarce resources to spend on capital projects
- Optimise benefit to cost ratio for projects undertaken

Pick a set of projects with the best Benefit/Cost ratios

Maximise Benefit and Minimise Cost for a specific project

Secure Benefit Quickly

Potential reductions in Cost
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Findings

• Majority of JASPERS assistance comes at Project Application stage. In some cases project has been built.

• Scope to improve project quality may be limited. Choice of project often already made and design is fixed.

• However JASPERS has a positive impact on project quality in a number of ways:

• In some cases a “detailed design” phase takes place after the Project Application. JASPERS intervention can have a positive impact on this “detailed design” work.
**JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Findings**

- JASPERS review of the Project Application may lead to a return to earlier stages of project development. E.g. Suggesting a more extensive analysis of options. This in turn can lead to improvements in design.

- JASPERS review of Project Application may highlight issues that are pursued further by the Commission which eventually lead to a higher quality project.

- JASPERS horizontal assignments can improve project quality as Member State officials are able to make better decisions on:
  - Identifying needs;
  - Prioritising needs; and,
  - Designing solutions
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Findings

• JASPERS informal contacts with Member States may lead to better choice of projects to be developed.
JASPERS Impact

Reputation and Value Added of JASPERS

• In general very positive

• Some comments that quality of staff varies and there were initial deficiencies

• Indications that quality has improved overtime

• Environmental capacity has increased over the funding period

• Some concern that JASPERS will need new skills to deal with different types of project in 2014-2020 programming period
JASPERS Impact

Conclusion

• JASPERS has a positive impact on project quality

• Earlier involvement in project development would increase this impact
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality Recommendations
Involvement in Strategic Planning

• JASPERS should be involved in the development of strategies and masterplans for infrastructure

• This means helping a Member State to set its priorities and identifying the projects that are needed.

• A deeper involvement than advising the presentation of an existing set of desired projects in an “Operational Programme”
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Recommendations

Involvement in Feasibility Study

• Feasibility Study is an opportunity to shape a project to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency

• Involve JASPERS in setting Terms of Reference for Feasibility Studies

• If resources allow involve JASPERS in Steering Groups for Feasibility Studies
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Recommendations

Structured Approach to Horizontal Assignments

• Horizontal Assignments have contributed to project quality

• Danger that JASPERS reacts to Member State requests, and Member States may not be aware of potential benefits of horizontal projects

• Recommend that JASPERS identifies needs of each Member State and proposes the necessary horizontal assignments
JASPERS Impact on Project Quality: Recommendations

Allocation of Resources

• JASPERS has a set amount of resources for each Member State

• These resources are currently allocated between different assignments by agreement between Member State and JASPERS

• To maximise its impact, JASPERS should focus less on individual Project Applications

• Need for JASPERS to ensure skill base matches the focus of national programmes
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings
Specific Questions on Administrative Capacity

• What are the key lessons learned in each country from participation in the JASPERS initiative?

• What mechanisms are in place to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS staff to project applicants and Member States?

• Within Member States are projects encouraged to learn from each other?

• What factors affect or limit knowledge transfer between JASPERS and project applicants?

• What factors affect or limit knowledge transfer within Member States?
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings

In principle

• JASPERS can act to build up capacity of:
  – Beneficiaries
  – Intermediate and Implementing Bodies
  – Managing Authorities
  – Consultants operating in Member State

• Conduits to build capacity are:
  – Officials developing projects with JASPERS support
  – Officials receiving training from JASPERS
  – Officials using reference and guidance material produced by JASPERS
  – JASPERS recommending changes to institutional structures so as to make the best use of officials
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings

Issues with building capacity through projects

• Official has to be involved in several projects with JASPERS to develop real skills and knowledge

• Same official must continue to develop projects or the new knowledge and capacity is wasted

• Only possible in certain types of beneficiary:
  – Operate on a national scale
  – Responsible for numerous projects

• Intermediate Bodies. If involved in project development can become a useful repository of sector specific knowledge and capacity
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings

Issues with building capacity through projects ...

• Managing Authorities, If involved in project development with JASPERS can become a useful repository of knowledge and capacity on cross sectoral issues
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings

JASPERS mechanisms in Place to Transfer Knowledge

• Capacity building not a formal objective of JASPERS

• Unsurprisingly little planned or formal training and capacity building

• However valuable training and capacity building takes place on an ad hoc basis, largely driven by Member State requests:
  – Informal contacts between Member State officials and JASPERS staff
  – Transfer of knowledge to officials developing assisted Projects
  – Training courses organised for groups of Member State officials
  – Preparation of Manuals: successful preparation of manuals on cost benefit analysis, energy markets etc.
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Findings

Transfer of knowledge between Projects in Member States

• Depends on Structures in Member State. 3 broad possibilities:

• Centralised preparation of projects, knowledge from one project automatically applied to others.

• Projects prepared by beneficiaries but central authorities are actively involved. Central authority can identify relevant knowledge and transfer it.

• Beneficiaries take full responsibility for project preparation. No structures or incentives for projects to learn from each other.
Factors Limiting Knowledge Transfer

- Language. Use of English as JASPERS working language has a significant effect.
- Lack of clarity about role of JASPERS.
- Managing and Intermediate bodies unable to gather and disseminate knowledge.
JASPERS Impact on Administrative Capacity: Recommendations
Preliminary Recommendations 1
Recommendations to be tested with Workshop

• JASPERS to review administrative capacity capabilities and needs with Member States

• JASPERS to take more proactive role in designing and implementing training programmes for MS

• Create general handbooks for all MS based on work already done

• Managing Authorities responsible for ensuring that projects learn from each other. Establish structures in managing Authorities to act as repositories of knowledge

• JASPERS to work in more languages
Preliminary Recommendations 2

• JASPERS to advise Member States on organisational structures that learn and develop capacity

• Early, substantive involvement of JASPERS in the development of projects

• Improved Dissemination of Knowledge from JASPERS

• More descriptive Completion Notes

• MS to circulate Completion Notes internally

• JASPERS to create central repository of useful Completion Note material
Preliminary Recommendations 3

• “SMART” goals for JASPERS knowledge transfer, communicated to all stakeholders

• Early acquisition by JASPERS of relevant skills for next funding period
Wrap Up
Discussion

As specified in the Terms of Reference

• What are the key lessons learned in each country from participation in the JASPERS initiative?

• What mechanisms are in place to transfer technical knowledge from JASPERS staff to project applicants and Member States?

• Within Member States are projects encouraged to learn from each other?

• What factors affect or limit knowledge transfer between JASPERS and project applicants?

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