Ex-post evaluation of Major Projects financed in the RDI sector in the 2007-2013 programming period

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**MOTIVATION**

- RDI has become a key ingredient of the Cohesion Policy budget: in 2007-2013, EUR 86 billion were earmarked to RDI
- Operations financed include: RDI capacity-building, infrastructure and activities, entrepreneurship, ICT capacities, research and take-up, human capital for innovation
- 32 major RDI major projects were financed during 2007-2013 for a total cost of EUR 4 billion
- Project appraisal of RDI projects was hindered by the lack of sector-specific guidelines at EU level and challenge to measure socio-economic benefits of RDI
- A newly developed CBA model for RDI infrastructure currently exists

**CONCEPT**

- **RDI Major Projects**
  Assess their potential and actual contribution to regional development
- **Ex-post CBA**
  Testing exercise for a newly developed methodology

**METHODOLOGY**

**Analysis of the project portfolio**
- Review of data and documentation submitted to DG Regio in the phase of request of EU funds. Specific activities are:
  - **Project portfolio review**: description of key characteristics of projects applying for EU funding
  - **Assess the quality-at-entry** of financed operations: completeness and quality of information on which the financing decision was based
  - **Selection of case studies** based on availability of information, geographical coverage, coverage of different scientific / sectoral domains

**Evaluation of selected projects**
- Development of a number of case studies on selected projects (around 10). The objectives are:
  - To understand the formulation, identification and prioritisation process that led to the selection and financing of the project
  - To provide an overview of the actual implementation status of the project and difficulties encountered
  - To assess the net welfare effects of the project (ex-post CBA) based on updated information and historical costs, to detect possible deviations for ex-ante forecasts

**DATA**

- Application forms and technical reports, including the ex-ante CBA
- DG Regio database including the encoded information on Major projects
- 6-10 interviews with official of the EC, Jaspers, national funds coordinators
- Existing independent studies, official documents, media news
- 10 interviews per project to project and sector managers, Managing Authorities, independent experts, representatives of users and beneficiaries

**LESSONS TO BE LEARNT**

- **Typologies and main features of supported RDI infrastructures:**
  - geographical reach, strategic objective, demand, services offered, managerial arrangements, revenue generating capability, status of implementation

- **Assess the contribution of RDI infrastructures to socio-economic welfare:**
  - main expected benefits and costs, sources of risk, quality of ex-ante CBA, re-estimated impact on social welfare, reasons for deviation from ex-ante forecasts

- **Improve design and selection of RDI projects:**
  - test of the newly developed CBA model, suggestions for methodological adjustment or operational shortcuts