

**Question for written answer E-002365/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Miroslav Poche (S&D)

Subject: Binding character of JASPERS opinions on final decisions taken by the Commission

A joint initiative of the Commission, the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, JASPERS – Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions – was introduced in order to facilitate and streamline preparations for projects financed under the EU's cohesion policy by providing consultancy services during preparations for projects. Observations made by JASPERS form part of the documentation transmitted to the managing body and to the Commission.

The JASPERS initiative has previously assisted in preparing a whole host of projects. However, situations have arisen in which the opinions of JASPERS experts have been in direct conflict with the opinions of the experts consulted by the subsidy applicant, and even on occasion in conflict with the national law of the relevant Member State. This fact has brought a number of major projects – for example, the project to reconstruct and expand the wastewater treatment plant in Prague – to an unresolvable situation.

In this context, are JASPERS opinions binding upon the final decisions taken by the Commission in respect of subsidy allocations and upon the EIB's decisions to offer loans? If JASPERS opinions are not binding, will the Commission take into account the opinions of independent, third-party experts in cases where JASPERS opinions are in direct conflict with the subsidy applicant's expert opinions? If so, under what conditions?