

JASPERS 2021

**JOINT
ASSISTANCE
TO SUPPORT
PROJECTS IN
EUROPEAN
REGIONS**





JASPERS is an advisory programme run by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and funded by the EIB and the European Commission. The programme helps good investment ideas see the light of day.

With a team of more than 100 people based in Luxembourg, Brussels, Bucharest, Vienna and Warsaw, JASPERS works alongside national managing authorities that handle EU funds. Together we plan projects to build sustainable transport, reduce pollution, cut fossil fuel use, expand innovation, offer better healthcare, help prevent natural disasters, promote a circular economy and support the green transition.

JASPERS combines the policy expertise of the European Commission and the project experience of the EIB, and is available to beneficiaries of the following European grant funds:

- European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), including the Just Transition Fund (JTF);
- Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funds;
- Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funds.

The programme offers technical training and advisory services to national, regional and local authorities, as well as other beneficiaries of EU funds, to ensure that projects are carried out to the highest social and environmental standards. This allows beneficiaries to develop projects independently and thoroughly, taking into account a wide variety of factors and complexities, and increases their chances of receiving and optimising EU funding.

In 2021, JASPERS completed 102 advisory assignments, including 85 in the European Union, supporting the preparation of projects in a variety of sectors: transport; energy; innovation; digital and human capital; water and environment; climate change mitigation and adaptation; urban development; circular economy; and capacity building.

The programme also provided assistance to the European Commission in 2021, appraising projects submitted for EU grant approval and assessing recovery and resilience plans (RRP) in 14 EU countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain).

The aim of the **Recovery and Resilience Facility** is to mitigate the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic and make European economies and societies more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. The total value of RRP investments reviewed by JASPERS was €78.6 billion as of 31 December 2021.

TABLE 1: **JASPERS PERFORMANCE IN 2021**

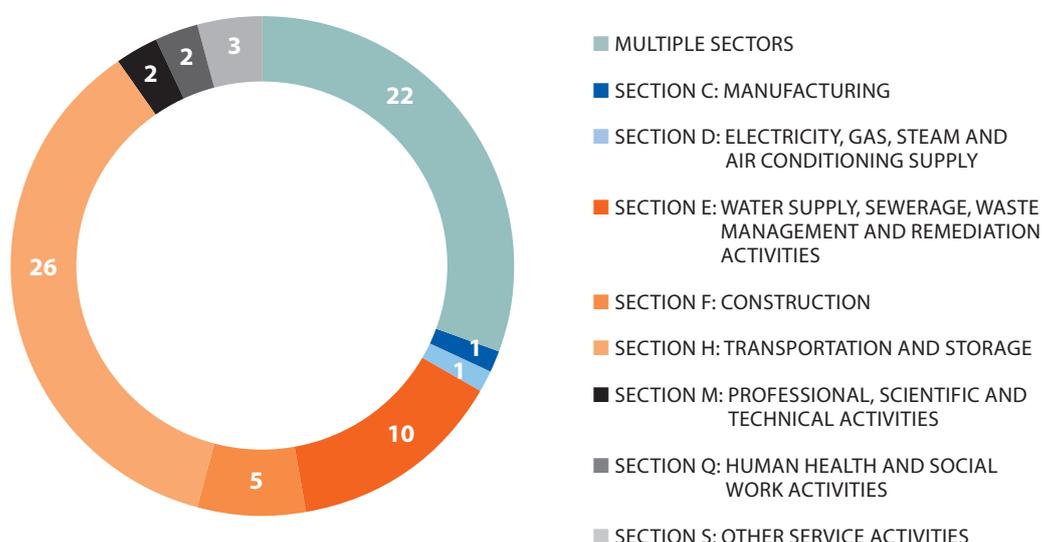
	Completed assignments	Ongoing assignments	Total	Assignments created in 2021
Appraisal	17	8	25	17
JASPERS EU ESIF	17	8	25	17
Advisory	85	410	495	116
JASPERS EU ESIF	63	268	331	73
JASPERS EU JTF	3	18	21	21
JASPERS EU CEF	6	76	82	14
IPA II	4	48	52	8
Serbia NP	9	0	9	0
Grand total	102	418	520	133

JASPERS supports the European Union’s commitment to a European future for the Western Balkans in the context of the **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II (IPA II)** mandate agreement, which covers all IPA countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) for the period 2016-2020, and the Serbia National Programme (Serbia NP) agreement for the period 2015-2022. After the end of the IPA II mandate on 31 December 2020, the European Commission and the EIB signed a new JASPERS IPA II 2020 agreement for the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Independence Declaration.

Demand for JASPERS support from EU Member States is high. During 2021, JASPERS created 133 new assignments to support projects and initiatives to be finalised and implemented in the upcoming years. As in previous years, JASPERS' counterparts viewed the programme favourably, with 93% giving it a positive assessment in 2021.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION BY SECTOR OF THE 72 ADVISORY ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETED BY JASPERS IN 2021 IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



In 2021, the European Commission approved financial contributions to 26 projects appraised by JASPERS or supported by it at the preparation stage, with total project costs of €7.5 billion and EU grant support worth €4 billion.



RENEWED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM JASPERS' PARTNERS

In 2021, the European Commission and the European Investment Bank committed to financing JASPERS over several years. JASPERS' support to beneficiary countries — EU Member States and Western Balkan candidate countries for EU accession — is needed more than ever in light of the impact of recent conflicts on the global economy, uncertainties linked to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-growing challenges of climate change adaptation and the transition to a carbon-neutral economy.

In December 2021, the European Commission and the EIB signed a new contribution agreement for 2022-2027, detailing JASPERS' expected budget until 2024 and providing total yearly financial support of around €40 million.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations ensured continued support in 2021 for JASPERS' activities in countries benefiting from Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funds, with the backing of a specific grant agreement of €2.3 million.

A part of the InvestEU Advisory Hub

As from 2022, **JASPERS will be embedded in the InvestEU Advisory Hub**, with dedicated financing, governance and supervision mechanisms from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport. The InvestEU programme is a pillar of Europe's largest ever stimulus package to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and help build a greener, more digital and resilient economy. It can also help address new economic challenges linked to global security events.

2021 HIGHLIGHTS

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE IN ANDALUSIA

In 2021, **JASPERS provided comprehensive guidance to Andalusia's regional government on addressing challenges posed by climate change**, notably in terms of mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions of transport systems) and adaptation (making transport systems more resilient).

JASPERS helped Andalusia define specific climate change-related analyses, consequent objectives and indicators and methods to calculate them, based on robust data collection and traffic modelling, among others.

Measures were then defined based on the objectives and indicators related to climate change and other aspects of sustainability (economic, financial, environmental and technical, including operation and maintenance).

Some of the key measures resulting from these studies were the promotion of soft transport modes, such as walking and cycling, and public transport usage, by making these more practicable and affordable, as well as the general electrification of transport. JASPERS also proposed an integrated approach to spatial land-use development, necessary for reaching emission reduction goals.

In addition, JASPERS continues to promote the inclusion of gender equality considerations in the development of transport strategies, aimed at making transport systems more responsive to the specific needs of different groups.

WIDE ASSISTANCE TO EUROPEAN URBAN PROJECTS

JASPERS supported several urban projects throughout Europe, including:

- **A bus rapid transit network in Cayenne, French Guiana.** The project vastly improves the transport system of the Cayenne conurbation in the overseas department of French Guiana, France.
- **Completion of Naples Metro Line 6.** The project, which received a €237.87 million grant, covers the line's eastward extension, from the terminus at Mergellina into the city centre. The project is expected to lead to a reduction in the use of private cars in favour of rail-based transport services, benefiting road safety and the environment.
- **The Kraków Metropolis Development Plan 2030.** The plan sets the framework for implementing smart city integrated projects in areas such as spatial planning, urban mobility, low-carbon economy, energy efficiency, social inclusion, creation and integration of databases, smart governance and urban revitalisation.
- **A new tramway linking Seville's Metro with Alcalá de Guadaíra, Spain.** The new line will connect Alcalá de Guadaíra, a city with over 75 000 inhabitants, to Universidad Pablo de Olavide in Seville.
- **A major mobility and transport overhaul plan for Cluj, Romania.** Cluj-Napoca, Romania's second largest city, secured €166.1 million in EU financing for 14 projects under the 2014-2020 Regional Operational Programme. Among others, the city plans to review functional requirements for rail renewal projects, lay the groundwork for improving the rapid transit system in the metropolitan area and review the metropolitan bypass road project.
- **Modernisation of tram infrastructure in Osijek, Croatia.** The project plans to modernise a 9.5 km section of the existing tram line and relocate and modernise 23 tram stops, including adaptation to people with disabilities, with the aim of increasing the number of tram users.



ENSURING A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO GREEN TRANSPORT

JASPERS supported an initiative in Poland to develop and deploy **innovative recycling technologies for lithium-ion batteries**, with recovery of strategic metals. The project aims to create a European leader in recycling of lithium-ion batteries and other materials used in e-mobility.

JASPERS provided technical assistance to the project during its preparation and in the application for ESIF grants. The project is expected to reinforce the European Union's competitiveness in the areas of battery recycling and e-mobility and help reduce the continent's carbon footprint.

SMART WATER MANAGEMENT FOR A GREENER FUTURE

The digital transformation of water utilities remains uneven among EU Member States, despite an abundance of promising smart water tools and available funding possibilities.

As part of its Networking Platform programme of knowledge-sharing activities in cooperation with the European Commission, JASPERS held a workshop, "**Digitalisation in the European Water Sector — Policy Frameworks and Smart Water Tools**," on 28 October 2021. The **workshop** was attended by some 120 officials from water utilities, managing authorities and relevant ministries in the European Union, and addressed some fundamental issues related to smart water, such as:

- Smart technologies that have yielded the best results in reducing water loss, increasing energy efficiency and optimising investments;
- The potential for further deployment;
- Challenges of planning and integration of these technologies;
- How digitalisation fits into the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal, the EU Cohesion Policy and the European Union's environmental legislation.

ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING THE JUST TRANSITION FUND

JASPERS supports the activities of the European Commission's Just Transition Fund (JTF), which assists EU Member States with the economic diversification and reconversion of territories expected to be negatively impacted by the green transition. JASPERS helps the regions develop, manage and prioritise projects, tailoring the assignments to the specific needs of each region.

In 2021, JASPERS completed three assignments in the Czech Republic and supported 19 projects in five Member States (Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Greece). The programme also reviewed and provided feedback for over 100 project proposals in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, and performed eligibility screening of over 900 project ideas in Romania. Discussions have begun for support for JTF regions in Bulgaria.

The transition issues targeted by these assignments are: zero emissions; environment and circular economy; integrated and high-quality living space; active citizens; productive investments in large companies with more than 250 employees and in small and medium-sized businesses; startups; clean energy; upskilling; regeneration of brownfield sites; business development and job creation; social and health.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' CAPACITY

In 2021, JASPERS continued supporting the European Commission in the preparation of technical documents and collection of good practices for the 2021-2027 programming period. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all capacity-building activities in 2021 were held online. The JASPERS Networking Platform organised nine webinars:

- **Cohesion Policy investment in digital education: The experience of e-schools in Croatia**, a webinar by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Croatian authorities, with the cooperation of JASPERS, held on 23 February 2021;
- A multi-country webinar focusing on the **application of the Habitats Directive requirements in project preparation**, organised in cooperation with the urban policy and the environment directorates, held on 18 March;

- Webinars for Croatian managing authorities and intermediate bodies on the Water Framework Directive's project preparation requirements, based on JASPERS' checklist developed in 2018 in cooperation with the environment directorate, held on 25 March and 14 April;
- [Climate Change Mitigation through Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans](#), a multi-country webinar organised in cooperation with the Directorates-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Climate Action, and Mobility and Transport, held on 15 September;
- A joint virtual workshop by JASPERS and the urban policy directorate, as part of the [2021 European Week of Regions and Cities](#), on 15 years of experience promoting the best use of EU funds and JASPERS' role in 2021-2027, held on 12 October;
- [Digitalisation in the European Water Sector](#), a multi-country webinar organised in cooperation with the urban policy and environment directorates, held on 28 October;
- A webinar on the application of the [Habitats Directive and the importance of site-specific conservation objectives](#), held on 3 December;
- A multi-country webinar on [data management in transport](#), organised in cooperation with the urban policy and the mobility and transport directorates, held on 6 December;
- A webinar organised in cooperation with the urban policy directorate to present the approach for [economic appraisal of projects in 2021-2027](#), held on 15 December.

These virtual workshops were attended by more than 1 300 participants from EU Member States and pre-accession countries, with 65% of participants attending JASPERS Networking Platform activities for the first time in 2021.

JASPERS helped finalise the [European Commission's technical guidance on sustainability proofing for the InvestEU Fund](#), published in April 2021, in close cooperation with the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs and several other directorates-general, notably for climate, environment and employment.

Lastly, JASPERS helped complete the [European Commission's technical guidance on the climate proofing of infrastructure in the period 2021-2027](#), published in July, as well as the new [Economic Appraisal Vademecum](#), published in September in close cooperation with the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy.

JASPERS 2021 STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

JASPERS held its first-ever online stakeholders meeting on 9-10 November. The event attracted close to 250 participants from 33 countries, mostly from Member States and managing authorities collaborating with the programme.

The meeting was an opportunity for EU Member States' authorities, the European Commission and the EIB to share their experiences, needs and expectations. Participants widely acknowledged JASPERS' fundamental role in getting projects off the ground and helping the European Union turn its ambitious climate, social and economic agendas into a tangible and just reality.

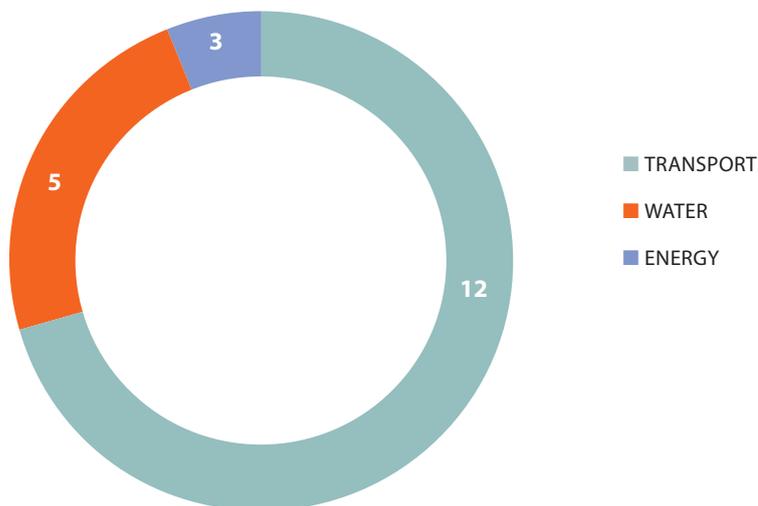
The first day was dedicated to new challenges for 2021-2027 and JASPERS' support for the successful delivery of projects, with testimonials from beneficiaries from Romania, Spain and Croatia.

On the second day, participants were able to choose between parallel sessions organised on each of the five EU Cohesion Policy objectives, as well as on JASPERS' support outside the European Union, particularly in the Western Balkans, under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. Experts and beneficiaries were able to share best practices in project preparation and innovative investments.

APPRAISAL ACTIVITY IN 2021

JASPERS carries out independent project quality reviews on behalf of Member States, preparing the ground for the European Commission's decisions on granting funds. In 2021, the programme completed appraisals for 17 projects and reappraised two projects after they had been modified. Transport projects remained the dominant sector. A further eight appraisal assignments, still ongoing as of 31 December 2021, were carried over into 2022.

FIGURE 2: **APPRAISAL ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETED BY JASPERS IN 2021 BY SECTOR**



STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR THE FUTURE

JASPERS will continue to work with national authorities under its 2021-2027 contribution agreement, assisting them in identifying potential sustainable projects and implementing them in accordance with EU requirements.

Assistance will focus particularly on sustainable projects that deliver significant socioeconomic benefits for the population, address market failures or sub-optimal investment situations and deliver results contributing to regional development.



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