

JASPERS: HELPING TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES





Municipality of Novo Mesto Urban
Regeneration Programme - Slovenia.

THE JOINT ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT PROJECTS IN EUROPEAN REGIONS (JASPERS) ADVISES ON STRATEGIES, PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS FOR INVESTMENTS SUPPORTED BY EUROPEAN GRANT FUNDS, WITH THE AIM OF PROMOTING GROWTH AND PAVING THE WAY TO A SMARTER, GREENER AND MORE CONNECTED EUROPE.

Think of an emergency hospital or a specialised healthcare centre. Think of ultrafast broadband projects, allowing households and businesses to access high-capacity networks crucial for telework and distance learning. Think of a climate-resilient city development based on smart and green technologies. Think of an offshore floating wind farm connected to a country's national grid, increasing the energy supply produced by renewable sources. Think of replacing diesel trains with environmentally friendly ones, or modernising a railway line, increasing passengers' safety and comfort while reducing travel times. Think of water treatment plants, connecting residents to the water supply and wastewater collection pipes. Think of protection against flood and disaster risks.

These are just a few examples of the types of projects where JASPERS can help with its expertise, bringing major improvements to people's lives.



A Fânzeres

MP
061

 **PERIGO!**
PROIBIDO VALER
PENSAMENTO
NO EXTERIOR.

Metro do porto - Portugal.

WHAT IS JASPERS?

JASPERS is a partnership between the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB). Combined in JASPERS, the policy expertise of the Commission and the project experience of the EIB are freely available for beneficiaries of the following European grant funds:

- **European Structural and Investment Funds**, under JASPERS' main mandate from the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). Europe needs cohesion more than ever to respond to emergencies, promote economic recovery and growth, and build an equitable future for all. In this context, JASPERS also now assists in deploying the Just Transition Fund and contributes to the URBIS initiative (see p. 11).
- **Connecting Europe Facility** (CEF) funds, under the mandate from the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE). These funds support sustainable transport projects across the European Union, with the principal objective of completing the core Trans-European Transport Network and its corridors by 2030.
- **Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance**, under mandates mainly from the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), covering all Pre-Accession Countries. The aim is to help develop infrastructure projects that meet the requirements for EU grant support, to assist in preparing sectoral strategies and to contribute to capacity strengthening.

In 2019, **JASPERS was awarded with a Recognised for Excellence certificate by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM).**



**Between 2006
and 2020, JASPERS
supported 2 245
projects, with an
estimated investment
cost of
€275.2 billion**



Impact assessment of economic instruments on waste recycled or recovered from landfills - Romania.

WHAT CAN JASPERS DO FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND PROJECT PROMOTERS?

- We support promoters from strategic planning to project preparation and implementation (**advisory support in project preparation**).
- We support strengthening capacity and transferring knowledge about project planning and preparation, climate and environmental proofing of investments, projects' compliance with EU legislation, and any related needs (**capacity-building support**).
- We carry out an independent quality review of projects on behalf of Member States, thus preparing the ground for the European Commission's decision (**independent project-appraisal support**).

ADVISORY SUPPORT IN PROJECT PREPARATION

Since 2006, JASPERS' international, multidisciplinary expert teams have been collaborating with public authorities and project promoters responsible for the investments delivering Europe's cohesion policy.

JASPERS' experts, based in Luxembourg, Brussels, Bucharest, Sofia, Vienna and Warsaw, work with local authorities, project developers and EU funds' managing authorities. **We help them to prepare strategies and sustainable projects, and to build their own capabilities in planning, designing, contracting and delivering in a vast range of sectors and topics**, including:

- circular economy
- energy efficiency
- carbon neutrality
- smart cities
- applied research and innovation
- healthcare systems
- connectivity and sustainable mobility
- affordable water and sanitation services
- flood and disaster risk management
- protecting biodiversity

We focus on the shift to climate-neutral and environment-friendly urban planning and innovation, and on projects integrating transport, environment, energy, health, education and information technology dimensions.

We also help public administrations to get higher quality outputs from consultants preparing masterplans, feasibility studies and projects.

TYPES OF JASPERS SUPPORT IN PROJECT PREPARATION

Strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support in developing strategies in a sector or subsector at national or local level, for example national transport strategy, urban mobility plans, flood and disaster risk management plans, or regional and urban climate adaptation, which underpin the project pipeline for EU funding • Support in formulating strategies, such as smart specialisation and urban strategic frameworks • Identification of project pipelines and preparation of action plans
Project development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of terms of reference, concept studies, methodological approaches, feasibility studies, cost–benefit analyses, environmental impact assessments, and grant application documents • Identification of areas for improvement • Ensure consistency with EU requirements and best practices • Recommendations to beneficiaries, their consultants and EU funds’ managing authorities
Horizontal tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of and advice on issues related to a number of projects, a sector, or a country • Identification and removal of barriers to project preparation or future implementation, such as cost-benefit analysis, option analysis, environmental or state aid regulation • Methodological papers and guidelines
Implementation support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selective support during preparation of the works tender, support for the setup of project implementation units, or targeted support on specific project implementation issues, such as procurement strategies

CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT

Capacity building is a cornerstone element in the relationship between JASPERS and its beneficiaries, and the result of JASPERS’ close interaction with public authorities and project managers.

The range of delivery of JASPERS’ capacity-building support includes dedicated in-person or virtual training, workshops, knowledge-sharing and networking activities, train-the-trainer programmes (in partnership with the requesting authorities), technical guidance papers and checklists, and on-the-job training.

JASPERS regularly offers dedicated activities for beneficiaries through its networking platform at www.jaspersnetwork.org to consolidate lessons learnt, disseminate knowledge and support capacity strengthening on cross-sectoral issues such as environment, cost-benefit analysis and economic appraisal, climate change and state aid. The platform hosts a wealth of content, including training materials, workshop proceedings and working papers.

INDEPENDENT PROJECT-APPRAISAL SUPPORT

If requested by beneficiary countries, **JASPERS can perform independent quality reviews to assist authorities in the decision-making process** and help them benefit from the European Commission's streamlined grant approval procedure.

JASPERS continues to refine its approach to appraising investments, aiming to ensure that evaluation of projects is harmonised and consistent across Member States and sectors. The engagement of our experts in the appraisal process has substantially reduced the average time taken by the Commission to process major project approvals.

How does JASPERS work?

JASPERS operates based on action plans prepared through cooperation with the beneficiary country and the European Commission. These plans list the investment projects that JASPERS may assist through individual assignments.

A managing authority acts as the central coordinator for each country and requests assistance from JASPERS. Our experts work in close cooperation with the beneficiary, managing authority and relevant intermediate bodies. Member States or Enlargement Countries remain the owners of the projects.

The list of managing authorities is available at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/

JASPERS' SUPPORT ACROSS TWO PROGRAMMING PERIODS

Since its creation in 2006, JASPERS has provided support across two programming periods (2007–2013 and 2014–2020). The number of beneficiaries and the scope of assistance have steadily increased.

Between 2006 and 2020, JASPERS supported 2 245 projects, with an estimated investment cost of €275.2 billion, and the European Commission approved 939 JASPERS-assisted major projects across all mandates, with a total investment cost of €218.1 billion and a grant amount of €117.9 billion.



Modernisation of the Wrocław
City Floodway System - Poland.

THE ROAD AHEAD

In the 2021–2027 programming period, JASPERS will extend its support for Member States through the DG REGIO mandate. Equally, it will support pre-accession and Eastern Neighbourhood countries through mandates with DG NEAR. In addition, JASPERS will scale up assistance to transport projects under the CEF mandate.

JASPERS will contribute to URBIS, a partnership between the European Commission and the EIB. URBIS offers tailor-made technical and financial advice to urban authorities and both public and private entities to accelerate and unlock urban investment projects, programmes and platforms.

JASPERS' advisory function will continue to cover all aspects of project development, horizontal issues relevant to more than one project or country, and other project-related matters such as implementation support and capacity building. JASPERS will cooperate with national authorities to assist them in producing project proposals that meet EU requirements, and in identifying potential projects for assistance.

In the 2021-27 programming period, JASPERS' advisory budget will come from **different funding streams: the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, the Just Transition Fund, CEF and IPA.**

The Just Transition Fund is a key element of the European Green Deal. It aims to alleviate the social and economic costs of Europe's transition towards a climate-neutral economy by 2050, through a wide range of activities directed mainly at diversifying economic activities and helping people adapt to a changing labour market.

Capacity building will be a key success factor for the Just Transition Fund, as less experienced regional authorities will connect with first-time beneficiaries who also have limited experience of project preparation.

With over a decade of experience in designing and delivering capacity building to managing authorities and beneficiaries, JASPERS is well positioned to help meet the renewed challenges of the 2021–2027 programming period and support projects that improve people's lives.

Supporting public authorities in the transition to an environmentally friendly and climate-neutral society is of strategic importance for JASPERS.

Werner Schmidt,
Head of JASPERS



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