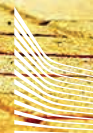


# **JASPERS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNUAL BROCHURE 2022**

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



## **JASPERS in the European Union**

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**JASPERS supported  
the upgrade of Athens  
Metro Line 1  
to reduce congestion  
and increase  
sustainable mobility**

# JASPERS IN A NUTSHELL

**JASPERS, the Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions, is an advisory programme run by the European Investment Bank (EIB) and funded by the European Commission and the EIB.**


We work with national Managing Authorities that handle EU funds and project promoters from all sectors. Together we prepare 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.

Within the European Union, JASPERS combines the policy expertise of the European Commission and the project experience of the EIB. The programme is available to beneficiaries of the following EU grant funds: European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), including the Just Transition Fund (JTF), and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) funds.

JASPERS offers project advice and technical training 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 enables beneficiaries to develop projects independently and thoroughly, taking into account a wide variety of factors and complexities, and increases their chances of receiving and deploying EU funding.

Since 2022, JASPERS has been 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, the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport, and the EIB. The InvestEU programme is a pillar of the European Union's economic support package, with the objective of helping to build a greener, more digital and more resilient economy. It can also help address new economic challenges linked to global security events.

In 2022, the JASPERS team was composed of 120 people — 21 in Bucharest, 15 in Brussels, 35 in Luxembourg, two in Sofia, 29 in Vienna and 18 in Warsaw.



**Helping to prepare  
integrated water projects  
throughout Bulgaria,  
as in Plovdiv,  
the country's  
second largest city**

# SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES IN 2022

## Working towards a climate-driven programming period

In 2022, JASPERS continued working on the transition of some projects from the 2014-2020 EU budgetary programming period to the 2021-2027 period. As most of the projects we support have an infrastructure element as well as a societal change aspect to them, they are long-term undertakings and sometimes need to be carried over between programming periods.

In recent years, the task of transitioning projects to the new programming period has been complicated by time delays and higher construction costs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and other factors. That is why we have supported many JASPERS beneficiaries in phasing their projects into the 2021-2027 programming period, or modifying them in the light of scope changes or cost increases.

This may be the case for around 100 Major Projects approved under the previous programming period. These are large-scale infrastructure projects of strategic importance for the European Union, with a total eligible cost exceeding €50 million, for which the European Commission had a dedicated approval line in the last programming period. While Major Projects no longer exist under the current programming period, JASPERS has been actively working with the Managing Authorities to prepare for the wave of phasing and modifications expected in 2023 needed to transition from one programming period to the next.

In 2022, JASPERS also helped build momentum for the current 2021-2027 programming period by giving our beneficiaries additional upstream, horizontal and capacity building support to ensure that local, regional and national plans are aligned with EU criteria and ambitions. This shift was complemented throughout 2022 by the negotiation of Country Work Programmes between the EU Member States, the European Commission and JASPERS, outlining the scope of JASPERS activities planned in each Member State.

Finally, we worked on an unusually high number of assignments early in the programming period, which helped kick-start project preparation and guidance documentation processes, with a view to enabling the funds to be used on schedule. In all areas of our activity, the shift towards climate-driven projects is already clear, in line with the European Commission and the EIB's main priority.

# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

In 2022, JASPERS worked on 491 advisory assignments in the European Union. In the course of the year, 35 assignments were closed and 43 completed, while 413 were still ongoing as of 31 December. This is proof of the high demand for JASPERS support. The number of assignments created in 2022 (137) rose slightly compared to 2021 (135). Among all active assignments at the end of 2022, 60% supported projects belonging to the 2021-2027 programming period, and the focus on climate-driven assignments has increased significantly.

JASPERS also provided assistance to the European Commission, appraising 25 projects submitted for EU grant approval in 2022. This included 16 new projects, re-appraisal of five projects, and four modifications of Major Projects that had already received Commission approval.

Finally, the portfolio of JASPERS capacity building and horizontal activities within its Knowledge Platform included 23 assignments on 31 December 2022.

TABLE 1: **DISTRIBUTION OF JASPERS ADVISORY ASSIGNMENTS ONGOING AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022 BY PROGRAMMING PERIOD AND ASSIGNMENT TYPE — EU MANDATE**

Programming period	Assignment type	Assignments ongoing
2014 – 2020	Capacity building	10
	Horizontal/Strategy support	31
	Project support	97
	<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>
2021 – 2027	Capacity building	23
	Horizontal/Strategy support	117
	Project support	135
	<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>All periods</b>	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>413</b>

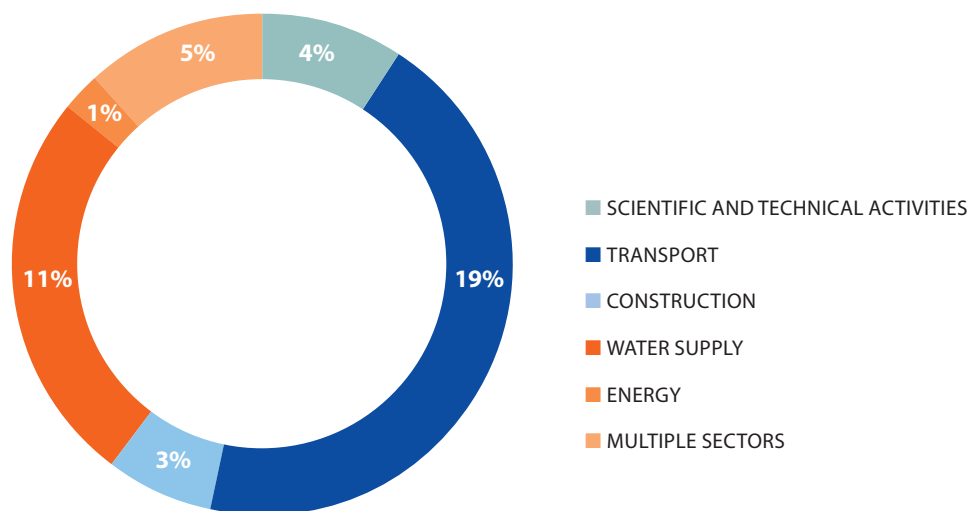


Once again, Romania (132 assignments/€53.6 billion) and Poland (67 assignments/€13 billion) were the top two beneficiary countries, in terms of both number of assignments and total project investment cost. The third-largest beneficiary was Greece (54 assignments/€8 billion).

The top three sectors of activity were transport (51%), water and wastewater (24%) and multi-sector assignments (16%), similarly to 2021.

Finally, customer satisfaction with JASPERS intervention, as measured by surveys at the end of each assignment, remained very high — in 2022, 88% of beneficiaries were satisfied or very satisfied.

FIGURE 1: **DISTRIBUTION OF ADVISORY ASSIGNMENTS (43) COMPLETED BY JASPERS IN 2022**





**The European Commission has entrusted JASPERS with the development of a pre-feasibility study for a new railway corridor connecting Poland, Ukraine, Romania and Moldova.**

# ADVISING

**Advising our local partners and beneficiaries to help turn European ambition and funding into concrete local projects**

**From transport to water, waste management to the circular economy, and new technologies to greener cities, here are a few of the projects that JASPERS helped make possible in 2022.**

## CASE STUDIES

### AN EXCEPTIONAL RAIL STUDY IN UKRAINE

The European Commission has entrusted JASPERS with developing a pre-feasibility study for a new railway corridor connecting Poland, Ukraine, Romania and Moldova.

European railways have a width (the technical term is “gauge”) of 1 435 mm, while Russian tracks are 1 520 mm wide. Currently, Moldova and Ukraine’s rail systems are built entirely to Russian standards. Creating a railway system compatible with European standards in these countries would be a first.

JASPERS experts are now working with the transport authorities of the four countries. Together, they are developing and assessing operational alternatives in terms of infrastructure: gauge, siding requirements, power supply systems, signalling, multimodal and transshipment terminals, logistics centres, rolling stock, maintenance requirements, customs operations, passport controls and other inspections.

The pre-feasibility study complements other short-term measures to improve connectivity at border crossings. In the longer term, it will provide the strategic framework to integrate Moldova and Ukraine into the European transport network while increasing the environmental resilience of their railway systems.

## **HELPING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN PORTUGAL BECOME CLIMATE RESILIENT**

JASPERS has been advising Infraestruturas de Portugal, the state-owned company managing Portuguese rail and road infrastructure, on the preparation of their climate change resilience plan.

The first phase of the plan focuses on assessing current and future climate change vulnerabilities and risks for road, rail and telecoms networks, considering different climate scenarios and time horizons. It started with an initial assessment of climate-related incidents on transport networks, and now includes detailed climate risk assessment mapping. The second phase will focus on identifying appropriate climate change adaptation measures, including an implementation and monitoring plan as well as an analysis of associated financing needs.

## **SUPPORTING THE UPGRADE OF ATHENS METRO LINE 1**

Athens Metro Line 1 is the oldest urban metropolitan rail line in operation in the greater Athens region. It links the port of Piraeus, the city centre of Athens and the northern suburbs of Kifissia. The investment proposal comprised a deep refurbishment of some of the existing rolling stock, as well as the upgrade of two traction power substations to facilitate the return of braking energy to the power grid.

JASPERS helped to draft the feasibility study, review the procurement documentation to allocate risks, and finalise the public service contract to ensure alignment with rules on state aid, specifically Regulation 1370/2007. The EU grant of €80 million spans two programming periods, 2014-2020 and 2021-2027.

Improving the metro line's efficiency and reliability should attract passengers back onto it after a continuous decline since 2014. This will reduce congestion and increase sustainable mobility and accessibility. The investment will also reduce energy consumption through more efficient traction, and by feeding braking energy back into the electrical grid — contributing further to climate change mitigation through emissions reduction.

## **COMBINING ADVICE AND CAPACITY BUILDING TO DEPLOY REGIONAL WATER PROJECTS IN BULGARIA**

The Bulgarian authorities are in the process of preparing regional integrated water projects for the entire country. JASPERS has now been by their side for more than a decade, assisting with regional project preparation and the underlying water sector reform. The first wave of 12 projects was prepared in the 2014-2020 period, and JASPERS helped deploy the second wave of six regional projects in 2022. These will receive European Commission funding under the 2021-2027 programming period.

Our team of water experts advised on the project preparation itself, but also developed a capacity building and knowledge transfer programme tailored to the needs of the authorities, the water operators and their consultants. JASPERS combined on-the-job training with workshops and training on technical and engineering matters, cost-benefit analysis and environmental and climate change requirements. With this programme, the third wave of projects planned in the coming years is expected to progress more quickly and smoothly.

## **MAKING THE MOST OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO REDUCE CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS**

Whether in healthcare, education or smart cities development, JASPERS has been building sustainability into innovative projects to achieve climate and social impacts. As a result, most assignments have led to substantial decreases of future CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the long term. Two projects were particularly representative of this trend in 2022.

The first is the intervention by JASPERS to advise the Comunidad de Madrid, one of the 17 regions of Spain, in preparing the extension of the University Hospital 12 Octubre. This has led to a significant decrease in the project's projected greenhouse gas emissions. The resulting new design is helping to save an estimated 12 900 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. The project includes constructing and equipping a new building for the technical block and hospitalisation units of the general hospital, and for all the services of the existing maternity and children's hospital.

The second example is JASPERS support for the Regional Government of Andalusia, which is helping to bring the energy consumption of the Costa del Sol Hospital in Marbella (Málaga) down to 197.28 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year — below the national maximum for that area and

building type (321.47 KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year). This is over a 60% reduction versus a scenario without the project. The project quality support provided by JASPERS is designed to increase the capacity, operating safety and efficiency of the works and building.

## **FACILITATING GREECE'S TRANSITION FROM A LINEAR TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

The Greek authorities turned to JASPERS in 2019 for assistance in their application for grant funding of the Peloponnese public-private partnership solid waste project. By enabling it to meet EU circular economy targets, JASPERS helped it to become more than a linear waste management project. What's more, this process allowed the authorities to realise that they should similarly re-engineer 12 other integrated waste management projects in development at the time.

In close coordination with the Greek authorities, JASPERS prepared a capacity building initiative, including drafting and sharing recommendations on conceptual project design and preparation, developing a new waste treatment facility concept — the Recovery and Recycling Facility — and delivering a workshop tailored to the needs of Greece's municipal and regional waste management authorities.

Significant work remains to be done to achieve circularity in solid waste management in Greece. Meeting the European Union's ambitious targets (at least 65% recycling and no more than 10% landfilling by 2035) will require both a shift in the way projects are conceived and executed, and appropriate funding solutions. Recognising the pivotal role of JASPERS in both areas, the Greek authorities have since requested our assistance in a further seven assignments: five projects involving recovery and recycling facilities with incorporated consideration for separate waste collection schemes, and two additional horizontal assignments targeting a variety of capacity building aspects.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## **Strengthening the technical capacity of public administrations to work with European Union regulations and methodologies and prepare better projects**

In 2022, **JASPERS Knowledge Platform** deployed both country-specific training programmes and capacity building assignments, as well as a comprehensive rolling programme of multi-country capacity building and cross-sectoral activities.

At country level, we notably supported Croatia in preparing their national project assessment system for the 2021-2027 period, and worked with Greece, Poland, Romania and Slovenia to develop national climate proofing guidelines in line with official European Commission guidance.

At multi-country level, JASPERS Knowledge Platform organised six widely attended webinars, including:

- Two **webinars on bus fleet decarbonisation**, sharing information on the concepts and investments needed to decarbonise bus fleets in urban areas, and on how to manage the operational and financial risks of the shift towards electric buses, organised in cooperation with the Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport.
- A **webinar on the requirements of the Water Framework Directive in project preparation**, presenting the updated JASPERS Water Framework Directive checklist developed in cooperation with the Commission's Directorate-General for Environment and DG REGIO.
- A joint JASPERS-DG REGIO virtual workshop as part of the 2022 European Week of Regions and Cities presenting **how JASPERS supports its counterparts in their journey through the Green Transition in 2021-2027**.

# APPRAISAL

## Project quality assessment paving the way to grant approval

JASPERS carries out independent project quality reviews that lay the groundwork for a Commission decision to grant funds. We carried out 25 such appraisals in 2022.

FIGURE 2: **APPRAISAL ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETED BY JASPERS IN 2022 BY COUNTRY**

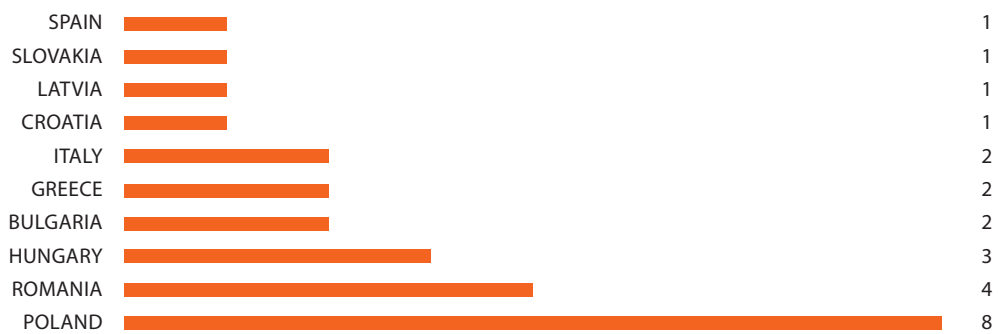
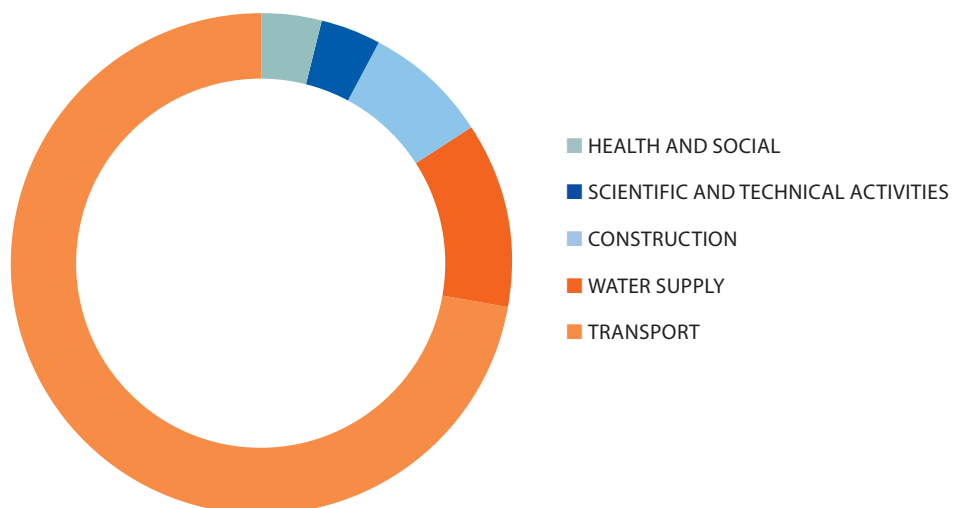


FIGURE 3: **APPRAISAL ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETED BY JASPERS IN 2022 BY SECTOR**





# MODERNISING THE SERBIAN-BULGARIAN RAILWAY CORRIDOR

For this project, the European Commission asked JASPERS to write a post-submission appraisal report to be submitted directly to DG REGIO. The project had previously received JASPERS advisory support.

The project entails upgrading 33.34 km of rail network as part of an overall investment programme to modernise the entire corridor from the Bulgarian capital of Sofia to the Serbian border. This corridor belongs to the core network of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). The works to be done include modernising the tracks, with a significant realignment of the existing single-track line Voluyak–Petarch–Aldomirovtsi East–Dragoman, and building a second track on the section Voluyak–Petarch–Aldomirovtsi East. Thanks to JASPERS assistance, the issues identified were swiftly rectified, leading to a positive funding decision by the European Commission.



# JASPERS STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Energy, migration and climate were at the heart of discussions at the JASPERS stakeholders meeting, which took place in Brussels in October 2022. In person and online, over 200 participants attended from 15 countries, with the majority from Member States working with JASPERS, as well as Managing Authorities.

At the meeting, Member States, pre-accession countries, the European Commission and the EIB shared their experiences, needs and expectations. This is particularly important at the beginning of a new programming period — a point marked by an abundance of available funding and a need for mature, high-quality projects through which Member States and regions can absorb these funds.

Present and future challenges addressed by panellists and participants included:

- Dealing with cost increases in ongoing projects and obtaining JASPERS implementation support
- The need for capacity building at all levels of administration
- Climate change resilience (adaptation) and neutrality (mitigation)
- Implementation of Do No Significant Harm principles
- Incorporating innovation and digitalisation in investments
- How JASPERS can support cities
- The overlap between the end of 2014-2020 and start of 2021-2027 programming periods — closure and the new project pipeline

A summary of the JASPERS stakeholders meeting is available on the [events webpage](#).

## A STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR THE FUTURE

The beginning of the new programming period has clearly demonstrated the high demand for JASPERS advice, even with projects approved at Member State level rather than directly by the European Commission. JASPERS will continue to be a strategic partner for Managing Authorities, giving them the confidence to raise their projects to the highest standards, and supporting them in preparing and implementing sound investments that contribute to cohesion in the European Union.



