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JASPERS Networking Platform

Second Webinar on

State aid for JTF Projects in the 2021-2027 Period

Date: **28th May 2024, from 13:00 to 16:30 CET**

Location: **Virtual meeting - WebEx Events**

The JASPERS Networking Platform was created to complement JASPERS project advisory operations by implementing knowledge sharing and capacity building activities, as well as fostering dissemination of good practices and exchange of experiences among all EU member states, pre-accession countries and other JASPERS stakeholders.

More information is available at https://jaspers.eib.org/knowledge/index

Description of the Webinar

The Just Transition Fund (JTF) is a new instrument of the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, introduced as the first pillar of the Just Transition Mechanism. The Commission set up the Just Transition Mechanism to support the achievement of the European Green Deal's objective of EU climate-neutrality by 2050.

The JTF supports the territories most affected by the transition towards climate neutrality to avoid regional inequalities growing, in line with EU cohesion policy's aim to reduce regional disparities and to address structural changes in the EU.

The JTF will bring wide-ranging benefits. Focusing on economic diversification and reskilling, the JTF aims to support regions facing serious socio-economic challenges due to the transition process. Regions that are heavily reliant on fossil fuels or greenhouse gas-intensive industrial activities will need to phase out certain activities and restructure their industries, while also protecting the environment and providing job and re-skilling opportunities to workers and their families.

State aid rules are essential to help avoid distortions of competition when Member States intervene in support of certain undertakings. Compliance with State aid rules is key to further improving the functioning of the Single market and must go hand in hand with a strong focus on stimulus and growth.

One of the main objectives of the JTF is to develop new or existing economic activities with the aim of providing alternative sources of income in areas in transition which are, or will be, affected by the need to decarbonise the energy generation sector or energy-intensive industries.

JTF resources are considered State resources and their use can provide recipient undertakings with an advantage on a selective basis, for example specific companies or industry sectors, or companies located in specific regions. As a result, competition may be distorted, and the intervention may affect trade between Member States. In this context JTF projects are subject to State aid assessment.

Understanding the available tools for State aid assessment of JTF projects is crucial for the timely implementation of the projects.

In the framework of the 2021-27 mandate with DG REGIO and DG MOVE, JASPERS provides advisory and technical capacity building support to Member States on the preparation of programmes and projects financed by Cohesion Policy, including JTF. JASPERS assistance also covers horizontal subjects relevant to project preparation, such as State aid, climate and environmental consideration, and methodologies for project prioritisation and appraisal.

This webinar is the follow-up of a webinar held on 11th of July 2023 on State aid issues in JTF projects. It aims to address certain State aid issues (decarbonisation, renewable energy communities) identified as particularly relevant for JTF purposes, based on the feedback of Member States and on the cases assessed by the Commission's services until now. It is also to present experiences, challenges, and good practices among Member States' JTF authorities involved in the State aid assessment of JTF projects.

The webinar is organised in cooperation with DG COMP and DG REGIO. It builds on joint DG REGIO – DG COMP actions in the area of State aid, including trainings, a community of practitioners on State aid and a Peer-2-Peer tool to facilitate exchanges between Member States on State aid. For more information about support available for Member States, please see here: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/how/improving-investment/state-aid_en

It will be held in English and participants will have the chance to intervene in Q&A sessions and discuss needs for further advisory and capacity building support in this specific knowledge area.

Participants are encouraged to register and indicate their questions on the topics when filling the pre-event questionnaire included in the online registration form, as a proposal for debate during the Q&A sessions and final round table.

AGENDA

13:00 – 13:05	**Welcome and introduction** Massimo Marra, Principal Advisor, Capacity Building Coordinator, EIB/JASPERS
13:05 – 13:15	**High Level Opening remarks** Ben Smulders, Director-General, European Commission Directorate-General for Competition
13:15 – 13:25	**EIB - JASPERS support to Just Transition Mechanism update** Luis Hebrero, Head of Division, EIB/JASPERS
13:25 – 13:40	**JASPERS experience and observations on applying State aid rules in JTF projects What made us select the specific topics of this webinar** Christos Peolidis, State aid Expert, EIB/JASPERS
	First Session: Aid for Decarbonisation Investments in ETS sectors under JTF, including Land repurposing

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13:40 – 14:20	**Applying State aid rules to JTF support to decarbonisation Investments in ETS sectors, including land repurposing** (Speaker to be confirmed, H2-H3, DG COMP)
14:20 – 14:40	**Testimonials from Member States**
14:40 – 14:50	**Q & A**
14:50 – 15:00	**Coffee Break**
	Second Session: State aid to Renewable Energy Communities
15:00 – 15:20	**Notion of undertaking applied to REC. Aid for RECs.** Speaker to be confirmed, Unit B2, DG COMP
15:20 – 15:40	**Testimonials from Member States**
15:40 – 16:10	**Final Q & A addressing questions sent in advance via online questionnaire**
16:10 – 16:20	**Summary of the messages conveyed in the thematic sessions on processes/ preparation/ notifications,** EIB/JASPERS
16:20 -16:30	**High Level closing remarks** Nicola de Michelis acting Deputy Director-General Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy / EIB, JASPERS

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