

Europe

Aiming for a Higher Standard and More Stable Regional and Economic Development

Many European countries belong to the European Union (EU) and most non-member countries are working on economic and social development with a view to becoming members in the future. JICA focuses on three sectors where Japan has comparative advantages, namely: (1) environmental protection, (2) peace consolidation, and (3) industrial development. In the course of cooperation, consideration is given to the close relationship with the EU and eventual graduation from ODA, as well as to assistance for stabilizing the countries in the Western Balkans that have experienced ethnic conflicts.

Key Aid Strategies Environmental Protection, Peace Consolidation, and Industrial Development

● Environmental Protection

Countries wishing to join the EU need to establish environmental standards in line with those of the EU. For example, they will have to comply with restrictions on exhaust gases and utilize renewable energy. Assistance provided by JICA also focuses on achieving these requirements.

The Flue Gas Desulphurization Construction Project for the Nikola Tesla Thermal Power Plant is an ODA Loan project for Serbia. Through installing equipment that will reduce sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and dust emissions from power plants, the project aims to improve the environment and enable the country to meet EU environmental standards.

ODA Loans for environmental improvement at thermal power plants have been extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Romania as well. JICA also has many other environmental projects, such as technical cooperation for waste management in

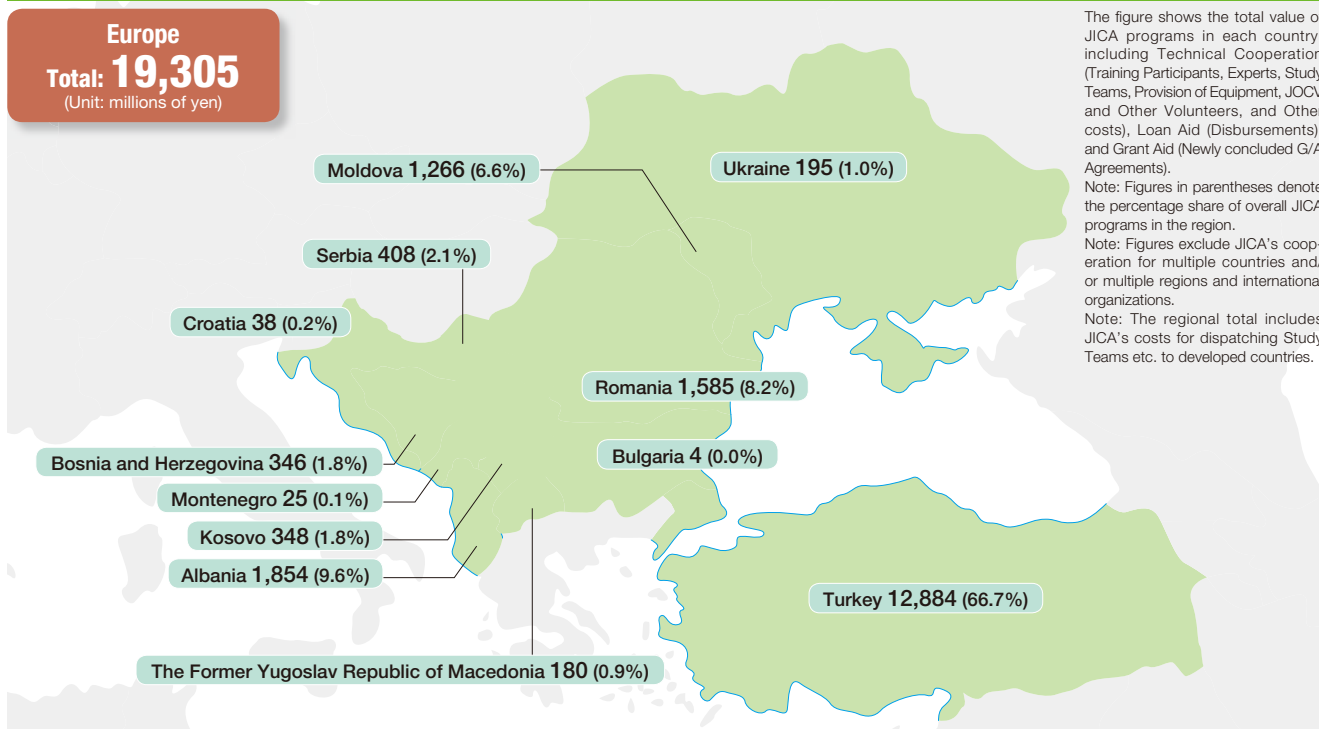
Kosovo and Albania and forest preservation in Macedonia. Overall, environmental protection is a major element of JICA's activities in Europe.

● Peace Consolidation

Countries in the Western Balkans have now recovered from the ethnic conflicts and civil wars of the 1990s. However, these countries still face many challenges, which include high unemployment and persistent ethnic tensions. Building a stable society in which different ethnicities can coexist is a paramount issue and requires international support.

JICA has been providing Bosnia and Herzegovina with assistance for facilitating ethnic collaboration and social stabilization. In the technical cooperation, Project for Informatics Curricula Modernization Phase 2, a multiethnic curriculum for informatics education is introduced to high schools throughout

JICA Programs in Europe (Fiscal 2013)



the country. By establishing an environment where students from different ethnic groups study together and interact with each other, this project is making steady progress with fostering bonds based on trust [→ see the Case Study on page 75].

● Industrial Development

The Western Balkans as well as Moldova and Ukraine are emerging as an export hub to EU countries. In particular, the Western Balkans are a huge market with the region's relatively high per capita gross national income (GNI) and population of more than 50 million. Furthermore, there are no tariffs within the region because of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). In consideration of such circumstances, JICA supports economic revitalization by promoting tourism and SMEs. The Project on Establishment and Promotion of Mentoring Service for Small and Medium Enterprises in the Western Balkans, a technical cooperation project, aims at improving the service of SME assistance organizations in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. JICA also provides support for enhancing domestic and export industries in Moldova and Ukraine through accepting training participants.

Turkey — Strengthening Relationship as a Global Partner

Turkey has been playing a key role as a bridge from Asia and the Middle East to Europe. In recent years, the country's economy has shown remarkable growth. Because of the balanced

diplomatic ties with the United States, Europe, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, Turkey exerts a strong political influence over the surrounding regions. JICA recognizes Turkey a mutual global partner and strengthens that partnership by extending ODA Loans and Technical Cooperation.

Specifically, JICA focuses on improving the business and investment environments to support the sustainable economic development of Turkey, as well as promoting projects strengthening disaster prevention and management capability that can minimize the risk impeding such development. Especially in the field of disaster prevention, JICA facilitates three technical cooperation fields: disaster risk management, disaster mitigation of earthquakes and tsunamis, and disaster prevention education. Furthermore, JICA also started a training course in 2013 for capacity development of Turkey's first disaster training center, established in Bursa.

In 2013, for further strengthening the development partnership, JICA and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) jointly initiated technical cooperation for Afghanistan and other countries in Central Asia for transferring livestock breeding techniques.

In October 2013, as the most symbolic cooperation between Japan and Turkey, the undersea subway system under the Bosphorus Strait finally opened. This project had received ODA Loans from Japan since 1999. The partnership is expected to grow even further in the future [→ see the Case Study below].

Case Study Turkey: Bosphorus Rail Tube Crossing Project

Undersea Subway Connecting below the Strait in Istanbul, the Heart of Turkey

In addition to bridges and ferries, an undersea subway financed by Japanese ODA Loans opened in October 2013 under the Bosphorus Strait, which splits Istanbul between Europe and Asia. Traffic congestion is expected to improve as the number of users grows.

Introducing Japan's Latest Technology

In Istanbul, with a population of 13 million, a recent increase in the number of cars has resulted in traffic congestion crossing the Bosphorus Strait connecting Europe and Asia. Traffic on the two bridges across the strait has been heavier than their standard design volumes. Air pollution caused by automobile emissions is also critical.

However, the opening of the undersea subway greatly reduces the travel time across the strait to 4 minutes, compared to the ferry, which takes 30 minutes. The subway is expected to become a means of transportation for 1.5 million local people a day.

This project is the world's deepest immersed tube tunnel,¹ adopting Japan's latest technologies, such as earthquake-resistant design and minimization of strait pollution during construction.

Prime Minister Abe and then Prime Minister Erdoğan confabulate after a ribbon-cutting at the opening ceremony.



Newly operating trains

In October 2013, the opening ceremony was held for the 90th year anniversary of the country's establishment. Japan's Prime Minister Abe attended the ceremony to celebrate this historic project, and with Turkey's then Prime Minister Erdoğan, reaffirmed the strong partnership between the countries.

The friendship between Japan and Turkey

since the 19th century has become even stronger in recent years. Japan is increasingly expected to provide development cooperation using Japan's technology, such as in disaster prevention.

1. A method of constructing undersea tunnels by sinking and connecting blocks built in advance on the shore.