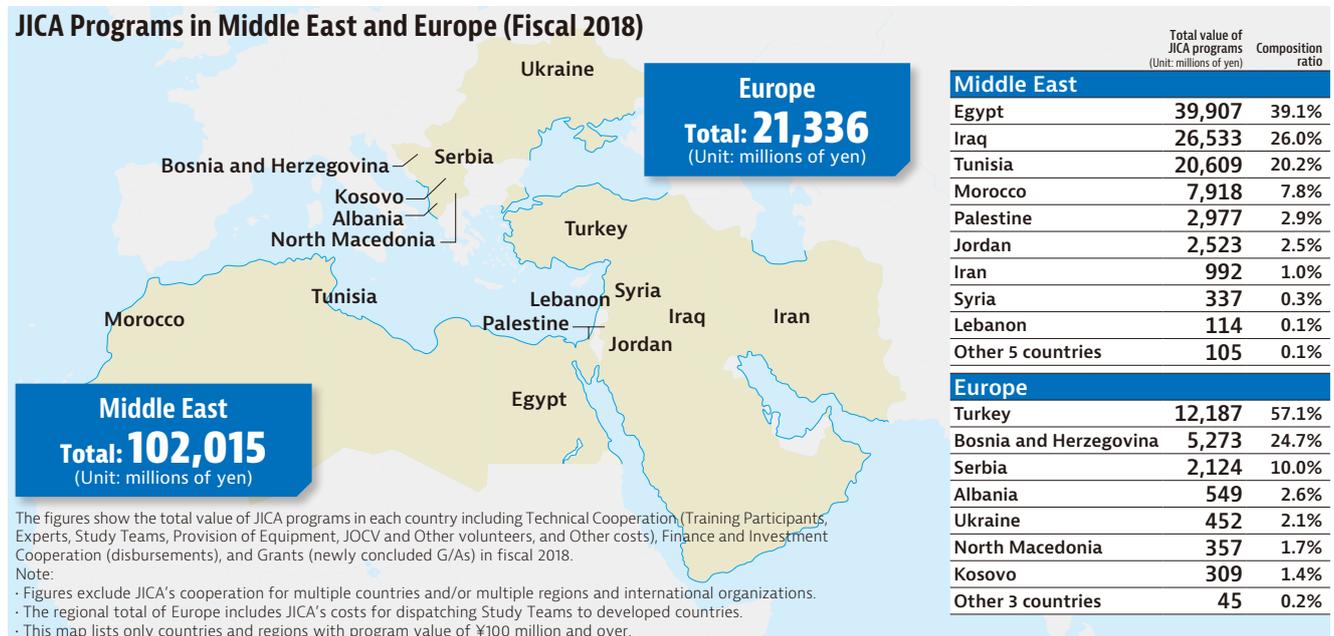


Middle East and Europe

Addressing Regional Stability, Quality Growth, Human Security, and Capacity Development



Regional Issues

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011, instability is still a big challenge in many countries in the Middle East. Longer-term cooperation to address issues such as the refugee crisis stemming from the Syrian conflict and reconstruction in areas liberated from the Islamist extremist group ISIL is required. Such assistance focuses specifically on (1) infrastructure development for reconstruction and sustainable economic growth; (2) good governance; (3) the development of human resources that support state development; (4) the reduction of disparities, which is one of the main reasons for social instability; and (5) investment promotion for the creation of youth employment.

For its regional stability, in Europe, JICA's cooperation covers three major areas: (1) private-sector development needed for economic growth, (2) support of the efforts by each partner to become EU members, and (3) administrative reform and good governance.

JICA Initiatives

1. Toward Regional Stability

In response to the protracted Syrian conflict, JICA started the initiative to receive Syrian refugees in fiscal 2017 as graduate school students in Japan. In fiscal 2018, there were 20 Syrian students who came to Japan under this initiative. For Jordan, a Grant project was launched to strengthen the country's capacity for solid waste management to relieve the serious burden associated with the increasing population due to the acceptance of Syrian refugees. A Development Policy Loan agreement was also signed with Jordan with the aim of

improving the business environment and creating employment for youth, women, and Syrian refugees, among other people. For Turkey, another major host country for Syrian refugees, JICA extended financial assistance for infrastructure development to local governments where refugees are hosted.

As for contributions to the Middle East peace process, JICA continued support for improving the development and management capacity of the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park in Palestine (JAIP), which is the flagship project of the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative by Japan. As of the end of March 2019, a total of 15 companies were in operation in this industrial park. Also, the initiation of an industrial promotion project designed to support the development of JAIP was decided.

For Iraq, JICA focused on infrastructure improvement for reconstruction and development. ODA Loan agreements were signed for the three following projects: the Basrah Water Supply Improvement Project (II), Irrigation Sector Loan (Phase 2), and the Water Supply Improvement Project in Kurdistan Region (II) in fiscal 2018.

For the Western Balkans, JICA promoted regional cooperation mainly by assisting in scaling up mentoring services for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), thereby contributing to the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative, which is advocated by the Japanese government.

2. Toward "Quality Growth"

In the Middle East and Europe, where many of the countries are of middle-income level, JICA promoted "quality growth" for further inclusive, sustainable, and resilient economic growth through cooperation in various fields, such as infrastructure

development, the environment, education, health, and SMEs, by supporting good governance and taking advantage of Japan's advanced technology and expertise.

JICA assistance in strengthening governance included (1) a technical cooperation project designed to improve the quality of statistics in Egypt, and (2) the dispatch of an advisor to the Minister of Finance of Ukraine to help with fiscal reconstruction and financial system improvement.

JICA's cooperation that leverages Japan's technology and expertise covered (1) the development of a subway line, a solar power plant, and an airport in Egypt; (2) seawater desalination for stable supply of safe water and the construction of a power generation facility for stable power supply in Tunisia; and (3) a study for port construction to support investment promotion in Morocco. For Palestine, a Grant agreement was signed for a solid waste management project.

For European countries aiming to become EU members, JICA's cooperation focused on the environmental sector to meet EU standards, supporting the development of sewage treatment facilities as well as institutional capacity development in such areas as solid waste management and air pollution control.

In the education sector, JICA assisted Egypt under the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP). This cooperation involved (1) the acceptance of Egyptian students to Japan (169 students in fiscal 2018); (2) an ODA Loan for introducing Japanese-style education, including *Tokkatsu* (special activities) such as classroom cleaning by students and class meetings at primary schools; and (3) technical cooperation in early childhood development and technical education. As a result, 35 Egypt-Japan Schools (EJSs) opened in Egypt in 2018 to promote



Turkey: Deepening mutual understanding between Syrian and Turkish children through group work (the Data Collection Survey on Social Service for Syrians)

Japanese-style education [→ see the case study on page 57].

JICA will remain committed to the following initiatives:

- To address the refugee issue, which requires long-term solutions, JICA will continue to support refugees and their host countries in cooperation with various partners, including international organizations. To secure regional stability and human security, JICA will also support confidence building for the Middle East peace process, ethnic reconciliation in Europe, and the reconstruction of areas liberated from ISIL and other groups in Iraq.
- For sustainable economic growth, JICA will support "quality growth" in a number of sectors applying Japan's advanced technology and expertise, including infrastructure development, education and health, good governance, and SME support.
- For the development of human resources who can contribute to reconstruction and development, JICA will enhance comprehensive cooperation that combines a range of schemes, including technical cooperation, financial assistance, and study programs in Japan, taking account of introducing Japanese-style education in the region.

Iraq: Electricity Sector Reconstruction Project in Kurdistan Region

The first ODA Loan project for the Kurdistan Region in cooperation with an international organization



A mobile substation

This is Japan's first ODA Loan project for the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq. The project contributed to the stabilization of the power supply, a key foundation of socioeconomic activity. Specifically, the project constructed transformer substations, provided mobile substations and related materials and equipment to solve the bottleneck in limited power supply, and established an Electric Power Training Center.

In 2008, when the project was initiated, the capacity of Iraq's electricity sector was significantly low due to the effects of conflicts and economic sanctions, which resulted in many years of insufficient new investment and poor operation and maintenance. Citizens in the region were suffering

from chronic power shortages: for example, power outages lasted more than 12 hours a day. This was where the project came into play. Completed in September 2018, the project helped to improve communities' access to electricity and to train operation and maintenance personnel.

It may be worth adding that in this project, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which had been involved in the electricity sector in the Kurdistan Region from the early stages of international reconstruction assistance to Iraq, was responsible for procurement support and project supervision. With UNDP's local networks and expertise, the project was implemented smoothly.