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Answer given by Ms Zaharieva
on behalf of the European Commission
(11.2.2025)

In its Communication of 2023 on EU Missions[1], the Commission stated that the 'implementation of the current five Missions should be continued, and support should be increased, both politically and financially'. It also stressed that 'a broader portfolio of instruments needs to be mobilised, with the Horizon Europe calls serving only as seed funding and orchestrators rather than the main instruments of deployment'.

For the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission[2], this broadening of portfolio of instruments is important as the majority of the resources needed for the deployment of their Climate City contracts will have to come from the private sector.

Beyond Research and Innovation funding, cities within the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities mission have received more than EUR 100 million of financial support from other EU programmes, other than Horizon Europe such as Connecting Europe Facility[3], LIFE[4], the European Urban Initiative[5]–[6] and the Digital Europe Programme[7].

The Climate City Capital Hub[8], launched in June 2024, helps cities that have received the EU Mission Label[9] (18 have been targeted so far) to get projects ready for investment. It offers them advice on the best financing solutions, in close cooperation with existing advisory services, such as those offered by the European Investment Bank, and puts cities in touch with investors.

In addition, EUR 21 million were secured in 2024 to deploy advisory services of the European Investment Bank (including European Local ENergy Assistance (ELENA)[10] and the InvestEU Advisory Hub[11]) to the cities that have received the EU Mission Label. Finally, the European Investment Bank also ringfenced a lending envelope of EUR 2 billion for labelled Mission Cities.

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[1] COM(2023) 457, 19/07/2023.
[2] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/climate-neutral-and-smart-cities_en
[3] https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/connecting-europe-facility_en
[4] https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en
[5] As regards the European Urban Initiative of Cohesion Policy, calls for innovative action proposals have included references to embed proposals in relevant urban strategies and plans such as those of the Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission
[6] https://www.urban-initiative.eu/
[7] https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/digital-europe-programme_en
[8] https://netzerocities.eu/capital-hub/
[9] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/942e747e-3ccf-4121-a973-9cc8032fc421_en
[10] https://www.eib.org/en/products/advisory-services/elena/index
[11] https://investeu.europa.eu/investeu-programme/investeu-advisory-hub_en