

15 January – 23 February 2018

Make the most of EU resources for your region or city

URBIS: Boosting urban development projects

What is URBIS?

URBIS is a new dedicated urban advisory platform within the European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH). URBIS has been established to provide **advisory support to urban authorities to facilitate, accelerate and unlock urban investment projects, programmes and platforms.**

URBIS has been developed in a partnership between the [Commission](#) (DG REGIO) and the [European Investment Bank](#) in the context of the [EU One Stop Shop for Cities](#) and in support of the [EU Urban Agenda](#).

What are the challenges URBIS is aiming to address?

URBIS has been created in recognition of the wide array of different existing financing programmes and advisory services offered by the European Commission and the EIB. Feedback re-

ceived from cities suggests that it should be **easier to navigate** this support and identify the most appropriate programmes and services for a city or group of cities.

Other challenges highlighted by the cities are that existing advisory services are often organised on the basis of specific programmes and sectors, whereas cities often require more **holistic and place-based advisory support**, addressing city-wide investment planning and financing needs.

Cities have also raised the need for more **support in identifying financing solutions** which require less recourse to the city budget or municipal guarantees.

How can URBIS help?

In its initial phase, URBIS consists of the following three work streams, implemented in parallel:

- Increased **awareness raising** in respect of existing instruments, programmes and services
- **Tailor-made** technical and financial **advice** to cities
- Exploring **innovative financing** approaches for city investments

It thus aims to simplify access to existing advisory programmes and services and also address some of the current gaps in the provision of advisory support. To do this, URBIS is resourced by a specially created task force within the EIAH, which will work with interested urban authorities on eligible advisory support assignments.

It will provide both **tailor-made technical and financial advice** in relation to project and programme development and **support to urban authorities** in exploring and developing investments.



This will include in particular capacity building, awareness raising and the development of urban investment platforms and financial instruments.

What types of projects can be supported?

The types of technical and financial tailor-made advice that will be available through URBIS include:

- support in relation to the development of a city's **investment strategies and programmes**;
- technical advice to **improve the quality and bankability of projects**;
- support in relation to **financial and economic analysis**;
- the review of **EU grant applications** and advice in relation to the establishment of project implementation units.

Under the innovative financing work stream, advice will be provided in relation to different financing opportunities available to cities, including European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and EIB financing including under the guarantee from the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

It will also cover advice in relation to the development and implementation of urban investment platforms and explorative work to assess the potential for developing off-balance sheet solutions to help to address certain municipal lending constraints.

Other existing advisory programmes, such as [JASPERS](#), [ELENA](#) and [fi-compass](#), which are also providing support to urban authorities, will continue to be available.

Who can benefit?

Cities have a vast range and volume of advisory support needs. URBIS offers its services to **cities of all sizes, and from all regions of Europe**. It aims to support cities at different stages of the investment programme/project life cycle, and across the priority themes of the Urban Agenda.

It will prioritise cities seeking support related to an integrated sustainable urban strategy, with a view to developing, financing and implementing urban investment programmes. Please [visit the EIAH website](#) for further information on the eligibility criteria.

How to apply?

Urban authorities wishing to access the service should submit a request through the [EIAH website](#).

Prior to submitting a request urban authorities should preferably have completed some **preparatory documents**, such as urban development strategies, feasibility studies, Environmental Impact Assessments and ex-ante assessments.

The relevant preparatory documents should be enclosed with the request, which is expected to demonstrate how the advisory support requested from URBIS will help take forward the urban authority's investment projects or programmes.



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