

# TeMA

Journal of  
Land Use, Mobility and Environment

The 10th volume of the TeMA Journal will promote the debate on the definition and the implementation of methods, tools and best practices aimed at improving energy efficiency at the neighbourhood level while increasing the capacity of urban systems to adapt to natural changes and/or man-made changes.

Tema is the Journal of Land use, Mobility and Environment and offers papers with a unified approach to planning and mobility. TeMA Journal has also received the Sparc Europe Seal of Open Access Journals released by Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC Europe) and the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ).



METHODS, TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF URBAN SYSTEMS TO ADAPT TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE CHANGES

## METHODS, TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES TO INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF URBAN SYSTEMS TO ADAPT TO NATURAL AND MAN-MADE CHANGES

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## CALL FOR PAPERS: TEMA VOL. 11 (2018)

### The Resilience City/The Fragile City. Methods, tools and best practices.

The fragile/resilience city represents a topic that collects itself all the issues related to the urban risks and referred to the different impacts that an urban system has to face with. Studies useful to improve the urban conditions of resilience (physical, environmental, economical, social) are particularly welcome. Main topics to consider could be issues of water, soil, energy, etc.. The identification of urban fragilities could represent a new first step in order to develop and to propose methodological and operative innovations for the planning and the management of the urban and territorial transformations.

The Journal also welcomes contributions that strategically address the following issues:

- new consideration of the planning standards, blue and green networks as a way to mitigate urban risks and increase city resilience;
- the territorial risks and fragilities related to mobility of people, goods, knowledge, etc.;
- the housing issue and the need of urban regeneration of the built heritage;
- socio-economical behaviour and the "dilemma" about emergency and prevention economy;
- the city as magnet of the next future's flows (tourism, culture, economy, migration, etc.).

Publishing frequency is four monthly. For this reason, authors interested in submitting manuscripts addressing the aforementioned issues may consider the following deadlines

- first issue: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018;
- second issue: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018;
- third issue: 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

## CALL FOR PAPERS: GENERAL CALL.

### Papers in Transport, Land Use and Environment

The Journal welcomes papers on topics at the interdisciplinary intersection of transport and land use, including research from the domains of engineering, planning, modeling, behavior, economics, geography, regional science, sociology, architecture and design, network science, and complex systems

## CALL FOR PAPERS: SPECIAL ISSUE 2018

### Urban Travel Behavior in the Middle East and North Africa

The characteristics of urban travel behaviors and the attitudes of passengers in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is less-studied. When it comes to the effects of urban form, residential self-selections, and lifestyles, it is entirely not investigated in majority of the countries of the region. There is a considerable knowledge gap about the circumstances of how people think and decide about their short-term, medium-term, and long-term mobility for commute and non-commute travels. The we do not know if the land use traits such as population and employment densities as well as mix of land uses, accessibility to public transportation and neighborhood amenities, and connectivity of street networks are as influential as they are in western counties or in higher income societies. There is a very limited understanding about the extent to which the personal preferences, lifestyles, and in general psychology of the people of the region affect their transport behaviors. The complexity of the analysis methods applied for studying urban travel phenomena of the MENA region is even less-developed. Longitudinal or discrete choice molding methods are applied in mobility research considerably less than studies coming from high-income countries.

This special issue collects the results of some of the most-recent studies on the MENA countries to fill out a part of the gap in English-language publications. The main topics covered by the issue include the following with focus on the MENA region:

- The role of urban form and land use in forming urban travel behavior;
- Urban sprawl and urban travel behavior;
- The effects of historical urban transformations on urban mobility decisions;
- Car ownership and use; car dependency;
- The impacts of socioeconomics and culture in forming the transport patterns;
- Lifestyles and personal preferences and urban travels; Perceptions of mobility, safety, security, neighborhoods;
- The interactions of travel behavior and health effects of different ages, genders, and income groups;
- Travel behavior of public transport riders;
- and similar topics.

The target countries of this issue are the ones that are referred to as the MENA counties in most of the definitions. Studies on the cities of Turkey and Pakistan are also of particular interest and welcome. Manuscripts about all city sizes are reflected by the issue. The authors interested in submitting manuscripts addressing the aforementioned issues may consider the deadline of 31st January 2018. All submissions will go through rigorous double-blind review, and if accepted will be published. Interested authors are requested to contact Houshmand Masoumi at [masoumi@ztg.tu-berlin.de](mailto:masoumi@ztg.tu-berlin.de), to discuss submission and review procedure.

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## IMPLEMENTING ITI FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT LOCALLY

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### ABSTRACT

In the current Programming Period (2014-2020) the European Commission has introduced a new strategic instrument, the Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI), which shifts the decisions on allocation of funds to the local level and, most importantly, enables drawing of funds from several priority axes and from several European Structural and Investment Funds. Greece is one of EU member countries that has committed on using ITIs as a tool for urban development. In August 2016, in the Region of Central Macedonia, urban authorities with a population of over 10.000 inhabitants were invited by the Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme to submit a Strategy for Sustainable Urban Development (SUD), through the mandatory implementation of the ITI tool. The paper focuses on one of these municipalities, the city of Veria, where the ITI approach has been implemented for the design of an ITI of urban scale (ITI-SUD). The integrated approach prescribed by regional authorities forced Municipalities to adopt government approaches uncommon until now: to involve multiple stakeholders in the entire process, from strategy development to project selection and implementation. The paper describes the benefits and challenges of the new approach as applied in the local context, showing the vertical and horizontal connections of urban development strategies. Most importantly, in the context of 'procedural learning' happening in Europe in the field of territorial cohesion, it offers an insight on how European cohesion policy strategies and tools are tested at the local level.

### KEYWORDS:

Sustainable Urban Development; Integrated Territorial Investment; European Cohesion Policy; Greek Cities; Veria

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有关土地使用、交通和环境的杂志

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## 实施ITI推进城市发展

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### 摘要

在当前的计划时期（2014-2020 年），欧盟委员会提出了一项新的战略工具，即综合领土投资（ITI），将资金分配决策转移到地方一级；最重要的是，通过该工具，可以从几个享有优先权的轴心国和几个欧盟结构基金和投资基金提取款项。希腊是曾致力于推行将 ITI 作为城市发展工具的欧盟成员国之一。2016 年 8 月，在马其顿中部地区，管辖内居民超过 1 万人的城市管理当局应区域行动计划的管理当局之邀，提交了一份关于通过强制执行 ITI 工具来实现可持续城市发展（SUD）的战略规划。本文重点讨论上述城市之一——维利亚，该市已经实施 ITI 方法来设计城市规模的 ITI（ITI-SUD）。由于区域当局所规定的综合办法，各市镇到目前为止必须采取不寻常的政府对策：从战略制定到项目选择和执行，让多个利益攸关者都参与到整个过程中来。本文介绍了新方法在地方环境中应用所体现的优点和面临的挑战，展示了城市发展战略的纵向和横向联系。最重要的是，在欧洲的领土凝聚力领域正在出现的“程序性学习”的背景下，这一方法为我们提供了关于如何将欧盟凝聚政策战略和工具在地方一级进行尝试的见解。

### 关键词：

可持续城市发展；综合领土投资；欧盟凝聚政策；希腊城市；维利亚

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the current (2014 - 2020) Programming Period, a notable change is taking place in the financing of territorial development programmes across the European Union (EU). Actions on sustainable urban development co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) are now channelled via the Regional Operational Programmes through the voluntary application of Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI). As its name implies, ITI is an instrument to implement territorial strategies in an integrated way. It is not an operation, nor a sub-priority of an Operational Programme. Instead, ITI allows Member States to implement Operational Programmes in a cross-cutting way and to draw funding from several priority axes of one or more Operational Programmes to ensure the implementation of an integrated strategy for a specific territory. As such, the existence of ITI both provides flexibility for Member States regarding the design of Operational Programmes, and enables the efficient implementation of integrated actions through simplified financing (European Commission, 2013).

The scope of this paper is to present a case study regarding the implementation of the ITI approach in an urban context, and specifically that of a town district: the design of the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (ITI-SUD) of the city of Veria, a medium-sized urban agglomeration in the Region of Central Macedonia, Greece. Alongside other localised analyses of ITI use in various spatial and administrative scales (Gaman, 2015; Krukowska & Lackowska, 2017) and in parallel to systematic overviews of the process of ITI implementation across Europe (CEMR, 2014; CEMR, 2015; Van der Zwet. & Mendez, 2015; Van Der Zwet, 2015), the present paper is a 'report from the field,' based on first-hand experience, as the author was involved in the local ITI, as a city employee working for the Division of Planning and Development of the Municipality of Veria, i.e. the Division which handled the Veria ITI-SUD throughout the process of its design, and continues to supervise its implementation.

On one hand, therefore, there is a pragmatic aspect in this paper: to contribute to the body of documentation of how ITI, a new policy tool for territorial development, originally a theoretical and then a strategic concept, is applied in the urban scale, in the form of a 'user's guide' handed down to local authorities (Municipalities) as to how an urban renewal strategy is to be drawn and financed by ESIFs. On the other hand, the paper aims to also link this practical process to two more theoretical issues often intertwined with each other: a) the reformed urban agenda of the EU in the current Programming Period and b) the advances regarding urban renewal within the discourses of Urban Design and Spatial Planning. In regard to the first issue, it is significant to stress out that ITI was introduced in the Europe2020 Strategy as a reform towards place-based approaches (Barca, 2009; Barca, McCann & Rodríguez-Pose, 2012; McCann, 2015), as the opposite pole of spatially-blind approaches. Acknowledging this theoretical influence, what does the comparison of the local ITI process with previous models for urban renewal applied in the specific local and national context tell us? Can we discern beneficial changes in the current process, transformations that bear 'place-based' characteristics? Regarding the second issue, we first need to place the ITI process as an urban renewal strategy in the historical and social background of the specific city and of Greece in general, taking into account the reluctance to institutional change which characterises Greek political system (Diamandouros, 1994) and also the 'accommodation' model of adjustment to European policies (Börzel & Risse, 2002), which is an attribute of Greece's relation to the EU. Can we find indications in the 'local milieu' (Governa, 1997) that the implementation of the ITI process (at the beginning viewed as another, though much more complicated, form of getting funding from the EU), has produced incremental changes in the local government and/or local society towards a better understanding of the concept of integrated sustainable development? These questions will permeate the presentation of the Veria ITI-SUD itself, and hopefully will be answered partially through observations and reflections on the case study.

## 2 THE ITI TOOL FROM EU POLICY DOCUMENTS TO NATIONAL DIRECTIVES

As a tool for territorial policy, ITI was introduced in Article 36 of the Common Provision Regulation (CPR, 2013), which constitutes the legal basis for its use. The Article further prescribes that all details about how the ITI will be used and how it will correspond to the allocation of funds from each priority axis, will be in the hands of the relevant Operational Programme(s). The openness of the ITI is clear by the statement that Member States are to designate the specific bodies (local authorities, regional development bodies or non-governmental organisations) which will carry out the ITI (CPR, 2013). However, the final clause of the Article stresses out the intricate horizontal/vertical relationship between the territorial approach and EU-wide strategic goals: "The Member State or the relevant managing authorities shall ensure that the monitoring system for the programme or programmes provides for the identification of operations and outputs of a priority contributing to an ITI" (CPR, 2013). It is noteworthy in this text that, from its inception, the ITI approach is not legally-binding, but is offered as a general framework for each Member State to develop its own policy. As McCann & Varga (2015) point out, in the highly heterogeneous, both economically and institutionally, space of the EU, any policy that spans this complex arena needs to be sufficiently flexible in order to adapt to the local context, but also "it needs to maintain a solid core in terms of its logic, objectives and management systems so as to ensure that the policy is used for correct purposes and is targeted at the intended recipients" (McCann & Varga, 2015, p. 1255). That is much the case in how ITI was introduced in EU policy documents and is indicated in the many different ways ITIs have been used so far (Gaman, 2015; Krukowska & Lackowska, 2017).

To entertain this flexibility but also to ensure the true-to-purpose use of the ITI tool, in the years following its official adoption of the CPR in December 2013, several formal and informal guidance papers have been offering examples of practical implementation of ITIs. Such a document is the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy report on "Scenarios for Integrated Territorial Investments" (De Bruijn & Zuber, 2015). This report provides a quite thorough understanding on how ITI is 'translated' from the theoretical and strategic spheres to the implementation level. De Bruijn & Zuber (2015) provide four 'scenarios' for the use of ITIs, in four different scales: Metropolis, Sub-region, District and Twin Cities. Despite the differences in these four contexts, differences not only in spatial scale, but also in administrative, macro- and micro-economic, social and even cultural and anthropological levels, the four scenarios developed in this report provide us with an important clarification of how the ITI instrument differs from other strategies for delivering funds:

- It is 'place-based,' meaning that it springs from a detailed analysis of local conditions, challenges and advantages, thus leading to a plan of actions and a funding scheme unique to the specific implementation area. A major setback of previous Programming Periods has been that distribution of funds was done in a 'spatially blind' or 'place neutral' manner (Barca, McCann & Rodríguez-Pose, 2012), meaning that decisions about prioritisation were made horizontally, frequently failing to address local problems;
- It addresses sustainability through all its three pillars – environment, economy, society. In the ITI Action Plan, it is highly advisable to include measures and actions drawing from multiple Thematic Objectives and more than one Structural Fund, and to target different categories of challenges, ranging from social inclusion to demographic decline to unemployment to climate change, in order to coordinate a truly sustainable Strategy for the implementation area;
- It involves the active participation of local stakeholders – such as community organizations, NGOs, local professional and entrepreneurial representatives, other public bodies – in all phases of the ITI, from the preliminary meetings to forming an overall Strategy to drawing up proposals for specific actions. In the urban scale, specifically, previous experience from this kind of local involvement has been gained across Europe in such EU pilot projects such as URBACT, where this local involvement has been secured in the form of Local Support Groups;

- Last but not least, the ITI tool emphasizes on the use of measurable data on the various characteristics of the implementation area, which support the Strategy and will be followed upon after the actions have been materialized, thus putting emphasis on results.

Admittedly few reports have come out in the course of the first three years of the current Programming Period regarding the progress of the implementation of ITIs across Europe (CEMR, 2014; CEMR, 2015; Van Der Zwet, 2015). By 2015, among the Member States using ITIs, some were significantly more advanced, as in the case of Poland, the Czech Republic, Finland, France and Italy (Gaman et.al., 2015; CEMR, 2015), primarily for areas already designated and foreseen in their Partnership Agreements. On the other hand, many countries such as Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark and Estonia have declined to use ITI tool altogether, while others have used the tool only partially (CEMR, 2015). As mentioned before, due to the vagueness of CPR mandates, the application of the ITI in the local level is actually a field of experimentation: none of these processes/activities are in fact streamlined. Only the mid-term (2017) report on EU Cohesion Policy will provide literature for substantial comparative analysis and drawing of conclusions. In the case of Greece, there was a significant delay in the offset of the 2014-2020 Programming Period due to political reasons and specifically because of the uncertainty caused by repeated national elections and changes of government. This delay also affected the adaptation of EU guidelines regarding the implementation of ITIs into state policies. The National Coordinating Authority for European Structural Funds, which is part of the Ministry of Economy and Development, issued the first Explanatory Circular on the design, implementation and monitoring of ITIs in July 2015 (Greek Ministry of Economy and Development, 2015), but the document contained few guidelines and emphasized on the general criteria for choosing an area for an ITI, albeit without clarifying how, and through what administrative schemes, ITIs would be formed and agreed upon. No real advancement was made until the following April (Greek Ministry of Economy and Development, 2016), when another Circular provided more detailed instructions about the choice of intermediate bodies and the delegation of functions among the national, regional and municipal levels of government. The 2016 Circular prescribed the use of ITIs as a mandatory tool for the distribution of funds on Sustainable Urban Development via the Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs) of the thirteen Regions of Greece. On the national level, no actual preparation or strategic regional analysis as to how and why ITIs were needed, and for which areas, preceded this regulation. Instead, there was an ad hoc decision on the mandatory implementation of the ITI tool specifically for urban development, a decision which in essence transferred all the 'burden' of its materialisation to the Managing Authorities of the Regional Operational Programmes and, from then on, to local authorities (Municipalities). Financially, the funds to be allocated for Urban Development via the ITI process represent only a fraction of the total European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) budget of each Region: they correspond to the minimum quota (5%) earmarked for Sustainable Urban Development according to Article 7 of the ERDF Regulation (European Commission, 2016). In the case of the Region of Central Macedonia (see Figure 1), the funds earmarked for all ITIs (5% of the Regional budget in the 2014-2020 Programming Period) equals to 99.081.645€. If we compare this amount to the funding for Sustainable Development prescribed in the 2007-2013 budget of the ROP, which was 1.079.000.000€ (Greek Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2007), it becomes clear that the intention has not been to adopt ITI on a wide scale for the scope of urban development financing, but rather to pass on only a small portion of EU funds to the discretion and responsibility of local authorities. On top of the general scarcity of ITI funds, Thessaloniki's metropolitan area was selected to be treated as an ITI on its own and a generous 79% of the total ITI budget (78.275.000€) was earmarked for urbanities in and around Thessaloniki. For the distribution of the remaining 20.805.645€ to the eight urban districts of the Region outside Thessaloniki, there was a decision of make the call to Municipalities competitive – which meant that each town or city in the Region had to design its own ITI and submit its own Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (ITI-SUD), in order to enter the evaluation process.



Fig. 1 Map showing the Region of Central Macedonia with its seven Prefectures. In-set map at the lower left shows the region's location in the map of Greece

The Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme of Central Macedonia issued this competitive call in August 2016, and addressed it to urban authorities (Municipalities) of urban districts with a population of 10.000 and over. Although the size of these towns may seem small for European standards (the biggest, Serres, has a population of 58.287, while the smallest, Alexandria, a population of 14.821), they are all important urban centres for their respective sub-regions, and most of them Prefecture capitals. Among these eight Municipalities, the case of our study is Veria, the capital of the Prefecture of Imathia, a medium-sized city for Greek standards, with a town population of 43.158, while the municipality population is 66.457 according to the 2011 census,<sup>1</sup> located about seventy kilometres to the west from the capital of the Region, Thessaloniki (see Map 1). However, before proceeding to the presentation of the ITI-SUD of Veria, it is important to place the specific process in a more general context, that of a) the theoretical concept of place-based policy and b) the local and national political culture, especially in relation to past experience of urban renewal projects funded by EU programmes. Both these issues become instrumental so as to allow us to reflect on the application of the ITI approach in the specific urban context.

### 3 THE ITI APPROACH AS BOTH AN URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGY AND A PLACE-BASED POLICY

With around three quarters of its population living in urban areas, Europe is the world's most urbanised continent; cities in Europe play a major role towards sustainability, in response to both the reality of climate

<sup>1</sup> Censuses in Greece are held every ten years, and the last one took place in 2011. Unfortunately, no more recent population data is available.

change and the pursuit of territorial cohesion. However, the same attributes that make urban living preferable (proximity to employment, vibrant and diverse everyday life, economic benefits) are the ones that put increasing challenges to environmental and social sustainability (Czischke et al., 2015). Therefore, it is precisely in urban areas that a holistic approach, dealing simultaneously with the physical, social and economic parameters of space is very much needed, in order to pursue the goals of the European Territorial Agenda (Böhme et al., 2011).

Urban renewal has been – for many years already – an extremely popular policy in many European and American cities and globally, and has its own history (Kafkalas et al., 2015). We can discern three generations of planned interventions in cities (Carmon, 1999): a) from the end of World War II until the end of 1960's the approach to urban regeneration was based on physical determinism and generally put emphasis on the demolition of old and degraded housing reserve; b) the 1970's was the decade that was characterised by a social turn, towards a more synthetic approach that aimed to regenerate neighbourhoods and took into account socioeconomic factors, too; and c) the entrepreneurial approach from 1980 onwards, in which the main issue at stake seems to have been how to attract investment in vacant urban districts. From the new millennium onwards, and under the prism of sustainability, urban regeneration as viewed in the EU is definitely a holistic concept and acknowledges the multiple factors related to urban renewal. As Roberts (2000) points out, four major changes contribute to urban regeneration: a) economic reconstruction and changes in employment; b) social and community issues; c) natural ageing and need in new land and buildings, and d) sustainable development.

As explained in the previous chapter, for the scope of Sustainable Urban Development, it was the Greek government's choice to make cities, both as physical spaces and as institutional and governance spheres, the testing field of the new ITI tool. This policy choice, conscious or not – given the limited funds earmarked and the lack of preparation in the introduction of the ITI as a tool for urban development, it seems like a rather half-hearted decision –, appears *a posteriori* to have been at the same time *appropriate* and *challenging*.

From the viewpoint of urban renewal, the integrated approach is *appropriate* for urban development, especially if we take into account Greece's situation after the 2008 global financial crisis and the impact this crisis had (and continues to have) on its urban economies. Philip McCann proposes that the geographical impacts of the 2008 global financial crisis is one of four issues shaping the debates regarding the reforms to European regional and urban policies – the other three being advances in academic thinking, the diversity and heterogeneity of the EU and shifts in European growth perspectives (McCann, 2015). In Greece, we can say that the factor of the 2008 crisis is influential on both accounts: both as an issue provoking changes in the European level of policy and as a pragmatic reality that shakes established notions and habitual ways of thinking, in search of new solutions to the 'urban crisis' it currently faces.

Greek urban centres have indeed been 'hit hard' by the financial crisis that has been evolving from 2008 onwards. Urban poverty has risen to the effect that an estimated 26.6% of children live in poverty conditions. The spatial effects of poverty and unemployment are also visible, especially in downtown areas, which by now are characterised by many abandoned buildings, closed shops and a decline of population. Energy poverty is also present, and already has put a toll on the environment, since, due to high prices of central heating, there is a very high percentage of use of polluting sources (individual heaters operating on wood, oil and even coal), affecting the air quality in cities.

All these circumstances create a situation of emergency for the environmental and social sustainability of Greek cities and towns. In the case of Greece, during the previous Programming Periods, although adequate funds were prescribed and distributed for urban regeneration projects, hardly any structural problems – such as unemployment, poverty, underdevelopment of local assets – were addressed. Urban renewal was restricted

to mere 'beautification' projects, handled solely by the local authorities,<sup>2</sup> and did not include any of the changes suggested by Roberts (2000) such as economic reconstruction, promotion of employment or resolve of local social problems. According to a recent analysis on the urban regeneration projects in western Thessaloniki from the 1980s onwards (Kourti, 2017), all too often the term 'integrated' was included in the title, but the projects themselves were downscaled to fragmentary interventions of a purely physical-spatial character. The social and economic parameters of urban development were left out, for reasons related also to the fact that immaterial, non-physical interventions have no immediate, visible and tangible results that can be used as leverage for re-election of local politicians.

Indeed, a major source of 'resistance' or 'disobedience' to EU philosophies, as exemplified in the case of urban renewal, has to be traced in the Greek ambivalent political culture, in which, as Diamandouros (1994) has claimed, two opposite ideologies strive for dominance: on one hand, the modernist, reformist one and, on the other, the 'underdog,' populist ideology, which is responsible for the backward practices of clientelism, individualism, lack of meritocracy and dysfunctionality. In the literature of Greek politics, the 'underdog' political culture is not only widely considered to be one of the main ideological entities of the modern Greek political system since its inception, but also the main source of resistance to the processes of modernization, Europeanization and globalization (Ntampoudi, 2014). According to Börzel & Risse (2002), Europeanization can cause three different degrees of domestic change: absorption, accommodation or transformation. 'Accommodation' is defined as the situation in which member states accommodate Europeanization pressure by adapting existing processes, policies and institutions without changing their essential features and the underlying collective understandings attached to them (Börzel & Risse, 2002). Significantly, from the 1990's onwards, many sociologists and political theorists have emphasized that the Greek model of adjustment to EU mandates falls into the category of 'accommodation' without a real transformation taking place (Kourti, 2017). Nonetheless, as Borzel & Risse point out, this is not necessarily a negative only aspect: whether we study policies, politics, or polities, a misfit between European-level and domestic processes, policies, or institutions constitutes the necessary condition for expecting any change.

It is exactly this ambition (intentional or not) that things can change that is underlying the current 'imposition' of the ITI approach as a prerequisite for the funding of urban renewal projects. The new approach indirectly aims to address the setbacks of past Regional Operational Programmes: the exclusively physical character of the intervention, the predominance of the Municipality as the only stakeholder and the lack of cooperation with other local agents. According to the August 2016 call for ITI-SUDs, the main novelties compared to past Programming Periods (presented as 'obligations' or 'evaluation criteria') were for the Municipalities to include social and economy-related actions in their Action Plans, to involve as many local stakeholders as possible and to form a Strategy following a consistent public consultation with the local community. These obligations were perceived by local authorities as a *true challenge* both for their technical experience and for their administrative capabilities.

From a technical point of view, the accompanying guide made it clear that the proposed cross-sectoral package of actions of the ITI-SUD had to be the outcome of a strategic analysis of the existing condition, taking into account the multiple characteristics of the area (demographic, economic, social, environmental, climate-change related), followed by a SWOT analysis and finally by the drawing up of a Strategy, a programmatic

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<sup>2</sup> A telling example is that of the "urban renewal" project that was financed by the EU during the last Programming Period (2007-2013) in our case study, the city of Veria. The project, entitled "Regeneration of Urban Landscape," with a budget of almost ten million euros failed to connect to any developmental goal or strategy. To begin with, the choice of the area where this investment took place was in essence made without any strategic criteria: it was actually a residential district, with no developmental assets. The intervention on the physical landscape stood on its own, with no other actions of social, cultural or entrepreneurial character, adding nothing towards a long-term urban development. The urban 'regeneration' itself was downscaled to the replacement of pavement slabs and the provision of new urban furniture.

'vision' for the Implementation Area. Within this strategic vision, proposed actions had to address several sectors (physical, entrepreneurial, social), but also had to cooperate with each other towards achieving the strategic goal. Faced with such complexity, local authorities, characterised by a dependency on national policies, and so far accustomed to be a passive receiver of EU funds, were thus quite unprepared to draw up an ITI-SUD, especially the ones with no or little experience in the field of Strategic Planning.

From a governance point of view, ITI-SUD presented yet another problem. The process as proposed in the guidelines prescribed another novel role for the Municipalities, that of coordinators of local delegation. Civic authorities found themselves 'forced' to consult with local stakeholders, and act as mediators of opposing views and interests. These local agents ranged from other public bodies accountable to the central government – overseeing special fields such as education, culture, natural environment–, trade chambers, non-government organizations, citizens' initiatives, representative of local enterprises etc. Due to a highly centralized bureaucratic organization of the political affairs, Greek culture of local government is not particularly oriented towards cooperation; therefore, the consultation phase of the ITI-SUD was also a testing field for a more open dialogue of the Municipality with non-Municipal entities, as we will see in the case of Veria, and a search for a 'middle ground' between presumed 'opponents.'

## 4 THE ITI-SUD OF VERIA

### 4.1 BACKGROUND

One can definitely claim that the discerning characteristic of Veria [*Bέροια*, in Greek] is the impressively dense and imposing presence of historical traces in its urban tissue (Kalogirou, 1990). Its continuous habitation, from at least 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (Veria is mentioned by the ancient historian Thucydides) until our days, has left a series of monuments dating from Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods, dispersed in the historic centre of the town, thus creating a true palimpsest of history (see Figure 2).

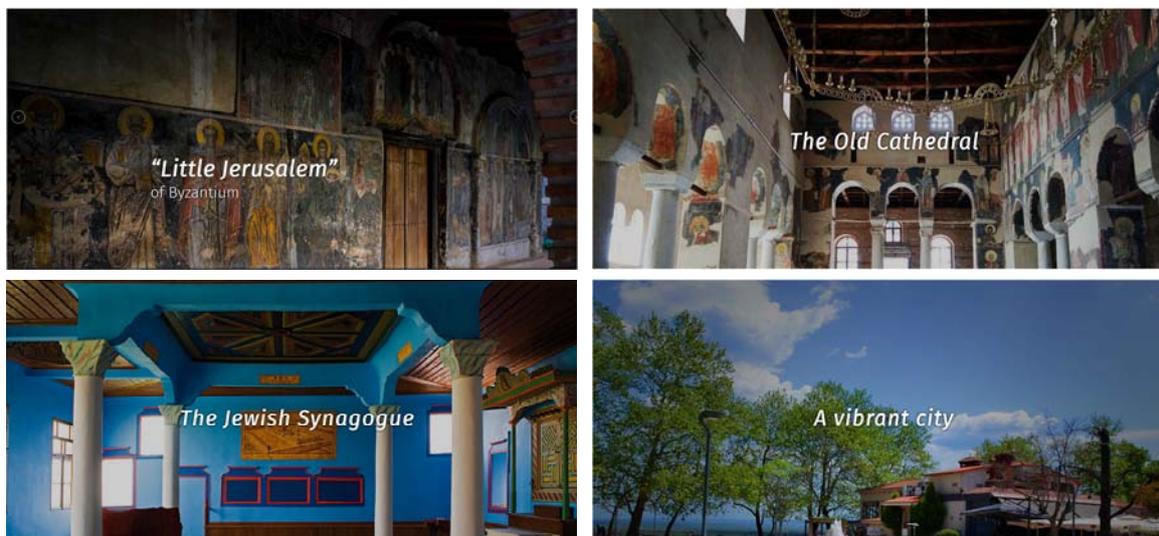


Fig. 2 Veria's monuments from Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods are dispersed in the vibrant centre of the city

Until recently, Veria was more known as a 'Byzantine town,' due to the fact that in 1912, the year of its annexation to the Greek state, no fewer than seventy-two byzantine and post-byzantine churches, adorned with impressive frescos, were surviving. In the following years, and especially in the first two post-World War II decades, the demolition of historic buildings, and even churches, in order to allow for new urban plans and modern rebuilding, destroyed the continuity of the urban fabric of this 'Little Jerusalem.' Nonetheless, four

listed neighbourhoods in the city centre still preserve much of their original character. A total of forty-eight, out of the seventy-two, churches are still standing; amongst them, stands out the monumental 11<sup>th</sup> century Old Cathedral, paradigmatically restored by the local Ephorate of Antiquities. The recently restored Jewish Synagogue and the proposed restoration and reuse of the Twin Ottoman Baths (see Figures 3, 4), are important signs of a shift towards acknowledging also the Ottoman and Jewish heritage of the city.



Fig. 3 Veria's Twin Baths, a 16th century monuments dating from the Ottoman period, surrounded by the contemporary urban tissue



Fig. 4 Typical house of the Jewish Quarter, dating from mid 19<sup>th</sup> century

According to Gospodini (2007) and the categorisation of European cities she offers in her discussion of how their spatial qualities relate to their developmental opportunities, Veria belongs to the sub-group of middle-

and small-sized cities of the periphery of Europe, which are endowed with endogenous natural and cultural developmental resources. In this sub-group, urban space in itself is the major attraction for visitors as well as residents; therefore the role of urban design is connected to the implementation of novel policies in issues of the protection of natural environment and the protection and promotion of cultural heritage (Gospodini, 2007). Alberto Magnaghi (2011) offers yet another interpretation of how heritage relates not simply to history but to the development of a territory. In his "Draft of the Territorialists' Society Manifesto," Principle 6, he writes: "Establishing the right balance between the opening and closure of a local system makes identity much more than a fixed construction whose inheritance is to be passed on unaltered. On the contrary, it should be seen as *a long-term dynamic reality which is projected into the future*. [...] Local identity which looks towards the future is more important than one which simply looks back in time [emphasis in the original]" (Magnaghi, 2011). Contrary to these theoretical models, the city of Veria has far from followed a pattern of development based on its unique local identity. The city seems to consider its cultural heritage more like a 'burden,' disproportionately heavy for its everyday happenings, than its most dynamic asset for future development. A walk around the centre reveals beautiful spots where the historic character blends with the natural environment (see Figure 5) but also exposes the degradation of the public space surrounding important monuments, a lack of quality infrastructure for pedestrians and the problematic state of the listed neighbourhoods, in terms of preservation (see Figures 6, 7).

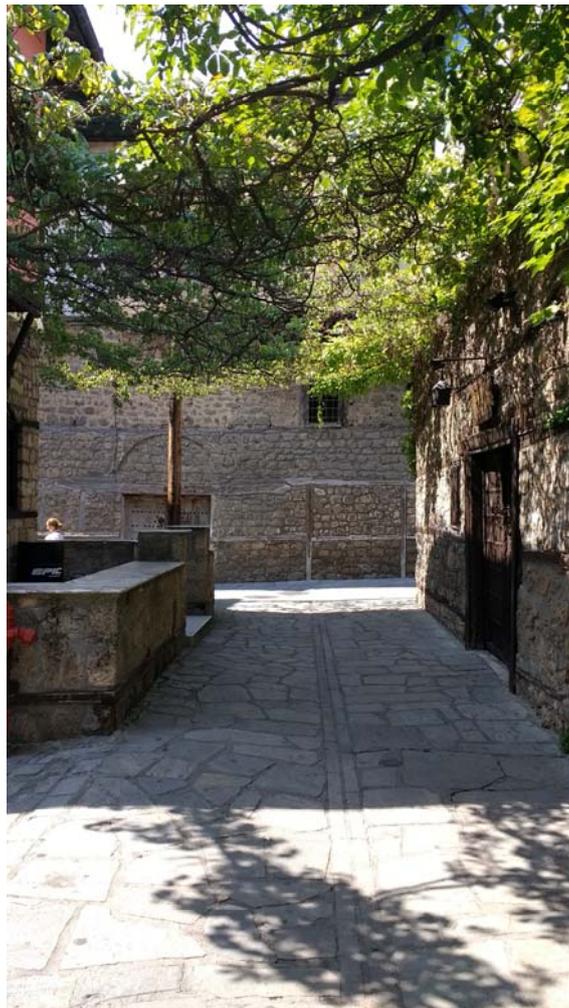


Fig. 5 View of a pedestrian street in the neighbourhood of Kyriotissa, one of the listed areas of Veria



Fig. 6 A street in the neighbourhood of Panagia Dexia

To add to this, the strict rules imposed on all construction and urban intervention because of the protected status of the areas around monuments and of the entire neighbourhoods, have created a negative image for the local Ephorate of Antiquities, which is the gate-keeper for the implementation of Greek Antiquities Law. A few months before the beginning of the ITI-SUD process, a group of local entities (including the Municipality and the Chamber of Commerce, as well as many trade unions) opposed the proposal of the Ephorate of Antiquities to declare the entire city a protected archaeological site. During the discussion of the issue in the Municipal Council, the President of the city council claimed that “no state entity can put handcuffs to the Municipality” (Smyrni, 2016a), implying that, if the proposal was approved, adhering to archaeological laws would halt municipal public works. Meanwhile, the Chief of the Ephorate of Antiquities maintained: “Veria is a sensitive area, with many archaeological traumas, an area where there has been a slaughtering of monuments. We cannot leave the monuments to the mercy of the bulldozer. It is an honour for a city to be saving its monuments” (Smyrni, 2016b). The opposition climaxed with harsh statements from both sides, as well as posters – sponsored by the Municipality and put up in prominent public spaces – that declared “NO to the plans of the Ephorate, NO to the decay of the city!”



Fig. 7 A pedestrian passage in the historic centre of Veria, in the Old Market area. Source: Irene Kampouroglou

## 4.2 THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF VERIA

The August 2016 Call for the submission of ITI-SUDs found the city of Veria in the midst of this unresolved confrontation.<sup>3</sup> The guidelines provided by the Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme (ROP) were clear enough: the Strategy had to be based on a strategic analysis that would conclude to a definition of a sub-district of the city (Implementation Area or IA), which had to meet a list of criteria for a 'degraded area.' Therefore, the model of ITI applied in the Region of Central Macedonia (for there are substantial differences among the 13 ROPs in Greece in the way ITIs were implemented) is an adaptation of the third 'scenario,' as described in the guidance provided by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (De Bruijn & Zuber, 2015), that of the implementation in a "District: A Deprived Urban Area" within a city. For anyone, with even a little knowledge of the city, reading this list of criteria, the choice of the district would be quite easy: the historic centre of the city, lined with monuments and degraded neighbourhoods, together with the neighbourhood of Prometheus on the other side of the river that runs through Veria, met almost all of them (see Table 1).<sup>4</sup>

FORMAL CRITERIA (MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT, 2015)	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPECIFIC AREA
Presence of acute economic problems	The area includes the commercial centre and the historic Old Market, which, since the economic crisis, shows signs of major decline (1 out of 4 shops are vacant)
Presence of acute social problems	A) Very high ageing index in the historic neighbourhoods (2,65 compared to 1,17 median city index) B) High percentage of population in danger of social exclusion (several NGOs already in operation to support vulnerable groups)
Degradation of the natural and built environment	A) The infrastructure of public spaces in the listed neighbourhoods is in bad shape and does not provide quality for residents and visitors B) The district lacks organised green areas, despite the presence of the river
Lack in basic infrastructure for universal mobility	Lack of provisions for sustainable urban mobility, especially in the immediate proximity of schools in the area (absence of school zones and of infrastructure for pedestrians)
Lack of sufficient connection with the surrounding area	The neighbourhood of Prometheus, which is on the other side of the river from the historic centre, is not organically connected with it and shows signs of seclusion
Areas characterized by a noteworthy cultural aspect	The area includes three of the four listed neighbourhoods, and 180 of the 240 listed buildings of the city of Veria
Urban districts that were the field of study during previous programs, such RFSC and URBACT	The historic centre was an area of study in the URBACT II LINKS program ("Low tech Inherited from the old European city as a key for performance and Sustainability)

Tab. 1 Matching the characteristics of the district with the formal criteria for choosing an area as Implementation Area for the ITI-SUD. Source: Municipality of Veria (2017). Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Veria

To support this choice, the analysis of the existing situation had to provide specific quantitative data on five major categories of characteristics: demographics, social, economic, environmental and related to climate change (see Figure 8). The SWOT analysis concluded that the specific area condenses the demographic,

<sup>3</sup> The situation regarding the re-definition of Veria's archaeological sites is still (October 2017) unresolved, since the Ephorate's proposal is still being discussed at the Ministry of Culture and no official decision has been made.

<sup>4</sup> The population of this specific area (16.674 people, according to the 2011 census) is about one third of the total population of Veria and it covers an area of 179 hectares, of which 34 hectares are protected environmentally as areas of "special natural beauty," namely the river and banks.

economic, societal and environmental challenges for Veria, while at the same time it includes the most dynamic elements for its future growth.

Following the definition of the IA and the detailed analysis of its present condition, the crucial phase was the formation of the overall Strategy, and, to this end, what proved to be instrumental was the involvement of local stakeholders and communities-of-interest. As it turned out, the publicity guidelines of the call and the mandatory public consultation 'forced' upon the Municipality, was not at all 'a waste of time,' as it is usually perceived locally, but made a great service into formulating an inclusive and effective Action Plan.

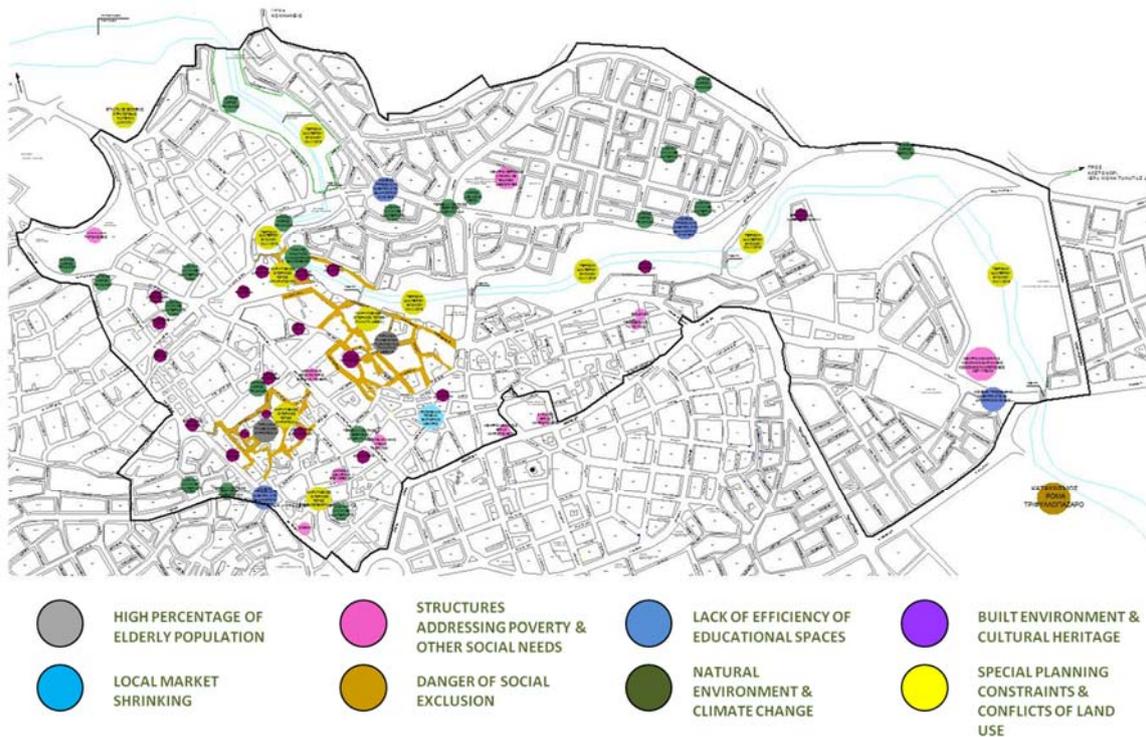


Fig. 8 Map of Veria showing the outline (continuous black line) of the Implementation Area and the concentration of various types of characteristics (colour dots). Source: Municipality of Veria (2017). Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Veria

Apart from the digital forum, fourteen meetings were organized in a period of two months with many local entities, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Veria Public Library, which was honoured with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's 2010 Access to Learning Award, non-governmental organizations operating in the social sector, community initiatives, and, most importantly, the local Ephorate of Antiquities. Precisely *in the course of the consultation phase*, it became clear that any proposal regarding the physical space of the listed neighbourhoods, intended to be included in the ITI-SUD plan, had to be discussed and agreed upon between the Municipality and the Ephorate of Antiquities. Urban design projects in the listed neighbourhoods had to have the approval of the Ephorate, and, on the other hand, the Ephorate could benefit from the ITI-SUD to get finance for works inside the IA, fostering the first Strategic Objective (SO1), that of promoting the cultural repository of the city.

The focus on heritage as developmental resource also meant that actions in other Strategic Objectives (such as SO3: support of local SMEs and advancement of employment through smart specialisation) had to have a cultural heritage orientation, too. For example, it was the Ephorate's idea to include in the ITI-SUD an action of adult education courses in the field of preservation of monuments and excavation techniques for unemployed individuals, since the Ephorate is always in search of specialised and skilled workers among local

residents. The final ITI-SUD of Veria focuses on the triptych “Nature – History – Hospitality.” It addresses all three pillars of Sustainability (Environment, Economy and Society) and is structured under four Strategic Objectives (SOs), which correspond to the Thematic Objectives (TOs) of the current Programming Period. The funding of the Action Plan is via ERDF (79%) and the rest through European Social Fund (ESF), as shown in Figure 9, corresponding to several investment priorities of the Regional Operational Programme. In detail, Strategic Objectives, Actions, Beneficiaries and funding of the ITI-SUD are shown in Table 2.

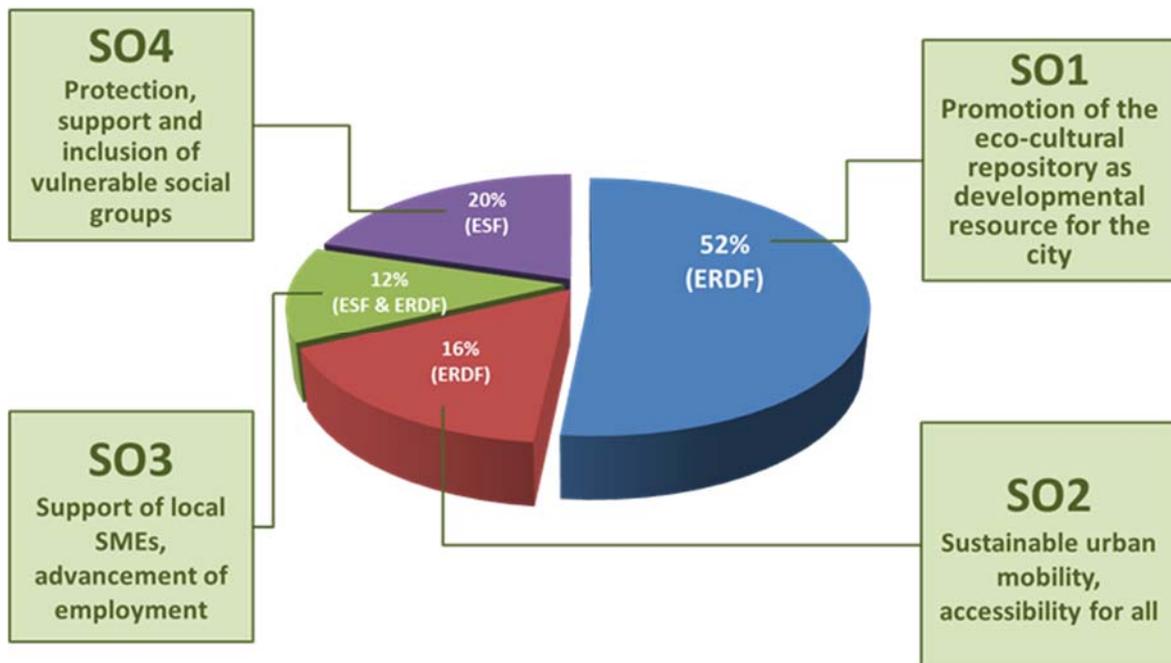


Fig. 9 Funding scheme of the Veria ITI-SUD: Distribution of the budget in the four Strategic Objectives (SOs) and ESIF funding

## 7 DISCUSSION

The case of the Veria ITI-SUD offers an opportunity to reflect on how a theoretical concept is applied in practice, especially in the constrained context of Greece, with its multiple problems regarding bureaucracy and resistance to transformation (Diamandouros, 1994). First of all, it is important to stress out the directive role of the Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme (OP) in the whole process. The guidelines given to Municipalities responsible for preparing the ITI-SUDs put emphasis on the integrated character of the Strategy, through all of its phases, following closely the relevant EU directives:

- In the documentation phase, data related to the demographic, social, economic and environmental challenges in the specific area had to be provided;
- In the analytical phase, challenges in the various sectors had to be interrelated with opportunities, based on local capital, to ensure that the revitalisation of the specific district has an overall developmental effect on the entire city;
- In the proposal phase, an integrated vision for the sustainable development of the specific area had to be presented, taking into account the cross-sectoral challenges, and setting specific strategic goals in accordance to the Priority Axes of the Regional OP preselected for the ITI-SUDs;
- Especially in the prioritisation of actions and distribution of funds, although the Municipality maintained its coordinating role, the consultation phase had to involve local stakeholders (NGOs, business consortia, other public bodies), which were also possible beneficiaries of actions included in the ITI-SUD;

We can notice several differences between the scenarios provided in the guidance paper of the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (De Bruijn & Zuber, 2015) and the process as it materialised in the local context.

- The Regional Managing Authority chose to pass the responsibility of defining areas for the ITI-SUDs on to the local Municipalities, without a concrete and detailed comparative analysis of its own about the entire Region; the eight Municipalities thus had to compete with neighbour cities, often sharing the same geographical characteristics, and also common problems;
- The ITI scenario presupposes a multiannual urban development strategy, springing from national legislation, but in the case of Greek cities such a development strategy is not compulsory.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS INCLUDED	BENEFICIARIES	THEMATIC OBJECTIVES OF EUROPE2020	BUDGET
<i>SO1: Promotion of the eco-cultural repository as developmental resource for the city</i>	Creation of a network of "green paths" connecting places of interest in the historic neighbourhoods	Municipality of Veria	TO6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (ERDF)	€2.401.000
	Creation of a new public square next to the Twin Ottoman Baths	Municipality of Veria		
	"Nature goes to school": Green infrastructure for schoolyards	Municipality of Veria		
	Restoration of the fortification walls and the tower of the Acropolis	Ephorate of Antiquities of Imathia		
<i>SO2: Sustainable urban mobility, accessibility for all</i>	Interventions in school zones to promote safe and sustainable urban mobility	Municipality of Veria	TO6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency (ERDF)	€617.000
	Public bike-hire system	Municipality of Veria	TO4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy (ERDF)	
<i>SO3: Support of local entrepreneurialism, advancement of occupation</i>	Creation of an "open mall" in the district of the historic Old Market	Local Merchants' Guild	TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs (ERDF)	€489.000
	Training of technicians specialising in conservation of monuments	Local Adult Education Centres	TO8: Promoting sustainable employment and supporting labour mobility (ESF)	
	Training and consulting for increasing employment skills	Veria Public Library	TO8: Promoting sustainable employment and supporting labour mobility (ESF)	
	Training for young entrepreneurs in creative and cultural economies	Chamber of Commerce of Imathia	TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs (ERDF)	
	Digital promotion of the city and City Branding	Municipality of Veria	TO2: Access to Information and communication technologies (ERDF)	
<i>SO4: Protection, support &amp; inclusion of vulnerable social groups</i>	Protection and support of victims of family violence, individuals with special needs, , disadvantaged children etc.	Six NGOs of the social sector operating within the IA	TO9: Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination (ESF)	€697.000
<b>Total budget of the ITI-SUD</b>				<b>€4.204.000</b>

Tab. 2 Strategic Objectives, Main Actions and Financing of the ITI in Veria. Source: Municipality of Veria (2017). Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Veria

- The ITI scenario also prescribes that, in the local Action Plan, the EU-financed actions are complimented by actions funded by other sources, such as national OPs, municipal budgets etc. This is not the case in the ITI-SUDs in Central Macedonia, where the local OP earmarked quite limited funds from ERDF and ESF for the ITIs, but no complimentary funds from horizontal OPs, or other sources. With the municipal budgets being very restrained, barely sufficing for operational costs and basic maintenance, the resulting very limited total budget of the ITI-SUD does not pragmatically correspond to the strategic aims set by it;
- No technical assistance was provided to the local authorities, despite the widely recognised complexity and novelty of the instrument.

Another way to view the Veria ITI-SUD is through the lens of 'procedural knowledge.' According to the report commissioned by the European Commission (De Bruijn & Zuber, 2015), the ITI has a so-called 'added value,' causing parallel effects in multiple scales. De Bruijn & Zuber's (2015) report follows on the steps of Barca's (2009) proposition that a place-based policy "promotes the supply of integrated goods and services tailored to contexts, and it triggers institutional changes" (Barca, 2009). Undoubtedly, the main scope of the ITI-SUD according to De Bruijn & Zuber (2015), that of preparing integrated strategies where they do not exist, was fulfilled, thus providing valuable knowledge and experience to the Municipality, which will be better prepared for future calls. Another aspect of the ITI, its mandatory coordination with other local, regional and national strategies, served towards a much better understanding of the rationale of EU funding. The ITI-induced promotion of partnerships was another strong element and the one most likely to open new platforms of dialogue for other projects, too. Especially the municipal authority, usually viewed as the handler of physical environment, was forced to see itself as one of many agents in the 'local milieu,' (Governa, 1997), this complex aggregate of actors.

An attempt to interpret the local ITI-SUD process from the perspective of political culture is perhaps the most difficult one. An important observation is that the 'underdog' culture (Diamandouros, 1994) still holds very strong in Greek society; while all this process was going on, many external partners, but also city officials, expressed a strong doubt whether the ITI-SUD Action Plan would actually be evaluated with objective criteria. Beliefs in clientelism continue to persist; even clear and diaphanous processes as this one, were judged as 'suspicious' for micro-political manipulation and interception.

Further research is needed regarding several issues of the Veria ITI-SUD, but probably the most important one is its comparison with ITIs of similar scale, within the Region, within Greece and across Europe, a comparison that could lead to an overview of what constitutes good practice and where Veria stands in that respect. Especially in regard to the distribution of roles between the Regional Managing Authority and the Municipality, a critical aspect of the local ITI implementation is becoming to come to surface: the high bureaucratic burden taken on by the local authority throughout the materialisation phase. Following the approval of the Action Plan of the ITI-SUD, the Municipality is now an 'intermediate body' (Region of Central Macedonia, 2017), a role attributed to it without taking into account the lack of expertise, personnel and resources that characterise most Municipalities of the Region.

Despite these shortcomings, the aims of the ITI approach have been, at least partially, met. The Action Plan for the Veria ITI-SUD was indeed produced by local stakeholders. It was based on a diagnosis and an analysis of local territorial assets, and shared with the public. As a place-based policy, it may have been 'imposed' upon the Municipality by exogenous powers (ranging from the Managing Authority to the Ministry of Economy & Development to the European Commission), however it was actualised by endogenous agents, who had to put their oppositions aside and agree upon a common strategy. One could say that the process adheres to the 'territorialist' approach, proposed in the mid 1980s by Italian geographers Dematteis, Turco and Quaini, socialist Bagmasco, economists Becattini and Latouche and urban planner Magnaghi (2011), who views the

territory as “a common good with its own historic[al], cultural, social, environmental and productive identity” of which the landscape is “its visible manifestation” (Magnaghi, 2011). Instead of conceptualising spatial problems as a multi-sectoral agglomeration of physical, social and economic characteristics, conventional definitions of ‘space’ are replaced by the Territorialists’ concept of SLoT, or Local Territorial System, defined as “an aggregate or a local network of agents that, according to their specific relation among them and with the specific territorial framework, act as a collective actor” (Berzi, 2017). Compared to urban renewal projects of previous Programming Periods, the ITI-SUD has been an optimistic change towards a more open-ended – and significantly, more effective – handling of EU funds. The up-to-now hegemonic, exclusive role of the Municipality has started to be replaced by a team of partners, all operating in the same territory. If, in the future, such a co-operation develops towards a sharing and contributing towards the same vision for the future development of the area, it would be a pragmatic concretisation of the SLoT concept.

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## IMAGE SOURCES

Fig. 1: [www.mapsofworld.com](http://www.mapsofworld.com). Fig. 2: [www.discoververia.gr](http://www.discoververia.gr). Figg. 3, 4, 5, 6, 9: Author. Fig. 7: Irene Kampouroglou. Fig. 8: Municipality of Veria (2017). Sustainable Urban Development Strategy of Veria.

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