

*Reports from  
External Experts  
GreenKeys workshop Volos  
10 -12 April 2006*

**The making of urban green spaces  
– fundraising for green space improvement**



Authors: Polly Turton, Pierre Wolkowinski, Antonios Rovolis

**October 2006**

Project coordinated by  
LEIBNIZ INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGICAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (IOER), DRESDEN

***Reports from  
External Experts  
GreenKeys workshop Volos  
10 -12 April 2006***

***The making of urban green spaces  
– fundraising for green space improvement***

## **List of Contents**

Introduction .....	3
1 Antonios Rovolis .....	4
2 Polly Turton.....	6
3 Pierre Wolkowinski.....	9



External experts in GreenKeys workshop in Volos, April 2006

## Introduction

GreenKeys was very glad to count with Antonios Rovolis, Polly Turton and Pierre Wolkowinski to share their expertise and experiences with the participants in the GreenKeys workshop held in Volos (Greece) in April 10-12, 2006. During this workshop the three external experts presented an introduction lecture and conducted working groups. Based on their expertise and the results of the working groups they presented the report are compiled here.

The GreenKeys workshop in Volos had as guiding theme: *The making of urban green spaces - fundraising for green space improvement*. One of the main purposes of this meeting was to discuss different experiences on innovative ways of financing green space development and management and generate new ideas for the GreenKeys partner cities.

Green spaces play an important role for a more sustainable urban development - this is without any controversy. The question is how to develop cities with a good green infrastructure in unpropitious - especially financial conditions. This is a current issue many cities are facing than till now most cities depends on public money to maintain and develop their green spaces.

Antonios Rovolis discusses the added value of green spaces for the urban economy, besides their ecological and social functions, and the problems green spaces have to overcome due to fact that local authorities are "pressed" to produce immediate results of their administration.

Polly Turton considers the three issues: strategic thinking, funding models and the characteristics of GreenKeys partner countries to build her arguments. She also makes the links between GreenKeys and CAFE space more visible. Another important task Polly brings out is if GreenKeys should support the European Landscape Convention publicly. It has been agreed that every partner will check its possibilities. GreenKeys' Work package 3 - Networking will take over than this task.

Pierre exposes the possibilities for public Private Partnership (PPP) concerning urban green spaces. Very valuable are the summary of the essential elements of urban green space public private partnerships. This can serve as good hints for developing ideas for alternative financing ways for urban green spaces. Pierre also emphasis that as in all partnerships, working together implies coordination, will and visible results.

The in this report summarised statements reinforce once again the need for green strategies in our cities and this should not be a buzzword but be an instrument to enable the cities to accomplish the challenge of sustainable urban development.

The GreenKeys IOER Team

## 1 Antonios Rovolis

### Harokopio University of Athens

Department of Geography

70 El. Benizelou Str

176 71 Athens - Greece

Email: [rovolis@hua.gr](mailto:rovolis@hua.gr)

One basic conclusion drawn at the Volos workshop is that urban green spaces do have a positive impact on urban economies. This impact can be broken down, for analytical reasons, to several different effects. The most visible positive effect of urban green spaces on the urban economy is on rent values. In most cases, rents (and land values) in areas adjacent to an urban green space are higher in comparison to those to similar neighbourhoods without green spaces. There can be, however, a negative side of this increase of land values. In the case in which urban green spaces are 'constructed' in the most affluent areas of the city, land prices in other neighbourhoods can decrease (in relative or even absolute terms).

It is also generally accepted that urban green spaces create positive externalities in the areas they are 'constructed'. The 'image' of the area, in most cases, is improved and acts as the 'catalyst' for the attraction of private investment and development to the area. The 'upgraded' image in combination to job opportunities created (through the attraction of private investment and new services) in the area attract more affluent residents. Again there can be a negative effect for areas away from the urban green spaces, as the former could be deprived from necessary private investment.

The most acknowledgeable positive effect of urban green spaces is, probably, that on the urban environment. Urban green spaces can be used for flood control and pollution amelioration in cities. However, urban green spaces can possibly play an even more important role that is to be the focal points for the local community.

These positive and negative effects, however, are not quantified in most cases. The paucity of quantitative evidence is startling, and one of the objectives of the GreenKeys project could be to create a comprehensive database. This database should include not just the quantifiable characteristics of urban green spaces, but also their qualitative characteristics expressed in numerical form (for instance, with the use of dummy variables). The impact of urban green spaces is usually estimated in economic analysis with the use of Hedonic Pricing Models.

There are, however, several problems regarding urban green spaces funding and maintenance. In many cases, their construction and maintenance is plagued by serious problems of under-funding. Experts say that creating a system of interconnected system of parks and open space is manifestly more beneficial than creating parks in isolation. This is not always possible as funds for the construction of urban green spaces are usually limited. The main reason is that public finance is the main source of finance for urban green spaces. One possible solution is to charge developers and future residents for construction and maintenance.

A related problem is that green spaces need time to mature. As local authorities are "pressed" to produce immediate results of their administration, they prefer to realise alternative projects. Funding the long-term and ongoing management & development of green spaces is more problematic than funding than initial capital works for two reasons: a) capital funding is generally more politically attractive, and b) a commitment to long-term revenue funding limits future options for those in control of budgets. In short it is easier to find funding for renovation or new facilities than for routine maintenance and upkeep. These problems can result to a "poor" condition of urban green spaces, which in turn appears to be a major barrier to their use.

Some other points raised by the participants of the Volos workshop were: In a few cases, the problem is not the paucity but the existence of many urban green spaces in the city. This can create problems of maintenance and equal distribution of urban green spaces across different neighbourhoods. Some countries, especially in the South of Europe, have tried to 'emulate' the fauna and flora of urban green spaces of the North. This creates additional costs of 'construction' and maintenance. A more sound strategy would be to use local endemic plants. In some countries pedestrianization was chosen as an alternative to urban green spaces. However, pedestrianization reduces pollution in the cities, whereas urban green spaces both reduces pollution and cleans the air we breathe. Urban green spaces should be part of an integrated strategy of municipalities / local government for the improvement of urban life and economy.

The GreenKeys project should produce, in my opinion, a publicly available database in which data and information regarding urban green spaces will be presented. This database could be extended in the future with relevant information and data for urban green spaces all over the world (local authorities could send that info); the database can be used for benchmarking and evaluation. The GreenKeys site could also present typologies of urban green areas (as there is a wide range in the quality of urban green strategies), pertinent bibliography, etc. There can be also tips and recommendation of how urban green spaces can become more accessible -both physically accessible and more user friendly- for communities. In other words, the site should be the focal point for researchers, local authorities, developers, etc.

## 2 Polly Turton

**CABE Space**  
**Commission for Architecture and**  
**the Built Environment**  
1 Kemble Street  
London WC2B 4AN - UK  
Email: [pturton@cabe.org.uk](mailto:pturton@cabe.org.uk)

The main outcomes from the three workshops held to discuss the issues surrounding funding for green space improvement are summarised below under three headings:

1. Strategic thinking
2. Funding models
3. Characteristics of GreenKeys partner countries
4. Links between the GreenKeys project and CABE Space work

### 1. Strategic thinking

We looked at the relevance of urban green space to wider issues of planning and development in Europe. The presence of a strategic planning framework was considered vital regardless of patterns and history of land ownership. It was generally felt that a lack of strategic planning can often result in confusion and uncertainty over use of certain areas land and how to fund land gained through planning and development opportunities.

There was a realisation that the political will and commitment of a high profile personality is essential to a successful green space policy (like a Mayor) but over reliance on any one individual is dangerous. The discussion highlighted the importance of embedding strategy and policy for urban green space independently of who's in power.

The integration of policies for urban green space in town and cities and 'green' space outside towns and cities can be challenging and involves negotiation and cooperation. The differences between green space issues in large metropolitan areas and in smaller municipalities were discussed. The scale and significance of site or issue in question affects the extent to which national government intervenes in the delivery of a project or initiative at the regional or local level.

It was recognised that in some instances in some countries legislative and administrative changes may be required to deliver high quality urban green space. This might range from encouragement and incentives for departments responsible for green space, planning and development to talk to and work with each other more regularly, to complete restructuring of the departments.

The importance of strategic long term thinking about optimising opportunities for combining increased funding for green space and achieving the objectives of sustainable development was noted.

### 2. Funding models

The groups gained a clearer idea of the range of models that currently exist for funding urban green space in towns and cities in the UK, Western/Northern Europe, North America and Australia/New Zealand. The reasons why 'alternative models of funding' are currently working were explored further. An appreciation was gained of which of the models might work or not in each partner country.

Taxation initiatives were considered to be applicable to some of the partner countries. For example, in Giulianova, Italy the municipality has succeeded in imposing an environmental tax to fund urban green spaces on a telecommunications company which wanted to erect mobile phone masts in the area.

Private public partnerships (PPPs) were generally considered feasible for green space in some of the partner countries, for example in Sofia, Bulgaria the private sector already pays for street lighting. But there was awareness of the risks of sacrificing 'public' services and spaces to 'private' interests if there is no public sector vision or state framework within which the market can operate effectively. Clarity is required over what types of public and private value will be generated from a PPP model for funding urban green space.

Sophisticated arguments about the economic, social and environmental value of urban green space are needed to make a convincing investment proposition to the private sector. Given the economic reality of a globalised, capitalist system, a sustainable balance needs to be found between funding and managing recreational uses, ecological functions and revenue generating activities.

Most project partner countries have a national lottery of some sort. There was a discussion about their role in generating funding for urban green spaces. Many national lotteries focus their funding on things considered to be 'cultural heritage'. GreenKeys partners should explore how green space can be communicated in the language of heritage ie its historical value, its cultural significance, and its potential as a heritage legacy for future generations.

### **3. Characteristics of GreenKeys partner countries**

An overview was obtained of the environmental, economic, social, political, cultural, historical, legislative and fiscal backgrounds for each partner country. The diversity and similarities of each country were noted.

'Urban green space as a key for urban sustainability' was considered to be a complex message which needed breaking down, adapting and made relevant to the specific contexts of each partner country/municipality. The idea of using GreenKeys as an overarching 'umbrella' within which partners could develop their own thinking was suggested.

The importance of making the most of economic, environmental and political opportunities available in each country to fund green space projects was highlighted.

Local, regional, national differences and similarities between countries were identified. There are similar patterns of land ownership in Slovenia and Greece with lots of small areas of land owned by local people. The history of Greek planning laws and decision making processes were generally considered to hinder innovative thinking about strategic, long term, sustainable planning.

Other land ownership issues exist amongst the former Communist countries in i.e. East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia. However, big differences exist between each country. The issues relating specifically to public ownership and privatisation of forests in these countries, particularly Slovenia were discussed.

Some of the problems/challenges presented by methods of budget allocation in cities were highlighted. In Budapest funding for green space is distributed to lots of small districts rather than pooling a central budget for strategic thinking across the whole city. The latter method was considered to be more effective if managed appropriately and democratically.

#### 4. Links between the GreenKeys project and CABE Space work

Key CABE Space publications summarising our research and practical advice of relevance to the GreenKeys project are listed below:

##### Research

- *'The value of public space'*
- *'Is the grass greener...?'*
- *'Does money grow on trees?'*
- *'Paying for parks: different ways of funding urban green space'*

##### Practical advice

- *'Green space strategies'*
- *'Guide to parks management plans'*
- *'Start with the park'*

I would suggest that the GreenKeys partners look at the general and specific relevance of the **European Landscape Convention (ELC)** to the GreenKeys project and project partners respectively. For further information about the ELC click on this weblink:

[http://www.coe.int/t/e/Cultural\\_Co-operation/Environment/Landscape/](http://www.coe.int/t/e/Cultural_Co-operation/Environment/Landscape/)

The status of GreenKeys project partners in relation to signing up and ratifying the ELC is summarized below:

Country	Date of signature	Date of ratification	Date of entry into force
• Bulgaria	20/10/2000	24/11/2004	1/3/2005
• Germany			
• Greece	13/12/2000		
• Hungary	28/9/2005		
• Italy	20/10/2000		
• Poland	21/12/2001	27/9/2004	1/1/2005
• Slovenia	7/3/2001	25/9/2003	1/3/2004

The GreenKeys project coordinators and individual project partners are encouraged to write a similar paper on the implications for partner countries and the GreenKeys project as a whole if all partner countries signed up to and ratified the ELC. The following questions might be a useful starting point.

##### Questions for consideration of GreenKeys project partners

- Should GreenKeys support the ELC publicly?
- How might the ELC relate to the specific circumstances and policies of each of the project partners?
- Should all GreenKeys partners encourage their Governments to sign and ratify the ELC (if they haven't done so already)?  
Could the GreenKeys project coordinators simplify and communicate key messages for partner countries?
- Should GreenKeys work in partnership with other key European organisations to promote the aims of the ELC to promote best practice across Europe?

### 3 Pierre Wolkowinski

#### Territoires, Identités et Développements

17c, rue d'Hénin  
62580 Bailleul-Sire-Berthoult - France  
Email: [pw.territoires.id@wanadoo.fr](mailto:pw.territoires.id@wanadoo.fr)

#### Possibilities for Public Private Partnership concerning urban green spaces

The large majority of the participants of the GreenKeys project are civil servants working for local authorities. Their vision is therefore coming from the point of view of the public sector. The private sector had, at the beginning of this conference a variable reputation amongst those present. One of the objectives became to dissipate sectorial wariness and to allow a wider understanding of who the actors on a given territory are, or can be.

The three working sessions allowed the participants not to start from scratch every time, but to profit from the work of the previous group, in order to move further forward more quickly.

#### 1. Inside knowledge

One of the keys of the accomplished work was to understand how in different forms of organisations we actually function. One of the tools shared were the so-called critical variables, worked out during another European project called Management and Promotion of Local Social Enterprises<sup>1</sup>. This consists of a tool which allows each structure to get to know itself, and therefore to become much more open to others, which would appear as a prerequisite of good public private partnership.

- **Awareness** - The level of awareness of an organisation shows its capacity to formulate its identity, its mission, its qualities and its political motivation. It also shows the balance between its values (social values/quality) in relationship to the role it wants to play in the territory, and ideally with a link to its commercial qualities.
- **Visibility** – What do all types of organisations do to be visible? In what way are they capable of promoting aspects of their own identity? The importance of this variable can be measured from the point of view of the vision that others have of the structure:
  - What do the other actors (from the other sectors) think about this structure, from the point of view of its global project, its products, missions, added social value?
  - Do these actors have an opinion on the coherence between the message that the structure is trying to promote and its values, qualities and its identity?
  - Do the other structures see it as a partner/actor within the economic, political and social aspects of the territory?
- **Professionalism** - the “soft”: mutualisation of everyone’s capacities, development of professional competence, internal communication, clear definition of all the posts and responsibilities, relationships with “clients”, human resources, training, management and quality control.
- **Internal structuring; a good quality organisation** – judicial structure, decision making methods, remuneration policy, (job contracts, social advantages), agreements, partnership agreements, relationships with institutions.
- **Networking** – Formal and informal networks have helped to create many organisations in all the sectors and have an influence on their future. They play a role in the relationships with other sectors and in the way contacts can be made in different territories. What is important is not the position of a given structure in a network, but the way in which it can contribute to the creation and development of the network, by producing and redis-

---

<sup>1</sup> MPLE web site address: [www.mple.info](http://www.mple.info)

tributing social capital<sup>2</sup>. In other words, its degree of implication and contribution to the “quality of life”.

## 2. Private structures as partners

The separation between structures of different sectors is very strong when thought about in a global manner. However, if the exchange is about a particular company, which is “at the end of the road”, the sectorial hang-ups and differences change.

What is interesting to note, is that the participants have insisted during the debates on concepts which put the lime light of what is common:

- A common territory
- A common culture
- Common needs (communication, pride, housing, health, education...)
- Market of values
- But also the market – invisible hand
- Private structures actors of their territory

## 3. The role of local authorities

Even though mostly from local authorities the participants expressed certain openness to working in new ways, without, for the time being able to develop these features otherwise than through experimentation. The elements discussed included the new role of local authorities to act strategically in and for a socially responsible territory, to facilitate the development of new initiatives, to integrate employment into their activities, to become socially responsible as employers. Perhaps the most significant element was to be able to consider partnerships with all other parties as the **new institutional framework** for action.

## 4. Socially responsible territories<sup>3</sup>

The presentation of the 13 “socially responsible territory” indicators permitted stimulated a new horizon, on what could be understood as a strategic decision making tool, which allows an overview of what is happening on a given territory.

### Principals

The practical work based on the REVES TSR® approach allowed the participants to define (rapidly) examples of principals, which seemed important at that time and some of which could perhaps become transversal indicators for a given territory. Were mentioned:

- Legal framework
- Public procurement
- Duties of the public sector
- Benefits of PPP
- Definition of PPP
- Human capacity (inhabitants as a development potential)
- Partners
- Participation
- Raising awareness about PPP
- Time
- Networks
- Creativity
- The art of clever negotiation (tango syndrome)
- Greenkeys examples

---

<sup>2</sup> social capital (trust, reciprocity and mutuality, shared norms of behaviour, shared commitment and belonging, formal and informal social networks and effective information channels).

<sup>3</sup> REVES TSR® see Annexe 1

As can be seen in Annexe 1, several of these elements overlap with previous work done on the TSR concept.

**Vectors of development:**

Public Private Partnerships (PPP) require a cultural adaptation, when relationships are being built, or transformed on a given territory. This naturally implies a posture of openness to new partners, which should become an invitation to work together. This requires a good understanding of who the other partners are and how they function. It is also necessary to open up the partnership potential and space to accommodate the new actors, by developing a new togetherness on the territory (1+1=2 or 3?). The symbol of the « tango syndrome » - dancing together very close but superbly coordinated, became the leitmotif of this debate.

These new relationships must be built on knowledge, which in the area of green spaces could be capitalised not only locally, but on a European level and this perhaps with the help of a European network. This is extremely important as the management of green spaces, and everything that goes with it, implies taking into account not only the human element, present on the territories, but also a clear position concerning "how green" the territories will be able to become.

**The essential elements of urban green space public private partnerships:**

As in all partnerships, working together implies coordination, will, visible results etc. Here are some of the variables, which the workshops found to be particularly pertinent.

**■ *Sharing a common vision:***

Are the different new partners of the territory ready to look at it in a way which can be positive, where a minimum of agreement about what the territory is, and what it can achieve is shared.

**■ *A role for each partner***

In such a case each partner must find his or her place or role. Excluding a partner leads to misunderstandings, which can undermine the partnership. Obviously this posture requires a minimum of mutual respect between partners, even those from the private and public sectors!

**■ *Raising awareness, communication and pedagogical competence***

On the basis of such a new "pact" the role of the local authority can be very strong in these different domains, which should help to forge solid partnerships on the given territory.

**■ *Participation of all stakeholders***

When the other partners are not known, how can they support a common project? Taking into account of all stakeholders opens up the partnerships, gives it more credibility and will permit much more ambitious projects together.

**■ *Knowledge of PPP stages and engineering***

The research done by the OCDE shows that partnerships follow certain rules, there are different stages and the social engineering which is inside really needs to be worked out<sup>4</sup>.

**■ *A transversal global approach to local challenges***

Local difficulties and situations are often lived through as if they were original and impossible to resolve. However a good knowledge of what goes on elsewhere can lead to a

---

<sup>4</sup> OECD website: [www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/forum/partnerships](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/forum/partnerships)

better understanding of local data and a phenomenon, permitting an overview of what happens elsewhere. Act locally, think globally.

■ *Global knowledge of all actors on the territories*

This form of globalisation – knowing all the local actors implies that a local territory has things to say, to its neighbours, to the planet. Especially in terms of green management, this would appear to be vital.

■ *Networks/interfaces*

However this can't come about, if each territory acts on its own. Today the concept of visibility of local actions is central to the meaning of what is being done. Without interfaces and networks the best local project will not be able to achieve the appropriate results. What is not seen does not exist.

■ *Creativity*

This means that locally, all the united actors must be creative, in order to put their territory on the map. This implies mutual confidence, a high level of social capital and super interactions between the actors. Without a positive standpoint no local development is possible.

■ *Strategic thinking, local actions*

The planet needs all these local positive actions. Without them, what future does it have? But it has to know about them.