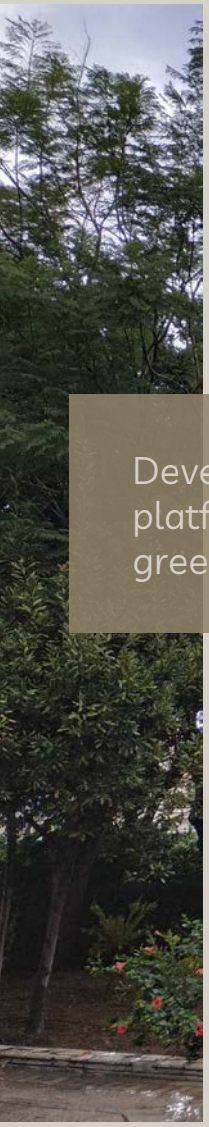
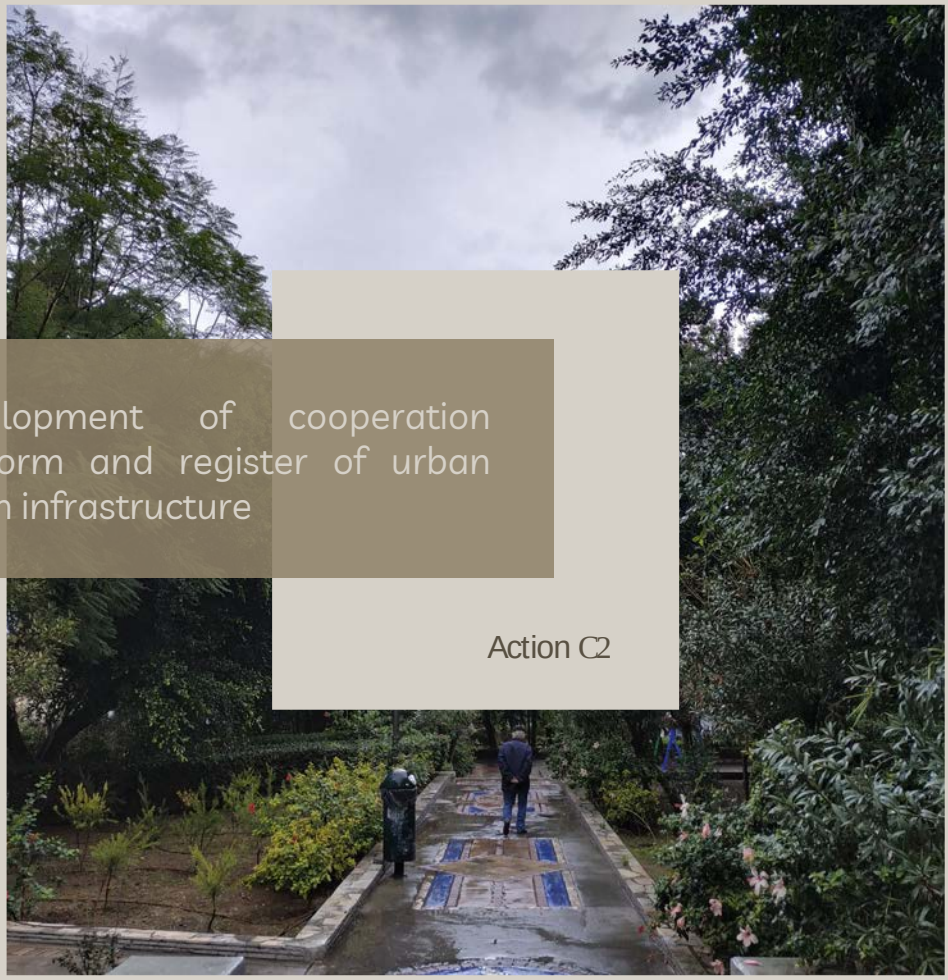
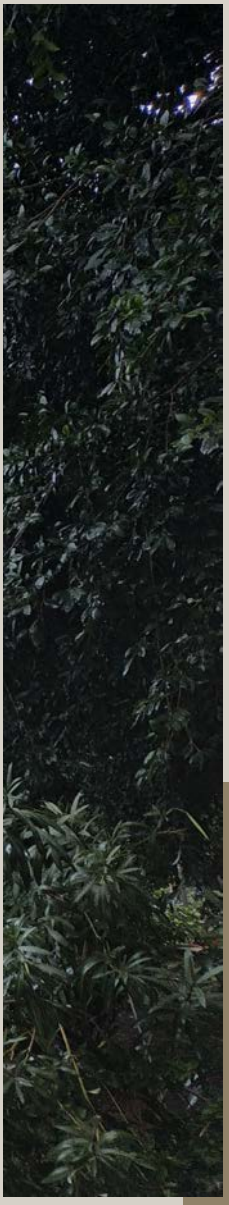
LIFE GrIn

Promoting urban integration of GReen INfrastructure to improve climate governance in cities

LIFE17GIC_GR_000029







Development of cooperation platform and register of urban green infrastructure

Action C2

The project "Promoting urban integration of GReen Infrastructure to improve climate governance in cities" (LIFE17GIC GR000029) is co-funded by the European Union in the context of Programme LIFE, with the contribution of the Green Fund

LIFE GrIn project at a glance

The project **LIFE GrIn: Promoting urban integration of GReen INfrastructure to improve climate governance in cities** (LIFE17GIC/GR/000029) is included in the programme LIFE, the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action, and specifically in the category of Environmental Governance and Information actions. This category supports projects related to awareness raising, environmental training and capacity building, compliance and institutionalization of new legislative frameworks, knowledge development and citizen participation.

The main objective of the LIFE GrIn project is **to incorporate climate governance in the management of green infrastructure** at local level through the establishment of an integrated policy framework focusing on Urban Green Areas (UGAs).

The project promotes urban integration, which is translated into thinking of urban green spaces not as isolated units, but as vital elements of the urban landscape, with their own specific set of functions and contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. This approach capitalizes on UGAs as valuable resources for the adaptation of cities to climate change and the mitigation of its impacts through the principles of Urban Forestry. The more general view includes the adoption of the EU policies and tools, with the aim of improving the quality and connection of green spaces, with a view to creating more resilient cities to climate change.

Goals

1. Establish an integrated policy framework for the management, monitoring and evaluation of UGAs based on cooperative planning and best practices in urban forestry
2. Integrate and promote the EU policies in relation to climate change in local governance, as well as sustainable urban planning and design
3. Quantify and multiply the impact of UGAs on climate problems in cities
4. Promote the incorporation of sustainable urban forest management for climate change in the Covenant of Mayors
5. Improve citizens' quality of life through the mitigation of the effects of climate change and the multifunctional planning of UGAs
6. Raise awareness amongst decision-makers regarding the necessity and benefits of taking action on climate change adaptation/ mitigation at municipal level
7. Raise public awareness and promote active participation of stakeholders
8. Conserve nature and biodiversity and improve habitats for species in cities

Beneficiary Partners

Coordinating beneficiary is the Institute of Mediterranean Forest Ecosystems and Forest Products Technology (IMFE), one of the oldest research institutes in Greece that falls under the Hellenic Agricultural Organization "DEMETER". Associated beneficiaries are HOMEOTECH Co. a private company that elaborates environmental studies and projects, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece and the Municipalities of Amarousion and Heraklion.

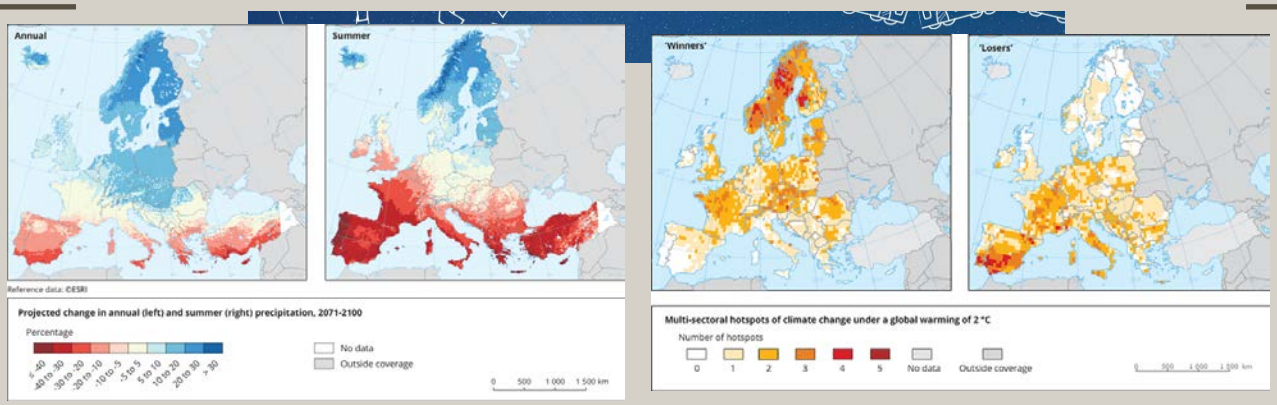
Budget

Total: 1,763,885 Euro

EU Contribution: 1,015,505 Euro (= 58.34%)

Introduction

Urban areas are the hotspots of global change, as they experience intense alterations in population, climate, economic, energy conditions, and the greatest consumption of resources as well. Thus, the perception of urban areas focuses on their negative effects.

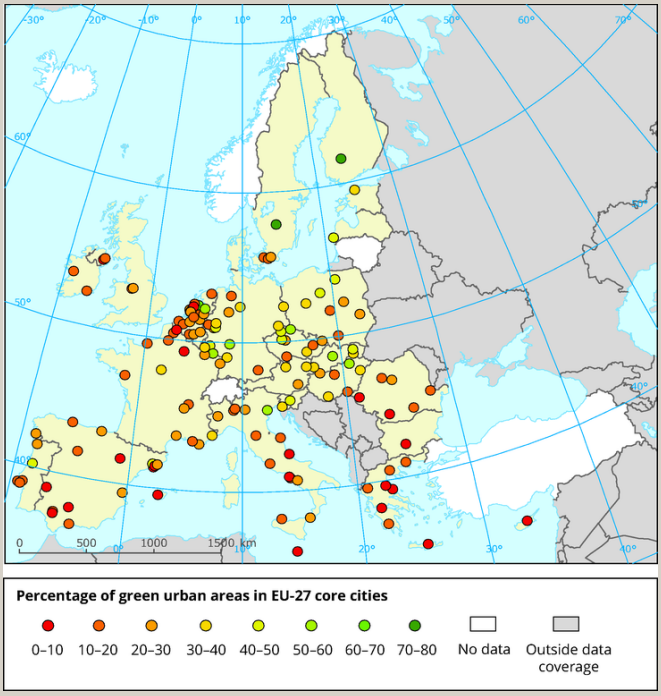


However, cities themselves are considered as **ecosystems**, rich in species and diversity, with an impressive presence of organisms that show excessive vitality, both inside and outside city's borders.

Ecosystem functions are physical, chemical and biological processes that take place in order to maintain itself. At the same time, they create **benefits and goods** that satisfy human needs, thus offering **solutions** to face challenges (nature based solution). They provide multiple benefits by promoting the sustainable use of resources, ensuring better health, increasing social cohesion and creating economic opportunities.

Part of these solutions is the establishment and the enhancement of Urban Green.

Green infrastructure is the most important element for the sustainability and the maintenance of an environment of high quality. This is also shown by a large number of researches and publications, which now prove quantitatively that urban green in general, and organized urban green areas in particular, provide significant benefits for local economy, for people's physical condition, mental health and the environment.



However, at both national and European Union level, there is little precise quantitative or qualitative information regarding the current state of urban infrastructure and urban green areas, their functions, services and directions for their optimization.

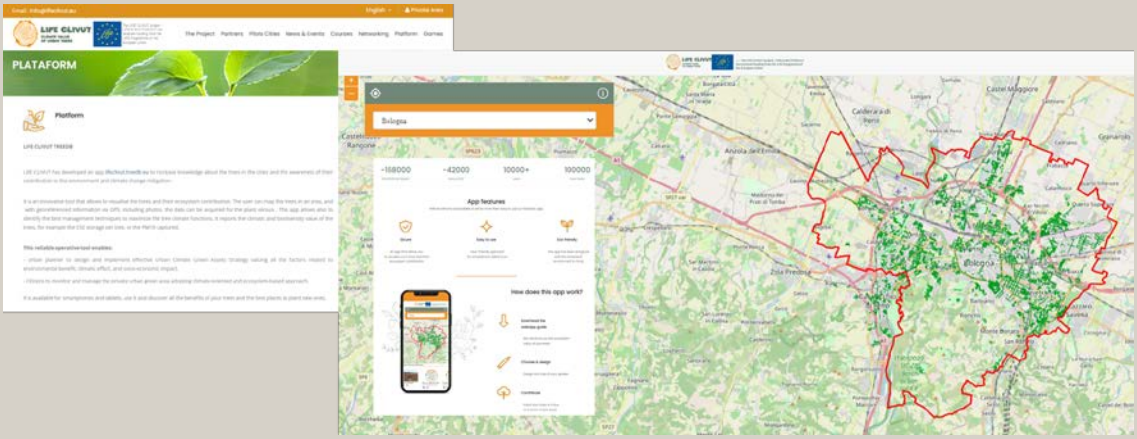
The result of the lack of this information is that it is difficult to ensure that even the scarce public spaces are properly distributed and deliver the best possible result.

Cooperation platform and register of urban green infrastructure

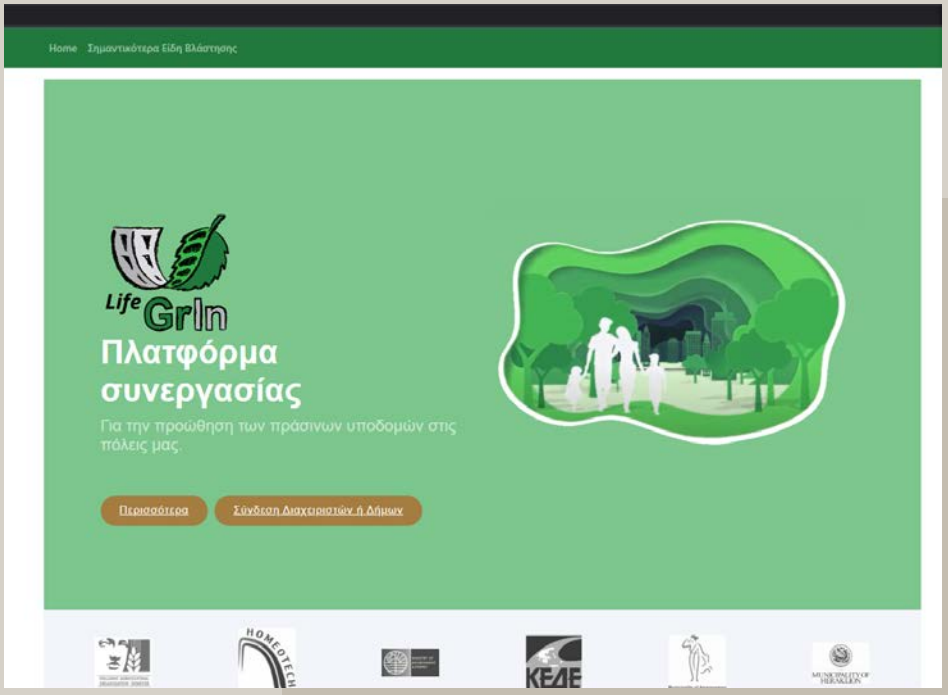
Therefore, countries such as United Kingdom - with **CABE Space** - Italy and Portugal - through the **LIFE CliVUT platform** - Germany - with additions to the **GCD**, are trying to create a comprehensive database, in which the state of the urban green infrastructure will be described, at national level.

cabe space

In other countries, the efforts made concern individual municipalities.



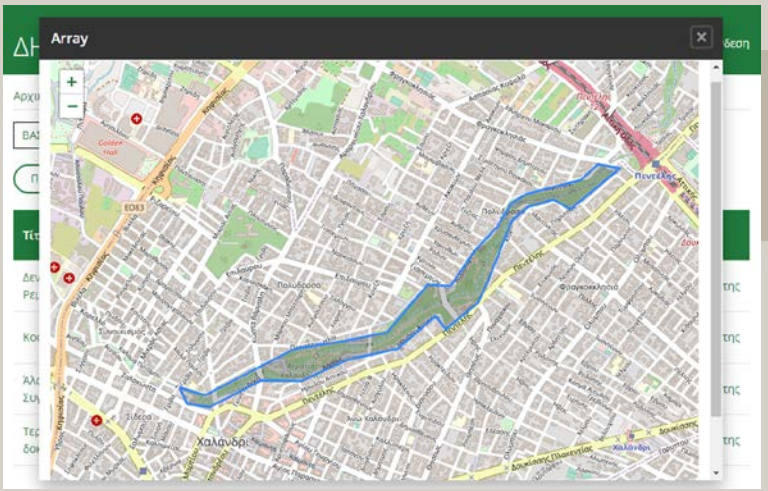
In the framework of the LIFE GrIn project and based on this concept, the National **Green db Cooperation Platform** was created, which it is aspired to develop into a **National Register of Urban Green Infrastructure**..

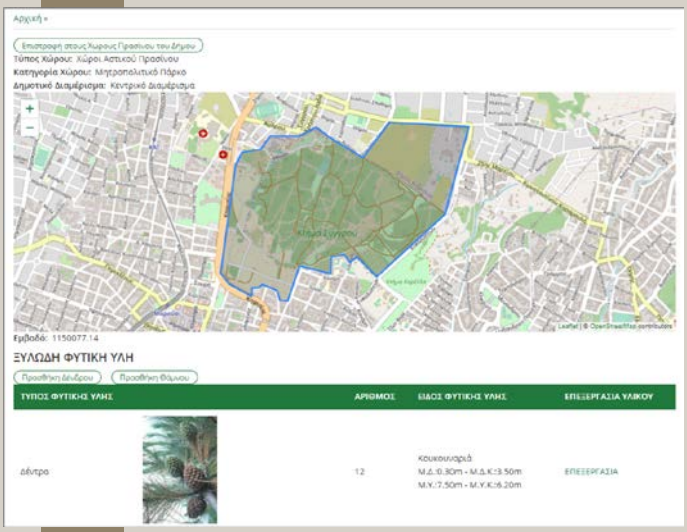


Cooperation platform and register of urban green infrastructure

Through the platform, each Municipality will separately provide information, which can also be managed by a national central service and which concerns:

- **Quantity** of every type of urban green infrastructure, including both absolute and relative numbers
- **Quantity** of woody vegetation
- **Quality** of woody vegetation, including assessments of general health, silvicultural
- **Use** of urban green infrastructure, as it is defined by each category of Urban Green Area
- **Mapping** Urban Green Areas, in order to indicate and justify their **proximity and dispersion**





- **Management and maintenance** of urban green, where applicable.
- **Value** of urban green infrastructure, as attributed by its ecological dimension, its climate value and the importance of urban green for citizens.

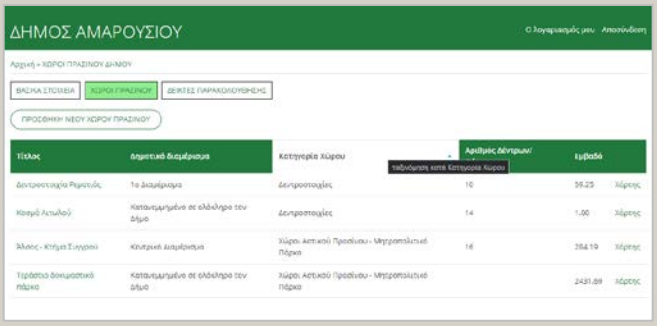
Life GrIn

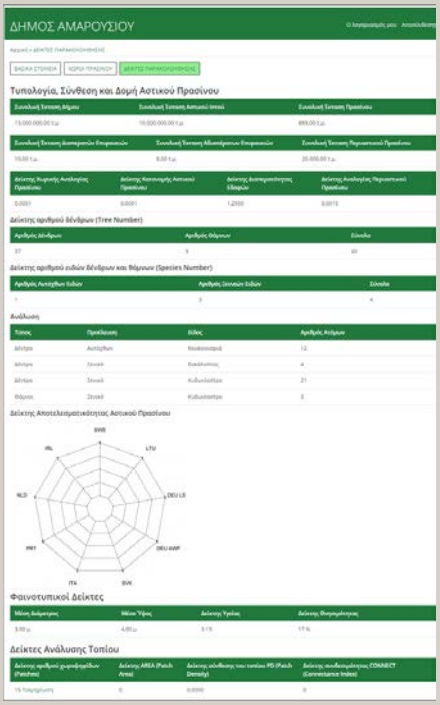
Cooperation platform and register of urban green infrastructure

Ultimately, the platform that was created in the frame of LIFE GrIn project, will help in one hand each Municipality to gather and organize data and information about urban green and in the other hand the central services:

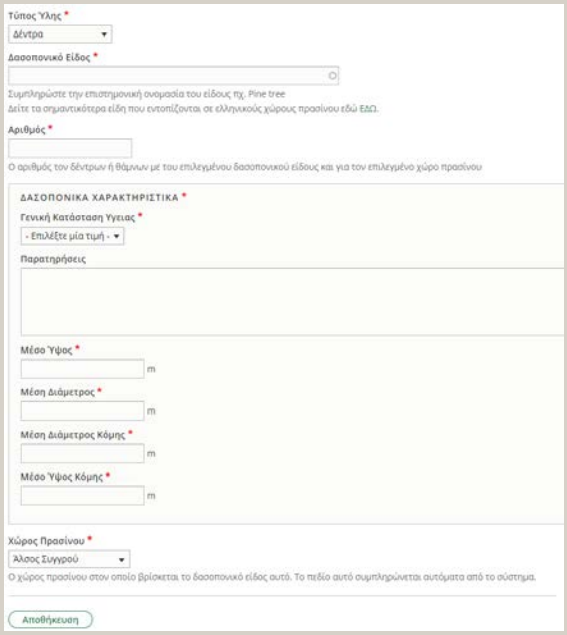
- **To set the baseline**, in order to be able to monitor the results of the silvicultural treatments and measures, and the overall urban green management

- **To make the most** of the existing urban green infrastructure

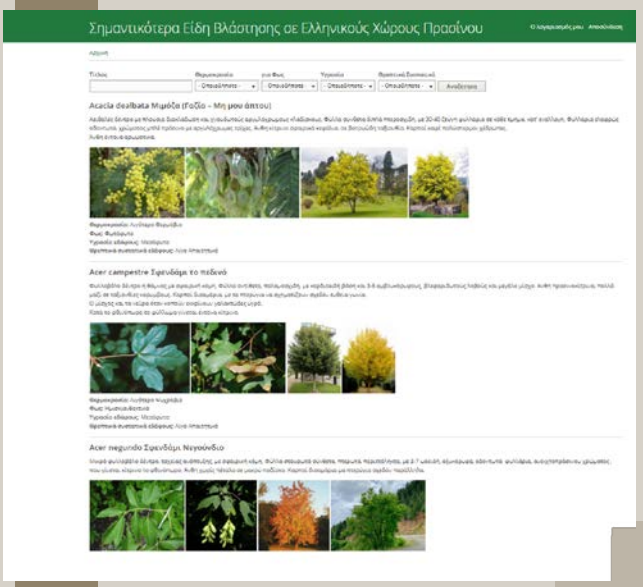




- **To calculate and evaluate** a range of indicators, which are used both to monitor any changes and to investigate future trends



- To identify significant **gaps** in the existing data



- To estimate necessary **budgets**

- **To inform and raise awareness** to citizens.

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