



Municipality area	10,805 km ²	Population	75.327 (2001)
		Trend	increasing
GDP per inhabitant	11.300 € (2000)		
Area of green spaces	All open spaces: 6,996 km ² ; Urban green spaces (private + public): 6,932 km ²		
Area of green spaces per inhabitant	92,8 m/inh. (all open spaces); 90 m/inh. (urban green spaces: public + private)		



Halandri and its green structure

The municipality of Halandri is one of the largest in the wider Attica region of Greece. It is located on the north-eastern side of the Attica basin in the foothills of mount Pendeli. The climate is characterised as being medium dry, whilst the wider area belongs to the Mediterranean zone of evergreen vegetation. The municipality's designated land use is mainly residential with two urban centres. The city's population has been increasing over several years,

The western part of the city is influenced by the presence of the Halandri stream. This is regarded as the main 'green' structure and is a major natural asset for the wider region, offering much in the way of 'green' potential. The Halandri stream also has an important influence on the microclimate of the surrounding area and is protected as a contributory feature within the natural landscape. Special restrictions apply in the vicinity of the stream regarding land use and building construction.

Halandri is one of the few cities endowed with a large percentage of green spaces: largely influenced by the presence of the stream. Whilst there are a significant number of smaller green spaces scattered throughout the municipality area, there is considerable demand for more accessible and better quality green spaces.

The development of green spaces faces a number of conflicts and obstacles ranging from insufficient finance, bureaucracy, ineffective green planning instruments, insufficient space for new green areas (in some parts of the city) through to pressures for building on green areas. In order to acquire land for green spaces and to change ownership the municipality is required to expropriate land. The process is characterised by high acquisition costs, lengthy procedures and in most cases unsatisfactory results, due to inefficiency.



Urban green space strategy

The challenges and approach to building an urban green space strategy

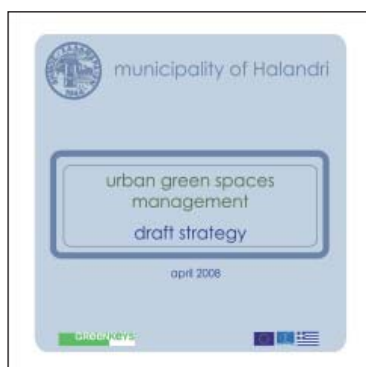
The new administration is environmentally orientated and aware of the need for its support for the process required to create a sustainable city. As this Green Space Strategy is the first opportunity that has become available to establish a basis for policy making there is considerable optimism that approval will be forthcoming from the City Council. This, however, can only be claimed when the Green Space Strategy is finished and ready to be published.

Currently the only official binding spatial legislation at local level is a Master City Plan. This only sets some very basic rules for urban green spaces such as the minimum proportion of green spaces in the whole city area. There is a lack of capacity and experience in Halandri and Greece in general regarding Green Space Strategy formulation. This will be the first in the country as there are no existing ones from which to draw examples, especially at local authority level.

The Halandri Green Space Strategy is the outcome of a different set of thought processes in policy making at city level. It seeks to start a process of communication about sustainability and green spaces. The intention of the process is to provide a tool for developing new, whilst improving the existing, urban green spaces of the municipality. Priority green areas, which would be supported in the future, include city squares, natural protection areas, cemeteries and recreational areas such as urban and neighbourhood parks and playgrounds.

The city administration has a challenge to raise public awareness of the importance of urban green spaces and the need for a strategic document on the topic. This is particularly so as it embodies a new way of thinking.

The implementation of all the critical issues of the Green Space Strategy is planned for the next 10 years. The securing of financial support and the education and training of municipal staff will be necessary steps to achieve the Green Space Strategy.



The strategy process started with the production of an outline and draft strategy by a small strategy group, then secured approval by the municipality of the outline, following a public consultation process. This will lead to the formulation of a final strategy, which will be approved by the City Council and implemented by the municipality.

Description of the urban green space strategy

Mission, vision and goals

Vision: "To safeguard and preserve the existing green spaces within the city. To introduce new ones and develop them so as to provide an environment that is 'worth-living-in' for the citizens and a playground for children"

Goals: environmental protection, improvement of green spaces (quality), accessibility to all users, interconnection of green spaces, raising public awareness.



The concept and main issues

Main issues:

- Environmental protection
- Quantity analysis (existing green spaces, needs for new green spaces)
- Quality analysis (equipment, flora & fauna)
- Accessibility (distribution, interconnection, potentials)
- Classification of green spaces (types, function, needs, problems)
- Involvement of all stakeholders.



Guidelines, recommendations, standards

Guidelines will be set down in the next step of the strategy preparation, on the basis of the GreenKeys Project, pilot project implementation and outcomes, together with the Habitat agenda and community needs.

Important tasks and actions

Regarding general needs and demands: to influence the general city plan (about the distribution of green spaces), create interconnecting pedestrian and cycling links (also green interconnection), develop implementation mechanisms for improved quality green spaces, provide accessibility for the disabled to all public spaces

Regarding sustainability: increase biodiversity (various species, endemic species), improve the microclimate, stimulate a low cost maintenance design, develop a sustainable maintenance scheme and establish a monitoring mechanism.

Regarding public involvement and promotion: involve stakeholders (design), engage volunteer groups in order to facilitate knowledge transfer; interest and a sense of shared responsibility, promote environmental education, publicise activities through the municipality website (important information, strategy document), organize public events, organize the green space personnel, organize field activities for students and school teachers.

Regarding monitoring: reviewing the strategy, targets achieved/not achieved, new needs and demands, assessing public participation and awareness levels.



Good practices/lessons learnt

1. development of a strategy in the absence of supportive legislation and previous experience
2. the importance of political support since the early stages of building a Green Space Strategy
3. The Municipal Company (Flya) has financed minor interventions for the restoration of small scale open spaces and has also undertaken maintenance works at several children's playgrounds.





Green Project > GreenKeys Park

Key data

Area	0,09 ha
Targeted users	General public, People working or spending time for various reasons in the city centre
Responsible body	Halandri's Municipality
Size of the project	medium
Progress of the project	Completed March 2008



Short description of the project

The main role of the project is to improve the existing green areas and inform/educate the public about urban green by cultivating and selling endemic plants and providing consultation about their better use. The surrounding neighbourhood and the city centre (administrative/commercial) will benefit from the project. The site is on a flat terrain and forms part of a wider open space. This hosts a kids' library with garden and a cement covered basketball court with basic and poorly maintained basketball equipment. The selected location, though described as green space, is characterized by the absence of vegetation. Only a stand of 'not-so healthy' pine trees is present. The site is surrounded by a 4m high metallic fence.

Objectives and goals for the improvement

- Increase the biodiversity; promote the use of endemic vegetation. Make the site attractive and accessible to everyone.



Challenges and Problems

- Lack of collaboration between the different departments of the Municipality.
- Lack of interest by inhabitants (no involvement of stakeholders in the design phase).
- Delays resulting from bureaucratic problems.

Actions undertaken

All official documentation was approved and signed during the summer of 2007 and the construction phase began at the beginning of November 2007. The necessary infrastructure was constructed and the project was completed within 3 weeks. This was achieved as a result of the persistent and personal involvement in the activities by the Mayor himself. The phase of planting took place in the 3rd and final week, around mid December. Inauguration of the pilot project site and delivery to the public was set for late March 2008.



Maintenance Concept

The Municipality of Halandri has no specific concept or provision for the maintenance of the GreenKeys Green Project. The maintenance of the Green Project will, most probably, be incorporated in the regular maintenance scheme the municipality has for all its urban green spaces. Whilst, like all other GreenKeys Partner Cities, there is a connection between maintenance and resources (inevitably a lack of money), there are, however, attempts to involve public and private companies in maintenance schemes. The use of endemic plant species, which show increased tolerance to the local climatic conditions, will reduce the maintenance costs.



Good practices/lessons learnt

- The use of endemic vegetation that enables low maintenance costs.
- PR activities: breaking ground event with presentation of Pilot Project model, events for presentation of Green Space Strategy, concepts, competition of Pilot Project, Common GreenKeys event.
- Halandri draft Green Space Strategy – a good starting point as an example for other Greek cities.