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Article

Making Thessaloniki Resilient? The Enclosing Process of the Urban Green Commons

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Abstract
In the global hegemonic resilience discourse, green infrastructure is projected as a "win-win" approach to urban planning. Following the trend of adopting resilience as the new silver bullet for urban development, and in the midst of the recent financial crisis, Thessaloniki, Greece, joined the 100 Resilient Cities network of the Rockefeller Foundation in 2014. This event marked a shift in the city's public space production and governance programme, introducing new private actors in decision-making processes, an emphasis on green space economic benefits, and an extensive regeneration programme heavily focused on the city centre. The article scrutinises these changes to uncover the policy implications of the turn to resilience in green public space production. Based on data on green public space spatial distribution; semi-structured interviews with municipal representatives and senior employees and representatives of the government, civil society, and local professional associations; policy document analysis; and comparative analysis of all relevant development and planning documents, and drawing on Brenner and Theodore's (2005) conceptualisation of neoliberalism, the article argues that greening policies in Thessaloniki form an ongoing enclosing process of the urban green commons that articulates in a threefold manner: their discursive construction as "natural assets," the implementation of spatially selective policies, and the post-politicisation of decision-making processes.

Keywords
Greece; green infrastructure; green public spaces; neoliberalisation; spatial justice; Thessaloniki; urban greening; urban resilience

Issue
This article is part of the issue "Social Justice in the Green City" edited by Roberta Cucca (Norwegian University of Life Sciences) and Thomas Thaler (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences).

1. Introduction

Thessaloniki, the second largest city in Greece, joined the 100 Resilient Cities network (100RCn) of the Rockefeller Foundation in 2014. The 100RCn was inaugurated to facilitate the resilience-building process of cities around the globe (Berkowitz & Kramer, 2018) and was embraced by international organisations like the World Bank and the UN. At the same time, the network projected resilience as the "new green" (Quirk, 2013, p. 1) and a major business opportunity for the private sector (Rodin, 2013). In fact, resilience arose as the new "one size fits all" model for urban environmental development during the past 20 years. Within this discourse, "green infrastructure" (GI) is projected as a "win-win" approach to urban planning, or, as Matthews et al. (2015, p. 157) argue, "an economic case for greening." However, critical accounts of resilience and the role of GI projects underscore their economistic character, since they pay little attention to ecological and socio-political issues related to green public space production (Matthews et al., 2015; Webber et al., 2021). But how does this process unfold in urban settings with regard to green spaces?

This article answers the above question by shedding light on how urban greening policies in the context of resilience, often framed as a simultaneous enhancement of GI and the green commons (Frantzeskaki, 2019; Simić et al., 2017), can in fact result in the shrinkage of the latter. In doing so, it examines the cumulative effects of successive urban greening interventions, promoted in the

context of a market-oriented urban development programme, as a process of enclosing the urban green commons. Building on an understanding of enclosures as part of broader neoliberalisation processes, the article draws upon the threefold framing of neoliberalism in the literature, as described by Brenner and Theodore (2005, pp. 103–106), as "a modality of urban governance…a spatially selective political strategy…[and] a form of discourse, ideology, and representation." All three dimensions support "a politically guided intensification of market rule and commodification" (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 3). In more detail, on the governance level, neoliberalism tends to shrink democratic participation, alter governance mechanisms to open them up to market representatives, and build an urban development vision based on individual responsibility and competitiveness (Brenner & Theodore, 2005; Cook & Swyngedouw, 2012; Keil & Boudreau, 2004). The spatial selectiveness of neoliberalism refers to the spatial reference of related policies and the unequal distribution of their positive and negative impacts throughout cities and scales (Brenner & Theodore, 2005; Heynen et al., 2006). Finally, neoliberal discourses are articulated around competitiveness, entrepreneurialism, individual responsibility, and efficiency, rather than around urban justice, equality, or democratic governance (Brenner & Theodore, 2005). Regarding the environment, neoliberal discourses tend to naturalise the roots, causes, and effects of resource depletion, climate change, and the climate crisis, promoting ecological modernisation (for an account of ecological modernisation discourses see Apostolopoulou et al., 2012; Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2006; Bettini & Karaliotas, 2013).

Building on the above understanding of neoliberalisation, the concept of "enclosing" as a verb, instead of "enclosures" as a noun, is coined to progress our understanding of such processes that are increasingly fluctuating and unfold on multiple levels. The article demonstrates that the inclusion of Thessaloniki in the 100RCn marked a shift in the city's public space production and governance programme, introducing new private actors in decision-making processes, an emphasis on green space economic benefits, and a regeneration programme heavily focused on the city centre. The article argues that greening policies in Thessaloniki form an ongoing enclosing process of the urban green commons that is articulated in a threefold manner: their discursive construction as "natural assets," the implementation of spatially selective policies, and the postpoliticisation of decision-making processes.

In studying the implications of this policy shift for green public space production in the years 2010–2018 in Thessaloniki, three main methods were used for the collection of data: (1) qualitative document analysis, including official policy and planning documents, i.e., strategies, urban plans, municipal council meetings' minutes, reports, and press releases from the municipality, the World Bank, and the 100RCn programme; (2) semi-structured elite interviews with two vice-mayors of the Municipality of Thessaloniki (MoTh), one with a central government representative, one with a high-ranking employee of the Department of Urban Green, one with a representative of the local Architects' Association, and one with a representative of a citizen-led initiative involved in the Resilient Thessaloniki programme; and (3) participant observation in meetings and working groups of the Resilient Thessaloniki office.

The article sets off with a review of the literature on GI and continues with the documentation of the need to examine urban regeneration projects linked to green gentrification processes as a process of enclosing the urban green commons. It moves on with the case study of Thessaloniki, starting with a brief overview of the context and continuing with the inclusion of the city in the 100RCn. This section discusses separately the governance mechanisms employed by the programme and its policies. The article concludes with an overview of the three trends observed in the case of Thessaloniki, advocating that they all feed into a process of enclosure of the urban green commons.

2. Green Public Spaces: Green Infrastructure, Urban Green Commons, or Both?

For resilience, urban green comes to the forefront of planning processes and projects. "Urban greening" is "intended to address urban impacts and to make cities more healthy, attractive and biodiverse" (Ahern, 2013, p. 1206). The introduction of "nature-based" solutions to urban problems is implemented—among others—through the creation and reinforcement of urban GI (Frantzeskaki, 2019). GI is a "connected network of multifunctional, predominately unbuilt space that supports both ecological and social activities and processes" (Kambites & Owen, 2006, p. 484). It includes landscapes, water bodies, parks, and gardens (Connop et al., 2016); greenways, treelines, and rain gardens (Meerow & Newell, 2017); forests and roadside zones (Lovell & Taylor, 2013), but also cemeteries, golf courses, and brownfields (Andersson et al., 2014). Thus, GI can promote several resilience planning principles, namely "diversity, flexibility, redundancy, modularization, and decentralization" (Meerow & Newell, 2017, p. 63) without necessarily referring to a network of exclusively public and/or accessible spaces.

In the GI literature, urban green spaces are considered ecological and natural assets (Schäffler & Swilling, 2013), an approach intended to "elevat[e] [them] in mainstream planning" (Cowling et al., 2008, as cited in Schäffler & Swilling, 2013, p. 248). Green spaces provide, according to the same literature, a series of "ecosystem" services to cities (Table 1), that can be categorised as environmental (improving urban climate, controlling noise pollution, and flooding control, waste management and biodiversity), social (leisure, health, food security, and community reinforcement), and economic

Table 1. Functions provided by GI according to the resilience literature.

Functions of green spaces for resilience	Indicative reference
ENVIRONMENTAL	
• Waste management and sewage treatment	Schäffler and Swilling (2013)
• Hydrological cycle—Rainwater and flood management	Connop et al. (2016)
• Noise insulation	Connop et al. (2016)
• Urban climate improvement	Norton et al. (2015)
• Biodiversity	Andersson et al. (2014)
• (Air) Pollution control	Norton et al. (2015)
SOCIAL	
• Health and quality of life	Wang and Banzhaf (2018)
• Production (urban agriculture)—Food security	De Zeeuw et al. (2011)
• Recreation, education and sports	Ernstson et al. (2010)
• Community reinforcement—Identity	Kambites and Owen (2006)
ECONOMIC	
• Economic growth and property values	Kambites and Owen (2006)
• City marketing/tourism	Kambites and Owen (2006)

(marketing, tourism, and economic growth through increased property values). While it is evident that the GI literature essentially builds on sustainability's approach regarding urban green benefits, without adding any innovative or new approaches to greening, it also makes the discursive shift from the "role" of green spaces, as framed in the sustainability discourse, to their "function'' as parts of a city's infrastructure (Wang & Banzhaf, 2018).

This emphasis on the function of green spaces has been criticised by scholars as technocratic and managerial, often built on economistic premises by underlining the material benefits they can deliver (Matthews et al., 2015). This is the case even when appraising benefits that do not have an obvious material substance. For instance, the contribution of urban green availability to the health of urban dwellers is appraised by evaluating the expected estimated reduction in healthcare costs (Matthews et al., 2015). Thus, there the aforementioned categorical shift of focus from the sustainability to the resilience literature on green spaces (Matthews et al., 2015) is located in the move from an ecological approach to an economic one (Horwood, 2011). Exemplary of this move is the methodology proposed by the 100RCn of the Rockefeller Foundation for the appraisal of the value of GI. According to a report published in 2018, nature, like any other type of infrastructure, "needs to be strategically planned and managed" (Chadsey & Grenfell, 2018, p. 13). To this end, the market value of natural infrastructure is appraised based on its selling value, the amount of money that individuals would be willing to spend to visit the infrastructure, and the cost that replacing the natural with man-made infrastructure would have for a city (Chadsey & Grenfell, 2018).

At the same time, the creation of GI is celebrated as an enhancement of the green urban commons (Frantzeskaki, 2019; Simić et al., 2017). In the context of resilience policies, the term "urban green commons" refers to:

> Physical green spaces in urban settings of diverse ownership that depend on the collective organization and management and to which individuals and interest groups participating in management hold a rich set of bundles of rights, including rights to craft their institutions and to decide whom they want to include in management schemes. (Colding & Barthel, 2013, p. 1043)

The resilience model adopts a resource-oriented understanding of the urban commons that derives from the economistic framing of green public spaces and GI in general as assets. This can be traced back to the very concept of resilience, since, as MacKinnon and Derickson (2013) argue, it can be a very conservative tool when applied to the social sphere. In this framework, existing systems, drenched with unequal power relations and inequalities, are not challenged but, in fact, reinforced (MacKinnon & Derickson, 2013), while the term itself is defined in a strictly top-down manner that excludes local communities (Kaika, 2017). The commons are described in this literature strand with references to management issues, natural resources, property rights, and so on. Within this framework, their socio-political dimensions can be silenced and the urban green commons become mere resources, that can be developed through extensive regeneration projects and shared management schemes, without necessarily remaining open to all urban dwellers, or addressing issues of urban inequalities and distributional and other injustices.

Notwithstanding the significant positive impacts of regeneration projects on urban areas, such projects

can also have negative effects that, although well-documented in the literature, are often downplayed within the resilience discourse. For instance, Athanassiou (2017; see also Athanassiou et al., 2018) demonstrates how the regeneration of a park in Thessaloniki by a private company led to the displacement of homeless people and drug addicts. Cucca (2017) studies the relationship between green urban renewal projects—in the inner city, on the waterfront, and in new eco-districts—and socio-spatial inequalities in Vienna and Copenhagen. Combining ecological modernisation with neoliberal growth (Cucca, 2017), green urban renewal projects often lead to the displacement of vulnerable populations (Millington, 2018), the reproduction of urban socio-environmental inequalities (changes in rents due to increased real estate values, privatisation of social housing and urban infrastructure, unequal access to quality public space), and segregation (Cucca, 2017). Finally, discussing the production of green public spaces in cities, Heynen (2006, as cited in Parés et al., 2013, p. 331) asserts that urban parks are often produced as "built environments of consumption" in the context of broader urban neoliberalisation processes. Thus, green urban renewal and green gentrification policies are, oftentimes, part of larger—intended or unintended—ecological gentrification projects and neoliberalisation agendas (Checker, 2011; Gould & Lewis, 2016).

Building on the work of several other scholars who have distanced themselves from resource-oriented conceptualisations of the commons (Chatterton et al., 2013; Linebaugh, 2008; Stavrides, 2016) and the literature on the possible adverse effects of urban green regeneration projects, this article proposes that we examine greening policies in the context of resilience as part of a broader, enclosing process of the urban green commons. Although the increasing incorporation of the urban green commons in neoliberalisation processes does not always entail their straightforward enclosure, it can lead to what is described in the literature as "softer" enclosures. Softer enclosures can be the combined result of two processes: governance and planning. First, enclosures can derive from the collective management of common spaces by private actors or closed communities (Newman, 2013), or by the incorporation of a market logic that promotes the shrinking of state and local government services and the rise of civil sector and private actors in decision-making processes, that is the development of what Perkins (2009) refers to as "shared governance." Second, softer enclosures can also be reinforced by urban planning regulations and interventions, including an increased focus on small-scale projects outside holistic urban development visions, prioritisation of revenue-generating activities over social infrastructure in urban settings, and public-private partnerships (Sundaram, 2004). Murray et al. (2010, p. 367) use the term "creeping enclosures" to underline the cumulative character of exclusionary policies and practices that, as a sum, result in enclosures.

As Jeffrey et al. (2012, p. 1249) demonstrate, enclosure takes "porous, sociomaterial and distanciated forms" that entail new exclusionary spatialities and subjectivities. In this sense, enclosure does not only refer to land grabbing or displacement, but the sum of exclusions, boundaries, regulations, and surveillance mechanisms (Jeffrey et al., 2012). Hence, a more processual and dialectical analysis of enclosures is needed to shed light on their drivers and associated processes and consider their role in broader urban neoliberalisation processes. Notwithstanding the aforementioned important contributions, the way this enclosing process unfolds in the case of the urban green commons in the context of resilience policies remains a question. To this end, the rest of this article closely scrutinises the resilience-related, planning processes, governance mechanisms, and discourses that come together to reinforce the enclosing process of the urban green commons in Thessaloniki.

3. Thessaloniki in the 100 Resilient Cities Network

Thessaloniki is a second-tier port city in northern Greece on the shores of the Thermaikos Gulf (Figure 1), known, among others, for its rich architectural Byzantine and Islamic heritage. It is one of the two metropolitan cities in the country (along with Athens) and has approximately one million inhabitants (ELSTAT, 2022). Its form follows that of Mediterranean cities (Leontidou, 2009), significantly distinguishing it from that of central and northern European cities. It has popular suburbs and spontaneous urban sprawl in its periphery and along large road networks, while the city itself is compact and multicentred, with mixed uses. Administratively, Thessaloniki comprises seven municipalities, with the central and larger, in terms of population, being that of the MoTh. The majority of the municipality has multiple-storey buildings (4–7 floors) that in the 1st and 3rd municipal boroughs were mostly built before the 1970s. In general, the population residing in the western and northern parts of the municipality has a lower educational level, is occupied mostly in low-skilled jobs and has a lower income, while this changes as we move towards the city's southern and eastern parts (Hatziprokopiou et al., 2021).

Thessaloniki as a whole has one of the lowest ratios of green space/resident in Europe, 2.6 m^2/inhabitant (Latinopoulos et al., 2016). Indicative of the lack of related policies and projects is that this indicator has remained unchanged since the 1980s. Furthermore, green public spaces are unequally distributed within MoTh. While, for example, the city centre (1st municipal borough) has 129 parks and 3.53 m^2 of green space/resident, the 4th borough has only 0.77 (Table 2). The lack of—and unequal access to—open green space for urban dwellers is exacerbated by the high residential densities, especially in the third, fourth and fifth municipal boroughs (Figure 2).

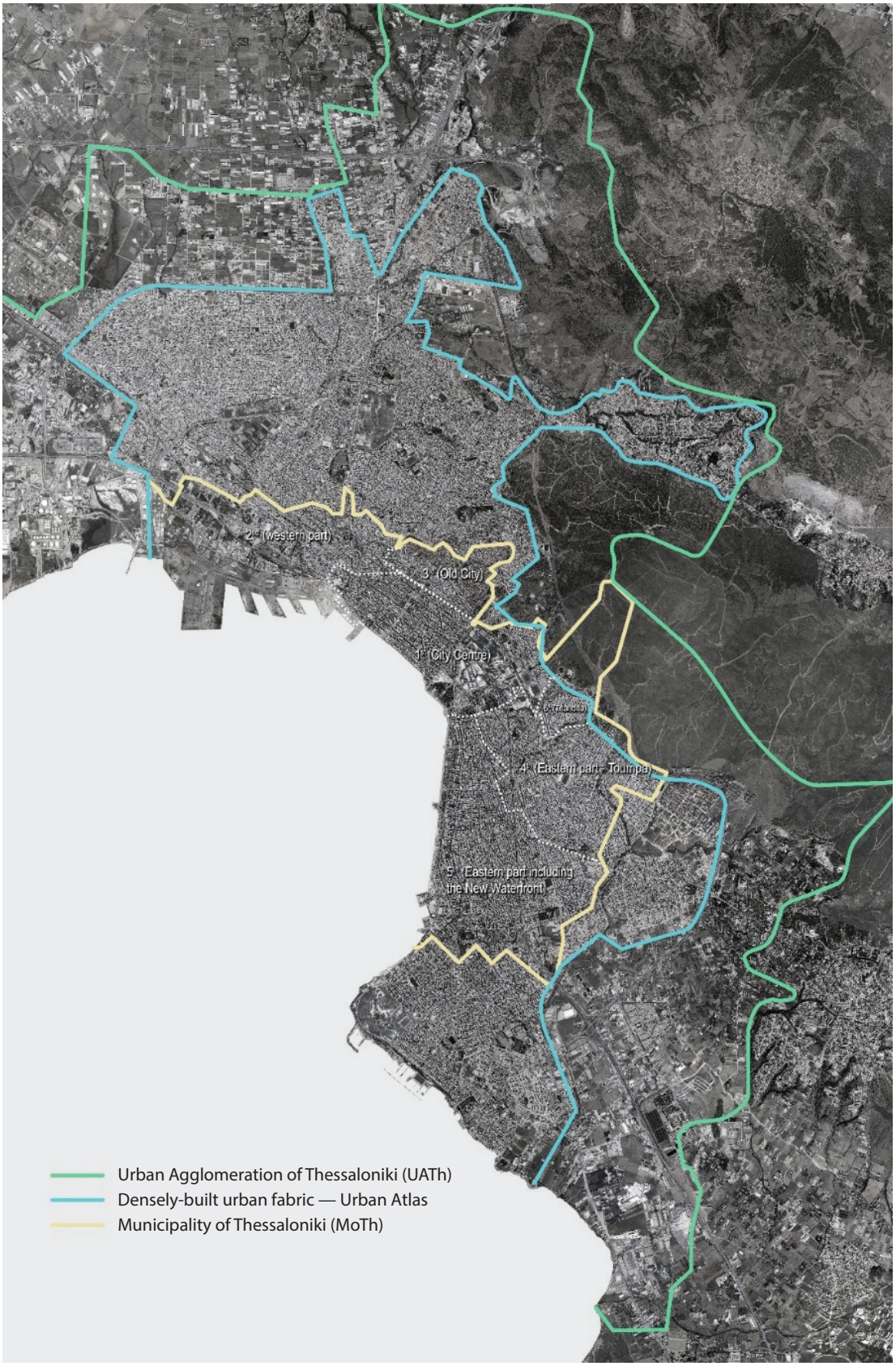

Figure 1. The Urban Agglomeration of Thessaloniki, the densely built urban fabric, and the MoTh with its six municipal boroughs. Source: Created by the author with images from Google Earth and the Greek National Cadastre and Mapping Agency S. A. (2018).

Table 2. Data on existing green public spaces in Thessaloniki.

Municipal Borough	Population (in 2011)	Density (residents/km^2)	No. of parks	Green area/resident (m^2)
1st (City Centre)	46,715	12,100	129	3.53
2nd (Western part)	30,164	5,860	55	2.5
3rd (Old City)	26,567	22,010	81	3.4
4th (Eastern part—Toumpa)	80,717	21,280	98	0.77
5th (Eastern part including the waterfront)	131,033	23,220	151	1.43
6th (Triandria)	9,986	17,860	32	1.47
MoTh	325,182	16,200	546	1.83

Sources: Edited by the author, based on MoTh (2018b) and ELSTAT (2022).

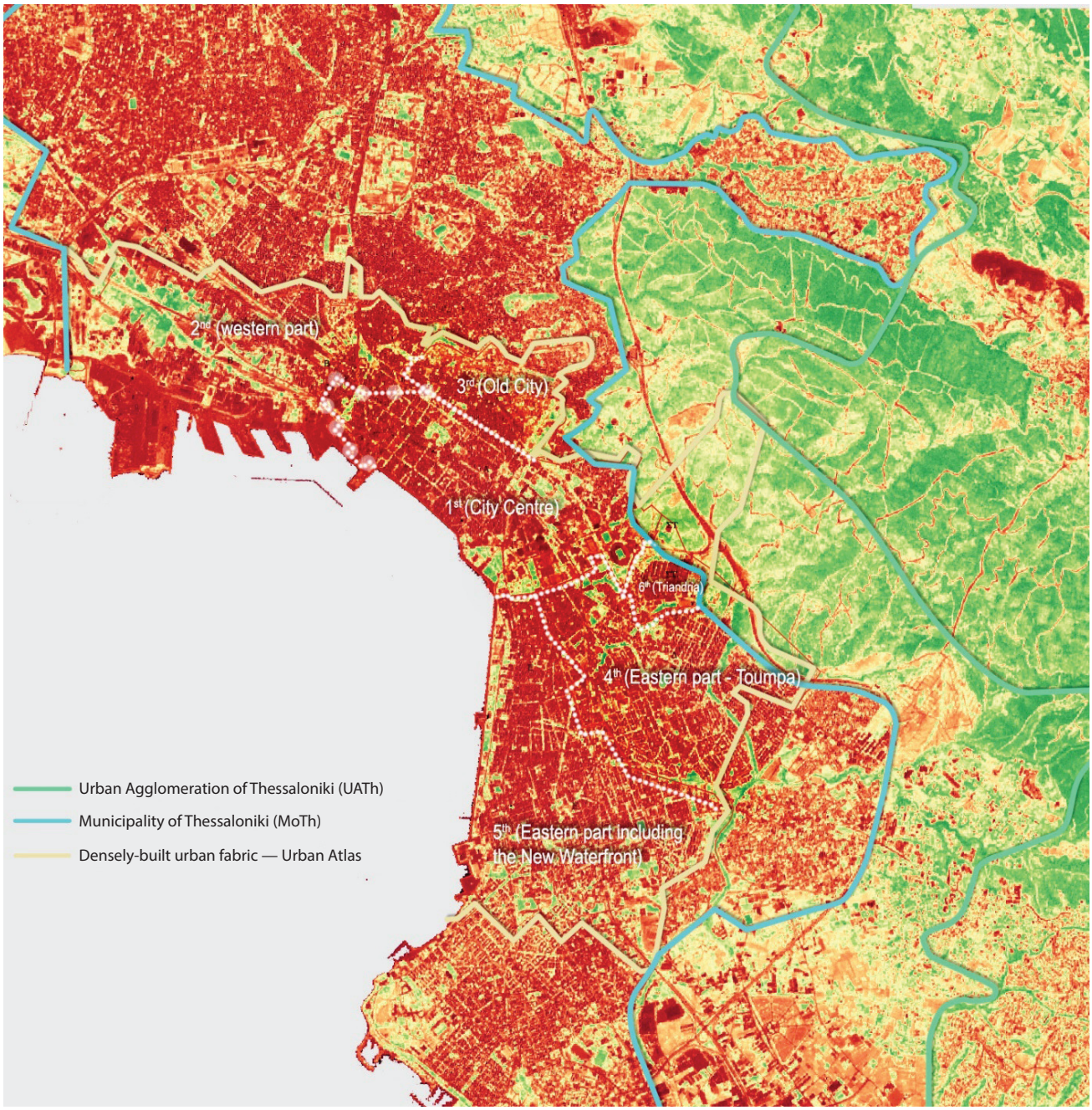

Figure 2. Thessaloniki's vegetation index based on Sentinel-2 data. Source: Edited by the author based on MoTh (2022).

4. Governing Resilience

Thessaloniki's urgent need for environmental upgrading formed the basis for the articulation of the resilience discourse in the city. In this direction, MoTh joined, in 2014, 99 other cities in forming the 100RCn, a global initiative championed by the Rockefeller Foundation (Athanassiou et al., 2015). The Foundation defines urban resilience as "the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow, no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience" (Chambers & Berman, 2017, p. 6). Compared to the definitions other organisations have given to resilience, the definition provided by the Rockefeller Foundation can be described as a narrow one. Indicatively, the OECD defines resilient "cities [as those] that have the ability to absorb, recover and prepare for future shocks (economic, environmental, social & institutional)….[They] promote sustainable development, well-being and inclusive growth" (OECD, 2018). The focus in the case of the OECD is on the city rather than on individuals, stakeholders, and systems within it, like in the definition of the Rockefeller Foundation. Furthermore, the definition of OECD includes references to sustainability and inclusion, whereas that of the Rockefeller Foundation does not.

The 100RCn supports participating cities for funding for staff compensation and networking with stakeholders, and experts for knowledge sharing, service delivery, funding, and policy mobility. Policies and policy-making processes are based on best practices (see for example the organisation of the CRO Network Exchange Program in Nelson, 2015) and public-private collaborations and partnerships. To this end, each city has access to a large network of partners, mostly multinational corporations, with interests spanning from governance and development to disaster risk management and culture (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016). Although the programme's website is not in operation anymore, the articles on it were an important source of information on the network's policy strategy. As Armstrong (2017, p. 1) wrote, for instance, the partner network served the programme's objective to "alter existing city government structures" and "create a city-level marketplace for resilience services, supplied by specialised private and not-for-profit organisations with cities as their main clients." In Thessaloniki, the inclusion in 100RCn was celebrated as a major opportunity for funding acquisition and networking, especially with the private sector. As the mayor stated, "the participation in the network is representative of the logic of the municipal authority, [that is] searching for alternative funding sources during the crisis, to simplify and accelerate the implementation of necessary projects" (MoTh, 2017, p. 5). Or, as a Vice-Mayor stated during an interview, "you cannot be the 'gallic village.' If the others are talking about climate change adaptation…[and] you don't include this [in your policies] you won't have funding for anything'' (interview, MoTh Vice-Mayor 1, July 13, 2016).

Furthermore, joining the 100RCn led to the alteration of municipal governance mechanisms by replacing pre-existing governance schemes to simplify and expedite decision-making processes. The first step of the Municipality was to create an Office for Urban Resilience, Resilient Thessaloniki, under the supervision of a newly established Vice-Mayor of Urban Resilience and Development position (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016). This political choice affected the governance mechanisms of the municipality, resulting in the concentration of a significant amount of power to only a few people. Specifically, after the creation of the Urban Resilience Department and the appointment of the Chief Resilience Officer in 2014, the latter was also appointed Director of the Thessaloniki Metropolitan Agency S.A., the local development company that officially supervised the programme, and, later, Vice Mayor of Urban Resilience and Development, holding all three positions simultaneously (Figure 3).

During its participation in 100RCn, MoTh issued two reports, the *Thessaloniki Preliminary Resilience Assessment* (ThPRA; MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016) and the *Thessaloniki Resilience Strategy* 2030 (ThRS-2030; MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017); organised workshops with local and global actors on urban development issues; and acquired funding from the World Bank to draft in collaboration with Deloitte a real-estate development plan for the waterfront (Deloitte et al., 2019). The vision for the city, as it was framed in ThRS-2030, is to turn Thessaloniki into "an inspiring, dynamic coastal city that ensures the well-being of its people and nurtures its human talent, while strengthening its urban economy and respecting its natural resources" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 14).

For the development of the strategy, Resilient Thessaloniki collaborated with several stakeholders. The strategy itself is projected as the product of a broad participation and deliberation process through the conduction of workshops and other events. Indeed, during the development of the ThPRA report (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016), MoTh consulted with 94 local, regional, national, and supranational stakeholders—excluding those that were part of the Rockefeller Foundation support network for the 100RCn, the majority of which were from the private sector (Figure 4). Specifically, 34 belonged to the private sector and were companies and business associations. Only 10 of the stakeholders were from the public sector (local municipalities and the regional government), 10 were NGOs of different types and interests, and four were citizen initiatives. The rest of the participants were from other organisations (institutes, foundations, associations, etc.), academics, media representatives, and high-ranking employees of the EU and the UN. The category of NGOs and non-profit organisations includes organisations of both public and private interests, spanning from

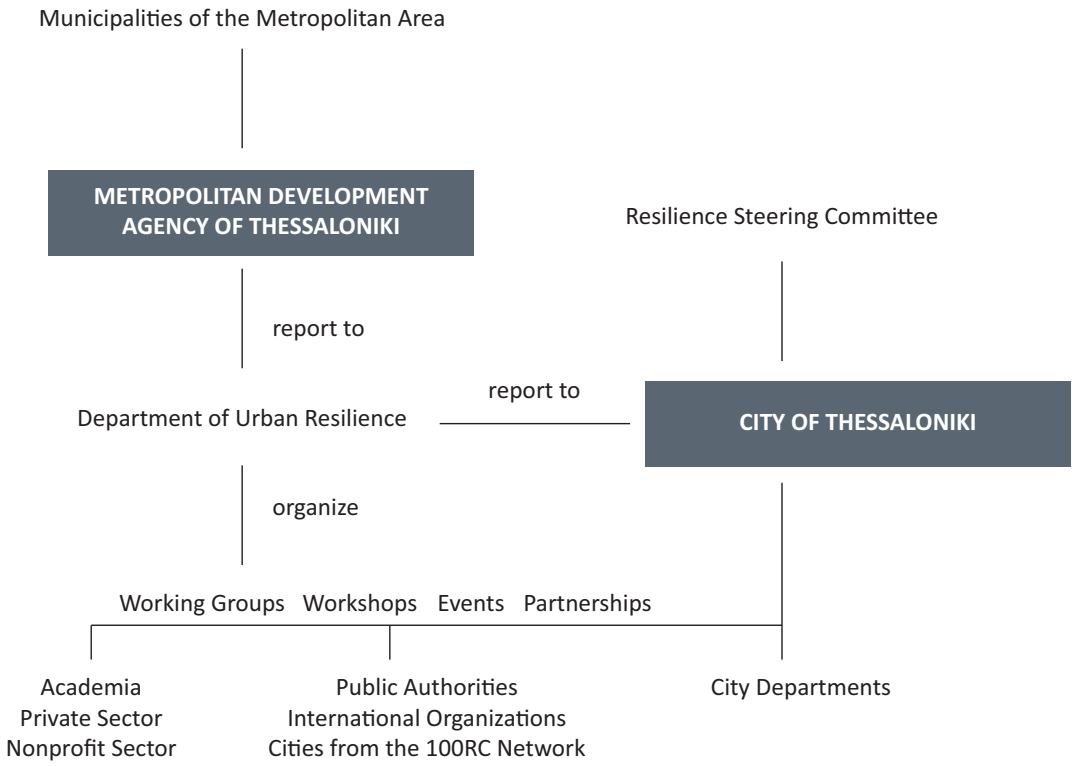

Figure 3. The organisational structure of Resilient Thessaloniki. Source: MoTh and Resilient Thessaloniki (2017, p. 24).

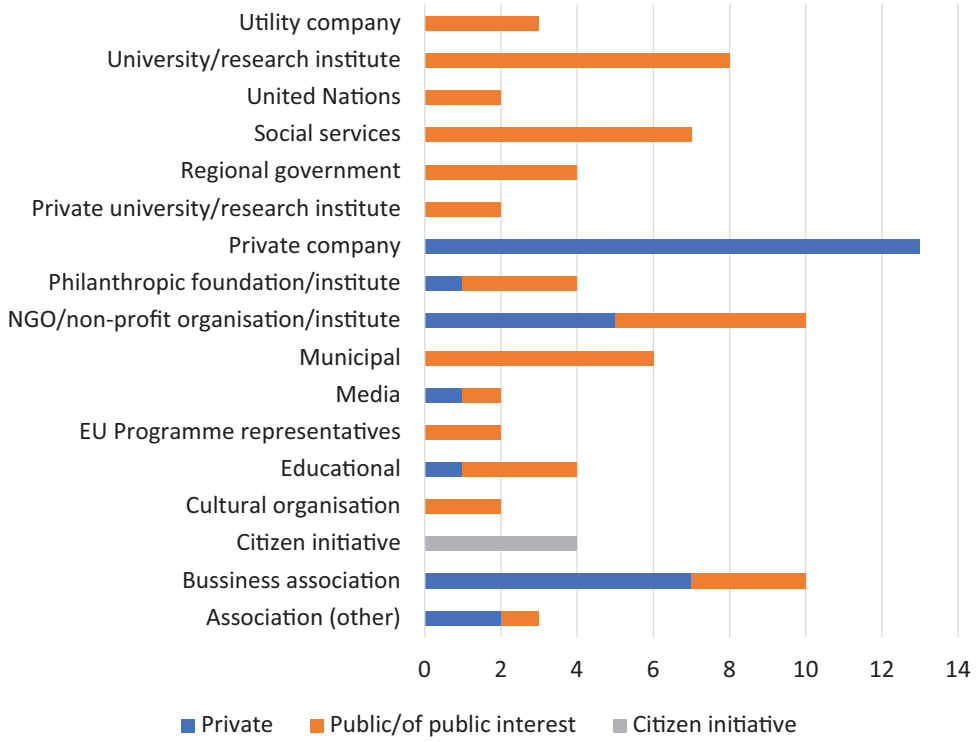

Figure 4. Types of stakeholders involved in the development of the Preliminary Resilience Assessment of MoTh according to Resilient Thessaloniki. Source: Created by the author based on MoTh and Resilient Thessaloniki (2016, p. 29).

the Thessaloniki Convention Bureau and the Centre for Entrepreneurial and Cultural Development (operating under the Federation of Industries of Northern Greece) to PRAKSIS, an NGO providing social services, and is, thus, hard to define. Indicatively, it is worth mentioning that out of the 10 NGOs in total, only half could be considered of public interest.

Resilient Thessaloniki, benefitting from Rockefeller's network of stakeholders, established, since the publication of the ThPRA report (2016), various collaborations with multinational companies and organisations (MoTh, 2018c). ARUP acted as a technical consultant in the resilience assessment process and the development of the resilience strategy (ARUP, 2018). Additionally, ARUP with CBR Ellis (a real estate firm), and its local collaborator, Atria Property Services S.A., AT-Osborne (a company working in governance and transport infrastructure), Cisco (a multinational company working in IT), and Frog Design (a global design firm that undertakes mobility projects), participated in a municipally-led task force, called the "CoLab Thessaloniki" (MoTh, 2018a). The CoLab was a think tank for the development and regeneration of Egnatia St., a major commercial axis in the city's historic centre, adversely affected by ongoing works for the creation of the city's metro (MoTh, 2018a). Commenting on the inclusion of several private actors in project development processes, MoTh Vice-Mayor argued:

> These are several million [investment] projects, a metabolism of the function of the coastal area. It cannot be done with public land, that is, to make a public green space…the public sector cannot do these….[T]he Municipality…needs to collaborate with experts…to attract private investments….[T]his is how it is done around the world. (interview, MoTh Vice-Mayor 2, January 24, 2018)

Overall, although it might appear that decision-making processes opened up to include more actors and stakeholders, this was only the case for a select few. Private enterprises, business associations, and multinational corporations were included in working groups and consultation meetings, while the participation of locals and bottom-up initiatives was limited.

5. Resilience Policies for Urban Green Spaces in Thessaloniki

In the reports published by Resilient Thessaloniki, green public spaces are projected as a "natural" fix to Thessaloniki's environmental problems. The term natural, combined with terms like "resources," "solutions," or "assets" is very common throughout the texts. For instance, the ThPRA and ThRS-2030 refer 12 times to natural resources to highlight the need to "respect their limits" and "protect" them (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, pp. 31, 124). Natural resources are also linked to "natural assets," which are always mentioned as the opposite of "man-made assets" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016, p. 30). The third most common nature-related term in the strategy is that of "nature-based solutions." They are mentioned as non-traditional, "efficient and cost-effective solutions" for the creation of "green neighbourhoods" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 83). Furthermore, nature-based solutions are seen by Resilient Thessaloniki as a means that can:

> Help to harness the power and sophistication of nature to turn environmental, social and economic challenges into opportunities. These solutions will contribute to creating green growth and "future-proofing" our society, as well as enhancing citizen well-being, and providing business opportunities. (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 83)

The ThPRA report describes open spaces in Thessaloniki as the city's "priority assets" and the need for their redevelopment as "one of the top priorities in the agenda for creating a more resilient city" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016, pp. 38, 16). Although it underlines the severe quantitative deficit in green public spaces in the city, the report fails to account for their qualitative characteristics, distribution, and types. The ThPRA only includes one map on which all "open spaces" in Thessaloniki are highlighted in green colour. Among the highlighted spaces are archaeological sites (e.g., the Roman Forum), squares (e.g., Aristotelous sq., Eleftherias sq. which is used as a parking space), pedestrianized streets (e.g., the Aristotelous axis), the waterfront promenades, and buildings (the two buildings of the Thessaloniki Music Hall complex, the Rotunda). Thus, it provides a distorted image of the context, especially in the densely built residential areas outside the city centre. What is more, a large part of the Municipality is not shown on the map at all. The map of "open spaces" in the ThPRA report misrepresents the municipal boundaries and leaves out a part of the first, all of the fourth, and almost half of the fifth municipal boroughs. The fourth and fifth boroughs, which are not represented on the map, have two of the lowest ratios of green spaces/resident in Thessaloniki (Table 2; Figure 5).

As shown in Table 3, the resilience strategy includes in total 12 actions directly or indirectly related to green public spaces. These span from neighbourhood-level interventions for the creation of pocket parks and urban gardens, or the "adoption" and "co-creation" of spaces by citizen-led initiatives, to green routes linking cultural and leisure sites for "identity-building" and the reinforcement of their attractiveness; Transit-Oriented-Development projects around the metro stations; the aforementioned real estate portfolio strategy developed by Deloitte; and recreational/leisure infrastructure development along the waterfront parks to increase their "socio-economic value" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 119).

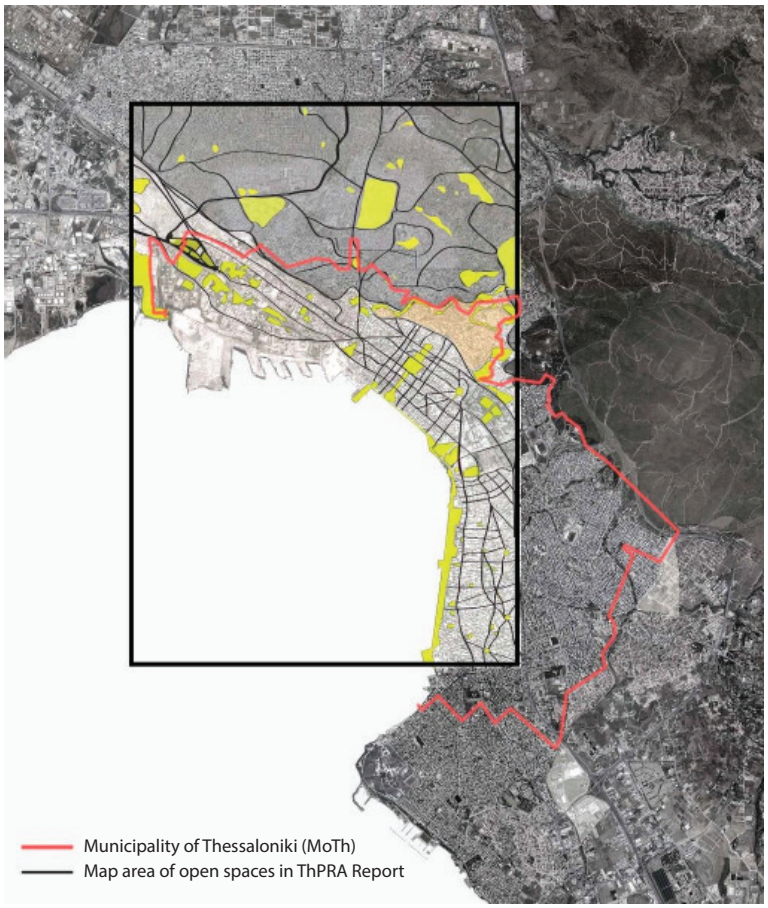

Figure 5. Open spaces in Thessaloniki as presented in the ThPRA policy document, compared with the official boundaries of MoTh. Source: Edited by the author based on MoTh and Resilient Thessaloniki (2016).

These projects are expected to have a significant financial impact on the city, manifested not only by their description of the strategy but also by their spatial distribution within the municipality. For instance, the regeneration of the areas around Metro stations is expected to "contribute to a new identity in these areas and create economic development opportunities for existing residents and businesses" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 41). This project refers to the planned regeneration around a central Metro Station (Venizelou) that includes an archaeological site (Via Egnatia), uncovered during construction, and the Byzantine and Ottoman Monuments in the surrounding area (Panagia Chalkeon Church and Hamza Bey Mosque; MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 41).

The link between open space policies and touristic development through an envisioned "win-win" capitalisation on the city's historic and cultural sites is also found in two more measures proposed by the ThRS-2030. First, in the action related to the creation of green routes within the city and its waterfront. A network of green spaces is planned to connect the city's Heptapyrgion Fortress, in the Old City, with the sea. The reinforcement of the network between cultural sites in Thessaloniki is expected, according to the Resilient Thessaloniki reports, to "[h]ighlight the cultural and historical wealth and the city's touristic image" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016, p. 25), and enhance "the spatial quality of the city while increasing the local sense of identity and…the attractiveness of cultural heritage sites" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 83). Second, the same link is observed in the activities related to the Kapani district, a traditional urban market in the historic centre. The strategy plans the designation of the areas of Kapani and other nearby markets as a Business Improvement District and suggests the development of a branding strategy to foster economic growth (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2016, p. 25). A network of green public spaces will connect the district to other significant public sites and buildings such as the waterfront, which is considered the "most important natural resource" and a "landmark offering unique development opportunities" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 20).

The strategy's policy recommendations appear to be more specific, in terms of their spatial reference, operation, and implementation process, when projects are related to the economic functions of GI, and much vaguer when it comes to its environmental functions—which appear to be considered a given, and in this case, they are not tailored to the city's context-specific, socio-environmental issues. As a result, most interventions regarding urban green spaces are scheduled in the city

Table 3. Actions related to (green) public spaces in the ThRS-2030 policy document.

ThRS-2030 Action (Action Code)		Description
Neighbourhood-level projects		
1.	Adopt a public space co-creation policy (2.G.01)	"Public Space Co-Creation Program Guide"
2.	Deliver a public space pilot project (2.G.02)	Pilot project for the "co-creation" manual
3.	Install green roofs and green walls on schools and municipal buildings (2.H.02)	GI
4.	Create a pocket community gardens (2.H.03)	Urban agriculture, integration of refugees
5.	Creating a Metropolitan Land Bank (3.D.04)	Land rights management for the development of open spaces
City centre/waterfront-related projects		
6.	Create a new natural landscape within the built environment (2.H.01)	Green routes linking cultural and leisure sites, mentions of identity building and attractiveness of sites
7.	Prepare sustainable, area-wide plans according to TOD2 Standards (1.B.03)	Pedestrianisation of areas around Metro stations, link to place identity and economic development
8.	Create a Real-Estate Portfolio Strategy (3.F.02)	Identify asset monetisation and development opportunities
9.	Develop "Adopt your Green Spot" (2.H.04)	Volunteerism, sustainability of GI, education
10.	Integrated Market Redevelopment Strategy for Kapani Markets (3.B.02)	Green routes connecting markets with "key" traffic nodes and urban spaces
11.	Develop recreational infrastructure (4.A.02)	Increase the "socio-economic value" of the waterfront, create leisure infrastructure (e.g., floating pools, artificial beaches; Municipality of Thessaloniki & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 119)
12.	Restore the natural beaches (4.C.01)	Aims to restore the "recreational and aesthetic value" of beaches on the waterfront (Municipality of Thessaloniki & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 124)

Source: Created by the author based on MoTh and Resilient Thessaloniki (2017).

centre and mainly in the surrounding areas of cultural heritage sites, the waterfront and the city's historic markets (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017).

Overall, ThRS-2030 constructs a direct link between green public spaces, citizen well-being, and urban growth, in line with the resilience literature. GI and other "nature-based" solutions aim to "harness the power and sophistication of nature to turn environmental, social and economic challenges into opportunities…[and] create green growth…enhance citizen well-being, and provid[e] business opportunities" (MoTh & Resilient Thessaloniki, 2017, p. 83). No questions are posed on who benefits and who loses from the implementation of relevant policies. As Davoudi (2013, p. 4) puts it, in this case too, resilience becomes "the 'be-all and end-all' remedy for coping with the current state of flux and the heightened uncertainties of our times." GI is planned based on cost-benefit analyses, stakeholder preferences, supply-and-demand principles, synergies, and trade-offs (Hansen & Pauleit, 2014). In Thessaloniki, the economic approach to green spaces found in the resilience paradigm (Matthews et al., 2015, pp. 157–158) not only does not challenge neoliberalisation processes but supplements them. Green spaces are meant to generate material benefits and profits and operate primarily as one more form of urban assets of capital.

6. Conclusions

Thessaloniki's development model, as it is shaped by the city's resilience strategy, appears to focus more on economic development, resilience, and growth with policies especially targeted to the city centre, and less on the amelioration of living conditions for citizens or even building the resilience of the city in general. To sum up, three trends arise as important from the study of Thessaloniki's participation in the 100RCn.

The first is the post-politicisation of decision-making processes. A plethora of private stakeholders and multinational corporations got involved in the governance of large infrastructural projects in MoTh. Decisions over urban interventions were mostly taken behind closed doors, in working groups, task forces, and private meetings between public and private stakeholders. Participants were not necessarily democratically (s)elected, and did not necessarily represent the local public, or even private, interests. In the case of Thessaloniki, then, instead of broadening urban governance towards more inclusive methods, we can observe, as Cook and Swyngedouw (2012, p. 1970) phrase it, a "selective pluralisation of policy circles." These findings match those of the Urban Institute on the results of the 100RCn programme in general. The institute, a US-based

non-profit research organisation tasked with the evaluation of the programme, found that the inclusion of cities in the Network helped them to mainstream and institutionalise resilience in urban planning processes (Urban Institute, 2018). It also stated that municipal departments became better coordinated, while cities managed to foster collaboration between different levels of government and various stakeholders and to "reduc[e] the strength of the government silos" (Urban Institute, 2018, p. 4). The same report, however, found that the Network has not managed to increase community participation levels or to decrease the vulnerable—to shocks and stresses—population (Urban Institute, 2018).

The second trend observed is the discursive construction of green public spaces as assets. This is not only indicated by direct references to green public spaces as assets found in city resilience strategies. The production of regenerated spaces as "built environments of consumption" (Heynen, 2006, as cited in Parés et al., 2013, p. 331) by the Resilient Thessaloniki programme is evident in the prioritisation of their economic functions, that is their role in supporting economic growth, rising property values, and contributing to city marketing and the development of the tourist sector.

Third, there appears to be a spatially selective strategy in the promotion of regeneration projects that is dialectically linked to the second trend. Most of the proposals refer to spaces adjacent or close to architectural/cultural heritage sites and/or the waterfront, i.e., spaces in areas with high real estate values or high concentrations of touristic uses, a tendency observed in several other cities globally (Cucca, 2017). At the same time, the prioritisation of the economic functions of green spaces, over their social and environmental benefits, hinders their potential contribution to the reinforcement of urban resilience, at least for the city as a whole.

All three aforementioned trends form a process, not a state or an *ad hoc* intervention, that leads to ever-shrinking access to the green public commons for citizens, and, hence, an enclosing process. Thessaloniki might be on a resilience-building track, but the question remains: Resilient for whom? The proposed policies tend to benefit certain financial sectors, namely the real-estate and tourist ones, gradually altering the character of the city centre and pushing locals outside of it. Prioritisation of projects in the city centre might accelerate urban growth and even enhance the resilience of the area. However, this occurs at the expense of urban dwellers who reside outside the city centre and already have disproportionally unequal access to green public spaces. In the case of Thessaloniki, like in other cities, "urban greening," as planned in the context of Resilient Thessaloniki, reinforces processes of unjust urban development (Wolch et al., 2014). As Birge-Liberman (2010, p. 1936) suggests, fixing capital in place through regeneration projects allows its accumulation by property owners and the stakeholders involved in the implementation and management of the project.

Moving forward, the city could benefit from a series of measures that seek to address the above issues. First, it is of the utmost importance to address the severe deficiency in the accessibility of green spaces faced by citizens residing outside the 1st municipal borough, through an extensive programme that aims not only at the regeneration of existing spaces but at the creation of new smaller ones in peripheral neighbourhoods. Second, these projects should be combined with policies for securing affordable housing, in order to prevent the possible rise in real-estate values. Third, citizen initiatives and common practices in green public spaces should be reinforced in a manner that moves beyond consensual planning objectives and processes, towards meaningful participation that does not shy away from dissent. Overall, it is necessary to make a priority shift on the policy-making level from the city centre and growth-oriented development, to its neighbourhoods and interventions planned on the basis of spatial justice.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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