



Experiences in Romania and Greece: Implementing integrated approaches to Urban Development

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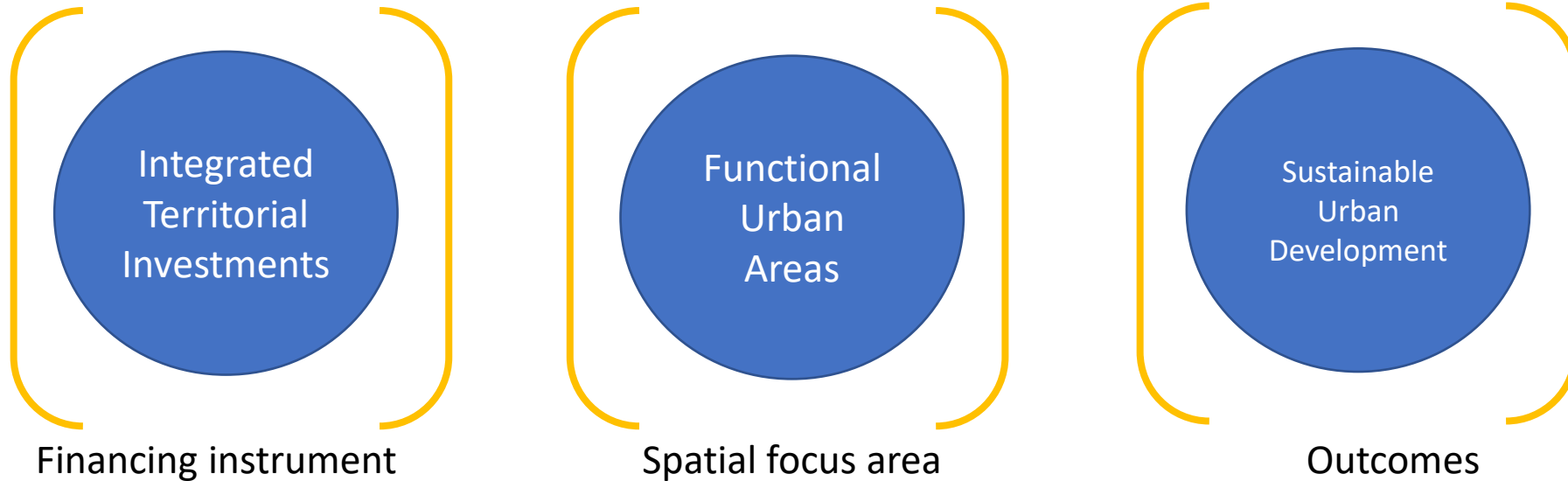
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The same theme, different approaches



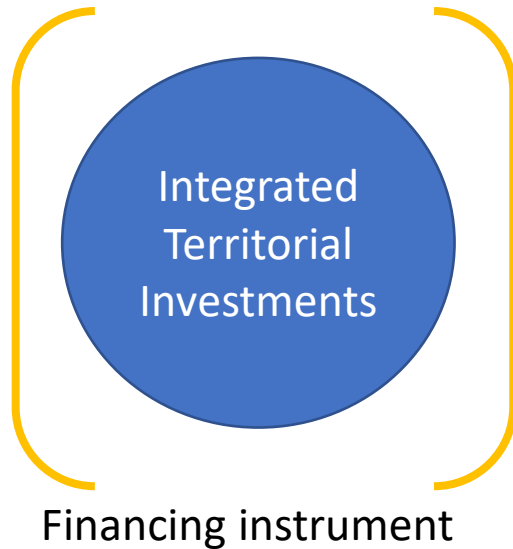
Romania

- ITI is a special, separate instrument
- FUA's & SUD are related but also treated somewhat separately





The same theme, different approaches



ITI as instrument used for very large, lagging regions:

- Danube Delta (Euro 1 Billion in 2014 – 2020, underpinned by a longer-term Sustainable Dev. Strategy to 2030, more funding in 2021 - 2027)
- Jiu Valley (Just Transition, 100,000 people, close to Euro 400 Million in 2021 – 2027)

Romania



Danube Delta Integrated Sustainable Development Strategy (2015 – 2030)

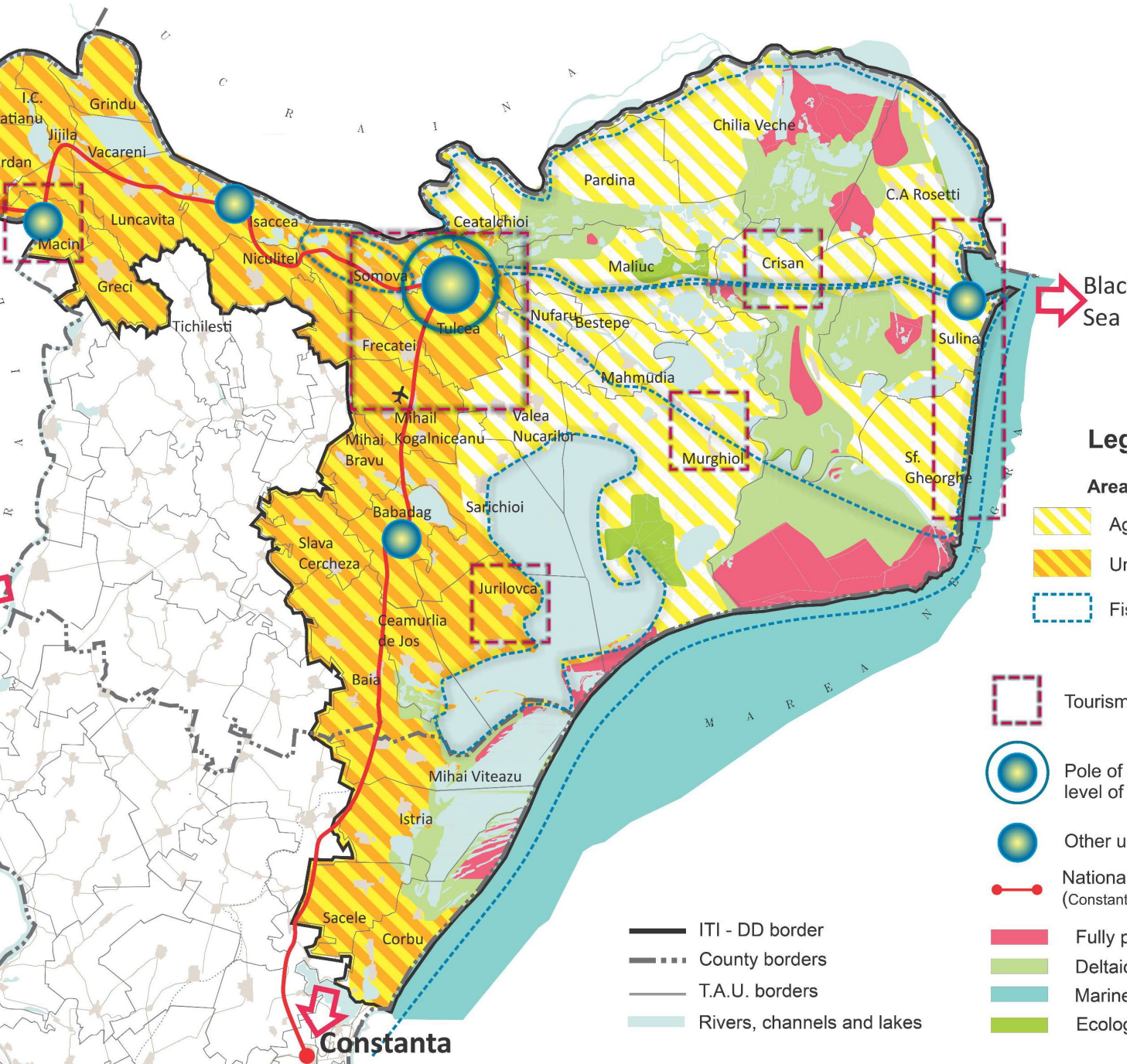
- Overarching vision, 2 strategic objectives
- Five pillars, 16 sectors, 52 sectorial specific objectives
- 137 interventions with 1024 projects

World Bank progress review in 2020:

- Absorption of EU funds below 20%
- Physical progress of projects 35%
- Overall progress with regards to result indicators is estimated at 42%
- Two thirds of respondents to the online survey appreciate that both tourists and residents are satisfied with the development of tourism in the area.
- 51% of respondents to the online survey consider that implemented projects have a positive impact on the environment.

Lessons:

- Longer term planning
- Update strategy (not new)
- IDA as “soft” body – with no official power





The same theme, different approaches

Law no. 246/2022 on metropolitan areas and the amendment and supplementation of various acts, as published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no. 745, of 25 July 2022.

Voluntary association

Romania

Romania National Urban Policy (adopted 2022)

Functional Urban Areas

Sustainable Urban Development

Spatial focus area

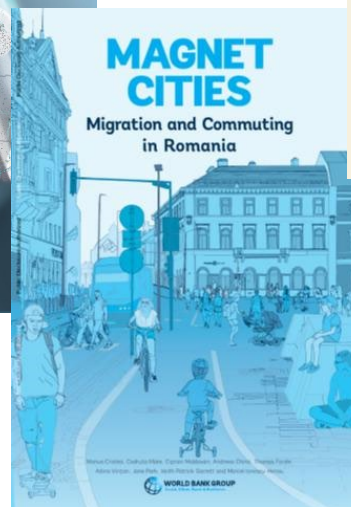
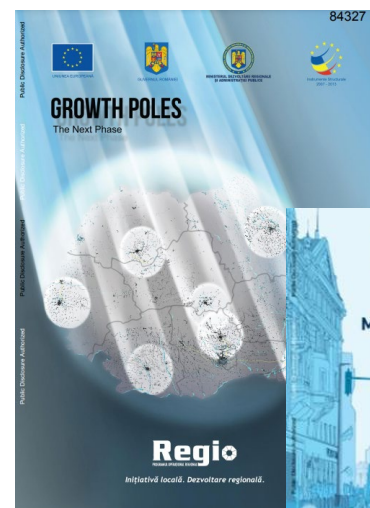
Outcomes

- Access if a) Urban and b) have an **Integrated Urban Development Strategy**: common interest areas – such as tourism, cultural heritage, urban regeneration
- Relatively large allocation of ERDF (15% in 2014 – 2020)
- Now 8 ROP's to target better (vs. national competition)

Advocating for the role of cities



- Long history of work (WB, DG Regio, etc.) to establish a stronger city focus in regional development
- Growth Poles
- Functional Urban Areas
- City level technical work
- Romania National Urban Policy
- Sustainable Cities



<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/romania/brief/romania-urban-development>



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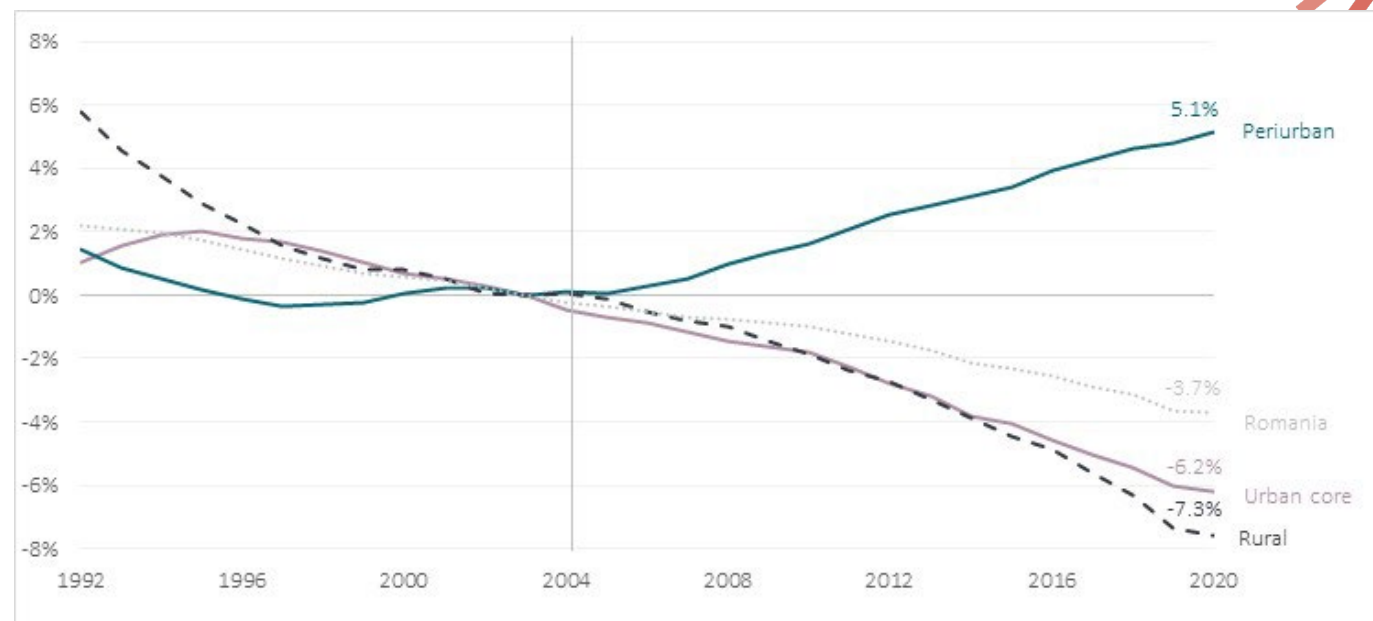
Understanding Romania's urban dynamics



- 3228 administrative territorial units (ATU)
- 319 administrative units are classified as urban:
 - Bucharest
 - 103 municipalities
 - 215 towns
- 40 designated as county capitals

The eight largest cities in Romania amass around 22% of the population and generate around 53% of the country's GDP.

If considering the one-hour driving areas around the Growth Poles: around 50% of Romania's population and generating around 75% of firm revenues in Romania.



Source: World Bank. 2022. Romania Sustainable Cities Review. Authors using INS TEMPO data

Dual trajectory of growth and decline:

- urban sprawl with the simultaneous hollowing out of the urban core as the dominant growth form
- while most small and medium-small cities face severe population loss and fragmentation of the urban footprint.



Romania's National Urban Policy

- All of government approach with Min. of Regional Development as coordinator
 - Ownership by Local Authorities (bottom-up push for what they need)

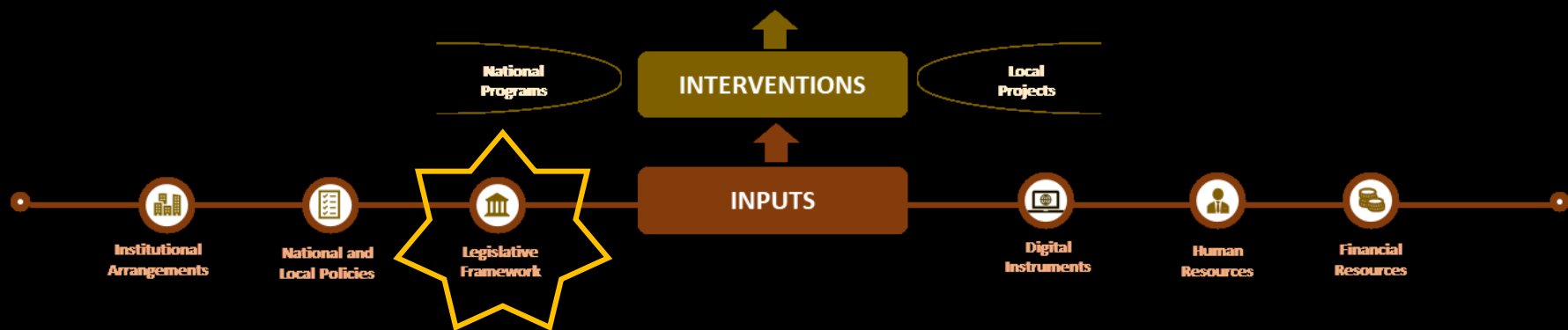
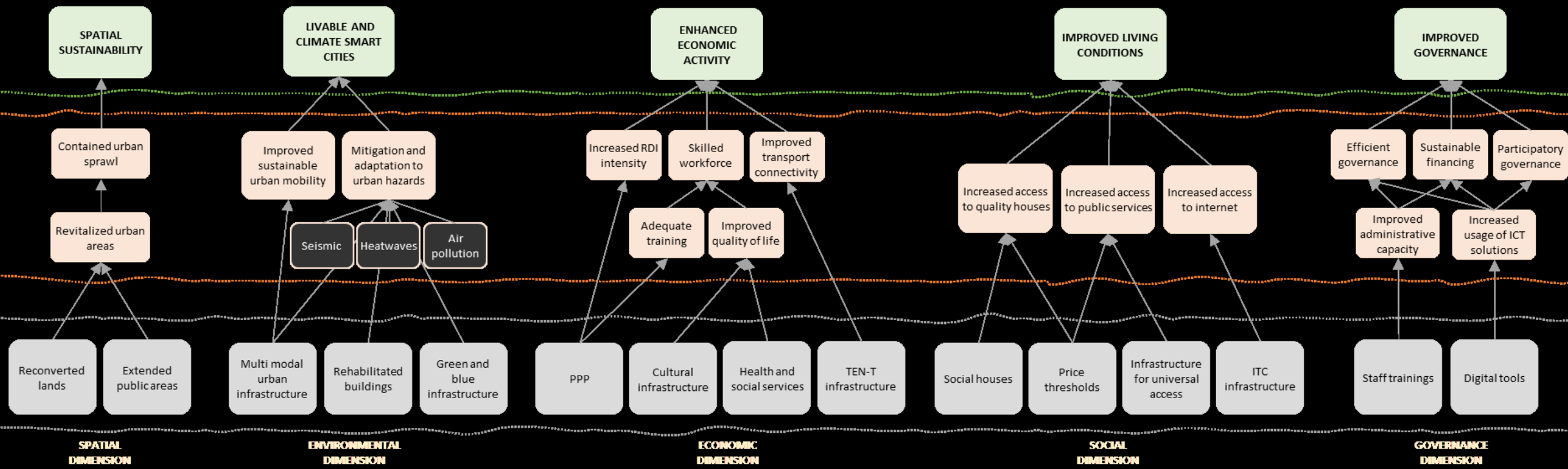


VISION
Sustainable Romanian cities

IMPACTS

OUTCOMES

OUTPUTS



Metropolitan law is the first to be passed



Romania's National Urban Policy

- All of government approach with Min. of Regional Development as coordinator
 - Ownership by Local Authorities (bottom-up push for what they need)

- Foundation for differentiated approaches to support cities:

Growing

Static

Shrinking

'in Europe we are dealing with islands of growth in a sea of shrinkage'

(Wiechman 2012)

- Gaps identified in specific types of support for specific cities e.g. initiate a government program for Small Towns
- Steps to clearly link government priorities to EU funded programs





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Functional Urban Areas

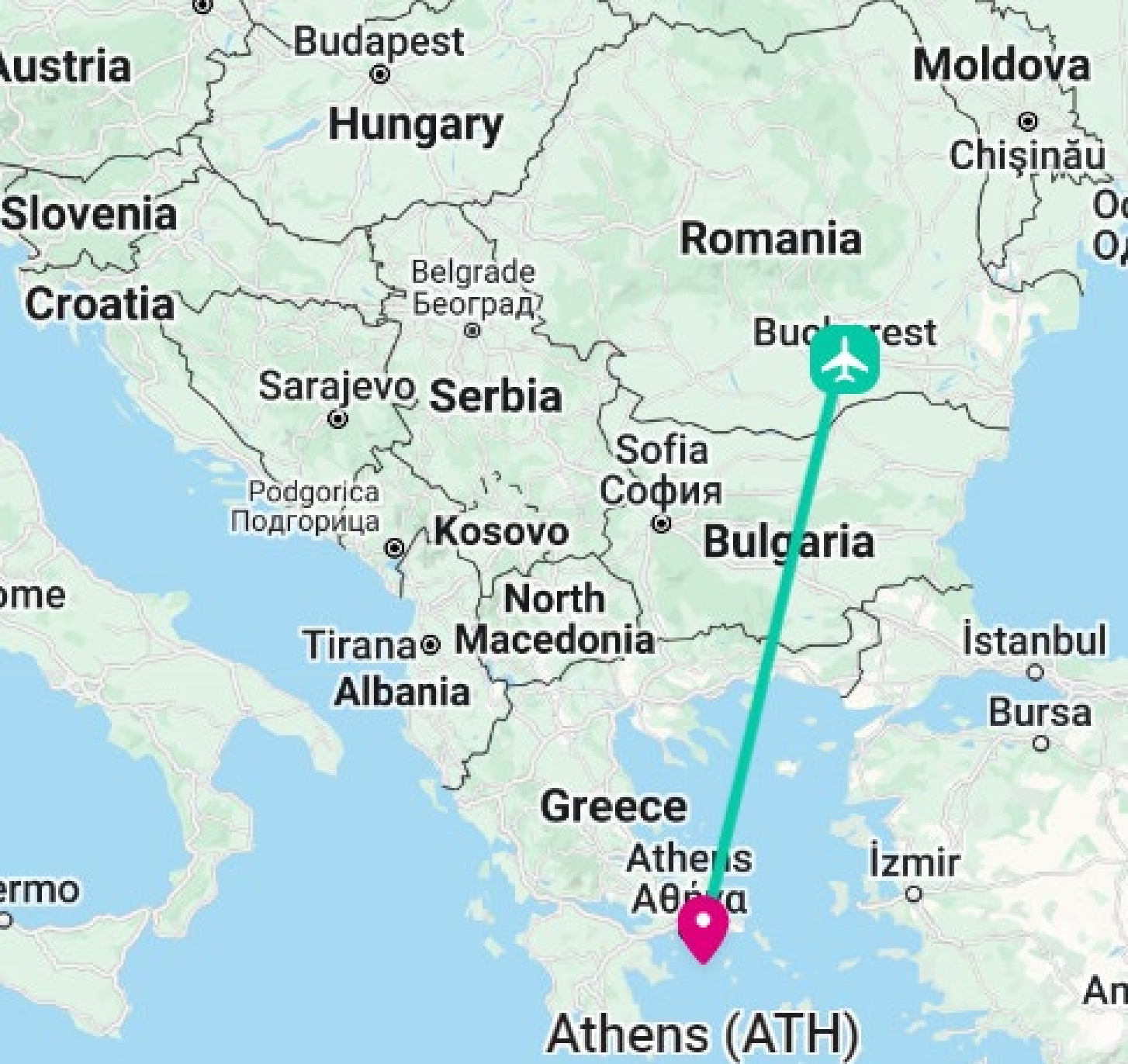
Sustainable Urban Development

Spatial focus area

Outcomes

Eligibility check for 2021 – 2027: Is local strategy aligned with national policy

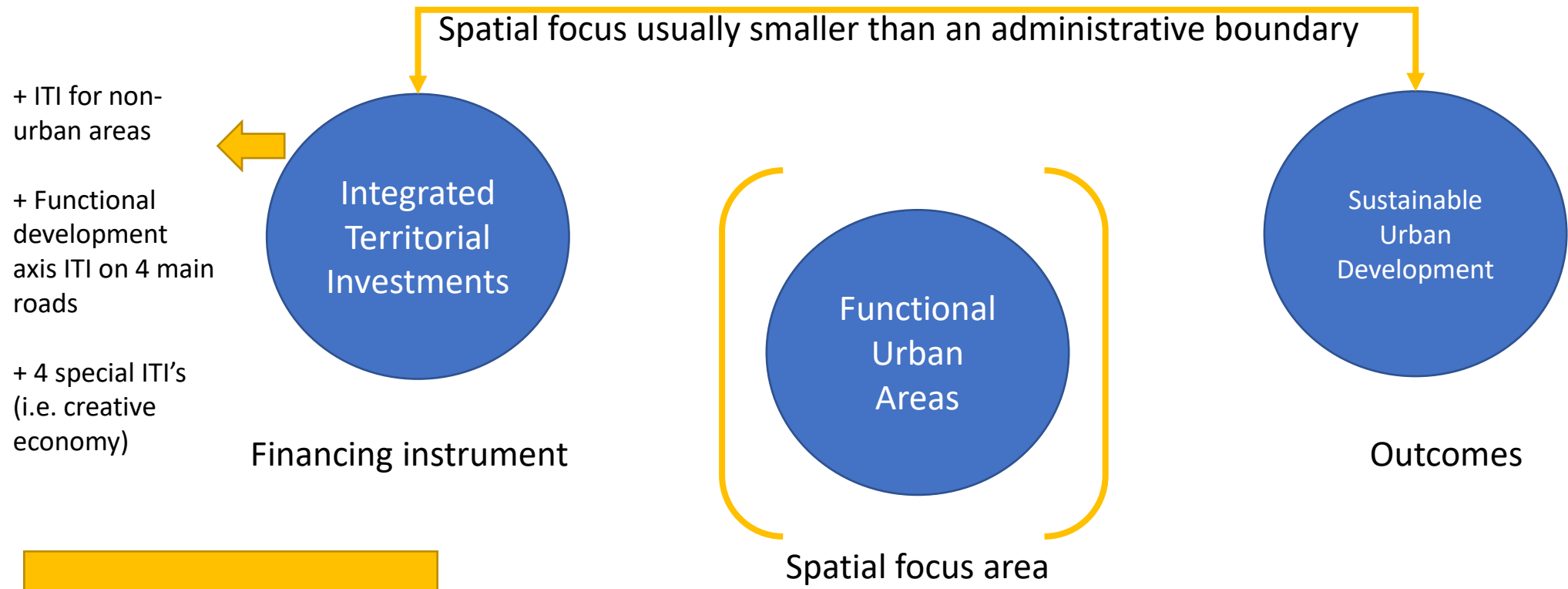
Access if have an **Integrated Urban Development Strategy**: common interest areas – such as tourism, cultural heritage, urban regeneration



From Romania to Greece



The same theme, different approaches



Greece

Leaning towards inter-municipal cooperation rather than true FUA

Intermediate Body for geographically co-located municipalities that can access funds for different calls (examples "West Athens")

Greece : ITI for SUD

Technical Assistance Facility for Sustainable Urban Development

Enhancing technical capacity for integrated planning and sustainable urban development in Greek Municipalities

Project funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, implemented by the World Bank



Build municipal capacity for strategic and integrated regional and urban planning

a) Better quality SUD strategies

b) Municipalities resolve administrative, planning and implementation bottlenecks for SUD

Accelerated implementation of investments and projects as part of SUD strategies

Improved quality of life for urban residents

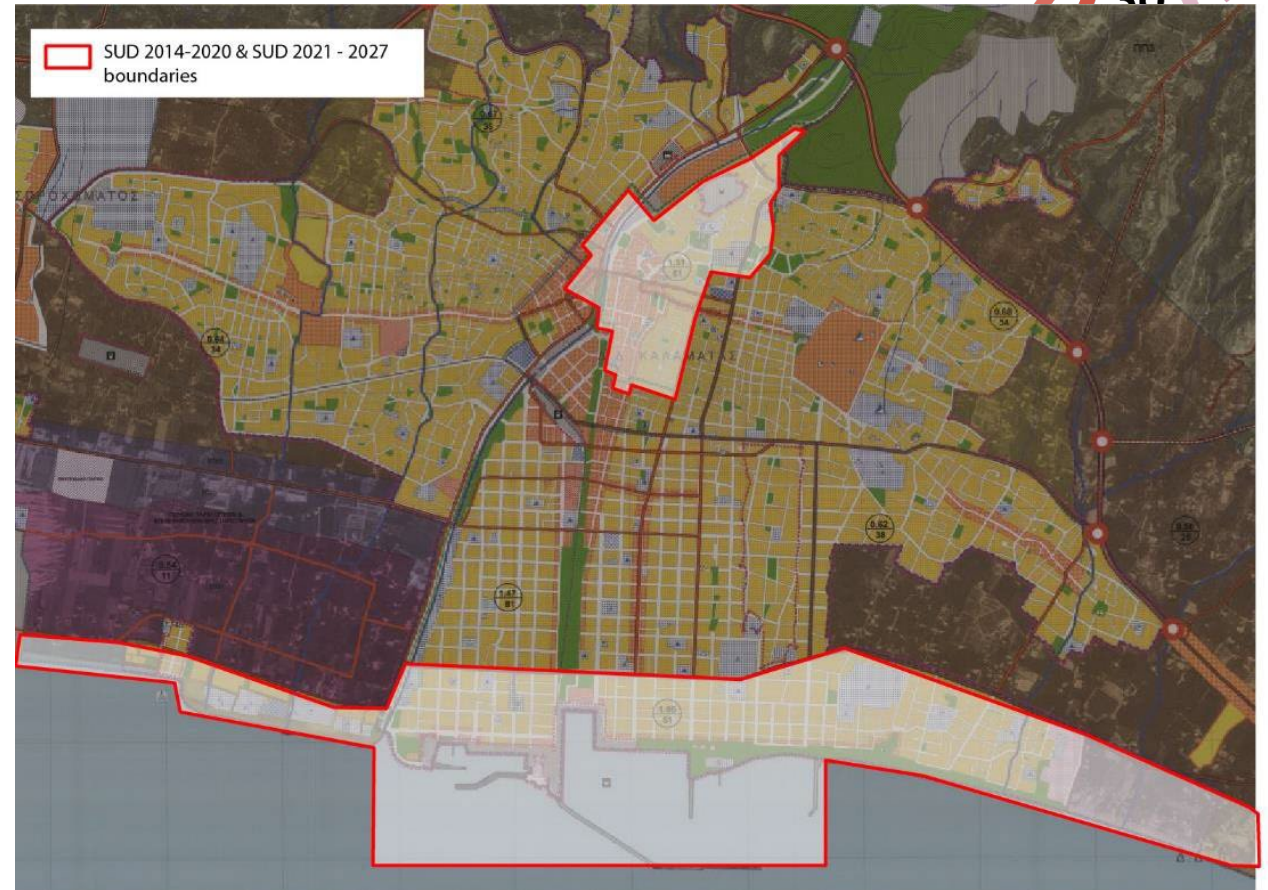
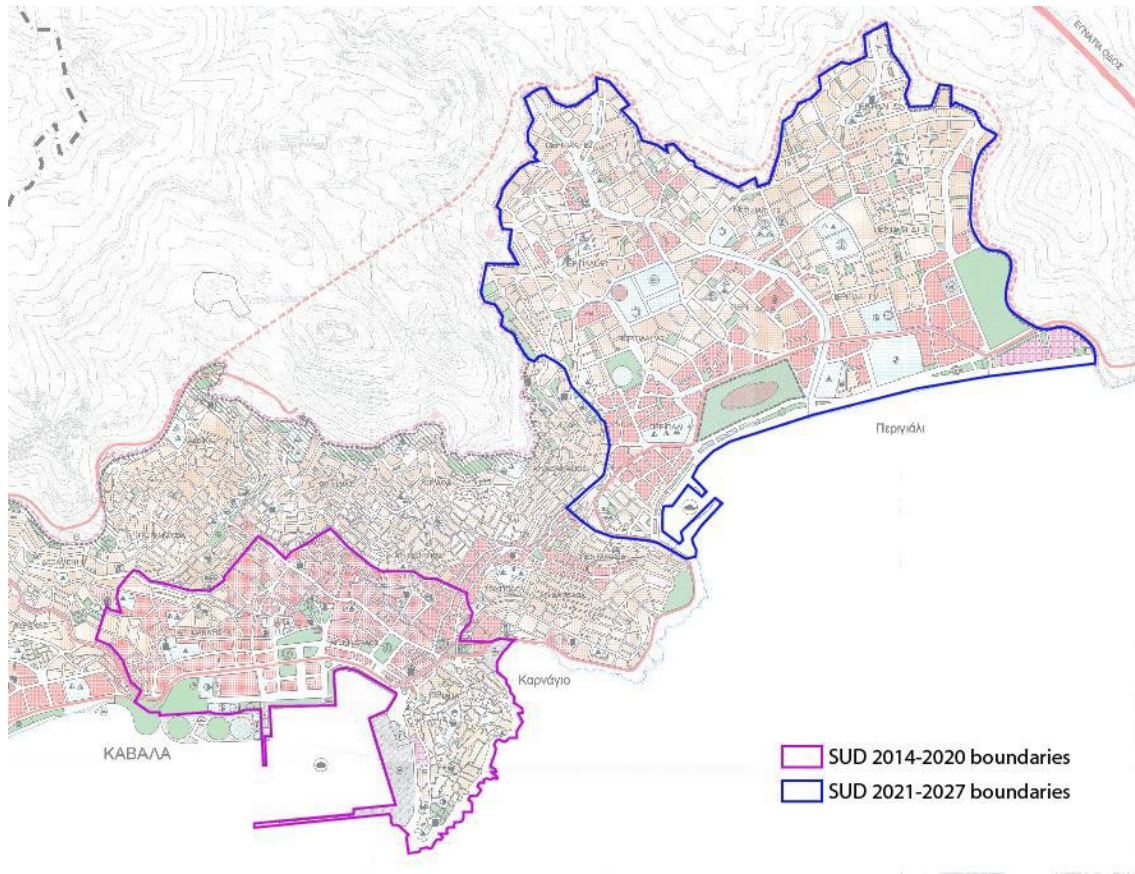


Technical support will be provided to:

- Improve the quality of strategies, plans and projects as part of the Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) requirements for the 2021- 2027 programming period;
- Identify and help to unblock bottlenecks to implementation of SUD strategies overall and in selected thematic areas;



Shifting geographical focus or not?



Source: World Bank. 2023. Scoping report for SUD ITI Technical Assistance Facility in Greece

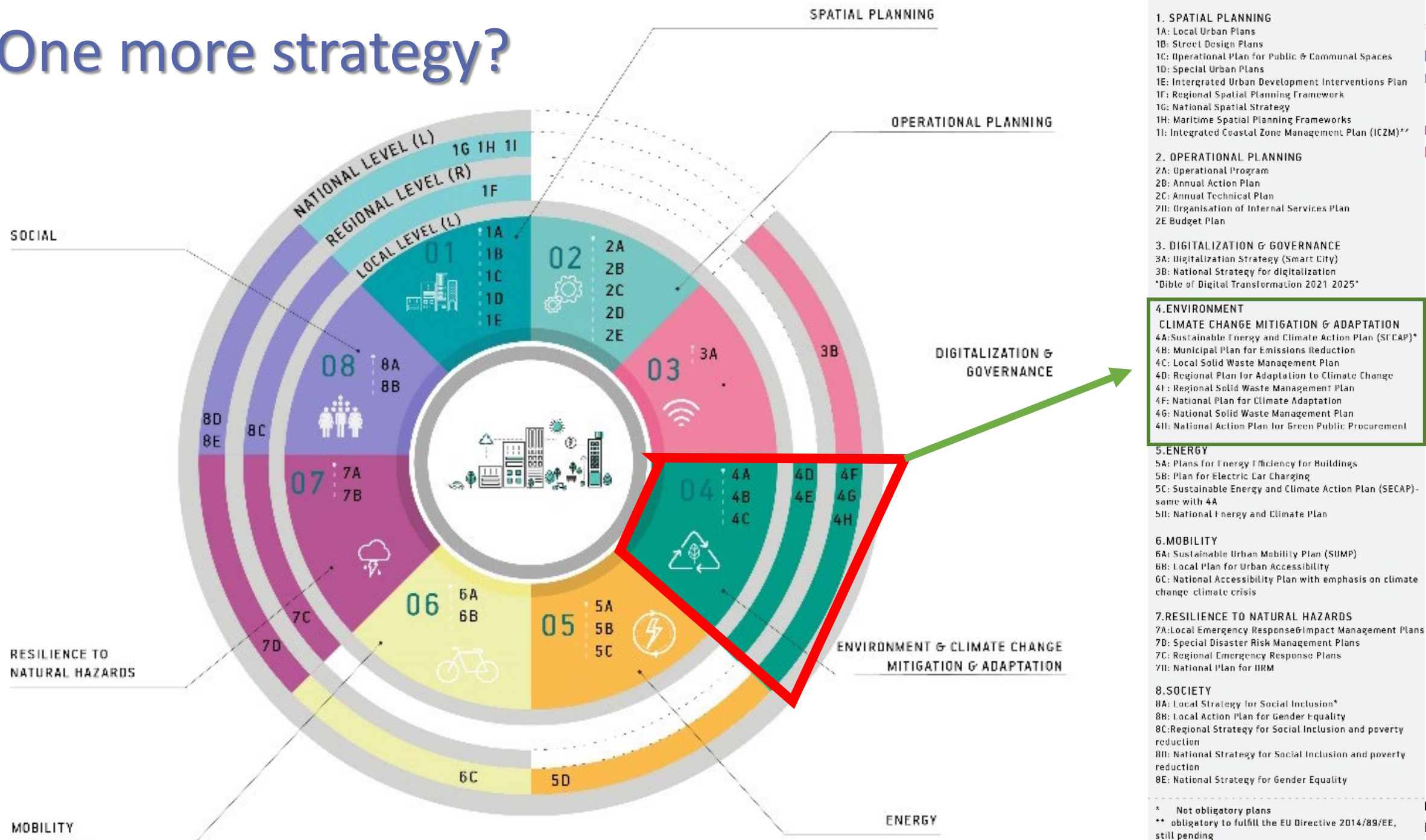


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One more strategy?



- 1. SPATIAL PLANNING**
 - 1A: Local Urban Plans
 - 1B: Street Design Plans
 - 1C: Operational Plan for Public & Communal Spaces
 - 1D: Special Urban Plans
 - 1E: Integrated Urban Development Interventions Plan
 - 1F: Regional Spatial Planning Framework
 - 1G: National Spatial Strategy
 - 1H: Maritime Spatial Planning Frameworks
 - 1I: Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM)**
- 2. OPERATIONAL PLANNING**
 - 2A: Operational Program
 - 2B: Annual Action Plan
 - 2C: Annual Technical Plan
 - 2D: Organisation of Internal Services Plan
 - 2E Budget Plan
- 3. DIGITALIZATION & GOVERNANCE**
 - 3A: Digitalization Strategy (Smart City)
 - 3B: National Strategy for digitalization

Dible of Digital Transformation 2021-2025
- 4. ENVIRONMENT**

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION & ADAPTATION

 - 4A: Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)*
 - 4B: Municipal Plan for Emissions Reduction
 - 4C: Local Solid Waste Management Plan
 - 4D: Regional Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change
 - 4E: Regional Solid Waste Management Plan
 - 4F: National Plan for Climate Adaptation
 - 4G: National Solid Waste Management Plan
 - 4H: National Action Plan for Green Public Procurement
- 5. ENERGY**
 - 5A: Plans for Energy Efficiency for Buildings
 - 5B: Plan for Electric Car Charging
 - 5C: Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)- same with 4A
 - 5D: National Energy and Climate Plan
- 6. MOBILITY**
 - 6A: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)
 - 6B: Local Plan for Urban Accessibility
 - 6C: National Accessibility Plan with emphasis on climate change climate crisis
- 7. RESILIENCE TO NATURAL HAZARDS**
 - 7A: Local Emergency Response & Impact Management Plans
 - 7B: Special Disaster Risk Management Plans
 - 7C: Regional Emergency Response Plans
 - 7D: National Plan for IRRM
- 8. SOCIETY**
 - 8A: Local Strategy for Social Inclusion*
 - 8B: Local Action Plan for Gender Equality
 - 8C: Regional Strategy for Social Inclusion and poverty reduction
 - 8D: National Strategy for Social Inclusion and poverty reduction
 - 8E: National Strategy for Gender Equality

* Not obligatory plans
 ** obligatory to fulfill the EU Directive 2014/89/EE, still pending

Trying to find implementation bottlenecks

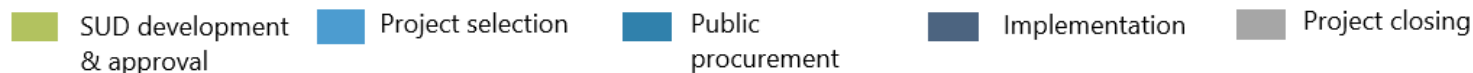


Sample of actual ITI SUD Projects from 2014 -2020 programming period from the 4 cities

Anonymized for scoping report

* = process not fully complete

Broadly 5 stages :



Region B



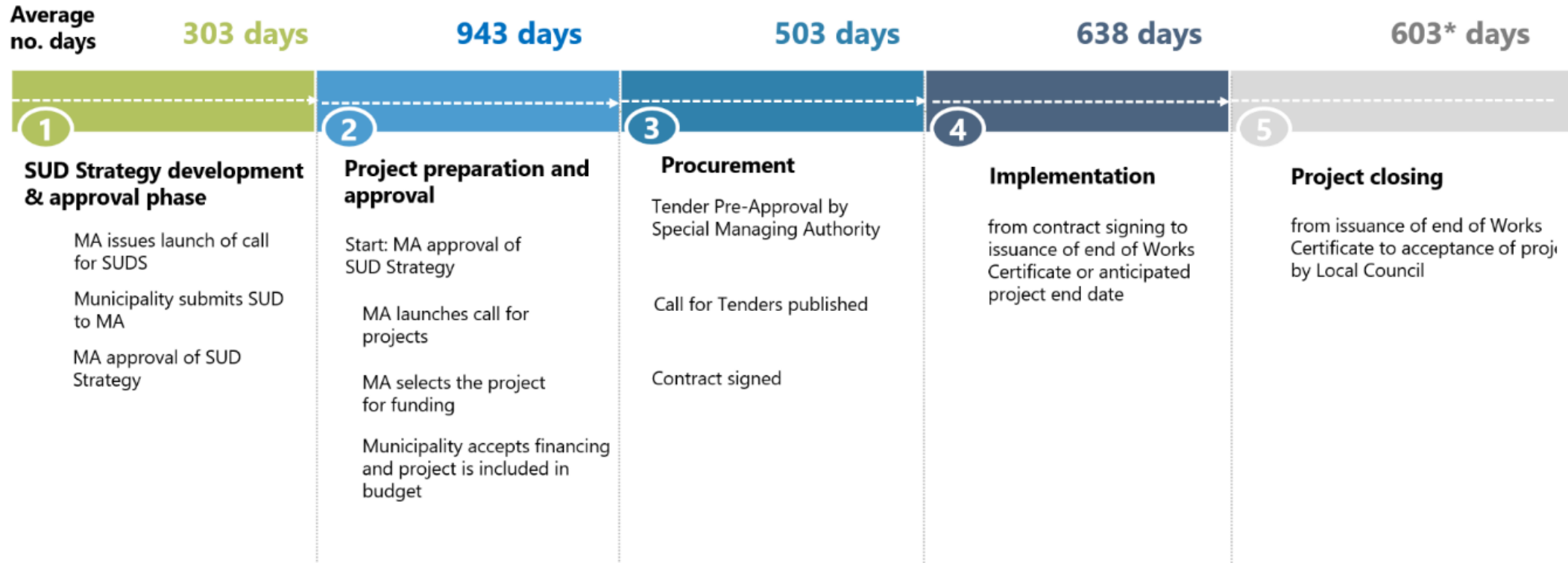
Region C



Region D



Trying to find implementation bottlenecks



Average time recorded from strategy to complete implementation (excl. project closing)

2387 days

6.5 Years

If a project could be delivered within the shortest time recorded in each step the delivery (excl. project closing)

1001 days

2.7 Years

Lessons from Greece



- Capacity constraints – what capacity?
 - Very good technical skills – not enough people!
 - Highly bureaucratic processes – the few people you have are moving papers around
- Another strategy?
- Where exactly are the bottlenecks in implementation?





And now maybe some Philosophy

Plato's view of what he called the *Kallipolis*—the beautiful city— included a tripartite structure that aligned parts of the human soul with the psychological constitution of the city along with their respective virtues and the different classes that would represent those elements

Plato identifies four cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice (427e). Both the city and the individual person may be said to be virtuous in any of these respects

Sustainable Urban Development – some final thoughts



- Peri-urban areas in Growing cities
 - Don't let FUA approach be an excuse for sprawl
- This links to Brownfields redevelopment –
 - Difficult & sometimes not compatible with quick disbursement (private sector definitely prefer greenfields)
 - Join forces in FUA to
 - i) prevent a “race to the bottom” in the market
 - ii) Have a stronger collective package to discuss with Ministries
- What about Shrinking cities?
 - Differentiated approaches to different cities – based on actual dynamics NOT legal definition
- *Neighbourhood level* focus offers opportunities for integration even with a FUA approach



Sustainable Urban Development – some final thoughts



- Sustainability of ANY institution / governance layers created (does the structure go away when the TA money stops)
- Long term financial sustainability of local governments
 - Is anyone looking at the overall municipality situation?
 - Project by project feasibility could create a distorted picture
 - Are we creating stranded assets in a climate and maintenance context?



Sustainable Urban Development – some final thoughts



- How to build partnerships & collaborate?

*“planning is everything and a plan is nothing”
– Polish expression*

Or was it Eisenhower?

"Plans are nothing; planning is everything."

- Collaboration is NOT negotiation
- True partnership and trust is only built in practice

