

**Delivering Efficient Sustainable Tourism** with low-carbon transport **Innovations: Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel**

**DESTI-SMART**  
Interreg Europe



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund

## ***Action Plan for Thessaloniki***



**Major Development  
Agency  
Thessaloniki  
(MDAT S.A.)**

**March 2021**



*Map of Thessaloniki Action Plan area*

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March 2021

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## DESTI-SMART Project

Integration of regional/local policies for Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility & low-carbon Responsible Travel, with policies for efficient sustainable tourism towards a low-carbon economy, requires particular attention in the EU. This is a common challenge that public regional/local and transport authorities increasingly face, particularly at busy destinations with high tourism travel flows (including in South Europe, coastal, maritime & insular, mass tourism destinations). Immediate action is needed through interregional cooperation to capitalise best practices, improve policy instruments & prepare action plans with implementation monitoring & evaluation.

The DESTI-SMART project, addresses the above towards 'Smart Destinations', for sustainable & responsible tourism development in Europe, with low-carbon, multimodal sustainable mobility & accessibility.

The overall objective is to improve the transport and tourism policies of EU destinations, by integrating strategies for sustainable mobility, accessibility and responsible travel with efficient & sustainable tourism development, for transition to a low-carbon economy, through efficiency, resilience, multimodality, novel low-carbon transport systems, cycling & walking, with implementation innovations, policy learning and capacity building.

The following pressing issues are addressed:

- Investments in low-carbon transport systems for mode shift to sustainable tourism mobility, incl. Electro-Mobility
- Intermodality facilities for visitors, including ICT, Mobile Aps & MaaS
- Accessible tourism for all
- Cycling & Walking facilities & promotion for visitors.

Main outputs:

- policy learning & capacity building for public authorities & their stakeholders
- improved policy instruments & action plans in 9 destinations, with close involvement of stakeholders
- advances in EU2020 objectives
- communication & dissemination learning materials.

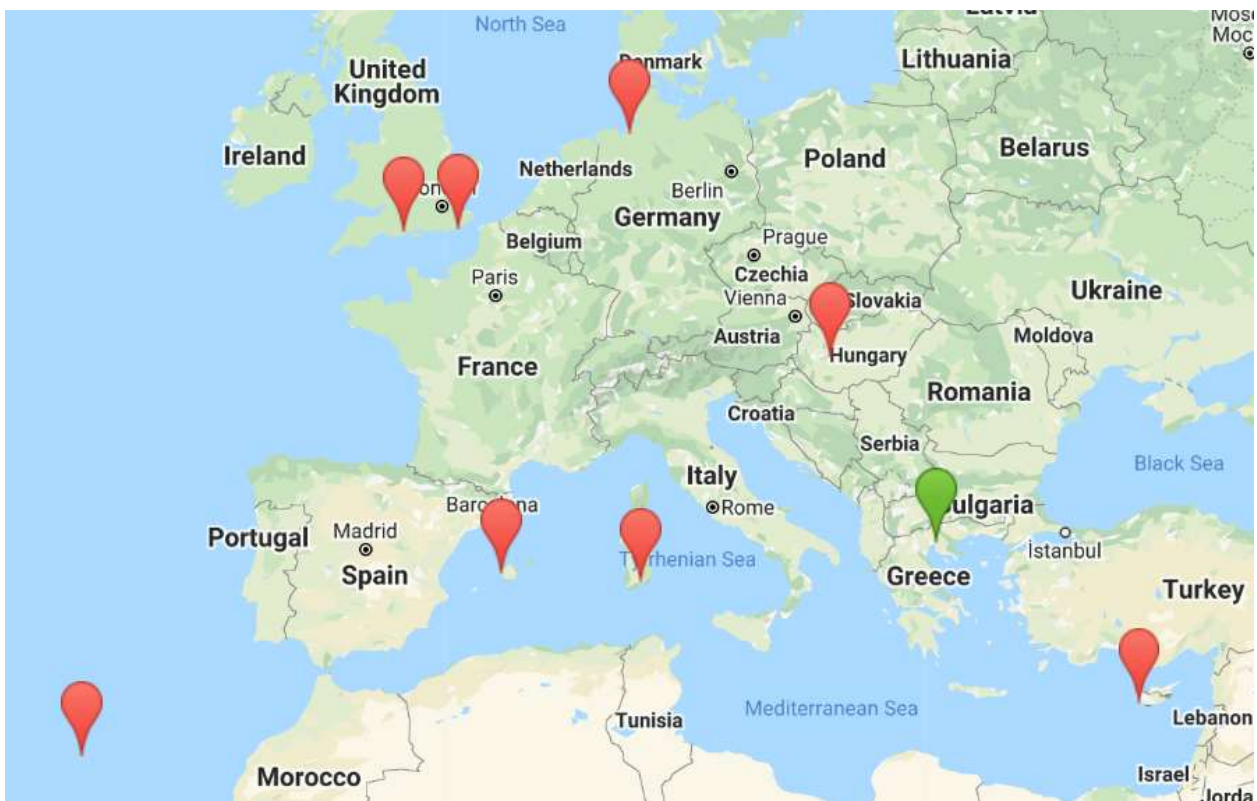
# DESTI-SMART Project Partnership

Delivering Efficient Sustainable Tourism with low-carbon transport Innovations:  
Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel

**DESTI-SMART**  
Interreg Europe



Lead Partner



**Thessaloniki - Sardinia - Bremerhaven - Madeira - Hastings - Mallorca - Vidzeme - Balaton - Pafos - BU**

*Improving transport and tourism policies at destinations by integrating strategies for smart and sustainable mobility, accessibility and responsible travel in sustainable tourism development, and through efficiency, resilience, intermodality, novel low-carbon transport systems, cycling and walking for visitors, towards smart destinations*

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## FOREWORD



Major Development Agency of Thessaloniki (MDAT S.A.) as Lead Partner of DESTI-SMART project has been working over the past two years along with the other partners of the project towards the connection of policies for Mobility and for Tourism. By building strong, integrated and sustainable mobility strategies, fully connected with the urban planning policies, we will be able to promote a tourism model based on the principle of 'Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel'.

The City of Thessaloniki is a major tourist destination in Greece. The city for years seeks ways to implement a holistic approach for transport and tourism planning and DESTI-SMART project has given a unique opportunity to research new ways for sustainable mobility with impact on tourism or the city of Thessaloniki.

During the last two years MDAT S.A. has been intensively engaged in networking and governance activities with other organisations both from the mobility and the tourism sector so as to determine the course of action for the next two-year period that will have a long-term impact for the city.

The purpose of the presented Action Plan is to enhance the cooperation among major organisations of the city from the two sectors so as to jointly achieve both tangible results by implementing new forms of urban mobility and intermodality and also achieve policy and governance changes that will determine the future actions towards sustainable mobility accessibility and responsible travel.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our European partners. We feel honoured to lead such an important project with such a strong partnership scheme, comprising of organisations and experts with great experience in the field of Transportation and Tourism.

We look forward to achieving the vision and the aims of the Thessaloniki DESTI-SMART Action Plan for a responsible city, accessible for all and we are confident we will achieve it! We own a sustainable future for our City and for the next generations.

Maria Karagianni,

*Chairperson of the Board of Major Development Agency Thessaloniki S.A. – MDAT, Deputy Mayor of Culture and Tourism of the City of Thessaloniki*

## Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

The present Action Plan for Thessaloniki City implemented by the Major Development Agency Thessaloniki aims to enhance the connection between sustainable mobility and tourism.

Thessaloniki City is a major tourist destination of Greece with multiple effects on its economy, social cohesion, city planning and image. Today, Thessaloniki is a lively, multicultural city that attracts young people, tourists, and international business. Major challenge is to enhance the city's destination image, further adding to the city's and region's GDP. However, the tourism sector is facing major challenges despite the positive figures over the last decade. Among the challenges (competitiveness, marketing strategy, upgrade of services and products, diversification, etc.) is the mobility infrastructure in connection with accessibility and services. In this direction, the city seeks to combine tourism development with other sectors so as to regenerate the urban economy and attract investments that promote sustainable growth.

DESTI-SMART project has provided a unique opportunity to learn and implement actions towards the integration of tourism and mobility policies. DESTI-SMART project has been crucial for the city of Thessaloniki to start an engagement process among Mobility and Tourism organisations and experts. Over the last two years intensive networking took place both at interregional and at local/regional level.

The present Action Plan resulted from a) the results of the questionnaire survey for travel behaviour research , that took place in summer 2019 along the Metropolitan Thessaloniki seafront, b) networking activities among the local/regional partners who are intensively involved in the fields of public transport, urban planning and tourism, c) the Interregional DESTI-SMART Workshops and d) the Good Practices presented by project partners.

Staff exchange visit took place in London and Hastings , UK in the Hastings Borough Council premises and its consultant agency in London, regarding the process of delivering the feasibility study. Another virtual staff exchange atook place with Pafos Regional Board of Tourism, CY focusing mainly on building partnerships and creating synergies among tourism and mobility stakeholders around the thematics of DESTI-SMART.

The good practices published by the partners were also helpful to learn about the projects implemented by the other DESTI-SMART partners. Main input was received by:

- ✓ GP - Lake Balaton Region – Intermodality Transport Hubs
- ✓ GP - Bremerhaven Harbor cruises through Overseas Harbours
- ✓ GP -"Practical guidelines for smart and sustainable mobility in tourism" by PP4 Horários do Funchal, Transportes Públicos S.A., PT
- ✓ GP - The 10 tourism and mobility guidelines are an output of CIVITAS DESTINATIONS project and provide orientation on how the transport and tourism stakeholders can improve tourism governance, customer journey and reduce CO2 emissions, towards smart and sustainable mobility.
- ✓ GP - Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for visitors to destinations: The case of Manchester by PP10 Bournemouth University
- ✓ Workshop B on Intermodality - Study visit in Bremerhaven, DE in Spetmeber 2019: Visit at the city port along the new line/route of the the public bus "Hafenliner"
- ✓ All workshops "State of the Art" by PP10 Bournemouth University

### Tourism, Mobility and Accessibility in the City of Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki is a mid-size coastal city situated in northern Greece, on Thermaikos Bay, part of the Aegean Sea. It is Greece's second-largest city and the country's second-largest export and transit Port. Thessaloniki is also a rapidly growing tourist destination. The city's history, culture, and vivid atmosphere



are highly valued by visitors.

Thessaloniki is a rapid growing tourist destination. The City has increased the number of international tourists by 30%, overnight stays by 110%, and international flights by 15% since 2009. International events also help to draw in foreign visitors to the city. Events like the Thessaloniki International Film Festival, Thessaloniki International Trade Fair, Thessaloniki Food Festival and Thessaloniki Pride Festival are held annually, and the city increasingly hosts international events like the World Music Expo (WOMEX, 2012) and the 12th World MaxiBasketball Championship (2013).

In 2019, international arrivals at Thessaloniki airport increased by 12% according to an annual survey conducted out by the Thessaloniki Hotels Association (THA). In the same survey, visitors of Thessaloniki, evaluate their experiences within the city, in various aspects. The public transport experience is been evaluated very low (satisfaction rate 6.3 / 10), while the average satisfaction rate for the city is 8.1 / 10.

Thessaloniki also welcomes many visitors for one day from the suburban, the other cities of Northern Greece and recently from the wider Balkan area (City Break). Of course, we should take into consideration the multicultural heritage, which attracts many tourists. Taking these into consideration there is a high need to provide to the visitors – tourists the chance to facilitate and satisfy their travel needs.

Additionally, during their visit, tourists tend not to leave the historical city centre, despite the fact that there are numerous historical landmarks and sites in close adjacent municipalities of the Metropolitan area. The diversification of tourism offer in the city is closely related to the mobility infrastructure provided by the city and also to tools provides such as apps, e-ticketing, etc.

On the other hand, mobility is major stress affecting the everyday lives of Thessaloniki's residents and visitors, particularly as it contributes to air pollution, which is one of the city's key current priorities. By waiting for the Metro completion, the city is facing the limited public transportation options available at present, causing over-reliance on private car use.

Mobility issues is a major stress affecting the everyday lives of Thessaloniki's residents, particularly as it contributes to air pollution, which is one of the city's key current priorities. Policies for sustainable mobility & accessibility are of high priority in the city, however it lacks an integrated plan for its mobility system. The mobility system in Thessaloniki is facing a number of significant challenges including limited public transport options, over-reliance on private car use, and ageing infrastructure. This has led to severe traffic congestion and obstruction of the city road network.

Currently, three (3) public transportation systems are planned: the subway system is being constructed after several delays (projected completion in 2021), a flyover by-pass. Also, there are studies to be implemented such as the urban sea transportation, and a new (west) suburban railway are planned and will be implemented the next decade.

The expansion of the cycling infrastructure is becoming increasingly important over the past years and from a tourism networking perspective. However, only parts of the city centre have a good cycling infrastructure: 12 km bicycle lanes in the city and 7 bike sharing stations mainly along the waterfront. Along with planned infrastructure, new business opportunities have emerged the recent years. The bike-sharing system (Bikethess) and bike-courier services (PiediVerdi) are examples of innovative businesses that create or expand new mobility practices.

Also, the city lacks an integrated smart mobility tool, which could boost the accessibility to the various tourism points of interest through a more sustainable mobility system.

Additionally, shifting to cleaner energy practices is important to the city due to the above-mentioned problem with high congestion and obstruction.

### **VISION and Goals of the Thessaloniki Action Plan**

To achieve an improved transport and tourism policy in the city, new strategies for sustainable forms of mobility, accessibility and other infrastructure measures must be implemented to enable sustainable and responsible travel and accessibility for all. Promoting Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility provision with

low-carbon transport is a theme that has not been given the emphasis that is required and deserves, particularly in peak summertime tourism season. Transport planning is usually geared to the normal travel demand of residents and businesses, with the special needs of tourists frequently overlooked, underestimated, or given inadequate attention. Visitors and tourists are not very familiar with the destination transport networks and language but have to use the available facilities for their mobility.

***The vision of DESTI-SMART Action Plan for Thessaloniki is to improve the Thessaloniki 2030 Resilience Strategy and create a new policy framework for the city towards its promotion to a Responsible Travel Destination by fostering low-carbon and active mobility means and by offering accessibility to the city's tourism and cultural hotspots all over its metropolitan area. The Action Plan proposes a resilient concept to provide new, sustainable, and more responsible mobility services for tourists.***

**The Action Plan includes a sustainable and integrated set of proposals comprising the following:**

Action 1: Enabling an upgraded policy framework for the promotion of Thessaloniki as a Resilient SMART tourist destination through measures for the promotion of e-mobility, intermodality, accessibility for all and cycling & walking

DESTI-SMART Thematic: All / Responsible Tourism

Type: Structural Change

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Action 2: THESSPASS Joint Digital Platform (Pilot Action)

DESTI-SMART Thematic: Accessibility, Walking & Cycling

Type: New Project

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### **Monitoring process**

The Action Plan presented in this document will be monitored regularly every six months by MDAT S.A. The process and the framework of the proposed actions will be monitored by using several performance Indicators. Through these indicators, the progress of the actions, in respect to the timeframe and the implementation stage, will be effectively checked. The Performance Indicators vary according to the actions. Some indicators will check whether the action has been implemented or not. Other type of the indicators will be monitored according to the specific context of the Actions.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The proposed actions aim to support a vision for the city of Thessaloniki to become a Responsible Tourism Destination by promoting responsible traveling practices to have a positive impact on urban environment, natural ecosystem and biodiversity, reduce pollution, but also help visitors and tourist to understand and interpret local qualities and interact with them in a sustainable and responsible way.

For the first time in Greece, a policy document will address mobility issues in a tourist destination in detail, recognising the massive seasonal effect of tourism on a destination's mobility. The Action Plan will reinforce the Thessaloniki Resilience Strategy by integrating SMART Destinations elements into the Strategy, aiming in exemplifying the city as a Responsible Tourism Destination in national and European level.

<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Type</b> <i>(New project / Improved Governance / Structural Change)</i>	<b>Source</b> <i>Good Practice transfer</i>	<b>Source Partner</b>
<b>Accessible - Responsible Tourism / Low-carbon transport system</b>			
Enabling an upgraded policy framework for the promotion of Thessaloniki as a Resilient SMART tourist destination through measures for the promotion of e-mobility, intermodality, accessibility for all and cycling & walking	Structural Change & Governance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Three Towns Travel (3TT): Bournemouth, Poole &amp; Christchurch Sustainable Mobility-Residents &amp; Tourist"</li> <li>✓ Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for visitors to destinations: The case of Manchester</li> <li>✓ Practical guidelines for smart and sustainable mobility in tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bournemouth University, UK (Advisory partner - PP10)</li> <li>✓ Horários do Funchal – Transportes Públicos, S.A., Madeira, PT (PP4)</li> </ul>
<b>Pilot Action Implementation</b>			
<b>ThessPass joint digital platform (Pilot Action)</b>	New Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Three Towns Travel (3TT): Bournemouth, Poole &amp; Christchurch Sustainable Mobility-Residents &amp; Tourist"</li> <li>✓ Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for visitors to destinations: The case of Manchester</li> </ul>	✓ Bournemouth University (PP10)

## Action Plan

### Part I – General information

Project: DESTI-SMART - Delivering Efficient Sustainable Tourism with low-carbon transport Innovations: Sustainable Mobility, Accessibility and Responsible Travel

**Partner organisation:** Major Development Agency Thessaloniki S.A. –MDAT S.A.

**Country:** Greece

**NUTS2 region:** Central Macedonia (Kentriki Makedonia)

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### Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:  Investment for Growth and Jobs programme  
 European Territorial Cooperation programme  
 Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: **Resilient Thessaloniki - A strategy for 2030**

The main policy instrument addressed the Thessaloniki DESTI SMART Action Plan is the “[Resilient Thessaloniki – A Strategy for 2030](#)” delivered by the City of Thessaloniki in the framework of the city’s selection to join the 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) Network, in 2014. The City of Thessaloniki considers this a unique opportunity to implement a robust, participatory approach to create a long-term City Strategy that addresses current and future challenges. So, the Municipality of Thessaloniki joined forces with the Major Development Agency of Thessaloniki (MDAT S.A.) to create a strategy that delivers intermunicipal solutions in the city’s metropolitan scale.

The main objective of the Strategy is to strengthen Thessaloniki’s urban resilience towards its population shifts, urban economy, open spaces and local governance. The strategic approaches and considering the certain city values such as: Social Cohesion, Local Identity & Heritage, Environmental Management, Multi-stakeholder Engagement, Technology Adaptation, Health & Well-being, Youth Empowerment, Economic Prosperity.

More specifically, the Strategy sets the below goals and objectives:

- ✓ Goal 1: Shape a thriving and sustainable city with mobility and city systems that serve its people
- ✓ Goal 2: Co-create an inclusive city that invests in its human talent
- ✓ Goal 3: Build a dynamic urban economy and responsive city through effective and network governance
- ✓ Goal 4: Re-discover the City’s relationship to the sea – Integrated Thermaikos Bay

These Goals are broken down into 30 objectives and more than 100 actions, each with multiple benefits for the resilience of the city and population. Actions include policies, projects, and initiatives (existing and new) that connect goals and city values, from youth participation to clean power for mobility, from waste management to co-ownership of public space and risk reduction.

Although the Strategy promotes integrated resilient mobility, the combination of transport and tourism resilience is not addressed fully. There is a need to further improve the Strategy by integrating sustainable tourism mobility, accessibility & transport systems resilience as a S.M.A.R.T. destination.

So, the Thessaloniki DESTI-SMART Action Plan will contribute this strategic policy instrument by enabling an upgraded policy framework for the promotion of Thessaloniki as a Resilient SMART tourist destination through measures for the promotion of e-mobility, intermodality, accessibility for all and cycling & walking. The new framework will identify the interrelation between the transportation networks and the city's attractions, identifying and understanding the visitors/tourists flows. A new Objective titled **"Thessaloniki as a Responsible Tourist Destination"** will reflect the project's topics and challenges identified during Phase 1 of DESTI-SMART.

By upscaling and supporting the city's Resilient Strategy 2030, the Thessaloniki DESTI – SMART Action Plan aims to contribute to the creation of center-periphery tourism destination systems and help locally rooted tourism and transportation services become sustainable, inclusive, and finally, more competitive.

### Part III – Details of the actions envisaged.

#### **ACTION 1: Enabling an upgraded policy framework for the promotion of Thessaloniki as a Resilient SMART tourist destination through measures for the promotion of e-mobility, intermodality, accessibility for all and cycling & walking**

##### **1. The background**

The main policy instrument addressed by the Thessaloniki DESTI SMART Action Plan is the “[Resilient Thessaloniki – A Strategy for 2030](#)” delivered by the City of Thessaloniki in the framework of the city’s selection to join the 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) Network, in 2014. The City of Thessaloniki considers this a unique opportunity to implement a robust, participatory approach to create a long-term City Strategy that addresses current and future challenges. So, the Municipality of Thessaloniki joined forces with the Major Development Agency of Thessaloniki (MDAT S.A.) to create a strategy that delivers intermunicipal solutions in the city’s metropolitan scale.

Thessaloniki’s Resilience Strategy 2030 is inline and also complements other strategic documents in the local, regional and national domain, such as: The Municipality’s 5-year Operational Plan 2014-2020, the City’s Technical Plan, the Master Plan of Thessaloniki and the Regional and National Framework for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development and also the Regional Operational Plan 2014-2020 of Central Macedonia.

The Resilience Strategy cut across four (4) main Goals:

- ✓ Goal 1: Shape a thriving and sustainable city with mobility and city systems that serve its people.
- ✓ Goal 2: Co-create an inclusive city that invests in its human talent.
- ✓ Goal 3: Build a dynamic urban economy and responsive city through effective and network governance.
- ✓ Goal 4: Re-discover the City’s relationship to the sea – Integrated Thermaikos Bay

These goals are broken down into 30 objectives and more than 100 actions, each with multiple benefits for the resilience of the city and population. Actions include policies, projects, and initiatives (existing and new) that connect goals and city values, from youth participation to clean power for mobility, from waste management to co-ownership of public space and risk reduction.

However, the Strategy lacks a concrete framework which addresses the needs of the visitors and tourists of the Metropolitan Thessaloniki. More specifically, Goal 1, which concerns sustainable urban mobility, lacks of focus on the needs of the city’s visitors and tourists during their stay in Thessaloniki. As Thessaloniki emerges as a new tourist destination in Northern Greece, which offers lots of attractions and experiences to the visitors, the need for adapting the Thessaloniki Resilience Strategy 2030 is crucial. Tourism severally affects the urban landscape, bringing forwards the city’s deficiencies regarding mobility management and coordination.

Inspired by the project’s exchange of experience activities, i.e Interregional Workshops, staff exchanges, good practices identifications and peer reviews, MDAT drafted this Action, aiming in achieving the structural change in the Resilience Strategy policy instrument. The Good practices that mainly inspired this action are the following:

- a. “Three Towns Travel (3TT): Bournemouth, Poole & Christchurch Sustainable Mobility-Residents & Tourist” by PP10 Advisory Partner Bournemouth University, UK (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/3910/three-towns-travel-3tt-bournemouth-poole-christchurch-sustainable-mobility-residents-tourist/>): A programme of sustainable transport measures to provide a step change to low carbon travel for residents and tourists which support the growth of the economy. 3TT – is an integrated and targeted package of measures which aims to create a long-lasting step change in low-carbon travel,
- b. “Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for visitors to destinations: The case of Manchester”, by PP10

Advisory Partner Bournemouth University, UK (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4596/mobility-as-a-service-maaS-for-visitors-to-destinations-the-case-of-manchester/>)  
Mobility as a Service (MaaS) as an enabler of seamless and more environmentally-friendly visitor travel at a destination

c. “Practical guidelines for smart and sustainable mobility in tourism”, by PP4 Horários do Funchal – Transportes Públicos, S.A., Madeira, PT

(<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4435/practical-guidelines-for-smart-and-sustainable-mobility-in-tourism/>) 10 practical guidance recommendations dedicated to tourism and mobility sectors to implement sustainable mobility solutions in touristic destinations

## 2. Action

The Action 2 of the Thessaloniki DESTI-SMART Action Plan aims to introduce and enable an upgraded policy framework in the Metropolitan Thessaloniki, which will address both the city’s and visitors/tourists’ needs.

The new framework will identify the interrelation between the transportation networks and the city’s attractions, identifying and understanding the visitors/tourists flows. A new Objective titled “Thessaloniki as a Responsible Tourist Destination” will reflect the project’s topics and challenges identified during Phase 1 of DESTI-SMART.

Goal 1 “Shape a thriving and sustainable city with mobility and city systems that serve its people”, consists of seven (7) objectives:

- A. Build an integrated resilient mobility system
- B. Adopt Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
- C. Develop smart urban logistics
- D. Move to clean power for transport
- E. Reduce air pollution and urban noise
- F. Reframe waste management
- G. Strengthen environmental public awareness for a stronger environmental policy,

aiming among others, to improve intermodal transportation, reduce air pollution and tailpipe emissions and reduce congestion and delays. An 8th Objective will be added in order to complement the current Strategy’s objectives and to highlight the impact of tourism in the city’s mobility.

The methodology to achieve the final drafting of the upgraded policy framework for smart mobility for tourists in the Metropolitan area of Thessaloniki, will be based on the results of the travel behaviour study that took place in summer 2019 along the Thessaloniki seafront, as well as the PP10 advisory partner’s comments, clarifications, suggestions and conclusions regarding the study’s findings.

MDAT will establish close cooperation with two (2) of the Municipality’s Departments to contribute to their activities and to change the way that the Municipality plans and implements policies regarding mobility and transportation. MDAT will introduce elements of tourism destinations planning into concrete transport planning methodologies through the identification, monitoring and provision of indicators which measures tourist behaviour and preferences.

Also, MDAT will collaborate with the Municipality’s team responsible for the development of the Electric Vehicles Charging Plan of the city, in order to contribute to the identification, recording and monitoring of indicators related to e-mobility for tourists. For example, data regarding the use of e-vehicles by tourists, charging stations at tourist attractions etc are missing and should be considered for further investigation.

The implementation of the Action includes the following steps/tasks:

- A. Presentation of the city's visitors/tourists mobility profile (based on the study's results and conclusions)
- B. Identification of possible gaps and further elaboration, if needed, on the findings. Collaboration with the AUTH (MDAT's key stakeholder) to strengthen the initial survey (optional)
- C. Identification of visitors/tourists mobility needs through the organisation of participatory workshops (in person or online)
- D. Determination of four (4) indicators and their baseline and target values to monitor visitors/tourists behavior and needs
- E. Measuring and providing data to the Urban Resilient Observatory of the Municipality of Thessaloniki and the Thessaloniki Electric Vehicle Charging Plan team. Establishment of cooperation.
- F. Consultations on drafting and finalising the updated Objective of the Strategy
- G. Submission of the new Objective proposal (inc. Actions for e-mobility, intermodality, accessibility and cycling & walking for tourists) to the Municipality's Resilience Office
- H. Integration into the policy instrument and approval by the Municipal Council
- I. Dissemination event addressed to local and regional policy makers, academic institutions and transport & tourism stakeholders to introduce the changes and adopt the new framework.

#### **Main outputs**

- 1st Report on tourist mobility trends in Thessaloniki, including gap analysis and minutes of the meeting with the Action's key stakeholders (see below "players involved")
- 2nd Report on the results of participatory workshop(s), inc. defined indicators and baseline values
- Excel file measuring the indicators every 3 months
- Poster with visualised data on the indicators monitoring (at the end of project the project)
- New objective proposal in Greek and abstract and press release on the new objective proposal in English
- Minutes of the Dissemination event

#### **3. Players involved**

- Major Development Agency Thessaloniki – MDAT S.A.: MDAT as body co-responsible for the production of the Strategy has been also a body to implement part of its actions. Within the framework of DESTI-SMART project MDAT will coordinate the structural changes to be implemented within the Strategy
- Municipality of Thessaloniki: The Resilience Office of the Municipality of Thessaloniki is the responsible authority for carrying out the strategy and also setting the priorities for the city. The Urban Resilient Observatory is responsible to monitor any changes regarding the identified indicators of the Resilience Strategy. The Technical Department is responsible for the drafting and implementation of the Electric Vehicles Charging Plan of the city.
- Municipalities of the greater urban area of Thessaloniki (especially Municipalities of Thermaikos bay area): The Strategy outlines within its goals the importance of the intermunicipal cooperation at metropolitan level, thus—the Municipalities' contribution to the updating of the Strategy is crucial.



#### **4. Timeframe**

Semester 1 (January 2021 - June 2021): Delivering tasks A-C

Semester 2 (July 2021 – December 2021): Delivering tasks D-G

Semester 3 (January 2022 – June 2022): Delivering Tasks H-I

#### **5. Costs (if relevant)**

This action includes only staff costs.

#### **6. Funding sources (if relevant):**

MDAT Staff costs

Municipality of Thessaloniki staff cost

## **ACTION 2: ThessPass Joint Digital Platform**

### ***Testing of a joint digital platform for Thessaloniki's top tourism attractions and significant points of interest, fostering low-carbon, Sustainable and Active Mobility, Accessibility, and Responsible Travel***

#### **1. The background**

The “ThessPass” pilot embraces approaches and solutions that have been presented in the following list of best practices:

Project Partner “Bournemouth University”: [Highlighted Good Practice](#): “Three Towns Travel (3TT): Bournemouth, Poole & Christchurch Sustainable Mobility-Residents & Tourist”. A programme of sustainable transport measures to provide a step change to low carbon travel for residents and tourists through the promotion of local bus, rail, walking and cycling alternatives.

Project Stakeholder: “Transport for Greater Manchester” [Highlighted Good Practice](#): Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for visitors to destinations: The case of Manchester”. As part of the project, a smartphone app was designed to provide detailed, integrated information about all transport options available in Greater Manchester, including pricing. The app will facilitate journey planning and offer an opportunity to its users to book trips on the go. The app will enable access of its users not only to the city's public transport, but also bike-share services and, potentially, rental cars.

#### **2. Action**

The city of Thessaloniki is considered a busy destination with high tourism travel flows, but it lacks an integrated smart mobility tool, which could boost the accessibility of various tourism points of interest through a more sustainable mobility system.

The pilot action “ThessPass” envisages the development of a joint digital platform. The joint platform will be created on the basis of a MoU establishment between the main key actors in the tourism industry both with key the transportation authorities. The objective of the platform will be to promote responsible tourism, mass transportation and active mobility to reduce users’ CO2 emissions footprint when visiting tourist points of interest and additionally to promote sustainable destinations. The digital platform will provide integrated accessibility considering the elders, disabled and families with young children needs. Walking and cycling routes, will be greatly encouraged, in order to promote “Greenways” as sustainable transport options. The ultimate goal of the pilot action is to optimize the way users experience the city, showcasing Thessaloniki’s treasured gems, while fostering active mobility and balancing environmental, educational and social considerations. The most important feature of the platform is for the users to have the ability to share their experiences and help other users to choose the most efficient and sustainable way to reach their destination.

The ThessPass will also provide to the visitors combined and budget solutions to purchase transportation and cultural / archaeological venue tickets (ThessPass Card). As a joint platform, the application will be the result of the common actions of the city’s tourism and transportation key actors as follows:

- A. Operators
- B. Intermediaries (supporters)
- C. End Users

A. The operators are the platform owners, the Major Development Agency (MDAT) and the Municipality of Thessaloniki. The joint platform will be created on the basis of a MoU establishment between the main key actors in the tourism industry and local transportation authorities. The coordinator of the MoU will be the MDAT S.A who will undertake the task to organize all the needed joint activities.

B. The Intermediaries (supporters) are the MoU key stakeholders of this initiative. The Intermediaries consist of businesses in the wider tourism sector including, but not limited to, Museums, Public Transportation, bike renting businesses, car sharing businesses, electric scooters renting businesses,

restaurants, and recreational areas in general. The intermediaries (initially referred as suppliers) which are the MoU stakeholders will also use the platform for free to support their “customers”. In this way, they will promote the ThessPass use.

C. End Users will be the visitors of the City of Thessaloniki, tourists or business visitors that might need to move within the city and in the hinterland and could use the platform for direct booking of attractions and mobility tickets (when needed).

Walking and cycling routes will be greatly promoted combining all together a network of sustainable routes considering as well the elders’, disabled’ and families with young children needs. The aim is to make an incredibly simple web-based platform where anyone will have the right tools to create a customized tour within the city using sustainable & smart ways of commuting.

The Action will be implemented in three (3) phases

### **PHASE 1: BRINGING TOGETHER THE STAKEHOLDERS AND ANALYSING THE NEEDS**

Task 1.1: MoU signed between the key stakeholders (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki). The first task of the pilot is to gather all the key- stakeholders of the project, communicate the aim and objective of the project and assign a MoU with them that will ensure their active involvement.

Task 1.2: Detailed Project Timeline and Activities drafted (MDAT). The second task will be to develop a detailed methodology of all the steps and actions to be followed together with a time plan. This document will need to get the approval of the Steering Committee which will monitor the progress of the pilot and evaluate its results.

Task 1.3: ThessPass needs analysis and specifications (MDAT, all stakeholders). This task includes a short needs analysis survey that will be delivered by MDAT. The survey will record the key- stakeholders needs and will formulate the technical specifications for the ThessPass platform and app (architecture, components, features, app functions etc)

Task 1.4: Open procurement for the technical expert (MDAT). Based on the technical specifications report, MDAT will proceed the procurement for the external expert that will develop the platform and ThessPass application.

#### **Main outputs**

D 1.1: Memorandum of Understanding & appointment of the Steering Committee

D 1.2: Project Timeline and work Plan

D 1.3: Needs analysis and ThessPass specifications

D 1.4: ThessPass technical expert open procurement

### **A. PHASE 2: THESSPASS PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING**

Task 2.1: Development of the joint platform mock-up (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, external expert). Based on the technical specifications, external expert, under the supervision of MDAT and Municipality of Thessaloniki will draft the mock-up of the joint digital platform. This task will include the following activities: functionality definition, sketching the platform, planning the workflow, wireframing the UI and validation of the platform.

Task 2.2: Development of the ThessPass platform Beta Version (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, external expert). This task will be devoted to building the platform Beta Version and will include the following activities: Architecture of the database, Development of the frontend, Building of the backend etc.

Task 2.3: Testing the Beta Version (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, all stakeholders). The Beta Version will be tested and debugged. The testing phase will include an internal one (testing by MoU stakeholders) and an external one (testing by external target audiences). MDAT staff will be responsible

to report the testing results.

Task 2.4: Development of the Final Version (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, external expert). Based on the testing results report, external expert will provide the needed changes and corrections and will develop the Final Version of the ThessPass platform and application.

#### **Main outputs**

D 2.2: Mock-up of the joint digital platform

D 2.2: ThessPass Beta Version

D 2.3: Testing Report

D 2.4: ThessPass Final Version

### **B. PHASE 3: THESSPASS PLATFORM CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND LAUNCH**

Task 3.1: Development of ThessPass platform content (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, external expert, input, and data from all stakeholders). This task includes the development of the platform content for all its features. The content will be based on existing data provides by all MoU stakeholders and will also include development of original new material, especially graphic material (photos and videos). All right will be received for any content, texts, or graphic material.

Task 3.2: Launch the platform and the app (MDAT). The platform and the application will be launched. The external expert will provide a detailed and comprehensive user guide for the ThessPass functionality.

Task 3.3: On-going monitoring and evaluation (MDAT, Municipality of Thessaloniki, MoU stakeholders). The MoU stakeholders through Steering Committee, and under the responsibility of MDAT, will proceed ongoing monitoring and evaluation after the ThessPass launch (actions described under section 2.2.).

#### **Main outputs**

D 3.1: Content raw material (texts and graphic material, archived)

D 3.2: ThessPass user guide

D 3.3: Monitoring and evaluation results

### **3. Players involved**

MDAT and Municipality of Thessaloniki will be the owners of the ThessPass Digital Platform. The key-stakeholders will need to provide through the lifetime of the project: any relevant info/content for the platform, suggestions/advise for its improvement & sustainability and additionally they will need to use any potential way to promote the Thessapp project. The main key-stakeholders will be selected from the most representative organizations related to the the tourism and transport ecosystem such as:

- ✓ Municipality of Thessaloniki
- ✓ Municipalities of Thessaloniki Greater Urban area
- ✓ Thessaloniki Transport Authority
- ✓ Hellenic Institute of Transport
- ✓ Thessaloniki Urban Transport Organization
- ✓ Thessaloniki Hotels Association
- ✓ The Metropolitan Organisation of Museums of Visual Arts of Thessaloniki (MoMus)
- ✓ Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki
- ✓ Museum of Byzantine Culture Thessaloniki
- ✓ Thessaloniki Tourism Organization
- ✓ Hellenic Ministry of Culture / regional and city Ephorates
- ✓ Hellenic Ministry of Interior / Sector Macedonia and Thrace

- ✓ Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (a. Laboratory of Transportation Engineering – Civil Engineering Department, b. Laboratory of Transportation Engineering and Road Construction – Surveying Engineering Department, c. Interdepartmental Postgraduate Programme on Tourism and Local Development)
- ✓ Private sector, companies and relevant NGOs (i.e. Thessbike, Open House Thessaloniki, etc)

#### 4. Timeframe

Semester 1: January 2021 - June 2021 (Delivering Tasks 1.1 – 1.4)

Semester 2: July 2021 – December 2021 (Delivering Tasks 2.1 – 2.4)

Semester 3: January 2022 – June 2022 (Delivering Tasks 3.1 – 3.3)

#### 5. Costs (if relevant)

Total cost of Pilot Action: 51,900.00€

#### 6. Funding sources (if relevant):

INTERREG EUROPE Programme - the Pilot Action has been approved for funding.

**Date:** 29.03.2021


**Name of the organisation(s):**

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AGENCY THESSALONIKI S.A. (MDAT S.A.)

**Signatures of the relevant organisation(s):**

Maria Karagianni

Chair of MDAT S.A. Advisory Board



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***The vision of DESTI-SMART Action Plan for Thessaloniki is to support the city to become a Responsible Travel Destination by fostering low-carbon and active mobility means. By upscaling and supporting the city's Resilient Strategy 2030, the Action Plan aims to contribute the creation of center-periphery tourism destination systems and help locally rooted tourism and transportation services become sustainable, inclusive, and finally, more competitive.***



***DESTI-SMART Project improves transport and tourism policies at destinations by integrating strategies for smart and sustainable mobility, accessibility and responsible travel in sustainable tourism development, and through efficiency, resilience, intermodality, novel low-carbon transport systems, cycling and walking for visitors, towards smart destinations***