FINAL REPORT THESSALONIKI CAMP ON RESILIENCE

The Innovation Camp on Resilience took place in Thessaloniki, Greece from 21-23 September 2017. This societal innovation camp was co-organized by The City of Thessaloniki, The Centre for Research & Technology Hellas (CERTH), The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), and The European Committee of the Regions (CoR).

The theme of the Camp was Resilience, as it applies to four aspects of society. The Camp was initiated to explore different ways to develop grassroots ideas and projects on how to improve resilience and systematically address risks to the safety and well-being of citizens. The camp offers the opportunity for participants coming from academia, business, civil society and local governance to reflect on how to better deal with societal shocks and stresses.

Diverse organisations brought an actual ‘challenge’ to the camp, and served as challenge owner. 70 people – a powerful mix of public sector officials, professionals, researchers, innovation experts and entrepreneurs – from 12 countries addressed these challenges during the 3-day camp. Participants were invited to share their expertise and work together in small, dedicated cross-disciplinary teams to deal with the challenges. As the work proceeded over the course of three days, participants defined diverse new perspectives to address the challenges, promising ideas for prototyping possible solutions, potential implementation activities and plans for experimenting and piloting those activities.

The Challenges

**Challenge 1: Resilience of energy critical infrastructures for European defence**

Challenge Owner: Colonel George Drossos, Hellenic Ministry of Defence, Member of the European Defence Agency Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructure Expert Group (PCEI/EDA) and Athanasios G. Konstandopoulos Chairman of CERTH member of the PCEI/EDA group.

Facilitator: Hank Kune, Educore

This challenge concerned Energy Critical Infrastructures for European Defence, an area which forms an integral element of the European defence landscape and presents complex challenges which have just recently begun to be investigated. As formulated by the Challenge Owners, the objective of this challenge was: how to achieve “resilience by design” for an ecosystem of interconnected infrastructures critical for the defence sector.

**Challenge 2: Resilience in a financially volatile environment**

Challenge Owner: Aristos Doxiadis, Openfund

Facilitator: Katja Subrizi Wessling, Human Kapow!

This challenge intends to explore interdisciplinary approaches to channel investment towards technological and social innovations generated by the research community, start-ups and SMEs.

**Challenge 3: Resilience in migration flows**

**Challenge 4: Resilience in regional innovation ecosystems**
This challenge concerns the need for resilience in a financially volatile environment in order to foster synergies between financial sector actors with the research community, start-ups and SMEs which can contribute to the creation of new products, tools and practices. At the same time, it should also create new opportunities for financial sector development by exploiting interdisciplinary approaches, innovative technologies and on-going technological disruptions (e.g. the block-chain technology).

The challenge also asked the group to identify economic and social issues that have significant effects on the challenge, in order to valorise human capital and create employment opportunities at the urban/regional level.

**Challenge 3: Resilience in migration flows**

This challenge concerns fast tracking integration of asylum seekers, refugees and their families with efficient and effective ways into the local and regional labour markets and the social life of their host community.

**Challenge Owner:** Lina Liakou, Vice-Mayor, Municipality of Thessaloniki  
**Facilitator:** Marcelino Cabrera, JRC

This challenge is about the need for fast track integration of asylum seekers, refugees and their families into the local and regional labour markets. Concrete questions for the challenge were on how to incorporate migration considerations into the design of key services and infrastructures; how to create opportunities for migrants to generate income, improve their access to financial services and promote business/entrepreneurial attitudes; and on how to address migrants fundamental needs while promoting initiatives that reduce real or perceived competition among newcomers and native residents. The group was asked to look for inter-systemic, holistic solutions that enhance resilience to migration flows by embracing non-traditional collaborations, with the public and private sector. Mapping skills and needs, matching supply and demand, and providing proper training or reorientation where needed, were additional aspects of the challenge.

**Challenge 4: Resilience in regional innovation ecosystems**

This challenge aims to explore how to foster capabilities of local development actors to link their own strategies to wider trends in research and innovation in a regional, national and European smart specialisation strategies (S3) context.

**Challenge Owner:** Caroline Cohen, European Commission’s Joint Research Centre; European Committee of the Regions  
**Facilitator:** Nikos Katsiadakis, CERTH

This challenge aims to explore how capabilities can be built for local development actors to link their own strategies to wider trends in research and innovation in the context of regional, national and European smart specialization strategies (S3). What are the necessary ingredients for effective innovation ecosystems? How can territorial actors be mobilized despite the crisis? Need to develop a long-term dialogue among stakeholders and avoid fragmented efforts (long-term vision versus individual short-time interests). How can the Smart specialisation concept help to sustain the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process?

*The full Challenge descriptions is available on the Camp website:*  

**Methodology**

The working process at the Innovation Camp on Resilience was based on the ACSI Camps for Societal Innovation methodology. These societal innovation camps are instruments for addressing societal challenges in an open innovation context. They use an *entrepreneurial discovery process* for developing breakthrough ideas and insights, and work towards producing real-world impact. Participants work with content experts, direct stakeholders and an international community of open innovation practitioners to discover promising ideas and design follow-through process to move promising ideas forward through active prototyping after the Camp. (See: *Camp Methodology (Background)* section, below, for additional information).

Basic tenets of the methodology are:
- Addressing actual societal challenges brought to the Camp by committed Challenge-owners  
- Light facilitation in a self-organising framework  
- Reframing challenges problems for deeper understanding
• Rapid Prototyping promising ideas during and after the Camp

In Thessaloniki, camp participants worked in dedicated groups of 10-20 people for 48 hours across three days, using this entrepreneurial discovery process and guided by a facilitator. This resulted in a set of promising plans and proposals to address each of the challenges, which were presented to Challenge-owners at the end of the final afternoon.

The facilitation team consisted of
• Hank Kune, Director of Educore, (Challenge 1). Mr Kune is co-initiator of the Innovation Camp methodology, also served as Lead moderator during the Innovation Camp on Resilience.
• Katja Wessling, Founder and director at Human Kapow! (Challenge 2)
• Marcelino Cabrera, Joint Research Center of the European Commission (JRC), (Challenge 3)
• Nikos Katsiadakis, Project Manager for Creativity, Knowledge & Innovation, CERTH (Challenge 4).

The Results

The Challenge groups came up with diverse proposals and promising ideas and proposals for taking the ideas forward after the Camp. A short summary is given below. The proposals are further elaborated in the Attachments to this report, and available on the Camp website: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/innovation-camp-resilience

Challenge I: Resilience of energy critical infrastructures for European defence

The group developed a proposal for shared responsibility within the local ecosystem, in which both the military sector and civil society share responsibility for the defence of energy critical infrastructures. The group envisioned this joint civil & military approach to Resilience-by-design, to:
• Keep Society Energized!
• Defend Energy Access!

This entails an energy crisis management procedure that
• Promotes a joint approach of both civil and defence actors
• Includes energy operators or vendors
• Makes use of current civil protection mechanisms
• Enables and directly involves citizens

The proposal outlines a resilience procedure that should be followed before, during and after a threat to - or crisis involving - the energy infrastructure, and outlines a prototype Energy Crisis Exercise for the city of Thessaloniki in which to test and improves these ideas.

Shared databases are a first step towards shared knowledge and shared responsibility. The proposal emphasizes that the defence of critical energy infrastructure refers to ‘One energy pool, two worlds, one common effort’. Activities should always be undertaken in parallel (military and civil society), not top-down or bottom-up.

Challenge II: Resilience in a financially volatile environment

The team considered that the core of the challenge is the need to build connection, trust and information flow in the innovation ecosystem, starting at the local level and increasingly going national/international. Key to this is creating a hub for urban innovation, alternative financing and new approaches to invest in communities.

Two ideas were worked out to test and improve after the Camp:
1. The Open House Summit. The idea is based on the need for trust and more free-flowing information between Thessaloniki’s business environments/SMEs/startups, national/international capital holders (primarily venture capitalist funds and angel investors), and new avant-garde investment know-how. The basic idea is to with time create a larger summit for the different stakeholders in the local innovations system and national/international investor knowhow and capital. The summit itself would have a unique flair, be meaningful and personal to the investors and participants. The groundwork before the summit will be as important as the summit itself - building capacity and identity in the local innovation ecosystem and clarifying vision and meaningful outcomes that can be cared for in collaboration.
2. **The citizen entrepreneurship center.** The basic idea is for a ‘citizen driven entrepreneurship center’ that supports local businesses, new entrepreneurs, and the clustering of businesses to share know-how, supplier connections, shared transports, access to clients, access to capital, championing, emotional support, practical support, sparring partners, etc. This physical citizen entrepreneurship center is important for situations when there is no or little investment from banks or investors, recognising that entrepreneurs and scalable businesses are not only born in the knowledge-rich environments of universities and related accelerator/incubator programs, but amongst citizens with dreams and desires to sustain themselves and their communities.

**Challenge III: Resilience in migration flows**

Participants, working in two groups, came up with two proposals

1. **Transposable model for the creation of a socio-economic co-op.** The aim of this prototype is to create employment for refugee families, as a mean to achieve socio-cultural inclusion, in the agricultural sector in the Thessaloniki region, specifically in the Central Macedonia regions surrounding the city. The model proposes a sequence of actions to achieve this, which:
   - provide legal support and information guidance from NGO’s, state authorities and municipalities;
   - organize skills matching with the needs of the co-operatives and companies;
   - include training sessions with affiliated local communities for keeping traditional production and agricultural methods;
   - utilize the refugees’ production know-how and knowledge;
   - leverage already initial interaction among the interested parties (NGO’s-co-operatives-refugees) in Central Macedonia.

2. **SPECTRUM: Strategy for Prevention of Exclusion / Tailored Responses for Integrating Migrants.** This means the creation of a survey, analysis, and prompt response mechanism to facilitate migrant’s Access to the labour market. The proposed action plan is directly linked with the Resilience Strategy for Thessaloniki. The action plan is inclusive for both local citizens and migrants, in order to avoid conflicts and misperceptions. A market analysis will identify the needs for employment and entrepreneurship, while short tailor-made trainings will be designed according to needs, in partnership with competent educational and vocational training institutions. Together, these will provide a fast track to required skills to match the market needs, thus creating employable citizens. Migrants will be facilitated in the process of acquiring all necessary documentation through a one-stop information and service point in order to proceed to job search or engage in entrepreneurship, including access to financing.

**Challenge IV: Resilience in regional innovation ecosystems**

Six Concrete resilient actions were suggested by the team as opportunities for change:

- **Training to promote a culture of cooperation and collaboration,** including social innovation and towards citizens’ cohesion.
- **Virtual portal as an agora/forum,** that gathers all actor’s initiatives in a coordinated way.
- **Match-making events, such as:**
  - A festival to sustain individual initiatives, encourage local communities and make their work visible to others, including the activities with migrants.
  - Thematic events to bring together the chamber of commerce, technology transfer organizations, Higher education and research, graduates around domains of excellence.
  - An annual event to present innovative ideas/projects and foster interregional cooperation within and outside Greece. The event brings together the whole ecosystem, having parallel workshops and cross-presentations, fostering the monitoring of the ecosystem and consensus.
- **A set of Incentive instruments** such as vouchers turned towards entrepreneurship, partnerships among actors, innovation, community initiatives, strengthening the role of clusters, incubators, and innovation accelerators. These incentives would favour the creation of start-ups, facilitate the collaboration and knowledge/technology transfer from R&D institutions to SMEs towards the creation of new/innovative products/services and researchers’ employment. Specific incentives will be given to students/tutors to develop and integrate a draft entrepreneurial potential section in the thesis.

**Initial feedback**
In responding to the presentations of the proposals at the end of the Camp, the Challenge owners were enthusiastic, and reinforced their commitment to take away the proposals for prototyping in real-world environments in the coming months, in this way testing and improving the ideas for possible implementation later this year and in 2018.

At the Closing Session, Mr. Yannis Boutaris, Mayor of the Municipality of Thessaloniki, spoke about the way forward and emphasized that “residence is the issue”. We must follow tradition, the Mayor told us, but that is not enough for today: we must also undertake new things. Mr. Markku Markkula, First Vice-President of the European Committee of the Regions, put the experience of the Camp and the passion of its participants in a larger European context, reminding us of the importance of bottom-up approaches for innovation in Europe, and referring to three focus-points for European innovation in the coming years: developing an entrepreneurial mind-set, a fully-functioning Digital Single Market, and realizing Smart Specialisation. Activities like the Innovation Camp on Resilience help build capacity for achieving these goals.

**Reflection on Camp Processes and Logistics**

*This section of the Report provides a critical reflection on important issues of Camp processes and logistics.*

**Preparation.** Discussions about holding this Camp began in December 2016, and the concrete preparation process began in summer 2017, approximately 6 weeks before the Camp. A Coordination Team was formed to coordinate the Camp content and logistics, consisting of representatives from CERTH, the Joint Research Centre (JRC), plus the Lead Moderator. In practice, the JRC took the lead in convening the Coordination Team and the overall communications about the Camp. The Lead Moderator took the lead in developing the Camp programme, the working process and facilitation guidelines.

**Participants.** 70 participants from 12 different countries took part in the Camp. In some cases, the diversity and spread in culture, age, sex, personal background, expertise was sufficient to provide a broad enough spectrum of perspectives to address the challenges from different points of view. However, at least two groups lacked relevant expertise, and this lack of different perspectives on the issues were perceived as limiting factors by the groups themselves. In addition, one group had only Greek participants. At future camps, more attention should be paid to involving people with relevant expertise in each of the groups. More international participation, and more participation by young people (ages 18-25) is also recommended.

**Activities flow.** Despite some difficulties in coordinating Camp process, the organization went smoothly. However, in some cases – for example, the recruitment of relevant participants, the formulation the Challenge descriptions, and the distribution to participants in different groups – this was only finished a few days before the Camp began.

**Venue.** The Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH) was the venue for the camp. This comfortable, fully staffed and well-equipped space was an ideal location for holding the camp. CERTH personnel provided all the services and facilities required for a successful camp. The work spaces provided were adequate for the working process. The catering was excellent, with sufficient food for lunch and coffee/tea breaks, which is always an important success factor at camps.

**Camping Methodology (Background)**

These Societal Innovation Camps are instruments for addressing societal challenges in an open innovation context. They use an entrepreneurial discovery process for developing breakthrough ideas and insights, and work towards producing real-world impact. Participants work with content experts, direct stakeholders and an international community of open innovation practitioners to discover promising ideas and design follow-through process to move them forward in active prototyping after the Camp.

ACSI was co-developed by Aalto University and the New Club of Paris in 2010. The ACSI methodology has been tested and improved in diverse Camps in Europe, South Africa and Japan since then. This was the 19th innovation camp that has been held since 2010 in diverse countries in Europe, as well as Japan and South Africa. Website for the Camp: [https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/innovation-camp-resilience](https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/innovation-camp-resilience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>3 November 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Hank Kune</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>