

# Intelligent Cities Challenge

COVID-19 webinar

Fighting Coronavirus at a City-Level

3rd April 2020

Summary Report

# Intelligent Cities Challenge – COVID-19 Webinar

Summary report of COVID-19 Webinar, 3rd April 2020

## 1. Agenda

### ICC COVID-19 Webinar – “Fighting Coronavirus at a City-Level”

Time	Item	Speaker
4:00-4:05	Introduction and overview of the Commission response	Dana Eleftheriadou - EU Commission
4:05-4:40	An overview to COVID-19 in the EU Safeguarding livelihoods – city-driven responses to economic impacts Safeguarding lives – city-driven responses to health risks Effective preparation – how to manage a city in a crisis	Sven Smit - McKinsey expert Sven Smit - McKinsey expert Angela Spatharou - McKinsey expert Angela Spatharou - McKinsey expert
4:40-5:30	Cities in the fight against COVID-19 and planning the post-Corona recovery: best practices, technologies, lessons learnt and future plans	Mikko Rasuma - Helsinki Veera Vihula, Petri Häkkinen, Satu Laukkanen - Espoo Sébastien Viano, Alain Chateau - Nice
5:30-5:55	Clusters and DIHs supporting cities against COVID-19	Andrea Halmos - EU Commission; Emilija Stojmenova - 4PDIH Eva Revilla Penaranda - Cluster Collaboration Hubs
5:55-6:00	Closing remarks	Dana Eleftheriadou - EU Commission

## 2. Summary of presentations

### Introduction and overview of the Commission Response

#### **Dana Eleftheriadou (European Commission, DG GROW)**

Dana Eleftheriadou introduced the Intelligent Cities Challenge (ICC) and the objectives of this COVID-19 webinar, namely:

- to provide an overview of the European Commission response to the COVID-19 crisis;
- to present forecasts of the health and economic impact of Covid-19;
- to explore cities short-term responses to the current health crisis;
- to launch the debate for the next phase, mid-to-long-term recovery plans;
- to present efficient technologies;
- to inform on current industrial and technological ecosystems, such as industrial clusters and Digital Innovation Hubs.

#### **The European Commission’s response**

The European Commission is coordinating a common European response to the outbreak of COVID-19. They are taking resolute action to reinforce public health sectors and mitigate the socio-economic impact in the European Union. More information is available here:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en)

## Economy

To cushion the blow to people's livelihoods and the economy, the European Commission has adopted a [comprehensive economic response](#) to the outbreak, has applied the full [flexibility of the EU fiscal rules](#), revised its [State Aid rules](#) and set up a €37 billion [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative](#) to provide liquidity to small businesses and the health care sector. More information is available here:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response/economy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response/economy_en)

## SURE - a new €100 billion instrument to mitigate unemployment risks

On the 2nd of April, the European Commission [launched](#) a new initiative designed to protect jobs and workers affected by the COVID-19 outbreak - the temporary [Support mitigating Unemployment Risks in Emergency \(SURE\) initiative](#). The SURE initiative will provide financial assistance of up to €100 billion in total to Member States in the form of loans granted on favourable terms. More information is available here:

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_20\\_582](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_582)

Additional relevant EU measures include:

- **European standards for medical supplies made freely available to facilitate increase of production:** <https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/news/european-commission-european-standards-medical-supplies-made-freely>
- **Guidance for the production of masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE), leave-on hand cleaners and hand disinfectants and 3D printing:** <https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/news/european-commission-guidance-production-masks-and-other-personal-protective>
- **30 national measures adopted under the Temporary Framework for State Aid measures of the European Commission:** [https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response/economy/state-aid-cases\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response/economy/state-aid-cases_en)
- **How can public buyers make fast and efficient purchases during coronavirus crisis? EU guidelines here:** <https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/news/european-commission-how-can-public-buyers-make-fast-and-efficient-purchases>

## Experts' views

### **Sven Smit and Angela Spatharou- McKinsey**

Sven Smit, Senior Partner at McKinsey and Company, shared a perspective on possible future economic scenarios on the EU, and how cities can use digital technology to keep economies running. For more information on Sven's presentation, please see [Safeguarding our lives and our livelihoods: The imperative of our time](#).

Angela Spatharou, Partner at McKinsey and Company, shared a perspective on how COVID-19 was impact health systems, and covered examples of digital innovations that were helping them cope. In addition, the concept of nerve centres was examined as a practical step cities can take to manage their response. For more information on nerve centres as an intervention, please see [Crisis nerve centres: Supporting responses to coronavirus](#).

For McKinsey's latest thinking on Coronavirus, please visit our [Coronavirus: Leading through the crisis](#) landing page.

## Cities in the fight against COVID-19 and planning the post-Corona

### **Federica Bordelot (Eurocities)**

Federica Bordelot, Policy advisor at Eurocities, showcased the Eurocities' website (<https://covidnews.eurocities.eu/>) which delivers live updates on cities' responses to COVID-19. It serves as a tool for cities to be updated on EU measures and responses. In addition, it allows cities to share examples on how they are responding to the COVID-19 crisis. It spans a broad range of actions and initiatives, from local funding, digital solutions (e.g. for organizing council meetings online or to launch calls for companies to deliver digital solutions), or support for the local community. The Eurocities portal with good practices from cities is here: <https://covidnews.eurocities.eu/>

### **Mikko Rasama (city of Helsinki)**

Mikko Rasama, CDO at city of Helsinki, provided a video intervention, focused on the three dimensions of the crisis: health, social and economic crisis. He stressed the value of effective preparation, data driven tracking and citizen engagement techniques. The Helsinki's crisis management model has a task force divided into different areas and making predictive analysis. The need for having the right data was emphasized as key.

### **Veera Vihula, Petri Hakkinen & Satu Laukkanen (city of Espoo)**

Building the city's resilience is key. Espoo mobilised the local ecosystem, working with its community and networks, local businesses and local universities, which contributes to making the city resilient. The strong collaboration with the university of Espoo is advancing research into

methods to normalize the situation. While the city is following the government's procedures, it has set up an emergency task force with daily organized meetings.

Actions include:

- Preparedness and proactive measures - coordinating overall security across the city, understanding cross-sectoral effects, delivering guidelines for sectoral planning, etc.
- Delivery of culture and sport services to make sure people are keeping active, for example e-culture is supported through on-line theatre shows.
- E-services on social and healthcare services - online services delivered to assess citizens' symptoms. These have existed for a long time, but the city reports a much more significant use during the current crisis. The corona crisis can increase anxiousness and the city offers a hotline for people in need.
- Schools and preschool daycare - schools responded quickly and are providing lessons through different platforms. Overall, their response received a positive feedback but a key concern is to avoid inequalities for students.
- Remote working - the city has decided not to lay off people, however, if they can no longer proceed with the regular work, they are now instead asked to be part of resource pool. In addition, the city has invested in tools that enable remote working, while also information security protocols were updated. The ICT department is focusing on connections for social and health care as first priority.

### **Sebastien Viano & Alain Chateau (city of Nice / Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur)**

As the fifth largest city in France, it has been affected – although to a less extent than Paris - by increased hospitalization, need for intensive care and casualties. Emergency measures have been put in place, including for health, social care and security:

- Reorganization of administration, i.e. delivery of priority services and teleworking;
- Nurseries and schools for the mobilized staff from health, social care and security;
- Transports supplies provided for free for people that still have to go to work;
- COVID-19 drive-in tests for mobilized staff and vulnerable citizens;
- Remote medical consultations and call center for psychological support;
- Volunteer service for people in need;
- Home delivery platform for the elderly;
- Call center for victims of violence;
- Drones deployed to ask citizens to follow rules.

The economic consequences have been significant with thousands of jobs and enterprises impacted. It is estimated that approximately **90% of local enterprises in the territory are affected, especially the tourism industry**. It is perceived that the main impact is on smaller companies. Measures include:

- Short-term measures - economic instruments were deployed, such as the cancellation of rents for companies, vouchers to cover rents, cancelling or postponing of taxes.
- Medium-term measures – a recovery plan, a promotion campaign for tourism and campaigns to stimulate local consumption are under development.

The city of Nice also provided **suggestions for the EU**, recommending to: channel funds to meet the concrete needs of cities, enterprises and communities, to support post-crisis resilience strategies at local level; propose EU funded cooperation projects for better preparedness and crisis management among others (e.g. Nice is a coordinator of the EU urban agenda on Security, which can now be extended to include health risks.)

### **Emphasis on innovation**

Referring to ongoing innovation and research projects, a drone had been delivered in the city of Nice to warn citizens to follow the containment rules. A submitted H2020 project proposal seeks to develop optical testing platform to detect ultra-low covid-19 concentration. In addition, emphasis was put on the importance of local food supply and distribution channels, the continuity of public services in tele-presence, the decreased levels of pollution, and deploying the city data platform to support all activities at city-level.

Dana Eleftheriadou, European Commission, explained that it is expected that the next MFF (Multi-annual Financial Framework) will be repurposed to help Member States to cope with the post-crisis recovery.

### **Role of the Digital Innovation Hubs**

#### **Andrea Halmos (European Commission, DG CNECT)**

The Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) is an initiative launched 4 years ago to support digital transformations of companies, especially SMEs, but also public administrations. Today the role of the DIHs is to help SMEs and public administration to cope with COVID-19 crisis.

Cities among others have set up community platforms to match needs with support. There is equally a need for facilitating tele-medicine, digital tools to speed up reporting of infection cases, analytical tools and procurement of COVID-19 related supplies. In the longer term, there is a need for developing a recovery plan and for supporting resilience at city-level.

Digital solutions are needed, and many tools are already deployed. In the short-term, there is a need to facilitate smart work, to deliver digitally enabled administrative procedures and mapping tools and data analytics, but also for tele-medicine and health monitoring apps. In this context, there is a need for an appropriate infrastructure to support urban digital platforms. DIHs have a role in helping with training and capacity building.

All available tools have been published on the DIHNET community platform - Digital Innovation Hubs Community (DIHNET): <https://fundingbox.com/c/dihnet-community-1>.

### **Emilija Stojmenova (4PDIH - Slovenia Digital Innovation Hub)**

4PDIH aims to help public administrations, communities, education and private sector organizations. The FabLab and 4PDIH have 91 partners and recently they started to map all services provided by the municipalities (work is ongoing), while also delivering provisions for remote meetings for municipalities and organizations. The tool is available at: <http://4pdih.com/orodje/>. For example, it has delivered “Helping Hand”, a digital platform to connect people who seek help with and organizations who offer help for free. Another example is the delivery of 3D printed masks, as partners within the FatLabs network are providing open source resources and instructions for local production of masks.

Overall, there are many bottom-up community led initiatives. However, there is a lack of intuitive and easy to use digital platforms as there is a lack of digital skills especially in rural areas. This emphasizes the importance of urban-rural linkages.

### **Next steps – new city-focused COVID-19 webinars being launched**

Due to time constraints, the EU initiative on industrial clusters’ response to Covid 19 and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform will be presented at the next webinar.

In response to the interest displayed by city stakeholders, additional city-focused COVID-19 webinars will be scheduled in the coming weeks on selected thematic priorities.

More information about upcoming COVID-19 webinars will be presented on the website of the Intelligent Cities Challenge: <https://www.intelligentcitieschallenge.eu>.