

Intelligent Cities Challenge

COVID-19 webinar

Building cities' resilience: mobilising the local ecosystems

15th April 2020

Summary Report

Intelligent Cities Challenge – COVID-19 Webinar

Summary report of COVID-19 Webinar, 15th April 2020

1. Agenda

ICC COVID-19 Webinar – “Building cities’ resilience: mobilising the local ecosystems”

Time	Item	Speaker
4:00-4:15	Overview of the Commission response	Dana Eleftheriadou – EU Commission, DG GROW, Head of Advanced Technologies Team
4:15-5:25	Resilient city and essential supply chains: coordination of government measures with bottom-up civic communities and the role of technology	
	City case – Amsterdam	Machteld Combé, Lead Amsterdam’s Democratization Team, Amsterdam
	City case – Barcelona	Michael Donaldson, Commissioner on Digital Innovation, Barcelona
	Industrial Clusters – European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)	Eva Revilla Penaranda – EU Commission, DG GROW, Policy officer for Industrial Clusters
	Overview on bottom up approaches and the role of social economy platforms	Karel Vanderpoorten – EU Commission, DG GROW, Policy officer for Social Economy
	Q&As	Bart Wolput – Give a Day, Community Director
5:25-5:30	Closing remarks	Dana Eleftheriadou – EU Commission, DG GROW, Head of Advanced Technologies Team

Moderated and chaired by Dana Eleftheriadou - EU Commission

2. Summary of presentations

Introduction and overview of the Commission Response

Dana Eleftheriadou, European Commission, DG GROW, Head of Advanced Technologies Team

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

- to provide an overview of the latest European Commission response to the COVID-19 crisis;
- to present effective city-led interventions from two cities: Amsterdam and Barcelona;
- to provide insights into the European Cluster Collaboration Platform’s support in helping cities and industrial ecosystems to meet current needs;
- to introduce the role of the social economy and bottom-up approaches in the fight against COVID-19;

- to introduce the Give a day initiative, helping cities organize volunteering communities.

This webinar is part of a series of webinars organized to help cities exchange best practices and learn from each other, in terms of short-, medium- and long-term responses, including post-Corona recovery. The focus of this webinar series is in particular on the role of technology in responding to the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

Cities are in a strategic position to coordinate effectively top-down rules, investment instruments and guidance (EU and national) with the numerous bottom-up initiatives emerging from social actors.

The European Commission's response

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

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

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
- **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>

On 10 April, the **Eurogroup agreed on a €540 billion package** to support member states, companies and workers in the coronavirus crisis. The allocation of the budget includes: €200 billion to support businesses at risk through the European Investment Bank; €240 billion to be

given to countries through loans to help them fund their responses to the crisis and protect their citizens, and €100 billion to protect jobs and workers affected by the COVID-19 outbreak through the [SURE initiative](#), in the form of loans granted to EU Member States on favourable terms.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/04/09/report-on-the-comprehensive-economic-policy-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Lifting coronavirus containment measures

On 15 April, the Commission, in cooperation with the President of the European Council, has put forward a [European Roadmap towards lifting coronavirus containment measures](#), which recommends **three main sets of criteria** to be considered whether the time has come to start lifting the measures:

- **Epidemiological criteria**, indicating a sustained reduction and stabilisation in the number of hospitalisations and/or new cases for a sustained period of time.
- **Sufficient health system capacity**, for example in terms of an adequate number of hospital beds, pharmaceutical products and stocks of equipment.
- **Appropriate monitoring capacity**, including large-scale testing capacity to quickly detect and isolate infected individuals, as well as tracking and tracing capacity.

City cases

Machteld Combé , Lead Democratization Team, Amsterdam

Matchteld Comné introduced the platform [Wij Amsterdam](#) launched on 27th March 2020; the platform, which was built through open source software, was created to support Amsterdam's citizens throughout the COVID-19 crisis and make all citizens' and social actors' initiatives visible. All initiatives are connected online and can be mapped in the city of Amsterdam.

The overarching goal of the platform is to join-up bottom-up solutions. At the moment, it comprises a total of 299 initiatives to support citizens of Amsterdam. Initiatives include: i) Support for people that are in need; ii) Activities for children, such as online education; iii) Physical and mental exercises; iv) Access to online culture; and v) Support for local entrepreneurship.

The platform further provides inspiration for people to come up with ideas for new initiatives to be launched and a monitoring system is put in place to ensure that submitted ideas are fit for purpose

The COVID-19 crisis is increasingly demonstrating the **problem of dependency on global supply chains**. In the Netherlands, discussions are ongoing at the national level concerning the crisis exit strategy and socio-economic impacts, also taking into account how to resolve the dependency on international supply chains.

At municipal level, the city of Amsterdam has recently embraced Kate Raworth's "doughnut" model, to mend post-corona economy. More information on Amsterdam city doughnut can be found here: <https://www.kateraworth.com/2020/04/08/amsterdam-city-doughnut/>

The city of Amsterdam is also involved in discussions around the usage of contact-tracing apps to help lift the containment measures. Amsterdam Smart City and DataLab Amsterdam are hosting an [online Data Dilemmas event](#) on the 23th of April.

Michael Donaldson, Commissioner for Digital Innovation, Barcelona

Michael Donaldson highlighted three projects from the city of Barcelona:

- [Community of makers in Barcelona](#) (Ateneus de Fabricació) – The city’s Fablabs and Makers community have joined forces in the fight against COVID-19, by using 3D printers to make protective equipment and sanitary materials and distribute them where needs exist.
- [Conversion of municipal sport centres into hospitals](#) – A programme to convert four municipal sports centres to provide health support and avoid the city’s main hospitals being overwhelmed by the COVID-19 health crisis. The municipal Institute of Technology, the Catalan government’s Telecommunications and Information Technology Centre, guarantee connections between these facilities and the main hospitals, so that the staff be able to seek medical expertise and consult patients’ medical histories.
- [Challenges to engage the ecosystem](#) – Barcelona’s City Council, through the Fundació BIT Habitat, invites SMEs and start-ups with ready-made solutions about to be rolled out which respond to the challenges posed by the crisis. In particular, the following types of solutions are requested: materials and devices, logistics solutions, monitoring and verifications, solutions for the elderly. In addition, Fundació BIT Habitat has organised a [series of dialogues with experts](#) to discuss the current sanitary emergency, the digital transformation that can be derived from the current situation and debates the way back to normality.

More information on Barcelona’s resources and care advice to tackle COVID-19 is available here: https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/digital/en/noticia/barcelona-des-de-casa-the-website-with-information-resources-and-care-advice-to-tackle-covid-19_933274

Industrial clusters

Eva Revilla Panaranda, European Commission, DG GROW, Policy officer for European Industrial Clusters

Eva Revilla Panaranda explained the critical issues faced by industry and companies due to supply chain disruptions as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis. DG GROW has launched an informal call in order to map initiatives for the supply of medical and protective equipment. On the background of the many contributions received, there is a clear need for rearranging the supply chain in Europe.

The [European Cluster Collaboration Platform \(ECCP\)](#) is a service aiming to connect cluster organisations with modern tools. To respond to the COVID-19 crisis, the ECCP has set up a

dedicated [COVID-19 Industrial Cluster Response Portal](#); it provides updates on EU initiatives especially targeted industry, businesses and SMEs. In addition, the portal provides information and answers, including on funding opportunities and to a range of available solutions.

The ECCP has created a [COVID-19 Response Forum](#) thereby facilitating discussions on technological solutions, economic impacts, funding opportunities and supporting policies. The forum also allows for best practice sharing.

Social economy platforms

Karel Vanderpoorten, European Commission, DG GROW, Policy Officer for Social Economy

Karel Vanderpoorten presented the European Commission's web page on the [social economy in the fight against Corona](#), which maps initiatives of social actors throughout Europe, which help cities respond to the crisis. The focus of the actions and initiatives are on technology solutions, services for elderly, volunteering requests, food delivery services, online courses, etc.

The Social Economy team of DG Grow is also organising a number of online sessions to provide a more detailed picture on the aforementioned social economy initiatives. Three online sessions have been organised so far:

- [The role of platforms, commons and fablabs](#), exploring digital solutions and bridging the gap between the digital world and the local FabLabs;
- [Platform design for local volunteers](#), providing insights into volunteering platforms and how to latch volunteers with people in need, as well as SMEs;
- [Alternative finance: crowdfunding & matchfunding](#), exploring how funds are raised to invest in necessary equipment or to support online platforms for people in need.

Bart Wolput, Community Director, Give a Day initiative

Bart Wolput presented the [Give a Day Initiative](#), a volunteering matching website where volunteers and organisations are matched. In short, the website provides cities with an easy to use platform to create their own volunteers ecosystem with a view to facing social challenges. The Give a Day initiative stresses the importance of volunteers - the DNA of social cohesion – as the cornerstone of every city to develop social impact.

Within the Give a Day initiative, the [Impactdays](#) platform was launched in January 2020, where municipalities and organizations can organize, manage and increase social engagement. More recently, the platform has started to organize help locally to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. The city of Leuven, Belgium, was the first city to launch a corona help platform, "Leuven Helpt" in March 2020. Today, **more than 300 cities have joined**, launching corona help platforms. All platforms can be mapped at country-level through the following link: <https://www.impactdays.co/?lang=en>

Platforms can easily be created, free of charge, through Impactdays by cities and organisations, through the following link: <https://www.impactdays.co/start/>