

# **From here to where: Succeed in the post-Covid transformation**

## **MCE Online Annual Conference 2021**

### **Day Three overview**

**Moderator of the morning: Stefanie Dreyer – Journalist**

**Chair of the morning: Oliver Schwabe – City ISAC I4C+ / Cybersecurity Manager at MCE**



The third day of the annual conference consisted of four speaker presentations, a panel discussion hosted by the City ISAC special interest group of MCE and a “bridge” to our face-to-face annual conference in Larissa, Greece in May next year.

In the first speaker presentation Prof. Panos Fitsilis (Univ.of Thessaly, Coordinator and Lecturer - School of Science & Technology, Hellenic Open University, Project coordinator of "DevOps competences for Smart Cities") shared his thoughts on „Digital skills and competences for smart cities staff: Smart Cities Body of Knowledge. “Abstract: Smart cities are rising all over the world with the main goal to improve urban life and achieve long-term growth via the use of digital technologies. People are a critical axis in these initiatives, and a highly skilled workforce is critical to their success. However, the digital transformation of cities requires a new skill that is not available or short in demand. We present the results of our research, done in the context of SmartDevOps project (<https://smartdevops.eu>) , which aimed at identifying emerging smart city job roles and skills. Three new job roles have been identified: the smart city planner, the smart city IT manager, and the smart city IT officer. These job roles correspond to 102 skills grouped in four categories (transversal, digital, DevOps, and smart city-related skills) and determined the 42 perceived most important ones for smart cities.

The second speaker was Nadira Hussain (Director of leadership development and research at Socitm – UK) exploring the “Reimagining of work“. Nadira reconsidered what work looks like post-pandemic including what it is, where it’s done, how it’s done and the people that do it. Importantly, the focus will be on creating a better work – life balance and emphasising the seismic shift in people’s attitude towards work.

In the third speaker presentation Christopher Frauenberger (Professor for HCI - Center for Human-Computer Interaction - Paris Lodron University of Salzburg – Austria) explored “Digital Ethics“ with us. Technology is not neutral and the way we create technological infrastructures for our societies (re-)structures power. As the pandemic has illustrated, these infrastructures

often are underpinned by sensitive data and the way we use this data, equally manifests our values. In this talk, I will make the argument that creating digital systems requires political discourse on ethical questions around common welfare. From efficient vaccination platforms to the green pass, the examples created by the pandemic for a critical reflection are manifold, but I argue, the argument goes beyond these and may benefit a broader discussion about the role of digital systems within democratic societies.

In the final speaker presentation Paolo Boscolo (CIO of the City of Prato – Italy) then shared insights into “DATA VAULTS - EU Project: Empowering individuals to choose how and with whom share their personal data and get rewarded for it“. DataVaults aims to create a digital platform that focuses on the personal data of citizens, originating from different sources (applications, geolocation services, digital archives, etc.) and defines a series of safe and privacy-friendly procedures through which citizens can regain full control of their data and choose the methods for sharing them with other subjects (companies, public administrations, etc.), through appropriate mechanisms of fair compensation. The value chain produced by personal data is then very innovative and is transformed into a multilateral process, governed by innovative digital contracts that safeguard the ownership of personal data and privacy and pay back the citizen for the exploitation of its data.

After a short coffee break we then held the "Panel Discussion: How do WE become “David” and conquer “Goliath” - Supporting Peer-to-Peer Knowledge Sharing as the “Real Way of Protection” chaired by Dr. Oliver Schwabe - (Acting) Chair City ISAC I4C+ with the speakers Reinhard Posch (CIO of the Austrian Federal Government), Ruth Buckley (CIO Cork City Council, Digital Cities Champion, I Wish Founder), Rossen Naydenov (Officer at ENISA - The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity), David Carvalho (CEO Naoris Cyber Blockchain SE | Cyber advisory at Nation-state level), Alan R. Shark (Executive Director at Public Technology Institute (now part of CompTIA) – USA), Chris Frauenberger (Professor - Human-Computer Interaction at the University of Salzburg, Paolo Boscolo (CIO of the City of Prato) and last but not least Dr. Edna Pasher (Chair & founder of Israel Smart Cities Institute.) Reinhard started us off with a presentation that addressed the Austrian Cyber Security Strategy and added a special focus on what COVID influenced/changed with the practical implementation of eGov. With the urgent need to make everything digital COVID overrules several cornerstones of digital strategies. This is demonstrated using the example of the “Green Pass”. In the panel discussion we explored how we as a community of small “David” municipalities can best collaborate in order to protect ourselves better from the “Goliath” of cyber threat actors that are targeting us continuously. We believe we have a chance – it is not hopeless. The exam question was whether the role of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing truly is the “Real Way of Protection” – we suggested therefore that technology can help, but in the end the most powerful protection comes from helping each other and working together so that we can prevent security challenges in the first place. First, each panel member shared a short thought on whether collaboration is indeed the key and what might be the most important activity needed to create effective collaboration. After the discussion we then asked for a short highlight on how we might make the cyber challenge more relevant to our stakeholders and citizens.

Key takeaways from the discussion included:

- Today money is handled electronically – if you do not pay attention to cyber you lose your money.  
Look up at the sky and you will see vapor trails of planes. Everything you do leaves a vapor trail and you have no clue who is following you. These are the “breadcrumbs from Hansel and Gretel” and someone will harvest...
- In a complex and very dangerous world the only way to survive is as a community. We must relate to peoples’ we are talking to. Imagine your loved ones are impacted -> the “smart” IoT door that locks with mobile phone usage – what if it were controlled by another? Immediate effect on our lives....
- 95% of all cyber security problems are due to human error.
- We must bring the topic closer to people’s reality – your employer knows you are pregnant before you can tell your spouse.... We must also remember there is no public sphere without privacy.
- We must demonstrate the dangers to others.
- Most cyber events involve a time period of great uncertainty. That's when the value of the trusted connections is invaluable.

If any city/regional CIOs/CISOs are interested in regular discussions on such subjects among a group of friends please consider joining our City ISAC I4C+ - see the attached one pager and visit us at <https://www.majorcities.eu/isac-for-cities-plus/> to register.

We then concluded the day with a presentation on the “Bridge to the 2022 Conference in Larissa and conclusions”.

Overall, it was an energizing and fascinating conclusion to the three-day annual MCE conference and we look forward to meeting everyone in person in May!"

**Dr. Oliver Schwabe**

City ISAC I4C+ / Cybersecurity Manager at Major Cities Europe

Email: [i4cplus@majorcities.eu](mailto:i4cplus@majorcities.eu), Mobile: +49 (0) 1709053671