

General information

Organisational & technical details

The final conference is organised exclusively as live event. In order to fulfil the criteria of eligibility to CERV funding, the final conference must be attended by at least one representative of each partner organisation. Therefore, please make sure that your organisation will be represented at the conference. Moderation, panel discussion and experts' key notes will be held in German language, however, we will provide for German-English/English-German interpretation. Regarding the second part of the conference, the working language for each project partner's short presentation will be English.

Objectives of the conference

Previous SOLICO workshops have focused on the technical handling of the COVID pandemic, including testing and vaccination management. The final conference primarily aims to illustrate the lessons learned from different angles of society and, by doing so, to develop coping strategies for both society in general as well as for individuals, in order to be prepared for future forms of crisis (inflation, energy, climate, migration, etc.).

Data protection

By taking part in the event, the participants give their consent to photo, sound and film recordings that are made during the event.

Keynote speakers

Dr. iur. Helmut-Theobald Müller

Helmut-Theobald Müller, administrative lawyer, born in 1960, studied law, history of law, history and history of art at Graz University and received his doctor's degree in 1983. After absolving his court internship, he joined the Office of the Styrian Government. Working as a personal secretary to the Deputy Governors of Land Steiermark Hans Groß and, respectively, Peter Schachner until the year 1996, he then served for a period of 25 years as District Commissioner of the Western Styrian District Authority Deutschlandsberg. In 2021, he was appointed COVID coordinator in the Directorate of the Office of the Styrian Government. Since 2023, he has been in charge



of designing the action plan against blackouts within the Office of the Styrian Government.

Mag. Lejla Pock

Lejla Pock, CFO at Human.Technology Styria from 2019 to 2022 and CEO since October 2022, has been closely associated with Styrian human technology and the innovation sector for almost 20 years. As a shareholder and authorized signatory of the consulting firm Austin, Pock + Partners (1999 – 2019), which specializes in technology and innovation, she has already been able to implement numerous projects in the cluster environment and has known Human.Technology Styria from this time also from the communities' perspective. She has experience as an entrepreneur, as a start-up, as an SME and as a consulting service provider. Ms. Pock has many years of experience and good knowledge of the Styrian life science industry.

Univ.-Prof. Ing. Dr. Gerhard Stark

Gerhard Stark, born in 1961, received his medical doctor's degree at Graz University in 1986 and habilitated in internal medicine in 1992, besides he was nominated mechanical engineer in 1987. He has completed several additional training courses, e.g. as an emergency physician and in the specialist areas of internal pharmacotherapy, angiology and intensive care medicine. Since the 1990ies, Mr. Stark has been in various management positions, among others as Head of the Department for Internal Medicine at Styrian State Hospital Deutschlandsberg, Medical Director of Hospital Elisabethinen at Graz and Marien Hospital at Vorau. He was co-founder and shareholder of the JSW research company, the pharmaceutical marketing firm actiopharm and the Quadris-Consulting Company, furthermore he has run a private surgery for internal medicine since 1995. Stark has absolved research stays in Germany and the United States, has held different (honorary) functions in national research societies, the Medical Chamber as well as in his home municipality, and is published in books, scientific articles, and reviews. Since December 2021, he has been CEO of KAGes, the Styrian Hospital Corporation.

Panel guests

Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Thomas Gremsl

After completing his studies in history and Catholic theology with a focus on ethics and social studies at Graz University, Thomas Gremsl was guest researcher at the Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis (ITAS) at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). Since April 2022, he has been university professor for ethics and



social studies at the Catholic Theological Faculty of Graz University, and since October 2022 Chairman of the Ethics Committee of Graz University of Technology. His research focus is placed on social ethics, digital ethics, technology ethics, sports ethics and media ethics. From 2009 to 2019, Mr. Gremsl was football referee (up to the regional league) and then member of the committee for refereeing of the Styrian Football Association and referee observer up to the regional league. Since 2013, he has been a paramedic, and since December 2022 Head of the Red Cross section of the municipality of Vorau.

Michelle Isop

Michelle Isop, born in 2005, is a student at the Federal Grammar School Kirchengasse in Graz. Since September 2022, she has been school spokesperson for higher general education schools in the State of Styria. With this function, she is also a member of the national student council. In addition, she does volunteer work e.g. in the parish council.

Bernd Olbrich

Bernd Olbrich, born in Bruck an der Mur, started as freelance worker at Kleine Zeitung, a well-known Austrian print medium and the most widely-read daily newspaper in Styria, while studying commercial sciences at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. He soon accepted a full-time position and since then, he has had various management positions in the course of his career at Kleine Zeitung. Starting as office manager at the regional office in Bruck in 1989, he became head of organization and production in the Graz editorial office in 1992, head of regionalization and all regional offices in 1995 as well as head of Styria in 2006. Since 2012, he has been editorial manager and in this function responsible for personnel, budget and organization for about 240 employees between Eastern Tyrol and Vienna. In the past four years, he was also in charge of the change process at Kleine Zeitung.

Dr. Ines Wöckl, MSc

Ines Wöckl is the founder and CFO of the internationally successful Graz high-tech start-up Flasher, which develops and sells safety wearables for more safety on the road, on construction sites and on company premises. Grown up in the United States, Ms. Wöckl got to know America's goal-oriented and entrepreneurial culture at an early age. Ms. Wöckl completed her master's degree in business administration, including a stay abroad in Hong Kong, at Graz University in 2017 at the top of her class. During her doctorate, Ms. Wöckl taught and researched as a university assistant at the Institute for Finance at Graz University. The idea for Flasher, the smart high-tech



bangles, was born in spring 2019 when Ms. Wöckl and her later co-founder, Alexander Rech, fell victim to a dangerous situation on the e-scooter in Vienna's traffic. After completing the incubation programme at Science Park Graz, Flasher successfully launched the international market in 2022 thanks to a successful crowdfunding campaign and an impressive appearance on the German TV start-up show 'Die Höhle der Löwen'. The 30-year-old has already received several awards for her forward-looking, entrepreneurial achievements, including “Styrian Entrepreneur of the Year 2022” and “Entrepreneurs AWARD21”, and works as a speaker and mentor.

About the project

Full name: *Involvement and role of public authorities, civil society and volunteers in times of crisis as well as international SOLIdarity – learning from the COrona pandemic (SOLICO)*

The SOLICO project is established around the tackling and management of the most severe crisis of European societies since WWII - the COVID-19 pandemic. European, national, regional and local solidarity became one of the most important factors during that time and the importance of volunteering and active participation in local societies are a crucial factor for maintaining services and supporting most vulnerable groups.

In all European countries public administrations, civil society organisations as well as volunteers and citizens have gathered broad experiences (positive and negative) around the management of the pandemic development, about crisis management, management of volunteer support and solidarity on local level. With the SOLICO project, these experiences and expertise on local level should be gathered, discussed and treasured as good practices for future crisis management and solidarity actions.

During a series of workshops in all partner countries, representatives of local and regional authorities, civil society organisations and citizens will share their experience and practices for all three phases of pandemic management. Furthermore, good practice collections will be deducted and discussed on European level during a final conference, which shall ensure a sustainable impact of the results beyond the partner organisations.

A comprehensive dissemination, exploitation and multiplication strategy will be applied to allow participation and broad impact so that besides all negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on all European societies, there can at least be learning effects and good practices for future similar situations. The partnership of the project consists of eleven well-known and powerful local public administrations, regional authorities,



civil society organisations as well as federations and networks of local municipalities in nine countries, who are all willing to share their experiences:

AT	Land Steiermark (lead partner)
AT	Verein AUXILIUM
BA	SERDA - Sarajevo Regional Development Agency / Sarajevska regionalna razvojna agencija
HR	Alps-Adriatic Association for International Cooperation
HR	Varaždin county
HU	Vas county
ME	Centre for Civic Education / Centar za građansko obrazovanje
NMK	ZELS – Association of the units of local self-government / Заедница на единиците на локална самоуправа
SI	Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia / Škupnost Obcin Slovenije
SR	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina/ Аутономна Покрајина Војводина
XK	Municipality of Rahovec / Komuna e Rahovecit

About the event's location

The European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML), situated at the interface between policy, research, teacher education and practice, is in a unique position to act as a catalyst for reform and to help member states implement quality language education. Established in Graz in 1994, the ECML's mission is to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching and support its member states in the implementation of effective language education policies. It does so by working with decision-makers in member states and bringing together language experts to develop innovative, research-informed solutions to challenges in language education.

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About the event's organiser

The Unit for European and International Affairs is based at the Department Culture, Europe, Sports within the Office of the Styrian Government. Its tasks are divided into three major working areas – communicating Europe, development cooperation and



international relations. The office of Europe Direct, accommodated in the Unit's premises in Graz, aims at communicating the European idea and the decisions made on EU level toward the Styrian population; moreover, a Styrian office located at Brussels functions as interface between EU institutions and Styrian decision makers. The Styrian development cooperation, operating under the brand FairStyria, promotes awareness for the topic within Styria and supports Styrian organisations that realise projects in developing countries according to the principle "partnership, sustainability and aid toward self-sufficiency". In its international relations, Land Steiermark maintains partnerships with more than 20 regions worldwide, whilst the focus lies on Styria's neighbouring countries, the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership.

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