

# GovTech Connect

**Transforming Government, Together**

**GovTech Connect  
Challenge definition Workshop for Boot  
camp 2 – Southern Europe & the  
Western Balkans**

21<sup>st</sup> of March 2023, 12:00–13:30 CET

With the support of:



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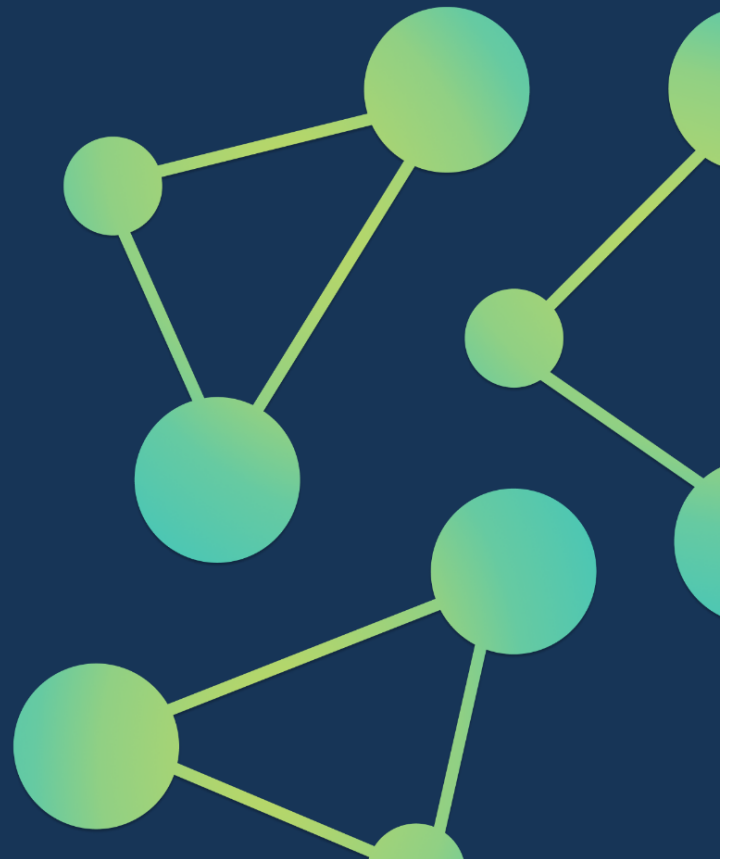
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## Workshop 2 – Challenge definition for Southern Europe & the Western Balkans on public sector digitisation

### Objectives

As part of GovTech Connect, we run a series of boot camps for start-ups aimed at identifying innovative solutions across European regions that address challenges regarding digital infrastructure, net-zero, health technology, and smart cities.

To define innovation challenges to be worked on in each GovTech Connect Boot Camp, we host Challenge Definition Workshops for each of the four regions. These virtual and interactive workshops are a gathering of GovTech experts, EDIHs, and public officials from across the region, supported by collaboration tools to focus on identifying problem areas that could potentially benefit from tech-enabled, innovative solutions.

In March 2023 we hosted the first two GovTech Connect Workshops, to define the objectives and the challenge statements for the 2023 GovTech Connect boot camps. **Workshop 2: Digitisation of Public Services for Enhanced Civic Engagement, Accessibility, and Transparency (Southern Europe & Western Balkans) was hosted on March 21<sup>st</sup> from 12:00 to 13:30 online via Zoom.**

The goal of this workshop was to **produce a set of concrete challenge statements** considering digital infrastructure in Southern Europe & the Western Balkans to which start-ups could apply to afterwards. Participants were provided with a **list of challenge statements** that they were then invited to analyse and prioritise through a poll conducted on Slido. Statements were carefully crafted by the project team based on insights and data collected during a research phase.

### Proposed challenge statements

1. **Inclusive and Accessible Services:** How can we use new technologies to make public services more inclusive and accessible for all users and communities?
2. **Community Engagement and Collaboration:** How can we use new technologies to facilitate more meaningful and productive dialogues between public authorities and the communities they serve?
3. **Transparent and Open Government:** How can we use new technologies and data to promote greater transparency and openness about public services and government outcomes?

To help the workshop attendees prioritise these challenge statements, four key indicators were provided:

- **Relevance:** Is it a priority area with a clear commitment from governments? Are there new government-led initiatives (strategies, funding) addressing this issue?
- **Feasibility:** Are there clear routes to market for innovators wanting to work with governments? Have we seen examples of successful government-start-up collaborations in this area?
- **Ecosystem Readiness:** Is there an ecosystem of new solutions and capabilities to tap into? Are there accelerators, investors and government-backed schemes supporting innovators in this space?

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- **Novelty:** Are there existing initiatives which will lead to duplication? Will this challenge capture public enthusiasm?

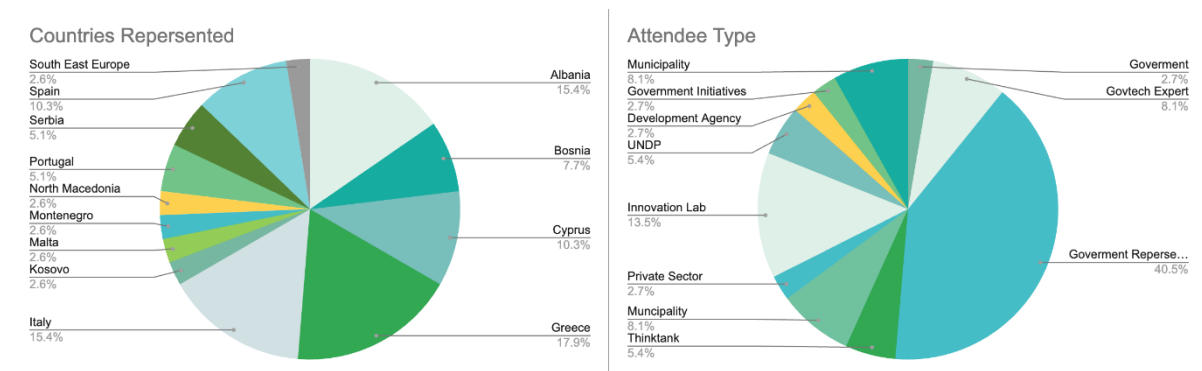
## Agenda

- 12:00-12:05 Opening keynote**  
 Goran Zeković, EC DG CNECT, GovTech Connect Project Officer
- 12:05-12:20 Project Introduction**  
**GovTech Connect Overview**  
 Giovanna Galasso, Intellera Consulting  
**GovTech Connect Boot Camps**  
 Chiara Carlini, PUBLIC
- 12:20-13:30 Interactive Workshop**  
 Facilitated by Chiara Carlini and Sofia Silva, PUBLIC
- 13:30-13:35 Wrap up & Next Steps**  
 Giovanna Galasso, Intellera Consulting

## Major Outcomes

### Attendee demographics

The event brought together 45 attendees from government organisations, GovTech labs and private sector organisations. Additionally, we were grateful for the representation from the European Commission.



### Workshop results

Two of the challenge statements were received particularly positively:

**Inclusive and Accessible Services:** How can we use new technologies to make public services more inclusive and accessible for all users and communities? The poll among participants, conducted on Slido, showed the following insights from the group:

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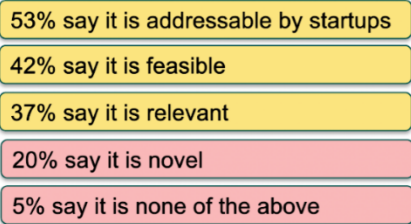
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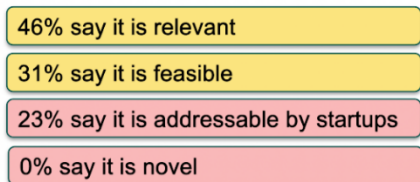




Participants commented amongst others: *“Participation is often designed for “participation professionals”. The challenge is to engage and collaborate with citizens on what is relevant for them. Engagement is not a project and cannot be done plug&play, it is a process of building and maintaining relationships.”*

**In summary, the group decided to proceed with this statement. This is a strong priority area for the governments we spoke to, with the recognition that start-ups can be the key to unlocking where governments have struggled to deliver effectively.**

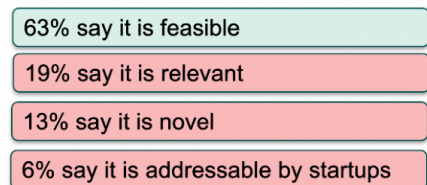
**Community Engagement and Collaboration:** How can we use new technologies to facilitate more meaningful and productive dialogues between public authorities and the communities they serve? The Slido poll showed the following insights from the group:



Participants commented amongst others: *“Besides using technology to make online public services more accessible, you could also consider the case of using technology to make public spaces where public services are delivered more accessible. For example, any public office where less digital citizens go to for example apply for a grant or fill in documents.”*

**In summary, the group decided to maybe proceed with this statement. While this is an area of need, there are existing solutions in many countries tackling it.**

**Transparent and Open Government:** How can we use new technologies and data to promote greater transparency and openness about public services and government outcomes? The Slido poll showed the following insights from the group:



Participants commented amongst others: *“The faster states digitize their public services, the better and easier it is for citizens to receive them. Since in this form corruption also decreases.”*

**In summary, the group decided to proceed with this statement. This area was considered feasible, however, it scored low on whether startups are the best provider to create the solutions.**

## Next Steps

The selected challenge statements will inform the upcoming project activities. The open call for the 2023 boot camps was officially launched on April 3rd and the challenge areas were published in the Boot Camp microsite for startups to apply.

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Companies were invited to apply through social media channels and via direct outreach. To support their application process, a live Q&A session for each region was hosted. The session for Southern Europe and the Balkan region took place on April 20th.

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