# Deliverable 2.2.2
## Thematic factsheet “Coworking in Greece”

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<th>PROJECT INFORMATION</th>
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<td><strong>Acronym</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Axis</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Programme specific objective</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Project website</strong></td>
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<td><strong>WP</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
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STATE OF COWORKING IN GREECE

NUMBER OF COWORKING SPACES

According to an updated list, until January 31st 2018 there are 16 recognized coworking spaces operating in Greece. 68,75% of the operating coworking spaces (11 out of 16) in Greece are located in Athens (10 coworking spaces) and in Athens (1 coworking space). On the one hand, this is logical if one takes into account also the concentration of the population in these two cities. On the other hand, this fact may act as a deterrent for people that want to start a coworking space in a small-er city.

TYPOLOGY

As it is emerged by the data collection, coworking is connected with the startup community and generally with entrepreneurship activities and some of their main roles are the development of a network and the providing of tools for business growth. The existing coworking activities are mainly set up by local entrepreneurs or they are the result of interaction between local entrepreneurs. Referring to specialization of coworking spaces in certain fields, is according to the domain knowledge of the operators and the domain expertise clusters of the region, for example people who are working at the ICT sector.

SERVICES

Coworking spaces in Greece offer a big variety of services such as: working area/office, implementation of workshops, events and training sessions, networking, restaurant – bar, private meeting rooms, conference rooms, parking, leisure space, etc. In this way, they make it more attractive for freelancers and professionals to work in a coworking space. But, beyond these basic services, typology and orientation of services strongly depend on the specific nature of each coworking space.

ACTIVITIES TO TAKE PART IN

Since, there is not a specific legal framework, there is also a high variation of the activities organized by the coworking spaces and a coworker can participate in:

- networking events
- seminars
- training sessions
- thematic workshops
- social events

COWORKING BENEFITS

Coworking offers a variety of benefits both to the coworkers themselves and the community as well.

For the coworkers:

- Networking
- Enhancement of their collaborative spirit
- Exchange of knowledge and experiences
- New acquired competences and (soft) skills, such as communication, team working, problem solving, etc.
- Increased job opportunities
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- Reduction of their operational costs

For the community:
- Dynamization and enhancement of the entrepreneurial spirit
- Local economic development

CHALLENGES

In Greece, the main challenge for coworking spaces refers to the lack of a specific legal framework and regulation which will define all necessary aspects (foundation, technical and other requirements, operational aspects, etc.) of coworking sector. Other challenges can be summarized as following:

- Concentration of the vast majority of coworking spaces in the two biggest cities of Greece
  68.75% of the operating coworking spaces (11 out of 16) in Greece are located in Athens (10 coworking spaces) and in Athens (1 coworking space). On the one hand, this is logical if one takes into account also the concentration of the population in these two cities. On the other hand, this fact may act as a deterrent for people that want to start a coworking space in a smaller city.

- The overall negative economic situation in Greece
  The negative consequences of the current economic situation in Greece are more than obvious: high youth unemployment rates, high rates of business closures, etc. These consequences threaten the operation of coworking spaces.

- Overall trend and need for professionals to minimize their operational costs
  Although coworking spaces in Greece consist a good choice for a freelancer / professional to minimize his/her operational costs, freelancers / professionals are always seeking for other choices such as working from home. This may lead to a decrease of the potential clients for coworking spaces.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND SUPPORT

As it emerged from the data collection, in terms of the first indicator which is the “coworking definition and legal framework”, according to Greek managers, there are many informal definitions about co-working, but indeed none of them is legally binding. Moreover, there is not any kind of formal regulation for co-working spaces in Greece. Due to the fact that there isn’t a standard definition about co-working, the bureaucratic steps are not clear and understandable by individuals and firms. They may vary according to the type of business each co-working space will have (for example, a social cooperative enterprise). In addition to this, the absence of regulation doesn’t help the coworking activities and drive coworkers and entrepreneurs to self-organization. In addition to this, there isn’t any strategy for inspiring the current legal framework on co-working activities. However, the strategy may inspire the current legal framework on co-working activities is financing programs from European Union, like “ESPA projects” include coworking and incubation to their agenda which is a positive step for increasing coworking activities.

Moreover, regarding the level of support from public policies, in Greece there are only few incentives for opening a business but not particular for coworking spaces, due to the fact that the bureaucratic steps prevent the procedures. It is better to give vouchers to users of spaces so as to use spaces rather than to spaces directly.
FUTURE OF COWORKING

The discussion regarding the future of coworking in Greece begins with the necessity of developing a more clear and coherent legal framework and regulation regarding the foundation and operation of coworking spaces. This is a crucial step towards a better organization of the sector as a clearer legal framework will define several aspects of the operation of coworking spaces, such as a stronger and clearer definition of requirements and characteristics of coworking activities.

Following this crucial step, the future of coworking space in Greece seems to be auspicious, for several reasons:

- Coworking spaces can enhance the variety of the services they offer in order to attract more clients. This, combined with the lowest possible pricing policy, will enable coworking spaces to take advantage of the increasing number of freelancers and individual professionals.
- Coworking spaces can further exploit the growing engagement of public bodies in supporting the coworking sector by developing, in cooperation with the relevant public bodies, specific funding programs which will address the needs of founding a coworking space.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Greece is a country in southeastern Europe with thousands of islands throughout the Aegean and Ionian seas. Influential in ancient times, it's often called the cradle of Western civilization. Athens, its capital, retains landmarks including the 5th-century B.C. Acropolis citadel with the Parthenon temple.

- Population of Greece: 10.75 million
- Female population: 5.484.000 (50,8%), male population: 5.303.690 (49,2%)
- Population per age:
  - 0-14 years old: 1.666.888 (15,20%) (2008: 14.4% 1.614.785)
  - 15-64 years old: 7.423.889 (67,71%) (2008: 67.5% 7.569.304)
  - >65 years old: 1.873.243 (17,08%) (2008: 18.1% 2.029.695)
- Average life expectancy: male: 77,11, female: 82,37
- GDP per capita: 18.103,97 USD
- Minimum wage: 683,76€ per month (July 2017)
- Unemployment rate: 20,5%
- Unemployment rate for youth under 25 years old: 39,5%
- Number of operating enterprises & SMEs (2016): 16.186

Sources:
http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1515741/GreeceInFigures_2017Q4_GR.pdf/eac29fd2-50c1-446f-af42-5c10e7fafe14

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