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CodeForGreece

Driving Transparency in Greece via Citizen Participation and New Communication Technologies

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Introduction

"Well – managed companies want to invest in countries governed by transparency and fair rules," according to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).[1] From a corporate governance perspective this statement could not be more explanatory, but five years into the Greek financial crisis, little has been done in this direction. Currently Greece is experiencing economic, political and social turmoil, which discourage local and foreign investments, further damaging the economy.

While the local and international experts tackle the financial distress as the core crisis issue, the root of the problem is corruption. Since 2008, when the first corruption cases were uncovered, the nation divided up according to their economic interests and in the absence of faith to the government, people lobbied amongst themselves to pursue their individual benefit. Needless to say that trust towards institutionalism evaporated, amplifying the disconnect between the government and people.

The exclusion of Greeks from political decision-making is raising additional transparency concerns, causing frustration and greater instability, while making representative democracy obsolete. The scenario is similar in the corporate world, this time between companies and stakeholders, discouraging economic development. Therefore, addressing corruption and including citizens in the process are implicit to

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[1] This initiative was launched in 2002 to improve the level of corruption in government turnover from natural resources. More information can be found on the official site of the organization at www.eiti.org

address these long standing issues, to reestablish trust and to improve the overall governance.

New communication technologies are a means of information dissemination, which provide a platform that makes transparency possible as the open government data move has demonstrated, and citizen participation easier to urge and monitor. A mechanism combining these two forces in the name of transparency can be a powerful tool for citizens and governments to work toward a sustainable future; and that is why CodeForGreece.org is the way forward.

Currently Greeks sporadically use social media to express their dissatisfaction or organize protests in the streets of Athens achieving little or no impact. However, if Greeks strategically used the Internet and technology, then greater influence on political and corporate decision-making could be accomplished. As a social entrepreneur I see this crisis as an opportunity to re-invent the Greek system and establish the foundation for participatory governance that will be driven by the people with the support of new and existing technology, in collaboration with institutions, toward a sustainable inclusive future.

This paper will demonstrate why corruption is a serious problem for the Greek community and introduce a new way to address it. CodeForGreece.org is an online platform that will bring people and institutions together for the pursuit of transparency in Greece. The business plan will address the different facets of the project implementation process, discussing both the benefits of this idea and the expected obstacles.

The Problem

Corruption is a global problem that leads to lack of public trust to institutions, the drain of public revenue, the unfair allocation of benefits due to corrupt relations, and the overall reputational damage of the nation both from a political and business perspective[2]. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) the international cost of corruption is approximately $2,5 trillion, which is an outrageous number impacting global development and therefore must be tackled.

The European Union (EU) of course is not intact to this problem. About €120 billion are lost to corruption every year, and the anti-corruption legislation efforts have not achieved the desired results to date. Interestingly, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain - widely known as PIIGS (Figure 1) - have serious deficits in public accountability, which makes the link between corruption and financial crisis evident according to Transparency International (TI)[3].

Figure 1: PIIGS

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[2] Independent Commission Against Corruption, *Why Exposing and preventing corruption is important.* More information can be found at http://www.icac.nsw.gov.au/about-corruption/why-expose-corruption
[3] TI is a global movement promoting corruption free relationships in government, business and the wider society. More information about the initiative can be found at http://www.transparency.org/whoweare/organisation

Greece is 94th among 176 reviewed countries and territories in the 2012 corruption perceptions index. With a score of 36, Greece has the highest corruption level across the EU, which is 19 places after Bulgaria, one of the latest EU entrants. Notwithstanding the implications of this poor performance on the overall EU economy, on a local level the lack of transparency in both public and private sectors intensifies the economic crisis and discourages new investments, creating a vicious circle of negative events for Greece.

The several political corruption scandals that became public from 2008 onwards, such as the Siemens controversy, the Vatopedi scandal, the sex tape of the General Secretary of the Culture Ministry or the ferry contracts dispute, contributed to the problem by sparking feelings of anger, frustration and demotivation, further increasing the gap between citizens and institutions.

Greece has a family controlled political and corporate tradition. As a result there is a vague line between control and ownership, as well as between the pursuit of the common and individual benefit. The status quo led Greeks to a free rider mentality, where citizens rely on personal connections and corrupt relationships for the pursuit of their interests rather than merit. In this climate, it is obvious that the rights on the minority stakeholders in the system, aka ordinary citizens, are undermined creating and reinforcing another vicious circle of distrust and disloyalty towards the government, public officials, corporations and citizens amongst themselves.
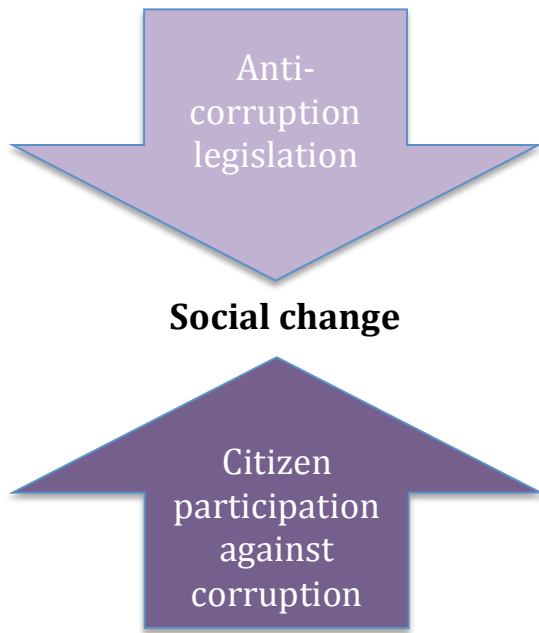
Opportunity

Although, international organizations and countries including the EU allocate an enormous amount of time, resources and effort to challenge corruption across sectors,[4] the implementation has not delivered the desired results. The main drawback is that these measures and legal frameworks are to be applied by institutions already facing corruption issues internally, and thus discounting efficiency. Current efforts need a supporting force in the market to ensure proper implementation throughout the system. This force is the citizens, which to date have not been asked to take an active role in the anti-corruption move (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The new anti-corruption mechanism

The European Commission (EC) presented an anticorruption plan in December 2012. However, this measure fails once more to address the longstanding problem of ineffective legislative policies implementation in Greece. Similarly, current international

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[4] Global Witness, (2013) EU agrees landmark anti-corruption law for global resource companies, Accessed May 6th, 2013 http://www.globalwitness.org/library/eu-agrees-landmark-anti-corruption-law-global-resource-companies

anti-corruption initiatives, such as the Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI)[5], the Partnering against Corruption Initiative (PACI)[6], the Clean.Gov.Biz – OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative[7], or the European Commission efforts to address corruption throughout the EU and in particular in Greece, depend on new legislation and regulation while this method has already been proven ineffective as mentioned previously. In addition, existing models do not allow for citizen participation and have limited technological functions to empower the community.

Transparency should be pursued from two lines, the legislative and the participatory, within the framework of the global Open Government move. A top-down legal framework is indispensable, however as past experience implies, the implementation must be supported bottom – up, via citizen participation to effectively "monitor" the efficient operation of the public and corporate sectors.

The suggested organization, CodeForGreece.org is a new kind of Internet venture. It is an initiative aiming to leverage citizen participation and promote the use of technology to tackle corruption and create social change. The operational model will be designed after Code for America, a new kind of public service organization in the USA that aims to drive citizen participation via online platform to address community issues (Figure 3).[8] The anti-corruption mission across sectors was inspired by the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which aims to increase transparency in the transactions between oil extracting companies and governments. The platform design

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[5] http://www.rai-see.org/
[6] http://www.weforum.org/issues/partnering-against-corruption-initiative
[7] See the press release at: http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/oecdannouncesnewtransparencyandanti-corruptioninitiativecleangovbiz.htm
[8] Appendix 1 – Code for America

and the capacity of the CodeForGreece.com capitalized on the capabilities of the online mapping platform Ushahidi, which allows users to report information using text, mms and email.

Figure 3: Code for Greece vs Code for America

Code for Greece	Code for America
Addresses corruption across multiple sectors	Addresses multiple issues across the community
The anti-corruption reporting move will be driven by a dedicated team that will mobilize the community throughout Greece	Initiatives are driven by a team of fellows that work closely with specific municipal authorities that expressed interest
Social stigma for those who choose not to comply with the anti-corruption move	There is no penalty for the states who chose not participate

The benefit of citizens and institutions to become part of this anti corruption move is the contribution to change the face of Greek politics from corrupt to sustainable. The service value offering will rely on a team of fifteen experts in policy, communication and program development (Figure 4), and on active citizen participation.

Mission

The mission of Code for Greece will be based on 4 pillars, which are memorable, manageable, measurable and motivational:

- Change the nature of Greek Politics via citizen participation and technology

- Enable everyone to participate and contribute either by joining the open data move or by reporting corrupt acts across sectors

- Fight corruption via collective impact

- Bring transparency in Greece by 2020

The overarching goal is to change the nature of Greek politics through citizen participation and technology, with the goal to eliminate corruption from the Greek system. The idea is to enable everyone in the community to become part of this process setting a clear anti-corruption goal: To bring transparency in Greece by 2020.

Citizens will be urged to report corrupt acts in their environments to CodeForGreece.org, while corporations and institutions will be encouraged to make their financial information public and join the open data trend. Citizen reports will be analyzed and translated into actionable recommendation for the government and other stakeholders. The impact of the organization will be evaluated by the number of organizations that will join the anti-corruption move and publicize their data, the number of policy recommendations implemented and of course by the number of active user profiles. Collective impact is the foundation of the organization's mission.

Theory of Change

The idea of citizen participation and the use of technology to bring social change is based on my master thesis research, on how electronic governance (e-governance) can change the notion of representative democracy. Since technology offers the

capacity for holistic participation it is implicit to enable people to take active part in decision-making.

In Greece, currently, the collaboration ties between government and citizens or corporations and shareholders are absent, and therefore so is trust. Inevitably, excluding stakeholders from the political and corporate decision-making is raising serious transparency concerns, causing frustration and greater economic instability. The promotion of active citizenship and crowdsourcing both offline and online are ultimate components towards the improvement of national governance, growth and common identity.

Citizen participation is a noble objective that follows the history of Greece and democracy. Faithful to its past, in recent years Greece already begun to deploy technology as a means to establish online government services; however, most of the services in place are not interactive. In other words they provide services without allowing citizens to make a difference, and this must change.

The Greek government should emphasize upon the foundation of e-governance, because it will allow for political stability, better policies, effective services, transparency and citizen engagement to an inclusive information society.[9] However the Greek Government is not in a position to launch an initiative like CodeForGreece.org because people have lost their trust in the government and it is likely that they would not be receptive to such initiative from fear to contributing to corruption instead of the opposite.

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[9] Appendix 2 – E-governance: benefits and drawbacks

It is often the case when the governments instead of starting a participatory initiative from scratch, instead partners with existing organizations run by citizens. This is an easy way to establish collaboration between citizens and the government. Partnering with a team of experts managing an anti-corruption strategy like CodeForGreece.org, the government will benefit from outsourcing one responsibility to the people staying true to the participation objective, and from the acquisition of specialized technical expertise that is currently rare. [10]

The mission of CodeForGreece.org is based on participation via technology that requires digital literacy and technical infrastructure in place, which is not the case in Greece.[11] The innovation of the suggested business model is the combination of existing and new technology. As it will be described in the strategy section of this paper, although Greeks are lacking new technology expertise, with 139% cellphone penetration there is a tremendous opportunity and thus processing cellphone reports on corruption will be a priority in our strategy.

This theory is aiming to achieve systemic change on a national and maybe international level. The suggested organization will act as a platform to align the efforts of the citizens, government, corporations, and other local and foreign stakeholders against corruption. If this effort is successful, then it will set the base to replicate the model and create social change regarding other issues faced by the community. This is an opportunity for the Greek government to change its perception as a corrupt obsolete institution to a modern participatory government role model in the EU and beyond.

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[10] Jochum, et al., 2005
[11] Appendix 2 – E-governance: benefits and drawbacks

Business model

CodeForGreece.org will enable citizens, institutions and the government to fight corruption. Corruption is defined as any situation where a local official, employee or other stakeholder requests for any kind of compensation for the performance of a task that would have a different cost otherwise. Citizens will be prompted to report corrupt action on a tailor-made online platform. According to the reports policy recommendations will be submitted to the government, while the organization will be also offering technical support to institutional stakeholders to join the open government move.

The first step to identify how to best serve the citizens, was to assess what is the digital literacy of Greeks, since the suggested organization is a technology based venture. According to research on EU and Greek statistic reports, that was completed in December 2012, the following conditions define the outlook of Greeks towards technology and the Internet:

- 45% of Greeks never used the Internet,

- Intense usage gap between digital immigrants and natives,

- The Internet is mainly used as a search engine,

- DSL connections prevail while Broadband is available in large cities, and

- Smart phones and tablets have a high market penetration[12].

From the data analysis the need of diversification in participation options to the platform is obvious. To ensure maximum participation against corruption the platform will be developed to receive reports from different media. In this way citizens will have the opportunity to participate using several communication tools, such as SMS, MMS, email, telephone or by directly inputting information on the platform.

The data will be gathered and grouped by area, sector and type of corrupt act. The reported data will be populated on a heated corruption online map that will give a visual impression of corruption across the country. Updates and improvements will also be shared on the map for citizens to see the impact of their contribution. Time is required to effectively utilize the data and proceed to actions and therefore the promoting campaign of CodeForGreece.org will set the users' expectations accordingly, to avoid demotivation in the absence of imminent results. The reason why action on reported incidents would not be immediate, is the necessity to verify the validity of the reports based on crowd sourced transparency data to ensure fair evaluation of reporting.

The policy experts will draw conclusions from the data analysis and suggest policies to challenge corruption in the respective areas. Close collaboration with the government is required to achieve impact, as the problem must be tackled at its source. Furthermore, the policy experts, in addition to their legal work, they will provide support to the partner network to change the language of their annual reports to become comprehensive and easy to understand by the wider public.

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[12] Appendix 3: Digital literacy and Technological Infrastructure in Greece

The software development team, beyond the platform maintenance, will be working to support the partner network to join the open government move via the development of customized platforms for the organizations to publicly share their information on their website. Leading companies will be approached to join the move and set the example for others to follow and join the open move.

The service launch campaign will emphasize how CodeForGreece can change the nature of Greek politics by bringing transparency in Greece by 2020. In view of this specific objective citizens will be educated to use the available technology to make a difference with little investment of their time and effort. Needless to say the use of all media linked to the platform will be simplified to a user-friendly interface. Of course online security and trust is another issue that many of Greeks are weary of, and therefore a key component of the promoting campaign and of the services terms of use, will be to explain how the user personal information or reports will be utilized.

For the CodeForGreece.org team to take action on the reported incidents, the law request reporters to be identified. While private information will not be displayed on the public website, it may be used for legal purposes in certain occasions and users must consent before using the anti-corruption service. The overall goal of the organization is to keep stakeholders aware of the progress made and therefore communication will be recurrent to reflect the data accumulated and actions taken on a trimester basis.

Last but not least, a software developers' training academy will operate within the suggested organization. This is an existing initiative named CodeForGreece.com and

was started by the chief program developer couple of years ago. The training modules will be in the form of webinars and our program development team will share their expertise with citizens as well as employees in the partner network, allowing them to code and optimize existing processes in their work environment and contribute to transparency by adding efficiency in their operations.

Team

To carry out the organizational objectives and the action tanking strategy, the right team mix is crucial. In view of the upcoming launch, a group of fifteen experts (Figure 4) has come together to work towards the mission of bringing transparency to Greece by 2020.

Figure 4: The Code for Greece Experts Team
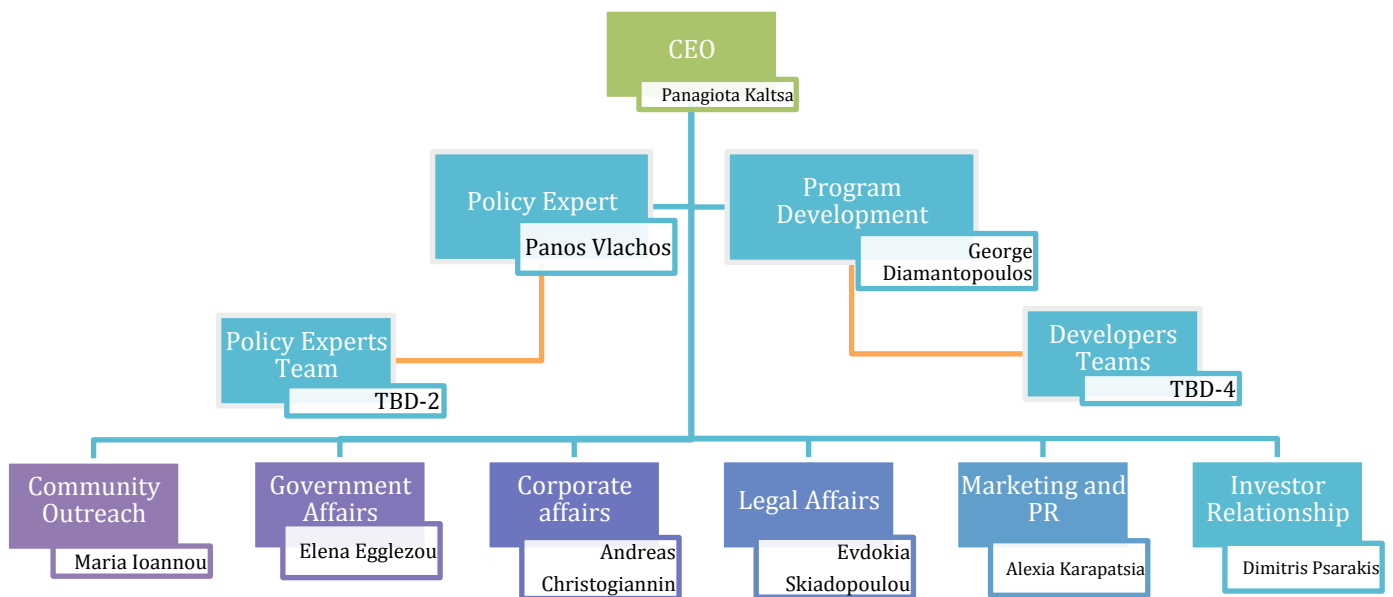
The core components at this preliminary phase are the program developers, the community outreach and the corporate and government affairs branches. Those are highly critical as engaging stakeholders in the process will be 50% of the venture's

success in the long run. The work of the policy experts will start simultaneously, initially focused on assisting participating organizations to simplify the language of their annual reports to the public. The efforts of marketing, legal and investor relations managers will be constant throughout the process as communication of the service benefits, compliance with the local legal framework and cash flow are fundamental to sustain operations at all times.

Partnerships

For the promotion of this initiative across the Greek Market, partnerships with like-minded organizations are fundamental. The support of the European Commission and Transparency International will be requested on an international level. Local partnerships will be pursued by inviting large corporations, and institutions to join the move. Consistent with the principles of collective impact, creating a sustainable network of engaged organizations on the ground will fortify the CodeForGreece.org efforts.

Like in the case of EITI, there will be no penalty for the government or any corporation if they chose not to participate in CodeForGreece.org, but the social stigma will be much greater motivation to join voluntarily. While partnerships in the beginning will be pursued, there will be an open application process for organizations that wish to change and join the open data transparency move. The management team will consider

the new applicants, and recommendations and guidance may be provided upon occasion, before the applicant would be ready to join the partner network

CodeForGreece.org will operate as a non-profit social service organization encouraging voluntary participation of institutions and citizens to join the anti-corruption move for a transparent Greece by 2020. Upon successful completion of the set goal, the organization will dissolve. Until then, this initiative will be mainly dependent on voluntary partition and the work of a small central paid team by investors and donors. Investors and donors will serve on the board. To ensure fairness and transparency the president of the board will be rotating every six months.

Code for America will also be a part of the process, as a partner offering guidance and expertise both from a technical and implementation perspective. It is important to have an expert organization supporting this initiative with knowledge to ensure a better program implementation.

Scaling Strategy

Based on the analysis of the Greek landscape and the technological competencies of the population, it would be practically impossible to address the whole country at once, and stir participation. The innovative nature of e-governance, implies the participatory platform pilot is tested in smaller scale and, if successful, then strategically expand to other municipalities and gradually share best practices across the

country. The design of digital strategy to serve national purposes - even on a smaller scale - is challenging and must be based upon practical evidence and representative citizen attributes.
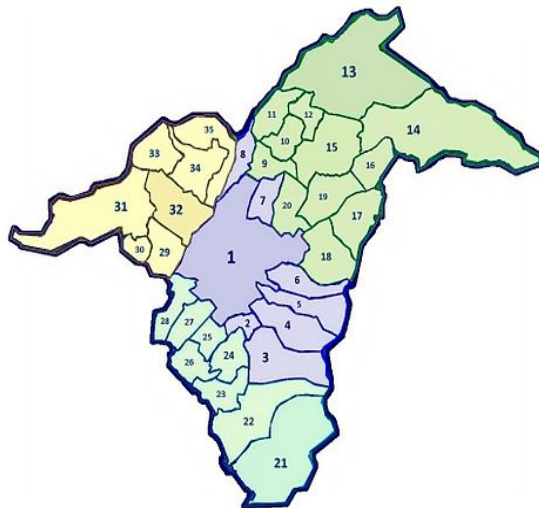

Figure 5: Attiki

According to 2011 statistics, 34.3% of the Greek population lived in the broader region of Attiki, out of which 60.2% were Internet users. Attiki is divided into four main districts: north, south, west, and central (Figure 5). Athens, the capital of Greece, is the central district of Attiki, and is the ideal place to test the CodeForGreece.org pilot. This suggestion is rationalized because approximately 750,000 Greeks live in Athens, the demographics are representative, the capital is the most technologically advanced region and where the majority of national services are located.

After the CodeForGreece.org launch year in the capital, the next two years will be key for national expansion. In the second year of operations other cities around Greece will be prompted to join the move according to their population, location and technology statistics. The third year of operation, the massive expansion plan will take place to address the needs of the country holistically (Figure 6).

Figure 6: The CodeforGreece.org Expansion Strategy

2014	**Pilot launch in** Athens and the broader region of Attiki.
2015	**Municipalities will be selected strategically** based on population metrics

The involvement of local authorities, municipalities and citizen run businesses and organizations is prerequisite for the successful expansion strategy. Both from the citizen participation and collective impact perspectives, stakeholder engagement is the core of this initiative. Once stakeholders are engaged and involved, through word of mouth[13] they will become the best ambassadors of the organization's mission.

To create a social move against corruption it is important to differentiate between mobilization and organization. The point is not to get citizens to report once and let go or their responsibilities, or to teach companies how to make their information public and stop there (mobilization). The objective of the organization is to provide a structure for the overall community actors to become organized and constantly work for the pursuit of a long-term goal. By engaging in a long-term process, citizens and institutions create a behavioral and systemic change move, where citizens and other power holders learn to be responsible and take action to address social issues collectively maximizing the service value.

The benefits of living in a transparent country are evident both on a national and individual level, starting from a healthy national balance sheet to equal opportunity for citizens. Economics are universal and citizens and organizations will do things as long as they benefit directly or indirectly. Indeed, the individual marginal benefit is smaller in

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[13] Goyette et al (2010)

large groups, but can be more if you partner each action to another, and will be substantial collectively. Evidently social media allow for collective organization and it remains to further exploit this potential to address corruption.

The expected social and economic value of the organization will be tremendous, considering that currently corruption cost Greece 10% of the annual GDP[14]. If it was not for this ongoing leak of funds, it is even possible to assume that the financial crisis could have been avoid. Currently though it is obvious that if funds continue to become corrupt it will be impossible for the country to overcome the financial distress. Properly communicating this fact is expected to increase engagement and participation across sectors.

The optimum social value contribution of CodeForGreece.org would be a corruption-free country heading toward a sustainable future. However, shifting the citizen mentality about what can or cannot change, teaching people and institutions how to utilize technology while trying to bridge the existing technology infrastructure shortcomings, are serious drawbacks that may undermine the project value.

Although addressing the anti-corruption needs of the entire country is the ultimate objective, the priority for the management team is quality in implementation and impact. The pilot is Athens will generate a track record of successful practices as well as issues to be addressed before the first strategic expansion in year two. Once year two comes to an end, the awareness of the initiative is expected to be so broad that

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[14] Dabilis, A. (2013) Corruption costs Greece 10% of GDP, Greek Reporter, Accessed May 9, 2013 http://greece.greekreporter.com/2013/02/17/corruption-costs-greece-10-of-gdp/

municipalities and companies are likely to approach our team and ask to be included in the process.

Alternatively, by engaging people and organizations across the country to participate in the anti-corruption move, best practices sharing with like-minded individuals and services is foreseen making the model of CodeForGreece.org the trend to follow in e-governance leveraging the notion of social value from a specific goal to an overall purpose.

Measuring Results

Measuring participation to the social move and measuring the effects of participation is challenging, but essential[15]. The link of the initiative to the Internet will allow for better and more accurate monitoring of performance, thus the impact of CodeForGreece.org will be assessed on five levels:

- The number of organizations that will join the anti-corruption move and publicize their financials,

- The number of new applicants to join the move,

- The number of policy recommendations implemented,

- The number of active user profiles, and

- The number of reports

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[15] Quintelier (2008); Koontz (1999); Williams (2010); Lestrelin et al (2011);

These data will be combined with one another to give a better impression of the organizations impact. For example the number of recorded reports is important to be compared to the number of implemented improvements. In addition, comparing the number of policy recommendations to the number of regulatory changes passed is an important metric. This assessment will especially be useful for the policy team, as it will indicate what is effective and what needs to improve.

Risks

The power of participatory governance via tech is a new concept in modern Greece and might be difficult to engage citizens. Furthermore, in the absence of trust to political and corporate governance, citizens and may be discouraged to participate in this initiative or any other similar venture, because the general sentiment is that the status quo cannot be changed. The benefit of this organization is that it is citizen run and the effort will be promoted as an initiative from the citizens to serve citizens and change governance.

Another shortcoming for the successful implementation of CodeForGreece.org is the fact that 45% of Greeks have never used a computer as of 2011, which raises concerns about the applicability of a tech-based business models in Greece. The chief program developer at CodeForGreece.org, George Diamantopoulos, attested from his experience with CodeForGreece.com – the online learning software development

initiative – that Greece is lacking strong developers. The scarcity of human capital with technology expertise maybe a drawback when the expansion strategy begins and the headcount needs increase.

While there is not much the organization can do to address digital literacy on a national level, the organization will launch a diversified platform allowing people to participate in various ways, educating them about the potential of modern technology and how it can be used. The training-developers venture of George, will continue to exist under the umbrella of the new organization aiming to enable more people to joint the move as developers to address issues in their own environment.

A serious risk in this transformative process is the Greek bureaucracy that may complicate the process for companies to join the open data move. Another threat is the legal procedures that may require much more evidence than numerous reports on corrupt actions, whether named or anonymous, to proceed to legal action. The organizations mission is to change the face of governance and technology is the way forward. Beyond the anti-corruption objectives, the goal is to teach the community a new way to do business and therefore generic legal alterations will also be proposed and promoted in the government circles.

In addition, since this is a non-profit initiative, financial risks apply as the viability of the move relies on a team of paid staff members. While the majority of work is volunteer base, paid headcount is expected to increase by one or two members annually depending on the operational needs, and platform and communication cost are expected to be significant.

Currently there is no capital in place, and while the Investors' Relationship Manager is working to engage companies and institutions to the mission of a transparent Greece by 2020, engagement does not guarantee sufficient cash flow throughout the project. Priority for CodeForGreece.org is to engage the European Commission in this process and receive funding, and then the organization will follow a social capital markets strategy trying to create enough revenue to sustain its operation without needing extensive monetary support.

Financial Plan

CodeForGreece.org is an Internet non-profit startup promoting social change and the aim to make Greece transparent by 2020. The strategy to finance the describe business plan is by sponsored funds from supporters of its mission, such as the European Commission, Transparency International, other international conglomerates related or non related to the cyberspace and local stakeholders.

CodeFromGreece.org will not accept money from any Government to ensure transparency and credibility in the eyes of people. Currently the Investor Manager is working to identify potential investors and explores funding opportunities from different channels. In identifying sponsors, the most important part their alignment to our core values. Funding will not be received from organizations that do not much the profile of organizations we are pursuing.

Significant capital is required to address the operation needs of the first three years of operations (Figure 7). A rough estimation of the costs entails the following items:

Figure 7: The CodeforGreece.org Financial Forecasting

Item	2014	2015	2016
Office lease & Utilities	$ 20,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Hardware and office equipment	$20,000	$ 10,000	$ 5,000
Platform development & maintenance	$50,000	$20,000	$ 20,000
Marketing Promotion	$100,000	$100,000	$ 100,000
Staffing	$ 350,000	$ 400,000	$ 440,000
Total per year	$ 540,000	$ 550,000	$ 585,000

As indicated on the chart above, the money is necessary to sustain the team operations and work to leverage our strategic objectives in the wider society. The marketing budget for example is constant throughout the years even though we are planning to expand widely because it is expected that people will already be engaged in the idea from year one, when the pilot is launched in Athens. We expect word of mouth and best practices sharing among organization to be our best marketing tool and hence our marketing activities will aim to raise awareness and prompt action.

Epilogue

CodeForGreece.org is a new approach to tackle corruption via citizen participation and technology rather than regulation. The objective to make Greece transparent by 2020 is imminent but yet allows enough time for Greeks to organize and take action for the pursuit of this objective. This solution is cost effective as every citizen is effectively an auditor, and every organization a leader of change. The fact that everyone in the community will be able to participate and feel part of a holistic move adds to the organization's momentum and efficiency.

The sooner this organizing process starts, the sooner Greece will become transparent, regain citizen trust to its institutions and political and corporate officials and eventually attract new investments to become financially viable again. Undeniably the obstacles and drawbacks are many, and the process of promoting citizen participation for the pursuit of a serious objective like transparency will be challenging, but institutionalism change must start today. After all, *it is always to early before it is too late.*

Appendix 1

Code for America

Code for America is an initiative that was established as a *"new non-profit"* organization that is a perfect representation of technological participation, where few web developers and technology experts are creating platforms to empower the community. Beyond technological participation, this initiative embodies all participation forms highlighting certain aspects at a time depending on the project.

The first time I encountered Code for America, was during the conduct of the literature review for my master thesis. There were five aspects of this initiative that immediately captured my attention: the diversity of undertaken tasks, the direct involvement with the government, the immediate citizens participation, the open source program development, the evolving infrastructure to support and collaborate with new initiatives

In other words, this example presents a promising model where everyone can have a significant role in different parts of the process, starting from a community level and gradually reaching a local, state or even national stage. Of course this is a long-term, multilevel and complicated aspiration, but what matters most is the potential and the possibility to adjust this business model and address community issues beyond the United States.

With this idea in mind, I traveled out to San Francisco where I met with the founder of this *"new kind of public service,"* Jennifer Pahlka. We started the conversation discussing the management model of autonomy, mastery and purpose by Daniel Pink and whether it would be applicable in governance over the course of the next decade. Per this theory, Pink advocates that people need self-direction (autonomy), they want to get better at doing things (mastery) and they also want to contribute to a greater purpose. The purpose is to discover what gets people motivated, and this is what Code For America capitalizes on.

The purpose of becoming an active community member is a noble one, but is not an easy one to convey. In many countries including the United States, it is extremely challenging to shift the mentality of people toward simple participation forms such as voting, let alone more complex initiatives like participatory decision-making. This is a result of the hierarchical function of governance up until now, which makes citizens to believe their voice will have no impact.

People will be better prepared to contribute to governance if they begin by making a difference in their community first. Educating citizens to appreciate the power to choose where they want to make a difference, become better and contribute to the

resolution of a problem for the common benefit must start with smaller endeavors. In Boston the project to *"adopt a fire hydrant,"* is an example of a small responsibility that teaches participants how to give back to the community allocating a little of their time. Simple tasks like this is a way to teach people how a small contribution can make a big difference for the community.

The greater question that raised out of this conversation with Jennifer, is how much time do you really have to form behaviors in countries in crisis, like Greece, where the need of citizen action to change the status quo is imminent. In contrast to healthy democracies, where the average citizen needs an incentive to develop interest in politics or the overall governance, countries in crisis present a different scene. As the recent protests from the Arab Spring, to Spain, Greece and the Occupy move have demonstrated, people who live under non democratic regimes or in countries in crisis, have a significantly stronger interest in politics and therefore are more likely to engage and contribute to a greater purpose aiming to ameliorate the political situation in their countries.

These uprising examples of recent history, present a great sample of what can be achieved by supporting the power of human capital with technology. However, the aftermath of those moves highlighted the difference between mobilization and organizations. The aforementioned cases present a great example of citizen mobilization under a cause, but the absence of central organization concluded with citizen inaction.

This observation emphasizes the importance of organization for the pursuit of a sustainable participatory model that will lead to a better community infrastructure. This is where organizations like Code For America have a role to play. By providing an open source platform for everyone to contribute and continue adding new tools to address new needs, the people have the power to create a new kind of institution and shape the new kind of governance.

The new kind of governance idea is not to say that the existing government structure should be replaced. By facilitating active citizen involvement in non-governmental participatory incentives with community impact, citizens create a trend that will be followed by governments and captured by the media. This idea is not a novice concept taking into consideration the debut of social media and how from being considered unreliable or unprofessional they now constitute an information channel that is embraced and incorporated by institutions across the spectrum.

Appendix 2

E-governance in Greece: Benefits and Drawbacks

Benefits

The Greek government should emphasize upon the foundation of interactive e-governance, because it will allow for political stability, better policies, effective services, transparency and citizen engagement to an inclusive information society.

Political stability

Alienation causes the formation of group identities. Thus, if citizen exclusion from political decision-making results to identity groups, riots and national turbulence; then a two–way government-citizen relationship would significantly alleviate the constant political turmoil. The promotion of active citizenship and crowdsourcing both offline and online are ultimate components towards the improvement of national governance, growth and identity.

Policy making

E-governance provides the space for decision - making upon policies that concern citizens and the public good, with holistic participation. People or entities interested in certain policy areas can access relevant information and the have the ability to shape the final policy contributing to better governance and laws that reflect upon the needs of the people. (Ferri, 2010)

Services and Transparency

Within the framework of e-governance, e-government services will provide public services to improve the citizen life and reduce the cost of government work (Jeong, 2007). Faster and cost effective services along with open government initiatives and public information will increase transparency, accountability and trust (McNeal et al. 2008). Technology in this sense also contributes to the public confidence, as virtual communication and information from the government is constant (McNeal et al. 2008).

Citizen Engagement

In contrast to the one-way flow of e-government services, e-governance is about mutual communication. E-governance concerns the breadth of governance sub-segments from electoral, legislative to administrative matters and beyond. Urging citizens to participate in decisions that have an impact in their life will change their mindset from passive to active citizenship in the wider community except politics.

Government and social participation will increase the sense of belonging, mutual purpose and common identity amongst Greeks.

Drawbacks

The drawbacks of a digital strategy to increase collaboration and inclusion vary from trust issues, to national priorities, limited digital literacy to weak technological infrastructure in certain areas.

Trust

Despite the clear benefits of a closer government-citizen relationship, urging Greeks to embrace any government initiative at the moment will be challenging due to the lack of loyalty. Limited trust of citizens towards their government is a general phenomenon over the course of the last four decades (Putnam, 2000) that has also been attributed to the absence of participation engagement (Norris, 1999).

Trust issues also occur among citizens because of online safety and privacy threats and that might also be serious drawback for people to engage with government digital platforms. (Urban et al. 2000)

National Priorities

Currently the political attention is focused on the financial debt restructuring rather than the importance of e-governance. Moreover, since the country entered the economic deadlock, all broadband network expansion efforts were postponed to 2018, since spending 2.1 billion Euros on Broadband is financially and strategically unrealistic at the moment.

Digital Literacy

Even if there was a network, the low digital literacy of Greeks implies that Broadband is not a priority. Many citizens lack digital skills and even though they might have access to the internet their competence might not allow them to utilize the offered public services. Another scenario is that citizens may not be aware of the available options, or even they might not be eager to use new media channels for such purposes (VanDeursen et al., 2008; Brandtweiner et al., 2010).

Technological Infrastructure

Greece is far behind its EU peers in terms of wireless Broadband, and households continue to mainly operate with DSL Internet connections, leaving a large percent of the population disconnected despite the time, money and effort put in this project so far (Figure 7). Telephony on the other hand is well developed. Cellular penetration in 2011 139%; which is impressive but it is actually much lower than 2009 when it was 186% (Wired Magazine, 2011). However, the mobile telephone market is undergoing a crisis encountering significant revenue loses due to intense competition that lowered telephony prices greatly. One of the three principle telephony companies, Wind, faced bankruptcy issues, but is now operating again.

Moreover, Greece has very limited authority over the telecommunication companies; [16] and this makes the market dominating carriers OTE, Vodafone and Wind significant power holders, as it would not be impossible if all or either one of those went on a strike and left the country in information darkness.

Appendix 3

Digital Literacy and Technological Infrastructure in Greece

45% of Greeks never used the Internet

Looking at the Eurostat report on Internet use in households and by individuals in 2011, the Internet users across the 27 EU countries reached 73% on an annual basis. However, the same report indicates that Internet users in Greece are significantly lower than the EU average at 53%. What is striking is that Greece has the 3rd largest percentage (45%) of citizens that have never used the Internet while the EU non-user average is only 24%.

Even though the percentage of Internet use in Greece has rapidly evolved over the past decade (Figure 1), there is still a lot of work to be done until the majority of Greeks become competent to participate and utilize the range of government services in place or to be created.

Figure 1: Weekly Internet Usage % in Greece from 2003 to 2011

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
14	17	18	23	28	33	38	41	47

Source: Eurostat

Another issue that must be noted is that only 37% are everyday users, while 53% use it throughout a year (Figure 2). Such activity is not satisfactory to suggest that 53% of Greeks would utilize to e-government initiatives in place or to be created. It is possible but not likely.

Figure 2: Internet Usage types in Greece in % as of 2011

Every Day	Every Week	Within 3 Months	Within 12 Months	Never Used

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[16] The majority of common carriers are private with the exception of OTE which is 10% government owned. The Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission (EETT) is the independent entity in charge of resolving and regulating market competition issues and has no power over the Telecommunication market either.

| 37 | 47 | 52 | 53 | 45 |

Source: Eurostat

Intense usage gap between digital immigrants and natives

Furthermore, like in every other country, in Greece demographics like age, education level and gender matter in digital literacy. A 2011 analysis from the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) on the computer and Internet use per age groups verifies the digital divide as younger populations or "digital natives" tend to be significantly more active than older generations known as "digital immigrants" (Appendix 3, Figure 2). This trend is consistent with EU statistics. Moreover, the most active Internet users are those in the age group of 25-34, which are almost 30% of the total Internet users in the country. Not surprisingly the educated population consists 45.6% of the active users while the non-or lower educated are only 12.5%. Another interesting statistic measure indicates that males are more active Internet users (52.4%) than females (47.6%). Mutually these trends of highly educated individuals and more active male users are consistent with the EU.

The Internet is mainly used as a search engine

Most Greeks use the Internet for information searches at a rate of 74.9% and news reading at 72.9%. Other activities include: health and fitness services (58.5%), social media networking (54.3%), online encyclopedias, information on education (39.3%), online calling (31.8%), online chatting and commenting (28.8%), software (26.2%), job search (25%), e-banking (16.6%), participation to online government polls (9.6%), online courses (7.3%), and e-commerce (4.5%). Considering the largest user population in Greece ranges between the ages of 16 and 34, it is no surprise that the most visited sites are Facebook, Google, and YouTube.

While "digital natives" dominate large percent Internet usage, according to the metrics we can see a growing activity across various sectors that offer some kind of benefit to the user. That includes information, communication, or faster transactions for example. It is good to see that Greeks have slowly started to become active in public matters online and shift from passive to active Internet use. In fact, 2011 was the first time this variable was measured, and shows that Greeks became more sensitive toward government decision-making.

DSL connections prevail while Broadband is available in large cities

The existing literature points to a number of government efforts in early 2000 to increase connectivity in Greece, mainly via the Information Technology Committee operating under the Special Secretariat for Digital Planning at the Greek Ministry of Economy and Finance. The plan was to follow a 4-step strategy to become digitally viable over a 7-year horizon starting from 2006 to 2013. Since the country entered the economic deadlock those efforts were postponed to 2018 since spending 2.1 billion Euros on the broadband network expansion is unrealistic. Today, Greece is far behind its EU peers, and households continue to mainly operate with DSL Internet connections, leaving a large percent of the population disconnected despite the time, money and effort put in this project so far.

Smart phones and tablet computers have a high market penetration

Until recently Greeks accessed the Internet form public sites like Internet cafés and hot spots, but gradually this tendency is shifting as households get DSL or in some cases broadband connections. However what is interesting is that 62.3%of the existing users access the internet on their laptop or tablet device and 46.4% use their mobile phones to surf the internet indicating high digital literacy.

This shift is not surprising when considering the market growth of smart phones, netbooks, notebooks and tablets in Greece. Cellular penetration in 2011 was 139%; which is impressive but it is actually much lower than 2009 when it was 186%. What is striking according to an article in Wired Magazine in 2011 is that Greece ranks 16th among the 42 countries with the highest smart phone penetration per capita. At the moment, the mobile telephony market is undergoing a crisis encountering significant revenue losses due to intense competition that lowered the telephony prices greatly. Recently one of the three principle telephony companies, Wind, faced serious bankruptcy issues, but is back in the game working on lower mobile broadband and higher quality service offerings.

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