Press Release

1st EU-CIP Annual Conference promotes "Reinventing Resilience" for European Critical Infrastructures

Brussels, 20-21/09/2023. On 20 and 21 September 2023 in Brussels, the EU-CIP consortium successfully held its **1st Annual Conference on Critical Infrastructure Resilience focusing on "Reinventing Resilience"**.

In this first edition of the conference, EU-CIP partners introduced the project and its objectives to over 90 stakeholders from the global CIP/CIR ecosystem and sought to establish an open forum for the fruitful exchange of ideas, solutions, research results and challenges. The conference was held in conjuction with a workshop of the **European Cluster for Security Critical Infrastructures**, in which 11 cluster projects presented their results for strengthening CI resilience.

Over the course of two days, speakers from the European Commission, representatives of European critical infrastructures, researchers, security solution providers, and other participants had the opportunity to engage in discussions covering a diverse range of topics related to resilience in the present landscape, while also evaluating emerging threats and both existing and required solutions.

Key conclusions and takeaways:

- In their respective keynote speeches, Mr. Giannis Skiadaresis and Mr. Sebastian Serwiak of the European Commission Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) emphasized the significance of EU research projects in enhancing European security. They underscored **the role of knowledge networks like EU-CIP in fostering a capability-driven approach to security research**, ensuring that practitioners acquire the necessary capabilities, and translating project achievements into policies.

- The first panel discussion moderated by Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Jovanović (Steinbeis European Risk & Resilience) focused on current and emerging risks and challenges for CIP/CIR. Operators from smaller and larger CIs (Attilio Carmagnani AC SpA, Athens Airport, EDF), solution providers (Engineering) and policymakers (European Commission JRC) provided an assessment of threats, gaps and needs.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under the grant agreement No 101073878.

- In today's environment, characterized by constant and sometimes extreme pressure on infrastructures, **operators must move beyond mere compliance and prioritise resilience**. Achieving this demands collaborative and multidisciplinary efforts.

- As the nature of attacks continues to evolve, the skills of operators and security personnel must evolve in tandem. **Skill development is crucial for the future of European resilience**, encompassing both education and practical experience.

- The second panel moderated by Mr. Paolo Venturoni (European Organisation for Security) looked into current market solutions and practitioners' needs.

  - Three security solution providers (Collins Aerospace, IDEMIA, German Aerospace Centre – DLR) presented **their current solutions and R&D findings for CI resilience, cobering cybersecurity trends, AI and biometrics**.

  - A research centre representative (Center for Security Studies – KEMEA) emphasised the importance of **procurement in operationalising innovative technologies** to enhance CI resilience.

  - The panelists stressed a critical issue: the **lack of post-project investment**, despite many R&I projects producing valuable results for CI resilience.

  - All speakers recognized the potential of AI solutions for bolstering resilience, but they also highlighted the malicious use of AI in infrastructure attacks. **Tools for preventing malicious AI usage** or protecting against it are in demand.

- During the *European Cluster for Security Critical Infrastructures (ECSCI) workshop*, the growth of the cluster from 3 to 34 projects and its value for the CIP/CIR community were highlighted. After the presentation of CIP/CIR solutions developed by 11 cluster projects, participants identified key takeaways and recommendations for future actions:

  - The importance of **breaking down silos and fostering a community-oriented** approach to CIP.

  - The significant impact of **AI on critical sectors**, particulalry as a tool for anticipating attacks.

  - The necessity of **dynamically adapting incident response** strategies to emerging threats.

  - **The importance of disseminating project results after their conclusion**, creating a timeline of relevant projects by area and sector, and establishing links between their work.

These conclusions are invaluable not only for EU-CIP partners but also for the broader European CIP/CIR research community. The event successfully extracted key insights into the community's needs, which project partners will consider in their future actions.

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The role of the EU-CIP project

EU-CIP partners are actively incorporating these recommendations into the next phases of the project. A primary project objective is to reduce information fragmentation and promote structured analysis and evidence-based policymaking for CIP/CIR.

To achieve this, EU-CIP is **launching its Knowledge Hub, designed to collect 'success stories' and solutions developed in the past**, facilitating stakeholder access to knowledge, results, services, and infrastructures. EU-CIP invites all event participants, ECSCI projects, and CIP stakeholders to contribute to this initiative and **pre-register for the Knowledge Hub**.

Furthermore, EU-CIP aims to **maximise the impact of R&I activities in Europe by offering innovation support and solution validation services**. In the coming months, project partners will launch commercialization training and open calls for CIP innovators seeking support in solution commercialization. **Stay tuned to our website for more updates**.

Consortium:

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GFT Italia SRL (GFT), Italy
Inov instituto de engenharia de sistemas e computadores inovacao (INOV), Portugal
Inlecom commercial pathways company limited by guarantee (ICP), Ireland
SINTEF AS (SIN), Norway
Steinbeis EU-VRI GMBH (EU-VRi), Germany
Stowarzyszenie Polska Platforma bezpieczenstwa wewnetrznego (PPHS), Poland
Laurea – Ammattikorkeakoulou oy (LAU), Finland
Innov - Acts Limited (INNOV), Cyprus
Norks Regnesentral (NRS), Norway
European Organisation for Security (EOS), Belgium
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL), Belgium
Fstechnology SPA (FST), Italy
Athens International Airport S.A (AIA), Greece
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