

BUSINESS Partners

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2024

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
www.amcham.gr

HARNESSING REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGIES

NIKOS MANIATIS

GENERAL MANAGER, IBM GREECE AND CYPRUS

THOUGHT LEADERS
**LABOR
DECONSTRUCTED**

BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS WITH JERRIER ISMAIL
EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKING WITH AMY HUGHLETT
AND DIEGO MEDELLIN

UNVEILING HUMAN RIGHTS LESSONS FROM CLASSICAL
GREEK DRAMA BY ALCIBIADES SIAVARAS



STANTON CHASE

Your Leadership Partner

Our bespoke, innovative and all-encompassing leadership solutions are designed to help you achieve sustainable success.

As a top-ranked global retained executive search and leadership advisory firm, we take pride in being more than just leadership service providers, **we are your trusted partners in leadership.**

STANTON CHASE ATHENS
**Executive Search and Leadership
Consultancy Firm**

10 Mykalis Street, Maroussi 151 24 Athens
Phone: +30 210 6129429
Email: athens@stantonchase.com
www.stantonchase.com

24



Nikos Maniatis, General Manager, IBM Greece and Cyprus, discusses the company's strategic vision for the future

20



US Consul General Jerrier Ismail talks about the deep-rooted strength of US-Greek ties and Greece's promising prospects in key sectors

36



Prof. Panayiotis Ketikidis talks about innovation, the work of AIZ, and what it takes to build a strong innovation ecosystem

BUSINESS
Partners

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE
AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOLUME XXIII | NUMBER 130
ISSN 1109-4990 CODE: 6526

CHAMBER.PRESS

DIRECTOR
Elias Spirtoonias
e.spirtoonias@amcham.gr

PUBLISHER
Alexandra Loli
a.loli@amcham.gr

EDITOR
T.C. Lowrie

DESIGN
snack•

PRINTING & BINDING
Queue Print LTD

OWNER
American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce
Politia Business Center
109-111 Messoghion Avenue
115 26 Athens
Tel: +30 210 699 3559
Fax: +30 210 698 5686-7
E-mail: info@amcham.gr

BRANCH OFFICE
123 Tsimiski Street
546 21 Thessaloniki
Tel: +30 2310 286 453
Fax: +30 2310 225 162
E-mail: n.savdaroglou@amcham.gr

www.amcham.gr

4 THE BOARD

6 CHAMBER NEWS AND EVENTS

10 MEMBERS' CORNER

Dedicated to showcasing the AmChamGR community

12 GREEK ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Fostering a Sustainable Economic Future Amidst Global Challenges

18 AMCHAM EVENTS

Thanksgiving Dinner 2023

20 FOREIGN SERVICE

Building on Our Strengths
WITH JERRIER ISMAIL

22 ALBA BUSINESS REVIEW

Leadership in the Age of Industry 4.0: A Focus on Technology and STEM
WITH KOSTAS AXARLOGLOU

24 THE INTERVIEW

Harnessing Revolutionary Technologies
WITH NIKOS MANIATIS

28 THOUGHT LEADERS

Labor Deconstructed: Navigating Diverse Perspectives in the World of Work

36 Q & A

Fostering Innovation
WITH PANAYIOTIS KETIKIDIS

38 RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

Unveiling Human Rights Lessons from Classical Greek Drama
BY ALCIBIADES SIARAVAS

40 TAX TALK

Tax Transparency: Why Public Country-By-Country Reporting Is an Important Development
BY EFFIE ADAMIDOU

Delivering More Strategic Value: How the Transformation of Tax and Finance Functions Can Open Up New Opportunities
BY STEPHANOS MITSIOS

42 SOUTHEAST EUROPE ENERGY FORUM
SEEF 2023

46 BUSINESS TOOLKIT

Nurturing Business Leadership in Greece Through Effective Public Speaking
BY AMY HUGHLETT AND DIEGO MEDELLIN

47 READERS' CORNER

The Curse of Midas' Touch
PART 1 OF 3
BY ARTEMIOS MIROPOULOS

48 OUR CHAMBER

Amcham Greece Building a Legacy of Award-Winning Events



28 THOUGHT LEADERS
Labor Deconstructed



At the beginning of each new year, most of us are full of hope and anticipation, putting concerns and problems out of our minds and making resolutions to do things differently. For many, however, this positive mood lasts only for a short while, and soon after the holidays, that optimism and enthusiasm give way to routine and the established patterns of day to day life. These past few weeks, I've been thinking about how differently we might behave and act if we saw every new day as the first day of the year—if we started each new day still holding on to that optimism and positive attitude.

This year, 2024, is set to be particularly interesting. Critical elections are coming up in the US and Europe. There are growing geopolitical conflicts, some of them with asymmetric threats, in many parts of the world. The cost of living crisis continues. The frequency of extreme weather phenomena and natural disasters is on the rise. And the world is constantly bombarded with an endless stream of information and news, both true and false. Each on their own, and certainly combined, these developments stand to bring significant upheavals in the policies followed today and to change not only our world but also life as we know it. This is particularly so for Europe which, due to an unproductive polyphony and a lack of leadership policies needed for a common vision and orientation, is lagging and struggling to find its footing in a competitive global environment with new emerging economies. Meanwhile, the growing lack of trust in institutions and policies, a result of growing social inequalities and unequal distribution of wealth, runs like a red thread through it all, giving rise to populist tendencies and undermining fundamental values and principles.

You may think, dear readers, that the picture I just described for 2024 is not consistent with how I started this article. But that isn't so. Because the more of us that hold on to optimism and to the desire to do things differently, get creative and build on that positive energy, the more things can change for the better. Wonderful things are happening out there, things that are worth fighting for and sharing with the world. We live on a beautiful planet, and we must do whatever it takes to protect it and pass it on to our children.

In this spirit of hope and commitment to contributing to a better tomorrow, our Chamber continues its creative work, exploring new horizons and forging new paths as conditions dictate. We pledge to continue building bridges, fostering partnerships, and championing the values that make our business community strong and the future brighter.

With a big smile, we wish you all a successful and fulfilling new year.

ELIAS SPIRTOONIAS
Executive Director

THE AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A DYNAMIC, PROACTIVE CHAMBER

The American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce was established in 1932 and is one of the largest, most active, and dynamic American Chambers in Europe. Virtually all American companies that do business in Greece and Greek companies that engage in trade with the United States are members of the Chamber.

The Chamber's membership is comprised of more than 1,000 proactive companies that seek to expand business horizons, create new business partnerships, and take advantage of trade and investment opportunities in today's global economy.

The American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce is an active mem-

ber of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington D.C. and the European Council of American Chambers of Commerce (ECACC).

MISSION STATEMENT

The American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce strives for continuous improvement of American-Hellenic commercial and financial relations, through increased membership and through the organization of top-quality events, exhibitions, fora, seminars, and congresses on both sides of the Atlantic.

Accounting Solutions

FINANCE | PAYROLL | TAX

member of

wts global



Accounting Solutions, established in 2000, has vast experience and high level of expertise in the field of financial, accounting, payroll, tax and advisory services, with extensive clientele and know-how.

As such, we are trusted by some of the largest companies of both the public and private sector as well as by several small and medium-sized businesses operating in Greece.

26.000

Payroll Accounts
Managed

350

Multinational &
Greek Clients

120

Highly Experienced
Professionals

Making Business Better
www.accountingsolutions.gr





AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Nikolaos Bakatselos, *President* | PYRAMIS METALLOURGIA
Vassilis Kafatos, *Vice President* | DELOITTE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS
John D. Saracakis, *Vice President* | SARACAKIS BROTHERS
Alexandros Costopoulos, *Secretary General* | FORESIGHT Strategy & Communications
Litsa Panayotopoulos, *Treasurer* | EVIA-IP
Paul Canellopoulos, *Counselor* | CANELLOPOULOS
ADAMANTIADIS HOLDINGS
John Kyriakides, *Counselor* | KYRIAKIDES GEORGOPOULOS
LAW FIRM
Athanasios Papadopoulos, *Counselor* | NAUTICAL CARRIERS
INCORPORATED
Despina Passaris, *Counselor* | PROCTER & GAMBLE HELLAS
Spirtonias Elias, *Executive Director*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

George Alexopoulos | HELLENiQ ENERGY
Yanna Andronopoulou | MICROSOFT HELLAS
Labrina Barbetaki | ABBVIE PHARMACEUTICALS
Claudia Carydis | THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GREECE
Sophie Daskalaki-Mytilineos | MYTILINEOS
John Enepekides | EFFECTUS GOVERNMENT RELATIONS &
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
Christos Harpantidis | PAPASTRATOS
Michalis Kassimiotis | HEWLETT PACKARD ENTERPRISE HELLAS
Chryssos Kavounides | BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP (BCG)
Yiannos Kontopoulos | ATHENS EXCHANGE GROUP
Athanasios Kouimtziis | KOUIMTZIS GROUP
Venetia Koussia | VENETIA KOUSSIA
Emilios Kyriacou | CITIBANK EUROPE - Greece Branch
Siana Kyriacou | ISO HELLAS
Christos Megalou | PIRAEUS BANK
Stavros Mourelatos | THE COCA-COLA COMPANY
Paul Mylonas | NATIONAL BANK OF GREECE
Georgios Papadimitriou | EY
Costas Papadopoulos | LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION
Panos Pitsillides | JOHNSON & JOHNSON MEDTech
Spyros Poulidas | IBM HELLAS, IMB EMEA
Marios Psaltis | PwC
Zachary Ragousis | PFIZER HELLAS
Kyriacos Sabatakakis | ACCENTURE
George Stassis | PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION
Ioannis Stavropoulos | STAVROPOULOS & PARTNERS LAW OFFICE
Andreas Stylianopoulos | NAVIGATOR TRAVEL & TOURIST
SERVICES
Michael Tsamaz | OTE GROUP
Antonios Tsiboukis | CISCO SYSTEMS HELLAS
Sofoklis Yiannacou

COMMITTEES

AGROTECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE Chair: Athanasios Kouimtziis | Alkis Alexandrou, Notis Argiriou, Stella Bezergianni, Dimitrios Chriss, Constantinos Constantinidis, Thymis Efthymiadis, Iatridis Angelos, Nikolaos Karagiorgos, Georgios Katsaros, Effie Lazaridou, Aini Michalides, Olga Mitsiolidou, Ioannis Nakas, Theocharidis Kostas, Athanasios Tsafaris, Evangelos Vergos | Coordinator: Nikos Tsvardaroglou

AUDITORS COMMITTEE Stavros Gigantes, Athanasios Felonis, George Kerameus | Coordinator: Andriana Hadjianagnostou

CIRCULAR ECONOMY COMMITTEE Chair: George Kremliis | Stavroula Aggelopoulou, Evangelos Baltas, George Kalavrouziotis, Kiara Konti, Apostolos Mourgos, Eleni Providi, Antonios Sagris, Ioanna Spountzi, Panagiotis Skiadas, Ioanna Skondra | Coordinators: Sofia Chaidogiannou, Frosso Paneta

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE Chair: Maria Theodoulidou | John Apsouris, Xenofon Avlonitis, Leda Condoyanni, Aris Dimitriadis, Irini Ioannidou, Vassilios Kaminaris, Christy Kozoboli, Vassilis Monogios, Eirini Pothitou, George Samothrakis, Eleftheria Spyridonos, Michalis Tsibris, Georgios Venieris, George Vlachos | Coordinator: Daphne Constantinidou

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE Chair: Pakis Papademetriou | Dimitris Agrafiotis, Nickolas Angelopoulos, Rania Assariotaki, Rouli Christophoulou, Chrysoula Diakatou, Dimitrios Dimopoulos, Chryssa Eleftheriou, Ada Gianneskis, Manos Iatrelis, Vasiliki Kapari, Martha Kesisoglou, Elina Konstantinou, Kiara Konti, Siana Kyriacou, Alexia Macheras, Nikolaos Melios, Manina Menidiati, Katerina Papakonstantinou, Sotiris Pastras, Sevi Sfakianaki, Alcibiades Siaravas, Melina Thomaidou, Maria Ziouvelou | Coordinator: Angela Boyatzis

CULTURE COMMITTEE Chair: Zozo Lidoriki | Eugenia Arsenis, Sophie Daskalaki-Mytilineou, Sofia Dimitsa, Xenia Kaldara, Eva Karaitidi, Vassilis Karamitsanis, Vicky Marangopoulou, Efi Nestoridi, Anna Pataki, John D. Saracakis, Stavros Stavropoulos, Panagiotis Tsougrianis, Leonidas Tzonis, Nikos Ververidis, Artemis Zenetou, Yannis Zirinis | Coordinator: Katerina Tzagaroulaki

EDUCATION, INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMITTEE Chair: Litsa Panayotopoulos | Spyros Arsenis, Babis Bakolias, Claudia Carydis, Nikos Christakis, Alexandros Costopoulos, George Ioannou, Michael Kassimiotis, Panagiotis Ketikidis, Nikos Konstakis, Vassilis Makios, Barbara Mergou, Constantinos Moros, Sonia Mousavere, George Papadakis, Archontoula Papapanagiotou, Peggy Pelonis, Thanasis Politis, Nikolaos Porfyris, Elena Prassaki, Michael Printzos, Yannis Rizopoulos, Nondas Syrrakos, Katerina Triviza, Alex Tsoukalis, Nely Tzakou, Konstantinos Zanetopoulos | Coordinator: Katerina Tzagaroulaki

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE Chair: Venetia Koussia | Eleni Drakopoulou, Irene Gioni, Vassilis Karayannis, Konstantinos Kintzios, Giorgis Kritsotakis, Eugenia Melea, Iro Melliou, Manos Panorios, Maria Patakioti, Manto Patsoura, Constantinos Tsalikis | Coordinator: Sofia Chaidogiannou

ENERGY COMMITTEE Chair: Prof. Dr. Kostas Andriosopoulos | Aristotelis Chantavas, Stavros Charitos, Minas Diacakis, Konstantinos Eleftheriadis, George Ioannou, Georgios Kalavrouziotis, Fernando Kalligas, George Kouvaris, Panagiotis Ladakakos, Loukas Lazarakis, Anastasios Manos, Konstantinos Mavros, Evangelos Mytilineos, Yannis Papadopoulos, Gus Papamichalopoulos, Mathios Rigas, Andreas Shiamishis, Kostis Sifnaios, George Stassis, Aristofanis Stefanos, Leonidas Zaimis | Coordinator: Angeliki Dikeoulia

GES-GREEK ECONOMIC SUMMIT ORGANIZING COMMITTEE Chair: Nikolaos Bakatselos | Alexandros Costopoulos, Vassilis Kafatos, Chryssos Kavounides, Yianos Kontopoulos, George Papadimitriou, Marios Psaltis | Coordinator: Angeliki Dikeoulia

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE Chair: Michalis Kassimiotis | Yanna Andronopoulou, Andrea Antoniou, Alexandros Bechrakis, Nikos Christakis, Stefanos Dionysopoulos, Apostolos Leonidopoulos, Nikos Maniatis, Kyriacos Sabatakakis, Marina Stavrakantonaki, Antonis Tsioubakis | Coordinator: Georgia Mamali

INSURANCE, SOCIAL SECURITY & LABOR AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Chair: Konstantinos Kremalis | Kostas Athanasakis, Epaminondas Atsaves, Paul Canellopoulos, Agni Christidou, Katerina Daskalaki, Irene Gioni, Tasos Hatzi-theodosiou, Yiannis Katsanis, Panagiotis Kessoglou, Christos Nounis, Antonaneta Oikonomopoulou, Dimitrios Papachristou, Marianna Papamichael, Anastasios Pateris, George Plomaritis, Alkiviadis Poulidas, Athanasios Stavrakos, S. Thomopoulou, Ioannis Tzanakos, Apostolos Tzotzos, Konstantinos Vrettos | Coordinator: Voula Tseritzoglou

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR) COMMITTEE Chair: Yannis Mastrocostas | Elli Filippopoulou, Michalis Kosmopoulos, Yota Kremmida, George Michos, Antonios Oikonomou, Xenofon Paparrigopoulos, Nikos Prentoulis, Maria Spanou, Dora Zachou | Coordinator: Daphne Constantinidou

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE Chair: Artemis Miroopoulos | Konstantinos Alexopoulos, Harris Broumidis, Rania Ekaterinari, Spyros Filiotis, Dimitris Gerogiannis, Polychronis Griveas, John Kalligeros, Antonios Kerastaris, Nikolaos Kostopoulos, George Kotionis, Marina Mavrommati, Nikolaos Nefes, Pantelis Panos, Aristotelis Panteliadis, Efi Papadogianni, Nicolas Plakopitas, Marianna Politopoulou, Vassilis Rabbat, Leonidas Samaras, Alexander D. Saracakis, Steven Sirtis, Ilias Tsakiris, John Vassilakos, Andreas Xirocostas, Leonidas Zaimis Giuseppe Zoragno | Coordinator: Ritana Xidou

LEGISLATIVE REFORMS COMMITTEE Chair: John Kyriakides | Panayotis Bernitsas, Nikolaos Bregianios, Vassilis Constantinidis, Stavros Georgiades, Vassilios Ikonomidis, Nikolaos Moussas, Angelike Nestorides, Spyridon Themelis, Dr. Dimitris Tsiabanoulis, Mina Zoulouvis | Coordinator: Daphne Constantinidou

MEDICAL DEVICES & DIAGNOSTICS COMMITTEE Chair: Theodore Liakopoulos | Giannis Anastasiou, Christos Barakos, Siete Braak, Martha Christophoulou, Christos Cholevas, Kostas Delakouridis, Spyridon Glikas-Panousis, Theodoros Katsolis, Gregory Krinos, Kostas Mariakis, Iakovos Michalitsis, Panagiotis Mparas, Dimitrios Nikas, Miltiades Papadopoulos, Georgios Sofianos, Dimitris Therianos, Manolis Tripodianos, John Vrettos | Coordinator: Voula Tseritzoglou

NORTHERN GREECE COMMITTEE Chair: Vassilis Kafatos | Athanasios Kouimtziis, Konstantinos Koukountzos, Costas Malamas, Nikolaos Margaropoulos, George Milonas, George Nikolaou, Konstantinos Papadopoulos-Hatzakos, Loukia Saranti, Panos Vlachos | Coordinator: Nikolaos Tsvardaroglou

PHARMACEUTICAL COMMITTEE Chair: Labrina Barmpetaki | Ezat Azem, Christos Boukis, Antonino Broccio, Savas Charalampidis, Elena Chouliara, Konstantinos Evripides, Spyros Filiotis, Leonidas Issopoulos, Agata Jacconcic, Susan King-Barnardo, Marianna Konstantinidi, Iakovos Michalitsis, George Panagakis, Konstantinos Papagiannis, Yvoni Papastelatu Andreas Pollner, Elizabeth Prodromou, Zachary Ragousis, Christian Rodseth | Coordinator: Voula Tseritzoglou

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Chair: John D. Saracakis | Paul Canellopoulos, John Kyriakides, Marios Kyriakou, Thanos Papadopoulos | Coordinator: Ritana Xidou

REAL ESTATE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE Chair: Left Sikalidis | George Bersis, Nicholas Chatzisolis, Vassilios Delikaterinis, Nikolaos - Ioannis Dimtsas, Ioannis Gasos, Marinos Giannopoulos, Sophia Grigoriadou, Ellie Kakoullou, Samantha Karra, Michael Mavroleon, Krysta Petropoulou | Coordinator: Frosso Paneta

TAXATION COMMITTEE Chair: Ioannis Stavropoulos | Evangelos Abeliotis, Effie Adamidou, Christos Altiparmakis, Ioannis Athanasiadis, Stathis Bakalis, Panagiotis Daveros, Spiros Doucas, John Dryllarakis, Stavros Gigantes, Vasilios Govaris, Vassilios Ikonomidis, Ioulia Kapobasi, George Kerameus, Stavros Kostas, Antonis Kotis, Nikolaia-Anna Lepida, Aspasia Malliou, Stephanos Mitsios, George Nikolou, Maria Nikolopoulou, Jenny Panou, Petros Pantazopoulos, Eugene Papadatos, Stavros Petridisoglou, Panagiotis Pothos, George Samothrakis, Kostas Sfakakis, Litsa Spyriouni, Georgios Stamatou, Gregory Tapinos, Maria Trakadi, Vassilios Vizas, Sofoklis Yiannacou, Maria Zoupa | Coordinator: Katerina Tzagaroulaki

TOURISM COMMITTEE Chair: Tim Ananiadis | Michael Argiri, Vicky Evangelou, Nikos Hadjos, Nikolas Kelaiditis, Christina Konstantinidou, Celia Koukouli, George Kyvernitis, Carol Marriott, Panos Panayotopoulos, Andreas Stylianopoulos, Stephanos Theodorides, Yannis Tsakalos, Evripides Tzikas | Coordinator: Angeliki Dikeoulia

WIB (WOMEN IN BUSINESS) COMMITTEE Chair: Myladi Stombou | Betty Alexandropoulou, Lia Bertsiadou, Zeta Cheimonidou, Chara Dalekou, Kelly Damalou, Despina Doxaki, Anastasia Dritsa, Sissy Iliopoulou, Betty Kazakopoulou, Alexandra Konida, Agnes Mariakaki, Zozeta Miliopoulou, Martha Mylona, Penny Retsa, Iphigenia Tarou, Teti Tsekoura, Katerina Tsemperlidou, Maria Tzelepi, Deppie Tzimea, Peggy Velliotiou | Coordinator: Angela Boyatzis

Brighter Solutions through

Holistic Approach

for your employees' resilience



Largest
global Broker



An industry
leader and
Market/Insurer
influencer



Holistic Approach
of the client's needs
rather than
"casual" broking



Half a century
of Expertise



Provide new
technological
services to
your customers

We improve lives and build stronger organizations

Tailor-made insurance solutions, utilizing Data Driven Solutions.

Ensure your viable and long-term relationships with insurance carriers and employees.

Global best-practice sharing.

MMB International presence.

Focus on the Client

Health

Benefits exchange
Benefit strategy, design,
and financing
Individual and
voluntary benefits
Plan management
and brokerage
Specialty health and benefits
Benefits administration

Wealth

Strategic plan design,
management, administration
and investments
Financial well being
Flexible delegated solutions
and advice

Global benefits management

Dive into data – driven
insights and transform your
global benefits with HBB,
the number-one benefits
administration platform

Career

Talent strategy
Talent mobility
HR transformation
Executive rewards
Workforce rewards
Communication
Digital

Contact us

Marsh LLC Insurance Brokers, 8-10 Sorou & Dimitsanas Str.
15125 Maroussi, Athens - Greece

Tel: +30 2108176000 | Email: Marsh.Greece@marsh.com

www.mercermarshbenefits.com | www.marsh.com/gr

This is a marketing communication. Marsh LLC Insurance Brokers is authorised and regulated by the Bank of Greece being the Supervisory Authority of Private Insurance Sector. Marsh LLC Insurance Brokers - Registration No:160605 - Special Registration Number: EEA / 8. CE-828400010.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

6th Youth Talks Workshop

Held under the title “Agility Beyond the Jargon,” AmCham Greece’s 6th Youth Talks workshop took place on November 14, 2023, at Deree - The American College of Greece in the Greek capital. Organized by the Chamber’s Employment Committee, and sponsored by Vodafone, the event brought together seasoned business executives and young participants, undergraduate and postgraduate university students, providing a unique platform for them to share and access insights, exchange views and delve into a selection of important topics.

The 6th Youth talks focused on the crucial importance and meaning of agility, the role of data-driven targets and the need for a structured yet flexible framework through which to effectively navigate the ever-evolving and uncertain business environment. Young participants had the opportunity to hear remarks, talks and discussions by Lara Calfa, Group HR Director at Famar; Dr. Venetia Koussia, Chair of the Chamber’s Employment Committee; Dimitris Panopoulos, Head of the Research and Documentation Unit for the Labor Market at the Ministry of Labor and Social Security; Maria Patakiouti, Director, People and Culture EU, SE Cluster, at Philip Morris International; Elias Spirtounias, Executive Director at AmCham Greece; Dr. Panos Vlachopoulos, VP for Academic Affairs at Deree - The American College of Greece; and Myrto Xanthopoulou, non-profit consultant and board member at WWF Greece; while Katia Stathaki, CBU Director at Vodafone Greece, delivered the event’s Inspirational Talk.

As part of the event, the young participants then worked in teams, through experiential and interactive sessions, with each team tasked with addressing, and then presenting, one of 10 key topics: The effect of having empowered teams; Enabling continuous improvement through reflection; Cultivating an innovation mindset; Guiding through ongoing change; Putting the customer at the epicenter; Embracing learning agility for growth and adaptability; The leveraging effects of autonomy in the workplace; Evolution of project management: From Waterfall to Agile; Optimizing work management strategies for productivity; and Gaining a holistic understanding on business agility.

ELIAS SPIRTOUNIAS



DR. PANOS VLACHOPOULOS



VENETIA KOUSSIA



IRO MELLIU



LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
LEADERSHIP
COMMITTEE VISIT
TO EAS FACILITIES

On November 10, 2023, members of the Leadership Committee of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce visited Hellenic Defence Systems’ (EAS) factory complexes in Athens and Lavrion. Welcomed by the EAS’s CEO, Nikolaos Kostopoulos, who personally showed the group around each location, the committee members had the opportunity to find out more about the company’s work, tour the grounds, and visit a range of facilities handling specialized tasks including cartridge case manufacturing, the assembly and quality control of large caliber ammunition, as well as missile maintenance.

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE
NEW YEAR’S RECEPTION

Upholding what is becoming an annual tradition, this year too, the AmCham Greece Leadership Committee held a private New Year’s celebration for its members. This year’s reception took place on January 9, 2024, at TGI Fridays at Golden Hall, in Athens, and was hosted by Lefteris Samaras, Managing Director South East Europe at DHL Express.





ATHANASIOS KOUIMTZIS, LEFTERIS AVGENAKIS, VASSILIS KAFATOS

AGROTECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Closed Working Luncheon with Minister of Rural Development and Food Lefteris Avgenakis

On November 24, 2023, the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce held a closed working luncheon with the Minister of Rural Development and Food, Lefteris Avgenakis, at the MET Hotel in Thessaloniki, in Northern Greece. The meeting was attended by a number of AmCham Greece members as well as top representatives from across the agrifood sector. Minister Avgenakis noted the sector's key role in the Greek economy and outlined the ministry's priorities for the coming time, while he also responded to the remarks of participating Chamber members

NORTHERN GREECE COMMITTEE

Closed Working Luncheon with Minister of Infrastructure and Transport Christos Staikouras



VASSILIS KAFATOS, CHRISTOS STAIKOURAS

On December 19, 2023, the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce held a closed working luncheon with Minister of Infrastructure and Transport Christos Staikouras. During the luncheon, which took place at the MET Hotel in Thessaloniki, Minister Staikouras discussed the crucial role of appropriate infrastructure and its significance for business as well as the everyday life of the country's citizens. The minister further outlined the government's priorities in this regard in the coming period and took the time to answer questions posed by the Chamber members and distinguished business leaders attending the luncheon.



ELIAS SPIRTOONIAS

AMCHAM GREECE UNDERTAKES ACE SECRETARIAT AS ELIAS SPIRTOONIAS APPOINTED ACE VICE CHAIR

AmCham Greece is delighted to announce the appointment of Elias Spirtoonias, Executive Director of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, to the role of Vice Chair of AmChams in Europe (ACE). Elected in November 2023, Spirtoonias assumed his new role on January 1, 2024. He will hold this office for a period of two years, during which time AmCham Greece will also assume the ACE Secretariat. Founded in 1963, AmChams in Europe brings together 49 US Chambers of Commerce (AmChams) from 47 countries in Europe and Eurasia, supporting the interests of more than 17,000 US and European companies, which collectively employ more than 20 million people and contribute over \$1.1 trillion in investment on both sides of the Atlantic.





EDUCATION, INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMITTEE

Business Transformation Stories II



LITSA PANAYOTOPOULOS

Joining forces with Alexander Innovation Zone (AIZ), the company charged with the management and development of Thessaloniki Innovation Zone, AmCham Greece successfully organized its latest Business Transformation Stories event, which took place on November 28, 2023, at AIZ's premises in the heart of Thessaloniki. Sponsored by Deloitte Greece and Papapostolou Healthcare Technologies, the event was dedicated to showcasing business transformation practices as

well as to highlighting how mature companies and startups stand to benefit from each other's experiences. Founders, executives and other top business representatives took to the podium to share their insights and relevant experiences on actions that proved to be pivotal for the growth and development of their respective companies.

The event kicked off with welcome remarks from AmCham Greece Executive Director Elias Spirtounias and EIE Committee member Barbara Mergou, followed by opening speeches from Nikolaos Bakatselos, President of AmCham Greece, and Panayiotis Ketikidis, Chairman of the Board at Alexander Innovation Zone. The discussion was then structured into two thematic units—the first focused on digital transformation and the second on workplace transformation—each of which featured a panel discussion, a Q&A session, and a summary of conclusions. Proceedings subsequently ended with a closing address by EIE Committee Litsa Panayotopoulos.

Digital transformation refers to the adoption of digital technologies for the purpose of achieving substantial change in the way companies operate and increasing the value offered to their customers and clients. Workplace transformation on the other hand refers to the changes that companies implement to their premises and policies in order to improve collaboration, efficiency, employee engagement, and decisionmaking. Startups can play a key role by helping larger companies move towards their digital and workplace transformation with steadier steps, but larger companies too can help startups by passing on a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Launched in May 2023, Business Transformation Stories is an initiative of the Education, Innovation, Entrepreneurship (EIE) Committee of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce that aims to promote good business transformation practices and facilitate knowledge transfer to startups.

WHITE PAPERS 2023

The American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce the publication of the *AmCham Greece Committees' White Papers 2023*. Launched in 2021, the Chambers' White Papers series focuses the knowledge, knowhow and sectoral expertise of AmCham Greece committees and their members in a series of papers providing succinct information, outlining the most recent key developments, and offering insightful recommendations on their respective sectors. In this latest edition, the annual compendium of our committee's positions and recommendations for the year identifies the short- and long-term reforms required in each sector for the successful development of a new and modern productive and economic model for Greece that will guarantee the country's dynamic and sustainable growth for many years to come.

Access White Papers 2023, as well as previous editions of the compendium, at amcham.gr/amchamgr-news/the-american-hellenic-chamber-of-commerce-presents-the-amchamgr-committees-set-of-positions-and-recommendations/

UPCOMING EVENTS

12th Agrotechnology Conference
Primary Production With an Eye to the Future: Challenges and Prospects in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

February 23, 2024

PORTO PALACE HOTEL, THESSALONIKI

Find out more and stay up to date with our latest and upcoming events at amcham.gr/amcham-events/

Alcon

**Alcon is the global leader in eye care,
dedicated to helping people see brilliantly.**

With **70-plus years of heritage**, we are a **cutting-edge eye care device company** with complementary businesses in Surgical and Vision Care.

We aspire to lead the world in innovating life-changing vision products because when people **see brilliantly, they live brilliantly**

FOSTERING INNOVATION

You serve as Chairman of the Board of Alexander Innovation Zone, which in November 2023 hosted the EIE Committee's latest Business Transformation Stories event, and its first in Thessaloniki. What exactly is AIZ?

Alexander Innovation Zone is the managing body behind Thessaloniki Innovation Zone (TIZ), an area where innovative enterprises, startups and research entities come together to strengthen the bridges of knowledge and collaboration and create synergies. Thessaloniki Innovation Zone covers an area of approximately 11.5 sq.km. southeast of the city, located just 5 km from Thessaloniki International Airport and 13 km from the city center. Among its other duties, AIZ is tasked with organizing and promoting the innovation ecosystem of Northern Greece to international markets.

Tell us a bit more about AIZ's work in promoting innovation.

The purpose of AIZ is to catalyze and nurture a vibrant innovation ecosystem that supports the growth and success of startups, innovators, and businesses throughout the region of Northern Greece, and we do this through actions based on collaborations with all involved stakeholders. AIZ's vision is to scale up Northern Greece, thinking globally and acting locally, and its mission is to make Northern Greece an innovation-friendly hub and a great place to live, work, and invest.

The organization's six strategic priorities are

An integrationist interdisciplinarian with over 30 years of experience in education, research, management, technology ventures, entrepreneurship, investment, supply chain management, health informatics, and regional development, Professor Panayiotis Ketikidis is an expert in mobilizing knowledge and facilitating innovation—expertise that he brings to the table as a member of the AmCham Greece Education, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (EIE) Committee. Among his many roles, he is Professor of Innovation and Technology at City College, University Of York Europe Campus, and Chairman of the Board of Alexander Innovation Zone (AIZ).

In this Q&A, Professor Ketikidis talks to Litsa Panayotopoulos, Chair of the EIE Committee, about innovation, the work of AIZ, and what it takes to build a strong innovation ecosystem.

Extroversion—the expansion of existing innovative businesses at an international level, based on collaborations with all stakeholders in Northern Greece; Entrepreneurship—the promotion and encouragement of a culture of collaboration, innovation, and entrepreneurship; Networking—the development of longterm collaborations at the local, national, and international levels aiming to mutually enhance competitiveness; Infrastructure—the development equitable and sustainable partnerships in the city and across the region, as well as nationally and globally, to increase our in-

fluence and derive mutual benefit; Investment—the development and management of infrastructure to support the academic, research, and entrepreneurial community; and Sustainability-Financing—the creation of a supportive and welcoming culture towards innovation and entrepreneurship that attracts investors and pioneering entrepreneurs from around the world.

In addition to your work with AIZ, you are also Chair of the Management Committee at the South-East European Research Centre (SEERC), founding member of the

Hellenic Business Angels Network (HeBAN), and Executive Committee board member of the European Business Angels Network (EBAN). Based on this background, what would you say are the most vital elements in building a strong innovation ecosystem?

When considering the best approach to developing innovation ecosystems in any market, one size does not fit all; different markets require different approaches. It's important to look to similar markets when deciding on best practices to emulate. While the road to building an innovation ecosystem is challenging, the rewards in terms of economic growth, job creation, and societal progress are immense. However, fostering the growth of an innovation ecosystem and positioning a region or country on the international stage requires many elements and actors/stakeholders to work in concert (with a conductor—the builder of the ecosystem—coordinating them).


In my view, the most critical elements in building a strong and sustainable innova-

tion ecosystem are government involvement in shaping policies and regulations, fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, and building partnerships and promoting collaboration and networking. Government involvement is key to creating strong innovation ecosystems. Supportive policies and infrastructure—such as a favorable regulatory framework that promotes entrepreneurship, protects intellectual property rights, and offers incentives for innovation and investments—can attract and retain innovative talent and businesses, while programs and initiatives that

bring together the public and private sectors to address specific challenges or foster innovation in key industries can facilitate collaboration. A central coordinating body, such as AIZ, can help align the efforts of various innovation institutions; it can be responsible for developing and implementing a unified strategy for international growth, coordinating activities, and promoting collaboration and resource sharing among the institutions. Providing access to funding through venture capital firms, angel investors, and government grants and developing robust digital infrastructure are additional critical elements to attracting and supporting startups and innovation-driven enterprises.

WHILE THE ROAD TO BUILDING AN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM IS CHALLENGING, THE REWARDS ARE IMMENSE

incubators—entities that bring different stakeholders together and provide essential resources for startups, including office space, mentorship, training, and, in some cases, seed funding. These are designed to support the entrepreneur throughout the journey of building a business, and there are both early-stage and growth-stage programs at the regional or country level that can also organize events including hackathons, startup competitions, and innovation challenges to inspire and showcase local talent. Encouraging a diverse and inclusive environment that welcomes ideas from different

backgrounds and promotes creativity helps attract international talent and foster a vibrant innovation ecosystem. Partnerships, collaboration and networking are crucial for an innovation ecosystem to thrive. To promote innovation on an international scale, it is crucial to develop collaboration between different sectors, including academia, industry, government, and nonprofits. Educational institutions play a pivotal role in innovation ecosystems, producing a steady stream of individuals equipped with the knowledge and skills to drive innovation. Collaboration between educational institutions and businesses is crucial, as it not only fosters the exchange of ideas but also ensures that research outcomes are translated into tangible products and services that benefit society. Such partnerships also offer networking opportunities, which are vital for collaboration and knowledge/resource sharing and serendipitous interactions among entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, and industry experts. Actively seeking international partnerships with other cities, innovation hubs, and organizations can help expand the reach of a city's innovation ecosystem. Collaborative programs, exchange programs for startups and researchers, and joint initiatives can promote cross-border innovation and create avenues for international collaboration. 



backgrounds and promotes creativity helps attract international talent and foster a vibrant innovation ecosystem.

Partnerships, collaboration and networking are crucial for an innovation ecosystem to thrive. To promote innovation on an international scale, it is crucial to develop collaboration between different sectors, including academia, industry, government, and nonprofits. Educational institutions play a pivotal role in innovation ecosystems, producing a steady stream of individuals equipped with the knowledge and skills to drive innovation. Collaboration between educational institutions and businesses is crucial, as it not only fosters the exchange of ideas but also ensures that research outcomes are translated into tangible products and services that benefit society. Such partnerships also offer networking opportunities, which are vital for collaboration and knowledge/resource sharing and serendipitous interactions among entrepreneurs, researchers, investors, and industry experts. Actively seeking international partnerships with other cities, innovation hubs, and organizations can help expand the reach of a city's innovation ecosystem. Collaborative programs, exchange programs for startups and researchers, and joint initiatives can promote cross-border innovation and create avenues for international collaboration. 