

Chapter 24

A Three-Level Analysis of the Innovation and Resilience Strategies During the COVID-19 Crisis

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the actions of the several actors of a regional ecosystem, through a three-level analysis, taking into account the micro level with (1) the analysis of individual measures and innovations implemented during the first semi-containment by managers, the meso-level with (2) the measures taken by professional associations, and the macro level with (3) the analysis of the measures taken by public authorities and professional associations. Despite procedural and financial support offered by municipalities and business associations, key findings show that companies adopted different strategies. These observations lead to a discussion about disruptive and sustainable innovations. Scenario planning techniques were proposed to identify likely futures.

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INTRODUCTION

During the years 2020 and 2021, many companies were forced to transform themselves to face the Covid-19 crisis period, to maintain their activity in the context of clients and resources limitation, due to health protection measures.

However, epidemics are not the only risks of the 21st century. According to the World Economic Forum, systemic risks categorized into economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal, and technological risks will increase over the next decade. It is therefore more interesting to look at the resilience of companies to prepare for possible future crises (World Economic Forum, 2022). Beyond the search for recommendations at the level of economic agents, individuals and organizations, it is necessary to consider the system level because of the obligation of municipalities to guarantee a certain level of health security with the need for a protection plan according to the Swiss law on epidemics (Association of Swiss Municipalities, 2020). For example, cities like London have vouched for resilience strategies with the help of the Rockefeller Foundation's program "100 resilient cities" launched in 2013 in which pandemics is addressed in the long-term risks section of process-oriented resilience projects (Greater London Authority, 2020). The Global resilient cities network has also been organizing a knowledge sharing session for cities in response to the rapidly evolving Covid-19 pandemic as a resilience building tool (Lauren Sorkin, 2020).

This chapter aims to present the analysis of the changes and stability of innovation and resilience strategies applied during the Covid-19 crisis over the period of March 2020 to September 2021, in order to provide insights into behaviors supporting resilience at the individual level (micro), the organization level (meso) and the system level (macro).

The surveys, interviews and analyses presented in this chapter aim to produce learning paths for the improvement of support to the economy, both through examples of measures aimed at companies, associations, and municipalities, with a focus on the balance between stability and change.

1. **The micro level** is dedicated to the analysis of individual measures and innovations implemented by managers.
2. **The meso level** is focused on analysis of the measures taken by professional associations.
3. **The macro level** is assigned to the analysis of the measures taken by public authorities and professional associations.

The research questions addressed in this chapter are:

1. **Research Question One** - Micro level: What are the problems and individual solutions and innovations implemented in the firms?
2. **Research Question Three** - Meso level: What are the support measures put in place by business associations?
3. **Research Question Two** - Macro level: What are the support measures put in place by local political authorities?

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