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Strategic views for the European Association of Local Democracy 2015/2018

The way ahead

**Citizens, Communities, Local Authorities & Civil Society
Acting together for democracy, development and peace
In Europe and in the Neighbourhood**

**Approved at the General Assembly
Podgorica, 9th of May 2015**

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1. Introduction: why we do it

ALDA - the European Association for Local Democracy – is a membership based and oriented organisation devoted to promote good local governance, based on citizens participation and strengthening and functioning local authorities. Local democracy is for us the possibility of having democratic processes at the local level (with elected, representatives and autonomous local governments) engaging with a vivid, strong and democratic civil society, able to represent the collective interests of citizens.

Our strong assumption and belief is that local democracy and local governance is an essential element for securing peace, equity, human rights and economic and social growth in the community.

Our scope of interest and geographic coverage is the whole territory of the European Union, the Enlargement Countries and the East and South Neighbourhood. All over this broad area, in a complex world, the governance based on strong local governance mechanisms is fundamental for sharing a basis of values on which we could build our societies and live together.

We are convinced that the processes we are addressing are a fundamental part of the European Union approach to governance, democracy, economy and peace. And therefore we are active to promote it with policies and actions.

In the implementation of its three years action plan, ALDA is starting its activities, with a stronger impetus given by several main projects that will also – in their implementation – a strong impact on our activities. In particular, we could mention here among others the Operating Grant of the programme Europe for Citizens, the programme LADDER on Education and Awareness for Local Authorities and CSOs in Development as well as the Horizon 2020 project on societal changes and youth perception.



2.Capitalizing the achievements of the past strategic programme and streamlining

ALDA is capitalizing from the past and is now celebrating its 15th anniversary. It is a relatively long period of time, which allows us to identify strengths and difficulties.

#1 – A consolidated network of members

During its 15 years of work, ALDA managed to build from scratch a consolidated, mixed network of almost 180 members from over 35 countries, sharing the values and the mission of the Association. ALDA remains one of the few examples of mixed membership organisations at European level. That is why our members are both local and regional authorities (LAs) and their associations, and civil society organisations (CSOs) and their networks, from all over Europe and the European Neighbourhood. The network of ALDA grows year by year, thus reflecting the added value of the membership (the online and offline activities of the working groups open to all members are one of the most visible outputs), as well as the fruitful cooperation among members representing local authorities and civil society in the enlarged Europe. Up to today, ALDA counts 179 members (51% LAs and associations of LAs, 49% CSOs and few individuals).

ALDA and its network have been growing more and more all over the years, by walking through common initiatives and projects. The initiatives were based on inputs from its members, supporting and providing its experience in domains, which are challenging and relevant for them (i.e. environment, social research). This has increased the value of cooperation and strengthened the quality of the network.

#2 – Successfully making local authorities and CSOs work together

ALDA believes that the cooperation between local authorities and civil society organisations is key to achieve its objectives – the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level, supporting a balanced and sustainable development. All our activities foster the cooperation between LAs and CSOs in the long term, often using the method of multilateral decentralised cooperation, and a multi-stakeholder approach. In particular, thanks to ALDA commitment in decentralised cooperation and in the implementation of several projects in the framework of European programmes, ALDA promotes joint work and synergies between LAs and CSOs, in order to promote and improve best practices in the field of local governance and citizen's active participation.

#3 – Supported EU enlargement...

On 1st July 2013, we all raised our glasses in a toast as Croatia joined the European Union. The event represented a milestone for the country, torn by war only two



decades ago, as well as for ALDA and the network of LDAs. The work carried out by ALDA in Croatia during the past years has strongly supported the integration of the country in Europe. The activities of the association and of the three Local Democracy Agencies (now Operational Partners) based in Verteneglio/Brtonigla, Sisak and Osijek, were crucial to build trust, promote citizen participation and European values, and strengthen local authorities. Throughout these years, ALDA has been a reference point for LAs and CSOs in the Enlargement area, paving the way for the accession of Croatia to the EU, and also supported alignment of standards and conditions for the rest of the region towards the EU.

#4 – ... and supporting future enlargement

The activities, lobbying work, and projects of ALDA and the LDAs in the candidate countries have always been instrumental to their improvement of democratic, social, and economical standards before joining the European Union. Today, we are particularly active in South-Eastern Europe - Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as in Turkey. Despite the reduced speed given to the Enlargement process, ALDA and the LDAs are in the frontline to keep high the determination and desire to be part of the EU in the region of South-East Europe, as well as to promote debate on EU values and opportunities.

#5 – Leader for reconciliation and community cohesion

The LDAs and ALDA have been part of all the process of reconciliation in a post war situation in Western Balkans, working both on the institutions and community level. The dialogue between the local authorities and the full engagement of a balanced and respectful of minorities civil society has been the centre of the activities of the LDAs for more than a decade. Thanks to peace building processes and direct projects, citizens were engaged in a reconciliation path leading to peace and local development.

#6 – Expanding network of LDAs

The Local Democracy Agencies (and Operational Partners) are today 13, of which 11 in the Western Balkans and 2 in South Caucasus; ALDA is working to open 3 new LDAs in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, in Moldova, and in Tunisia. The ALDA and LDAs methodology has been successfully tested and the mechanisms (engagement of different stakeholders and sustainability of the process in a long term process) are now in expansion and adopted in many programmes. It is implemented in most of the Neighborhood areas...



#7 – Putting the accent on “local”

By empowering citizens and communities, and by creating trust among the stakeholders involved, especially local authorities and organised civil society, the work of ALDA clearly shows the importance of operating at the local level to build long-lasting democracy and development. Local development and local communities are not the final part of the chain of a large-scale, national plan. Indeed, thanks to ALDA, the local leverage has been recognised its importance and key role as a real initiator of development and sustainability.

#8 – Promoting active citizenship, and fighting populism in Europe

ALDA is a key stakeholder at EU-level for citizen participation: the Association is part of the structured dialogue of the EU commission on the programme “Europe for Citizen”, and plays an important role in networks and platforms addressing active European citizenship. Our activities foster understanding and sense of belonging to a common house, and fight populist, Euro-sceptic arguments.

#9 – Promoting local participation and democracy in Eastern Europe...

A few years after its establishment, ALDA started working in the Eastern Partnership area, to foster good governance, citizen participation, European integration, and decentralisation in the six countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Our efforts and our increasing presence in the area means only one thing – we work where it’s needed, not where it’s easy. Since 2004, the projects and activities of ALDA in Belarus together with our local member associations are a unique example of international work to strengthen local democracy and citizen participation throughout the country.

In spite of the constraints, and in tight cooperation with Lev Sapieha Foundation, one of the first Belarusian NGOs, promoting civil society development and local self government, we have been offering training and support to the local civil society, strengthening citizens’ participation and supporting the cooperation with local authorities to solve local issues, fostering a culture of citizenship and participation.

#10 – ... and in the Mediterranean area

After the so-called Arab Spring, the network of members of ALDA decided it was time to expand the Association scope of action to the EuroMediterranean area. While being aware of the huge differences from the Balkan and South Caucasus contexts were the Association has longer been active, ALDA is working hard to flexibly adapt its methodology, testing and implementing activities on the field in Tunisia in order to meet the needs of the local communities, and support local development and democracy.

#11 – Empowering young people

Many of ALDA activities target youngsters in the European Union and its Neighborhood, to raise their skills and awareness, and promote their civic participation and engagement in their communities' life – as well as their employment opportunities. Some quote of the volunteering centres in the LDAs (Sisak and CSS) as well and the youth centres that they basically all have in the LDAs

#12 – Focus on health and environment

Participation is a transversal topic, and more and more, ALDA integrates this component in activities aimed at protecting health and environment, as the theme being a core worry for all citizens, it represents a great way to stimulate their participation in their community life

#13 – Partnership with recognised stakeholders: our voice and activities heard

The list of our partners gets longer and longer year by year, thanks to the increase in our activities and scope of action, as well as to the long lasting credibility ALDA and its network gained throughout the years. At the same time, our lobbying work advocating for an enabling environment for citizen participation in the decision making process makes ALDA a key actor in a variety of institutions and bodies (at the EU and Council of Europe level, among the Civil Society and also at the worldwide level). ALDA represents therefore an important platform bridging the above-mentioned institutions with our network of members, and with the million citizens and communities they represent in the enlarged Europe.

#14 – Sharing our knowledge and experience: streamlining processes and best practices

We believe that knowledge is crucial, but it is not an achievement *per se* – it has to be shared and communicated in order to contribute to the growth and empowerment of local communities and stakeholders. For this, ALDA supports other stakeholders – local and regional authorities, civil society organizations, educational institutions – by providing a wide range of services such as training and capacity building activities, technical assistance, and ad hoc consultancy on different topics, including: project development and implementation, project financial management and audit, EU institutions, EU funds and programmes, citizens participation (methods and techniques), non-formal youth education, making use of non-formal education methods in order to foster a bottom up approach and interactive learning.



All our services are provided with a tailor-made approach, thus target the specific needs of the partners involved, and they fall into the field of work of ALDA Plus.

#15 – Always looking ahead, never forgetting our roots in line with the dynamism of our time!

Throughout the years, ALDA greatly expanded its mission, geographical scope, network, the number of projects and activities, and its offices... But we always keep in mind where we come from, and where we are heading.

The visionary ideas of those who gave birth to ALDA made the association grow more than any optimists could have imagined, over its 15 years. It is not a case that many of those who built the basis of ALDA and its work are still part of it – involved as members of the network, staff members, partners, supporters and multipliers of our activities.

Many of the other reasons have been presented in these pages, collating our key achievements during the (first) 15 years of activities of ALDA. Together with our members and partners, we are ready to face new challenges, and continue to be a recognised leader in the field of local democracy and citizen participation!

3. **Driving forces: five targets ahead of us**

ALDA – the European Association for Local Authorities looks ahead in the upcoming three years with determination and being convinced that local governance, local authorities and citizens’ participation, is one of the main assets for the future of the EU and its neighbouring countries.

For doing so, it is aiming at developing the proposed Strategic views to achieve the following 5 main goals:

1. **To be a strong membership based organisation engaging both Local Authorities and Civil Society organisations in collaborative actions all over the EU and the Neighbourhood.**
2. **To develop quality co-operation projects in the EU and in the Neighbourhood to support our mandate that will have a tangible impact in the communities**
3. **To develop and strengthen the network of the LDAs in the SEE, Eastern Partnership and Med area, finding necessary support from members and partners**
4. **To be a valuable, action oriented and recognised partners of the European and international stakeholders in the field of local governance and citizens’ participation**
5. **To develop a strong narrative substantiated with research work and analysis on the societal change addressed by participatory democracy and citizens participation at the local level**
6. **To strengthen the political relevance of ALDA and its visibility in order to have stronger policy oriented dimension**

4. **A stronger organisation for strengthening the impact and the results of our mandate.**

4.1 Membership based organisation

ALDA considers that it is fundamental to be a membership-based organisation and it aims at increasing the number and quality of its members and being more at the service of the overall mission with:

- Strengthening of services
- Engaging the members in activities and project and lobbying initiatives- working together
- Networking & creating opportunities of contact among members
- Lobbying together to the EU and national institutions for the ALDA's mission on local governance
- Reaching 200 members in all the EU countries and Neighbourhood with a balanced representation of CSOs and Local Authorities.

4.2 A stronger interlocutor for the European Institution and other international organizations (UN, CoE, CoR, EESC, etc.) and a better positioned organization in the EU panorama (platform, network, etc., both thematic and geographical ones)

ALDA wants to represent a clear stakeholder in the field of local governance (NGOs and Local Authorities). It will follow and be present in the discussions and lobbying initiatives of the partners – with proposals and comments within:

EU Institutions

- European Commission, within the structured dialogue of the Europe for Citizens programme, the partnership cooperation with the DG Near in the Balkans (through a structure dialogue with the EC), in the Eastern Partnership and the MED.

International organizations

- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CoE)
- Conference of INGOs of the CoE
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Art

European networks and platforms

- CONCORD – EPAN Group and European Year for Development 2015 Civil Society Alliance (and our R&D Coordinator sits in the Steering Committee of EYD 2015)

- Subgroup on Local Government and Public Administration Reform of the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership
- Committee of the Regions and Corleap (and Civex)
- European Movement International
- CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizens Participation
- Central and Eastern European Citizens Network
- Civil Society Europe
- Europe+
- European Partnership for Democracy’s Community of Practice
- Anna Lind Foundation

4.3 Improve internal governance

In order to implement fully its mandate, ALDA is aiming at improving its Institutional structures and the work of the Governing Board and Assembly. A focus will also be given to the activities of the Working Groups and their involvement in policy drafting as well as developing the role of the Advisory Committee.

The internal governance will also be improved with regular assessment of impact and work both at ALDA and LDAs’ level. An external global assessment will also be drafted.

4.4 Organisation of the staff & better staff management

The staff management of ALDA is a key of its development and success. The dynamism of ALDA is also possible thanks to the quality of the staff members and the flexibility, rapid reaction team.

In order to keep high the quality of the staff, it is proposed

- To redraft and revise the internal regulations rules in order to adapt them to the new conditions
- To work on evaluation system that could also introduce some recognition of the staff who have particular merits to reach the mandate of ALDA
- To give the staff the opportunity to improve themselves
- To give the staff the possibility to better know the members and the work of the LDAs (job shadowing)

4.5 Communication & visibility & outreach

Certainly, the work of ALDA needs to be known and accessible. On the other hand, the type of activities carried out and the broad geographic coverage make this exercise very difficult. We aim at:

- Creating a better accessibility to our work with an improved multilinguism – newsletter and multilingual team
- Improving our work with broad outreach tools including a renovated website, ICT tools, and new media
- Strengthening the video use and the social networks
- Creating a corporate image also shared by members and partners
- Supporting outreach actions like the Friends of ALDA and the Volunteers for Democracy programme
- Further involve GB, members, and partners communication offices to multiply our visibility work.

4.6 Stronger and organic relation with the LDAs

LDAs represent the core and the absolute asset of ALDA. The relationship with them is organic (they are statutory members) and represents the pillar of our projects. ALDA is constantly working for strengthening them with partners and projects.

It will in particular work in several directions

1. Enhancing the sustainability concept in anticipation of the third generation of LDAs in the Western Balkan region.
2. Strengthening/developing the LDAs and the cooperation with Eastern Partnership and in the MED area
3. Engaging all LDAs in ALDA strategies and projects
4. Continuous dialogue and creation of local best practice compendium
5. Identifying new possibilities and creating innovative approaches in partnerships and inter-sectorial cooperation

4.7 Strong management and risk control

The developments in seize of partnership and members and budget require naturally a stronger management and risk control. The level of administrative burden is increasing more than proportionally (as it is usually the case) and it needs a tight control both of expenses and possible complex situation, also legally relevant (job contracts, tenders, etc)

1. Capacity for financial management and supervision
2. Develop capacities of the project manager in financial control and mechanisms
3. Strengthen the financial department of ALDA in number and competences
4. Monitor the risk management of ALDA – referring to the document presented to the Governing Board, which highlight all the possible difficulties and risks and how to address them on time

4.8 Horizontal features

ALDA need to address – in its policies and programmes – horizontal features that have been requested and raised by the members and partners. In particular, it will focus on

1. Gender representation and balance
2. Involvement of cross generational dimension and involvement of elderly
3. Strengthen the volunteering component and give the possibility to volunteers to be involved
4. Focus on youth and its participation in policies and programme, with a special dimension on youth employment support
5. Focus on environmental issues and support green approach to programmes and policies
6. Development of projects with private sector of corporate responsibility

4.9 A reorganisation to understand & work better

Organisationally speaking, the work of ALDA has diversified a lot and expanded both in terms of programmes, than in partners and geographic coverage. In order to focus and clarify further the areas of actions, it has been decided in the previous Strategic programme to rationalise our actions in three main areas, which imply also a diversity of action and stakeholders.

- a. ALDA Europe, focusing on European citizenship and sense of identity and support of our members and partners to develop initiatives on citizens participation and mainly addressing internal dynamics of the EU (including specific dedicated funding)
- b. ALDA Cooperation, focusing on South Eastern Europe and Neighborhood – including LDAs promotion
- c. ALDA +, addressing technical assistance and selling services

The objective on that point would be to further strengthen these elements in order to rationalise and make even clearer to our stakeholders the area of cooperation and therefore to make our action more efficient

5. ACTIONS

A. ALDA Europe



A1. To analyse, collect and synthesise best practices and experience on citizens' mobilisation and participation at the local level and promote their transfer to members

The issue of citizenship participation and participative democracy is at the centre of ALDA's action. In the programming period 2015-2018, ALDA will further analyse, collect and share in a synthesised manner good practices and experience promoting citizen mobilisation and participation at the local level. We will be putting at the centre of our action the transfer and adoption of tested practices to members, through the development of tailor-made projects with members and partners. We will therefore actively contribute to bringing the "citizen participation" approach in most of the areas where citizens are concerned

Particular emphasis of our action will be given to promote the public and political participation of the following target groups:

- Youth
- Women
- People with Disabilities
- Migrants
- Minorities

In terms of geographical areas, ALDA's action will give more relevance to tackle the scarce level of participation of people from rural areas into European initiatives.

A2 To lobby for citizen participation at the local level and support LAs and CSOs

On the topics of local governance, ALDA should become a reference for the institutions and international actors as well as for its members and partners. It will represent a common and permanent space for exchange of experience and good practices on citizen participation issues as well as an instrument to lobby at all levels of governance for strengthening the political recognition and added value of the multi-stakeholder approach and the places of dialogue between local authorities and civil society.

Bringing ALDA's voice into all consultations and debates where citizen participation issues are at stake will further reinforce the lobbying component of the association.

A3. Promote thematic approaches of ALDA's action: youth participation and employment, local economic development and social issues, environment,

ALDA's action in promoting citizen participation at local level will also be developed through thematic approaches according to members' priorities.

In the programming period 2015-2018, our action will focus on topics such as youth participation and employment, local economic development and social issues, environment. Each thematic field will be developed according to a coherent programme highlighting priorities and the relative action plans.

The following priorities will lead ALDA's thematic action:

> Youth participation and employment:

- To raise young people's awareness about EU Citizenship and the rights that go with it
- To increase the participation of young people in the civic life of their community
- To increase the role of young Europeans in representative democracy
- To provide greater support for various forms of learning to participate
- To tackle the issue of youth unemployment as well as to stimulate unemployed young people's mobility and active participation in society
- To stimulate young people's spirit of initiative, creativity and entrepreneurship, employability, in particular through youth initiatives

> Economic local development and social issues:

- To tackle inequity, poverty and unemployment through promotion of citizen participation, community building and collective decision-making processes at local level

- To promote social innovation and cooperation as a tool to reinforce social inclusion of disadvantaged groups and tackle unemployment
- To promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

> Environment:

- To raise citizens' awareness on EU's health and environmental policy framework
- To promote and support citizens' initiatives to tackling environmental violations
- To foster the protection of local biodiversity and natural capital through promotion of individual environmental responsibility (household recycling, waste sorting etc.)
- To raise awareness of the environmental impact of individual consumption (reduction of food waste, using biomass in a sustainable way, more efficient use of our water resources)
- To promote new participatory approaches in the field of environmental protection
- To promote participation in sustainable urban planning
- To promote healthy behavior and lifestyles

A4. Promote the European project and the European Citizenship with information and dialogue

ALDA's action will strongly focus on supporting the European project through a bottom up approach. A coherent set of tools, mainly projects with members and partners, will be put into place in order to meet the following priorities:

- To contribute to citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity
- To foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level
- To raise awareness of remembrance, common history and values and the Union's aim that is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples by stimulating debate, reflection and development of networks
- To encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level, by developing citizens' understanding of the Union policy making-process and promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at Union level
- To make citizens participate in the construction of an ever closer Europe, by making people from different countries meet to debate on the future Europe;

- To strengthen the sense of ownership of the European Union, by promoting local and international activities where the issue of citizens' participation is tackled at all levels;
- To contribute to the intercultural dialogue and enhance mutual understanding.
- To promote cross-border communication and cooperation
- To contribute local democracy by promoting process of decentralization in the EU countries giving more political power closer to the citizens
- Lobbying for the interest of citizens, NGOs and local and regional authorities to the EU institutions

A5 A European actor (networks and civil society group)

ALDA will reinforce its visibility within all international and European networks as clear stakeholder in the field of local governance (NGOs and Local and Regional Authorities) by showcasing the multi-stakeholder approach as successfully tested methodology to promote citizen participation at the local level. The Brussels office will be reinforced in order to strengthen ALDA's voice and impact in shaping the agenda of the following networks and programmes:

- Europe for Citizens programme through the structured dialogue of the European Commission
- CONCORD – EPAN Group
- European Year for Development 2015 Civil Society Alliance
- Subgroup on Local Government and Public Administration Reform of the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership
- European Movement International
- CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizens Participation
- Conference of INGOs of the CoE
- Central and Eastern European Citizens Network
- Civil Society Europe
- Europe+
- European Partnership for Democracy's Community of Practice

B. ALDA Cooperation



B1. SEE – accompanying the EU Enlargement and economic and social development through local governance

The South Eastern European programmes of ALDA will be assisted and supported by a coordination office in Subotica, hosted by the LDA Subotica, and by the ALDA office in Skopje.

ALDA actions in SEE co-operation and development process based on the European accession perspective of the Western Balkan countries, fostering democracy, rule of law, and respect for human and minority rights- remain one of the main priorities aligned also with IPA II 2014-2020 Programming period.

B.1.1 Operational partners Croatia

With the three LDAs - Operational Partners, a specific programme will be established focusing on their role of partners with other LDAs in the region for project activities and lobbying actions. On the other hand, ALDA will include the experience of the LDAs/Operation programmes with a greater relevance in our programmes.

B.1.2 The LDAs in the rest of the region: a third generation programme

The development and support to the LDAs in the region will constantly continue whether it is for partnership and projects. After the period of post wartime, which represented the first phase of actions in the region, we had a second period of actions, supporting a first period of accession, on the basis of the Thessaloniki summit of 2003. Our intention is to identify a third generation LDAs programme in SEE in this new phase, based on the enlargement process, and on the possibilities to strengthen the cooperation between the local authorities and civil society. At this end of this process, this renewed third generation of LDAs will bring them towards a stronger autonomy as local stakeholders for the benefit of their own community.

B.1.3. Further developing and strengthening regional programmes and joint activities, with the coordination of ALDA Skopje

ALDA office in Skopje, based on the programme of decentralised cooperation Region Basse Normandie Macedoine, is increasingly relying on its own development capacities. . It is composed of staff members of ALDA who are working for the support of LDAs, members and partners in the region. ALDA office in Skopje is designated as a future hub for the Western Balkan LDAs regional co-operation programme supporting also the work started by the coordination in Subotica. A specific strategy for development will be further elaborated including also an upcoming programme of territorial cooperation, engaging SEE territories and incorporated within the European Group of Economic Interest “I Teatini” led by ALDA.

B.1.4 Endorsing decentralisation, good governance and citizens’ participation at the local level and regional level in South Eastern Europe

Thematically speaking, ALDA will strengthen its action-oriented strategy to help endorse the decentralisation process in the region of South Eastern Europe. The future EU enlargement requires an increased transparency of the negotiation process and a strengthened local ownership over the legislative and institutional reform, whereas the co-operation between local authorities and civil society is essential for achieving the progress towards a full accession.

ALDA will also support the SEE EU enlargement process by promoting the role of Local Authorities, the importance of local governance and decentralization, together with strengthening the cooperation with Civil Society, through development projects that it coordinates, using different channels and opportunities to network and engage with relevant institutional and non-institutional stakeholders. In particular, ALDA will increase its action in the promotion and strengthening of the role of Local Authorities in development policies, a layer where efficiency of actions has been proven and recognized at EU and international level.

B.1.5. Strengthening our role in the programme of territorial cooperation

The programmes of territorial cooperation offer many possibilities with EU support and engaging a multistakeholder approach to development. The new programming period of the EU will allow us to be more relevant both in the EU and in the Enlargement countries and Neighborhood and transborder cooperation ones. A specific action plan on the matter will be needed.

B.2. EaP – Accompanying the Eastern Partnership countries for democratic, economic and social development through local governance

B.2.1 Strengthening LDAs in Southern Caucasus and propose a network coordination

The development of the EaP presence work of ALDA will be of great importance in the upcoming years. It is proposed to strengthen the LDAs in Southern Caucasus (Armenia and Georgia) in their possibilities to assist local governance, decentralisation and citizens' participation. Regular activities on transborder cooperation will be proposed. As far as Azerbaijan is concerned, it is proposed to support project activities at the local level and work for the identification of strategic partners.

B.2.2 Developing the presence of ALDA in Moldova and enlarging our role in Ukraine with new LDAs and strategic partnership in Belarus

The plan includes the development of the LDA in Ukraine (with Dnipropetrovsk but also possible developments in other parts of the countries) and the development of the LDA Moldova. As far as Azerbaijan and Belarus are concerned, it is proposed to support project activities at the local level and work for the identification of strategic partners.

As for Azerbaijan is concerned, it is proposed to support project activities at the local level and work for the identification of strategic partners.

B.2.3. Developing regional programmes and joint activities in the EaP, identifying a coordinating element in the region

While the activities will be developing and the number of partners and members will also consequently multiply, it might be strategic to establish a coordination role in the EaP to facilitate the mobilisation of resources and ease the coordination (following the example of what has been done with the support person for SEE in Subotica LDA for many years). A proposal would need to be elaborated to this purpose.

B.2.4 Accompanying local authorities support, decentralisation and citizens' participation at the local level in the region

The background of activities of ALDA in the EaP, together with what has been done by the Association in the past, will be to support decentralisation, citizens participation at the local level in the whole region. It will be developed with joint projects with members and partners, in synergy with other stakeholders and

partners. To this purpose a map of the important partners that need to liaise with ALDA will be elaborated together with a list of topics that need particular support. Through the development projects that it coordinates, ALDA will support the decentralisation process and engage in the process of local authorities' recognition and strengthening in EaP, by raising awareness, engaging and training representatives of relevant stakeholders (Local Authorities, Civil Society, institutional and non-institutional actors etc) combined with networking and advocacy actions in line with above-mentioned objectives.

B.2.5. Accompanying a European rapprochement with the EaP thanks to a joint work on local governance

The work of ALDA on Local Governance and citizens' participation at the local level will be implemented within the Eastern Partnership process and Council of European and European Union. A constant dialogue with these institutions will be established contributing with projects, analysis and lobbying

B.3. MED – Accompanying the Med countries for democratic, economic and social development through local governance

B.3.1. Developing LDAs in MED area targeting in priority Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco

The objective of ALDA in the next three years is to establish an LDA in Tunisia and approach Morocco and Algeria for similar activities. The activities will be developed thanks to the support of international stakeholders and partners and members. The future programme of territorial cooperation, engaging EuroMed territories will be followed also by the European Group of Economic Interest "I Teatini" led by ALDA.

B.3.2. Developing regional programmes and joint activities in the MED area

The activities will be responding a regional approach creating also possibilities of bridging activities on transborder cooperation approach. The networks working at the regional level will be followed in order to favour ALDA growing its visibility and role in this new regional dimension.

B.3.3. Accompanying local authorities support, decentralisation and citizens' participation at the local level in the region, identifying a coordinating element in the region

While the activities will be developing and the number of partners and members will also consequently multiply, it might be strategic to establish a coordination role in the MED to facilitate the mobilisation of resources and ease the coordination (following the example of what has been done with the support person for SEE in Subotica LDA for many years). A proposal would need to be elaborated to this purpose.

Past and ongoing development projects led by ALDA pursue the MED strategy of ALDA, aiming at enhancing the cooperation with stakeholders from both sides of the Mediterranean area, supporting the role of Local Authorities and strengthening the cooperation with Civil Society. In particular, ALDA will work in that direction through the development actions and projects it coordinates, that provide a perfect opportunity to network, liaise and support the decentralisation process in the MED region, using its extensive experience applied in the Balkans and the EaP regions, reformulating and adapting it to the MED context.

B.3.4. Accompanying a European rapprochement with the MED thanks to a joint work on local governance

The work of ALDA on Local Governance and citizens' participation at the local level will be implemented within the programmes regarding the MED region and together with the main stakeholders. A constant dialogue with these institutions will be established contributing with projects, analysis and lobbying

B.4. World wide – ALDA and LDAs streamlining their experience

B.4.1. Identify possibilities to promote our activities and get new partnership with other global actors

ALDA will be mainly working at the EU and Neighborhood level however the benefit of being involved in global and worldwide programmes and processes could be an added value. In particular, ALDA will continue its effort to engage with UNDP (UNDP Art) on innovative territorial cooperation. That will be developed in engaging ourselves in possible experimental projects bringing our experience and exchanges of best practices. Other global actors in the field of local governance and civil society will also be considered.

B.4.2. Present expertise and involvement of LDAs and ALDA in particular in Central Asia and Russia and in a broader MED area and Middle East

Being stronger and well consolidated in the MED and in the EaP, ALDA would also consider to engaged on activities – on a pilot basis – to Central Asia and Middle East, with the support of its members and partners. This activity will strongly be oriented to the development of local governance activities.

C. ALDA +



The technical assistance and the innovative form of fundraising of ALDA will be one of the assets of the future three years of activities. This form of activities can increase the ALDA the necessary resources to implement its activities and increase the reach out to a broader spectrum of citizens.

C.1. Training and capacity building

Modules on various training, capacity building and awareness rising will be developed and proposed for members and partners. They will regard the topics of interest of ALDA such as the EU programmes and projects and the consolidation of competences of the Local Authorities and CSOs.

C.2. Technical assistance EU projects and project development

ALDA is also developing its dimension of technical assistance provider in terms of development and implementation of projects for partners and members.

C.3. Expertise of Staff, ALDA, LDAs and partners

For technical assistance and considering the possibilities of time and resources, ALDA will also propose the expertise of its staff, LDAs and partners for project activities. In this sense, it will develop a roster of experts on different topics.

C.4 Deepening the possibilities of crowd and innovative funding

The development of alternative sources of funding will represent a major issue for ALDA in the upcoming years. It gives the possibility to identify new and additional resources and to have an additional value to engage new stakeholders. The potentiality of



outreach is very important and a particular plan of action on the matter will be developed.

Campaigns and mass support activities will be organised.

C.5 Support the European Economic Group of Interest

ALDA is now the leader of the EEGI – I Teatini – that will give us the opportunity to be partner of the future territorial cooperation in the MED and in the SEE regions. This instrument will need to be further studied and strengthened and open to new members. A possible EEGI in the EaP will be studied.

