



Decentralized cooperation programme between the Region Lower Normandy (France) and Macedonia

The programme for decentralized cooperation between the Region Lower Normandy (France) and Macedonia started in 2006. It is an innovative cooperation where a French Region cooperates with a state, the Macedonian state. Having the local governance is in the heart of the project, institutional partners are the Regional Council of Lower Normandy and Macedonian Ministry for local self government. This institutional cooperation is based on an action plan of activities between stakeholders from both territories. Formally conceived as a three-year project (2007 – 2010), this cooperation continues in the next three years (2010-2013) The French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Region Lower Normandy financially support the activities of this programme.

Objectives

This cooperation is a product of a joint effort of the two partner entities to open up to the world and to encourage their population to engage in active citizenship at local and European levels by reciprocity and exchange. This project aims to support the accession of Macedonia to the European Union respecting the adoption of the Acquis Communautaire Aiming to strength the aspect of good local governance in all areas of co-operation, as each action is to develop the capacity of the local populations and to disseminate good practices and exchange good experience. The main objectives are to reinforce the capacity of local authorities to implement the decentralization process, to mobilize citizens and to ensure that the development is sustainable.

Activities and participants

The project aims to facilitate both territories, one of Lower Normandy and the other of Republic of Macedonia through the activities in the 6 components. They are implemented by two organizations from France and Macedonia in a tandem. They run this programme by leveraging support and interest in the local communities, involving citizens and organisations at various levels: public institutions, NGOs, professional bodies (such as Chambers of commerce), the media as well as other relevant parties. The lead coordinator is the Association of the Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA).



The 6 components of cooperation are:

1. Digital technologies and media at service of local governance
Training and use of new technologies for better local governance
 - Regional Council of Lower Normandy – France
 - Metamorphosis - Macedonia
2. Youth, education, local and European citizenship
Youth active citizenship on local level
 - House of Europe in Caen, Lower Normandy - France
 - Coalition of Youth organisations SEGA – Macedonia
3. Inventory of cultural heritage
Defined a shared methodology for inventory of cultural heritage
 - The National Association of Towns and Regions of Art and History and towns with protected areas- France
 - Association of historical and artistic cities of the Republic of Macedonia-
4. Local and regional cultural policies
Capacity building of stakeholders in the field of culture
 - CRÉCET – Lower Normandy
 - Lokomotiva – Macedonia
5. Cultural heritage and sustainable tourism
Support and promote sustainable tourism
 - Savoir-faire et découvertes - Lower Normandy
 - Center for institutional cooperation development – CIRA- Macedonia
6. Agriculture Development
Strengthening the network of Balkan farmers for sustainable agricultural development
 - AFDI – France
 - Federation of Farmers from Republic of Macedonia – Macedonia

Cooperation of municipalities: the way to European citizenship

The main result obtain in previous three years of the project are the agreements for cooperation between French and Macedonian municipalities. The direct cooperation between the local authorities allows citizens from Macedonia and France to meet each other, which will strengthen the sense of belonging to one European identity and citizenship.

Equitable regional Development in Macedonia

The initiation of regional development in Macedonia is an important phase. In this context, the decentralized cooperation between Lower Normandy and Macedonia gives its institutional support, experience and training.



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