

# Towards ALDA 20<sup>20</sup> years

4 webinars, 4 geographic areas of action for local democracy  
at the dawn of ALDA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## THE FUTURE OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP BEYOND 2020

Wednesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 | 10:30 am CEST

REGISTER HERE: [https://bit.ly/EaP\\_ALDA20years](https://bit.ly/EaP_ALDA20years)

Interpretation available in **Russian**

Dear Members and Partners,

we hope that our message finds you well in this moment when everybody is slowly but effectively exiting the lockdown caused by the spread of the COVID-19. The last months have been difficult for everybody, and we experienced a revised and somehow limited version of our work and social life; nevertheless, all over the world, local communities and the international civil society have shown an excellent sense of solidarity, mutual support and resilience.

Our work has never stopped, and so haven't our lives: we aptly kept -and continue keeping- alive our efforts in linking communities, supporting actions for the building of better communities, and putting in place activities, turning virtual communications into a means for sharing best practices and advocating for a more sustainable and inclusive future for all of us, as we have been doing for the past 20 years. With the summer ahead and the final months of the year in front of us, it seems we will have the opportunity to slowly return to our usual activities, too, gathering together in person the different stakeholders involved in our work, our members and partners.

Considering the importance of 2020 for ALDA, which is celebrating its 20 years of activity in the fields of citizens participation, good local governance and sustainable communities, and the fact that the future will –now more than ever- bring new challenges in our work for all of us, we decided to pave the way to our Annual General Assembly (which will take place in Brussels in October) by organizing online meetings and webinars to take a moment and celebrate the results we have achieved in the past 20 years, and reflect together on the future challenges in the different geographical areas we are operative in.

In this framework, we are hosting four online meetings of about 90 minutes each, with a focus on our four geographical areas of action -Europe, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership and the MENA region- and we will be extremely glad to have the opportunity to have you on board with us during this very important moment. Thank you!

Antonella Valmorbida,  
Secretary General

ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy



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## The Eastern Partnership context

At the Eastern Partnership's 10th anniversary, in March 2020, the European Commission put forward a **proposal for its long-term policy objectives beyond 2020**. These aim at increasing trade; strengthening connectivity and deepening economic integration with EaP countries; strengthening democratic institutions, the rule of law, environmental and climate resilience; supporting the digital transformation; and promoting fair and inclusive societies.

Building on the achievements of the Partnership in its first 10 years, the proposal outlines how the EU will work together with the partner countries to tackle common challenges and strengthen their resilience in the light of today's challenges as an overriding policy objective beyond 2020. In doing so, work between the EU and partners will continue on [new policy priorities](#) to support the ecological transformation, the digital transformation and to deliver on economies that work for all, in particular more job opportunities for youth and to promote gender equality through:

- a Partnership that CREATES: together for resilient, sustainable and integrated economies;
- a Partnership that PROTECTS: together for accountable institutions, the rule of law, and security;
- a Partnership that GREENS: together towards environmental and climate resilience;
- a Partnership that CONNECTS: together for a resilient digital transformation;
- a Partnership that EMPOWERS: together for resilient, fair and inclusive societies.

**What's next?** It is expected that the Member States and partner countries will endorse the Commission's proposal at the Eastern Partnership Summit in **June 2021** (postponed from June 2020), which will give a mandate to develop a **new set of tangible deliverables** building on the current 20 Deliverables for 2020.

Although there was some scepticism when the programme was launched a decade ago, the Eastern Partnership has filled a vacuum in terms of dialogue and of providing the eastern neighbours with a **prospect of closer integration with the EU**. There is relative optimism from the EU's side that the EaP is there to stay in one form or another. As a consequence, attitudes have begun to change even in those countries that had a lukewarm approach to the EaP at its launch.

Together with our panelists, we will aim to **explore several topics**: (1) what major changes shall be expected in the EU – EaP relations in the next decade; (2) how EaP member countries should act to get most out of this Partnership; (3) in what way ordinary citizens benefited of EaP framework in the past 10 years and how/if they will benefit in the future; (4) in the first 10 years, the partnership was targeting in principle central governments and civil society - what shall local authorities do to be included in this list of direct partners of the EU in implementing EaP agenda?



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## Webinar agenda

Opening speech

**ORIANO OTOČAN**, *ALDA President*

ALDA's 20th anniversary and its activity in the Eastern Partnership: a foreword;

A presentation of ALDA's new logo, Activity Report 2019 and LDA Activity Report 2019

**ANTONELLA VALMORBIDA**, *ALDA Secretary General*

*PANEL DISCUSSION moderated by* **ALEXANDRU COICA**, *ALDA EaP & Central Asia Coordinator*

**VASSILIS MARAGOS**, *Head of Unit in DG NEAR (Armenia, Belarus, Azerbaijan & EaP) of the EC*

**NATALYA YERASHEVICH**, *Executive Director, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum*

**BORIS NAVASARDIAN**, *President of the Yerevan Press Club*

Questions & Answers

The future of ALDA and its action plan in the Eastern Partnership region

**ANTONELLA VALMORBIDA**, *ALDA Secretary General*

Questions & Answers

Final remarks

