



A TOOL FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCY ARMENIA WILL OPEN IN GYUMRI, 28TH OF OCTOBER

The new Local Democracy Agency Armenia will open on 28th of October in Gyumri. It is the second LDA in the South Caucasus area and the thirteenth LDA opened by the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) with the

support of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

“Decentralisation of power and the development of administrative capacities at the local level, together with a capable and vivid civil society, represent a fundamental step in the process of democratisation, stability and development of Armenia”, says ALDA President, Per Vinther.

On occasion of the official opening ceremony, ALDA organises a conference: LDA Armenia opening agenda draft 141011) to gather Local Authorities, NGOs, citizens, and international representatives that are actively involved in local governance issues to discuss and learn about best practices of involving citizens in public life. The opening conference will take place in the City Hall of Gyumri and will be also be part of the European Week of Local Democracy.

In an effort to support the process of democratisation, stability and development of Armenia ALDA and the Congress decided to establish the Local Democracy Agency in the country. The opening plan has been developing since 2008.

It is a long term project and it will utilize the expertise of ALDA and the other LDAs and the network, which gather about 160 members, including Local Authorities, Associations of Local Authorities and non-governmental organisations, coming from more than 30 countries.

Partners of LDA Armenia will come from three countries: the Rhône-Alpes Region (France), the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (Italy), the International Committee For The Development of Peoples CISP (Italy), the Union of Communities of Armenia, the Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development (Armenia), the Journalists' Club Asparez (Armenia), and the Armenian Municipalities of Gyumri, the host city, and Ijevan. The role of the international partners will be to provide core financial support, participate in activities where they have the skills and capacities, to encourage their own partners to participate in the work of the LDA and to promote the work of the LDA in their own community and encourage wider participation.

Gyumri is the second largest city in Armenia, situated in the North of the country and has been selected as host since it will provide a good basis to allow the LDA to work on a national level.

The Municipality of Gyumri provides an office and rooms for the LDA in a building which already hosts other public associations and NGOs in Gyumri. “Furthermore the vibrant civil society in Gyumri and the possibilities to improve the situation for cooperation between civil society and local authorities are also very important factors”, stresses President Per Vinther. “In addition”, says Mr Vinther, “Gyumri is also twinned with the Georgian city Kutaisi which provides a strong basis for developing the cooperation between both cities”.

The first LDA in the Caucasus is based in Kutaisi, Georgia since the year 2006.

The LDA will facilitate the participation of civil society in the decision-making process at the local level, increase the interest, awareness and capacities of citizens to take part in the decision-making process at the local level and increase the awareness and skills of the local communities and local authorities to address the needs of their citizens. So a practical exercise of policy sharing between citizens and local authorities should also be facilitated. The LDA will support capacity building of civil society and local authorities and it will implement its activities at the local level with trainings, study visits and other participative methods.

Acting as a promoter of democracy and local self-government, the Local Democracy Agency will also promote human rights and sustainable development. The realisation of all objectives will be reached by implementing projects with local authorities and NGOs using the international partners support. The LDA will aim to serve as a bridge between Europe and Armenia and will bring Armenian practice to Europe and European experience to Armenia.

Finally the LDA will also work to ensure cross border cooperation in South Caucasus and will work to promote peace and understanding in the South Caucasus region. “There are plans to set up an LDA in Azerbaijan in the near future as well. So the LDA in Armenia will also become part of a network of LDAs in South Caucasus that can promote cooperation and mutual understanding between the countries in South Caucasus” announces Per Vinther.



ALDA PLAYING A CENTRAL ROLE IN THE PROMOTION OF THE EUROPEAN LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

ALDA is having a central role in the promotion of the ELDW , the European local

democracy week, among its members and its partners, as main partner of the Congress of the Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the body which promotes the initiative.

ALDA, together with the LDAs, is organizing several initiatives in the framework of the ELDW all over Europe. Moreover, ALDA is partner in many other initiatives within the Week organized by its members and partners.

The European Local Democracy Week is an annual European event where local authorities from all the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, as well as their national associations, organise public events to meet and engage with their citizens on issues of current interest. The main aim is to promote and foster democratic participation at a local level. The week around 15 October has been chosen for holding this event as a tribute to the European Charter of Local Self-Government, opened for signature on that date in 1985.

ELDW purpose is to raise European citizens' awareness of how local authorities operate, and inform them of the opportunities available for taking part in decision-making process at the local level.

The leading theme of the Week 2011 will be 'Human Rights at local level' and the Congress recommends that at least one of the activities should focus on it, allowing however the participants to organise events on issues of particular interest to them.

To give a more concrete overview of the role of ALDA in the promotion of the ELDW, we publish a list of events ALDA is directly organizing, also through its LDAs, or in which it will be partner:

- Opening of the Local Democracy Agency in Armenia.

On October 28, as the official day for the opening ceremony of LDA Armenia in Gyumri, an awareness-raising conference will be organized to gather citizens, NGOs and other groups actively involved in local governance issues to discuss and learn about the best practices of involving citizens in public life. The conference will give the participants a chance to better understand the bottom-up methodology for the development of local self-government and increasing citizen participation. The opening event in October will mark the link between the LDA in Armenia and its work in support of Local Democracy and Human Rights in the Country as part of the ELDW and as a medium-long term project. More info.

- Celebration of the 15th Anniversary LDA Sisak

The International Conference "The Road of Croatia towards the EU: the role of Croatian Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs)" will be organized on the 4th November 2011 in Sisak, Croatia. The Conference is organized in the framework of the celebration of the 15th Anniversary of the Local Democracy Agencies Sisak and as a part of the ELDW. In this regards the Municipality of Sisak obtained the 12 Stars Label from the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, a prestigious label awarded to Municipalities and local communities particularly active in the promotion of ELDW.

ALDA will take the opportunity of the Conference to reflect and to open the discussion with participants on the future of the Croatian LDAs in prevision of Croatia entering the EU in July 2013. Other activities will be organized by LDA Sisak to promote human rights among youth.

- ALDA organizing two major events in Venice from the 15 to the 17 November.

ALDA will organize in Venice a conference whose overall topic will be Mobility and Volunteering in Town Twinning and International Seminar on twinning relations. The events will unite around 180 participants from 10 different European countries involving representatives of Local Authorities and their associations, NGOs, civil servants and citizens' groups who will develop a dynamic evaluation of how mobility and volunteering can strongly support the building of a developed Europe. The overall goal of those activities, both organized within the Europe for Citizens programme and in the framework of the ELDW, is strengthening CSOs' involvement in the overall framework of EU twinning in order to create a better organized cooperation system between LAs e CSOs and a more present Public-Private Partnership in the fight against economic and social crisis, in the promotion of mobility for democracy and the ownership of European identity.

- LDA Kosovo organizing its first activity in the framework of the ELDW

On the 21-22 November LDA Kosovo, in cooperation with ALDA and all its partners will organize its first official activity in Peja/Pec (Kosovo) on the occasion of the Celebration of the International Child's Rights Day. An international conference will be organized to foster the discussion on the topic among the main international and local stakeholders (UNICEF, CoE, UNDP, EC, Ministry of Local Authorities, local and international CSOs working of the topic), the conference will be followed by a plain "air afternoon" which will be attended by families and citizens from all the region of Peja/Pec.

- ELDW in Georgia. Art and Nature in Kutaisi for Human Rights

In Kutaisi, LDA Georgia (celebrating its 5th anniversary) and the Association of Local Authorities of Georgia, will organize in cooperation with the Municipality a photo exhibition on human rights in the country and a competition and award called "The greenest Neighborhood in Kutaisi" that will see the involvement of a high number of citizens and representatives of LAa and CSOs.

- 10 years of LDA CSS keeping working on the promotion of Human Rights

On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary LDA CSS, City of Nis – Office of the Mayor, NGO Youth Education Center, Media Center Nis and LDA are organizing European Local Democracy Week from October 10 till October 16. Numerous workshops, discussion groups, entertainment events, exhibitions and other activities will be organised during this week. Nis University Faculty of Economics, Metropolitan University Education Center and Nis City Children's Center will take active part in the activities during this week. More info .

- CRCD Promoting Rights of Children in Albania

The Center for Research Cooperation and Development – CRCD, ALDA's member, in cooperation with European Information Center in Vlora (Albania) will initiate the promotion of the ELDW in Vlora by organizing one seminar at EU info as well an open public presentation to one of the school related "EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child".

- Strategies to promote Human Rights at the local level in Italy

The Municipality of Vibonati, Morigerati and Casaleto Spartano in Italy, new members of ALDA, will organize in mid-November a Conference on the means Municipalities have to promote human rights at local level and an interactive

activity in the high school of Sapri (Italy) targeting youth promoting human rights. ALDA will participate with one representative at both the events.

For more information about each event please contact Mr. Alfonso Aliberti, Project Manager of ALDA, at alfonso.aliberti@aldaintranet.org.



COOPERATION ON GOOD PRACTICE EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF THIENE (I) AND IJEVAN (AM)

Supporting participatory urban development and start a solid relationship of decentralized cooperation with an Armenian town.

These are the main aims of the project launched by the City of Thiene with the City of Ijevan, Armenia, in cooperation with ALDA, the Association of Local

Democracy Agencies.

The project is co-financed by the Veneto Region under the "Direct Initiative 2011 - Decentralized cooperation for development" for the promotion of human rights, culture of peace, development cooperation and solidarity.

Ijevan is a city of about twenty thousand inhabitants, the capital of Tavush region in the north-east of Armenia, near the border with Azerbaijan.

The project will develop over a year and includes study visits and training courses in the two cities.

"Citizen's participation in local government is one of the pillars of democracy and good governance-says Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA - and if in Europe this is a consolidated phenomenon, the situation is very different in many of the Eastern countries, which are still facing the transition from post-Soviet European to democracy. If we want democracy found fertile ground there, too, we must work hard with citizens to encourage them to participate. To reach this goal, ALDA promote this twinning project and will open in a few days, October 28, in Armenia his thirteenth Local Democracy Agency, with the support of the Council of Europe, in addition to the one opened five years ago in Georgia and the other eleven active in the Balkans. "

The project will establish an exchange of good practices, to develop, in the near future, citizens' participation and democracy. Environmental sustainability and sustainable development are other issues at the heart of future cooperation, which could spread to the management of waste and the public awareness on environmental issues.

The project is divided into three activities aimed at increasing the participation of the citizens of Ijevan and the instruments used to facilitate the dialogue between local authorities and civil society.

The first activity will be a training session in Ijevan, starting on the 26th of October, managed by expert of Thiene Municipality and ALDA.

The second action will involve an expert of ALDA in a lab with about thirty representatives of local authorities and civil society organizations of Ijevan on issues of active citizenship and cooperation between local authorities and civil society in urban development.

The last action will be a study visit in Thiene of a delegation of representatives of the Armenian community (next March), during which will be illustrated the practical activities and initiatives of the Italian town, such as the Urban Center, a reality that could also be replicated in the Armenian city. The visit aims to create a network between authorities and civil society organizations, which will be the basis for a durable cooperation.



RESPECT OF FREEDOM AND IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN AZERBAIJAN, ASKS THE EAP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Respect of freedom of expression and assembly, and immediate release of political prisoners, in Azerbaijan. Is what asks the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum to the Government of Azerbaijan, to the Heads of all EU institutions, to the Governments of the EU member States and to the Council of Europe.

In a statement of the Steering Committee the Co-Chairs of the Forum, Mrs Antonella Valmorbida, (ALDA), and Ulad Vialichka (International Consortium EUROBELARUS) claim that the work of civil society - including those formally recognised within the framework of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum - continues to be obstructed by government authorities in Azerbaijan.

"Democracy campaigners received jail sentences in Baku- is written in the statement-. Since their detention for participation in peaceful demonstrations on 2 April 2011, 14 civil society activists and opposition leaders have been sentenced to jail for periods of up to six years in politically motivated trials based on falsified evidence. On 2 April 2011, peaceful protesters were beaten and arrested in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, and others were arrested in pre-emptive police action before the 2 April public gatherings calling for democratic reforms in Azerbaijan. These actions were condemned by the Civil Society Forum in its statement of 5 April 2011.

The fourteen individuals sentenced include a well-known human rights defender, the deputy head of the opposition Musavat Party, and the chairman of the National Statehood Party. The convictions were based on charges ranging from

kidnapping and hooliganism to disobeying police orders and forcing a citizen to vote against his will or preventing him from voting. The results of the monitoring of the investigation process and court hearings by Azerbaijani Human Rights Defend Organizations shows that the right to a fair trial was violated both during the investigation and court hearings, and that the accusations against the defendants were of a political character and based on ungrounded and suspicious conclusions”.

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum calls upon the government of Azerbaijan to immediately release the political prisoners, and to respect freedom of expression and assembly.

The Steering Committee of the Civil Society Forum considers the court decisions unfair and politically motivated, and calls upon governments of the member-states of the European Union, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and the European Commissioner for Enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy, to communicate to the Azerbaijan authorities their unambiguous disapproval of these sentences, and to call upon the government of Azerbaijan to release the prisoners immediately.

The Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum strongly condemns these politically motivated convictions, which are clear violations of the obligations of Azerbaijan as a member of the Council of Europe and a party to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and urges the European Commission, the EU Council, and EU member-states to consult extensively with representatives of civil society, and to ensure that they meet directly with them on every official visit to Azerbaijan to hear first-hand about the observance of human rights and democratic freedoms in Azerbaijan.



DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPANTS OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE. Warsaw 29 September 2011

The participants of the Eastern Partnership Conference, that took place in Warsaw (29 September 2011) adopted a declaration in which they express their continuing concern about the ongoing human rights violations and the

existence of political prisoners in some of the EaP countries.

In the document they also call for more consistency of the EU policy towards the political developments in all countries of the Eastern Partnership.

Moreover, the participants of the Conference call for an increased assistance for the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

The international conference entitled “The Eastern Partnership Conference: Towards a European Community of Democracy, Prosperity and a Stronger Civil Society” took place as an event accompanying the Eastern Partnership summit, which is one of the most important events of the Polish presidency.

The conference was attended by a number of important guests, including: Radosław Sikorski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland; Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy; Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament. ALDA was represented by its Director, Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida.



ALDA PRESENT AT THE OPEN DAYS IN BRUSSELS. (October, 12) 2011)

ALDA and the LDA Central and Southern Serbia were present at the 2011 European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels. During the workshop on the Adriatic- Ionian macro- region on 12 October Mr Saša Marinkov, Delegate of the Niš based LDA presented ALDA and the creation of the LDA as a good practise

of public-private partnership.

During his presentation at the seminar in the Committee of Regions he explained to the representatives from several regions and cities from all over Europe as well as the European Commission the method of decentralized cooperation. He highlighted the best practise between ALDA and City of Niš that made LDA Central and South Serbia to one of earliest best practise examples of PPP in Southern Serbia. The Agency was established in 2001 in the Central Serbian city Niš. As a good practise example Mr Marinkov enumerates the Youth-the right direction project that was implemented from 2006 to 2009 by the LDA. It was dedicated to promote the possibilities of EU Youth in action programme among young people in South East Europe and the South Caucasus and reached a broad target group.

Photo description: Saša Marinkov is speaking at the European Week of Regions and Cities 2011 in Brussels. Photo: ALDA Brussels office.



**European Movement
Mouvement Européen**

EMI BOARD APPROVES NEW MEMBERSHIP OF ALDA

At its meeting in Brussels on 22 September 2011 the Board of the European Movement International (EMI) approved the application for full membership of ALDA.

The EUROPEAN MOVEMENT is an international organisation open to all political, economic, social and cultural trends in civil society. Its objective is to "contribute to the establishment of a united, federal Europe founded on the principles of peace, democracy, liberty, solidarity, and respect for basic human rights. It seeks to provide a structure to encourage and facilitate the active participation of citizens and civil society organisations in the development of a united Europe".

Read more

Its 42 National Councils and 31 associated Member Organisations work towards bringing together representatives from European associations, political parties, enterprises, trade unions and individual lobbyists.

Born over half a century ago, the EUROPEAN MOVEMENT has played a crucial role in the construction of Europe. The EUROPEAN MOVEMENT's main focus of attention centres on influencing political, social and cultural arenas within the framework of the European Civil Society.

The EUROPEAN MOVEMENT works as a study and information group, and also as a pressure group. It operates as a study and information group through the many projects and activities undertaken, and has been at the forefront in helping large segments of the public take part in the dissemination of information on European affairs and activities. It operates as a pressure group through the influence exerted by its members at all levels in each sector of activity. The European Parliament, Commission, national parliaments, authorities and governments, business-people, industry associations, NGOs and the many associations which make up the civil society in Europe have been influenced through the European Movement's network of contacts.



Non-Governmental
Organization
Lev Sapieha Foundation

ALDA STARTS MINI GRANT PROGRAM IN BELARUS AND CALLS FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

ALDA and its Belarusian partners Lev Sapieha Foundation and the Belarusian Organisation Working Women (BOWW) are now officially starting the TANDEM project. The project starts with a call for mini grants and partnership projects for promoting sustainable development in Belarus.

The mini grants are open for Belarusian NGOs and municipalities – Guidelines and applications forms can be downloaded on the link below on this site. The mini grants for the civic initiatives are up to 4,000 Euro and for partnership projects up to 8,000 Euro. These grants will support concrete activities in the year 2012 and 2013 focussing on building sustainable relations and cooperation between civil society organisations and local authorities. The deadline for applications is November 17.

As part of the partnership projects the TANDEM steering committee will identify international partners (NGOs or local authorities) from other European countries who are interested in developing their contacts and support the democratic development in Belarus. These international partners will participate in a partnership project to share their experience and support the implementation of the project.

ALDA is therefore calling interested NGOs and local authorities who are interested in sharing their experience and support civil society activities in Belarus to contact ALDA to be included in the pool of possible international partners for the partnership projects.

A conference for the groups that have been awarded grants will take place in Mid December and will also include the international partners of the partnership projects. This conference will discuss and share experience and ideas between the projects that will be supported as part of the TANDEM project.

If you are interested in becoming a partner for partnership or want to have more information about the project, please contact Peter Sondergaard at peter.sondergaard@aldaintranet.org or +32 274 201 61.

TANDEM is supported by the European Union's Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development programme. For more information on TANDEM [click here](#)

Download here the application package

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ALDA AT THE GENERAL MEETING ON TWINNING BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES. 29 September-1 October 2011, Rybnik (PL)

"Twinning between Municipalities have paved the way to concept of decentralised cooperation and local government engagement at the international level. They need to become operational in a political and general framework", stated Mrs. Antonella Valmorbidia, ALDA Director, in her intervention at the

general meeting on Twinning between municipalities.

The Congress was organised in Rybnik, Poland, (29 September – 1 October) by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), in partnership with the Association of Polish Cities, a CEMR member association, and the City of Rybnik, with the financial support of the European Commission and under the patronage of the Polish EU presidency.

The event was attended by more than 300 participants from 31 countries all over Europe. It focused on the methods of Twinning in building the European citizenship and further enlargement.

The Association of the Local Democracy Agencies was associated to this event and participated in the workshop on Europe XXL. The workshop was moderated by M. Tansel Kaya, member of the Municipality Assembly of Istanbul.

In her speech the Director of ALDA, Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida also stated that "there is no shared development and democratic processes without a process of decentralisation based on functioning local authorities and participative and strong civil society. It is a process sine qua non, because peace, stability and growth need this element. A centralised and monolithic state does not have a chance. Even in the centralised countries (China), forms of autonomy and decentralisation (called in a different way) are necessary".

Twinning between Municipalities make it possible to obtain an improvement of the capacity of public services, the development of cross-border cooperation projects and new forms of territorial cooperation upon which are based the majority of European policies, including those on social cohesion and development, and support administrative reform in transitional countries.

"The role of local and regional authorities –said Mrs. Valmorbida- is fundamental in transitional (east and now south) countries (like all the former CIS countries) and the practice of twinning/city to city cooperation is an additional element for institutional building. Many countries and areas are trying to find figure out their way : we need to strongly support democratic process, local democracy and civil society. It is for the benefit for us all, not only for stabilising our borders but also for strengthening our values - in Europe - and what we believe in".



ALDA PARTICIPATES IN CONFERENCE ON STRENGTHENING COOPERATION BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE PUBLIC IN UKRAINE. (Kyiv, 13th of September)

On September 13, the Agency for Legislative Initiatives held the Conference "Strengthening cooperation between the Authorities and the public at the local

level: experience of the regions" in Kyiv.

The Conference was the closing event of the Project "Strengthening Cooperation Between the Authorities and the Public at the Local Level for Community Development" implemented by the Agency for Legislative Initiatives.

During the conference participants presented the results of their activities in the project and their experience in cooperating with local and regional authorities in Ukraine. ALDA presented its work to the participants and told about the way ALDA works and ALDA's experience in facilitating cooperation between local authorities and citizens especially in the Eastern Partnership countries. Furthermore ALDA also told about its project in Belarus which shares a lot of features with the project Agency for Legislative Initiatives implemented in Ukraine and ALDA's work to raise the attention in EU institutions to the question of local democracy development in Eastern Partnership countries.

During the conference participants also discussed problems and perspectives for cooperation between the authorities and the public at the local level in Ukraine and possibilities for adoption of progressive models of participatory democracy at the local level in Ukraine.

Agency for Legislative Initiatives recently became member of ALDA and after the conference ideas and possibilities to further strengthen the cooperation with ALDA and ALDA's work in Ukraine was discussed.



NEW PERSPECTIVES OF COOPERATION AMONG FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA REGION (I), MONTENEGRO AND LDA NIKSIC

The new perspectives of cooperation between Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (I) and Montenegro were discussed at a forum held in Cattaro (MNE) on 16th of September. The event was promoted by Friuli Venezia Giulia Region,

Municipality of Monfalcone, Association of the Italian community in Montenegro and LDA of Niksic.

The meeting was attended by Mr Alessandro Perelli (Friuli Venezia Giulia) and Mr Lucio Gregoretti (Municipality of Monfalcone), both members of the governing board of ALDA, and by Mr Kerim Medjedovic, Delegate of the ALD of Niksic.

Attended the Forum also Mrs Silvia Altran, Mayor of Monfalcone, Elio De Anna, Friuli Venezia Giulia Councillor, Mr Paolo Perugini, President of the Italian Community of Montenegro, Mr Sergio Brabanti, Italian Ambassador in Montenegro, Mr Ettore Romoli, Mayor of Gorizia, Mrs Silvia Acerbi, Vice President of Informest, Mr Antonio Paoletti, Regional President of Chamber of Commerce, Mr Fausto Biroslavo, journalist and the responsible of some cooperation project in the area.

In September 2008, with the presentation, of the demand for EU membership, the Republic of Montenegro has started an important process of European integration which has as prerequisites the gradual adjustment to European standards of democratic participation and modernization of social institutions and economic system.

In this framework, and for its population size and its characteristics socio-economic, Montenegro is one of the areas of strategic interest for the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, also in consideration of the added value of being connected to the Local Democracy Agency of the Council of Europe, for the interest already expressed by major regional production companies, and the presence of a big community of Italians.

Among the objectives that emerged from the Forum, there is the support to programs and actions to facilitate the achievement of the criteria of the *acquis communautaire*, in particular of active citizenship projects and those projects that encourage democratic participation and the development of civil society. Therefore, now is time to consolidate the experience of activation, within the Local Democracy Agency, of a center devoted to the development of Institutional capacity-building initiatives..



FOURTH YEAR OF THE COOPERATION – STRENGTHENING AND SHARING IDEAS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERCULTURALISM

The steering committee regarding the cooperation between Normandy and the Republic of Macedonia was held from September 12 to 15 in Ohrid. During this annual meeting of Macedonian and French partners all participants had an

opportunity to participate in the workshops, meetings and discussions regarding the past four years of the project and consider future activities.

The components' tandems analyzed their activities separately and shared their impressions with all stakeholders. The possibilities and opportunities for participation and responding to calls for European projects were also studied, such as networking for lobbying in order to represent the interests of the cooperation at the European institutions. The priorities of the cooperation are support of the regional development and municipalities, development of the cooperation in relation to the Balkans and Caucasus, but also, for the first time, economic development.

The Programme for decentralised cooperation between the Region Lower Normandy and Republic of Macedonia is coordinated by ALDA, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies. For further information please consult the webpage of the Cooperation <http://crbn-mk.courriers.info/> or contact Katica Janeva katica.janeva@aldaintranet.org



“POVERTY REDUCTION: CIVIL SOCIETY AND AN ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT”: AN LDACSS PROJECT

LDA Central and Southern Serbia continues to cooperate with Association for Development of Youth and Children - Open Club on implementing project “Poverty Reduction: Civil Society and an Accountable Government”. This year LDA will conduct a research on state financial assistance to children and families. Research will be done in five Serbian cities with citizens from the most

vulnerable social groups.

Project is supported by the Institute for Sustainable Communities and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

CALLS FOR PARTNERS

[ALDA call for partnership: IPA 2010 CROATIA - Supporting the efforts of CSOs for monitoring and promoting transparency, effectiveness, accountability and inclusiveness of public administration in fighting against corruption](#)

[ALDA call for partners: Cross-border Programme Serbia – Montenegro under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance \(IPA\), Component II](#)

[ALDA call for partnership: Cross-border Programme Serbia – Montenegro under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance \(IPA\), Component II, allocations for 2009, 2010, 2011 and leftover from 2008](#)

[ALDA call for partnership: Information and Communication Programme 2011 – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA](#)