

ALDA NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2013



Dear ALDA Members, dear partners of our great network!

2013 was the European Year of Citizens and we were all very much involved in actions, disseminations, recommendations and debates on this topics! We are pleased to deliver to all of you the [Recommendations of the Alliance for the EYC 2013](#)

Next year, we will work hard to produce a change and make sure that the institutions at all levels put our recommendations into action! We will act to make it happen, especially at the local level. We are celebrating Christmas and New Year's Eve thinking and supporting those who are promoting the European choice in Ukraine. Many of them are our friends and colleagues with whom we have been working for many years. Our thoughts go to all those who are searching their way in democracy, fighting for human rights, and struggling to find a way out of the crisis in the EU, in South Eastern Europe and in our Neighborhood partners countries.

We wish you all MERRY CHRISTMAS, and let's make true that EVERY YEAR IS A EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS!

Oriano Otočan, President

Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA

And all the team of ALDA



From declaration to action: Every year is a European Year of Citizens

Brussels, Belgium

WE ALL MOVE ON FOR 2014: YEAR OF THE IMPLEMENTATION!

Today, the President of the Alliance of the European Year of Citizens, M. Jean Marc Roirant, handed over the whole recommendations elaborated by the Alliance of the European Year of Citizens 2013. The 80

recommendations have been received by the European Commissioner, Mrs. Viviane Reading. "We want to pass from declarations and recommendations to action", confirmed Mr. Roirant.

ALDA is present in Vilnius with the President, Oriano Otocan, and the Director, Antonella Valmorbida.

Read the [recommendations elaborated by the European Alliance](#) (.pdf)

The final event of the EYAC 2013 is taking place in Vilnius with the presence of 250 civil society groups from all over Europe, representing 62 Networks NGOs in Europe and more than 15 National Platforms. The recommendations focuses on a more inclusive and social Europe.

The European Year of Citizens will continue in 2014 since at the moment the European Institutions did not identify any priority for 2014. The Alliance for EYAC 2013 had its plenary meeting in Vilnius and decided to continue for the implementation and monitoring of the document issued in 2013 including a close support to the European Parliamentary elections.

ALDA has been a key actor of the Alliance for the EYAC 2013 as Working Group 1 coordinator and Initiator of the [Italian Alliance](#).



WTD: Human development and social service delivery at local level - A shared challenge for LRA and CSO in the EaP area – Vilnius, 29 November

Picture from the main event - Civil Society Conference "Eastern Partnership Reality Check: Political Challenges and Future Agenda for Civil Society" The event "Human development and social service delivery at local level - A shared challenge for LRA and CSO in the EaP area " took place in Vilnius (Lithuania), on 29 November 2013, at 14:30 at the RadissonBlu Hotel..

The event was part of the Civil Society Conference "Eastern Partnership Reality Check: Political Challenges and Future Agenda for Civil Society" on 27 – 29 November

The debate addressed benefits and obstacles to cooperation between CSO and LRA around local development processes, particularly in human development and social service delivery in EaP countries.

In the framework of the EU supported project WTD (Working Together for Development), the event was organised by ALDA, together with EPAN, a working group of CONCORD - European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs, and in cooperation with the National Lithuanian Platform of Development NGOs and the Lithuanian Association of Local Authorities.

If you want to participate send a confirmation at this e-mail: aldabrussels@aldaintranet.org

For more information see the [Agenda](#). See the [website of the project WTD \(Working Together for Development\)](#)



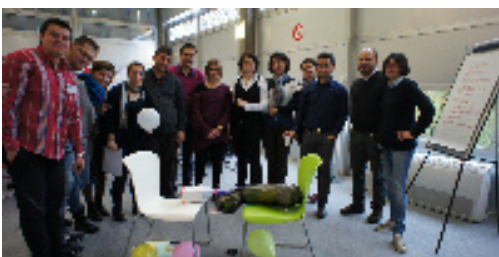
ALDA welcomes the Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit on local governance and citizens participation, Vilnius, 28-29 November 2013

ALDA welcomes the Vilnius summit declaration as for the development of local governance and citizens participation, which have a significant role in pursuing the goals of the Eastern Partnership.

The principles of local democracy represent a universal European value corroborated by the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Local governments are important providers of public services. The participants support the inclusion of local and regional authorities in the implementation of the relevant Eastern Partnership policies and strategies and encourage the representatives of national associations of local and regional authorities and CORLEAP to enhance their contribution to the Eastern Partnership. The role of local and regional authorities could be also strengthened through targeted support, including through capacity building.

We recognize and deplore all the problems also encountered in the implementation of all the provisions of the Eastern Partnership in particular for human rights violation in Azerbaijan and Belarus. We considered for Ukraine a missed opportunity the non signing of the Agreement and we hope in a democratic and peaceful solution of the Ukraine nowadays.

Read the [Declaration](#)



Grundtvig training course in Strasbourg

The Grundtvig training course "Citizen Participation and funding opportunities to support participate initiatives" organized by ALDA took place since Monday, 18 November to 22 November at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, France.

In this framework, the first study visit was held by Mrs Magali Schaedelin, representative of the Local Mission Democracy at the City and Urban Community of Strasbourg. The main topic was the management of local democracy and proximity, as well as participatory citizenship policy in Strasbourg.

The Grundtvig training course gathered participants coming from Macedonia, Romania, Greece, Turkey, Hungary, and Italy to debate the concepts of active citizenship and citizen participation in the European context. It focused on the exchange of ideas and the sharing of local experiences and best practices to strengthen connections at European level.



Statement of the Subgroup on Local Government and Public Administration Reform on the situation in Ukraine

The Associations members of the Local Government and Public Administration Reform to the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership, of which ALDA is part, support the demonstrations in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities for the signing by the country of the Association Agreement which has been under negotiation for many years.

As highlight by the [Steering Committee of the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership](#), they all recommend to start a dialogue between the authorities and the demonstrators to enable the speedy signing of the Association Agreement (AA), which has been under negotiation for many years.

The members of the Subgroup on Local Government and Public Administrative reform have worked for many years for enshrining the principle of local democracy, the development of local and regional authorities, and the full participation of civil society in the decision making process at the local level. All this principles are fundamental for peace, stability, and protection of human rights and will be supported trough the Association Agreement with the EU.

Read the full statement, [English](#) (.pdf) and [Russian](#) (.pdf)



ALDA launches the project TOYS - Tolerance in Youth Sport

ALDA officially launches the project Tolerance in Youth Sport – TOYS. The project, granted by the European Commission under the programme Youth in Action, aims at tackling racism and discrimination in sport by promoting social inclusion and integration, volunteering and active citizenship among young people.

In order to achieve the final objective, a five days seminar will be organised in Mesagne (Italy)

from 12-19 January 2014 in cooperation with the Euro Mediterranean Scientific and Biomedical Institute (ISBEM) and the ASD Mesagne Volley. The event will bring together as many as 40 youth workers coming from 9 different countries in wider Europe. Participants will be encouraged, through debates, discussions, workshops and in field visits to share best practices, views and ideas, bring in their own expertise and offer proposals on how to tackle racism in sport.

TOYS will therefore provide the participants with new skills and ideas on how to increase the quality and capacity of youth work when dealing with racism and tolerance in youth sport. The activity will also be an occasion for widely showcasing the new 2014-2020 programme for education, training, youth and sport Erasmus+

Read more about the [project TOYS](#)



Committee of the Regions

Hearing on local and regional democracy in Ukraine – Committee of the Regions

On 18 November the Committee of the Regions hosted the “Hearing on local regional democracy in Ukraine” event. The meeting took place in Brussels at 2.30 p.m. ALDA’s Director Antonella Valmorbida attended the event.

This hearing discussed the perspectives of implementing local democracy in Ukraine and the role that the Council of Europe and EU can play to support the development of regions in the country.

The event follows up the adoption of the monitoring report of the Council of Europe on the state of local and regional democracy in Ukraine, which recommends that the Ukrainian authorities review their legislation in order to remove the restrictions on the powers of local authorities.

See the [Agenda of the event](#). (.pdf)

Read the [recommendation of the of the CLRA on Local and regional democracy in Ukraine](#) (25th Session, 29-31 October 2013, Strasbourg)



How to tackle youth unemployment? Project FUNNY in Baku, Azerbaijan

Baku, Azerbaijan

How to tackle youth unemployment? ALDA project FUNNY stimulated ideas to fight one of the major issues affecting the young generations worldwide.

The European project «Fighting UNemployment through Networking for Youth» (FUNNY), within the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission, is a joint initiative of 20 associations from 17 countries in the enlarged Europe and its Neighborhood strongly active in the field of youth.

From 2 to 7 December, FUNNY brought together 40 youth workers from 17 states of the enlarged Europe and supported them to find partners for transnational cooperation in the field of the youth work, with specific attention to the issue of the youth unemployment. Participants come from the old EU15 (France, Italy, Denmark), New EU12 (Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania) South East Europe (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, BiH, Croatia), East Europe and Caucasus (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Belarus).

The hosting organization was Azerbaijani NGO Alliance for Municipality Development (BINA), and ALDA was in charge of the overall coordination of the project as well as a sending organization. Samir Alyiev, President of BINA, and Abil Bayramov welcomed the participants on the first day.

Contributions from experts enriched the experience for the participants: Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA, discussed with the participants the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process. Mr Ilkin Nazarov from Bina, and Mr Orkhan Ali from Oxfam Azerbaijan gave an in-depth overview of the situation of Azerbaijan, focusing on the work market, and deepening the knowledge and understanding of the country policies and society.

Stay tuned on the [blog of the project](#)!



The steering committee for Macedonian partners concludes the second tri-year phase of the Decentralised Cooperation LN/MK

Tuesday, November 5, 2013 Skopje

On Tuesday 5 November, the Macedonian partners gathered for a steering committee as closure of the second tri-years phase of the programme for decentralised cooperation between the Lower Normandy and Macedonia. Invited by the Regional Council of Lower Normandy, the French Embassy in Skopje, the Ministry of Local-self Governance of Macedonia and Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA), the Macedonian partners of the decentralised cooperation and the International Institute of Human Rights and Peace in Caen, met to present the results of the activities accomplished in the past three years.

This meeting was an occasion for the partners to present the outcomes of their work on the previous period and discuss their experiences. Through the various components of this cooperation the partnerships between Lower Normandy and Macedonia have ensured the capacity building on both territories, as well as raising awareness among all the actors on decentralization and local governance.

Mr Alexander Follot, Director of European Affairs and International Relations in the Regional Council of Lower Normandy, on behalf of the French region, expressed his gratitude towards the partners for the accomplished work during the last three years and highlighted the diversity of themes and partners. This programme contributed to the implementation of the decentralisation process and improvement of local governance in both territories. Hence, the programme is recognised by many different organisations and structures, such as municipalities, regions or associations that are part of it. Mrs Antonella Valmorbida, on behalf of ALDA, has stressed the Balkan and European dimension of this acknowledgement, and congratulated all the partners for their excellent progress in networking and reinforcement of the territorial development.

While ending this sixth year of Decentralised Cooperation, the new challenges are promising a future with a lot of innovation, defined through topics such as history, remembrance, Human Rights and cultural heritage. Mr Rijat Azemi, representative of the Macedonian Ministry of Local Self Governance underlined the importance of this cooperation on a local and central level, and the support towards Europe of the Macedonian society. Mr Pascal Gallet, Cooperation Attaché at the French Embassy in Skopje and representative of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, expressed their active political support for the forthcoming years.

A steering committee with French partners will be organised in December to conclude the three-year programme 2010/2013 as well as to launch the third phase that will continue until 2016



Lisbon Forum 2013, Conclusions – within the recommendations ALDA as a benchmark for citizen participation at local level and dialogue between civil society and elected representatives.

The 2013 Lisbon Forum of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, chaired by Bernardino León, EU Special Representative for Southern Mediterranean, was held in Lisbon on 6 and 7 November 2013, on the topic “Valuing civil society as actor of governance: Perspectives for the South Mediterranean”.

The Director of ALDA, Antonella Valmorbida, attended the Forum and introduced a workshop on the topic of 'Interactive dialogue with civil society: role of local and regional authorities'.

Organised in co-operation with the Anna Lindh Foundation, IDEA and the Aga Khan Development Network, the Forum was organised in the framework of the Joint EU/CoE Programme “Strengthening democratic reform in the southern Neighbourhood”.

At the end of its discussions, the Forum identified avenues to explore in order to address the challenges faced by the actors in governance. For each level of interaction with civil society, the Forum made a number of key conclusions and operational proposals, addressed to each player and to the international organisations, in order to achieve the objectives laid down.

Regarding local and regional authorities the Forum indicated ALDA as a benchmark framework for citizen participation at local level and dialogue between civil society and elected representatives, taking account of the “Code of good practice for civil participation in the decision-making process” drawn up by the Council of Europe’s Conference of INGOs, and approved by the Committee of Ministers

See the [Final Document](#) (.pdf)



ALDA at the final event of the TYEC project

The final event of the “Tackling Youth Employment Challenges – TYEC” project took place on 5 November 2013 at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels. The meeting

gathered together representatives of the partner organisations as well as key stakeholders in the field such as the European Parliament, represented by Mr Andrea Cozzolino, and the European Commission, represented by Mr Marco Fantini, Deputy Head of Unit on Sectorial Employment challenges, Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship.

The event was an occasion to showcase the results of the research promoted by the partners throughout the year and to further discuss a key issue such as youth unemployment nowadays affecting millions of youngsters across Europe. The first panel of the seminar granted the partners' representatives the opportunity of bringing in their own expertise in the field by stressing once more the need of doing more to tackle youth unemployment in Southern Europe through tailor-made policies within a less strict austerity approach.

ALDA contributed to the success of the initiative by highlighting the key role that local authorities might play in favouring the youth integration into the labour market. Mr Benjamin Dumas, City Councillor of the Municipality of Bobigny (France), invited by ALDA with the kind support of CIDEFE, addressed the topic of "Local level responses to youth employment challenges". In particular, he showcased the successful measure of the "missions locales", as launched in France, that the participants agreed to being further discussed as concrete good practice.

The second panel was an occasion to analyse the state of play of the current policy framework adopted at national and European level to tackle youth unemployment. In particular, it provided the participants with the opportunity of exchanging with the representatives of the European institutions on the unsuccessful outcomes of the austerity approach adopted in Southern Europe as well as on the upcoming initiatives of the European Commission such as the Youth Guarantee scheme. As final outcome of the seminar, particular focus was put on the need of a more integrated Europe as only frame for tackling youth unemployment effectively. ALDA will continue to be a key actor in promoting such a goal through its decentralised cooperation approach bringing together local authorities and civil society organisations across Europe.

See [Presentation from Ms Frias Julia, Notus Foundation](#) (.pdf)

See [Presentation from Mr Florentin Iancu, Vice-President of the National Youth Commission - Cartel ALFA](#) (.pdf)

See [Presentation from Mr Florian Marin, President BNS Youth Committee](#) (.pdf)

See [Presentation from Mr Giuseppe Ciccaraone, President Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini](#) (.pdf)



Democratic movements and social media - Training in Armenia

Dilijan, Armenia

The training course on Democratic Movements and Social Media started on 27 November and finished on 5 December in Dilijan, Armenia.

On 27 of November, within the EU Youth in Action programme, the Youth Cooperation Center of Dilijan, started the international training course "Democratic Movements and Social Media" in Dilijan, Armenia. Training course gathered 28 youth leaders and social workers from Czech Republic, Lithuania, Greece, Ukraine, Portugal, Switzerland, Georgia, Germany, Armenia, France, and Moldova in Dilijan, Armenia.

The training was dedicated to the role and influence of social media in democratization process in Europe. Looking at the Arab spring in 2011, social media played an important role in fostering the impact of democratic grass-root movements. Similarly civil initiatives in Eastern Europe e.g. Armenia and Georgia are widely using Web 2.0 tools to bypass censorship in order to bring their messages and demands for change to the public.

The training course was funded by Eastern Partnership Youth Window within Youth in Action programme of the European Commission.

As a partner of the project, ALDA was represented by two participants from France

NEWS FROM THE LDAs



LDA Zavidovici implements the project „FORM@INNOVA“

LDA Zavidovići is implementing activities in the frame of the project „Form@innova - Formazione e Innovazione“ per lo Sviluppo d’Insieme, funded by the region Friuli Venezia Giulia. The project is implemented in the municipality of Bratunac, on the west bank of the Drina River, at the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia: a large agricultural area divided into small plots of land for the cultivation of raspberries and other small fruits.

The project’s goal is to strengthen the local business, and in particular the Agricultural Cooperative “Insieme” and the network of its members, thus facilitating local development and fostering social cohesion.

The project was developed through the following activities:

- bringing the Agricultural Cooperative “Insieme” production site into conformity with european standards;
- training courses (courses and seminars) through participatory processes;
- implementation of a development plan that enhances the entrepreneurial existing structure;
- promotion of training and information sessions addressed to students, young people and adults in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.

One of the activities in the project was a course held on 11-12 November 2013 in Bratunac, and focused on protection on the workplace, and on criteria for certification. The course, titled „Work safety and correct use of equipment for quality certification“, was held by prof. Zdravko Delic. This was the last of 4 courses foreseen by the project. In the near future several seminars on topics related to the project are planned to be organised, namely about exchange of experiences and quality improvement in cooperative production of mixed berries.

LDA Zavidovići is acting as one of local partners, together with lead partners Provincia di Gorizia, KALLIPOLIS – Associazione non profit per uno sviluppo urbano sostenibile, Tenda per la Pace e i Diritti, IRES – Istituto di Ricerche Economiche e Sociali del Friuli Venezia Giulia, and other local partner - Zemljoradnicka Zadruga – Cooperativa agricola “INSIEME” Bratunac.



The president of ALDA, Oriano Otočan, visiting the City of Subotica, Serbia

In the framework of his official visit to Serbia, ALDA President, Oriano Otočan met the key representative of the City of Subotica, the Mayor Modest Dulic.

In the meeting he presented the activities of ALDA and the role and local contribution of the first established Local Democracy Agency in Subotica, Serbia, active since 1993.

The opportunities for further cooperation with the City of Subotica were discussed as well as the work of CSO Resource and training centre founded by LDA Subotica with the aim to develop a sustainable network of local civil society organizations and their capacities.

Also the possibility for collaboration between the municipalities from the Region of Istria and the City of Subotica was mentioned, considering the similar multicultural environment and previous good relations.

In the photo: ALDA President Oriano Otočan, Modest Dulic, the Mayor of the City of Subotica, Stanka Parac Damjanovic, ALDA SEE Regional programme coordinator, and Silvija Patarcic, LDA Subotica Delegate



New partners and horizons for LDA Verteneglio/Brtonigla

On 15 November, the annual assembly of the LDA Verteneglio/Brtonigla was held in Duino-Aurisina/Devin Nebrežina. The participants were welcomed by the words of Umberto Ademollo,

its president; Igor Gabrovec, Vice President of the Regional Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia; and Massimo Veronese, Deputy Mayor of the Municipality Duino-Aurisina.

ALDA was represented by its Vice President Alessandro Perelli, Lucio Gregoretti, sitting in the Governing Board, and Rada Orescanin, member of the Scientific Committee.

Elena Bernich, working for the LDA, presented all on-going projects and the wide range of the activities realized during the past year, highlighting the important efforts dedicated to activities for youngsters. MB Ghisletta, who opened the assembly as a representative of the city of Bellinzona, lead partner of the ADL, stated: "We are talking about important projects for the development of the concept of democracy among young people".

The future of the agency was also in the spotlight, through the presentation of a project tackling bullying, and of another project facilitating the access of Roma women on the job market in Macedonia. Partners have also presented their projects and ideas, which will strengthen a cooperation more and more important, and from now, without borders.

In the first picture: speech by Igor Gabrovec, Vice President of the Regional Council of Friuli Venezia Giulia



Eight NGOs selected for funding within the project Local Coalitions for Community Development, Montenegro

After administrative check and evaluation of the small projects submitted before deadline (22nd July 2013) the evaluation committee selected 8 out of total number of 19 projects received from NGOs operating in five municipalities in Montenegro: Niksic, Bijelo Polje, Rozaje, Ulcinj and Kotor.

During the two year project (2013/2014) the total amount to be awarded to eight local beneficiaries is up to 80.000 euros for their local projects that will be implemented in the next 6-10 months.

The contracting procedure is now in progress with the following selected NGOs active in different areas whose common denominator is contributing to participation of citizens in policy/decision making and to more effective implementation of municipal development strategies:

1. NGO Runolist, Rozaje, Project title: Promotion of sustainable tourism through involvement of youth in the Municipality of Rozaje
2. Association of young volunteers, Bijelo Polje, Project title: The establishment of a Volunteer Center and strengthening volunteer movement in the Municipality Bijelo Polje
3. NGO K-Club, Bijelo Polje, Project title: Culture of living – my building is my home
4. NGO Democratic center of Bijelo Polje, Project title: Active civil participation in decision making at local level
5. Association of young ecologists of Niksic, Project title: Increasing the level of protection of the

river Bistrica

6. Association of paraplegics Niksic, Project title: Ask us – it's about us
7. NGO Children of Montenegro, Podgorica, Project title: Building partnerships to support new social service provision in Ulcinj
8. NGO - SOS telephone for women and children victims of violence , Ulcinj, Project title: Improving social protection and safety of victims of domestic violence.

We congratulate to the awarded NGOs and look forward to working together for successful implementation of project activities.

[Read more about the project Local Coalitions for Community Development](#)



Citizen participation in decision-making process at local level. “Participation is ownership!” – Levon Barseghyan- President of Council of “Asparez” Journalists’ club – partner LDA Armenia

Gyumri, Armenia

On 5th of December 2013 the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (France) and “Local Democracy Agency” foundation (Armenia) organized a joint workshop on “Citizens Participation in decision-making process at the local level”.

Before starting the workshop Director of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies Antonella Valmorbida and director of “Local Democracy Agency” foundation director Lusine Aleksadryan met the mayor of Gyumri city, Mr. Samvel Balasanyan. The mayor welcomed the idea of having a workshop and added that the possibility of joint cooperation projects between LDA Armenia and municipality will increase in future.

The workshop intended to raise citizens’ participation in decision-making processes and visibility of “Local Democracy Agency” foundation activities and mission in Armenia.

The workshop was attended by civil society and local authorities’ representatives, civil servants of the region, Italian honorary consul, Counterpart Armenia.

The head of the department of Programs and Analysis of Gyumri municipality Hayk Sultanyan greeted the guests and underlined the importance of citizens participation in decision-making process as one of the indicators for promoting local democracy and good governance.

There were interesting and productive presentations on behalf of EAP CSF Armenian National Platform representative, Chairman of Communities Finance Officers Vahan Movsisyan about the law on Additions in the Law on Local Self-government on Citizen Participation in Local Self-government that is already in force in Armenia, Director of the Association of Local Democracy

Agencies Antonella Valmorbida on the “Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the decision-making process” adopted by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe, and President of Council of “Asparez” Journalists’ club Levon Barseghyan made an assessment on the citizens participation in Gyumri pointing out some progress in this area.

The participants discussed the possibilities of how much the law additions will be applied by the Local authorities pointing out that citizen’s participation culture and the ways of raising awareness of the citizens’ on the laws and additions should be modulated on behalf of the communities, shared with their concerns about the difficulties of citizens’ participation in the decision-making processes at local and international level, suggested to translate the Code of Good Practice into Armenian as well in order more civil society representatives can have access to it and made useful recommendations for the activities initiatives of “Local Democracy Agency” foundation in future.