

## ALDA NEWSLETTER MAY 2015



### **The Local Democracy Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, is officially established! Paving the way to local democracy, dialogue, and participation**

On 18 May 2015, the Local Democracy Dnipropetrovsk was officially inaugurated. The event was hosted by the Regional Council of the Dnipropetrovsk Region, and saw the participation of:

- Mr Evgeniy Udod, Chairman of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council of the Dnipropetrovsk Region;
- H.E. Mr Jan Tombinski, Ambassador, Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine;
- Mr Detlef Wolter, Consul General of Germany in Donetsk, Ukraine;
- Ms Natalia Romanova, Representative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe;
- Mr Bartłomiej Ostrowski, Senior Expert, Jan Nowak-Jezioranski College of Eastern Europe
- Ms Paulina Haijanen, Representative of the Committee of the Regions/Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP);
- Mr Blazej Zajac, Association of East-West Understanding, Wroclaw, Poland;
- Ms Tatyana Kirillova, Public Initiative of the Lugansk Region, Lugansk, Ukraine
- Mr Waldemar Weihs, Merkury Foundation, Walbrzych, Poland
- Ms Tetyana Karelska, Tamarisk/Centre for Support of Civic and Cultural Initiatives, Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine.

ALDA was represented by its President Oriano Otočan, its Secretary General Antonella Valmorbida, EaP Coordinator Ela Horoszko, and EaP support Alena Damaronak. The opening followed two preparatory years of work, and is a milestone for ALDA and all partners involved, being the Agency the first set up in Ukraine.

The lead partner of the newly created LDA Dnipropetrovsk is the Region Lower Silesia, Poland. The international, mixed partnership supporting the Agency includes as partners:

- Alsace Region, France
- Regional Council, Dnipropetrovsk Region, Ukraine
- Agency for Regional Development of the Dnipropetrovsk Region, Ukraine
- NGO Tamarisk from Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine
- NGO Public Initiative of the Luhansk Region from Luhansk, Ukraine
- NGO Merkury Foundation from Walbrzych, Lower Silesia, Poland
- NGO East-West Mutual Understanding from Wroclaw, Lower Silesia, Poland

The partners elected the Delegate who will lead the Agency, Ms Angelica Pilipenko, and the Deputy Delegate, Mr Kirill Batalov. On 19 May, the kick-off meeting will take place, in order to get the agency up and running, ready to support its activities through fundraising.

The mission of the Agency, the 14th in the network of ALDA, will be to promote dialogue and cooperation between local authorities and civil society in the region of Dnipropetrovsk, to build good governance and citizens' engagement, completing the work of ALDA in the Eastern Partnership region (ALDA has opened an LDA in Armenia, Gyumri, and in Georgia, in Kutaisi, and operates in Belarus with projects. It is working to open an LDA in Moldova.

There is no need to highlight how crucial the Local Democracy Agency Dnipropetrovsk is, for the region, as well as for the whole country, especially in light of the conflict affecting Ukraine. We all hope that it will pave the way for local development, governance, and participation, and that it will be the first of several LDAs in the country!

**Read more:**

Read the [speech of Ambassador Vladimir Ristovski, Representative of the Secretary General in charge of the co-ordination of the co-operation programmes in Ukraine, Council of Europe](#) (.pdf)

Read the [speech of Oriano Otočan, President of ALDA](#) (.pdf)



## Launching conference LADDER project - 5 June 2015

The Launching Conference of LADDER will be held on 5 June and will be hosted by the Committee of the Regions in Brussels.

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The Launching conference of LADDER project will be a very important occasion to discuss how to improve the promotion of Development Education at local level; how Local Authorities and CSOs are essential for Development Education and Raising awareness; how to efficiently act local, thinking global.

The event will host relevant representatives of Association of LAs, networks of Civil Society Organisations and experts on the field. Mr Lambertz, Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions will be representing the hosting Institution.

### What LADDER project is about?

- One common EU-project (3 years) coordinated by ALDA
- 26 partners & 20 associates, coming from 18 EU and 17 non EU-countries
- One major challenge: Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR)

LADDER, a 3-year project co-funded by the EU, seeks to enhance the action of Local Authorities for Development Education and Raising Awareness in the EU & the European Neighborhood. Local Authorities, in cooperation with Civil Society, have a considerable multiplier capacity and become drivers for change.

The final beneficiaries of LADDER are ordinary citizens, enhancing their awareness on global issues (short term), promoting their engagement in global challenges & poverty eradication (mid term) & leading to a change of attitudes (long term).

For further information, please consult the [Agenda of LADDER Launching conference](#).

Please, find here the [online form to register to the event](#). Registration deadline: 27 May (*registration will follow the "first come first served" rule*)

Please, find here more information on [LADDER project](#).

Read the [statement of ALDA EaP path](#), meeting on 18 May in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine - before the Riga EaP Summit



## Wrapping up DECIDE in the Final International Conference in Prijedor, BiH

The project DECIDE – DEMocratic Compact: Improving Democracy in Europe is turning to its end and the final international seminar will be held on 9-11 June in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 9 of June, the participants will discuss the achievements and challenges ahead in the EU integration process in Western Balkans in the international conference “Promoting citizen participation in democratic local policy-making in Western Balkans: status and perspectives?”.

DECIDE is a key initiative to promoting citizen participation in public life and in the decision making process at the local level. The project, funded by the Europe for Citizens programme, aims, through the establishment of a thematic network of towns and by adopting a bottom-up approach, to develop a democratic compact, namely a set of measures to increase the quality of democracy and citizen participation at local level both in the EU and Western Balkans.

Several good practices have been identified, exchanged, further elaborated and tested by the consortium of 24 municipalities and civil society organisations coming from 14 different countries in wider Europe: 4 countries of the “old” EU15, 6 countries accessing the EU between 2004 and 2007 and 4 IPA countries. This has allowed an enriching exchange among partners with different track record in the EU and its enlargement area, therefore contributing to develop a sense of belonging to a common “house”.

[Read more about the project DECIDE](#)



## ALDA General Assembly 2015 - 9 May, Podgorica Montenegro

The annual General Assembly of ALDA took place on 9th May 2015 in Podgorica, Montenegro. Europe Day was the best day to meet ALDA members, partners and friends, and to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Association.

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Mr Oriano Otočan, President of ALDA, introduced the event with his official opening, followed by the speech of Mrs Barbara Toce, Vice President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, and Mr Vladimir Rajcic, Head for economical operation and support to business from the City of Podgorica.

Mr Kerim Medjedovic, Delegate of LDA Montenegro, chaired the assembly. The members of ALDA discussed and approved a variety of topics, including the new [Strategic Views](#), which will guide the activities of the Association in the upcoming years.

The General Assembly was also the occasion to showcase the results of the project “TOPSA PATRAS”, led by Mrs Chrissa Geraga, Project Coordinator from Patras Municipality (see her [presentation](#)).

The winner of the Gianfranco Martini scholarship 2015 was announced – Mr Vedran Đublabić, PhD Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb, for his research project “[LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN BALKANS: 25 YEARS ON. Study on local government and local democracy](#)”.

The event was followed by the Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch”, the Celebration of the 15th anniversary of ALDA and the delivery of certificates for newALDA members.

#### USEFUL LINKS

See the [Agenda of the Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch”](#)

See the [Presentation of the Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch”](#)

See more info about the [Conference "Capitalisation and relaunch" and celebration of the 15th anniversary of ALDA](#)

Read the [Speech by the Ambassador Mitja Drobnič](#), Head of the Delegation of the EU to Montenegro, at ALDA’s Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch”

See more info about the [Gianfranco Martini Scholarship 2015 awarded to Dr Vedran Đublabić](#)

Read more on [LADDER project: 1st Monitoring Session and South Eastern Europe Working Group](#)

Read more on [Parliament of Montenegro opened its doors to Balkan youth](#)

Read more on [Closing conference of the project “Local Coalitions for Community Development”](#)

Read more on [Meeting of ALDA Governing Board under the auspices of the City of Podgorica, Montenegro](#)



## Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch” and Celebration of the 15th anniversary of ALDA

The Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch” and the Celebration of the 15th anniversary of ALDA took place on 9th May in Podgorica, Montenegro, following ALDA General Assembly.

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The conference was a great occasion to share with our members, partners and associates some thought about the success achieved until now and the steps forward.

The conference, made up of two panels, was introduced by **Mr. Oriano OTOČAN**, President of ALDA, and **Mr. Veselin GRBOVIC**, Mayor of Niksic, which is the city hosting the LDA Montenegro.

The first panel was dedicated to the EU Enlargement, focusing on the last 15 years achievements of ALDA and the challenges ahead. Among the speakers: **His Excellency Ambassador Mitja DROBNIC**, Delegation of the EU to Montenegro; **Ms. Snežana RADOVIC**, Director General for European Affairs, Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; **Mrs. Nada DROBNJAK**, Member of the Parliamentary Committee for EU Integration, Parliament of Montenegro and **Mrs. Barbara TOCE**, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The second panel focused on the theme of Decentralisation and the multi-stakeholder approach towards the Enlargement and Neighborhood of the EU. Among the speakers: **Ms. Daliborka ULJAREVIC**, Director NGO Center for Civic education, Montenegro; **Mr. Dragan POPOVIC**, Belgrade Policy Center Director; **Mr. Sasa SCEKIC**, Assistant to the General Secretary, Union of Municipalities of Montenegro; **Mrs. Sanja BOJANIC**, Team Leader/Programme Analyst, Democratic Governments & Economy and Environment, UNDP Montenegro; **Ms. Paula RAUZAN**, Director LDA Sisak/Operational Partner ALDA, Croatia; **Mrs. Dzenana DEDIC**, Director LDA Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina; **Mrs. Najeh SOUKI**, Executive Director, Lam Echaml, Tunisia; **Mr. Oleksiy ORLOVSKY**, Democratic practice Program Initiative Director International Renaissance Foundation, Ukraine.

The Conferences was closed by the certificate delivery for the new members of ALDA and the official reception for the 15th anniversary.

[Agenda of the Conference “Capitalisation and relaunch” and the Celebration of the 15th anniversary of ALDA](#)

Read the [speech of the Ambassador Mr. Mitja DROBNIC](#)

Read the [speech of Mrs. Barbara Toce](#)

Read the [Presentation of the Conference "Capitalisation and relaunch"](#)

Photo gallery [Conference "Capitalisation and relaunch"](#)



## **CONCORD Statement for Eastern Partnership Summit**

CONCORD released a statement addressed to Commissioner Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement negotiations, for the following Eastern Partnership Summit, which took place on 20 May in Riga. The statement is signed by Antonella Valmorbidia, Secretary General of ALDA and Chair of the EPAN Working group of CONCORD.

CONCORD, the European Consortium of civil society organisations working for Development and Relief, welcome the European Summit for Eastern Partnership. This event could and needs to represent a further step for stronger engagement of the European Union for stability, peace and democracy of all the six countries of the Eastern Partnership.

[Read the full statement](#) (.pdf)



**Summer offer for ALDA members: 3-day EU project development course. Get trained, fund your organization!**

Hands-on-field, interactive course - special prize June / September 2015

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## **Objectives**

The EU Project Development Course organised by ALDA provides participants with the necessary information and tools to take one's first steps in the field of European Union project development, in relation with the new programming period 2014-2020. Thanks to the proposed course, participants will:

- Get to know the communitarian programmes;
- Learn how to find the necessary information;
- Learn how to develop a project proposal, and implement a project.

Participants will receive the certificate of attendance awarded by ALDA, strategic partner of the European Commission and of the Council of Europe.

## **Programme and schedule (for a tailor-made programme, please contact us):**

The course will be structured during 3 days of training (8 hours / day, 24 hours in total):

### **DAY 1**

Project cycle management

### **DAY 2**

EU funds:

- How to get informed
- 2014-2020 Programmes (with a particular focus on the most relevant programmes in the field of education, culture, employment, social sector, environment, sport, governance, cooperation, and research)

### **DAY 3**

Implementation of a project

Communication and visibility

Financial management of a project.

## **Cost and organizational matters**

Special offer from June to September 2015 for ALDA members - € 2,750 plus travel, accommodation, and board for 1 ALDA trainer.

3 days course, 1 expert ALDA trainer, number of participants and cost per participant at the discretion of the hosting member.

## **The hosting member is in charge for:**

- supporting financially travel, accommodation, board for ALDA trainer
- printing materials (prepared by ALDA) and providing a fully equipped room (with projector, board, internet connection); serving coffee breaks as necessary identifying participants. Please note: ALDA is not setting the maximum amount of participants, or the cost per participant. The hosting

member can therefore set the number of participants and the price per participant, and keep the difference between the cost of ALDA course and the money raised. The level of interaction trainer / participants will however be higher with a more limited number of participants.

**Languages:** Italian, English, French; simultaneous translation with headsets is also an option, in case the hosting member can organize and financially support it.

Week days and weekends available during the summer months.

**For further information and bookings:**

If you are interested, please contact us at least 2 weeks prior to the desired date. Courses will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Contact person:** Marco Boaria, Head of ALDA Resource and Development department - marco.boaria@aldaintranet.org

**Our trainers:**

**Marco Boaria**

Since 2008, Marco is the Head of the Resource and Development Unit of ALDA. He has 15 years of experience in the international field, with a specific focus on active citizenship. He works on programmes development, as trainer, project coordinator and supervisor.

**Anna Ditta**

Since 2011, Anna works in ALDA Project Development Unit. She has 8 years of experience in the field of development and implementation of projects, in particular with EU funding programmes. She has a degree in International Policies and a master in European Studies and Project Management. She works on fundraising and project development.



## Parliament of Montenegro opened its doors to Balkan youth

On the 8th of May, 2015, Podgorica celebrated the Day of Europe. This same day, a group of young people, part of the Balkan regional platform for youth participation and dialogue, got the opportunity to engage and promote youth participation and democracy in the National Parliament of Montenegro. The Parliament opened its doors in welcome of these young people who saluted the preparedness and openness of this important institution.

The young participants had a chance not only to visit the Parliament but also engage in debate with Members of the Parliament. The panel discussion was held with seven MPs: who presented their work to

the youth and discussed on the topic “Youth in the process of EU Integration”. The young group had the opportunity not only to hear the professional political approach towards youth in their part of EU accession, but also to ask questions and share ideas.

“The youth are the main reason why the Balkans is moving towards EU, the youth have the power to build stronger paths” said Marija Maja Čatović, MP and President of the committee for European Integration. The youngsters were particularly interested in the state of youth participation in Montenegro and the Region. The MPs were glad to answer “it is because of the young that we are working really hard to modernize democracy, you are the future of our countries” stated MP Catovic.

The youngsters particularly enjoyed the visit of the Parliament plenary room where the members of the Parliament hold their sessions. They were sitting in the places of the Members of the Parliament and were being presented the work of the Parliament and its history. The group even had a short unofficial meeting with the President of the Parliament. It was a great opportunity to talk about the work of the Parliament.

This event was part of a three-day study visit, followed by visits to NGOs, Europe Day performance and the General Assembly of ALDA. The event is part of the IPA Operational Grant project funded by the EU, through the programme Civil Society Facility - Operating Grants to IPA CSO Associations. The programme is coordinated by the Association of the Local Democracy Agencies together with 8 LDAs from 5 Balkan countries: Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

#### [Photo gallery](#)



### Closing conference of the project “Local Coalitions for Community Development”

On the 7th May, the closing conference of the project “Local Coalitions for Community Development” took place in Podgorica, Montenegro.

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The closing conference “Democratic participation and good local governance” provided space for overview of the project results achieved and for the debate on reinforcing the role of civil society in local community development policy making and implementation.

At the event, curated by Stanka Parac, project manager of ALDA, some representatives of municipalities included in ALDA sub-granting Programme were also present: Niksic, Bijelo Polje, Ulcinj, Rozaje. Among the Speakers from Montenegro: Jelena Vujović, member of the Council for Cooperation with NGOs from Nikšić, Sanel Ljušković, Head of the Project Centet of Bijelo Polje, Ardian Mavric, Vice President from Ulcinj, and Ajsel Kalac, Secretary for culture, social activities and sports from Rožaje.

The overview of project activities and results was coordinated by Kerim Medjedović, Delegate of LDA Montenegro, while Dzenana Dedić from LDA Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Ljubica Nikolić from Knjaževac Municipality (Serbia) had a speech about Co-operation between civil society and local authorities.

The event was also an occasion to welcome the participation of some speakers operating in the framework of ALDA sub-granting programmes- exchange of good practice: Natalia Sovkoplias (UTC - Slovakia), Miroslav Kobasa (Leh Sapieha Foundation - Belarus), and Elita Kresse (LALRG - Latvia).

Some Presentation of Sub-grantees' activities and results were also delivered during the 1st workshop by Miodrag Karadžić, Luboder Dzevdet, Marko Stojanovic, Hatixhe Nelaj, respectively representatives of Young Ecologists Niksic, Runolist Rozaje, Volunteer Centre Bijelo Polje and SOS Ulcinj.

During the 2nd workshop some presentations were delivered by Zdravko Janjušević, Biljana Mrkaić, Sabra Dečević and Rafet Mulić, respectively representatives of Democratic Centre Bijelo Polje, Association of Paraplegics Niksic, NVO Djeca Crne Gore, Ulcinj, K-Club Bijelo Polje.

[Photo gallery of Closing conference of the project "Local Coalitions for Community Development"](#)



## The President of the Region Lower Normandy on an official visit in Macedonia

On the 25th and the 26th of April 2015, M. Laurent Beauvais, the President of the Region Lower Normandy, France was on an official visit in Macedonia to celebrate 10 years of cooperation between the two territories.

This anniversary was also an occasion for the inauguration of the new office and enlarged team of ALDA Skopje, in charge of the programme for decentralized cooperation between Lower Normandy and Macedonia and other regional and European projects.

The office was inaugurated by the President Laurent Beauvais alongside with the Mayor of the city of Skopje, Koce Trajanovski, the French Ambassador in Macedonia, Ms Laurence Auer, the State Secretary of local self-government Ms Biljana Cvetanovska Gugoska. The Macedonian members and partners of ALDA participated in the event.

The President Beauvais also visited the city Ohrid as well as the French cemetery from World War One in the city of Bitola. He met Mayors and representatives of Ohrid, Bitola, Novaci and other partners of the project.

This visit was an important stepping stone for the cooperation between Lower Normandy and Macedonia as well as for the office of ALDA Skopje. This tribute on the 10th anniversary of the cooperation indicates an incentive to continue on with bigger challenges in the future.



## ALDA at the Civil Society Europe plenary meeting

Mr Aldo Xhani, coordinator of the Citizenship programme, represented ALDA at the plenary meeting of Civil Society Europe (CSE), held on 27th April in Brussels. The event gathered together European networks of associations and NGOs that share a common vision for Europe, and will work towards regenerating the European project around the shared values of equality, solidarity, inclusiveness and democracy.

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As many as 34 European networks confirmed their participation in the newly established platform. The Brussels event was, in particular, an opportunity to further build the organisational structure of CSE and elect its Steering Committee's representatives. Two main proposals of action were put forward for debates: the creation of a working group on civic space and fundamental rights and a joint initiative between CSE and the European Year for Development Alliance (EYD2015).

As one of the main stakeholders in the European Year of Citizens Alliance 2013, ALDA confirmed its strong support and commitment to the development of the platform by bringing in its 15 year expertise in the field of active citizenship and good governance at local level. ALDA being a member of the European Year for Development Alliance, it will also contribute to facilitate joint actions between the two initiatives.

## NEWS FROM THE LDAs



## LDA Georgia on the road - Study visit in Strasbourg

Right after participating to ALDA General Assembly and 15th anniversary in Montenegro, the Director of the Local Democracy Agency Kutaisi - Georgia, Nino Tvaltvadze, took part in a study visit in Strasbourg.

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From 11 to 13 May, Mrs Tvaltvadze participated into the visit together with Tamar Gvaramadze, Executive Director of the Georgian Young Lawyers` Association, and Irma Pavliashvili, GYLA expert on governance issues. GYLA is a partner of the Local Democracy Agency Georgia.

Strasbourg, lead partner of the agency, was the setting for several important meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- Agnieszka Szklanna, Secretary to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- Guenter Schirmer, Deputy Head of the Secretariat, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- Nawel Rafik-Elmrini, Vice Mayor of Strasbourg
- Representatives of two French NGOs active in Georgia, Saint Georges and Action against Hunger.



## LDA Kosovo is operational again! MoU signed with “Trentino con i Balcani”

On 21st of April 2015 our Secretary General Antonella Valmorbida and the Director of Association Trentino con i Balcani, Maurizio Camin, signed a Memorandum of Understanding which reestablishes the cooperation between the three entities, ALDA, LDA Kosovo and the Association Trentino con i Balcani, which supported and cooperated with LDA Kosovo for a long time.

The Memorandum of Understanding is an important step towards the LDA Kosovo fully operational again, reintegrated to the network of LDAs and serving as ALDA’s partner and point of reference in Kosovo. The delegate of the LDA Kosovo is going to be Elbert Krasniqi who was acting as a delegate already before. Focus will be put on activities promoting local economic development, health and education.

In June representatives of Association Trentino con i Balcani, LDA Kosovo and ALDA will meet to further boost their cooperation and the LDA activities, and to celebrate the restart of LDA Kosovo.