

ALDA NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2015



Official (re)launch of LDA Albania in Vlora

The Local Democracy Agency Albania is back in action to promote good local governance and citizen participation in the southern part of the country. Following a recent process of revitalisation based upon a new successful partnership strategy, several meetings have taken place in 2014 and 2015 to identify and link together all local and regional governments as well as civil society associations from Albania and the EU supportive of the relaunch process.

The new LDA, will be established in Vlora, has officially been launched on 24th October on the occasion of the international seminar on "Improving citizen participation and good governance at local and regional level in Albania", following the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding. The event was an opportunity to present the LDA project to key stakeholders from the local to the international level. The objectives and the expected outcomes of the LDA have been showcased by all the partners supporting the project: ALDA, Apulia Region, the Metropolitan City of Bari, Region Vlora, the Municipality of Vlora, the Municipality of Fier, the Municipality of Patos, Center for Reserch, Cooperation and Development, UNISCO and Learning Cities.

"Supporting local democracy in Albania: best practices and challenges" was the title of the first panel of the event, moderated by **Mr. Oriano Otočan**, President of ALDA.

"The Local Democracy Agency in Vlora city is a cornerstone to strengthen the local democracy and to accelerate our path towards the European Union" stated **Mr. Dritan Leli**, Mayor of Vlora, while **Mr. Sadrit Danaj**, President of Region Vlora, said *"The LDA will be our point of connection with Europe"*. Both the Municipality and the Region of Vlora cooperated with interest and commitment to the relaunch of the LDA.

LDA Albania joins the well-established network of 14 LDAs under ALDA's umbrella. The LDA programme represents a key and innovative tool to good local governance in the Neighbourhood. It supports capacity building of civil society and local authorities and implements activities at the local level. The LDAs are by principle not based in capital cities. The Local Democracy Agencies act as promoters of democracy and local self-government and also promote human rights and sustainable development. The Agencies are an operational platform of debate, capacity building and shared cooperation between civil society and local authorities.

Useful links:

[Agenda](#)

[Photo gallery](#)



A step forward towards the establishment of LDA Moldova! Informative event at the Council of Europe

On occasion of the Congress Session taking place in Strasbourg on 20-22 October 2015, ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy, in cooperation with Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM), organised an informative event presenting the Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Moldova, on 22nd October at the Council of Europe.

Aim of the event was to present the LDA partnership mechanism and its objectives to the participants and potential partners of the upcoming LDA, who are interested in supporting the development of local communities, local democracy and citizen participation in Moldova. International partners, including regions, municipalities and NGOs from the EU Members States, were involved in providing financial support to the LDA, participating to its activities, preparing and implementing projects, as well as encouraging networking and participation among communities.

The LDA Moldova will form part of a wider network of LDAs already existent in the European Neighbourhood, working towards the same objectives to foster educational, economic and professional exchanges. Its aims are to actively contribute to capacity-building on the ground, on an individual, as well as on an institutional and organisational level, progressively feeding into the European Commission's mandate to support democratic institution building as a vital European Neighbourhood Policy objective.

The presentation was attended by **Mr. Andreas Kiefer**, Secretary General of Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, **Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida**, Secretary General of ALDA, **Mr. Andris Jaunsleinis**, Member of Ventspils Municipal Council of Latvia and of the European Committee of the Regions, **Ms Nawel Rafik Elmirini**, Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg, **Ms Tatiana Badan**, President of CALM and **Mr. Alexandru Osadci**, Project Manager of CALM.

Useful links:

[Agenda](#)

[Photo gallery](#)



Stabilisation and Association Agreement signed between European Union and Kosovo – ALDA in Kosovo for this historic moment

Kosovo* signed with the European Union the [Stabilisation and Association Agreement](#). This represents an historic fact for the stabilisation and normalisation of the situation of the country and for paving the way of a period of reforms and steps towards a possible European integration.

During this important day, the Secretary General of ALDA, Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, visited the Local Democracy Agency in Kosovo* and different other stakeholders. The LDA in Kosovo* is now based in Pec/Peja and run by the Delegate Elbert Krasniqi. The lead partner is the Association Trentino for the Balkans ([Associazione Trentino per i Balcani](#) from Trento, in Italy). Their activities are multi-faceted and support the development of local governance and community all over the Pec/Peja area. The Italian Association was represented by its Chair, Maurizio Camin.

The visit of Mrs. Valmorbida was also fundamental to reconnect with the local political stakeholders such the Mayor of Peja/Pec, Mr. Gazmend Muhaxeri and with Mr. Safet Kamberl, Deputy Mayor of Mitrovica. For all these important and known contacts of ALDA, there is a perspective of membership to ALDA and a more intense connection in the work of local governance and support to local communities. Mrs. Valmorbida also met the Mayor of Gjilane, Mr. Lutfi Haziri, who was the initial founder of the LDA Gjilane in 2004.

“It is a great moment for Kosovo* and I am confident that it will be a milestone for the supporting stabilisation in the country and in the region. The role of local governments working with communities is fundamental and will be even more in the future”, said Antonella Valmorbida.

Useful links:

[Article about the meeting - Municipality of Mitrovica](#)



Celebrating the European Local Democracy Week (ELDWW) 2015: busy & productive week for ALDA!

During the week of 12th-18th October 2015, we celebrated the [European Local Democracy Week \(ELDWW\) 2015](#).

The initiative was coordinated by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and targets specifically local and regional authorities coming from the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, which organised public events and initiatives involving citizens with the aim of fostering democratic participation at a local level. "Living together in multicultural societies: respect, dialogue, interaction" was the leading theme of the 2015 edition.

ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy, who has always been engaged in promoting citizen participation at local level through activities that facilitate cooperation between local authorities and civil society, supported the initiative by taking active part to events and meetings all over Europe and its Neighbourhood. Several events were booked in our calendar:

The week started on **Monday 12th October** with the presentation of the project [CHOICE - Cultural Heritage: Opportunity for Improving Civic Engagement in Dnipropetrovsk](#), Ukraine. **Tuesday** was marked with the Brussels "[Open Days – European week of Regions and Cities](#)" event, where Marco Boaria, Head of Resources and Development Unit of ALDA, attended the conferences for three days. Katica Janeva and Sanja Trpkovska from ALDA Office in Skopje were also present in Brussels and attended a two-day seminar on Transformative communication. The team was invited by the Macedonian Mission to attend the "Open Day of the City of Skopje in Brussels". On **Wednesday 14th October**, Ivana Dimitrovska, Head of ALDA Skopje attended the meeting of the France-Balkans network in Paris, France. Moving from France to Italy, in Turin, on **Thursday**, Antonella Valmorbida, Secretary General of ALDA, together with Nikos Gamouras, LADDER Project Manager, Alessandra Roccasalvo, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Kosovo, Paolo Giaccaria, Professor at the University of Turin, Olena Masluykivska, Expert of the Ukrainian School of Political studies and Associate Professor of University of Kiev, Nino Tvaltvadze, Executive Director of the Local Democracy Agency Georgia, and Fabio Masini, Professor at the University Roma Tre and Secretary General of the Italian Association of the European Movement (CIME) were present at the [3rd World Forum on Local Economic Development – Workshop "Local governments as drivers for change. Localizing the SDGs implementation through the LED approach. The Eastern Partnership \(EaP\) experience"](#). Back in Brussels, on **Friday**, the members of [ALDA Governing Board met at the Committee of the Regions](#). Attended by Antonella Valmorbida, Secretary General of ALDA, and by Mattia Brazzale, Assistant to the Secretary General, the meeting concluded this European Local Democracy Week, making sure that ALDA maintains its' course on the path of democracy, good governance and citizen participation.

Follow us on our website and social media channels: #EuropeanLocalDemocracyWeek #ELDWW2015



ALDA at the Autumn Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Strasbourg!

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities held its [29th Session](#) in Strasbourg, from 20th to 22nd October 2015.

The Session was dedicated to the celebration of the 30 years of the milestone of Local Democracy in Europe, the [European Charter on Local Self Government](#).

ALDA has always been close to the activities of the Congress to support local governance and citizen participation. The session represented a place for lobbying with the members on the field of interest of ALDA and LDAs and also for meeting many partners and members.

This week was particularly active with two important meetings dedicated to [rights of women and local communities in Turkey](#) and to the informative event for the [LDA Moldova](#).

The Secretary General of ALDA, Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, together with ALDA's staff, attended the events and liaise with other partners in the field, reinforcing the established partnerships and welcoming new ones.



"Bridges of Expertise to Fight Gender Based Violence": presentation of the Guide and best practices at the Council of Europe

On Wednesday 21st October 2015, ALDA and the Turkish Cappadocian Women's Solidarity Association presented the Guide and collection of good practice produced in the framework of the two-year project [Bridges of Expertise to Fight Gender Based Violence](#), at the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg. The event was organised during the **29th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities**, fully corresponding to its main agenda: **Local responses to human rights challenges – migration, discrimination, social inclusion**.

The project, led by **Cappadocian Women's Solidarity Association**, addressed the issue of fighting gender based violence and aimed to support capacity building of local and national Turkish NGOs on combating violence against women and gender violence, to foster the exchange of best practice with EU based counterparts and to improve the situation in local communities by promoting partnerships with local authorities that offer services to women.

The event was, at the same time, an occasion to launch an advocacy campaign for combating violence against women and for marking **2016 as the European Year to end violence against women**.

Among the guest speakers of the event there were: **Antonella Valmorbida**, Secretary General of ALDA; **Gaye Doganoglu**, Vice-President of the Congress; **Hayriye Demirebilek**, President of the Women's Solidarity Association from Nevsehir; **Yusuf Kaya**, Municipality of Nevşehir; **Muhammed Öztürk**, Ahiler Development Agency of Nevşehir; **Necati Akkaş**, Municipality of Zonguldak; **Baki Kara**, Municipality of Ereğli; and **Leyla Kahraman**, Professor of the University of Nevşehir, in Turkey.

Useful links:

[Official invitation](#)

[Photogallery](#)



The Nobel Peace Prize 2015: Tunisia in the spotlight

ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy, wishes to express its satisfaction and appreciation of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the **“Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet”**, composed of four Civil Society Organisations: the *Tunisian General Labour Union* (UGTT, Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail), the *Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts* (UTICA, Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat), the *Tunisian Human Rights League* (LTDH, La Ligue Tunisienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme), and the *Tunisian Order of Lawyers* (Ordre National des Avocats de Tunisie).

During these last years, ALDA intensified its action in Tunisia contributing, together with the associations of the civil society, to the strengthen and the promotion of a pluralist democracy, carried out after the “Jasmin Revolution” of 2011.

“It is still a long process – declared Mr. Alessandro Perelli, Vice-President and Responsible for the Mediterranean Working Group of ALDA – ***but, despite the terroristic attacks to the Museum in Tunis and in Sousse, Tunisian people have shown a great maturity, as well as desire to proceed along the path of democratic and civil rights. The elections and the approval of the new Constitution represent an important moment of citizen and social participation.*”**

ALDA's Governing Board approved a document which provides for the establishment of a new Local Democracy Agency in 2016, in Bizerte, together with the participation of Tunisian and European partners.

Very recently the European Parliament approved a resolution consisting in the use of new European funds which will be destined to Tunisia.

Alessandro Perelli

International relations and strategic infrastructures

Friuli Venezia-Giulia Region

Vice-President of ALDA

Useful links

[Statement of Alessandro Perelli, Vice-President of ALDA](#) .pdf version



ALDA at the Open Days 2015 in Brussels

Marco Boaria, Head of ALDA's Resources and Development Unit, attended the EU Committee of the Region's European Week of Regions and Cities on 12-15 October in Brussels, while Ela Horoszko, Project Manager and Eastern Partnership Coordinator, joined the joint EuroNEST - CORLEAP seminar on "Eastern Partnership Territorial and Parliamentary Cooperation: Revising the Relations, Implementing Association Agreements" on 13th October.

The programme of the Open Days 2015 encompassed 140 workshops spread across Brussels and was an opportunity for discussion and best practices sharing among regional and local authorities, civil society and the industry representatives. ALDA has been participating in the Open Days since many years and in that capacity it took an active part in many of the workshops held.

Together with the colleagues from ALDA Skopje, Katica Janeva and Sanja Trpkovska, Marco and Ela also had a chance to attend a reception hosted by the Mayor of Skopje, Mr Koce Trajanovski, organised within the framework of the Open Days. The City of Skopje and ALDA have a successful cooperation for several years on different projects.



Meeting of ALDA Governing board in Brussels, on Friday 16th October

The meeting of ALDA Governing Board was held in Brussels, in the Committee of the Regions, on Friday 16th October.

The meeting was the occasion for making the point on the current activities and to discuss about the strengthening of the association in the upcoming months. Indeed, after the approval of the new strategic views, during the [General Assembly in Podgorica](#), the Governing Board members were updated about the activities done so far, and those one which are foreseen in the next year.

The meeting was an excellent opportunity to discuss several other topics, such as the paper on "Multiculturalism and Integration in Europe". The paper is focusing on the importance of cultural diversity and proposing some recommendations on how ALDA action can contribute to the promotion of social inclusion and integration through participation at the local level. The text was discussed and approved by the members.

The Governing Board concluded its meeting by working on the organisation of the next General Assembly, which will be held in May 2016.

Useful links:

[News about "Multiculturalism and Integration in Europe"](#)

[Photo gallery](#)



Local governments as drivers for change: ALDA's workshop at the World LED Forum 2015

From 13 to 16 October 2015, the 3rd edition of the World Forum of Local Economic Development (LED Forum), took place in Turin, Italy.

The World LED (Local Economic Development) Forum 2015 offered the opportunity to explore experiences and practices capable of enhancing the importance of LED as a means to realise the development agenda at

a local level. 2015 is a landmark year, since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are coming to an end and the new Sustainable Development Goals have been adopted for the eradication of poverty in the next 15 years. It is also the [European Year for Development 2015](#), a Year dedicated to raising awareness of EU citizens on development issues and informing them about the role of the EU in the field.

ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy, actively participated to this 3rd Edition of the LED Forum 2015, organizing the workshop **“Local governments as drivers for change. Localizing the SDGs implementation through the LED approach. The Eastern Partnership (EaP) experience”**, on 15th of October, from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm at Polo Reale (Turin). The workshop was developed under the LADDER Project in cooperation with the coordinator of the Public Private Cooperation for Development, one of the 6 Thematic Paths of LADDER.

Moderator of the session was **Antonella Valmorbida**, Secretary General of ALDA, bringing the EaP dimension and the [LADDER project](#). Different experts in the field, as well as, representatives of Local Authorities (LAs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) reflected over ways of promoting and localizing the implementation of the SDGs through the LED approach, an approach that aims at generating sustainable local economic opportunities, developed under a strategically planned and locally driven partnership approach involving public & private actors, academia and Civil Society.

Among the speakers: **Alessandra Roccasalvo**, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Kosovo, **Paolo Giaccaria**, Professor at the University of Turin, **Olena Masluykivska**, Expert of the Ukrainian School of Political studies and Associate Professor of University of Kiev, **Nino Tvaltvadze**, Executive Director of the Local Democracy Agency Georgia, and **Fabio Masini**, Professor at the University Roma Tre and Secretary General of the Italian Association of the European Movement (CIME).

Promoting the role of LAs as drivers for Development is among the main priority of the LADDER project, role of which is being more and more recognized at European and Global level, following also the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (commonly called SDGs).

“The participants were great and the interventions were also very interesting!” - said Nikos Gamouras, LADDER Project Manager – “ [...] We want to promote the project. We want to promote the approach, which is local authorities working with civil society at local level to raise awareness of citizens, engage them, and hopefully in the end, seeing it as a process, change attitudes for development”

On the 14th, Mrs Olena Masluykivska intervened during the panel on “How innovation can be inclusive”, during which she presented some case studies from Ukraine and showcasing the approach of the LADDER project.

Useful links:

[World LED Forum website](#)

[Agenda of ALDA's workshop](#)

[LADDER project website](#)

[Photo gallery](#)

[Minutes of the workshop](#)



Cooperation with the Association for Community Self Organisation Assistance - Ukraine on the move

The Ukrainian member of ALDA, the Association for Community Self Organisation Assistance, held its annual coordination event in Kiev on 9th and 10th of October. The General Secretary of ALDA, Antonella Valmorbida, took part in the event and had the possibility to stress the importance of this cooperation.

[The Association for Community Self Organisation Assistance](#) represents a network of more than 10 regional centers, which are active in the promotion of concrete projects of animation of communities and citizens. Their work is to strengthen the participation attitude and activities with the local authorities and local groups. Many of these examples were reported by the representatives of the regional centers. The work of the Association is also towards legislative improvement for decentralisation and possibilities of active citizenship at the local level. At the plenary session, three representatives of the National Parliament took part in the event and updated the participants on the state of the reforms, which are unfortunately, relatively slowed currently. The next expected momentum will be during the regional elections, which will take place on the 25th of October.

The Chairman of the Association for Community Self Organisation Assistance, Andrii Krupnyk, showed a great interest to embark soon on new activities and programmes with ALDA. "It is a chance that our organisations could work together in Ukraine since I recognize in this network all potential change makers", confirmed Antonella Valmorbida.

Useful Links:

[Intervention of Antonella Valmorbida - video 1](#)

[Intervention of Antonella Valmorbida - video 2](#)

[Intervention of Antonella Valmorbida - video 3](#)



Event Milan: YOU CAN MAKE A CHANGE – Sustainable development 2.0

On 28-29 October 2015, ALDA participated to the event YOU CAN MAKE A CHANGE - Sustainable development 2.0, organised by the Civil Society Alliance EYD2015 in the framework of CONCORD, which took place in Milan.

This event was the second in the CONCORD EYD2015 project and involved NGOs, institutions and EU citizens, in order to discuss about the new global challenges that all countries have to face: how do we build societies that thrive and that look after the interests of current generations, as well as the interests of future generations, and of the planet? How do we build societies that are fair, prosperous and respectful of the planet we live on?

The event wanted to use the EYD2015 as the opportunity to outreach and work closely with the sectors that are also working for development, such as social sector, trade unions, environmental, gender, health, youth, etc, and it was a good occasion to foster the conversation with other networks in order to share best practices and challenges, identifying what can be done together to enhance the impact of Civil Society actions in Europe and globally and to explain the 'Universality' principle of the SDGs.

Furthermore, the key role of Civil Society at all levels in the achievement of the SDGs was highlighted, Local Authorities were invited to become more present in development actions, and of course the participation of citizens was fostered and visibility to initiatives led by citizens and CSOs in the EU and in partner countries promoting solutions to global issues had relevance.

The event was the occasion to clarify and explain key words such as, decentralised cooperation, development localisation and new SDGs, Eastern Partnership, MED policy of EU and local governance.

Marco Boaria, Head of Resources and Development Unit of ALDA, participated as member of the Steering Committee of the EYD2015 Civil Society Alliance, while Antonella Valmorbida, Secretary General of ALDA, moderated the workshop on the role of LAs in development on 29th October.

The event took place in Milan EXPO on 28th and in Milan City Hall on 29th.

Useful links:

[Program of the event](#)

[Photo gallery](#)

[Presentation](#)



ALDA at the DEAR Fair organized by the European Commission in Brussels

On 22nd and 23rd October 2015, the EU DEAR (Development Education and Awareness Raising Programme) Fair was organized by the European Commission in Brussels.

The DEAR Fair brought together an exhibition of around 80 projects from all EU countries, supported by the EU DEAR programme, a programme implemented by civil society actors and local authorities in EU and acceding countries. The projects supported by the DEAR programme work towards an increased awareness of citizens and critical engagement on development issues in the current global context.

The LADDER project was showcased at the exhibition forum while its approach and the role of Local Authorities were presented during a parallel workshop on the 22nd of October by the project manager of LADDER, Nikos Gamouras.

For more information on the project, visit the [website](#)



The new regional project on cultural heritage as a means to improve civic engagement - "CHOICE" starts in partnership with organisations from Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia

ALDA and its partners – EuroBelarus International Consortium, Centre for Cultural Management from Ukraine, ICOM Moldova National Committee, Millennium Foundation for Education and Research from Armenia, and the Belarussian Public Association Centre for Social Innovations – kicked off a new project on cultural heritage as an opportunity for conscious and engaged citizenry in the summer 2015.

The project's objective is to enhance the civil society's role and to build its organisational capacities to develop a heritage-friendly living environment in Belarus, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine and across the Eastern Neighbourhood in general.

Over the past few weeks, the partners organised country-based project presentations in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel and Grodno (Belarus), Lviv, Cherkasy, Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolayiv (Ukraine), Yerevan (Armenia), in Chisinau and in northern Moldova, the district of Soroca, and in Vanadzor (Armenia)

At the presentations the partners announced the call for proposals to engage the interested local organisations through the regranting scheme. The first stage of the application ran until the end of October. It was open to all the Belarusian, Ukrainian, Armenia and Moldova civil society organisations active in the fields of local development and protection and preservation of culture heritage. The selected initiatives will benefit from organisational development and project design assistance ahead of the final call for submission in the second stage.

It will be a great opportunity for the interested organisations to gain new skills and develop expertise as agents for socio-economic change in their communities. They will also receive a chance to develop their organisational change plan thanks to the assistance of the project country teams.

Useful links:

[Presentation of CHOICE in Minsk, Belarus](#)

[Presentation of CHOICE in Chisinau, Moldova](#)

[Presentation of CHOICE in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine](#)

[Presentation of CHOICE in Vanadzor, Armenia](#)



Kick-off meeting of project CARAVAN NEXT in Idom, Denmark

From the 4th to 8th October, the kick-off meeting of the project [CARAVAN NEXT](#) took place in Idom (Denmark).

CARAVAN NEXT is an initiative funded by the European Commission in the frame of the programme Creative Europe, sub-programme culture – strand larger scale cooperation projects.

The project is the follow up of the recently closed [CARAVAN - ARTISTS ON THE ROAD – COMMUNITY THEATRE IN PLACES OF CRISES & RENASCENCE](#). It aims at bringing the Community theatre to European local communities in order to empower them to develop artistic activities and, through them, convey messages related to the macro theme, such as the European challenges of the new millennium.

The consortium encompasses both old partners of CARAVAN as well as new organizations. The 12 partners of this project, led by Odin Teatret, gathered together to get to know each other, to get introduced to the key concepts of the action, to develop a common language and identify good approach for the action. The methodology, as well as content-wise and administrative aspects were discussed during the first Steering Committee of the project.

On 7th October, at 14h.00 CET, the press conference of the project was held in the headquarter of the Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium – Odin Teatret.

Useful links:

[Newsletter](#)

[Live streaming of the press conference](#)



Busy October for LADDER: Launch of the project video & of two participative initiatives!

In the framework of [Shining Stars of Europe](#), a contest organised under the umbrella of EYD 2015 – the European Year for Development, ALDA finalised a video presenting its project [LADDER – Local Authorities as drivers for Development Education and Raising Awareness](#).

The videos submitted to the competition, coming from all over the world, aim to present existing examples or innovative ideas about development cooperation and to foster our joint sense of responsibility and solidarity.

Please find here the [video of LADDER](#).

Watch & support LADDER video by sharing it also among your networks!

How to vote?

- Visit the [Shining Stars website](#)
- Click on **Current Edition** and then on Vote
- Choose the **LADDER video** among the 35 videos submitted (if you cannot see it immediately, click on view more to show all videos)
- Click on the video to watch it, and then on the **green "v"** to vote it.

[Description of Shining Stars Europe - 4th Edition](#)

In addition, other two participative initiatives have been launched during the last month. The **Citizen Journalist initiative** aims to create a network of around 50 non-professional civic journalists, coming from the countries of LADDER consortium, who are interested to have their say on development issues through articles, interviews, videos, cartoons, blog articles, etc.), while the object of the **Slogan Competition initiative** is to raise students and pupils' awareness on development in all the partners' countries, by involving them in the production of slogans.

Interested in getting involved in LADDER initiatives? Stay tuned on [our website!](#)



Promoting Active European Citizenship – Environment component

On 29th September, ALDA, represented by Mr. Mattia Brazzale, Assistant to the Secretary General's office attended the conference: "[Closing the loop in the Circular Economy: contributions and expectations from Europe's local and regional authorities](#)", organised in Brussels by the Committee of the Regions.

The conference looked at what meant for LRAs to act as key players in the circular economy, and the Committee of the Regions sought to contribute to European Commission's new circular economy roadmap, proposing some contribution in the field of waste management. Europe's commitment for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth requires a more comprehensive and holistic approach in the field of environment protection field. Waste management was identified as one of the most important issues to closing the loop and ultimately reaching the goal of a circular and self-sustainable economy.

Amongst the speakers of the conference, there were Mrs Sirpa Hertell, Vice-chair of the CoR Commission for Environment (ENVE), Mr. Michel Lebrun, former President of the Committee of the Region and former Minister of Wallonia Region (Belgium), Mr. Cuno van Geet, Senior Policy Advisor of Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, as well as other representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament, the CEMR, and other international networks working on the topic.

As far as waste management is concerned, local authorities have a key role to play because of the link they represent between citizens and producers. It does not concern only the collection of municipal waste, but also the production and consumption of goods. In these fields, cooperation and exchange of experience and best practices among LAs represent a central keystone and can assume a major role to tackling the challenges that different communities are nowadays facing.

The EU-funded project [WE-NET: Working for ENvironmentally Educated Towns](#) heads precisely in this direction. The initiative is supported by the Europe for Citizens programme and will bring together and establish a network of municipalities from across Europe in order to work together on a common goal, facilitating knowledge exchange and building up a basis of further communication and cooperation on waste management and recycling. The first international event will be taking place in Thiene (Vicenza), Italy from 12th to 15th November 2015.



Plants and nature: Cultural heritage for a local economic development in Macedonia and Normandy

“Aromatic and medical plants: a cultural heritage to valorise” is a project organized by *Savoir-faire and Co* of Lower Normandy and *Rural coalition* of Macedonia.

The 2 partners have been working for 6 months on the uses of the plants in the two territories and the expertise of the professionals on it. In the beginning of October 2015, the Normand producers of plants came to Macedonia to discover the plants production and transformation there and also to exchange with their homologs.

During one week, they visited the plantations and they observed the Macedonian producers. At the end of the visit, a conference was opened by the French Ambassador Laurence Auer, who invited the Macedonian stakeholders to exchange with the French producers. The conversations clearly showed the similarities and differences between the realities of their work in the both territories.

This project, for its singularity, showed how much the environment can be used, respectfully, to develop a local economy. By exchanging expertise, this project is expecting to make this economy sustainable for the professional and for their territories.

Laurence Auer, Ambassador of France, told during the conference how much the plants and in general, the nature, is a great asset for Macedonia and that this kind of initiative is a good step for economic development.

This visit in Macedonia is the first part of the project implemented by the two partners. In 2016, the Macedonian producers will visit their French homologs and will experience their realities and the technics they are developing in Normandy.

This project is funded in the framework of the call for projects 2015/2016 of the [Decentralized Cooperation Lower Normandy - Macedonia](#). This programme is coordinated by ALDA.



Twinning territories: The Days of Culture of Pelagonia welcomed two contemporary dancers from Normandy

For the 3rd year, the Pelagonia Region in Macedonia cooperated with the territorial organization “Pays de la Baie du Mont-Saint-Michel” from France. Since the beginning of the programme for cooperation, the 2 territories have been working on the topics of cultural policies and tourism.

On this year's annual event “Days of culture” organised by the Pelagonia Region, Pays de la Baie du Mont-Saint-Michel was invited to participate with 2 artists of its choice. Lolita Espin Anadon and Cécilia Emmenegger are working in the Pays de la Baie du Mont-Saint-Michel in the field of Arts and Culture. They performed in Bitola on 15th October 2015 and met with the cultural stakeholders of Pelagonia.

This project is a good example of the gain for the local authorities of working on artistic mobility in order to act on the local policy decision. This cooperation is supported by the [Cooperation Lower Normandy - Macedonia](#), funded by the Lower Normandy Region with the support of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Cooperation is coordinated by ALDA.

NEWS FROM THE LDAs



LDA Mostar at the policy seminar “Beyond Barriers” in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The youth policy seminar “**Beyond Barriers**”, held in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) on 28th and 29th October 2015 and focused on social inclusion of young people in vulnerable situations in South East Europe, explored what is happening and what can be improved in the implementation of youth policies so they can lead to an increasing social inclusion of young people at national and local levels.

The panels and working groups discussed different relevant topics such as the implementation of national youth policies, key elements for policy implementation: support for inclusion and good practices on inclusion, and tried to answer the questions such as how policies are reflecting the situation of youth inclusion and what is missing or needs improving in the policy framework.

Dzenana Dedic, Delegate of LDA Mostar, and the research experts **Marijana Rodic** and **Sladjana Petkovic**, engaged with in the ALDA's project "[Balkan regional platform for youth participation and dialogue](#)", presented the project activities and results of researches and analyses. **Bozina Stesevic**, youth engagement worker from LDA Montenegro, took part to the seminar within the Job Shadowing program in LDA Mostar.

The seminar gave the opportunity to the representatives of youth NGOs, associations and councils, Universities, independent experts, EU and SEE institutions to share their knowledge and experience but also ideas for future.

Useful links:

[Concept paper](#)

[Agenda](#)



LDA of the Dnipropetrovsk Region among students to discuss about local elections and decentralization

The team of the LDA of the Dnipropetrovsk Region was invited to take part in Say Your Word project implemented by local NGO - Civic Platform of Ukraine (Dnipropetrovsk), and financed by USAID.

The project consisted in 25 lectures delivered to the students of the Dnipropetrovsk Region and focused in two main topics: local elections (news, process, pros and cons of the system) and decentralization (consequences, impact on the community). The main idea is to share information and experience of the experts with youth in order to raise their awareness on these important issues.

Among the experts: **Anzhelika Pylypenko**, Delegate of the LDA of the Dnipropetrovsk Region, **Olena Tertyshna**, Head of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Reform, and **Kyrylo Batalov**, Deputy Delegate of the LDA of the Dnipropetrovsk Region, who delivered speeches on youth exchange programs, civic leadership within the present changes.

The students received a unique chance to communicate with people who have got experience in the vital topics which arise nowadays. They ask questions and get qualified answers.

Useful links:

[Say Your Word](#)

