



### EUROPEAN CRISIS: AN URGENT NEED TO STRENGTHEN CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE. TOWARD THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENSHIP IN 2013

Europe is much different now than at the beginning of the passed year. One could hardly say how much it will change in 2012. The financial crisis, which hit the economies of all the European States, and then afflicted so much the Eurozone, is

now setting the agenda of all the European summits. However, one of the victims of this last year is not only economy but also the perception that citizens have of the European Project.

Now, public opinion sees it as a project, which is punishing the "hopeless" States. This is, however, an old and well known trick of the European Members States that put on the European Union the role of scapegoat of all the troubles. The European Project is, for us, a vision of a common area of peace and wealth, which is now jeopardized by this 2011 and all its measures to address financial defaults

The participation of citizens to the future and difficult decisions for the European Union can't be suspended "till the crisis will pass or dealt with". Any decision must have a participatory approach and it should consider citizens and its civil society able to understand and address the problems, together. It is high time to put citizens and European Citizenship and identity high in the agenda. The tougher will be the times in the future, the more we need to relaunch the European project and the European identity, based on values and common objectives.

The real focus on human rights, democratic and participative societies and bottom up approach must lead the future decision making in the European Union, inside the EU and also in their policies with the Neighbouring States (Eastern Partnership and Med) and even more in the Enlargement process. Europe must be perceived even more now a choice of society and values and not be flattened to sorting out our budgets, no matters how much important are these issues as we know. The approach must give value and resources to the programme Europe for Citizens (and not the other way round) and give further resources to local governance and civil society engagement in the cooperation programmes of the EU. Otherwise, once we would have found our way out financially speaking, we shall realize that nobody wants to be part of the club, any longer...

In front of us, there is a lot to do this year and in the upcoming period 2014 – 2020. Sooner than this, we will focus on the Year of Citizenship for 2013 and prepare it as good as possible, first lobbying for considering it as a year of European Identity and Citizenship and not in legal and strict assumption. We should incentive the European stakeholders to consider it a great and timing opportunity to raise the issue at all levels, accompanying the strict and painful measures that will affect us all.



## **ALDA'S EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE ALSO IN 2012 IN PROMOTING DEMOCRACY, RESPECT FOR HUMAN AND MINORITY RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW**

Dear ALDA Members and Friends,

The year 2011 is drawing to a close and we can again say that it has been an extremely busy and successful one for our Association. The same is the case for the Local Democracy Agencies. We have opened the 13th LDA in Gyumri in

Armenia and are presently sorting out all the practical aspects so that the LDA can be fully operational soon in the new year. LDA Kosovo in Peja/Pec has been confirmed in its existence and is also now fully operational. In addition, ALDA has been closely associated with the EU's Eastern Partnership and we are working closely with non state actors in Belarus to push for much needed democratisation of that country.

On active citizenship we have been nothing but active. Our General Assembly was held in conjunction with a well attended conference on Volunteering, a project called Stand-Up has been promoting cooperation between local authorities and civil society on facing the negative consequences of the financial crisis and yet another has been addressing the issue of Remembrance as a means to preserve a peaceful future for Europe.

2012 promises to be equally busy. Apart from our normal activities we will become more engaged with partners in the Mediterranean Region and try to offer our support and experience in assisting the civil society involved in the Arab Spring. To that end we have established a number of alliances with organisations with objectives similar to ours but also expect to rely on continuing good cooperation with European Institutions and partners.

As of late, there has been plenty of media hype about the Euro crisis and associated doomsday prophesies. However, against the background of all this noise we must not forget what the European Union has meant for peace and prosperity in Europe over the last 60 years. That is what is important! The EU's efforts will continue and so will those of ALDA in promoting democracy, respect for human and minority rights and the rule of law.

Offering you on behalf of the ALDA Governing Board and Staff the best wishes for a Peaceful and Reflective Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2012 I also express the wish that we may continue to work together on these worthwhile issues in the new year, irrespective of the many demanding challenges I know you are also facing in your own communities. I send you a heartfelt Thank You!

Per Vinther  
ALDA President



## **OPENED THE OFFICES OF THE LDA KOSOVO. PEJE/PEC (21 and 22 November 2011)**

The LDA Kosovo with its further activities will be a bridge towards Europe not only for the host city, Peje/Pec, but for the all the country as a whole.

All the participants to the opening ceremony of the new offices of the LDA, that took place in Peje/Pec the 21st of November, stressed that this is not just a hope, but a certainty. Kosovo need Europa as Europa need peaceful relations between Kosovo and Serbia and the completion of the diplomatic path between the two countries, sine qua non condition for the stability of the entire region.

The LDA Kosovo wants to play an important role in this game.

The ceremony was attended, among others, by Mr. Ali Berisha, Mayor of Peje/Pec, the host city and local partner of the LDA, Mr. Maurizio Camin, President of Tavolo Trentino con il Kosovo, Colonel Andrea Borzaga new Commander of the Italian contingent in Kosovo and Commander of the Multinational Battle Group West KFOR (Kosovo Force), and Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA, in connection from Italy.

During the meeting was finalized and signed by partners the Agreement that will be the operational basis of the LDA, the Association "Tavolo Trentino per il Kosovo" was confirmed lead partner and was appointed the Director of the LDA, Mr. Elbert Krasniqi.

The LDA is promoted by ALDA under the auspices of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, in cooperation with international and local partners.

The ribbon cutting for the new headquarters at the Shtepia e Kultures (rrEnver Hadriq. nPeje/Pec), gave to the ADL a physical place where start to implement projects and activities that already are in its agenda.

LDA Kosovo can count on the support of the network of ALDA and other 12 LDAs currently active in the Balkans and South Caucasus.

Decentralisation of power and development of administrative capacities at the local level, together with a capable and vivid civil society, represent a fundamental step in the process of democratisation, stability and development of Kosovo.

With these aims, the LDA Kosovo will develop projects which will foster inter-ethnic dialogue, promote international cooperation, encourage civil society to participate actively in the life of the local community, develop the growth of democracy and good local governance, promote the economic development, giving answers to problems and needs of the population.

The international partners of the LDA are actively engaged in Kosovo since several years, as the Lead Partner Association Tavolo Trentino with Kosovo (TCK) - (Italy and Kosovo) for over 10 years working with the Municipality of Peja/Pec and numerous local organizations, AiBi, Friends of the Children (Italy and Kosovo), RTM Reggio Third World (Italy and Kosovo), the Only Equal Rights Association (Italy), ALFA Formation (France), the town of Yalova (Turkey).

LDA local partners are the Municipality of Peja/Pec, which is also the host city, and AKM, Association of Municipalities of Kosovo.

The role of the international partners will be to provide core financial support, participate in activities where they have the skills and capacities, to encourage their own partners to participate in the work of the LDA and to promote the work of the LDA in their own community and encourage wider participation.

On occasion of the opening of new offices of the LDA, an international conference took place on the anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1989, which ended with a series of entertainment activities organized for children and families in Peja/Pec at the Youth Centre.



#### **LDA SISAK: FOR 15 YEARS KEY PLAYER FOR THE GROWTH OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

"The reforms that the Croatian government will finalize in the next twenty months to prepare the country to the European appointment in July 2013 should be shared with civil society, and European institutions will continue to monitor the situation, which is essential for the completion of the process act". The warning came without metaphor from Ambassador Paul Vandoren, Head of EU Delegation in Zagreb,

during the ceremony organized to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the establishment, in Sisak, of the Local Democracy Agency.

Ambassador Vandoren has praised the work done by the ADL during these difficult years and noted the level of cooperation with the municipal administration, which has led to significant results, including the award of "12 star label" given by Congress of Local and regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to the city of Sisak for his commitment to the growth of local democracy.

"But the dialogue that exists today, especially at local level - stressed the Head of EU delegation in Croatia - should evolve in a partnership, a prerequisite for social cohesion and sharing of responsibility. We know that the Croatian government adopted new laws and amended its constitution to not miss the opportunity of entry into the European Community, but often the civil society is not consulted, and the Croatian the governors must remedy in the coming months". It is not entirely a surprise, this position. It is known that for its entry in 2013, Zagreb will be subject to close supervision because he has to finish the reforms demanded by Europe.

There is no doubt that the future accession of Croatia opens a new chapter for the countries of Western Balkans with a European vocation, and that despite some "Euro skepticism" or "Euro realism" as some call it, there is a high expectation in the completion of this process, especially among the population.

The progress made by Croatia is evident. Sisak, the tenth city in Croatia with more than 55 000 inhabitants, capital of the Sisak Moslavina County, which borders with Bosnia and Herzegovina, is an example of the progress reached in recent years and its image is very different from the one of fifteen years ago when it was established the ADL.

The ruin of the conflict, particularly intense towards the borders with Slavonia, where the Serbian troops created the Republic of Krajina, and Bosnia, are a distant memory and the process of pacification and democratization has reached optimum levels.

"I am proud of the success of this ADL - stressed during the ceremony the Mayor of Sisak Dinko Pintaric - and recognition of the 12 stars label to our city, despite being a small step for European democracy, is a great step for our beautiful Sisak".

At the official ceremony held on November 4, organized by the ADL, in cooperation with ALDA, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies, the Congress and the City, also attended Barbara Toce, member of the Congress and Deputy Mayor of Pedaso (I), the Ambassador of Belgium to Croatia, Nancy Adeline Marie Rossignol, the Ambassador of Norway to Croatia, Henrik Ofstad, Per Vinther, President of ALDA and Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA, as well as Diego Bottacin, Councilor of the Veneto Region, for many years Mayor of Mogliano Veneto, at the time city lead partners of the LDA.

"During these fifteen years the LDA of Sisak has developed more than one hundred projects, promoting values of tolerance, human rights, multiculturalism, cooperation, active citizenship and combating discrimination, involving directly more than fifteen thousand people and establishing itself as one of the key actors of the civil society in the democratic development of the city and the Sisak Moslavina County" said Paula Rauzan President of the LDA.

The conference was also an occasion for thinking about the future of the three LDA now active in Croatia (apart from Sisak, Osijek and Verteneglio-Brtonigla).

"With the accession of Croatia to Europe in 2013 - said Antonella Valmorbida, Director of ALDA - the LDA of this country will no longer exist as they are now structured, and will assume a new role. The experience will certainly be available for further growth of local democracy and European values. "

The reflection on their future has been launched and there is time to define together with all their partners form and content of the activity that they will develop once materialized the entry into the EU.

In addition to the international conference, Sisak was selected by ALDA to host the Annual LDAs Delegates meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Lead Partners Representatives of the LDAs (3 - 5 November).



## **THE EAP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM WILL BE PERMANENT PARTICIPANT OF THE EAP PLATFORM MEETINGS. THE DECISION AT THE EVE OF THE 3RD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FORUM (Poznan, PL – 28-30 November 2011)**

The Civil Society Forum of Eastern Partnership will be officially invited to participate in the meetings of all four EaP thematic platforms as a permanent participant. This very important decision arrived at the eve of the 3rd annual

Assembly of the EaP Civil Society Forum (Poznan, Poland, 28-30 November 2011).

“It is one of our most important achievements in terms of policy making. The recognizing of the hard work done in these two years and an extra opportunity, in view of the new tasks that the Forum could have in relation to the grants that the European Commission will start to allocate to projects in this area” stated Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, Co-Chair of the Forum and ALDA Director.

The recent EaP Platform on Democracy, Good Governance and Stability (17/11/2011) held a fruitful discussion concerning the involvement of the CSF in the activities of the EaP multilateral track.

The EU Member States and Eastern partners well received the proposal presented, by a joint letter of HR/VP C. Ashton and Csr. S. Füle, from the EEAS about the opportunity that the CSF will be a permanent participant of the EaP platform meetings.

The 3rd annual Assembly of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum “A partnership for democratic reforms and European integration” will gather around 300 participants and guests from civil society sector working in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and EU. During three days of intensive agenda participants will be able to discuss different questions on civil society engagement in eastern partnership, challenges and prospects for further development of EaP Civil Society Forum.

The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF) has been established in 2009 following the Prague Summit launching the Eastern Partnership. The EaP CSF aims to support the further development of civil society organizations and promote contacts between them as well as facilitate their dialogue with public authorities. The first EaP CSF took place in Brussels on 16-17 November 2009 and second was held in Berlin on 18-19 November 2010.

The 3rd annual meeting of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum will have extended format (from 1,5 up to three days) which has been made possible thanks to the European Commission/European External Action Service and the generous support of Poland’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Agenda of the Forum is intensive and full of activities: plenary sessions, working group discussions, side events and debates on Strategic concept of the Forum and issue of Forum registration as legal entity.

Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy will open the first panel discussion “Towards a new strategy for civil society engagement in the Eastern Partnership”.

Radosław Sikorski, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland will give a speech on the topic “Two Years of the Eastern Partnership and the EaP Civil Society Forum” and Award the Eastern Partnership Journalistic Prize for outstanding reporting on democracy, human rights, fight against abuse of power and the European Union issues.

For any further information please visit [www.eap-csf.eu/](http://www.eap-csf.eu/).



### **ANTONELLA VALMORBIDA APPOINTED COORDINATOR OF THE SUB GROUP ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM OF THE EAP CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM**

Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida, ALDA Director, was appointed coordinator of the sub group on Local Government and Public Administration Reform, of the Working Group 1 (Democracy and Human rights) of the EAP Civil Society Forum.

The members of the group, in a meeting that takes place at the end of the Annual meeting of the Forum in Poznan, asked to Mrs. Valmorbida to be the coordinator (taking over the work of Svyatoslav Pavlyuk, from Ukraine).

Mrs. Valmorbida for two consecutive one year terms, allowed by the regulation, was the EU representative in the Steering Committee of the Forum, the last as co-chair.

For any further information please visit [www.eap-csf.eu/](http://www.eap-csf.eu/).



### **ALDA VISIT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BYDGOSZCZ**

The ALDA President, Mr. Per Vinther, met recently with the Rector of the “Uniwersytet Kazimierza Wielkiego” in Bydgoszcz, Professor Józef Kubik. The meeting was also attended by the Head of International Relations Office of the University, Mgr Aniela Bekier-Jasińska, and by the Principal of the International School of Bydgoszcz, Mgr Imiśława Górską.

Topic of the discussions was the potential involvement of the University in ALDA projects in which the participation of local authorities and NGOs could be complemented by the added value of participation from the academic sector. The

efforts of ALDA and the LDAs in promoting democracy in host and partner communities and countries is bound to benefit from involvement also from the business and the education sector. The University already has some experience with exchange of academics from neighbouring countries, incl. Belarus, which could be beneficial in EU funded projects ALDA is developing with Non-State Actors. In addition, Rector Kubik expressed interest in engaging with other European universities who are already partners of ALDA.

The President also visited the International School of Bydgoszcz, which is affiliated with the NATO Joint Force Training Centre in the city and attached to the University. The Principal, Ms Gorska, stressed that the International School of Bydgoszcz is developing its multicultural policy and is interested in cooperation with ALDA members specializing in multiculturalism and multinational activities dedicated to pupils, youth or teenagers. Worth noting is that the Principal is the former Secretary of the ALDA Board and therefore very familiar with ALDA activities.

Photo: From left to right Ms Bekier-Jasinka, Professor Kubik, Mr Vinther and Ms Gorska.

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### **PROGRAMME 2012 AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LDAS IN THE AGENDA OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF ALDA. Rome 18 November 2011**

Programme 2012 and development of the LDAs were the main topics of the ALDA Governing Board held in Rome in the representative office of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region (18 November 2011).

Mrs. Anna Maria Menosso, Vicepresident of FVG Region, attended the meeting bringing the greetings of the Administration to the participants.

She stressed, among the many initiatives of the network of ALDA involving her Region, the support for women of Montenegro (Friuli Venezia Giulia is the lead partner of the LDA Montenegro) through the revival of the ancient practice of lace in collaboration with the School in Gorizia.

Attended the meeting also the Honorary President of ALDA, Mr. Gianfranco Martini and Mr. Alessandro Perelli, representative of the Region Friuli Venezia Giulia.

The Governing Board discussed the proposal of programme for 2012 and the expected budget, and the development of the LDAs, in particular the development of partnership, the follow up of the meeting in Sisak (3rd to 4th of November 2001), about situation in Croatia, cofunding issue for the LDAs, opening of the LDA in Armenia and further process for Azerbaijan.

The members of the Governing Board discussed also the preparation of the ALDA General Assembly 2012, that will take place in Trieste.

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### **TRAINING COURSE ON EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE - VALDAGNO (ITALY), DECEMBER-FEBRUARY 2011**

ALDA is more and more engaged in the promotion of volunteering, targeting primarily the younger generations in order to foster their active citizenship and their sense of belonging both to the local community and to Europe. In this respect, ALDA has

activated a training course that will start in Valdagno (Italy) on December.

The training course is focused on the European Voluntary Service, considered as one of the main "tool" to promote volunteering at the European and international level. It is addressed to one of the ALDA members, the Studio Progetto Social Cooperative, active in the social field, and particularly focused on youth. The staff of Studio Progetto working with youth will take part in this course, lasting 20 hours, focused on providing practical and technical information and instruments to carry out qualitative EVS projects: the Cooperative will thus contribute to provide mobility opportunities for young people and will further strengthen the active participation of young people in building "Europe from below". Through this training process Studio Progetto will be accredited both as sending and as hosting organization: the first foreign volunteers will arrive in Valdagno in 2012; the first volunteers going from Valdagno to Europe will also leave in 2012.

For those who are interested in the training course delivered by ALDA, please contact the Resources and Development Unit Coordinator Marco Boaria at [marco.boaria@aldaintranet.org](mailto:marco.boaria@aldaintranet.org).

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### **MORE PARTICIPATION IN THE TWINNING PROJETS: THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION READY TO THEIR REFORM. IN VENICE THE CONFERENCE OF INTACT, AN ALDA PROJECT**

More participation of citizens, more countries involved, more debate on the issues and European values. This is the idea of the European Commission for the reform of

twinning in the next program, 2014-2020, confirming the budget of 30 million a year to fund the twinning projects with the intention of making more effective their performance.

It's what said Anna Cozzoli, Department of Citizenship EACEA, the Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture of the European Commission, in liaison from Brussels, to the participants at the international conference organized by ALDA in Venice, within the project INTACT.

The central theme of the conference was just the future of twinning in view of their protagonists, municipalities, nonprofit associations, economic groups and companies that, even in the Veneto region, is taking a greater interest in public-private partnership programs, a new variation of twinning, which puts more emphasis on activities that can generate local economic development and prosperity for the population.

In Venice, representatives of these groups from seven countries (France, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Malta, Albania) as well as a large Italian representatives have discussed these issues.

"The Euro Info Veneto collects more and more requests for participation of companies in the European Partnership programs and projects, new opportunities for relationships and potential development tools," said Gian Angelo Bellati, director of Unioncamere Veneto and Euro Info.

The future of twinning is therefore positive, as indicated in the idea of reform, summed up in less dinners and football games, more partners and more countries involved from any single project, more companies, more meetings where people talk of European issues and ideas of sustainable development, so that the exchange of good ideas and good practices may arise concrete growth opportunities for the territory and for Europe as a whole.

"For the harmonious development of the European territory as a whole and the strengthening of economic, social and territorial cohesion - stressed Antonella Valmorbida, ALDA Director - is therefore necessary to strengthen the transnational territorial cooperation".

During the two days of the conference the best practices and experiences gained by the partners of the projects were presented and shared during workshops on city diplomacy, technical assistance to the twin cities, private sector involvement.

"The work has revealed the need and the will to the relaunch of twinning - said Massimo Ciullo, lead partner of the ADL Albania - although certainly with new perspectives and content, because every relationship, especially internationally, is also useful to economic development at this particular moment of crisis".

The meeting in Venice was promoted in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the main economic actors of the Veneto Region, Eurosportello Unioncamere, CIA, Italian Farmers Confederation, represented by the Regional President Daniele Toniolo, CAN, National Confederation of craft, Lega of Cooperative.

The INTACT project, lasting two years, has seen the organization of numerous events and activities in many European countries, as international workshops, local activities, a Summer School on the themes of active citizenship, local economic initiatives and international relations between local authorities.

These activities have strengthened the link between the twenty partners of the project (NGOs and local authorities) from seven countries, particularly involved in the theme of citizen participation, promotion of European values and integration process.



## **MOBILITY AND VOLUNTEERING IN TOWN TWINNING. STAND.UP PROJECT CONFERENCE IN VENICE (15 and 16 November)**

ALDA organized as partner leader of the project STAND.UP, an International Conference on "Mobility and volunteering in town twinning - Exchange of methodologies between Local Authorities and Civil Society" which took place in

Venice on 15 and 16 November.

The event aimed to promote the concept of mobility and volunteering, strengthening the involvement of civil society organisations, within the framework of European twinning, in order to create a greater cooperation between Local Authorities and Civil Society Organizations.

The conference was part of the activities of the project "STAND.UP: Strengthening Twinning and Networking for Development Agreements. United in Partnership" funded by the European Programme "Europe for Citizens", implemented by ALDA in partnership with 17 international partners.

STAND.UP aims to promote citizen participation and interaction with local and European institutions, through debates on important issues in the field of town twinning.

During the conference in Venice, after the intervention of senior officials of local and European authorities, were shared examples of good practices on mobility and volunteering by representatives of European and international associations. Participants were divided into three working groups to discuss these issues.



## **"DEALING WITH A PAST LEFT UNSAID – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INSTITUTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS". In Strasbourg the final conference of the ALDA project PEACE (22-23 November 2011)**

Restudy the recent history of European countries to strengthen the ideals of peace, tolerance and participation and help the building of an Europe ever more land of cohesion, stability and prosperity. This was the main aim of the project PEACE, implemented by ALDA, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies which final conference took place in Strasbourg the 22nd and 23rd of November.

The main subject of the conference was active remembrance. It united participants from several European countries, all professionals of historical education and active remembrance (educators, teachers, researchers, memorial curators and peace educators). Through presentations on the treatment of repressed pasts in Europe and exchange between the participants, the conference brought new insights on how to deal with different pasts.

All participants were encouraged to actively bring their specific experience in different workshops. Debates were held on subjects such as remembrance and its relation with active citizenship and a positive attitude towards Human Rights and peace.

One of the aims of the project was to develop efficient activities in this field.

The event combined different methods such as round tables and working groups in order to promote a wide debate benefiting from both multilateral and specific perspectives.

Participants participated also in a visit to "Le Mémorial de l'Alsace-Moselle".

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## **MIGRANTS IN EUROPE, INTEGRATION AS A PROCESS OF INCLUSION. FINAL WORKSHOP OF THE PROJECT GOAL (Bucharest, RO, 12-13 November)**

An international workshop concluded the project GOAL, Granting Opportunities for Active Learning, implemented by ALDA, as lead partner. The event took place on 12 and 13 November Bucharest.

The EU's population, due to decreased fertility rates and longer life expectancy, is ageing, leading to a likely fall in the working population in the 25 states from 303 million to 297 million by 2020. A smaller labour force means less economic growth: economic migration is therefore necessary for sustained the European economic growth.

But migration flows, affecting all Europe, often disregard the need for labour, and arise from the needs of the populations of third world countries to escape poverty and seek welfare and freedom.

What is the situation that migrants find in the European Countries, and how is possible to improve it?

The debate in Europe on the need for a European policy on migration management is open for years and still has not found a solution shared by all member states.

So each state has to deal daily with the problems that this phenomenon leads to social stability, often being connected to the illegality, now aggravated by the severe economic crisis.

To give answer to these questions, ALDA, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies, has managed the European project, GOAL, that aimed at improving the situation of migrants in Europe by giving them the occasion to discuss their own situation and suggesting ways to get better their life.

During the project, groups of citizens in six EU Member States and accession countries (France, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Italy and Greece) have met and debated about the situation of migrants in their country and how to improve it.

The members of these citizens' panels were themselves migrants. Drawing on the panels' discussions, the partners have drafted recommendations to European policy makers on how to improve the situation of migrants in Europe.

The final workshop of GOAL was the occasion to present the panels' recommendations to the participants - professionals in migration matters and concerned citizens – and policy makers.

All participants debated about the recommendations in particular and migration matters in general in three workshops on the topics of intercultural dialogue, political participation and access to services and the labour market.

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## **EXPERT, AN EUROPEAN EVENT IN AIX EN PROVENCE (11-15 November 2011)**

The Mission Tourism & Development International (MDTI) of the City of Aix en Provence for the first time has organized the event EXPERT, co-funded by the European Union, from 11 to 15 November 2011.

This project gather six twinned Cities with Aix en Provence and involved in common decentralized cooperation (Bath - United Kingdom, Granada – Spain, Coimbra - Portugal, Perugia – Italy, Tübingen – Germany, Pecs - Hungary) and will focus on three major themes.

ALDA participated at the third and final event, a day of reflection and discussion on volunteering and volunteerism, represented by the Director Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida.

The first action of the event, has seen six chefs of Aix and six chefs of other European country, that shared their culinary arts, combined their talents and skills to offer their customers in each of the participating restaurants, a creation "four hands" (11-12 November).

The second event, (14 November ) was an exchange of experiences on the theme of urban space reserved to elected, officials and technicians of the seven cities to work on common issues.

Finally, to conclude this tour of Europe in five days, at the amphitheater of the IUFM, took place a conference that aimed to reflect and discuss on volunteering and volunteerism, in the presence of key players, both local and European, on these issues.

Several representatives of associations, elected officials, presidents of national and local structures (France Volunteer - Volunteer France - Aix Association, Association of Twin ...) and academic partner cities, brought their stories and visions to the debate on possibility of a common European public policy in this sector.

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## NEWS FROM LDAs



### LDA NIŠ JOINED THE “MORE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK”

Upon successfully finished joint European Voluntary Service project, LDA Central and Southern Serbia, based in Niš, has been invited by Associação Mais Cidadania to join their international “MORE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK”. Born in 2008, this network links international partners to Portuguese organization Associação Mais Cidadania to discuss and deepen themes linked to citizenship and

search paths and strategies to answer to the challenges of our society at local and European level.

LDA Niš will share good practices with other members of the Network through development of common projects and will actively work on promoting citizenship, youngster's engagement, intercultural dialogue, cultural debate, social inclusion and active participation of young people in the society.



### LDA MOSTAR: SECOND ROUND TABLE OF THE PROJECT "POPOWO" (PEOPLE ORGANIZE PREVENTION OF WATER OVERFLOW. Trebinje (BiH), 14th of December 2011

The Second Round Table of the project "Popowo" (People Organize Prevention of Water Overflow) took place in Trebinje (BiH) on the 14th of December 2011.

The Round table aimed to establish a better dialogue between all interested parties to prevent flooding in the area Popovo fields. Project is funded by the EU and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway

Popowo project was developed with the clear intention to, without political pressures, provide clear communication of key stakeholders in the Popovo fields related to the problem of flooding of agricultural land, the establishment of informal networks and support self-organization of farmers, agricultural associations, cooperatives and business oriented to field Popovo.

Project Popowo is jointly developed and implementing by the Association for Entrepreneurship and Business Link Mostar, Local Democracy Agency Mostar and Centre for Development of Herzegovina Trebinje with the clear intention of starting a dialogue on this complex issue, which has a large impact on the socio-economic development of a large part of Herzegovina.



### CALLS FOR PROPOSAL

15/12/2011 - Deadline for sending your expression of interest - 01/01/2012

ALDA call for Partnership: Strengthening The Capacities Of Non-State Actors: The Programme “Non-State Actors And Local Authorities In Development” And The Neighbourhood Civil Society Facility

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15/12/2011 - Deadline for sending your expression of interest - 01/01/2012

ALDA call for partnership: Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development

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15/12/2011 -

Deadline for sending your expression of interest - 15/01/2012

ALDA call for partnership: Europe for Citizens Programme 2007-2013. Action 1, Measure 1.2 Thematic Networks of Twinned Towns.