

For the European Elections — Use Your Vote!

More than ever, it is time to exercise our right to vote. Let's make our voices heard. Let's not let others decide our future. Let us encourage our members and networks to do the same. Let us remind every citizen of the incredible power they hold through the simple act of voting.

4th June 2024

Dear Members, Partners, and Friends of ALDA,

From June 6th to 9th, citizens of the European Union will have the crucial opportunity to elect their 720 representatives to the European Parliament. These elections are undeniably among the most significant ones since the inception of our Union.

European democracy is at a crossroad and facing formidable challenges. These include assaults on civil society and local elected representatives, as well as on the rule of law at large from both within and beyond the European Union, geopolitical destabilisation and conflicts at our borders, and pressing issues such as the impacts of climate change, the rapid pace of digitalisation on our societies, and disinformation. The risks associated with the rise of populism have never been greater.

The newly-elected Governing Board is joining me in confirming ALDA's strong vision and mission, at the forefront of our Strategy 2024-2028. We want a strong and enlarged Europe, with engaged, inclusive, and responsible local communities, where **citizens, civil society groups, and local and regional authorities** are working together as drivers for efficient public policies, sustainable development, trust, local democracy, and accountability. We want Europe to tackle the growing social and economic inequalities, both within and outside our Union, and to offer all people a chance at decent and dignified living conditions.

ALDA is ready to act as a strong global alliance of local and regional authorities and civil society organisations, promoting good local governance in Europe and beyond, for more inclusive, democratic, sustainable, and equal local communities, addressing and solving local issues for the common good and development, in a non-partisan manner.

Over the past months, all over Europe, together with our members and partners, we have engaged with voters, political leaders, and civil society representatives. We have <u>organised or participated in over 100</u> <u>events</u> and connected with more than 5.000 citizens to highlight the importance of the European Union,

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democracy, and the act of voting. We have joined forces with the **Civil Society for EU campaign**, which received the pledge of more than **300 candidates** supporting civic space and civil society, or the **EurHope campaign**, **which** reached over **1,2 million** young citizens.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the members and partners who have contributed to this effort.

The European Parliament, with which ALDA has signed a communications partnership, continually emphasises a vital message: **do not let others decide for you. Use your vote.**

In these final days of the campaign, ALDA's Governing Board would like to pass this simple, yet essential, message on.

Exercise your right to vote. Encourage your members and networks to do the same. Let us remind every citizen of the incredible power they hold through the simple act of voting.

Let's make our voices heard. Let's not let others decide our future.

Let's build a Better Europe Together. #UseYourVote.

Sincerely,

Nataša Vučković, President of ALDA and the Governing Board of ALDA

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