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# LDAS ACTIVITY REPORT



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# ABOUT ALDA

**ALDA - The European Association for Local Democracy** is dedicated to the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level. **The Association focuses on activities facilitating cooperation between local authorities and civil society.** ALDA was established in 1999 at the initiative of the Council of Europe **to coordinate and support the network of Local Democracy Agencies, which are self-sufficient, locally registered CSOs** (Civil Society Organisations) acting as **promoters of good governance and local self government.** Today, ALDA is a key stakeholder in the field of local democracy, active citizenship, and cooperation between local authorities and civil society. ALDA is a membership-based organisation gathering 300 members (including local authorities, associations of local authorities, and civil society organisations) from over 45 countries in the enlarged Europe. ALDA is funded through membership fees, as well as project funding from the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and other public and private donors.

## OUR UNIQUE FEATURES

Most of ALDA's work is based on the method of multilateral decentralised cooperation. This method involves a multi-stakeholder approach which focuses on strong partnerships between local authorities and non-governmental organisations. These partnerships create positive synergies and ensure that common goals are reached in a successful way.

## WHAT WE DO

In the framework of the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level, ALDA focuses on various themes, such as European integration, decentralisation, civic initiatives and volunteering, human rights and sustainable economic development.

## ALDA conducts its initiatives through different forms of action:

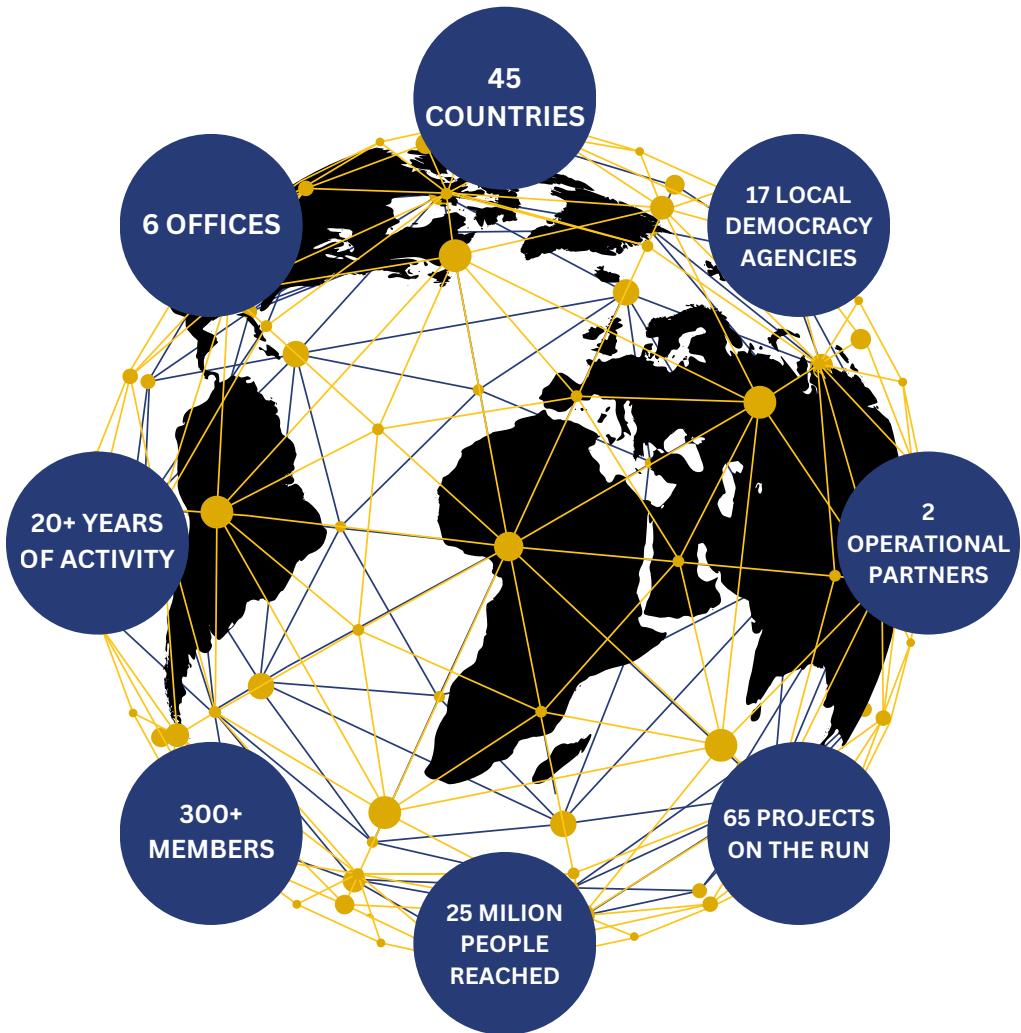
- Conducting a myriad of **projects** in the field of good governance and citizen participation at the local level in Europe and beyond, with its members, its partners and Local Democracy Agencies;
- Coordinating and supporting the **17 Local Democracy Agencies** and **2 Operational Partners**;
- Managing and supporting its wide **network** of members, made of **over 300 stakeholders**, including local authorities, associations of local authorities, provinces, counties, civil society organisation, and academic institutions;
- Collaborating with European and worldwide **networks** on campaigns, statements and joint initiatives to let citizens be heard and contribute to the decision-making process of their communities. It cooperates as official partner of **the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities** and it is a long term partner of **the programme Europe for Citizens** and other key policies and programmes of the European Commission;
- Supporting local stakeholders' initiatives by providing ALDA's unique expertise gained during its over 20 years of activity in the European Union and its Neighbourhood through the establishment of **partnerships** and the identification of relevant stakeholders to cooperate with, scouting funding opportunities to implement project ideas, and assuring dissemination and visibility of their initiatives;
- Leading **advocacy and lobbying activities**, raising the voice of its members and partners in order to orient local, national and European policies in our field of activities to make a stronger and more cohesive Europe, based on the principle of equality, democracy and human rights;

## WHERE WE WORK

**ALDA works throughout the enlarged Europe.** Activities in the European Union focus in particular on the promotion of **Active European Citizenship**. Activities in the Western Balkans and European Neighbourhood focus on good governance, citizen participation, European integration, and decentralisation.

Most of the Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) are located in the Western Balkans, which gives the natural focus on that area. But ALDA is also becoming more and more active in the European Neighbourhood. During the years, 5 LDAs have been established in various Eastern Partnership countries, while in 2017 the first LDA of its type opened in the Southern Neighbourhood region, specifically in Kairouan (Tunisia). ALDA is also leading several other projects and developing partnerships in other European Neighbouring countries, such as Morocco, Algeria and Türkiye. 2023, in particular, has been an eventful year in terms of meetings and new partnerships among ALDA and local authorities, organisations and associations in Ukraine in order to establish nine new Local Democracy Agencies in the country.

# NETWORK OF LDAS



## Supporting good governance and citizen participation on the field

ALDA coordinates and supports a network of 17 Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) and 2 Operational Partners (OPs) across Europe and its neighbourhood. While most LDAs are based in the Western Balkans, the network has significantly expanded in recent years to include 6 LDAs in Eastern Partnership countries and 2 in the Mediterranean area, including the most recently established LDA in Edremit (Türkiye).

In 2024, ALDA continued to prioritise support to Ukraine, where the network now includes **five fully operational LDAs** – in Odesa, Dnipro, Kharkiv, Mariupol (operating in exile), and Vinnytsia – with further efforts underway to expand the model to additional Ukrainian cities. This strategic focus reflects ALDA's long-standing commitment to local democracy, resilience, and civic engagement even in contexts affected by conflict.

The LDAs and OPs are supported by **more than 100 partners**, including local authorities and civil society organisations across Europe. These partners provide crucial political and financial backing, helping the Agencies to fulfil their mandate: promoting participatory democracy, fostering civil society, and encouraging citizen involvement in local governance.

Most of ALDA's and the LDA's work is based on an innovative and successful method of multilateral decentralised cooperation, which involves a multi-stakeholder approach and focuses on partnerships between Local Authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations. These partnerships create synergy and ensure that common goals are reached in a successful way. It focuses on the mutual benefits of the cooperation, on a participative and long-term approach in order to strengthen the real effectiveness of the impact on both communities. The multilateral approach allows a better sustainability as well as a multicultural input to the initiatives. The LDAs partnerships by means of multilateral decentralised cooperation were developed on the basis of two main lines of action:

- **Territorial based approach**, involving all the actors of the communities of interest on a geographic base;
- **Thematic networking** focused on specific, commonly determined issues connecting different local communities

### **Objectives of the activity of Local Democracy Agencies and Operational Partners are:**

- Promoting good local governance and support initiatives aimed at improving citizen participation;
- Enhancing institution and capacity building at the local level through the exchange of knowhow and training of locally elected representatives and administrators;
- Developing a Europe-wide network of citizens committed to the respect for human and minority rights;
- Fostering the development of a civil society in which all sections of the community participate;
- Supporting intercultural dialogue and diversity management capacities in multicultural local communities;
- Promoting the respect for human/minority rights in local communities;

### **Financial sustainability of the LDAs**

The available funds are managed by the LDAs themselves or by the members of the 7 partnerships established for the implementation of a specific project. Following the implementation of projects and activities, financial reports are drawn up to ensure transparency and appropriate use of the funds.

There are three different types of funding sources:

- Funds resulting from the LDA's fundraising
- Grants to support the LDAs
- Fees of the LDAs' partners



ALDA pursues its coordination and supporting mission to the LDAs by providing them with adequate expertise at all stages of the implementation of projects (funding opportunities, establishment of new partnerships, project implementation, exchange and sharing of good practices, technical support, joint projects etc). ALDA has been involved in several projects and providing support of all kind to the Local Democracy Agencies in order to further the promotion of local democracy and citizens' participation at the local level.

# WE STAND WITH UKRAINE



This Activity Report brings together the achievements, activities, and dedication of our **17 Local Democracy Agencies and 2 Operational Partners** throughout the past year.

But **2024 marked yet another year of war in Ukraine**, following Russia's ongoing, unjustified aggression. The consequences continue to be devastating: lives lost, cities destroyed, communities displaced. Yet throughout this prolonged crisis, the **resilience of the Ukrainian people** has stood as a powerful reminder of democracy's strength in the face of adversity.

Amidst conflict and destruction, **Ukrainians are actively defending not only their territory but also their democratic future**. Local authorities, civil society organisations, and citizens are working daily to preserve participation, rebuild trust, and uphold the rule of law.

**ALDA has stood by Ukraine since the first days of the invasion**, and in 2024, this commitment translated into concrete steps. The organisation now supports **five fully operational Local Democracy Agencies in Ukraine**: LDA Mariupol (operating in exile), LDA Dnipropetrovsk Region, LDA Odesa, LDA Kharkiv, LDA Vinnytsia.

Each of these LDAs is a testament to the will of Ukrainian local communities to maintain democratic dialogue and participation—even under extreme circumstances.

Building on this success, **ALDA** is working closely with local and regional partners to further expand the network. Preparations are under way to open new LDAs in Lviv, Rivne, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Bucha and Zhytomyr-Orouuvch, as part of a broader vision to establish a robust, decentralised network of LDAs across Ukraine.

These efforts are backed by ALDA's Governing Board, which in 2023 and 2024 approved a comprehensive support strategy for Ukraine, including partnerships with local authorities, involvement in EU-funded programmes, and targeted technical assistance for capacity-building.

In standing with Ukraine, ALDA reaffirms that local democracy is not a luxury of peace, but a lifeline in times of war—and a key pillar for sustainable recovery and European integration.



ALDA's ongoing **Flagship Initiative in Ukraine** continues to reinforce local governance and community resilience through decentralised cooperation. The year 2024 has seen several important milestones:

- **Spring 2024 – Hosting of Ukrainian Delegation in Brussels**

In April, ALDA welcomed a delegation of Ukrainian city and village mayors, civil society experts, and business leaders to Brussels, facilitating valuable dialogue with European counterparts on governance and reconstruction priorities.

- **May 2024 – ALDA Festival & General Assembly Recognition**

At ALDA's flagship annual event, Ukrainian LDAs in **Dnipropetrovsk, Mariupol, and Odesa** were celebrated, underscoring their essential role and inspiring continued network expansion.

- **25 September 2024 – MoU for LDA Kharkiv Region signed in Strasbourg**

At the Congress of French Regions, ALDA, the Kharkiv Regional Council, Grand-Est Region (France), and Merefa Municipality formalized their partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding, cementing **LDA Kharkiv as an official project** in the Flagship Initiative.

- **4–18 October 2024 – ALDA Mission to Ukraine**

ALDA conducted a field mission in **Ovruch, Zhytomyr, and Poltava**, aimed at strengthening partnerships and exploring new LDA opportunities, including plans for an LDA hub in Ovruch with funding from Saint-Brieuc.

- **5 December 2024 – MoU for LDA Vinnytsia signed in Dijon**

Within the “Building Bridges for Ukraine” event backed by Bourgogne Franche-Comté and Dijon Municipality, ALDA formalised the creation of **LDA Vinnytsia**—another key milestone in its decentralisation and reconstruction strategy.

Together, these actions reflect ALDA's sustained support for Ukraine's **locally-led recovery and democratic resilience**, anchored in strong European partnerships. These efforts **underpin the establishment and expansion of LDAs as critical instruments for decentralisation, civic engagement, and peacebuilding**.





# REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCIES IN 2024

**alda\***

European Association  
for Local Democracy



**Delegate: Lusine Aleksandryan**

**Established: 2011**

## KEY PARTNERS

- City of Gyumri, host city
- Autonomous Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy, lead partner)
- Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development (Armenia)
- Journalists' Club "Asparez" (Armenia)
- "Shirak Centre" NGO (Armenia)
- Community Finance Officers Association

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- To settle the LDA Armenia as a key stakeholder in citizen participation, good governance and local democracy
- To promote youth participation in the decision-making processes and women's integration into society
- To upscale LDA foundation Armenia as a convincing actor for enhancing Citizen Participation, good governance and local democracy
- To encourage tourism, cultural and environmental development initiatives
- To foster cooperation with international and local authorities and civil society representatives
- To promote of concrete initiatives to consolidate democracy at local level
- To boost entrepreneurship initiatives through local democracy
- To promote the respect of Human rights
- To promote cooperation at the local level, in Europe and in the EAP

Local Democracy Agency" foundation was established in 2011 in Gyumri, second Armenian city. Among its main priorities are to promote the capacities of local authorities and civil society in citizens' participation, support participative practices in the development of local and sustainable tourism, reinforce regional and cooperation, empower youth and women in environmental, democratic and community development initiatives. Furthermore, the cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany, the Council of Europe, CSF of Eastern Partnership, UN, European Commission, Policy Impact Lab and other European stakeholders supported the implementation of many initiatives in the field of local democracy and participative decision-making.

# MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF LDA ARMENIA

## 1. ALDA General Assembly 2024

The ALDA Festival and General Assembly 2024 "Local Democracy for Global Impact" took place from 13-15th of May, in Barcelona, Spain that gathered more than 200 members, partners and friends of ALDA.

Lusine Aleksandryan was among the speakers of the panel "Local Democracy in a shifting Landscape" presenting the challenges and developments towards Democracy in Armenia, the political situation impact and reforms in Local Democracy and Human Rights.

## 2. Study tour for German Heinrich Boell Foundation

"Local Democracy Agency" foundation hosted German journalists, teachers, politically active people, representatives of various CSOs and foundations organized by German Heinrich Boell Foundation on 7th of May at Gyumri Youth Palace. LDA Armenia director Lusine Aleksandryan presented the foundation, its activities, opportunities for local authorities, geopolitical situation, involvement of Armenia in EU agenda.

## 3. "23rd Conference of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD)" in Valongo, Portugal

Lusine Aleksandryan participated remotely with video presentation referring to the democracy in Armenia, challenges towards EU integration and initiatives implemented by LDA Armenia on youth empowerment and participation in decision-making processes in the special session "Local Resilient Democracy and Participatory Governance in Eastern Europe amidst Challenges".

# LDA CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SERBIA



**Delegate: Ana Jovanović**

**Established: 2001**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Association Trentino con i Balcani, Italy (Lead Partner)
- Municipality Knjaževac, Serbia (Host City)
- City of Aarhus, Denmark
- Association CORDIA – Center for education and development of open society, Serbia
- Association Zadrugarice, Serbia
- Associazione per l'Ambasciata della Democrazia Locale a Zavidovici Onlus, Italy

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Fostering democratic governance and citizen participation at the local level
- Youth empowerment
- Supporting the process of Serbia's EU integration

The LDA Central and Southern Serbia was established in 2001 in the City of Niš, Serbia. With the aim of spreading its program further onto the territories in need, in 2014 the LDA has moved its headquarter to Knjaževac, a city in South-Eastern Serbia. The LDA carries on activities in Niš, Knjaževac, Kraljevo and Kragujevac and it contributes to the development of local democracy in the communities of Eastern, Southern and Central Serbia through capacity building programs based on the principles of active citizenship and establishment of concrete mechanisms of citizens' participation in development of their communities.

# LDA CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SERBIA IN THE FIELD

## Projects and activities

### 1. fEUture Resonance: Amplifying Youth Engagement and Advocacy in Serbia's EU Accession Process

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to June, 2025

**Names of partners/Associated:** Zaječar Initiative, Jelena Šantić Foundation, Pro.Tok 21 and CDLM

**Total Budget:** 672.225,50 €

**Funded by:** Delegation of EU to the Republic of Serbia

**The Project.** This action aims to enhance awareness and participation of Serbian citizens, especially youth in Eastern Serbia, regarding the benefits and implications of Serbia's EU accession. It fosters understanding of economic, social, and cultural ties with the EU while strengthening civil society engagement. Led by Zajecar Initiative, Pro.Tok 21, CDLM, LDA Knjaževac, and Jelena Šantić Foundation, the project uses innovative approaches to demystify EU accession, dispel misconceptions, and empower youth and local CSOs to take an active role in the process through meaningful dialogue and engagement.

During 2024, several activities were organized to engage young people in Eastern Serbia with EU topics:

**Mapping Civil Society Capacities & Schools:** Identified CSOs' capacities, operational areas, and their role in promoting EU policies and youth engagement in EU integration across five towns.

**EU Pub Quizzes:** Six quizzes were held in Zaječar, Knjaževac, Smederevo, and Požarevac, attracting 66 teams and 264 young participants. These interactive events enhanced knowledge of the EU in a fun, competitive setting.

**Interlinked Cultural Islands Workshops:** Organized by the Jelena Šantić Foundation with ZI and LDA CSS, these workshops engaged 13 high school students in Knjaževac and Zaječar, fostering cultural exploration and creative souvenir design through intergenerational dialogue and photography.

**EU Heritage Hunt:** A gamified activity by Zajecar Initiative, implemented in five cities, combining physical and digital exploration to deepen young people's understanding of Serbia-EU historical ties while promoting critical thinking and teamwork. These initiatives successfully connected youth with EU topics, culture, and history in engaging and educational ways.



**Main achievement.** Interlinked Cultural Islands Workshops engaged the group of young people from Eastern Serbia in promoting EU values on creative and artistic way. Young people recognized their shared cultural heritage and the significance of creating connections with peers from different social groups.



IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE PROJECT, THERE WILL BE MORE PUBLIC AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS CONCERTS, PUB QUIZZES, DEBATES...



## 2. Improvement of the Association's Digital Presentation

**Timespan:** From **June, 2024** to **August, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 1.030€

**Funded by:** Delegation of EU to the Republic of Serbia

**The Project.** The main goal of the project is to enhance the association's online presence, ensuring greater transparency in its work and better communication with target groups.

**Main Achievement.** A new website for the association has been developed, featuring a dedicated section for young people called "Youth Corner." The content of this section was created in consultation with members of the youth club, who suggested including experiences of active club members, as well as useful links where young people can find relevant information. Meanwhile, texts and other materials intended for institutions and professionals working with youth have been placed in a separate section titled "Community Stories."

Content from the old website has been reorganized for better clarity, and the archive of publications produced over the association's 20 years of work has also been transferred.

The association's online presentation has been significantly improved with a new design and content tailored to users.

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Youth Club means meeting the other young people, people that fight for youth, people that believe in youth! Youth Club is the circle of people that works on improving the position of the young people. Here I learnt how to write projects, how to fight for my rights, how to socialize with everyone and to find compromise, no matter where they are from, how old they are or what is their nationality.

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# LDA DNIPROPetrovsk REGION



**Delegate: Anzhelika Pylypenko**

**Established: 2015**

## KEY PARTNERS

- ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy
- Lower Silesia Region- Lower Silesian Voivodship
- NGO All-Ukrainian public organisation “Association for the Promotion of Self-Organisation of the Population”
- NGO Campus Creative Club
- NGO Public Chamber of Ukraine
- NGO Gender club Dnipro
- Ukrainian Women’s Fund
- NGO Merkury Foundation
- UNESCO branch in Dnipro
- University of Customs and Finance
- Zelenodolsk City Council
- Organization "Blue and Yellow Cross" (Cologne, Germany)

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

To support the process of democratization in the Dnipropetrovsk Region and other territories of Ukraine by strengthening good governance and building the capacity of local authorities and civil society, as well as citizen participation in public life.

### Priorities:

- Local participatory democracy development and consulting on decentralization issues process;
- Psychological and social adaptation of IDPs and soldiers with their family members;
- Gender equality promotion;
- Support for youth initiatives.

## **The Strategic Objectives of the Union are to promote:**

- Implementation of European values and standards, the rule of law in the life of Ukrainian society;
- Protection and realization of legal rights, freedoms and interests of Union members, partners and members of local communities as of Dnipropetrovsk region and Ukraine as a whole;
- Organization of cooperation of local communities, associations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, state and local authorities with similar institutions abroad for the purpose of exchanging of positive experience of their participation in the development of local democracy;
- Enforcement of social, economic, artistic, educational, scientific and other projects; - increase of social activity of local communities;
- Development of local NGOs, unions, foundations, community organizations, initiative groups that seek to support local democracy;
- Development of social partnership between state government, local government and local communities;
- Monitoring authorities and citizens in compliance and enforcement of Legislative Acts of Ukraine and international treaties and agreements ratified by Ukraine;
- Self-association of communities, local government and local democracy;
- Promotion of the development of youth as individuals and responsible citizens of Ukraine as the most comprehensive disclosure of their physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual potential; assistance in the development of the youth movement in the territory of Ukraine and the protection of legitimate rights and interests;
- Support for the implementation of national, regional, local and international programs aimed at improving social relations and the economic situation of internally displaced persons, and cooperation with foreign countries and international organizations in this field;
- Promote the consolidation and coordination of the efforts of soldiers, members of their families, their associations in the broad, more effective use of available opportunities to protect their political, economic and social rights, and promote their social adaptation and rehabilitation;
- Assistance in supporting, ensuring and promoting gender equality and in all spheres of public life;
- Promoting the economic potential of the society in order to ensure its harmonious and democratic development, by supporting initiatives on launching and implementing social enterprise projects, attracting investments for the development of territorial communities.





## Projects and activities

### 1. "Indestructibility Point"

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to March, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

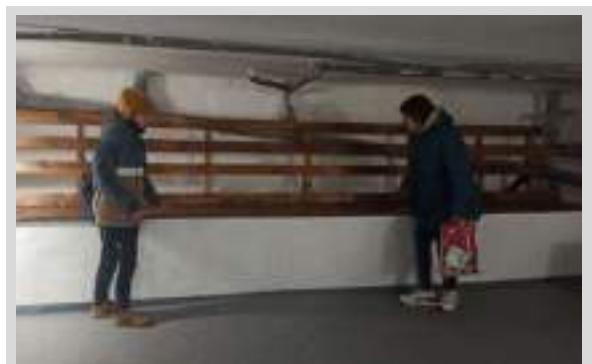
**Total Budget:** 17 980 €

**Funded by:** Organisation "Blue and Yellow Cross" (Cologne, Germany) with support by NRW

**The Project.** The project involved the establishment of an "Indestructibility Point" in Dnipro, designed to accommodate up to 50–60 individuals at a time during missile attacks or large-scale disruptions to energy infrastructure. This safe space allows both local residents and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to shelter during air raids or blackouts, offering access to warmth, electricity for charging devices, and a secure environment to continue working or studying.

**Main Achievements.** In a condominium building in the Sokil-1 residential complex in Dnipro, which is located in the center of a remote neighborhood of the city, has set up an "Invincibility point", where up to 50-60 people can stay at the same time to provide residents with the opportunity to temporarily stay in the absence of electricity and heat to recharge gadgets, heat, eat, work remotely or study.

This is an effective help in the context of the war in Ukraine, especially when there has been massive shelling of critical infrastructure recently, when there are often problems with electricity and heat supply. Now, residents of the Sokil housing estate can go to the equipped invincibility point to recharge their gadgets to stay in touch, keep warm, drink hot tea, work on the computer or do their homework. Such conditions make it easier for people to survive the difficult conditions of war and related restrictions.



## 2. “Emergency Support for Dnipro, Ukraine”

**Timespan:** From **May, 2024** to **July, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

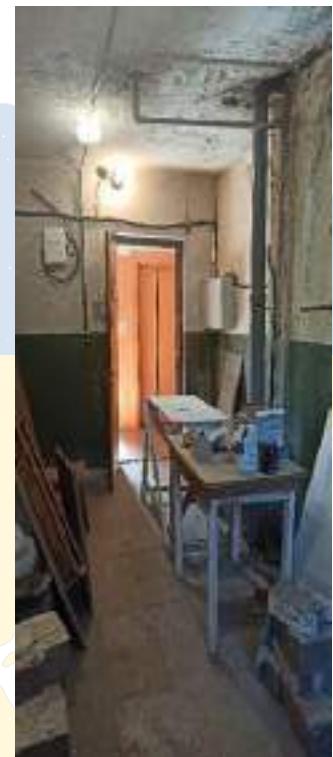
**Total Budget:** 23 000€

**Funded by:** ALDA (with support by Fons Mallorqui)

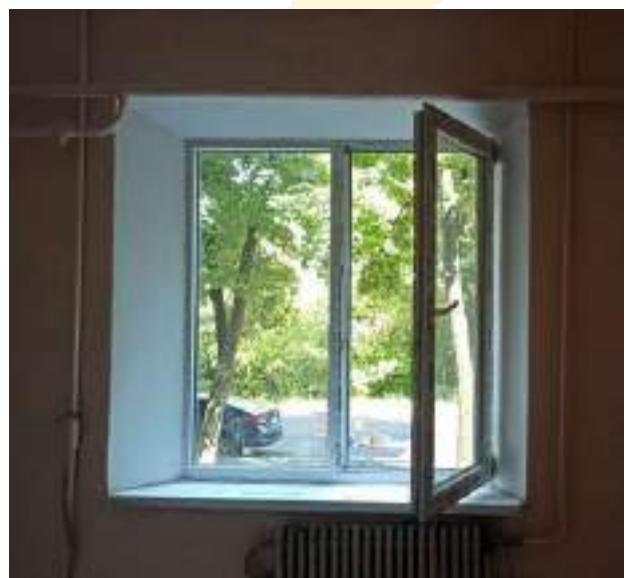
**The Project.** The project focused on the renovation and preparation of four premises (totalling approximately 80 square metres) to accommodate 6–8 internally displaced persons (IDPs), providing them with a safe and functional space for temporary living and individual activities., while actively promoting good governance and participatory democracy at the local level.

*Key activities included:*

- Carrying out renovation works in auxiliary premises within a condominium to make them suitable for habitation;
- Purchasing essential furnishings and equipment to set up a shelter for short-term accommodation;
- Providing guidance and training to designated individuals responsible for managing and maintaining the premises.



**Main Achievements.** In the Sokil residential complex, four premises were equipped to provide temporary accommodation for 6–8 internally displaced persons (IDPs). This initiative represents an effective and timely response to the urgent needs of individuals forced to flee their homes due to the intensification and proximity of hostilities. The shelter was arranged within a condominium setting, functioning as an organised micro-community. This approach not only fosters a sense of social cohesion and mutual support, but also ensures the preservation of the renovations and equipment through shared responsibility and regular use.



### 3 “ALDA Center at the University of Customs and Finance”

**Timespan:** From **August, 2024** to **September, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 1000€

**Funded by:** ALDA (with support by U-LEAD)

**The Project.** The project led to the opening of the ALDA Centre at the University of Customs and Finance in Dnipro, serving as a platform for dialogue and cooperation between communities in the Dnipropetrovsk region and those across European countries. The Centre aims to foster strong partnerships between local authorities and civil society, while actively promoting good governance and participatory democracy at the local level.

Key activities included:

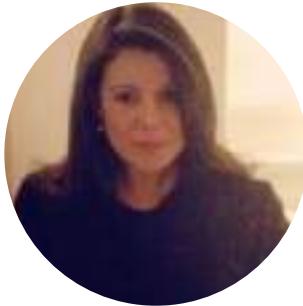
1. Renovation and preparation of the Centre's premises;
2. Organisation of a formal opening ceremony;
3. Hosting a dedicated conference for local communities to mark the launch of the ALDA Centre for Good Governance, Self-Organisation and Participatory Democracy.

**Main Achievements.** The ALDA Centre at the University of Customs and Finance has become a strategic hub for fostering cooperation between communities in the Dnipropetrovsk region and their counterparts across European countries. In addition to serving as a platform for international exchange, the Centre provides advisory support on community-based project development, promotes citizens' engagement in participatory democracy, and facilitates the strengthening of constructive relationships between local authorities and territorial communities.



**We built trust during war, connection during crisis, and hope for the future!**

”



**Delegate: Elisa Falcini**

**Established: 2022**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Edremit Municipality, Türkiye (Lead Partner)
- Dokuz8Haber/MEDAR, Türkiye
- Ahmetbey Municipality, Türkiye
- Elbarlament, Germany
- Budva Municipality, Montenegro
- Lushnje Municipality, Albania
- Edremit Gençlik Derneği (Youth Association), Türkiye
- Edremit Yorkshire Derneği (Yorkshire Canary Association), Türkiye
- Edremit Roman Dernekleri Federasyonu (Roma Citizens Federation in Edremit), Türkiye
- Edremit İşitme Engelliler Derneği (Edremit Association of Deaf), Türkiye

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

The Local Democracy Agency in Edremit is a permanent platform for cooperation, to improve dialogue and mutual exchange of experience in all aspects (cultural, social and economic) between the municipality, civil society and citizens of Edremit. Moreover, it fosters cooperation between Edremit local communities and the communities of Turkish and European partners. The LDA supports local democracy and citizens' participation for the successful community engagement of its partner associations and cities.

### **Its main objectives are:**

- The promotion of respect for Human Rights, democracy and the rule of law.
- The promotion of concrete initiatives to consolidate democracy at the local level.
- To develop practices of citizens participation at the local level such as participatory budgets, citizens' initiatives and other instruments which include cooperation between citizens and local authorities for better and inclusive policies.

- The empowering of institutions at the local level thanks to the exchange of know-how, training of the local councillors and territorial civil servants.
- The development of a pluralist civil society and the participation of all the components of society to more transparent and inclusive local decision-making mechanisms.
- The promotion of intercultural and interethnic dialogue.
- The promotion of decentralised and transnational cooperation, engaging communities including national and international partners.

### **Priority areas:**

- Relations between Türkiye and European Union
- Cooperation with other municipalities
- Local Democracy and Participatory Citizenship
- Women empowerment, women rights
- Climate change, Environmental Criticality and protection of Nature
- Empowerment local media in Edremit
- Mainstreaming Gender Equality at local level
- Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism
- Social Integration of Immigrants
- Youth Entrepreneurship
- Childhood and disabled people rights and strengthening education
- Trust and accountability principles in the relations between citizens and local administrations.
- Sustainable Urban Planning and Sustainable Local Development

## Projects and activities

### 1. Strengthening women's decision-making power and effective political participation in local governance

**Timespan:** From December, 2024 to July, 2025

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 15.000 €

**Funded by:** Ambassade de France en Turquie

**The Project.** The project is aimed to encourage the participation of local young women in the decision making processes of the Municipality, empowering them with a cycle of trainings addressed to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the frame of democratic rights, public speaking, political and governance processes.

The project's main output is represented by a "Women Policy Paper" which is planned to be drafted by the pilot group of women involved in the project and eventually to be presented to the Mayor and to the City Council members in order to raise awareness about the lack of women inclusion/women representativeness in Turkish local governance.

#### Main achievements.

- A total of 25 young women from the disadvantaged groups of Edremit gained knowledge and self-confidence in expressing themselves and their constraints to policy makers and decision makers of the city.
- A Women policy paper to be presented to the City Council in order to better align the local policies to the needs of local women with social, economic and physical disadvantages.
- A three days training for 25 young disadvantaged women about public speaking, local politics, human rights and decision making mechanisms.



It is the first time that **young women from the Roma community** have been involved in a capacity building activity strengthening their right to be represented and **their voices to be heard**. The project aimed to give instruments directly to women in order to adjust the local policies mostly shaped by men.



**Delegate: Nino Khukhua**  
**Established: 2007**

## KEY PARTNERS

- City of Strasbourg, France (Lead Partner)
- City of Kutaisi, Georgia (Host City)
- Municipality of Monfalcone, Italy
- Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region, Poland
- City of Tbilisi, Georgia
- National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), Georgia
- Georgian Young Lawyers' Association (GYLA), Georgia
- Partners-Georgia, Georgia

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Local Democracy Agency Georgia (LDA Georgia) was set up in 2007 in Kutaisi, as part of ALDA's strategy in the South Caucasus. LDA Georgia is dedicated to the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level. LDA focuses on activities facilitating cooperation between local authorities and civil society.

The mission of LDA Georgia is to strengthen local democracy and civil society, support democratic reforms in Georgia, and to develop new and innovative approaches to local and national challenges, by cooperating with local and international stakeholders through:

- Capacity building programs for local authorities and NGOs
- Promoting active citizenship and good governance
- Promoting women's and youth rights
- Supporting and initiating cross-border and regional cooperation
- Promoting EU integration and European values at the local level



## Projects and activities

### 1. The Voice of Youth in Local Self-Government

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **September, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 18 723,81 € (59 694 GEL)

**Funded by:** USAID

**The Project.** The project aimed to increase the level of youth engagement and support dialogue with the local government in the municipality of Kutaisi.

The project had two main objectives:

- To develop the capacities and practical skills of young people in the municipality of Kutaisi in order to identify youth-related issues.
- To enhance youth participation in the municipality of Kutaisi by training Youth, including the Youth Advisory Council, ensuring maximum youth involvement in local-level decision-making processes.

In the first phase, youth initiative groups were established and then empowered through informational meetings and targeted capacity-building trainings. These trainings covered key topics such as the structure and functions of municipal government, local self-government mandates, municipal programs, participatory budgeting, and civic engagement mechanisms. After assessing and identifying the needs of young people in their communities, the initiative groups developed budget proposals aimed at addressing those needs. These proposals were then presented and discussed during public meetings held at target universities to ensure transparency, raise awareness, and foster wider youth participation.

In the second phase, the project deepened youth participation by training the Youth Advisory Council and facilitating coordination between the council and youth initiative groups. Youth actively contributed to the development of youth-focused budget proposals, which were presented and discussed in the context of the 2025 municipal budget.

**Main achievements.** The project significantly increased the level of awareness among young people in Kutaisi about local governance. Participants gained practical skills in needs assessment, municipal planning, and participatory budgeting. This enabled them to identify the key challenges facing youth and propose relevant, needs-based budgetary solutions.

The project also improved institutional youth participation by strengthening the role and the capacity of the Kutaisi Youth Advisory Council. The council, along with the initiative groups, was actively involved in dialogue with local authorities, including presenting proposals at municipal council sessions.

One of the most inspiring outcomes of the project in Kutaisi has been the transformation of young people from first-time participants to active civic leaders. Many began as members of newly formed youth initiative groups, often with little prior experience engaging with local authorities or understanding how municipal governance works.

Thanks to a series of capacity-building workshops, they gained practical knowledge about the responsibilities of local government and the various tools available for citizen participation. Empowered by this training, several young people began working closely with the Youth Advisory Council of Kutaisi—and eventually joined it as official members.

Today, they continue to advocate for the rights and interests of youth in their city, turning their newfound understanding into tangible influence and community impact.

Although the project's budget programme component was suspended due to USAID's policy against direct cooperation with municipalities, the ideas developed during the initiative were not lost. These proposals have been forwarded for consideration in future planning cycles, ensuring that the project's vision lives on.



**“**At first, I was pretty skeptical about getting involved—I honestly thought I wanted to stay far away from politics and that it wasn't really my thing. But then I realized that shaping the policies that affect us isn't just the job of politicians or officials—it's something all of us, as citizens, have a responsibility to do. Being part of the Youth Advisory Council showed me how much impact young people can actually have when we step up and get involved.”

(A project participant who became a member of the Youth Advisory Council)



## 2. Empowerpreneurship Program: Strengthening Youth through Entrepreneurial/Storytelling Skills Development

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to October, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** Peace Corps

**Total Budget:** 4 230,38 € (13 487 GEL)

**Funded by:** USAID/Peace Corps

**The Project.** This comprehensive program aimed to empower Kutaisi youth aged 15-29 with essential entrepreneurial and digital literacy skills to address Georgia's high youth unemployment rates and low entrepreneurship participation. The project targeted five key objectives: enhancing entrepreneurial and digital literacy, improving self-advocacy and storytelling abilities, establishing community business networks, developing sustainable information sharing culture, and strengthening infrastructure for youth development.

Main activities included two intensive bootcamps (a 2-day entrepreneurship foundations program and a 2-day storytelling/advocacy workshop) alongside multiple training sessions held on-site at various local businesses and organizations, covering Business Model Canvas, Georgian entrepreneurship legislation, AI technology, financial literacy, and digital skills. The program featured innovative site visits to three regional enterprises, allowing participants to gain further practical insights into business operations and connect with local entrepreneurs.

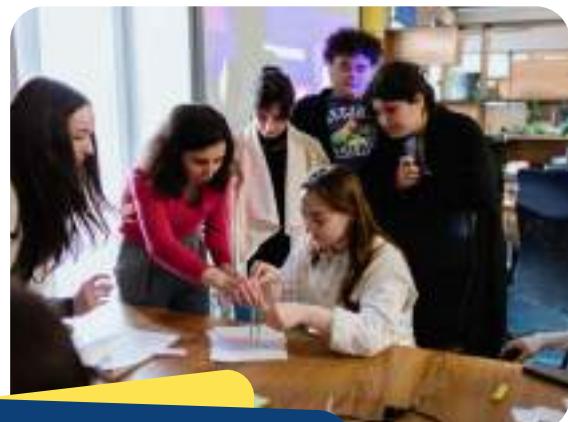
Key achievements include training 15+ youth directly with measurable improvements in confidence and entrepreneurial mindset, producing nine high-quality Georgian-language training videos, and creating a comprehensive digital repository ensuring sustainable access to resources. The program successfully established connections between youth and the local business community, with several enterprises volunteering their spaces for training sessions. Participants demonstrated significant growth, with one noting the program helped overcome fear of public speaking while gaining "excellent teamwork experience" and knowledge in "entrepreneurship, technology, and marketing." The project's impact extends beyond direct participants through digital content reaching 1,000+ indirect beneficiaries.

**Main achievements.** One of the main achievements of the project was the creation of a sustainable digital repository, featuring nine training videos in Georgian along with comprehensive learning resources. This platform ensures long-term community access to entrepreneurship education and has already demonstrated notable improvements in participants' confidence and entrepreneurial mindset. Participants successfully developed their initial ideas into well-structured and viable business concepts. As one participant shared, *"I think the most valuable experience I gained was learning how to present ideas in a way that captivates people, along with essential public speaking skills. Beyond the knowledge and skills, I met fascinating young people with whom I hope to collaborate in the future."*

Under this programme in Georgia, a lasting educational legacy was created through the development of a comprehensive digital repository, accessible to the wider community. This platform includes all training videos and supporting materials, ensuring that the benefits of the initiative continue well beyond its initial implementation.

The success of the programme was driven by the collaborative efforts of an American Peace Corps Volunteer and LDA Georgia staff, who introduced innovative training methods. Workshops were conducted not only in traditional settings but also within local businesses and organisations, offering participants a dynamic and practical learning environment.

A key strength of the initiative was its ability to combine forward-looking themes such as artificial intelligence with essential entrepreneurial skills. This modern and applied approach strongly resonated with participants, underscoring the value of reimagining youth education to reflect today's challenges and opportunities.



“The project taught me that nothing is impossible if you persevere. It helped me overcome my fear of public speaking and provided excellent teamwork experience. I learned a lot about entrepreneurship, technology, and marketing. Importantly, I met professionals from various fields, which is invaluable. I'll use this knowledge and these skills not just in entrepreneurship, but throughout my career.”

(A Youth Participant)



### 3. Civil Society STAR Initiative Imereti Regional Hub

**Timespan:** From April, 2021 to August, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Center for Strategic Research Development of Georgia (CSRDG), Civil Society Initiative (CSI), Consultation and Training Center (CTC), Education Development Employment Center (EDEC), Institute for European Politics (IEP)

**Total Budget:** 60 000 €

**Funded by:** KAS/EU

**The Project.** As the Imereti Regional Hub under the Civil Society STAR Initiative, LDA Georgia successfully concluded this flagship four-year project in 2024. The initiative aimed to strengthen sustainable, transparent, and accountable civil society organisations (CSOs) across the Imereti region, with a strong emphasis on capacity-building, civic engagement, and democratic accountability.

Throughout the final year of implementation, LDA Georgia carried out a wide range of impactful activities. Among the key achievements in 2024 were the operation of an SMS information platform, which reached 12,335 registered beneficiaries across the region, and the delivery of specialised trainings on emerging technologies, citizen participation mechanisms, and legal compliance under updated national legislation.

The project also provided over 150 hotline consultations to CSOs, and maintained a detailed regional database including 157 civil society organisations, 10 community-based organisations (CBOs), and 24 media outlets. Public consultations and thematic discussions were held with Imereti-based organisations on critical topics such as electoral technologies, the foreign influence transparency law, and democratic governance.

Additionally, the project facilitated constructive dialogue between donor institutions and local actors, fostering greater mutual understanding of project priorities, programme opportunities, and regional challenges. Collaboration with youth clubs and citizens in multiple municipalities further enhanced local ownership, through targeted seminars on local governance and civic participation.

**Main achievements.** Over the course of the four-year initiative, LDA Georgia successfully implemented a comprehensive civil society strengthening programme in the Imereti region. The project trained over 95 civil society representatives across six municipalities in core civic competencies, and provided timely legal guidance to more than 22 organisations on compliance with the newly adopted transparency legislation. In parallel, it established functional youth clubs in multiple municipalities, delivering ongoing civic programming to local youth.

Strategic partnerships were forged with key democracy-support organisations, including USAID, GIZ, ISFED, and GYLA, ensuring the sustainability of consultation services beyond the project's lifespan. The initiative also introduced systematic information-sharing mechanisms to support the broader civil society ecosystem across the region.

In total, the programme engaged over 180 participants in targeted training and consultation sessions on topics such as citizen participation, legal compliance, electoral democracy, and advocacy, while delivering more than 150 specialised hotline consultations. It maintained structured support for 157 CSOs, 10 CBOs, and 24 media organisations, leaving behind a lasting impact and a well-anchored network of support structures for democratic engagement in Imereti.

In 2024, the project showcased its remarkable adaptability by responding effectively to emerging challenges within Georgia's evolving civic landscape. One key example was its swift response to the introduction of the controversial foreign influence transparency law, which raised concerns across the civil society sector. The project team conducted specialised consultations, offering timely legal and strategic guidance to help organisations navigate the shifting regulatory environment with clarity and confidence.

The initiative culminated in July 2024 with a regional summary meeting, marking the successful conclusion of this flagship four-year programme. The event highlighted key outcomes, including the establishment of sustainable regional networks, robust information-sharing mechanisms, and enhanced organisational capacities across Imereti's civil society landscape.



## 4. More Transparency and Accountability for Effective Self-Government

**Timespan:** From November, 2023 to June, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** Tkibuli District Development Fund; Terjola, Tkibuli, and Baghdati Municipalities

**Total Budget:** 18 303 €

**Funded by:** GIZ

**The Project.** The project aimed to support the implementation of effective self-government in the municipalities of Terjola, Tkibuli, and Baghdati (Imereti region) while promoting active civil society engagement in local decision-making processes. The initiative focused on three core objectives:

1. Increasing the transparency and accountability of local self-government bodies in the target municipalities;
2. Strengthening good governance practices and enabling civil society participation in local policymaking;
3. Organising regional conferences to foster dialogue between stakeholders.

As part of the project's institutional framework, memoranda of understanding were signed between Local Democracy Agency Georgia, the Tkibuli District Development Fund, and the municipalities of Baghdati, Terjola, and Tkibuli, establishing the foundation for long-term cooperation.

Key activities in 2024 included the comprehensive introduction of the Local Self-Government Index (LSG Index) through training sessions that reached 110 municipal representatives. Civil initiative groups were formed and trained, with 29 active participants, and ALDA was commissioned to conduct research on international best practices for citizen participation.

The project also supported the creation and capacity-building of youth advisory councils, delivering focused training on local self-government, advocacy, and participatory budgeting. To raise public awareness, six podcast and media programmes were produced, featuring experts in governance and citizen engagement.

**Main achievements.** The project achieved significant and lasting impact by institutionalising transparency standards across the municipalities of Terjola, Tkibuli, and Baghdati, with the active involvement of municipal leadership throughout the process. It strengthened local civil society networks through targeted capacity-building initiatives and markedly enhanced youth civic engagement, particularly in Baghdati, where the Youth Advisory Council developed a professional orientation programme proposal for municipal-level implementation.

By introducing the Local Government Index (LSG Index) methodology, the project trained 110 municipal officials and laid the foundation for data-informed governance practices. The signing of formal partnership agreements with each target municipality helped establish sustainable frameworks for civil society participation, ensuring that the structures and practices developed during the project will continue to support democratic engagement beyond the project's duration. 32

An innovative aspect of the project was the creation of multimedia content designed to engage broader audiences through local television and radio platforms, including Rioni.TV. These programmes featured insights from experts representing the Council of Europe, academic institutions, and civil society organisations, helping to bring complex governance topics to the public in an accessible and engaging format.

In parallel, research conducted by ALDA on international best practices in citizen participation provided a valuable reference point for local stakeholders. This resource now serves as a foundation for future improvements in governance and participatory processes across the target municipalities.





**Delegate: Yaroslav Bedenko**  
**Established: 2024**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Région Grand Est - France
- ALDA – European Association for Local Democracy
- Regione Emilia Romagna - Italy TBC
- Bologna Municipality - Italy TBC
- Buscate Municipality - Italy TBC
- Regional Council of Kharkiv
- City of Kharkiv TBC

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

LDA Kharkiv is established with the overarching goal of supporting the reconstruction and democratisation process in the Kharkiv Region, a territory heavily affected by the ongoing conflict and located near the Russian border. The Agency aims to strengthen good governance, build the capacity of local authorities and civil society organisations, and foster citizen participation in public life. It is envisioned as a platform to lay the groundwork for Ukraine's broader social and democratic transformation, operating within the framework of the Eastern Partnership Process and aligning with the country's European integration agenda.

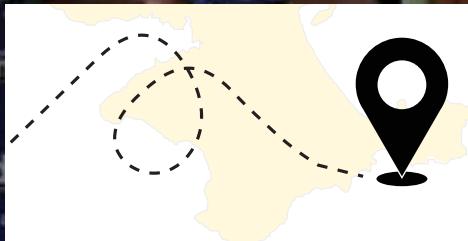
In its early phase, LDA Kharkiv prioritises the identification of a committed local authority partner to establish transparent, accountable, and participatory governance structures. The Agency works to promote participatory democracy and multi-stakeholder engagement through resilient, inclusive mechanisms, while actively fostering decentralisation and collaboration between municipalities and civil society actors.

Recognising the deep social impact of the war, LDA Kharkiv is also committed to supporting the psychological and social adaptation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other vulnerable groups. Additional thematic priorities include the promotion of gender equality and support for youth initiatives, empowering young people as active contributors to democratic life.

In line with its founding statutes, LDA Kharkiv works to advance European values and legal standards, promote the rule of law, and protect the rights and interests of local communities. The Agency encourages cooperation among communities, civil society, local governments, and international partners to exchange best practices and strengthen local democracy. Its work spans social, educational, economic, and cultural dimensions, and includes efforts to monitor public authorities, support the development of civil society organisations and grassroots initiatives, and strengthen social partnerships between citizens and institutions.

The Agency also prioritises the social reintegration and rights protection of soldiers, veterans, and their families, and promotes economic development through social entrepreneurship and investment in territorial communities, ensuring that democratic reconstruction is also inclusive and sustainable.

**As the LDA was formally established in late 2024, no projects have been implemented during this year. However, a series of initiatives are already envisioned for 2025, with a strong focus on local governance, civic resilience, and European cooperation.**





**Delegate: Shpresa Sefaj Berisha**  
**Established: 2011**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Association Trentino con i Balcani, Italy (Lead Partner)
- Municipality of Peja/Pec, Kosovo (Host City)
- Amici dei bambini, Italy and Kosovo
- RTM Region Third World, Italy and Kosovo
- Only Equal Rights Association S.U.D, Italy
- ALFA Formation, France
- Municipality of Yalova, Turkey
- Association of Municipalities of Kosovo AKM

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

Promoting local democracy through initiatives that encourage active citizenship by creating mechanisms for civic engagement, protecting human rights, and empowering youth to be actively involved in decision-making processes.

The LDA Kosovo was officially opened in 2011 in Peja/Pec, to promote local democracy in the country. The LDA implements its mission through activities in the fields of democracy, justice, human rights, youth and equal opportunities, dialogue among minority communities in Kosovo, economic development, and social and cultural development. LDA Kosovo implements capacity building programmes aimed at fostering active citizenship and at establishing concrete mechanisms of citizens' participation, thus empowering citizens to improve their communities, as well as their society.

## Projects and activities

### 1. Preservation of Traditional Crafts and Skills through the Empowerment of Artisans

**Timespan:** From May, 2024 to December, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 7.600 €

**Funded by:** Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports

**The Project.** This project aimed to safeguard and promote traditional craftsmanship by empowering local artisans and raising awareness among young generations. Through hands-on workshops, oral history documentation, and digital archiving, the project preserved Peja's unique cultural heritage. The initiative provided artisans with opportunities to share their expertise, encouraged youth participation in cultural preservation, and fostered intergenerational learning.

#### Main achievements.

- Hosted local workshops where artisans trained over 50 young participants in traditional crafts.
- Documented and archived at least seven oral histories from master artisans.
- Conducted guided cultural visits to heritage sites in Peja.
- Successfully organized a photography contest and exhibition, attracting local and national attention.



## 2. International DiSPLAY Project

**Timespan:** /

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 300.000 €

**Funded by:** Erasmus+ (European Union), Municipality of Peja

**The Project.** The International DiSPLAY Project is a youth entrepreneurship capacity-building initiative aimed at fostering innovation and business development in the Balkans and EU countries. Through the integration of LEGO Serious Play methodology, young entrepreneurs gain hands-on experience in conceptualizing and testing business ideas. The project focuses on enhancing entrepreneurial mindsets, equipping participants with innovative tools, and promoting cross-border collaboration.

The key objectives include:

- Strengthening youth entrepreneurship and innovation in the Balkan region.
- Providing interactive training on business idea development through LEGO Serious Play.
- Facilitating networking opportunities among young entrepreneurs and business mentors.
- Supporting the development of sustainable youth-led businesses.

### Main achievements.

- Conducted research on youth employment and entrepreneurship in partner countries.
- Developed a comprehensive methodology guide for LEGO Serious Play in entrepreneurship.
- Organized a series of local workshops with at least 50 young participants across different countries.
- Launched an online platform for educational resources and networking opportunities.



### 3. Photography Exhibition on Cultural Heritage

**Timespan:** From **May, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

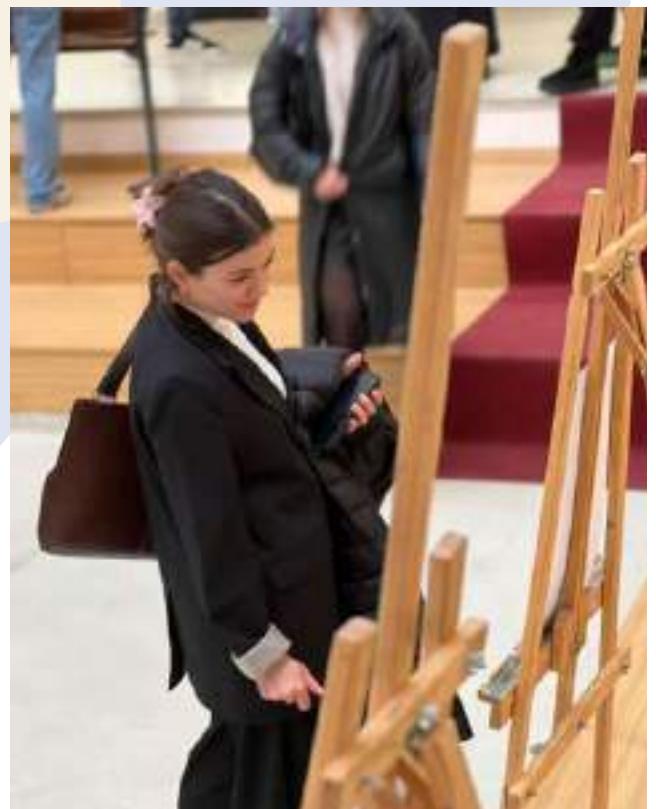
**Total Budget:** 7.600 €

**Funded by:** Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports of Kosovo

**The Project.** The Photography Exhibition on Cultural Heritage was organized to highlight the importance of preserving traditional crafts and cultural heritage. Young participants captured the essence of these traditions through photography, bringing attention to the beauty and significance of artisanal skills. The project aimed to foster cultural awareness, encourage artistic expression, and engage youth in documenting their heritage. The top three photographs were awarded by an evaluation committee, further motivating young photographers.

#### Main achievements.

- Successfully organized an exhibition showcasing the work of young photographers.
- Increased awareness of cultural heritage through visual storytelling.
- Encouraged youth engagement in heritage conservation through photography



## 4. Cultural Heritage Site Visits

**Timespan:** From **May, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

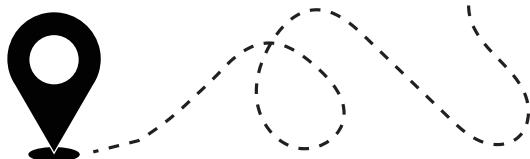
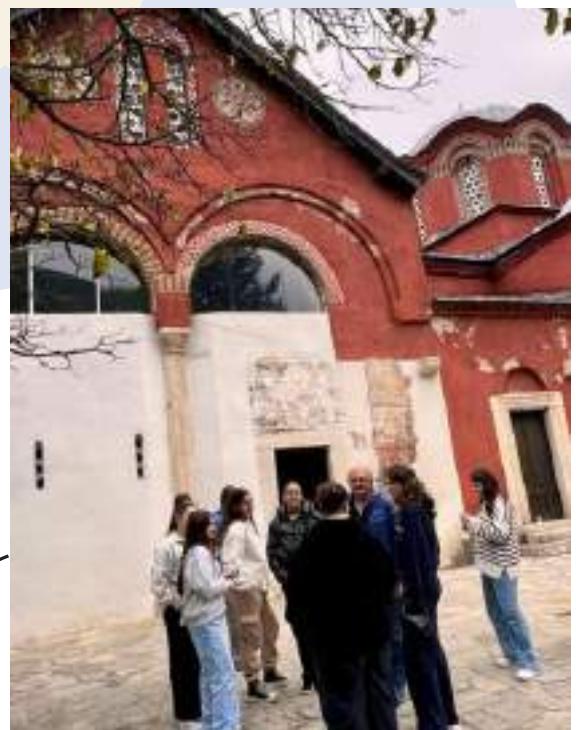
**Total Budget:** 7.600 €

**Funded by:** Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports of Kosovo

**The Project.** This project provided young participants with guided visits to significant cultural and historical sites in Peja, Kosovo. Led by cultural heritage expert Fatos Katallozi, the visits included historical, religious, and artisanal sites, helping participants appreciate and understand the cultural wealth of their region. The project aimed to raise awareness about the importance of heritage conservation and inspire youth to engage in cultural preservation efforts.

### Main achievements.

- Strengthened youth engagement in heritage conservation.
- Provided hands-on learning experiences about cultural landmarks.
- Fostered appreciation for the region's diverse cultural history.



## 5. IT Training for Minority and Majority Youth

**Timespan:** From 2024 to 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 8.200€

**Funded by:** Government of Japan (JSDF)

**The Project.** This project provided IT training to young people from different communities, equipping them with essential technological skills. The initiative aimed to improve employability by offering hands-on learning opportunities in IT-related fields such as programming and digital literacy. The training focused on bridging the skills gap in Kosovo's job market by preparing youth for opportunities in the tech sector.

### Main achievements.

- Graduates received certifications in IT skills.
- Enhanced employability for participants in the digital job market.
- Strengthened cooperation between local institutions and youth development programs.



## 6. Youth Entrepreneurship Training under DiSPLAY Project

**Timespan:** From **June 2024** to **December 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 11.500€

**Funded by:** Ministry of Regional Development & Municipality of Peja

**The Project.** This training introduced young people to fundamental entrepreneurship concepts, the role of digital technology in business development, and innovative methods for generating business ideas. The training aimed to equip youth with practical skills to develop and implement business ideas using digital tools. The project provided interactive workshops where participants explored creative and technological solutions for business growth.

### Main achievements.

- Trained youth in innovative business development strategies.
- Encouraged the use of digital tools in entrepreneurship.
- Strengthened youth capacities for business creation and self-employment.





**Delegate: Tetiana Lomakina**

**Established: 2017**

## KEY PARTNERS

### International partners:

- The Municipality of Gdansk
- Etterbeek Municipality
- Studio Progetto
- Progettarte
- ADL Zavidovici, Brescia
- the Government of Japan and the IOM (project partners in 2023)

### Ukrainian partners:

- Mariupol City Council
- Mariupol State University
- Pryazovskyi State Technical University
- CF "I am Mariupol. Youth"
- Pan-Ukrainian Youth Organization
- NGO Mariupol Youth Union
- Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) created in Ukraine by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

LDA Mariupol's mission is to support civil society in Ukraine during wartime by promoting citizen activism, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation between the public and local authorities, empowering youth and opinion leaders, and providing targeted assistance to internally displaced persons. The organisation envisions a sustainable and inclusive Ukrainian society in which citizens actively engage in decision-making, young people drive positive change, and displaced individuals find meaningful support and integration. Guided by the principles of human rights, equality, and solidarity, LDA Mariupol works to build a peaceful and democratic future. Its activities primarily target internally displaced persons, young people aged 14 to 35, and public activists, in collaboration with key stakeholders including opinion leaders, local authorities, international organisations, and donors. The agency operates from Kyiv, Ukraine.

## Projects and activities

### 1. PAVE - Peace Awareness through Volunteering and Education

**Timespan:** From January, 2022 to December, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** LDA Mariupol and Mariupol State University

**Funded by:** EU - Erasmus+ programme

**The Project.** Between 2023 and 2024, students from Mariupol State University participated in international volunteer experiences in Croatia and Ireland as part of the PAVE project – Peace Awareness through Volunteering and Education, supported by the Erasmus+ programme. The project offered a unique opportunity for young people from Ukraine to explore historical conflict contexts in Europe, including Northern Ireland, the Western Balkans, and Ukraine itself, providing valuable perspectives on peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Through educational exchanges and volunteering activities, participants deepened their understanding of the roots of conflict and gained practical tools for conflict prevention, dialogue, and promoting a culture of peace and mutual understanding.

The PAVE project is implemented by ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy, in partnership with Inishowen Development Partnership and other European organisations. In Ukraine, the project is supported by Mariupol State University and LDA Mariupol, acting as associated partners committed to fostering youth engagement and peace education.

**Main achievements.** The PAVE project achieved several meaningful milestones during 2023-2024. A notable success was the Policy Paper Contest, which attracted a high number of submissions from young participants across Europe. The eight most outstanding contributions were formally recognised during the International Peace Forum in Paris, highlighting the intellectual engagement and policy-oriented thinking of the next generation.

A particularly impactful moment of the Forum was the session dedicated to the war in Ukraine, led by young Ukrainian experts and activists. Their personal testimonies offered powerful and moving insights into the consequences of conflict, as well as the determination of local communities to rebuild and advocate for peace.

The event itself served as a global gathering, bringing together over 60 international participants from diverse backgrounds. This dynamic exchange of perspectives and experiences marked a fitting culmination of the PAVE project's journey, reinforcing its core message of peace through education, volunteering, and international cooperation.



“War has a huge impact on young people: on the one hand, it undermines stability and certainty, and on the other, it forces them to adapt to new conditions, find new values and aspirations. To restore and maintain a healthy identity, it is important to create opportunities for young people to get an education and comprehensive development, and to provide psychosocial support. Mariupol University has done much of this: it has helped with employment, provided a link for the displaced academic community to Kyiv, and continues to foster a sense of community among those who have lost their homes. And it is through these efforts that it has played an important role in supporting both its students and the wider Mariupol community during the protracted conflict”

(Mariia Kustikova, 24)

## 2. Project to improve the Resilience of IDP Children

**Timespan:** From **October, 2024** to **November 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** LDAM - ALDA, Mariupol City Council, PO "Zherela", the Palace of Children and Youth of the Pechersk district of Kyiv, the Expert Center "Development of Communities"

**Total Budget:** 5 000€

**Funded by:** Municipality of Etterbeek (Belgium), ALDA

**The Project.** In October 2024, the project “Garden of Dreams”, a creative excursion camp for children from internally displaced families from Mariupol, was officially launched. The initiative is designed to enhance the resilience of children aged 10 to 16 who have been affected by the war, helping them to better cope with its consequences and prepare for future challenges. The camp offers a rich and engaging programme, including masterclasses in eco-friendly holiday decoration making, thematic excursions, interactive workshops, and physical activities, all aimed at promoting psychological wellbeing, creativity, and social connection.

The camp began welcoming children on 25 October and will run until 3 November 2024 in the picturesque town of Bohuslav in the Kyiv region. This partnership project, titled “Creative Excursion Camp ‘Garden of Dreams’ to Increase the Level of Sustainability for Children of IDPs”, is implemented by the civil society organisation AMDM – Agency of Local Democracy of Mariupol, with the financial support of the municipality of Etterbeek (Belgium). It is delivered in collaboration with the Mariupol City Council, ALDA – European Association for Local Democracy, CC “Zherela”, the Palace of Children and Youth of the Pechersk District of Kyiv, and the Expert Centre “Development of Communities”.

**Main achievements.** The camp provided internally displaced children with a full-fledged, active, and enriching experience that significantly contributed to strengthening their emotional resilience. Through participation in creative, physical, and educational activities, the children became better equipped to cope with adversity, trauma, and the ongoing consequences of war. The programme offered them not only a safe and supportive environment, but also practical tools to safeguard their well-being, continue their education, and envision a more stable and hopeful future.



### 3. Equipping a children's room in a new medical hub for Mariupol residents in Kyiv

**Timespan:** 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** ALDA - lead partner / Mariupol City Council, the Charitable Foundation "YaMariupol"

**Total Budget:** 7 000€

**Funded by:** Municipality of Gdańsk, ALDA

**The Project.** In partnership with the Mariupol City Council and the Charitable Foundation "YaMariupol", the NGO "LDAM" (Local Democracy Agency Mariupol) successfully implemented a project to create a dedicated children's room within the new medical hub for Mariupol residents in Kyiv. The initiative aims to provide a safe, welcoming, and stress-reducing space for young patients, offering comfort during medical visits.

The room is fully equipped to meet the needs of children of all ages, featuring interactive toys, educational games, and a cosy environment that supports emotional wellbeing. This project not only improves the care experience for children, but also stands as a symbol of effective international cooperation and solidarity with Ukraine during a time of great challenge.





**Delegate: Nicolae Hristov**  
**Established: 2017**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Solidarité Eau Europe, France (Lead Partner)
- City of Cimişlia, Moldova (Host City)
- IASCI – International Agency for Source Country Information (Representative Office Moldova)
- NEXUS Moldova

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate the participation of civil society in the decision-making process at the local level.
- Increase the interest, awareness and capacities of citizens to take part in the decision-making process at the local level.
- Increase the awareness and skills of the local communities and local authorities to address the needs of citizens.
- Increase the interest and sharing of information between Moldova and other European countries and stakeholders to enable closer cooperation and ongoing exchange of the practices.
- Raise the awareness of the importance of migration with regards of local development.

The LDA Moldova in Cimişlia was established on 3 March 2017. It represents the first Local Democracy Agency in Moldova, based in the city of Cimişlia, a historic and symbolic city, the aim is to create a platform for cooperation, dialogue and mutual exchange of experience in all aspects (cultural, social and economic) between local communities and communities of European partners and will constitute a platform of discussion between citizens, local associations and authorities on the field in order to meet the needs of local communities.



## Projects and activities

### 1. Modernization of livestock farms, automation of the milk collection process, and enhancement of the feeding production

**Timespan:** From December, 2023 to October, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** NGO Development through Involvement (NGO Dezvoltare prin Implicare); Cimislia District Council; Cimislia Business Incubator.

**Total Budget:** 145.000,00 USD

**Funded by:** UNDP Moldova

**The Project.** This project is implementing within the micro-region of Cimislia-Basarabeasca, encompassing 10 localities within the region, with an aggregate population of 21,400 individuals. The focal recipients of this endeavor are the 24 constituents of the micro-cluster “Ovi-Caprin Cimislia-Basarabeasca”, an entity employing 50 workers with an estimated turnover of 23 mln MDL. The identification of the recipient institution transpired through a rigorous closed call for proposals. Subsequently, the ultimate beneficiaries were judiciously chosen at the micro-cluster level, taking into account the most pressing needs, challenges, and prospects. The overarching goal is to enhance the provision of tourism services within the region, aiding the micro-cluster in the execution of the roadmap formulated and sanctioned by its members. Furthermore, the principal aim of the project is to augment the revenue generation of the final beneficiaries, consequently contributing to the overall economic growth of the micro-cluster. The initiative also aspires to generate and/or enhance employment opportunities within the micro-region.



## Main achievements.

- The development of livestock farming and milk processing in the Cimislia-Basarabeasca micro-region through modernization and automation efforts.
- A budget allocation of 145 000,00 USD (Moldovan Leu 2,568,095) to support these initiatives, with disbursements based on project milestones.
- The establishment of an implementation team, execution of non-monetary assistance agreements, and a detailed procurement plan to facilitate project objectives.
- Implementation of interventions at the micro-cluster level, including the procurement of goods and services and the transfer of these to final beneficiaries.
- The project targets the creation and enhancement of employment opportunities and aims to generate economic growth within the micro-cluster, with performance indicators and risk analysis detailed to guide and measure progress.



The **sheep and goat cluster** is not just a project, but a community made up of people with the same **passion and commitment for the welfare of animals and the rural environment**. Through collaboration and exchange of experience, we can improve our practices, support each other in the face of difficulties

(Caproşu family)

“

## 2. Better sanitation and hygiene facilities for students in rural schools

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to December, 2026

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 81.967 €

**Funded by:** Charita Česká republika (Caritas Czech Republic)

**The Project.** The overall objective of the action is to contribute to the strengthening of CSOs' capacity in the process of implementation of the Association Agreement, including at local level. It is directly related to the 3rd priority of the European Union and the EU Member States third generation Roadmap for engagement with Civil Society in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2021-2027, "Enhance the role of Civil Society as a community development actor and service provider to the citizens.". The specific objective is directly linked to the schools' infrastructure development by providing financial and methodological support to at least 25 schools in refurbishing their toilets. Which means, improving the educational conditions for more than 2 500 children from rural and urban areas.

### Main achievements.

It is expected that refurbishing and building of new toilet facilities will be arranged on PPP (public private partnership) principles. We expect a multilateral system of public procurement including applicant and co-applicants, local building and sanitary system supplying companies, parents' and teachers' associations and clubs and local authorities. The procurement system will aim at maximizing the positives of PPP including lowering the contracting prices and lifecycle costs and maximizing of co-funding by local authorities, schools and private partners, finding ideal venues and schools and opportunities for cooperation, fine-tuning the conditions so that they are best suited for all stakeholders especially students, schools and local authorities. The PPP principles include transparency measures, especially regulating profits on the part of private partners. All of these partners will be encouraged to broaden the cooperation on other groups of activities, e.g. education and supply for hygiene products for girls.

The Action is mainstreaming the responsible use of resources, specifically focussing on the efficient water and waste management. While refurbishing toilets, the focus will be on ecological solutions and innovative concepts that require less water or don't require water at all, such as dry or ecosan toilets.

Emphasis will be given to connecting education projects with construction and supply. E.g.: by teaching children to save water in the sinks and in the toilets, general awareness of planet-friendly solutions will be raised. In the cases where composting toilets would be used, children can be included in small agriculture projects and will learn about sustainable fertilization in agriculture. Use of eco-friendly toilets in schools may also help to spread the message among parents and families and spread these principals across communities.

The Action will mainstream gender equality in all its components, with particular emphasis on Output 3. Educational activities at schools will promote gender equality and a standalone activity will provide free sanitary products to girls. In addition, gender equality will also be taken into account when designing new toilet facilities, especially with regard to sufficient capacities of girls' toilets.

Enabling people with disabilities to integrate into society needs to be part of the whole education system and must be aimed both at students and school staff. While it is quite costly to refurbish the schools to be wheelchair accessible, with the toilets the only thing needed is larger capacity booth and some basic equipment. Therefore, building wheelchair and disabled person accessible toilets should be a standard applied to all schools. The action will especially focus on schools that are wheelchair accessible but do not have wheelchair accessible toilets and prioritize them in the selection criteria.

# LDA MONTENEGRO



**Delegate: Kerim Medjedovic**  
**Established: 2001**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, Italy (Lead Partner)
- Municipality of Niksic, Montenegro (Host City)
- Municipality of Kotor, Montenegro
- Municipality of Rozaje, Montenegro
- Union of Municipalities of Montenegro
- Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Montenegro
- Association Betton-Montenegro, France
- City of Neuchatel, Switzerland

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Local administration capacity development
- Human rights and peace building
- Youth participation
- Local economic development
- European Union integration processes

The Local Democracy Agency in Nikšić was established with the support of the Council of Europe on May 11th 2001 as a local NGO. LDA Montenegro functions within the network of 11 Agencies in the former Yugoslav republics and with the support of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies. The creation of Local Democracy Agencies was one of the measures proposed in 1993 by the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. Local Democracy Agency of Montenegro together with the Association of Local Democracy Agencies works on the development of democratic processes and socio- economic development of Southeast and Eastern Europe in co-operation with partners, cities, regions and other organisations through decentralised co-operation and partnership.

## Projects and activities

### 1. YouSEED - Youth Social Economy Exploring for Rural Development

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **February, 2027**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 549.947,90€

**Funded by:** European Commission EU Delegation in Montenegro - Support to civil society to promote local development

**The Project.** To increase capacities of CSOs, LAs and Rural Development actors for boosting local economic development and social advance through Social Economy actions and development models.

YouSEED is structured around three work packages:

- The First, Policy Influencing and Dialogue, embarks on a thorough analysis of local and rural development with a keen focus on SSE.
- The second work package, Local Development - Environmental and Social Impact, delves into the socio-economic context of Montenegro. It implements a sub-granting program designed to support innovative Social and Green entrepreneurship initiatives.
- Visibility and Communication form the third pillar of YouSEED. A nationwide awareness-raising campaign is launched.

## Main Achievements.

- 47 project proposals arrived upon the public call announcement. 15 to 20 will be awarded with respect of the funds available (60% of the total amount);
- MoU signed with 20 Municipalities (100% of the number planned) and Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Dialogue;
- Feasibility Study on the sector of SSE in Montenegro created. This study gathers invaluable insights from Montenegrin communities, setting the stage for the creation of participatory Local Action Plans aimed at enhancing local economies.
- The awareness campaign spreads word about the project across Montenegro, ensuring that the message of social and economic development reaches every corner of the country.

**“**"The goal of the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Dialogue is not only to create a legal basis for the development of the solidarity economy, but also to promote this activity with all its benefits, so that it lives in Montenegrin society."

(Minister Mrs Naida Nisic)

## 2. Pathway to EASTern EUrope RURAL living labs as a mean To empower youth at local level

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to January, 2026

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 388.504€

**Funded by:** ERASMUS-YOUTH-2023-CB

**The Project.** Creating Living Labs in the Eastern European Countries, targeting youth workers and/or would-be entrepreneurs operating in rural areas.

Constitution of living labs that are conceived as ecosystems of open innovation, centred on the user, which operate in a specific territorial context, integrating both research and innovation processes in business creation within a public-private supporting partnership. The aim would also be to generate benefit and advantages in the medium-long term that may attract people to live in rural areas. These include lower housing and living costs, more available space, a less polluted environment and a less stressful lifestyle.

### Main Achievements

- A research on potential for rural development and young entrepreneurs' involvement is conducted in 4 WB countries. Around 150 young/future entrepreneurs and 120 institutions representatives responded and the Paper is created, comprising also the legislation and support mechanisms, starting from the statistical demography and economy data.
- A 5 day training program for young entrepreneurs is developed;
- Living Labs methodology is adopted and is going to be implemented in following day in 4 WB countries, as a permanent mechanism for local development.
- More than 100 actors and stakeholders are contacted.

Living Labs are both practice-driven organisations that **facilitate and foster open, collaborative innovation, as well as real-life environments or arenas**, where both open innovation and user innovation processes can be studied and experimented with, and where new solutions are developed

(Penny Evans - Bristol Living Lab)

### 3. BOOST - Civil society of the Western Balkan empowerment for the local and regional development

**Timespan:** From January, 2024 to January, 2027

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 3.700.000€

**Funded by:** Agence Francaise de Development

**The Project.** Civil society empowerment, community development, active citizenship, youth, entrepreneurship, rural development, environment, cultural heritage, social and economic local and regional development.

#### Main Achievements.

- Strengthen the role and the capacities of civil society organizations in the Western Balkans countries, which work for the democratisation and sustainable development of the region.
- Set up a network of relevant stakeholders (civil society, local authorities, others) committed to the stable and democratic, economic, cultural and social development of the region.
- Promote and strengthen a shared narrative among civil society and decision-makers that reinforces European values of peace, democracy, and inclusion at regional level.

This strategy underscores France's commitment to investing in the region, recognising its growth potential. He also noted that while French CSOs have reduced their involvement, the French government has increased financial support to address key challenges and opportunities in the Balkans

(**Thibaut Lespagnol**, Deputy Delegate for Local Communities and Civil Society at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs)

## 4. WB cities creating more opportunities for young people

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **January, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 35.155€

**Funded by:** Regional Programme on Local Democracy in the Western Balkans 2 (ReLOaD2)

**The Project.** To empower civil society and youth to engage jointly in participatory democracy and the EU integration process.

To foster youth mobility and engagement in regional co-operation and exchange as a tool for youth professional skills development, vocational training and economic empowerment.

### Main Achievements.

- Improved local capacities for evidence based engagement of youth in policy dialogue and cooperation with local authorities Increased knowledge, entrepreneurial skills and employment opportunities of young people in ICT sector.
- Enhanced regional and inter-municipal cooperation contributing to youth skills development and youth economic empowerment
- A “Guide for Employment and Future Entrepreneurs” for Niksic created;
- A study on employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in 3 countries created.

“ Participation in this project is promotion of Niksic and Niksic youth. This project connects and builds bridges. ”

(Arsenije Lalatovic, Niksic Municipality Deputy Mayor)





**Delegate: Dženana Dedić**  
**Established: 2004**

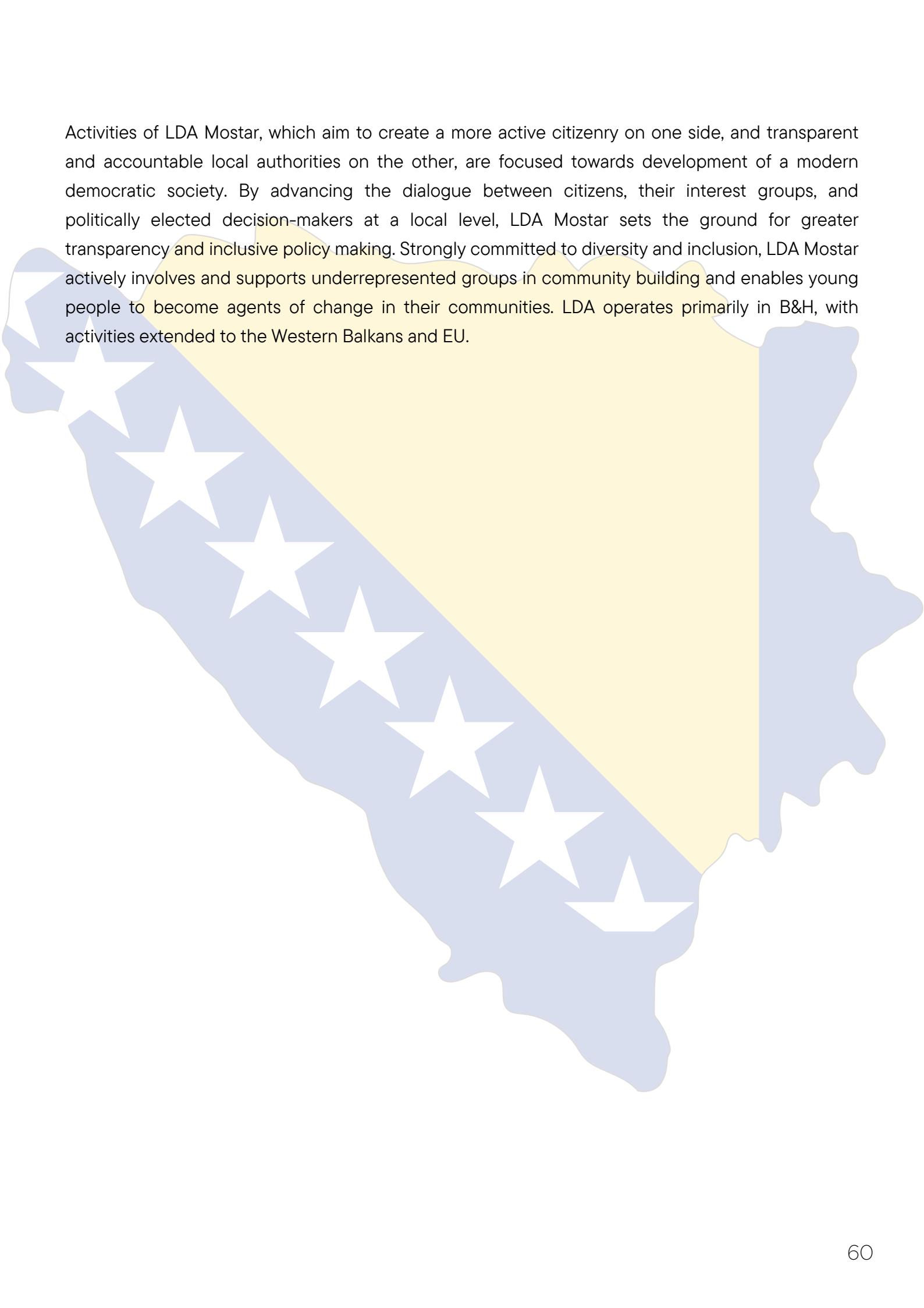
## KEY PARTNERS

- Apulia Region, Italy (Lead Partner)
- City of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Host Partner)
- Municipality of Vejle, Denmark
- City of Monfalcone, Italy
- Province of Brindisi, Italy
- NGO IPSIA, Italy
- City of Kragujevac, Serbia

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Creating active citizenship by involving citizens in decision-making processes
- Building the capacities of local authorities for better local government
- Supporting youth activism and the position of women
- Strengthening partnership networks (national and international) to develop strong national and regional cooperation programmes

Since its establishment in November 2004, Local Democracy Agency Mostar acts as a locally registered non-profit, nongovernmental organization, with the support of its partners and cooperation with other Agencies and the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA). It is precisely this co-operation, both on local and regional level that has enabled numerous activities and projects useful for the development of the local community and its inclusion into processes at the regional level.



Activities of LDA Mostar, which aim to create a more active citizenry on one side, and transparent and accountable local authorities on the other, are focused towards development of a modern democratic society. By advancing the dialogue between citizens, their interest groups, and politically elected decision-makers at a local level, LDA Mostar sets the ground for greater transparency and inclusive policy making. Strongly committed to diversity and inclusion, LDA Mostar actively involves and supports underrepresented groups in community building and enables young people to become agents of change in their communities. LDA operates primarily in B&H, with activities extended to the Western Balkans and EU.

# LDA MOSTAR IN THE FIELD

## Projects and activities

### 1. Project Mostar - Spaces to Activate and Rejuvenate

**Timespan:** From April, 2021 to October, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 3.374.526,42 €

**Funded by:** Government of the United Kingdom

**The Project.** Project Mostar – Spaces to Activate and Rejuvenate is a three-year project, which seeks to improve public spaces and its use in Mostar through citizen engagement and support for citizen-led initiatives which contribute to shared civic, cultural and economic life in Mostar. The project supports citizens and local authorities in effective use of new skills, tools and mechanisms that address existing priorities in an inclusive, gender sensitive, participatory, and systematic manner.

Members of the consortium, within their spheres of action, are implementing a series of innovative activities that engage citizens with a goal of establishing dialogue around common priorities between various communities in Mostar. In addition, the Project is directly allocating funds for infrastructural investments in the City and initiatives, led and designed by citizens, which contribute to public spaces.

As part of the Project, LDA Mostar is working with local authorities to draw attention to citizens' common priorities and provide skills, mechanisms and concrete opportunities for solving them. Our activities focus on concrete means to make local democracy more participatory and inclusive through improved dialogue, consultation and cooperation tools, and workshops on civic engagement for youth. In parallel, LDA Mostar is supporting civil society organization, through a mentoring process for grant recipients, with the aim of improving collaboration with local authorities in the process of finding joint solutions for citizen's needs.



**Main Achievement.** The "What is Democracy for the Youth – Electionville" program, organized by LDA Mostar, ran from September 2023 to March 2024, engaging 17 Mostar high schools, 91 students, and 25 mentors. The educational game, designed to teach democratic values like inclusiveness, participation, and gender equality, was adapted from a board game by Fabel AB and modified for large-floor use by the Swedish Institute. After successful rounds in late 2023, the program continued in 2024 with rounds in February, where nine teams competed, and six advanced to the semi-finals. The program highlighted students' debating and argumentation skills, and their professionalism was evident throughout. The semi-finals on February 15th showcased strong determination, and the Grand Finale on March 4th featured intense competition, with teams from various schools participating. The event, held at Mostar City Hall, also included ambassadors and city officials. Students received awards for Best Council Member and Fair Play, and the program was praised for promoting democratic principles, critical thinking, and collaboration. It proved to be an effective tool for teaching consensus-building and could be adapted for future use in classrooms to encourage active citizenship.

Electionville demonstrated its value as a tool for teaching consensus-building and compromise, vital for addressing polarization in Bosnia and Herzegovina's political landscape. Schools praised its educational potential, emphasizing its adaptability for future use in classrooms to promote democratic principles and active citizenship. The program was praised by students, mentors, and observers for fostering democratic principles, critical thinking, and collaboration.



“Welcome to Electionville’ allows participants to learn how the local government and democratic process’s function. It is also a tool for practising **fundamental democratic rights and values**. This is something we should all continuously practise because: Democracy is worth protecting – every day and by all of us. The **freedom of choice, speech, opinion, and love can never be taken for granted**. The same goes for every person’s right to make an impact, vote, and be treated equally under the law”

(H.E. Helena Lagerlöf, Swedish Ambassador to BiH)

## 2. Performative aRts fOr yoUth EngagemenT and communiTy rEgeneration - PIROUETTE

**Timespan:** From April, 2022 to December, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 153.265 €

**Funded by:** Erasmus+ (KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Youth)

**The Project.** "Pirouette" is a 2-year Capacity Building aimed at promoting the use of performative street arts such as circus, street dance and street painting as an innovative NFE methodology to foster social and civic engagement of youth and, eventually led to a community-led regeneration of urban/disadvantaged areas. The idea behind the project stems from the recognition of youth's social and civic engagement as a driving force for community development.

Overall Goal: recognizing the social and civic engagement of young people as a driving force for community development through the use of performative street arts such as circus, street dance and street art.

**Main Achievements.** The final transnational project meeting for the Pirouette project was held in Milan, Italy, hosted by our partner Q Code Magazine. This two-day event brought together all project partners to reflect on the activities implemented, evaluate the project's outcomes, and consolidate its results for the final report. The meeting marked the culmination of an exceptionally creative and impactful initiative, highlighting the use of performative arts to foster social and civic engagement among youth.



### 3. Raising Environmental Sustainability Through Art - REST\_ART

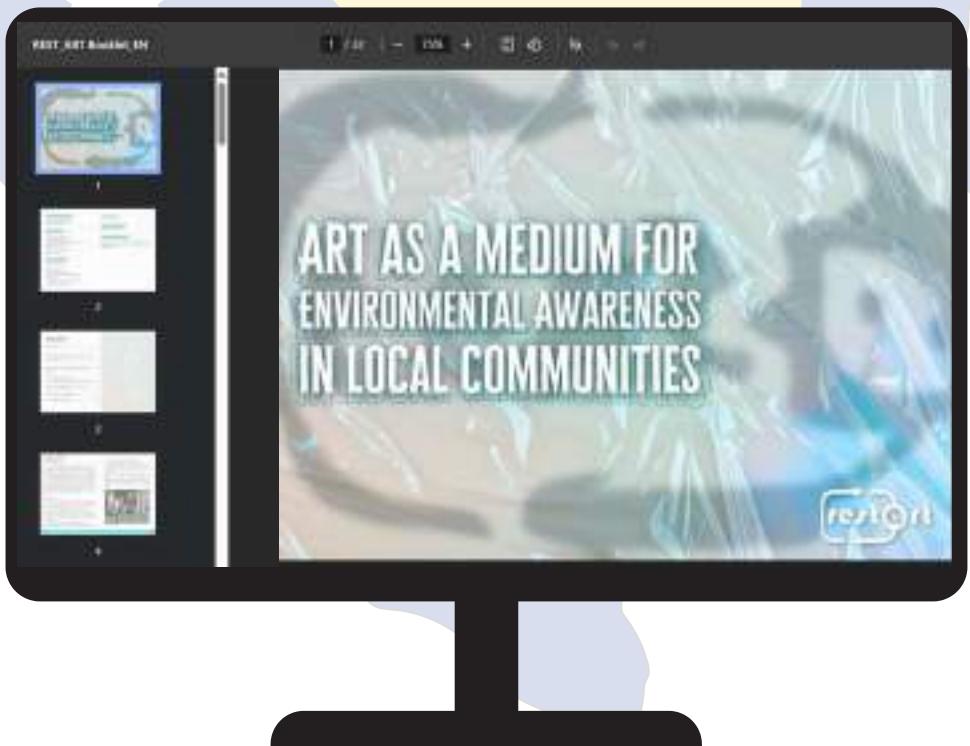
**Timespan:** From January, 2023 to December, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 182.598 €

**Funded by:** Erasmus+ (KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Youth)

**The Project.** The project aims to present, raise awareness, sensibilize and prevent harmful attitudes against the environment through artwork. Through the scheduled mobilities the project envisions acknowledging Art as a strong influence on issues related to environmental preservation. Artworks are essential tools for ecological activism that alert the population to urgent matters, facilitate understanding messages about sustainability, and help mobilize people to fight for this cause. In addition, the Consortium will implement a comparative approach and photography research to shed light on the plastic waste management of the respective cities of the consortium, as a tool to exercise pressure on the Municipalities through its dissemination and communication.



**The REST\_ART Booklet** explores the powerful connection between art and environmental sustainability, showcasing how creative approaches and community engagement can address ecological challenges.

**Main Achievements.** From March 3–9, the REST\_ART project study visit took place on the island of Lesvos, Greece, hosted by Lesvos Solidarity - Pikpa. Participants explored the intersection of environmental sustainability and art through diverse activities, including:

- Contributing to the "Safe Passage" workshop at Mosaik Support Center, crafting plastic bags from boat materials and life vests.
- Learning about the natural wealth of Kalloni Gulf and the island at the Kalloni Environmental Information Center.
- Visiting the University of the Aegean for an insightful discussion on environmental sustainability and art.

The visit concluded meaningfully at Nan's Solidarity Kitchen, where participants prepared ethnic food and shared meals with refugees and locals, fostering dialogue and mutual understanding.

The final meeting of the REST\_ART project took place in Podgorica, Montenegro, from October 9–12, 2024. Partners gathered to evaluate the project's achievements, discuss its sustainability and long-term impact, and strengthen networks for future initiatives promoting environmental awareness through art. This meeting marked the culmination of a successful collaboration focused on combining creativity and advocacy to address environmental challenges.

On November 30th, LDA Mostar organized a multiplier event in collaboration with AIESEC Bosnia & Herzegovina as part of the REST\_ART project. The results were shared and achievements of the REST\_ART project, highlighting how it has successfully promoted environmental sustainability through art. As the project is nearing its conclusion, this event was an opportunity to reflect on the impact it has had, from raising awareness about environmental issues to fostering creativity and collaboration among young people and communities. LDA Mostar team showcased innovative practices developed during the project and celebrated the contributions of young participants who have been an integral part of its success. Their inspiring stories and personal experiences demonstrated the real-world impact of the project's activities.



#### 4. Digital Serious Play for Youth Business Ideas Level - DiDISPLAY

**Timespan:** From **January, 2023** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 300.000 €

**Funded by:** Erasmus+ (KA2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Youth)

**The Project.** The DiDISPLAY project addresses high youth unemployment by promoting social entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation through the use of digital LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®. This innovative methodology empowers young people to develop business ideas, enhance entrepreneurial skills, and foster intercultural dialogue. By integrating digital tools, design thinking, and ethical entrepreneurship, DiDISPLAY aims to create new employability opportunities and build entrepreneurial capacities for youth and youth workers across Europe, associated countries, and the Western Balkans. The project also seeks to challenge stereotypes about young professionals and support their aspirations for sustainable success.

**Main Achievements.** From June 2nd-5th , the DiDISPLAY **Study Visit in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina** brought together 25 participants from 8 countries. Activities included team building and LEGO Serious Play sessions, a cultural walking tour of Mostar, visits to civil and business sector to Makerspace Garaža and NSoft, discussions with Faculty of information technologies of the University "Džemal Bijedić" students, and an inspiring session on youth entrepreneurship featuring local success stories. The event showcased innovation, collaboration, and sustainability in youth business development.



The DISPLAY **Job Shadowing event**, held from September 8-15, 2024, in **Herceg Novi, Montenegro**, gathered partners from Europe and the Western Balkans to explore youth entrepreneurship through LEGO® Serious Play. Hosted by CeP, the event fostered innovation, cross-cultural collaboration, and professional development among youth workers.

The **DiDISPLAY Blended Training** took place in Thessaloniki, Greece, from **October 21-25, 2024**, bringing together 48 participants from 8 partner countries. The focus of the event was on using the **LEGO® Serious Play® methodology** to foster entrepreneurship skills. Over the course of five days, participants engaged in hands-on, creative activities designed to enhance problem-solving, innovation, and collaboration. The training provided a unique opportunity to explore new entrepreneurial ideas and build practical skills while strengthening connections between youth workers and organizations from across Europe and the Western Balkans. The event emphasized youth empowerment and the importance of creativity and teamwork in driving positive change and innovation in entrepreneurship.

The **Final Conference and Partners Meeting** of the DiDISPLAY Project took place in **Bucharest, Romania**, from November 25th to 27th, 2024, hosted by ASEL RO. The event brought together project partners, youth workers, and participants to reflect on the project's impact on youth entrepreneurship. Highlights included inspiring speeches, personal testimonials from youth participants, interactive workshops on sustainability, and panel discussions on digital tools and serious play methodologies. The event also focused on future collaborations and funding opportunities to continue empowering youth and fostering entrepreneurship.



## 5. Virtual Exchanges for Balkan Youth - VEBY

**Timespan:** From July, 2023 to June, 2026

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 79.200 €

**Funded by:** European Union / Erasmus+ (ERASMUS-EDU-2022-VIRT-EXCH (Virtual Exchanges in Higher Education and Youth)

**The Project.** Virtual Exchanges for Balkan Youth (VEBY) is a 3-year project aimed at enhancing the participation of young people with fewer opportunities in virtual mobilities, and building skills for youth workers and educators in media literacy, inclusion, and peacebuilding. It addresses challenges faced by Balkan communities, such as post-conflict issues and economic disparities. VEBY offers low-threshold virtual exchanges, promoting tolerance, soft skills, and critical thinking while tackling disinformation and polarization. The project connects young people across borders, fosters intercultural dialogue, and strengthens EU relations with non-EU countries. The main target groups are young people, youth workers, and educators, along with local communities and stakeholders.

**Main Achievements.** In June 2024, an online Virtual Facilitator's Course (VFC) training took place with 40 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Greece, and Albania. The 7-day training equipped 24 youth workers and educators with essential skills for organizing and facilitating virtual youth exchanges. The course covered key topics such as dialogue principles, group facilitation techniques, soft skills development, managing online group dynamics, and conflict resolution. During a 3-day practicum, participants co-facilitated discussions on youth-related issues, receiving feedback from trainers and peers. At the end of the training, participants were awarded certificates and a YouthPass, recognizing the competences they gained.



## 6. Youth Ambassadors of Non Formal Learning Phase 2 - YAMNFL2

**Timespan:** From **December, 2023** to **November, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 267.643 €

**Funded by:** European Union / Erasmus+ (ERASMUS-YOUTH-2023-CB)

**The Project.** The project “Youth Ambassadors of Non Formal Learning – phase 2” / YAMNFL2 is a continuation of the successfully implemented Youth Ambassadors of Non-Formal Learning project from 11/2020-05/2022 approved by the ERASMUS-JOUTH-2019-CB program. Phase 2 involves 6 partners and 6 associate partners from the program and WB countries, which aims to build the capacities of youth through participation in non-formal education activities and the ability to recognize competencies gained outside the formal educational environment, to enhance the employability of youth through innovative methodology. On 20/12/2012, the Council of the European Union issued a recommendation (2012/C 398/01) urging the EU countries to develop and empower ways of recognizing the NFL. Since then, a lot has been done in the member states, but such work was not conducted in the countries of the WB. Within these actions, we want to involve youth NGOs (responsible for developing NFL activities), other CSOs (that work with disadvantaged groups focused on youth), public institutions (responsible to design firm policies), private business companies (aiming at increasing the skills and recognition by employers of NFL competences), and young people. The beneficiaries of the action will join the 2-year journey to get the knowledge of best practices used in their local realities, features of NFL for increasing (self)employability, to collect inspiring successful stories, to develop dedicated tools and methods, and to get trained to directly work on the field.



**Main Achievements.** The Webinars 1 and 2 of the YAMNFL2 project were a great success! Webinar 1 focused on the concept of non-formal learning (NFL) and explored how to address youth unemployment through the use of design thinking methodology and the Canva business model. Webinar 2, titled "Leveraging Non Formal Learning to Reduce Youth Unemployment," sparked engaging discussions and insightful interactions among participants. For those who missed the live sessions, the recordings are now available online. A big thank you to everyone who participated and contributed to the success of these webinars!

1st Webinar: [https://youtu.be/rpy\\_EeRqb7A?si=tK4quHZ-hOor\\_LRM](https://youtu.be/rpy_EeRqb7A?si=tK4quHZ-hOor_LRM)

2nd Webinar: <https://youtu.be/cnPYUiQxAbg>

From June 2-8, 2024, the International Seminar on Design Thinking Methodology was held in Podgorica, Montenegro, organized by ADP-Zid. Participants from six countries explored innovation and creativity through user research, ideation, business modeling, and prototyping. They engaged in interviews, created empathy maps, and developed solutions, culminating in the presentation of their final projects. The seminar blended creativity with collaboration, empowering participants to drive change in non-formal learning and youth employment.

#### **Design Thinking Methodology:**

[https://www.ldamostar.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/YAMNFL2\\_Package-Design-Thinking-Lab-Methodology.pdf](https://www.ldamostar.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/YAMNFL2_Package-Design-Thinking-Lab-Methodology.pdf)



From August 2-8, 2024, a training course was held in Cagliari, Italy, as part of the YAMNFL Phase 2 project, co-funded by the European Union. The event brought together participants from six countries to explore innovative approaches to youth employment and self-employment through non-formal learning (NFL). Throughout the week, participants engaged in various activities, including expert panel discussions, TED talks featuring inspiring social entrepreneurs, and a dynamic hackathon. Additionally, they prepared for local peer-to-peer activities aimed at further promoting NFL in their communities. This training course provided an invaluable opportunity for participants to enhance their knowledge and skills while fostering collaboration across borders.

Training Package:

<https://www.ldamostar.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/D2.3-Training-Package.pdf>

From November 10-15, 2024, participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, Italy, and Albania gathered in Novi Sad as part of the YAMNFL2 project. The study visit, hosted by NGO Iuventa, focused on the role of non-formal education (NFO) in youth employment. During the visit, participants engaged with inspiring local organizations, including RESTART, Cepom do Osmeha, OPENS, Edit Centar, Youth Office Novi Sad, Pokret Gorana Vojvodine, and CK13 Novi Sad. The visit aimed to exchange best practices, gain new insights, and inspire positive action in local communities, strengthening the connection between NFO and youth employment.



## 7. Let's Debate Change in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 51.602,24 €

**Funded by:** Solidar Suisse

**The Project.** Active participation, institutional trust, and inclusion are the main features of liberal democracies. Unfortunately, these features are still considerable news in B&H and the region and they are yet to be fully integrated into social structures. Young people today are more likely to participate in targeted activities, such as protests or petitions, aimed at creating or changing public policies, rather than resorting to traditional forms of democratic participation, such as participation in political parties or voting. A low level of trust in government institutions makes governance more difficult by undermining public authority. Furthermore, it discourages young people in their efforts to innovate and adapt these institutions which would make them more responsive to their needs. As a result, this further reduces the effectiveness and legitimacy of governments. Described setting is ground for action whose aim is to encourage youth activism and strengthen youth participation in decision-making processes at the local level.

**Project goals:** Enhancing engagement of young people in advocacy and creating effective change in three cities with the support of local governments.

**Specific goals:** Young people in three cities have developed their debating skills thus enhancing their political participation and cooperation with local governments.

Working on the project was a complete refreshment for me. I would include projects as part of the curriculum, because **children have the opportunity to learn so much.**

(Prof. Sanja Maksumić)

**Main Achievements.** More than 120 students, from six secondary schools in the Mostar, Konjic, and Čapljina actively participated in the first year of the "Let's Debate Change" project. Project enabled the students to carry out six initiatives worth 11.000 EUR aimed at improving educational resources. These initiatives are designed to enhance the quality of educational processes and equip high school students with the skills necessary for entering the labor market. Through these projects, the students demonstrated the importance of an active approach and critical reflection in tackling the challenges faced by them and their peers.

In Mostar, students from the High School of Hospitality and Tourism and the High School of Construction developed and implemented two initiatives: "Future Through Technology" and "Digital Practical Teaching." These projects improved educational resources by acquiring modern IT equipment, aimed at boosting the digital skills of students. The City of Mostar also recognized the significance of these initiatives and provided additional support through co-financing of 2,500 KM.

Students from the Čapljina High School worked on the "Let's Talk About Changes" initiative, which sought to enhance practical teaching for the nutritionist technician and power engineer courses. The equipment acquired through the project will allow future generations to gain practical knowledge, link theory to practice, and benefit from modern educational conditions. Meanwhile, their peers were involved in the "Our Park" initiative, aimed at creating a safe and welcoming space for socializing in the school park. With the purchase of equipment and furniture, this project will foster creativity, socialization, and provide a sustainable legacy for future generations.

At Konjic Secondary School, students in technical studies implemented the "Safety and Hygiene" initiative, which provided necessary sanitary equipment and hygiene supplies. This project helped create safer and healthier conditions for students' daily activities at school. Additionally, other students focused on creating an inspiring environment through the "Zone of Inspiration" initiative. By equipping the school canteen and social corner, they created a space where students can relax, socialize, and feel at home. They actively participated in installing and setting up the equipment, demonstrating how individual actions can directly lead to positive changes in the local community.

To equip students with the skills needed for designing and implementing initiatives, all 120 students across the six schools were trained in participatory action research (PAR) methodology under the guidance of certified trainers. By analyzing the needs of their communities, students developed critical thinking, strengthened their capacities, and established debate clubs that became incubators for new ideas and platforms for young activists. The lists of recommendations generated from the research were also shared with local authorities. Through this project, students further developed their leadership, communication, and teamwork skills during a five-day Summer Camp, which also helped foster responsibility, self-awareness, and collaboration.

Finally, through specialized workshops, high school students were trained to write and implement their initiatives, which they successfully carried out within their local communities.

The most significant achievement is that these young people have applied the skills and knowledge they gained, initiating tangible, positive changes in their communities through active and critical engagement.

It is important to note that the project was carried out with the ongoing support of local governments, including the City of Mostar, the City of Konjic, the City of Čapljina, and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

“Through the project's activities, we involved different profiles of students, and I can confidently say that the students learned a lot, mastered new skills, and applied them. After this, we, as teachers, **see our students from a new perspective, and they, in turn, see each other in an entirely different light.** This is an exceptional story that should continue and be incorporated into the curriculum. After this experience, I believe it's necessary to introduce mandatory volunteering for students to help them step outside of their 'digital frames.' Being a link between students is a wonderful thing”.

(Prof. Sanja Maksumić)

## 8. BOOST: Balkans for Optimizing Opportunities, Sustainability, and Transformation of Civil Society

**Timespan:** From April, 2024 to April, 2027

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 3.700.001,10 €

**Funded by:** French Development Agency (AFD)

**The Project.** The project aims to strengthen democratic, economic and social development of the WB region. This will be achieved through long-term program support for empowering civil society capacities in different thematic pillars: youth & entrepreneurship, rural development & environment, preservation of cultural heritage & community development. The cross-cutting priority is to promote active citizenship through participatory approaches and tools, and to encourage a gender perspective in all the programme's activities. The programme aims to strengthen the capacities of civil society organisations through: a) capacity building, b) financial supporting activities to CSOs in the three key thematic pillars; c) promoting networking within civil society and with other key actors such as local authorities.

The project focuses on young people and especially young women and is aimed at strengthening their capacity for active participation in all the pillars described above. Project also aims to encourage greater engagement and effective cooperation among citizens and direct dialogue with decision-makers, at the local and national level. These actions help to strengthen transparent and responsive local governance structures, generating a positive impact on a regional scale.

**Overall Objective:** Promote the democratic, economic, and social development of the Western Balkans region within the context of EU enlargement, by strengthening civil society in the areas of youth and entrepreneurship, environmental protection, rural development, preservation of cultural heritage and community development.

**Main Achievement.** "Balkans for Optimising Opportunities, Sustainability, and Transformation of Civil Society" International Conference and Partners meeting was successfully held in Tirana, on April 29-30, 2024.

The project BOOST had very successful promotion at national level in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of the forthcoming implementation of the sub-granting scheme. More than 85 applications for the regional sub-granting programme were submitted and will be announced in early March 2025.

## 9. Cohesion of Local Initiatives for the Progress of Communities - KLIN

**Timespan:** From **May, 2024** to **April, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 123.687 €

**Funded by:** Network for Building Peace through USAID (Project Local Works/Support to local resource organizations (Strength of local LRO/A)

**The Project.** Enable local communities in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton to become successful and inclusive environment where every single citizen enjoys equal high-quality living conditions, LDA Mostar has developed a grant scheme for civil society organizations and informal groups to strengthen their capacities in identifying local issues and advocating solutions, encouraging them to develop and implement projects and networking with individuals, organizations and relevant institutions and government representatives. The grant scheme involves financial resources intended to encourage beneficiaries to act in ways that meet community needs effectively.

Project goal is to create the prerequisites for active and democratic citizen participation in decision-making processes affecting all aspects of life in local communities within the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

### Main Achievements.

#### Grant Agreements Signing Ceremony

The implementation of the "Cohesion of Local Initiatives for Community Progress – KLIN" project began with the ceremonial signing of agreements between LDA Mostar and the grant recipients under the grant scheme in September 2024. The projects are being implemented in Konjic, Jablanica, Čitluk, Čapljina and Mostar, focusing on empowering women in communities, strengthening civil society organization capacities in specific areas, supporting people with disabilities and other health challenges, youth engagement, environmental conservation, and promoting sustainable and healthy lifestyles. LDA Mostar supported 30 local CSOs and informal groups.

#### Assistance to Flood-Affected Areas in Jablanica Municipality (October – December 2024)

Less than a month after devastating floods hit Jablanica Municipality, one of flooded working spaces used by the women's association "Most" were reconstructed through the "Cohesion of Local Initiatives for Community Progress – KLIN" project. This was a way to create a chance for association members to begin the healing process of the community by offering a safe space for psycho-social and occupational therapy services to their fellow citizens. The "Most" Jablanica women's association, as a recipient of KLIN project grants, enabled immediate response efforts.

Additionally, new recovery and rebuilding initiatives were launched in one of the hardest-hit areas, supported by a local informal youth group and the community council.

"We Need Hugs". These were the words that greeted us at the women's association "Most" in Jablanica, where members have been tirelessly and selflessly preparing meals for countless volunteers helping the residents of Jablanica since the disaster struck. On some days, they prepare over 300 meals, despite working in unsuitable, flooded spaces and being personally affected by floods and landslides in their own homes. Yet, brave and resourceful as they are, they do not complain or ask for anything for themselves—except for hugs. And understanding.

Along with hugs, we exchanged ideas and developed a plan for moving forward. The "Most" Jablanica women's association is one of the grant recipients under the KLIN project—Cohesion of Local Initiatives for Community Progress—implemented by LDA Mostar with the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Network for Peacebuilding. This grant allowed us to act immediately, on the ground, to support Jablanica's recovery. LDA Mostar team visited the hardest-hit areas, spoke with representatives of associations active in Jablanica, and discussed the best support options for the local residents with representatives of the Donja Jablanica community council. We are glad to have the opportunity to contribute to the community's recovery, as the process will be challenging and extensive. Jablanica will need the support of its friends for a long time to come!

### **"100 Meters" for People with Multiple Sclerosis**

More than 200 Mostarians participated in two activities organized by the informal group MS Crew as part of the KLIN project in October 2024. Events included a cinema screening of the inspirational feature film "100 Meters" and a race of the same name. The race "100 meters" was held on the city's central promenade, with participants running, walking or strolling hand in hand. The goal was to encourage people diagnosed and living with multiple sclerosis, especially those facing mobility challenges, and to raise public awareness about this disease.



## Controlled Waste Disposal

Over 150 waste bins were distributed to households in southern suburban areas of Mostar, where waste disposal and collection have been a challenge for years, as there was no regular schedule or plan by local authorities on controlling it. Alongside the distribution, residents were educated on the importance of controlled waste disposal to eliminate health risks. Activities, carried out by the association "Korak naprijed" under the KLIN project, were also supported by the public utility company "Komunalno" Mostar. Several similar initiatives are planned for 2025 in at least two additional suburban neighbourhoods, initiated after this campaign echoed in public.



## 10. Not Neat to be NEET – building capacities of the Western Balkan's youth organisations for more inclusive projects and full participation of youth with fewer opportunities

**Timespan:** From **November, 2024** to **June, 2026**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 292.666 €

**Funded by:** European Union / Erasmus+ (ERASMUS-YOUTH-2024-CB)

**The Project.** The project is aiming to directly build capacities of youth organisations for more effective participation of youth with fewer opportunities in youth projects. Thus, project also stipulates greater participation of youth with fewer opportunities in a society but also active participation in youth and other civil society organisations – a prospective way for a person to for instance, come out of poverty by increasing one's employability profile via volunteering in a youth organisation.

### Main Achievements.

- Reduced inequalities among youth by decreasing the proportion of young people with fewer opportunities in the overall youth population.
- Improved quality of life for young people with fewer opportunities as well as the general youth population.
- More positive public perception of NGOs, thanks to more visible and effective work on inclusion.
- Increased public awareness of the challenges faced by young people with fewer opportunities, leading to better policies, more accessible projects, and a stronger societal focus on their needs.
- Systemic changes facilitating grassroots initiatives and youth organizing, enabling access to new funding sources and other forms of support for inclusive projects.
- Enhanced tolerance and peace among people in Serbia and Kosovo.



## 11. Promotion of the Gender Action Plan of the City of Mostar for the period 2023-2027

**Timespan:** From **November, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 2.556 €

**Funded by:** City of Mostar

**The Project.** As part of the "Promotion of the Gender Action Plan of the City of Mostar for the period 2023-2027" project, LDA Mostar organized a series of informational and educational activities for all interested parties, alongside promotional efforts aimed at increasing the visibility and importance of the Gender Action Plan's implementation. These activities were designed to contribute to the successful execution of the Gender Action Plan, ensuring it becomes practical, applicable, and yields visible results within the local community.

In celebration of the "16 Days of Activism," the Local Democracy Agency Mostar, in collaboration with the City of Mostar and with the active participation and support of the Women of Bosnia and Herzegovina Association, held an educational session and workshop titled "Are We Equal?" on November 26, 2024. The event, which was attended by representatives from local civil society organizations, aimed to generate initiatives for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

### Main Achievements.

- Presentation of the Gender Action Plan of the City of Mostar
- Awareness raising of the gender bases violence
- Creation of the CSOs initiatives for the implementation of Gender Action Plan





**Delegate: Valentyna Puzikova**  
**Established: 2023**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Odesa Rayon Council, Ukraine
- Foster Europe Foundation for Strong European Regions, Austria
- Istria Region, Croatia
- Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Italy (Observer partner)
- Centre for Regional Studies, Ukraine
- Odesa Oblast branch of the all-Ukrainian community organisation “Committee of Voters of Ukraine”, Ukraine

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

LDA Odesa was established to support civil society development, citizen participation, and community resilience in the Odesa district of the Odesa region, particularly in the context of ongoing war. Its mission is to foster greater civic engagement, enhance the institutional capacity of local communities, empower youth and opinion leaders, and provide targeted support to internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Agency envisions a sustainable and inclusive society in which citizens are actively involved in decision-making, local authorities are responsive and effective, and young people play a transformative role in driving innovation and democratic values.

LDA Odesa focuses its work on engaging key target groups, including IDPs seeking support for adaptation, youth aged 14 to 35, grassroots civil society actors, and local authorities in need of institutional strengthening. Its strategic priorities reflect the cultural, economic, and strategic importance of Odesa Oblast, and the urgent need to reinforce local democratic structures and community preparedness in response to wartime challenges.

ue between local authorities, civil society, and international partners, LDA Odesa positions itself as a catalyst for inclusive local development, democratic resilience, and European integration in one of Ukraine's most strategic regions.

The Agency's work is grounded in a commitment to the principles of democracy, inclusiveness, and human rights, and is guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—specifically: Quality Education, Gender Equality, Reduced Inequality, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Partnerships for the Goals. LDA Odesa actively promotes international partnerships, facilitates capacity-building in grant writing and project management, and supports local governance reforms.

While 2024 marked the foundational year of the Agency—with important milestones such as legal registration, office set-up, the launch of its public presence, and high-level stakeholder engagement—LDA Odesa has already laid the groundwork for long-term action. It participated in key regional and international events, initiated cooperation with development actors including SKEW and the Italian Embassy, and began developing project proposals to support democratic governance, digitalisation, and civic participation.

By fostering dialogue between local authorities, civil society, and international partners, LDA Odesa positions itself as a catalyst for inclusive local development, democratic resilience, and European integration in one of Ukraine's most strategic regions.



# LDA ODESA IN THE FIELD

## Main achievements in 2024

In its first full year of activity, LDA Odesa has made significant strides in establishing itself as a key actor for local democracy, civic engagement, and regional cooperation in the Odesa district. From September to December 2024, the organisation focused on institutional development, international outreach, stakeholder engagement, and project design to lay a strong foundation for future programming.

Organisational development was a key priority. LDA Odesa completed its official registration, established a functioning office, opened a bank account, and launched a dedicated Facebook page, which reached 44 followers and generated strong engagement through 39 published posts. These efforts ensured full operational capacity and visibility among local and international audiences.

LDA Odesa has also focused extensively on building strategic partnerships and expanding its outreach. It formalised collaboration with the Odesa District Council, strengthened relationships with the regional Ombudsman's office, and initiated working relationships with prominent NGOs such as Next, the 10th of April, and the Odesa Regional Development Agency. LDA Odesa participated in high-level forums such as the Odesa Economic Revival Forum and the Annual Kyiv Dialogue Conference in Berlin, where it contributed to discussions on decentralisation, EU integration, and sustainable development.

On the international front, the Agency built ties with the Italian Embassy in Ukraine, representatives of the Visegrad Group, and the SKEW programme (Municipal Partnerships with Ukraine). These connections led to the preparation of formal cooperation documents, such as SWOT analyses and presentations, to support collaboration between Ukrainian and German municipalities. Ten working meetings were organised with gromadas, and support was provided to seven communities in completing initial documentation, with four more underway.

LDA Odesa also contributed to policy dialogue and hosted meaningful events on critical themes. These included a session on the protection of veterans' and former detainees' rights, and another on Ukraine's EU integration through strengthened local democracy, in cooperation with NEXT NGO and LDA Moldova. The organisation also launched a questionnaire exploring citizens' perceptions of democracy in the Odesa region, in preparation for a major public event planned for January 2025. Efforts to engage youth and promote democratic values included grant proposal development in collaboration with civil society partners, the design of training modules on digitalisation and governance, and participation in thematic forums on reconstruction and regional cooperation. Two major proposals were submitted: one to support Ukrainian cultural diplomacy and another addressing Ukraine's role in the EU Danube Strategy, the latter in cooperation with the Centre for Regional Studies.

Finally, LDA Odesa contributed actively to the development and promotion of the DREAM ecosystem, supporting local governance and investment planning in Odesa oblast. Through its presence, partnerships, and programme design, LDA Odesa has laid a solid and strategic foundation for long-term impact, firmly anchoring its role as a facilitator of democratic development, citizen participation, and European integration in one of Ukraine's most critical regions.



**Delegate: Dragan Dosen**  
**Established: 2000**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Association Project Prijedor, Italy (Lead Partner)
- Municipality of Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Host City)
- ALDA Office in Vicenza, Italy
- Association Tavolo Trentino con Kraljevo, Serbia
- Association Tavolo Trentino con il Kosovo, Kosovo

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Supporting citizen participation
- Supporting the democratic process at the local level
- Fostering the social network between citizens, organisations and institutions
- Supporting social inclusion and local economic development
- Contribution to the work on memory

The mission of LDA Prijedor is to promote local democracy and regional cooperation in the perspective of the integration of the Western Balkans into the EU through the strengthening of civil society and local authorities.

In addition to permanent and long-term partners, such as Associazione Progetto Prijedor from Trento (Italy), with which LDA Prijedor has a permanent and continuous cooperation for more than 20 years and the ALDA association, LDA Prijedor has joined the regional network of Balkan organizations for local democracy BNLD and thereby ensuring closer access to funds. In addition to this, LDA Prijedor strives to independently apply to various calls at the local, national and international levels.

# LDA PRIJEDOR IN THE FIELD

## Projects and activities

### 1. Eleventh edition of the project “Prijedor, city of murals”, international prize “Paola de Manincor” 2024.

**Timespan:** From **September, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 5.000 €

**Funded by:** Municipality of Lavis, Trento and Municipality of Prijedor

**The Project.** In continuity with the tenth edition of the international prize named Paola de Manincor (artist from Trentino who in 1998 painted, with the support of the City of Trento, the first mural in Prijedor), in 2023 for the tenth time was issued the invitation for artists to participate in the competition through which the best proposal for the new mural in the Prijedor was selected; After that, the selected work was carried out on the facade of a building in the city of Prijedor.

#### Main Achievements.

- Contribution for development of culture and tourism of the city of Prijedor, that contribute to the branding of Prijedor on cultural and tourist map of Europe;
- Contribute to the improvement of the offer of cultural and tourist experiences in Prijedor;
- Encourage the promotion of tourism in Prijedor as a city of art and artists;
- Improving the appearance of the space of the city through the rehabilitation and beautification of surfaces that need technical and aesthetic interventions;
- Improve the visibility of artists from Prijedor;
- Increase the motivation of people to participate in the art and cultural and artistic events;
- To train and spread a positive view on art and culture;
- Provide more information to citizens about the past artistic and cultural city;
- To encourage an increased sensitivity of policy makers towards art and culture in general.



## 2. Continue to support the social centre with the public kitchen in Ljubija

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 4.000 €

**Funded by:** Municipality of Trento and Municipality of Prijedor

**The Project.** The Prijedor Project Association, in agreement with the local administration, with the aim of mitigating the problem of the poverty of inhabitants of Ljubija, also continued in the year 2023 to support the Social Daily Center project with the public canteen in Ljubija, officially opened in September 2013 with the support of the Trentino Alto Adige Autonomous Region. Users of the Daily Center and the canteen are people in socio-economic distress, mainly elderly, without family assistance.

**Main Achievement.** Support working spaces for social inclusion through the opening of spaces and services is possible to improve the quality of responses to the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the population and the well-being of the community in general



### 3. Remote adoption

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Committee entrusts Prijedor, Social Services Centre, Prijedor municipality

**Total Budget:** 50 000 €

**Funded by:** Associazione Progetto Prijedor and private donors from Trento

**The Project.** Since 1997 began the PROJECT DISTANCE ADOPTIONS (entrusts) that involved up to now 811 families in Prijedor and as many from Trentino (for most).

This activity goes beyond economic aid: among many families has created a stable relationship, made of meetings in Prijedor and exchanges in Trentino.

#### ACTIVITIES:

- Distribution of material assistance in the amount of 120 euros every four months.
- Visiting the families of the donors once a month.
- The exchange of letters or e-mails between donors and families in donations.

**Main Achievement.** The economic aid, while important, becomes an instrument through which to create relationships that go beyond this dimension, and help to feed the population of Prijedor greater hope for the future and to combat the apathy that is currently one of the major problems of the area. The recipients of this aid are especially families in economic distress, lonely elderly and students of secondary schools and universities, who need support in order to continue their studies and to become in this way a resource for the future of their community.



#### **4. A project of cooperation, exchange of experiences and training between the Association of Parents of Children with Special Needs "Neven" and the organization "Amffas" from Trento, which deals with the same issue**

**Timespan:** From April, 2024 to December, 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 8.000 €

**Funded by:** Municipality of Trento

**The Project.** There has been a mutual collaboration between our partner leader Associazione Progetto Prijedor (APP) and Neven Prijedor since 2005 (2022). Thanks to the presence of a decentralized APP office in Prijedor it is possible to have a direct relationship with the population of Prijedor and know the real and widespread needs. People with disabilities in Prijedor in most cases experience a state of isolation, students who finish special school, after reaching adulthood, remain without employment under the exclusive care of their families.

The Neven association represents concrete support for many families. Since the foundation of Neven, the APP has been present to support the association's activities through humanitarian aid, laboratory materials, financing of transport vans. Despite these interventions, the Neven association is unable to deal with all the requests present in the area, due to lack of adequate spaces, lack of funds and specialized personnel, the need to intervene by supporting the association itself through a partnership, starting from the experience of similar realities in Trentino. The APP therefore decided to involve ANFFAS Trentino association reference for the sector, which accepted the challenge.



**Main Achievement.** The actors were collaborated in the following ways:

- 1) Exchange of practices between associative realities in the definition of strategies for cultural change and acceptance of the disabled person in society "overcoming the sense of shame", definition of advocacy and negotiation strategies with local administrations and institutions, search for new funding financing and economic development of the association, thinking of new projects related to work employment and inclusion interventions for the disabled population in a vulnerable situation in Prijedor, sharing new evaluation and intervention models starting from the "support intensity scale".
- 2) Procurement of greenhouses and irrigation systems with a well and pump for occupational therapy for users of the Day Care Center and vegetable production



## 5. BOOST – Balkans for Optimising Opportunities, Sustainability and Transformation of Civil Society

**Timespan:** From April, 2024 to April, 2027

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 27.930 €

**Funded by:** Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

**The Project.** BOOST aims to promote the democratic, economic, and social development of the Western Balkans region within the context of EU enlargement, by strengthening civil society in the areas of youth and entrepreneurship, environmental protection, rural development, preservation of cultural heritage and community development

**Main Achievement.** Through its initiatives, BOOST will strengthen the role of CSOs in the Western Balkans enabling them to address challenges such as high corruption levels, weak economic development, governance issues, limited CSO involvement, human rights application difficulties, brain drain, and gender inequality.



**Delegate: Silvija Patarčić**  
**Established: 1993**

## KEY PARTNERS

Wolverhampton City Council, UK (Lead Partner)

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Fostering democratic governance and citizen participation at local level
- Strengthening socio- economic development
- Promoting youth volunteering
- Supporting the European Union integration

Local Democracy Agency LDA Subotica was founded in 1993 under the auspices of the Council of Europe and by an agreement with the local government of Subotica as a local NGO whose main mission was to promote local democracy and human rights in local multicultural community in the then war torn former Yugoslavia. Today LDA Subotica is registered as a local NGO, member of the European Association for Local Democracy – ALDA, consistently advocating democratic governance and participation and getting the accession negotiation process with the EU closer to citizens in local communities in Serbia and in multicultural Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in particular. Our main programmes are focused on capacity building, awareness raising and advocacy actions intended for three main target groups – policy and decision makers at local level, civil society organisations, youth and women's groups in particular. Educating for democratic citizenship, promoting intercultural dialogue, regional cooperation, cross-sectoral partnership building for local sustainable development are the main types of our activities including also networking at regional and European level.

## Projects and activities

### 1. Let's Debate Change - Vojvodina

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 47.000 €

**Funded by:** SOLIDAR Suisse SEE

**The Project.** The project overall objective: increased capacity and engagement of youth to advocate and effect change in their local community, with the support of their Municipalities. Specific objectives: 1) Improved understanding among youth of good governance principles in local multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-religious communities; 2) Increased knowledge and leadership skills of youth for proactive engagement in local community; 3) Increased local youth CSOs capacities to engage in policy dialogue and cooperation with local authorities.

In the 'Let's Debate Change' project, the aim is to help build personal competencies in a youth friendly environment that stimulates building individual self-confidence and social skills. Therefore, Debate clubs are perceived here as a learning platform for achieving the objectives set forth.



**Main Achievement.** Educated and empowered high school population young people for active participation in the local community through the process of preparing and creating small projects that they have designed themselves.

After the establishment of 6 Debate in 3 municipalitis in Vojvodina region: Subotica, Sombor and Kanjiza, with the support and guidance of the local youth coordinators, groups of young people have first debated, and then designed, written and successfully implemented their youth projects. In total 4 youth led small projects have been implemented which have improved their skills, active participation and connection to the local community.

Implemented youth projects:

1. In Subotica: - Training programme on financial literacy and Painting of mural Colors of youth, representing the importance of music and art.
2. In Sombor - Equipped kitchen within the Youth Center
3. In Kanjiza organized Sports dayPolicy Papers (Youth Manifestos) for each municipality were prepared by the Debate club members and are widely disseminated through LDA Subotica social media and via Debate club members' networks. These concrete proposals reached out to municipal decision makers and youth offices as the main target of advocacy campaign. In this way the project is gradually creating the grounds for making the Debate clubs in three municipalities a visible and well organized groups of young people who have their say in local community



## 2. BOOST - Balkans for Optimising Opportunities Sustainability and Transformation of Civil Society

**Timespan:** /

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 3.7 million €

**Funded by:** Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

**The Project.** BOOST aims to enhance democratic, economic, and social development within the Western Balkan region. The project is a comprehensive, long-term program designed to bolster the capacities of civil society across various thematic areas such as youth empowerment and entrepreneurship, rural development and environmental conservation, as well as the preservation of cultural heritage and community advancement. A core focus is on fostering active citizenship through participatory methodologies and ensuring a gender-inclusive perspective across all program endeavours.

Furthermore, the program seeks to support civil society organizations by: a) providing capacity-building initiatives, b) offering financial support for activities aligned with the three primary thematic pillars, and c) facilitating networking opportunities among civil society entities and other stakeholders, including local authorities.

**Main Achievement.** In 2024 main milestone was the launching of regional subgranting scheme for projects in the areas of youth and entrepreneurship, environmental protection, rural development, cultural heritage preservation, and community development.



**Delegate: Afaf Zaddem**  
**Established: 2017**

## KEY PARTNERS

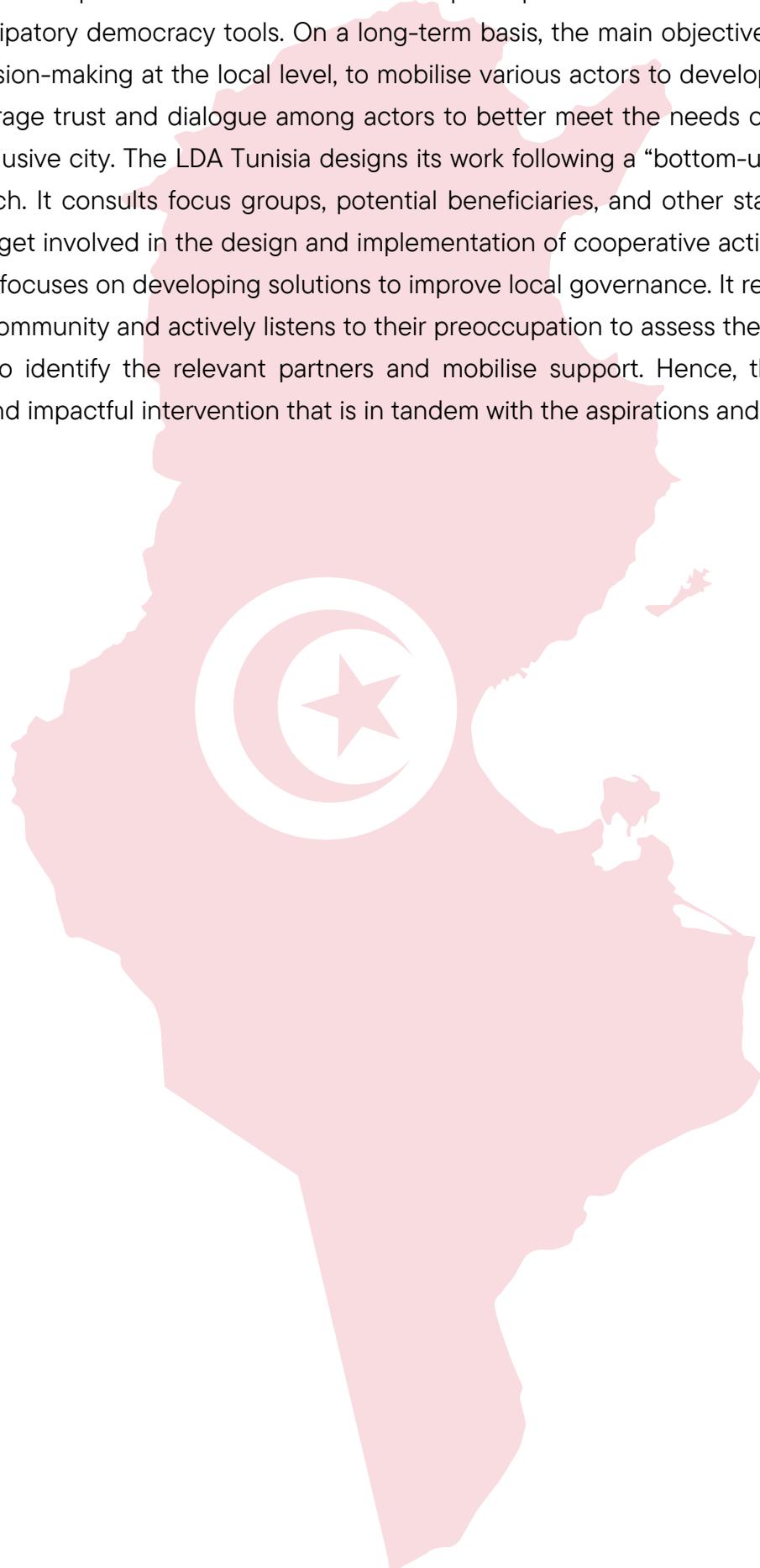
- City of Kairouan (Tunisia)
- ALDA
- COPE (Italy)
- Fons Mallorquí de Solidaritat i Cooperació (Spain)
- T4D Tamkeen for Development
- LDA Zavidovici
- Cities Alliances
- GIZ
- Fons Menorqui
- Other Tunisian NGOs



## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Economic development: Support for local businesses and artisans, preservation of intangible heritage and local know-how, and job creation.
- Public services: Improvement of local services (Citizen Spaces in municipalities).
- Environment: Protection of the environment, management of natural resources, and promotion of sustainable development.
- Capacity building and training: Vocational training/trades program, awareness raising on informal education, and support for lifelong learning.
- Social cohesion: Promotion of the values of peace, social inclusion and equal opportunities.
- Soft and active mobility: Improvement of infrastructure and promotion of sustainable mobility solutions.

LDA Tunisia represents a platform that facilitates citizen participation at the local level through implementing participatory democracy tools. On a long-term basis, the main objectives of the LDA are to improve decision-making at the local level, to mobilise various actors to develop joint citizen initiatives, to encourage trust and dialogue among actors to better meet the needs of the groups, and promote an inclusive city. The LDA Tunisia designs its work following a “bottom-up” and multi-stakeholder approach. It consults focus groups, potential beneficiaries, and other stakeholders to encourage them to get involved in the design and implementation of cooperative actions. Also, the LDA's work strategy focuses on developing solutions to improve local governance. It relies on direct meetings with the community and actively listens to their preoccupation to assess their needs. This helps the agency to identify the relevant partners and mobilise support. Hence, this approach ensures a precise and impactful intervention that is in tandem with the aspirations and needs of the community.





# LDA TUNISIA IN THE FIELD



## Projects and activities

### 1. Vélopark

**Timespan:** From **February, 2023** to **February, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 32.000 €

**Funded by:** Kairouan Municipality (Within the framework of AUTREMENT project)

**The Project.** "VéloPark" was a project designed and implemented by the Local Democracy Agency "ADL Tunisia" financed by the Municipality of Kairouan as part of the cooperation project AUTREMENT "Urban Land Development to REinvent Mobility and Engage Tunisians" co-financed by the EU.

The "VéloPark" project aimed to raise awareness and promote active mobility by providing bike services and teaching how to bike to encourage the use of this eco-friendly and soft means of transport. Furthermore, the project aimed to support alternative tourism through guided group tours that allowed residents and visitors to discover the history and heritage of Kairouan.

We offer a wide variety to meet the diverse needs of its audience. The full range will include bikes aimed at children, models suitable for adults. As well as electric bikes, offering a flexible mobility solution for individuals, families, professionals, friends. Also visitors to the city.

Whether for a lively group outing. The celebration of a festive event. Organising a memorable business seminar. A school trip full of adventure. Or simply a leisurely stroll to explore the city. Vélopark offers a response adapted to each occasion. In addition, the company is resolutely committed to facilitating bicycle mobility for all people wishing to live unique experiences.

Furthermore, the particular emphasis placed on cycle tourism is at the heart of the Vélopark proposal. Whether for cycling enthusiasts. Also urban explorers or lovers of leisurely strolls in picturesque suburbs. Also Vélopark electric bikes are specially designed to offer an immersive and enriching experience. Likewise at Vélopark, each bike ride is designed to be unforgettable. Further encouraging discovery, adventure and fun on two wheels.

## Main Achievements.

- Establishing a sustainable and a well equipped space with more than 60 bikes and needed accessories to provide services of cyclotourism, renting, and teaching bikes.
- Conducting more than 30 tours with a total participation of more than 1000 participants.



“I’m so happy that I discovered the bike service, it is both a source of entertainment and sporting, but also it is a source of **networking and socialising** as we go together and participate in an active and fun activity with a group outing”



## 2. READY

**Timespan:** /

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 279.697 €

**Funded by:** Erasmus+

**The Project.** The Raise Environmental Awareness for Deprived Youths (READY) project aims to build socio ecological awareness. It focuses on deprived and polluted areas:

The activities included:

- Needs analysis to identify obstacles and opportunities for young citizens in their neighbourhoods/areas.
- Co-design and implementation of environmental training for young people, based on non-formal education methods with a combination of online and offline tools, such as short videos, individual exercises, group work, study visits.
- Transnational training of trainers for partner youth workers.
- Creation of short-term voluntary work.young people carried out voluntary work and guided by host organisations in the discovery of 'green jobs'.
- Peer-to-peer environmental workshops, young citizens have completed their empowerment and are ready to defend the environment through specific workshops in schools.
- Communication and dissemination of project results.

The LDA Tunisia implemented a study to assess the needs of the community and their level of awareness, then it was possible to compare and contrast the results with that of studies conducted by the project partners in their countries. As the project emphasised the capacity building aspect of youth orchestrated by youth workers, a training of trainers took place in Italy where a tunisian participant took part in the TOT and then returned with feedback on the prepared materials. The Tunisian youth in the LDA Tunisia community received the necessary training and after that they were ready to participate in volunteering activities with partner organisations. The volunteering was based on entrepreneurship skills mainly, developing green skills, and participating in learning and active participation opportunities in this field.

The Green Youth Ambassadors actively participated in environmental workshops at schools to raise awareness about issues such as waste management and biodiversity.

## Main Achievements.

- More awareness and capacity building of young people on social-ecological issues.
- Youth workers improved their awareness of the specific needs of young people and how to respond to them.
- Youth participated actively in green volunteering.



### 3. VISA

**Timespan:** /

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 600.000 €

**Funded by:** Cities Alliances

**The Project.** The Visa project aims to improve the attractiveness of municipalities in the interior of the country through:

- Improving access to employment opportunities and the integration of migrant workers into the labour market and the population from rural areas and settled on the fringes of cities.
- Render municipal and administrative services more accessible, efficient, transparent and close to citizens who live far from the urban centre of the municipalities.



**Main Achievement.** The "Visa Project: Inclusive Cities - Proximity Services and Decent Work" is funded by Cities Alliances.

The Visa Project intervenes in the governorates of Kairouan, Tataouine, and Medenine. It aims to improve the attractiveness of municipalities in the interior regions. This takes place through facilitating access of citizens residing in rural areas to municipal and administrative services with speed, ease and efficiency.

In an effort to improve access to essential services in rural areas, three municipalities have launched citizen spaces designed to provide services of proximity. During the first phase, the initiative focused on identifying suitable platforms, ensuring the necessary infrastructure, and equipping the spaces with modern tools to facilitate service delivery. These newly established spaces, housed within modernized and well-appointed premises, are set to enhance the relationship between local authorities and citizens while improving the overall perception of public services. By bringing essential administrative and social services closer to residents, these citizen spaces will foster greater engagement, convenience, and inclusivity within the communities they serve.

As part of the creation of Citizen Spaces, the LDA Tunisia organized a series of training sessions for the benefit of executives and employees of Citizen Spaces in the municipalities of Houmt Souk, Remada, and Chebika.

These training sessions strengthened participants' competencies in technical, economic, tax-related, complaints management, access to information, and associative services. The objective was to ensure the seamless integration of the Citizen Space platform within the aforementioned municipalities. In collaboration with the service provider ARSELA, the LDA Tunisia developed and delivered a customized training program tailored to the specific needs of Citizen Space service agents as well as the municipalities' back-office staff.

#### 4. The Yasmina Project: Economic Empowerment of Women through Weaving

**Timespan:** 2024

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 25.000 €

**Funded by:** GNDR

**The Project.** The Yasmina project aimed to empower and train vulnerable young women through capacity building in technical and life skills, providing exhibitions and internships, and including them in the craft sector. In September, 2024 the young craftswomen received evaluation and feedback at the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts in Kairouan. A committee consisting of experts and professors of the institute met the young women and provided insights and feedback after examining the craft products created in the Yasmina project.

The overall feedback was positive and encouraging as the participants demonstrated refined creativity and motivation to further consolidate their skills in design, techniques, and colors. Indeed, the jury provided valuable feedback to increase their competencies and creativity.

ADL co-ordinated with the Kairouan Initiative Space to organise a training session on 'initiative' for the benefit of the Yasmina project's rural textile creative girls.

The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for the participants to translate their ideas into project objectives and to learn how to apply the concept of "self-initiator" to the development of their work.

Finally, the meeting created a platform for interaction with experts and actors in the field, enabling participants to acquire more information and tailor-made guidance for starting their own projects.

**Main Achievement.** 12 young women developed their capacities in weaving, personal growth, and entrepreneurship.





**Delegate: Olha Oliynyk**  
**Established: 2024**

## KEY PARTNERS

Local partners:

- Vinnytsia Regional Council (UA)
- Vinnytsia City Council (UA)
- Vinnytsia Regional Association of Local Self-Government Bodies (UA)
- Civil Society Union “Civic Initiatives of Ukraine” (UA)

International partners:

- Diputació de Barcelona (ES)
- Région Bourgogne-Franche-Comté (FR)
- Dijon Municipality (FR)

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

LDA Vinnytsia Region plays a strategic role in advancing local democracy, good governance, and international cooperation in central Ukraine. Its mission is to act as a facilitator of decentralised partnerships, promoting multi-level dialogue and cooperation between local and regional actors, including through tri-partite and quadri-partite partnerships with key European institutions such as Dijon Métropole, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, Diputació de Barcelona, and local authorities in Vinnytsia City and Vinnytsia Oblast.

Functioning as both a platform for building democratic capacity and a driver of international dialogue, LDA Vinnytsia Region advocates for the European integration of Ukrainian communities through practical, localised tools of decentralised cooperation. It serves as a representative of the region's consolidated interests, while also fostering cross-border project implementation aligned with Ukraine's EU accession goals.

In accordance with its Charter, the Agency promotes inclusive and sustainable development by supporting self-sufficient decentralised communities, strengthening citizen participation and multi-stakeholder governance, and advancing thematic priorities such as green innovation, smart specialisation, sustainable resource management, and digitalisation. It also champions entrepreneurship (including social entrepreneurship), gender equality, and support for vulnerable groups such as IDPs and veterans. Particular attention is given to youth engagement, interregional exchange, and cooperation.

To implement these goals, LDA Vinnytsia Region employs a diverse methodology, including comprehensive training cycles, peer learning activities, public forums and conferences, and online workshops. The Agency also engages in fundraising and grant writing, actively preparing joint project proposals with international partners to catalyse development in the region.

As the Agency was officially established in December 2024, no projects have yet been implemented during this calendar year. However, a series of initiatives are already envisioned for 2025, focusing on democratic governance, youth empowerment, decentralised cooperation, and EU integration.

The overarching goal of LDA Vinnytsia Region is to promote mutually beneficial, decentralised, and long-term partnerships that contribute to sustainable development, resilient local governance, and enhanced socio-economic ties—anchored in the broader vision of Ukraine's European integration.





**Delegate: Sladjan Ilić**  
**Established: 1997**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Association for Local Democracy Embassy in Zavidovići, Italy (Lead Partner)
- Municipality of Zavidovići, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Host City)
- Association of Local Authorities of Brescia, Italy
- Municipality of Alba, Italy
- Municipality of Roncadelle, Italy
- Trade Union SPI-CGIL, Italy
- Inter – University Consortium, Venezia, Italy
- NGO Liberacion Carpenedolo, Italy
- Local Coordination for Peace of Cremona, Italy
- Arci New Organization, Italy
- NGO CGIL, Italy
- NGO SPI-CGIL, Italy
- UISP Brescia, Italy
- UISP Cremona, Italy
- Friends of Emmaus, Italy
- Municipality of Torre de Picenardi, Italy
- Association Strani Vari, Italy
- Association Donne in nero Alba, Italy

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Activities in the sectors of Youth policies, Social Welfare and Sustainable Economic Development
- Increasing the net of local actors involved, promoting their role, animating and supporting them through LDA's partner network
- Enlarging the relationship with local and international NGOs, institutions and authorities
- Supporting local NGOs active in the social and educative field

The Local Democracy Agency in Zavidovići was established in April 1997, following many years of cooperation between Italian NGOs and local authorities with the host city of Zavidovići. It is located in the Zenica-Doboj Kanton, BiH Federation, Bosnia Herzegovina. Zavidovići and the surrounding area were severely affected by the war.

## Projects and activities

### 1. Wim Laboratories Iuvenis II

**Timespan:** From **November, 2021** to **November, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 393.830 €

**Funded by:** Agence Erasmus+ France

**The Project.** WIM Laboratories Iuvenis II Project is applying to the Erasmus+ programme to continue this work of learning foreign languages through theatre, and in so doing to meet two needs: - If theatre is a great vehicle for languages, it can be for all disciplines, thanks to thematic writing. It forces students who engage their bodies and wills in the theatrical process to research and write about topics that interest them, to invent ways of inhabiting a stage space to talk about the past, history, geography, or whatever. The WIM Laboratories Iuvenis II project responds to a clear need to think of new, openly inclusive ways of learning that are easier to access for students who are struggling in the traditional system, to see global teaching levers emerge. - Theatre forces the consideration of otherness. Playing is only possible through the acceptance of the other in the stage space that one occupies. The stage is a place of shared citizenship. Based on this analysis, we ask young Europeans from all over the continent to explore their individual histories of conflicts, migrations and dictatorships, and to explore the individual and collective memories that surround them. In doing so, they construct new narratives of the continental past for the stage. Then, playing with each other, moving to France, Italy, ..., they confront these narratives to see everywhere that European History is made up of individual narratives which everywhere are those of the escape from conflicts, of the suffering in their time, of the protection of one's loved ones and of the will to go towards peace. Considering on stage or as an audience the work of other young Europeans, they fully measure the commonality of their experience, they measure the European identity, the values of peace and dialogue that it carries. The WIM Laboratories Iuvenis II project responds to a need for mutual consideration between peoples, between individuals on a continental scale, for dialogue and therefore for democracy.

## Main Achievements.

- Theatre workshops for young people in Zavidovići. The workshops aimed to launch exchange activities through creative work, theatre, language learning.
- Participants in these workshops were high school students, members of the theatre school of the municipal public institution the Center for Culture Zavidovići, with which LDA Zavidovići has been cooperating for many years in the implementation of various cultural initiatives.
- Youth exchange in Izieu, France - participation of 5 young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the European event commemorating the suffering of children in war conflicts
- The "Memory Bus" was organized, a collection of testimonies, memories and local stories of all young people, artistic, memorial and social experiences created for all participants.
- European caravan "Water is memory" - youth exchange realized in Zavidovići with 50 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and different European countries
- Performance "Carriers of Memories" - joint performance with the participation of 50 young people in Zavidovići and Sarajevo



## 2. Ludobus - Activities for children in rural areas

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 1.500 €

**Funded by:** Associazione Mimi

**The Project.** "Ludobus" is a service that offers recreational, cultural, educational, sport and creative activities for children in parks, schools, streets and green areas of the city and villages. Activities are implemented by young people with the assistance of teachers. "Ludobus" is a mobile playroom that has a great ability to gather, attracts and animate children through the game as a basis to socialize and acquire new experiences. "Ludobus" with the simplicity can be involved in various programs (school and extracurricular) and events in the city and beyond. LDA Zavidovici is actively involved in the development of non-formal education and creativity for children through fun and educational workshops with "Ludobus". In the previous period, "Ludobus" visited almost all schools in rural Zavidovici and the activities involved a large number of children.

**Main Achievement.** Development of non-formal education and creativity for young people and children through fun and educational workshops.



### 3. Family Gardens

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 6.000 €

**Funded by:** Fondazione Ampleos Alba

**The Project.** The "Family Gardens" project characterizes the cooperation activities of LDA Zavidovići with partners in Italy since 2014 and continues throughout the years in providing education and assistance to women engaged in agricultural activities, in order to increase production and quality of products for own consumption and sale on a small scale. Food security, sustainability and productivity of family farming are a basic resource for many families in the context of economic stagnation and serious impoverishment of large sections of the population. Activities are:

- Educational workshops for women beneficiaries of the project ;
- Advisory field visits;
- Procurement of seeds, sieve equipment, fertilizers, etc. ;
- Workshops for processing and canning of fruits and vegetables;
- Organization of promotional events of local production in cooperation with the municipal administration and local associations;

**Main Achievement.** Assistance to women engaged in agriculture on a small scale in order to increase production and product quality covering own needs for food; promotion of local agricultural production



#### 4. Co-working Zavidovići Youth HUB – CoZY HUB

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 5.000 €

**Funded by:** City of Zavidovići

**The Project.** Development of a co-working space intended for the improvement of entrepreneurial skills, with an emphasis on youth and women's entrepreneurship as well as other interested users for the purpose of developing social entrepreneurship and establishing a civil-public dialogue.

**Main Achievement.** Providing operational support and organizing various activities through a platform for education and professional development, promotion and networking of users.

Currently the space is used daily by 4 companies, the Development Agency for the Realization of STEM Academy, and various seminars, workshops and foreign language courses organized by local associations and individuals are held there.



## 5. "Strani Vari - Summer animation for children and young people"

**Timespan:** From **June, 2024** to **August, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 5.000 €

**Funded by:** Associazione Strani Vari

**The Project.** The goal of the "Strani Vari" project is to contribute to the involvement of young people in social activities for children. The project animates elementary school children during their summer vacation, with the intention of offering them extracurricular activities at a time when they are not formally tied to school, thus making their vacation more meaningful, and providing them with some new knowledge and skills that they will use on a daily basis.

**Main Achievement.** In collaboration with the volunteers of the Strani Vari Association of Alba, the Summer Camp 2024 was organized at the Oratory of San Luigi Gonzaga in Roncadelle, from 14 to 19 July 2024. A year ago the initiative took place in Bosnia, on this occasion the path was reversed: a group of young people from the Zavidovići area were welcomed by ADL operators and volunteers and spent a week in the spaces of the Oratory.



## 6. BOOST - Balkans for Optimising Opportunities, Sustainability and Transformation of Civil Society

**Timespan:** From April, 2024 to April, 2027

**Names of partners/Associated:** /

**Total Budget:** 3.7 M, / LDA Zavidovici 27.000 €

**Funded by:** French Development Agency (AFD)

**The Project.** It aims to strengthen democratic, economic and social development of the WB region. This will be achieved through long-term program support for empowering civil society capacities in different thematic pillars: youth & entrepreneurship, rural development & environment, preservation of cultural heritage & community development. The cross-cutting priority is to promote active citizenship through participatory approaches and tools, and to encourage a gender perspective in all the programme's activities. The programme aims to strengthen the capacities of civil society organisations through: a) capacity building, b) financial supporting activities to CSOs in the three key thematic pillars; c) promoting networking within civil society and with other key actors such as local authorities.

**Main Achievement.** The project focuses on young people and especially young women and is aimed at strengthening their capacity for active participation. Project also aims to encourage greater engagement and effective cooperation among citizens and direct dialogue with decision-makers, at the local and national level. These actions help to strengthen transparent and responsive local governance structures, generating a positive impact on a regional scale.





**Delegate: Paula Raužan**  
**Established: 1996**

## KEY PARTNERS

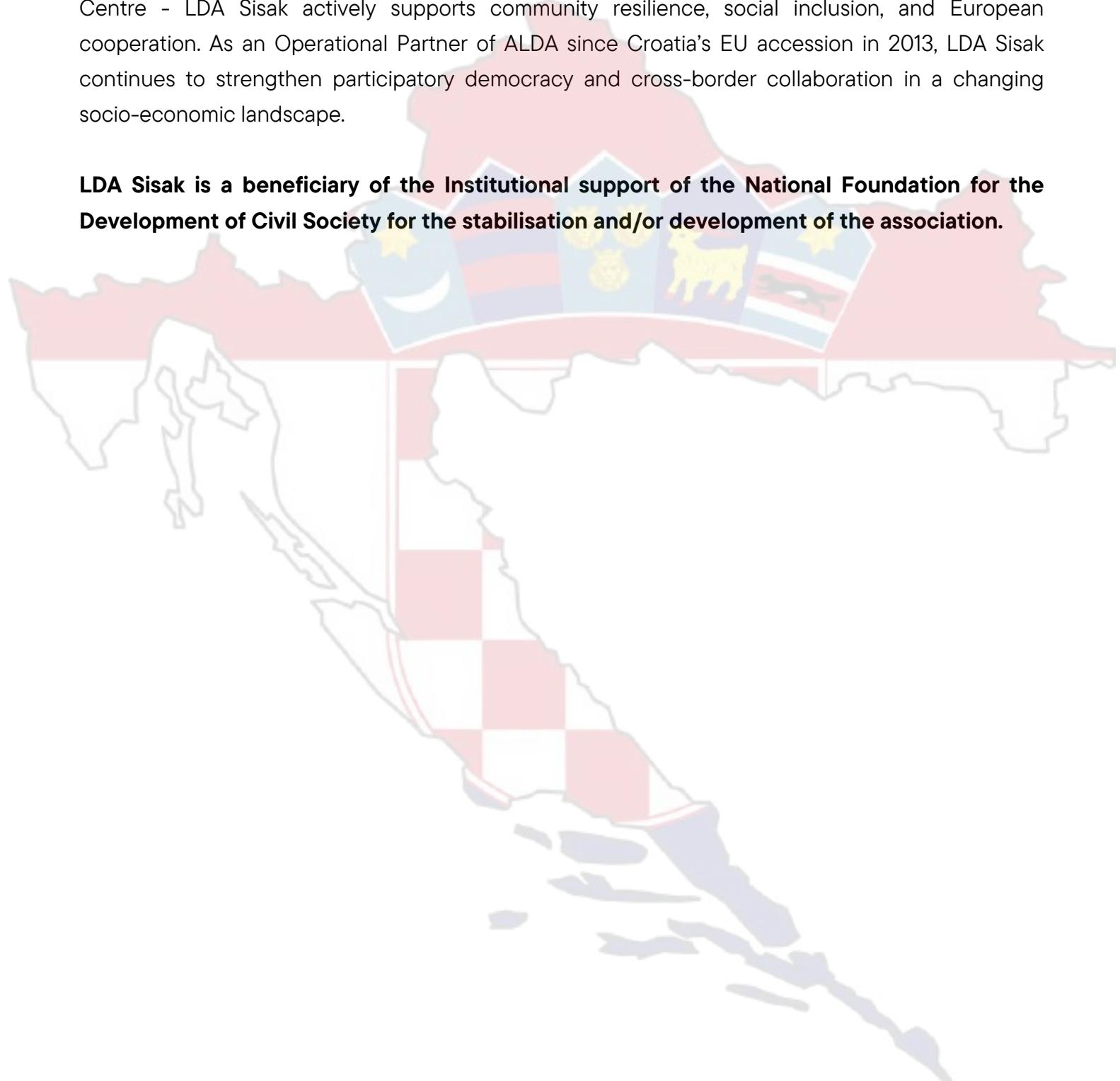
- ALDA (Lead partner)
- Municipality of Sisak, Croatia (Host city)
- Municipality of Hrvatska Kostajnica, Croatia
- Municipality of Petrinja, Croatia
- Municipality of Kutina, Croatia
- Municipality of Dvor, Croatia
- NGO "Going to Europe", Modena, Italy
- International School for Peace Studies, Northern Ireland

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Local democratic processes development by citizens' participation in decision-making, planning and development of pluralistic and multicultural society;
- Promotion, education, development and advocacy of human rights, active citizenship and volunteering;
- Fostering and development of life-long-learning and non-formal education;
- Support to civil society organisations and local authorities in sustainable and participatory democracy development;
- Social innovations and community services development;
- International cooperation development.

Established in 1996 in a post-war context, LDA Sisak has been fostering democratic values, civic engagement, and sustainable local development. Through its key programmes - Local Democracy and Active Citizenship, Volunteer Centre Sisak, Sustainable Development, and the Social-Cultural Centre - LDA Sisak actively supports community resilience, social inclusion, and European cooperation. As an Operational Partner of ALDA since Croatia's EU accession in 2013, LDA Sisak continues to strengthen participatory democracy and cross-border collaboration in a changing socio-economic landscape.

**LDA Sisak is a beneficiary of the Institutional support of the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society for the stabilisation and/or development of the association.**



## Projects and activities

### 1. LDA Sisak Institutional support

**Timespan:** From **January, 2023** to **December, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak

**Total Budget:** 98.787 €

**Funded by:** National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society

**The Project.** The institutional support will strengthen our organisation and the local community, facilitating structural changes. Over the next three years, we aim to enhance the capacity of our staff, ensuring the retention of skilled employees and empowering new recruits to take on responsibilities. This will contribute to organisational sustainability and effective service delivery to our target groups.

By investing in local community development, we aim to support the recovery of Sisak-Moslavina County, which is dealing with population decline after the earthquake. Our activities will focus on improving services and developing new initiatives for vulnerable groups, including refugees, the elderly, those with intellectual disabilities, and young people. We will strengthen local authorities and CSOs by introducing new tools and practices for crisis response.

We plan to continue collaboration with schools, expanding educational programmes focused on sustainable development and social cohesion. A key initiative will be the Platform for Development of School Volunteering, for capacity-building, innovation, and teacher training in sustainable development and participatory democracy. This platform will foster civil-public partnerships and create new collaborative practices.

Additionally, we will advocate the establishment a Social-Cultural Centre, a space for social and cultural initiatives, promoting community relationships and contributing to area revitalisation. The centre will foster cultural engagement and social cohesion.

At the national level, our work will contribute to societal development by promoting youth engagement, creating new educational and social policies, and transferring best practices. Our efforts will strengthen CSOs' capacity to advocate for changes in education, focusing on civic education and active citizenship.

**Main Achievement.** In 2024, our organisation achieved significant milestones, including the successful continuation of the advocacy Platform for School Volunteering Development and the launch of the Diversity Day initiative in Sisak, which united multi-sectoral stakeholders and positioned civil society organisations as key actors in driving social change. Through this initiative, we strengthened networks, including the Local Integration Coordination, inclusive volunteering promotion, and advocacy for a Social-cultural Centre in Sisak.

Additionally, we developed the Youth Programme for Sisak-Moslavina County (2024-2028) through a participatory process and successfully delivered a new social service aimed at preventing institutionalisation for older adults and people with disabilities, ensuring three years of funding. The growth of our staff allowed for the expansion of services, though it also posed challenges in organisational restructuring. Furthermore, we continued to implement the Volunteering Centre programme, earning a four-year Quality Label.

In 2024, we directly engaged with over 1500 beneficiaries and stakeholders, making strides in building partnerships and successfully managing complex projects.

“

2024 was a pivotal year for our association, marked by significant progress in **strengthening volunteer and advocacy initiatives, as well as improving social services for vulnerable groups.** Through collaboration with partners and collective efforts on key projects such as the Platform for the Development of School Volunteering and the Initiative for Diversity Day in the City of Sisak – the first such initiative in Europe – we further enhanced our recognition and impact in the community. Our commitment to creating long-term change is now being recognised in a broader societal context as a best practice example, driving further steps towards inclusivity and social cohesion.

(Paula Rauzan, LDA Sisak President)

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## 2. Live equality, celebrate diversity!

**Timespan:** From **November, 2022 to March, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia (leader);

CROSOL – Croatian Platform for International Citizen Solidarity, Zagreb/Croatia

**Total Budget:** 54.730,50 €

**Funded by:** EU program Citizens, Equality, Rights, Values (CERV) of the European Executive Agency for Education and Culture (EACEA) through the Impact4Values Program. Co-funded by the Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with the NGOs.

**The Project.** The project addresses lack of civil society organisations (CSOs) able to be force of change in the promotion and protection of the human rights in Sisak and Sisak-Moslavina County (SMC) area.

Lack of recognition and sustainability of the CSOs working on integration, leads to discontinuity of the migrants' integration programs, lack of understanding of the European values and the CSOs' role in democratic society development, and fewer opportunities of citizens' participation and civil society development. Small number of the CSOs in the SMC active in peace culture development and human rights protection, additionally makes promotion and protection of these values in the local community even harder.

The project brings solutions at the three interconnected levels:

- 1) Strengthening CSOs and public initiatives advocacy capacities on the European values, democracy and the role of the civil society in the society;
- 2) Public campaign on the CSOs work in SMC and their importance in building solidary and inclusive community, by which the citizens will be introduced with concrete activities of the CSOs active in advocating human rights, European values and migrants' integration in the community life;
- 3) Advocacy campaign directed to the Sisak City Council on declaring official the Sisak Diversity Day.

**Main Achievement.** The project **strengthened the capacities** of 14 local CSOs for advocating European values, reached over 30,000 citizens through an [online campaign on the impact of CSOs on citizens' lives](#), organised an NGO and institution fair with 37 exhibitors and over 300 visitors, and created **the first Europe' ever Diversity Day Initiative** document for Sisak with concrete measures for improving CSOs' working conditions, migrant integration, support for people with disabilities, and equal opportunities for their families. The initiative was presented to local decision-makers who promised support for adoption by the city council.



Europska unija  
Sustavna  
Europska unija



Impact4Values program is co-funded  
by the Government Office for  
Cooperation with NGOs.



AGENCIJA LOKALNE DEMOKRACIJE SISAK  
Local Democracy Agency Sisak



### 3. Youth Programme of Sisak-Moslavina County

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia (leader); Sisak-Moslavina County, Croatia; Regional Coordinator of Sisak-Moslavina County, Croatia

**Total Budget:** 15.000 €

**Funded by:** Central State Office for Demography and Youth of the Republic of Croatia

**The Project.** Following the expiry of the Youth Programme of Sisak-Moslavina County for 2019-2023, it is necessary to develop a new programme to ensure continuous systematic support for the youth in the county. The Youth Programme represents a strategic overarching document that guides youth policy, making it crucial for the new Youth Programme of Sisak-Moslavina County for the period from 2024 to 2028 to come into effect.

The LDA Sisak, along with partners and collaborators, will work together during the 12-month project implementation to develop a proposal for the Youth Programme of Sisak-Moslavina County for 2024-2028 through public-civil partnerships and a dialogue between youth and decision-makers. The project places youth at the forefront of programme development, actively involving them in the conceptualisation and creation of the new programme.

Research on the needs of the youth in the county will be conducted, and a Working Group for the development of the programme will be formed, involving youth representatives, decision-makers, and individuals working with youth. The Working Group, through collaborative learning about the processes of creating strategic documents and the impact of climate change, will draft a proposal for the Youth Programme, which will be presented in public discussions and during public consultation.

The project contributes to creating a conducive environment for active youth engagement in democratic processes and community life in Sisak-Moslavina County, through public-civil partnerships in the development of youth policies based on the principles of participation, inclusivity, and sustainable development.

#### Main Achievements.

- **Development and official adoption of the Youth Programme 2024–2028 by the County Assembly**, setting strategic priorities for youth policies in Sisak-Moslavina County.
- **Comprehensive research on youth needs**, providing valuable insights for evidence-based policymaking.
- **Collaborative planning process**, engaging young representatives, educators, local authorities, and civil society organisations.
- **Integration of climate change adaptation** into youth policies through expert-led workshops.
- **Public consultation**, ensuring youth and stakeholder participation in shaping the final Programme.

## 4. Weaving Solidarity

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **January, 2027**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia (leader); City of Sisak, Croatia

**Total Budget:** 792.000 €

**Funded by:** European Social Fund+ and national co-financing from the Croatian State Budget

**The Project.** This project aims to provide support services to individuals aged 65 and over and adults with disabilities (18 years and older), contributing to their increased social inclusion, prevention of institutionalisation, enabling them to remain in their homes, and ensuring their right to live in the community.

The provision of support services will be implemented in the area of the City of Sisak, including urban and rural parts, and will start on 1 April 2024. A public call for expressions of interest from the target groups, including eligibility criteria for users, will be published on our website.

The project will be implemented over 36 months, with support services being provided for 33 months.

Project Activities:

1. Employment of 16 service providers for at least 96 members of the target group to:
  - 2.a. Organise food provision,
  - 3.b. Perform household chores,
  - 4.c. Maintain personal hygiene,
  - 5.d. Meet other daily needs.
6. Monitoring and controlling the delivery of services;
7. Procurement and distribution of household and basic hygiene supplies, in accordance with donor rules;
8. Communication and visibility;
9. Project management and administration.

**Main Achievement.** The project enabled the provision of a new social service for the prevention of institutionalization for elderly people and adults with disabilities, with secured three-year funding. Services were provided to 127 beneficiaries, improving their quality of life and social inclusion. The project also contributed to the development of social services at the local level and achieved long-term positive changes for vulnerable groups.

“ I don't know how I would manage without this help. I recently came out of hospital and couldn't believe how much extra support I needed. I don't know how I would cope if it wasn't for this service, which allows me to stay in my own home without being alone. Who would have thought that such help could be so invaluable? Honestly, I don't know how to thank you, as I wouldn't have made it without you. With every visit and every bit of assistance, I feel safer and less lonely.

(A beneficiary of the social service)

## 5. Platform for development of school volunteering

**Timespan:** From **October, 2022 to March, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia; Vocational School Sisak, Croatia; Human Rights House Zagreb, Croatia; Norsensus Mediaforum, Norway

**Total Budget:** 87.870 €

**Funded by:** Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway within the European Economic Area and Active citizens fund

**The Project.** The project systematizes the long-term practice and efforts of the LDA Sisak and educational institutions in the Sisak-Moslavina County (SMC) for the development of school volunteer clubs through the establishment of the Platform for development of school volunteering, as a place of education, exchange and advocacy towards the decision makers.

The project aims to create a precondition for the systematic support to schools in SMC by strengthening their capacities for development and implementation of practical and engaging contents on topics such as active citizenship, social justice and social inclusion.

The platform consists of schools in which volunteer clubs exist and those schools that are interested in developing this type of extracurricular activities. The backbone of the work of school volunteer clubs is collaborative (co-creative) work of teachers and students in detecting the needs and problems of the community, finding the best solutions, and implementing concrete actions.



## Main Achievements.

- Established nonformal advocacy network the Platform for development of school volunteering, gathering schools and CSOs in Sisak-Moslavina County,
- Conducted the first research in Croatia on practices and needs of schools and students in the field of volunteering and civic education.
- Implemented educational program on social justice and civic education for educational workers.
- Established the Vocational school Sisak volunteer' club based on in depth needs analysis and education on volunteer' club management,
- Developed and implemented 7 school volunteers' actions on the social justice topics.
- Dedicated web page on school volunteering, including advocacy positions.
- Produced the handbook "School Volunteering Clubs as a Platform for Education on Social Justice", designed for primary and secondary school educators to develop educational content on social justice through school volunteering clubs.
- Conducted an advocacy campaign to improve conditions for school volunteering and the recognition of volunteer work, targeting the Ministry of Science and Education, the Education and Teacher Training Agency, and cities in the Sisak-Moslavina County.

“We have learned that, although we are all different, we all share the same needs and emotions”.  
(Primary school student)

## 6. Volunteering Network

**Timespan:** From **May, 2023** to **April, 2025**

**Names of partners/Associated:** 1. Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia; City of Sisak, Croatia; Elementary school “Budaševo-Topolovac-Gušće”, Sisak/Croatia; Gymnasium Sisak, Croatia; Croatian Social Welfare Center, Sisak Regional Office, Croatia; Municipality of Lekenik, Croatia; Municipality of Majur, Croatia

**Total Budget:** 20.800 €

**Funded by:** Croatian Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family and Social Policy and City of Sisak

**The Project.** Through the program, the LDA Sisak continues its long-standing practice of providing systematic support to citizens, volunteers, and volunteer organisers. By providing education, networking, and information exchange, we assist volunteer organisers in developing high-quality and diverse volunteer programs, contributing to an increase in the number of citizens, particularly young people and those in disadvantaged positions, who engage in volunteering. By promoting less common forms of volunteering (school volunteering, inclusive volunteering, and volunteering in rural areas), we aim to ensure that volunteering expands across various segments of the community and that everyone has equal opportunities to participate.

The contribution of volunteer support to academic success and the socialisation of students will be assessed through research on the impact of volunteer assistance in learning on students' academic performance and personal growth. The purpose of the research is to encourage other schools in Sisak-Moslavina County to introduce similar programs and promote the good practices and values of school volunteering.

The program will contribute to community development and the promotion of social inclusion among the rural populations of the Municipalities of Lekenik and Majur, which are sparsely populated and thus further socially excluded.

Through a promotional campaign, we aim to ensure that volunteer work is recognised and valued at the institutional level and to inform citizens and relevant stakeholders about the benefits of volunteering and its positive impact on the development of a more humane and equitable society.

## Main Achievements.

- 362 direct beneficiaries involved in the project activities, whereof 68% children and youth.
- Developed and implemented educational program for rural volunteers on volunteering in social services sector.
- 136 legal entities involved in the project activities and/or received support in development of their voluntary activities.
- 95 volunteers received support in volunteering engagement.
- Rural school organised a volunteer' action on the topic of social justice.
- 61 elementary and high school pupils educated on volunteering and organised 5 voluntary actions on social justice topics.
- Developed new voluntary program for providing learning assistance to elementary and high school pupils from socially disadvantaged and migrant families.



## 7. Volunteer Centre Sisak

**Timespan:** From **January, 2024** to **December, 2024**

**Names of partners/Associated:** Local Democracy Agency Sisak, Croatia; Primary school Budaševo-Toplovac-Gušće, Sisak, Croatia; Gymnasium Sisak, Croatia

**Total Budget:** 2.000 €

**Funded by:** City of Sisak, own resources

**The Project.** Volunteers' Centre Sisak (VCS), operating since 2011, is a social infrastructure available to all community' stakeholders, providing free-of-charge educational and networking services to citizens wanted to volunteer and legal entities needing volunteers, in accordance to legal framework and voluntary programs standards.

The objective is to contribute to strengthening democratic society through development of local partnerships and active involvement of citizens, children and youth u public community life by building resources of potential and existing volunteering organisers and advocating positive impact of volunteering in Sisak area.

### Main Achievements.

- Volunteer Centre Sisak has been awarded the **Quality Label** for the next four years.
- Monitoring and promotion of the City of Sisak Volunteering Development Program 2023-2027.
- 7 individuals and legal entities awarded with the Sisak Volunteer Awards 2024.
- Personal volunteer stories are available on the [dedicated website](#) which has 105.748 registered visits.
- 9th Annual photo exhibitions of voluntary programs opened with 20 photos of 15 organisations all over the Sisak-Moslavina County.
- 18th Annual Sisak Fair of NGOs and Institutions gathered 37 organisations
- 77 legal entities supported in development of voluntary programs and in engaging volunteers.
- 86 citizens received support in informing and/ or finding suitable voluntary placement.



# OP VERTENEGLIO/ BRTONIGLA



**Delegate: Umberto Ademollo**

**Established: 1996**

## KEY PARTNERS

- Municipality of Bellinzona, Switzerland (Lead partner)
- Municipality of Vertenglio/Brtonigla (Host City)
- Istria Region, Croatia
- Friulia-Venezia Giulia Region, Italy
- Province of Florence, Italy
- Municipality of Portogruaro, Italy
- Municipality of Ravenna, Italy
- Municipality of Greve in Chianti, Italy
- Municipality of Russi, Italy
- Municipality of Duino-Aurisina, Italy
- Province of Florence, Italy
- Association "Marevivo", Italy
- Association Circle of Culture Istria, Italy
- Association Causes Communes Switzerland

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- Supporting the development of local democracy
- Supporting the European integration of the Region
- Fostering cross-border cooperation
- Raising awareness on human rights, minority rights and youth active participation

The Operational Partner Brtonigla is a non-governmental organisation founded in 1996 as part of the Council of Europe's initiative to establish lasting peace in the post-Yugoslav region. It began in 1993 with Resolution 251 of the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, which called for the establishment of several Local Democracy Embassies in the SEE region.

The Local Democracy Embassy in Brtonigla (called Operational Partner since 28 July 2005) was established in Brtonigla (Istria-Croatia) on 5 May 1996 by the partners of the OP (regional bodies from various European countries) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. In 1997, the OP Brtonigla signed an agreement with the Istrian Region with the aim of implementing its activities on the entire Istrian territory and becoming an instrument of development in the region.

For the past 20 years, the OP has been dedicated to supporting local democracy and active citizenship, civil society, raising awareness of European values and citizenship among young people, facilitating and promoting development opportunities through various European programmes, supporting the efforts of local institutions and the community to create solutions to social and economic challenges, promoting and supporting the unique richness of the multicultural and multilingual regional identity, and developing networks and partnerships with many local, national and international public bodies and NGOs with the aim of creating new opportunities for sustainable development in the region.

Istria has a history shaped by its strategic geographic position in Europe, as a bridge between its western and eastern parts, connecting the Balkans with Central Europe; traditionally, it has been a focal point of conflicting interests of various international actors, experienced periods of authoritarian regimes and changing national borders during the 20th century. Nevertheless, the local population has inherited, preserved and strengthened the strong sense of regional belonging and affiliation to the Istrian identity, making it richer and extremely important in the context of its symbolic role as a bridge between East and West in the heart of Europe. Over the past 20 years, the OP has built a long track record as a major actor in strengthening democratic values and culture among the local population and in particular among the local youth, its European awareness has enabled the participation of a large number of local young people and professionals in various programmes in Europe, and it has been actively involved in the implementation of a large number of projects under various European programmes in cooperation with its regional partners in the region.



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