



**ALDA**

European Association  
for Local Democracy

# THE TOP 15 ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALDA (FIRST) YEARS OF ACTIVITIES



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# THE TOP 15 ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALDA (FIRST) 15 YEARS OF ACTIVITIES



European Association  
for Local Democracy



Supported by:



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## FORWARD

*Dear members, dear friends,*

*I am very proud to announce the 15th anniversary of the European Association for Local Democracy, ALDA.*

*Step by step, ALDA has turned 15 years old, since the registration of its Statute in 1999 and the start of its activities in 2000. I am honoured to be celebrating this milestone together with our members, Board, and staff, as each of us contributed to the success of the Association, as well as to its resilience, flexibility, and vision.*

*We decided this important anniversary was the right time to step back and look at ourselves, in order to identify our biggest achievements. It has not been an easy selection, which is definitely a good sign: the success and width of the activities of ALDA are blatant, as well as its increasing geographical scope.*

*For this, if you think that something is missing from this publication, it is because our struggle to condensate the past 15 years in 15 key achievements compelled us to stick to the essential. Sometimes, less is just more!*

*By thanking you all for your long-term support and commitment, I wish you a successful Year of Development 2015, and invite you to keep being pro-active and informed about the activities of ALDA. Our network is our strength, and our (first) fifteen years of work proof it.*

Oriano Otočan  
President of ALDA



## **ALDA 15TH ANNIVERSARY – TIME TO ASSESS OUR ACHIEVEMENTS**

*Dear members, dear friends,*

*First of all, I would like to thank you all for having made ALDA 15th anniversary possible. We would not be able to celebrate this anniversary without the commitment of all of you.*

*Anniversaries are traditionally used to go through our lives and evaluate them; in this publication dedicated to our main 15 achievements, you will find an assessment of our activity, highlighting what ALDA has really produced through the years, and why our contribution is still crucial for a better, more democratic and inclusive society.*

*Our Association is growing, and it is crucial to bear in mind that the huge results achieved so far are not mainly driven by luck, coincidences, and destiny. They result from our 15-years of work, and reflect the credibility gained by ALDA and its network of members and partners.*

*Europe and its Neighbouring countries are unfortunately not free from war, terrorism, and tensions. Day by day, our experience becomes more precious and needed, and our unique network has to play a key role in promoting citizen participation and good local governance in an innovative way.*

*Let's raise our glasses in a quick toast, before getting back to working together during the next 15 years and beyond!*

Antonella Valmorbidia  
Secretary General of ALDA

## **INTRODUCTION**

# A CONSOLIDATED NETWORK OF MEMBERS



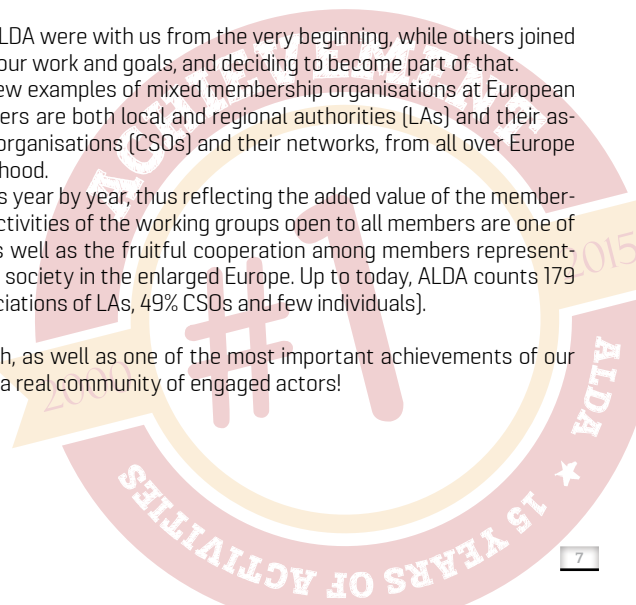
During its 15 years of work, ALDA managed to build from scratch a consolidated, mixed network of almost 180 members from over 35 countries, sharing the values and the mission of the Association.

Some of the members of ALDA were with us from the very beginning, while others joined on the way, getting to know our work and goals, and deciding to become part of that.

ALDA remains one of the few examples of mixed membership organisations at European level. That is why our members are both local and regional authorities (LAs) and their associations, and civil society organisations (CSOs) and their networks, from all over Europe and the European Neighbourhood.

The network of ALDA grows year by year, thus reflecting the added value of the membership (the online and offline activities of the working groups open to all members are one of the most visible outputs), as well as the fruitful cooperation among members representing local authorities and civil society in the enlarged Europe. Up to today, ALDA counts 179 members (51% LAs and associations of LAs, 49% CSOs and few individuals).

Our network is our strength, as well as one of the most important achievements of our (first) 15 years of activities – a real community of engaged actors!



# SUCCESSFULLY MAKING LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CSOs WORK TOGETHER

ALDA believes that the cooperation between local authorities and civil society organisations is key to achieve its objectives – the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level, supporting a balanced and sustainable development. That is why ALDA members are both local authorities (LAs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). All our activities foster the cooperation between LAs and CSOs in the long term, often using the method of multilateral decentralised cooperation, and a multi-stakeholder approach.

In particular, thanks to ALDA commitment in decentralised cooperation and in the implementation of several projects in the framework of European programmes, ALDA promotes joint work and synergies between LAs and CSOs, in order to promote and improve best practices in the field of local governance and citizen's active participation.

ALDA most recent and ambitious challenge under this respect is the launch of "LADDER - Local Authorities as Drivers for Development Education and Raising awareness", a 3-years project funded by EuropeAid, led by ALDA and involving 26 partners & 20 associates, coming from 18 EU and 17 non EU-countries, namely associations of local authorities and networks of CSOs.

Natural follow up of the successful project "Working Together for Development", LADDER aims at strengthening the capacity of associations of LAs and CSOs to act in a sustainable way as drivers for development, fostering their role of multipliers within their countries, communities and networks.

LADDER will support developing and reinforcing cooperation between LAs and CSOs, in order to develop win-win synergies. The European Year for Development 2015 is the right timing to begin this journey, encompassing key stakeholders in the EU, as well as in all its Neighborhood – Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Mediterranean area.

Thanks to ALDA, particularly active under this respect, this new paradigm of innovative and enhanced methods for securing democracy and development is now well enshrined in the policy for development and institutional and democratic consolidation both in the EU and in its Neighborhood.





## SUPPORTED EU ENLARGEMENT...

On 1st July 2013, we all raised our glasses in a toast as Croatia joined the European Union. The event represented a milestone for the country, torn by war only two decades ago, as well as for ALDA and the network of LDAs.

The work carried out by ALDA in Croatia during the past years has strongly supported the integration of the country in Europe. The activities of the association and of the three Local Democracy Agencies (now Operational Partners) based in Verteneglio/Brtonigla, Sisak and Osijek, were crucial to build trust, promote citizen participation and European values, and strengthen local authorities.

Among the supporting activities implemented, the project 'ALL.4.EU', led by the Croatian Region of Istria, historical member of ALDA, aimed at getting people to be involved and play an active role in the construction of Europe, and to contribute to bridge the gap between citizens and the European Union. This represented a major challenge also for the Region, ideally representing



a bridge between Europe and pre-accession countries. Through the project, the Region of Istria, sought to develop – on the basis of the achievements of the pilot project entitled “Eur-action” implemented by ALDA whose network the Region of Istria belongs to – and to further promote the use of the “citizens’ panels” to assure interaction between citizens and decision makers at all levels, fostering at the same time their active participation in the life of their communities and in Europe.

Another project we were part of was ‘THINKEU - Through Information and Knowledge towards EU’, led by our Croatian partner association ‘Foundation for partnership and civil society development’, aimed at supporting the country accession to the EU with a strong, deep and sustained dialogue between the civil society actors.

Throughout these years, ALDA has been a reference point for LAs and CSOs in the Enlargement area, paving the way for the accession of Croatia to the EU, and also supported alignment of standards and conditions for the rest of the region towards the EU.



The activities, lobbying work, and projects of ALDA and the LDAs in the candidate countries have always been instrumental to their improvement of democratic, social, and economical standards before joining the European Union. Today, we are particularly active in South-Eastern Europe - Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as in Turkey.

It is definitely not a case that the very first project won by ALDA in 2003, 'EU Mayors', sponsored by the EU Information Programme Prince, aimed at raising municipal authorities' and community leaders' awareness of the opportunities linked with the EU enlargement in Lithuania and Poland.

In the Western Balkans we run a variety of projects, mostly funded by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, aimed at supporting reform and capacity building to pave the way towards Europe.

Putting the spotlight on Bosnia and Herzegovina, the list is long: ALDA managed the 2-year project 'Civil society in action for dialogue and partnerships' implemented a set of capacity building and awareness raising activities targeting local NGOs and local authorities, to enhance citizen participation in policy and decision making process from 2011 to 2013. The

## ... AND SUPPORTING FUTURE ENLARGEMENT

European and Our Affairs, run with LDA Zavidovici, but also 'Italian municipalities for Balkans municipalities', a 30- month project to transfer know-how and modernise the 11 hosting municipalities of the Local Democracy Agencies in the Western Balkans; 'Actions for capacity building of local authorities and civil society in Southern and Eastern Europe', targeting Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Republic of Macedonia.

Without forgetting 'Local Coalitions for Community Development', ongoing in Montenegro, which promotes good practices in the cooperation between local authorities and civil society organisations, and fosters their active involvement in the country process of EU integration.

Despite the reduced speed given to the Enlargement process, ALDA and the LDAs are in the frontline to keep high the determination and desire to be part of the EU in the region of South-East Europe, as well as to promote debate on EU values and opportunities.



# LEADER FOR RECONCILIATION AND COMMUNITY COHESION



The LDAs and ALDA have been leading actors in the process of reconciliation in the post war context in Western Balkans, working both on the institutional and community levels. The dialogue between local authorities and the full engagement of an interethnic civil society has been the centre of the activities of the LDAs for more than a decade. Thanks to peace building processes and direct projects, citizens were engaged in a reconciliation path leading to peace and local development.

Within this framework, "Reconciling for the future - European perspective for the Western Balkans" launched in 2009-2010 has proven to be a relevant initiative. The project addressed the post-conflict reconciliation and the EU integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. The one-year project funded by the European Commission promoted three country-based panel discussions and a regional round table that gathered representatives of government bodies, civil society, experts and media to help improve the dialogue at regional level on the need for effective reconciliation as one of the crucial preconditions for furthering the EU integration process. The entire action was designed to help address the post-conflict reconciliation process between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia with particular emphasis on assessing the achieved level and quality of inter-state relations in view of the progress made toward EU integration.

A valuable initiative marking ALDA's success in this context is also the project "Cities for peace and democracy in Europe", implemented in 2006-2007. The project brought local authorities, NGOs and young people together to evaluate and debate their role in the construction of a peaceful and democratic Europe. Best practice examples on how to foster peace and democracy at the local level were gathered through workshops, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, cultural events and disseminated through a Europe-wide campaign on peace and democracy in today's Europe.

# EXPANDING NETWORK OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCIES



At the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ALDA, we proudly assess that the network of Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) has shown to be a successful self-sustainable tool for promoting local democracy and citizen participation in the Enlargement and Neighborhood regions. From the first experience of the Local Democracy Agency established in Subotica (Serbia) back in 1993, ALDA has developed a well-established system counting nowadays 13 agencies, 11 in Western Balkans, among which three upgraded with the status of Operational Partners following the access of Croatia into the EU, and 2 in the Caucasus.

The LDA methodology promoting consortia of local authorities and civil society associations from both the country of establishment and all across Europe as a form of international decentralised cooperation and basis for the LDA sustainability, has therefore proven to be a successful one and promoted as a good practice to be replicated in most of the Neighborhood areas. Stemming from the tested success of the methodology, ALDA has launched the opening process of three new LDAs: in Ukraine, Moldova and Tunisia.

In an effort to support the development of local communities, local democracy and citizens' participation in Ukraine, ALDA, in cooperation with the regions of Lower Silesia (Poland), Alsace (France), and the region of Dnipropetrovsk (Ukraine) and the endorsement of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE, UNDP ART initiative and CORLEAP (The Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership) of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), has been working since 2013 in the opening of an LDA in Dnipropetrovsk, planned to be launched on 18 May 2015.

ALDA's strategy to further extend the LDA model in the neighborhood area is reinforced by the decision to establish a new Local Democracy Agency in Moldova. The first fact-finding mission has been launched in March 2015 in Chisinau where our representatives met the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM). Concrete steps forward have also been moved in Tunisia where from February 2014, ALDA's Governing Board has confirmed the launching process "Tournesol" for the opening of the first LDA in the southern part of the Mediterranean, therefore adding a new geographical dimension and new challenges to ALDA's work.

# PUTTING THE ACCENT ON “LOCAL”

By empowering citizens and communities, and by creating trust among the stakeholders involved, especially local authorities and organised civil society, the work of ALDA clearly shows the importance of operating at the local level to build long-lasting democracy and development.

An initiative to be recalled as a best practice in the field is 'Microcredit Balkans', a four-year project run by ALDA in cooperation with Banca Intesa San Paolo and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By developing a Microcredit programme in the Balkans, ALDA committed itself to help people benefit from access credit in order to encourage entrepreneurship and foster local development. The project was implemented in Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Microcredit Balkans gathered a vast range of actors willing to support small-scale initiatives in places where credit opportunities for local entrepreneurs are limited, and reached stakeholders who would have not been able to get traditional loans from banks.

When the project started in 2006, the countries involved were slowly but steadily proceeding towards European integration. Economic development

and democratization were both equally important, and development of the capacities at the local level represented a crucial challenge. The difficult economic situation in the area was characterized by the effects of the painful transition problems, harshened by the global crisis. On top of this, the rigid and costly credit system made it hard to impossible for many existing companies – and all the new start-up ones – to obtain loans paying the standard rates. This resulted in a devastating brain drain affecting the three countries.

The microcredit scheme implemented represented an important socially responsible opportunity in the credit market, financing over 150 companies, especially newly created ones, and companies which had a strong, healthy impact on the local communities operating in - because they fostered youth or women entrepreneurship, supported employment opportunities for the local population, etc.].

Local development and local communities are not the final part of the chain of a large-scale, national plan. Indeed, thanks to ALDA, the local leverage has been recognised its importance and key role as a real initiator of development and sustainability.



# PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, AND FIGHTING POPULISM IN EUROPE

Stemming from 15 years of constant work on the ground, ALDA has been widely recognised as a leading organisation in wider Europe in promoting participatory citizenship at the local level. We keep advocating for our vision of fostering cooperation between local authorities and civil society as the most efficient tool to create the necessary conditions for political and social development of the community and to bring better results in terms of equality, welfare, security and sustainability. Engaging citizens in all aspects of the life of their community and making their voices heard through peaceful and legal forms of participation is an antidote to populism and anti-democratic movements all across Europe.

Promoting participatory citizenship at the local level calls for a fruitful cooperation between local authorities, civil society associations and citizens. We have been contributing to this from 1999 by developing three main lines of action: 1) empowering civil society associations and citizens, in order to make them be a stronger voice in front of decision makers by providing them with knowledge, resources and connections; 2) support decentralisation processes and the development of capacities and awareness of local authorities in setting mechanisms involving citizens in the decision making process; 3) advocate at all levels of government to create an enabling environment for a fruitful cooperation between the two actors.



ALDA is also proud that our action is recognised as having a strong impact on strengthening the European project and, in particular, in contributing to objectives such as fostering citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity, in encouraging democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level as well as in contributing to intercultural dialogue and enhancing mutual understanding. Convinced that European citizens have a key and primary role in building Europe, ALDA has been promoting and implementing projects, actions and debates regarding the future of Europe as a necessity to bring Europe closer to its citizens. Since 2006, we have launched and assessed a brand new tool to promote citizen participation: the "citizen panel", tested as good practice by the European Commission in the programme Europe for Citizens. The evidence of our impact has been rewarded by the European Commission and ALDA has proudly been seating in the structured dialogue of the Europe for Citizens programme.

In 2013 we took the ambitious decision to capitalise all our experience and launched DECIDE - DEMocratic Compact: Improving Democracy in Europe. The initiative will be finalised in July 2015 and will develop a democratic compact, namely a set of measures increasing the quality of citizen participation at local level through a two-year process of identification, exchange, test and assessment.

A few years after its establishment, ALDA started working in the Eastern Partnership area, to foster good governance, citizen participation, European integration, and decentralisation in the six countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

Today ALDA activities cover all the six countries, while LDAs are present in two – Armenia, in Gyumri, and Georgia, in Kutaisi; very soon (in May 2015) the LDA Dnipropetrovsk, in Ukraine will be opened, and the work towards the creation of LDA Moldova is ongoing.

Our efforts and our increasing presence in the area means only one thing – we work where it's needed, not where it's easy. Since 2004, the projects and activities of ALDA in Belarus together with our local member associations are a unique example of international work to strengthen local democracy and citizen participation throughout the country.

It has not been easy, at all. Belarusian civil society has no loud voice: NGOs are small, fragmented, with limited resources and networking possibilities. They have difficulties in implementing, as well as in communicating their activities. Furthermore, the concept of participation and volunteerism does not have a positive image for the majority of the population.

In spite of the constraints, and in tight cooperation with Lev Sapieha Foundation, one of the first Belarusian NGOs, promoting civil society development and local self government, we have been offering training and support to the local civil society, strengthening citizens' participation and supporting the cooperation with local authorities to solve local issues, fostering a culture of citizenship and participation.

The two on-going actions in the country, TANDEM II – Cooperation for citizen participation and community development in Belarus, SPREAD II – Sustainable Partnership for REinforcement of Active Development, are both follow-up of successfully implemented projects.

## PROMOTING LOCAL PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE...



## ... AND IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA



After the so-called Arab Spring, the network of members of ALDA decided it was time to expand the Association scope of action to the Euro-Mediterranean area.

Some initiatives had already been implemented in the region, such as the project 'Capitalising Migrant Capacities', run in Algeria and funded by the EC and UNDP. It addressed the problem of brain waste and de-skilling of prospective migrants and returnees in the country, and strengthened the links and the dialogue among Algerian migrants in Italy and France, and migrant associations and local authorities in Algeria on this topics.

In September 2014, ALDA trained on 120 Tunisian civic educators on citizen participation and innovative methodologies within the EU-funded project Vox in Box, led by our partner association Lam Echaml.

Vox in Box is a piece of the process called Tournesol/Sunflower/Girasole, launched for an enhanced cooperation with the Mediterranean countries. One of the key goals set is the creation of the future LDA Tunisia, which will represent the first Local Democracy Agency in the Mediterranean and Northern African region.

The future LDA Tunisia, Inch'Allah opening after the local elections will be held, will strongly support the process of decentralisation foreseen by the new constitution. At the same time, it will be a key actor promoting local democracy, citizen participation, and social cohesion, by empowering local authorities, civil society, and youngsters.

While being aware of the huge differences from the Balkan and South Caucasus contexts where the Association has longer been active, ALDA is working hard to flexibly adapt its methodology, testing and implementing activities on the field in Tunisia in order to meet the needs of the local communities, and support local development and democracy.







## EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

ment for youth activism and participation, in particular of young people with fewer opportunities.

The Regional platform is the natural follow-up of a strong commitment to empower young people and bring their voice to the local policy making. The experience of the volunteer centres developed within the LDAs such as LDA Sisak has been a fundamental pillar. The centres are a key means to promote community development through volunteering by informing and providing a wide range of citizens, especially youngsters, with opportunities for being involved into high quality community volunteer programmes.

Young people have nowadays acquired a more central and decisive role in European policies, in particular in the light of the high unemployment rates they currently face. ALDA and the LDAs have always considered the youngsters as fundamental resources for the future of the EU as well as of the enlargement and neighbourhood countries. Through a coherent set of tools and projects, we have promoted economic, social, cultural and professional growth of these new generations of citizens.

Pilot initiatives such as POPEYE – Promoting Organic Production, Enhancing Youth Employment - strongly impacted the life of more than 100 youngsters aged 15-25 from France, Italy, Croatia, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Estonia by promoting their active participation in their local community and, at the same time, by developing key skills in organic agriculture and ICT so as to favour their access to the labour market.

The strong focus on youth has brought all the LDAs in the Balkans to join forces and launch the Balkan Regional Platform for Youth Participation and Dialogue. The initiative aims at promoting social and economic inclusion of age groups that risk marginalisation and helping improve the environ-



## FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENT AND PARTICIPATION



Participation is a transversal topic and ALDA has increasingly been integrating this component in activities aimed at protecting health and environment. As the theme is a core worry for all citizens, it represents a great way to stimulate their participation in their community life. Through a long list of initiatives, ALDA managed to raise citizens' awareness on EU's health and environmental policy framework, to promote and support citizens' initiatives to tackle environmental violations, to raise awareness on the environmental impact of individual consumption and, more generally, to promote new participatory approaches in the field of environmental protection.

The project COHEIRS – Civic Observers for Health and Environment, Initiative for Responsibility and Sustainability has been one of our main pillars. It showcased the effectiveness of the multi-stakeholder approach when coping with delicate issues such as environment and health. By reuniting together local authorities, civil society associations as well as experts and ordinary citizens, the initiative brought citizens' voice into the decision making arena and created strong partnerships at local level to tackle environmental violations.

Young people being the future of our communities, it is not by chance that many of our environmental-friendly initiatives have targeted them firstly. This is the case of projects such as LEADERS and EYES that have strongly contributed to promote healthy behaviour, in particular through the promotion of the practice of outdoor activities and grassroots sport, as a means to foster healthy lifestyles as well as to foster social inclusion and the active participation of young people in society.

# PARTNERSHIP, WORKING, LOBBYING NEXT TO RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The list of our partners gets longer year by year, thanks to the increase in our activities and scope of action, as well as to the long lasting credibility ALDA and its network gained throughout the years.

At the same time, our lobbying work advocating for an enabling environment for citizen participation in the decision making process makes ALDA a key actor in a variety of institutions and bodies. ALDA key partnership include:

- *Observer to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CoE)*
- *Strategic partner of the European Commission within the structured dialogue of the Europe for Citizens programme*
- *Strategic partner of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*
- *Initiator and member of the Steering Committee of the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA)*
- *Initiator and Coordinator of the Italian National Alliance for the European Year on active citizenship 2013*
- *Member of the European Year for Development 2015 Civil Society Alliance (and our R&D Coordinator sits in the Steering Committee of EYD 2015)*
- *Coordinator of the subgroup on Local Government and Public Administration Reform of the Civil Society Forum for Eastern Partnership*
- *Member of the European Movement International*
- *Member of CIVICUS – World Alliance for Citizens Participation*
- *Chair of the Enlargement, Pre-accession, and Neighborhood (EPAN) group of CONCORD*

- *Member of the Conference of INGOs of the CoE*
- *Member of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 Alliance*
- *Member of the Central and Eastern European Citizens Network*
- *Initiator of Civil Society Europe*
- *Member of Europe+*
- *Member of European Partnership for Democracy's Community of Practice*

ALDA represents therefore an important platform bridging the above mentioned institutions with our network of members, and with the million citizens and communities they represent in the enlarged Europe.



# SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

We believe that knowledge is crucial, but it is not an achievement per se – it has to be shared and communicated in order to contribute to the growth and empowerment of local communities and stakeholders.

For this, ALDA supports other stakeholders – local and regional authorities, civil society organizations, educational institutions – by providing a wide range of services such as training and capacity building activities, technical assistance, and *ad hoc* consultancy on different topics, including: project development and implementation, project financial management and audit, EU institutions, EU funds and programmes, citizens participation (methods and techniques), non formal youth education.

All our services are provided with a tailor-made approach, thus target the specific needs of the partners involved, and they fall into the field of work of ALDA Plus.

Many of our activities in this domain are organised in cooperation with our members. For example, in 2014 the staff of ALDA delivered a training on project management and a master class on the programme Europe for Citizens in Mesagne, Italy. The activity was jointly organised with our member association ISBEM, thus representing a capacity building tool, as well as a financial support measure, for the association itself.

The fact that an increasing number of institutions and bodies is contacting ALDA seeking training, assistance and consultancy, is at the same time rewarding, and a clear sign of the need to learn from the experience and skills gained by the association during its 15 years of work.



# ALWAYS LOOKING AHEAD, NEVER FORGETTING OUR ROOTS!



Throughout the years, ALDA greatly expanded its mission, geographical scope, network, the number of projects and activities, its offices... But we always keep in mind where we come from, and where we are heading.

The visionary ideas of those who gave birth to ALDA made the association grow more than any optimists could have imagined, over its 15 years. It is not a case that many of those who built the basis of ALDA and its work are still part of it – involved as members of the network, staff members, partners, supporters and multipliers of our activities.

In most of the areas we work in, we have witnessed the structural boom of civil society organisations when international donors decide to support development and democracy in the region. When donors (and their capitals) move to another area, or to more burning issues, few CSOs survive – and inevitably, it is those who are really expression of the local community, and represent a number of citizens who are committed to achieving common goals, which do not disappear but find their way to survive, and get stronger.

This is one of the reasons explaining our steady growth, and why ALDA today is a crucial actor for local democracy and development – through our network of members, we do represent and give a voice and opportunities to million citizens in the enlarged Europe.

Many of the other reasons have been presented in these pages, collating our key achievements during the (first) 15 years of activities of ALDA. Together with our members and partners, we are ready to face new challenges, and continue to be a recognised leader in the field of local democracy and citizen participation!



# OUR NETWORK

 COUNTRIES WITH ALDA ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERS / EU MEMBER STATES

 UPCOMING LDAs

-  *DNIPROPETROVSK, UKRAINE (UA)*
-  *MOLDOVA (MD)*
-  *TUNISIA (TN)*

 LOCAL DEMOCRACY AGENCIES (LDAs)

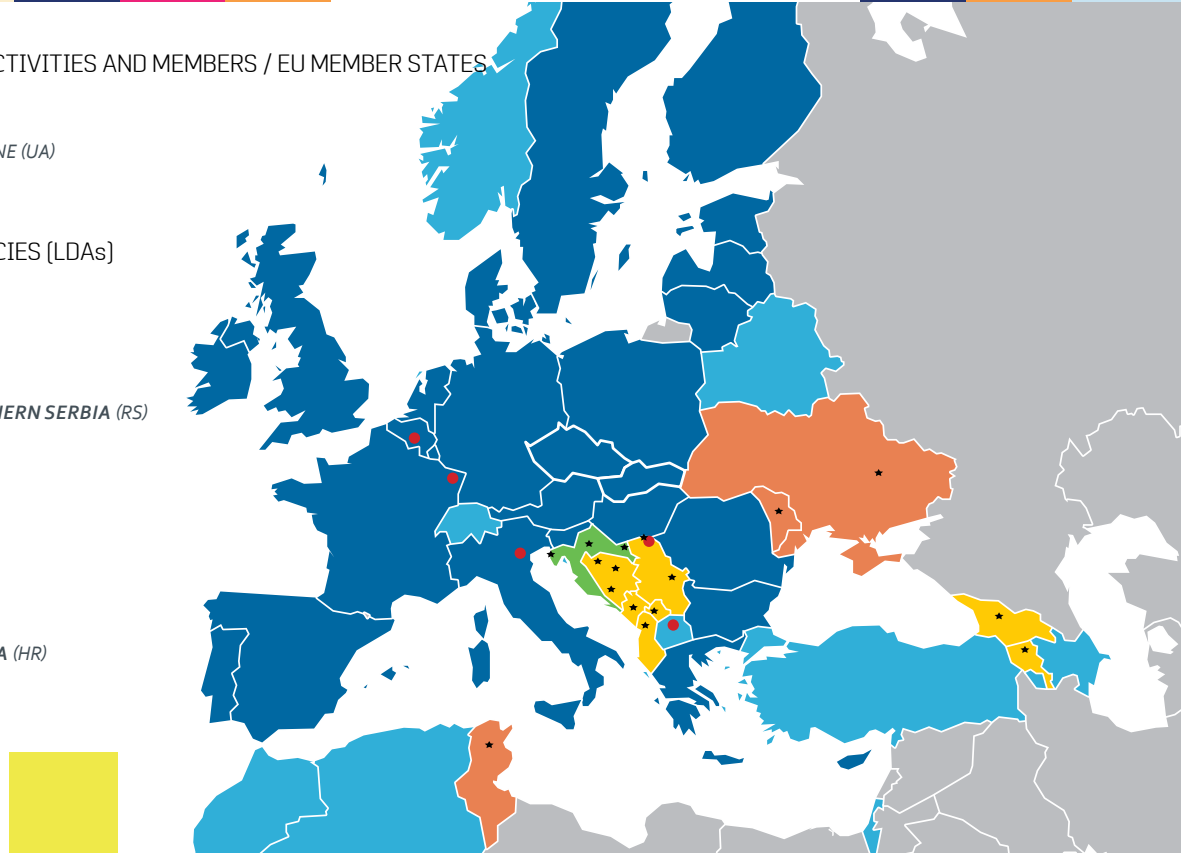
-  *LDA ALBANIA (AL)*
-  *LDA ARMENIA (ARM)*
-  *LDA GEORGIA (GEO)*
-  *LDA KOSOVO (RKS)*
-  *LDA MONTENEGRO (MNE)*
-  *LDA CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SERBIA (RS)*
-  *LDA SUBOTICA (RS)*
-  *LDA MOSTAR (BIH)*
-  *LDA PRIJEDOR (BIH)*
-  *LDA ZAVIDOVIĆI (BIH)*

 OPERATIONAL PARTNERS

-  *SISAK (HR)*
-  *OSIJEK (HR)*
-  *VERTENEGGLIO/BRTONIGLA (HR)*

 ALDA OFFICES

-  *BRUSSELS (BE)*
-  *STRASBOURG (FR)*
-  *SUBOTICA (RS)*
-  *VICENZA (IT)*
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