

ALDA'S PARTNERSHIP  
PROGRAMME FOR  
GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL  
ORGANISATIONS IN  
EUROPE | 2014-2015



Europe  
for Citizens

# SUPPORTING EUROPEAN ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP



**ALDA**

European Association  
for Local Democracy

[www.alda-europe.eu](http://www.alda-europe.eu)

# SUPPORTING EUROPEAN ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP 2014–2015

ALDA - the European Association for Local Democracy - is an organization dedicated to the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level. ALDA in particular focuses on activities that facilitate the cooperation between local authorities and civil society in the European Union and its Neighbourhood. Based on its fifteen year experience, ALDA has developed a "partnership scheme" for grass-roots level organisations as one of its main tools in fostering and encouraging active citizenship in wider Europe.

A pilot programme was used, for the first time, in 2012, within the framework of the project TANDEM – Cooperation for citizen participation and community development in Belarus. The objective of the programme is to provide resources for initiatives at the grass-roots level by promoting multistakeholder approaches to community development. More than 50 applications from Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, Slovakia and the Netherlands were evaluated in 2014-2015 and fourteen of them were developed in cooperation with ALDA within the framework of the partnership scheme.

This publication aims at showcasing the key outcomes of the programme in 2014-2015. The granted initiatives took place in Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece and The Netherlands. They have been promoted by local authorities and civil society organisations on topics such as citizens' understanding of the EU, its history and diversity and its policy making process; the strengthening of European citizenship, the conditions for civic and democratic participation at local and Union level; the promotion of opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering; the contribution to intercultural dialogue and enhancement of mutual understanding. The initiatives raised citizens' awareness about the value of participation both at local and European level as a key tool to promote a successful community development.

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## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Promoted debate and exchange on the topic of reviving cultural and leisure activities in the international community volunteer project
- ▶ Raised awareness on volunteering, and promoted new partnerships
- ▶ Raised awareness on financial support for international volunteer activities
- ▶ Raised awareness on what areas and how foreign and domestic volunteers can help one's community or organization
- ▶ Debated on how to develop language skills of young people with the help of foreign volunteers, how to use international volunteering when implementing projects twinning or collaborating with bordering countries
- ▶ Contributed to implementing Europe for Citizens programme objective, and ALDA within it
- ▶ The programme was focusing on practical examples and experience sharing in collaboration and partnership between civil society – local NGOs, individuals from the community and local authorities / municipalities in planning preparation and realization of volunteering projects in their communities
- ▶ Speakers represented large variety of stakeholders from both civil society and governmental structures: municipalities of small villages (Mezno), municipalities and NGOs from larger cities (Pilsen), small NGOs (Ledovec), individual volunteers who organized their own volunteer project (Pisek), representatives of companies supporting local community development projects (Vodafone, ERA), Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic – promoting collaboration between municipalities and NGOs, German NGO IBG and the Czech Ministry of Interior

## TITLE

Seminar “**Partnership among your municipality, NGO and community through international volunteering**” for representatives of the ministries and municipalities, non-profit organizations, public institutions, volunteers and the public

## DATE

09/12/2014

## LOCATION

Pilsen, Czech Republic

## PARTNERS

In collaboration with **INEX – Association for Voluntary Activities**, and three local partners of INEX

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

~60



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Ceremonial opening of the exhibition on the history of the Jewish school and the building from 1908 to 1942
- ▶ The exhibition showed the building's history, beginning with the building erection in 1908 on the site of a demolished part of the Jewish Ghetto, the opening of the Jewish school in 1920, its importance during the years 1940 to 1942, when "Jáchymka" became the only remaining school for Jewish pupils and teachers in the Czech part of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia
- ▶ Remembrance fostered among students and participants
- ▶ Increased awareness on the EU history
- ▶ Fostered debate about EU identity and its future
- ▶ Students empowered to be more active European citizens, and more engaged in their community



**TITLE**  
**Open day** in Jáchymka, a former Jewish school, with educational activities for students. The open day was organised during the exhibition "JACHYMKA – The Jewish School in Prague 1908 – 1942"

**DATE**  
**04/12/2014**

**LOCATION**  
**Prague, Czech Republic**

**PARTNERS**  
 In collaboration with the **Terezin Initiative Institute**

**NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**  
**~100**





## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Increased awareness and understanding among EU external border regions citizens on policy making
- ▶ Cooperation between stakeholders promoting development and democracy in border regions boosted
- ▶ Capacities of CSOs and local community groups in the Estonian-Russian border region enhanced, in order to give birth to further activities for community development
- ▶ ALDA network and cooperation activities developed
- ▶ Networking activities and exchange of ideas/methods/best practices improved
- ▶ Raised awareness of issues including democratic and civic engagement, networking and twinning at European level, volunteering, the follow-up of the European Year of Citizens 2013, European Elections 2014
- ▶ ENP and its impact on the border region – the view from researches and local inhabitants
- ▶ Evaluation of the ENPI EstLatRus and other cross border cooperation programs – its impact and challenges (the view from policy makers and local stakeholders)
- ▶ Debate on improving local democracy, governance and sustainable development of peripheral municipalities; priorities for next cross border cooperation projects in the Estonian-Russian border region

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## TITLE

**Estonian-Russian cross border cooperation Policy Forum**

## DATE

**28/11/2014**

## LOCATION

**Tartu and Varska, Estonia**

## PARTNERS

Jointly organised with our partner association **Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation**





## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Discussion on engagement and active citizenship through open data and open government fostered
- ▶ Youth knowledge and interest in topics connecting data, ICT and citizenship boosted
- ▶ ALDA network and cooperation activities developed
- ▶ Partnership in the field of local and European cooperation built
- ▶ Networking activities and exchange of ideas/methods/best practices improved



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## TITLE

**Open City Camp – Barcamp**  
style event with citizens and representatives of municipal and state governments alike can meet and exchange ideas on civic engagement through Open Data and Open Government

## DATE

**29/11/2014**

## LOCATION

**Stuttgart, Germany**

## PARTNERS

Jointly organised with our partner association **Open Knowledge Foundation**

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**~70**



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ ALDA network and cooperation activities developed
- ▶ Partnership in the field of local and European cooperation built
- ▶ Networking activities and exchange of ideas/methods/best practices improved
- ▶ Raised awareness of issues as participatory activities, democratic and civic engagement, networking and twinning at European level, volunteering, the follow-up of the European Year of Citizens 2013, European Elections 2014
- ▶ New formats for trainings and events on topics identified
- ▶ Toolkit based on the activities of the day developed (How to impact Society!), and available online
- ▶ Raised participants awareness on inspiring NGO stories and campaigns, and learnt how to campaign more effectively
- ▶ Speakers arrived from different NGOs, which are specialised in new participatory city culture, in improving the living conditions and promoting the human rights in developing countries, or from civil society organisations which are focused on corporate responsibility in Global South and from highly successful Citizen's Initiative Campaign for equal marriage law for all regardless of the genders of the spouses

## SUPPORTING EUROPEAN ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP 2014

## TITLE

Training day for NGOs and active citizens titled **"How to succeed in active citizenship"**

## DATE

**16/12/2014**

## LOCATION

**Helsinki, Finland**

## PARTNERS

Jointly organised with our partner association **European Movement** in Finland

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**~35**





## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Widely raised awareness of the European and international agendas and issues at stake, especially coming into the European Year of Development 2015
- ▶ Role of regional and local authorities strengthened in enhancing the active involvement and participation of citizens in policy making and implementation
- ▶ Innovative, multi-level and more effective alliances and partnerships between regional and local authorities and civil society organizations boosted
- ▶ Elements of particular added value of regional and local authorities, such as their proximity to the needs of citizens, their efficiency and their instruments and indicators for accountability, brought to European and international debate

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## TITLE

Seminar on the subject of "**International and European Development Agendas: Subsidiarity, Efficiency, Accountability and Citizenship – Time for an active role of regional and local authorities**"

## DATE

9/12/2014

## LOCATION

Brussels, Belgium

## PARTNERS

Jointly organised with the **Delegation of the Basque Country to the European Union**

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

~50



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Increased awareness on EU citizenship
- ▶ Citizens empowered to express themselves in public spaces
- ▶ Debate and exchange promoted among marginalised groups about their community and city
- ▶ Social inclusion fostered



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## TITLE

Organisation of the event  
"Silence, on parle!"



## DATE

11/10/2014



## LOCATION

Brussels, Belgium



## PARTNERS

In collaboration with the Belgian association **Periferia aisbl**



## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

~200

## Partners 2014

**INEX – Association for Voluntary Activities** Czech Republic



[www.inexsda.cz](http://www.inexsda.cz)

**Terezin Initiative Institute** Czech Republic



[www.terezinstudies.cz](http://www.terezinstudies.cz)

**Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation** Estonia



[www.ctc.ee](http://www.ctc.ee)

**Open Knowledge Foundation** Germany



Open Knowledge  
Foundation

[www.opencitycamp.de](http://www.opencitycamp.de)

**European Movement** Finland



***Eurooppalainen Suomi***  
*parempaa Eurooppaa rakentamassa*

[www.eurooppalainen suomi.fi](http://www.eurooppalainen suomi.fi)

**Delegation of the Basque Country to the European Union** Belgium



[www.euskadi.eus/europa](http://www.euskadi.eus/europa)

**Periferia aisbl** Belgium



[www.periferia.be](http://www.periferia.be)



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Student debate tournament on EU issues
- ▶ The debate promoted the exchange of ideas and opinions on the topics, “the state should not in any way restrict the expression of opinion”, “Schengen area has brought more harm than good” and the “EU should accept Ukraine as a member by 2020”. Participants debated for and against the motion and provided detailed facts to support their side of the argument
- ▶ Participants consisted mainly of debate club coaches and students between the ages of 14 and 19 invited through the web page and Facebook page of the event
- ▶ The debate advanced the critical and analytical thinking and improved the rhetorical abilities and presentation skills of participants
- ▶ Debaters learned to approach complex issues from multiple sides
- ▶ Debaters improved their multiple soft skills like teamwork, critical thinking, and respecting the opinions of others
- ▶ Each debate was judged by trained adjudicators who gave debaters extensive feedback
- ▶ Feedback included not only judging the debate but also contributed to the personal development of the debaters

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## TITLE

Tournament of the Debate league –YEAR 21



## DATES

**16-18/10/2015**  
**13-15/11/2015**



## LOCATIONS

**Česká Třebová**  
 (Eastern Bohemia),  
 Czech Republic  
**Opava** (Silesia),  
 Czech Republic



## PARTNER

**Czech Debate Association**



## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**170** Česká Třebová  
**185** Opava



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ The conference promoted a debate on the European Citizens' Initiative, and on the current asylum and migration crisis and its implications for European citizenship
- ▶ Raised awareness about the ECIs among the general public, and also proposed reform measures to make ECI more effective
- ▶ A European civic education awareness campaign was advocated to inform people about the ECI activities in universities and schools in all EU Member States
- ▶ Shared values at the center of a broader, democratic and inclusive European citizenship were debated
- ▶ Stronger solidarity among EU Member States was suggested as a solution to the current refugee crisis
- ▶ Participants advocated for more participatory, inclusive and democratic Europe by enabling the members of minority groups to enjoy full European citizenship rights
- ▶ Plans were made to develop the statutes and register ECIT Maastricht in the Netherlands as a new stakeholder to promote European Active Citizenship
- ▶ Proposals for inclusive European citizens participation were made by the ECI to the European Commission

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## TITLE

Conference on European Citizens' Initiatives (ECIs):  
**A Breakthrough or the Illusion of Inclusion?**



## DATES

**11/12/2015**



## LOCATION

Belgium



## PARTNER

**Maastricht University**  
(Faculty of Art and Social Science (FASOS))  
**ELTE University in Budapest** (Faculty of Law)



## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**170** Maastricht University  
**185** ELTE University in Budapest



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ The objective of the seminar was to deconstruct the intrinsic dialectic of the terms “war and peace” through political-aesthetic education
- ▶ Participants had the opportunity to discover and explore the arts and culture of Römerkastell
- ▶ Group dynamics were fostered by small groupings and it gave participants the opportunity to know each other
- ▶ The activity adopted the combination of political and aesthetic education approach, bringing together the two traditionally separated fields of education
- ▶ The activity promoted young people’s active participation through role plays, discussions and working groups
- ▶ Participants gathered together in different settings to share ideas and views on war and peace
- ▶ Established in-depth relationship between the terms “war and peace” by means of creative ways of expression
- ▶ The international atmosphere provided participants from Germany, France, Montenegro and Croatia the opportunity to know each other’s culture and to work in an international context

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## TITLE

Seminar “**War and peace in Europe: (only) a contradiction?**”



## DATES

**16-21/11/2015**



## LOCATIONS

**Römerkastell/Saarbrücken, Germany**



## PARTNERS

*In partnership with*

- ◆ **Maison de l’Europe des Yvelines**, St Germain-en-Laye, France
- ◆ **BREZA Youth Association**, Osijek, Croatia
- ◆ **Local Democracy Agency Montenegro**, Montenegro
- ◆ **L’Office franco-allemand pour la Jeunesse (OFAJ)**, Germany
- ◆ **Asko Europa Stiftung**, Germany
- ◆ **Stiftung europäische Kultur und Bildung**, Germany



## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**150-200**



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Association meetings and workshops were held to provide information on the issues of COP21 and were used to mobilize members to take part in the campaign
- ▶ Raised awareness among Lasemo festival goers on climate issues and mobilized them to take part in the Paris march
- ▶ Critical mass cyclists “Special Climate” was organized to draw attention to climate issues through urban cycling in town
- ▶ Parking Day was organized to invite citizens to reclaim parking spaces with something other than a car
- ▶ Integration of several environmental groups in the climate change campaign helped increase public awareness
- ▶ Locally pool energies and lead field activities took place during the climate Parade in Liège
- ▶ The postcard event involved the public through signature collection
- ▶ Lobbying mission through Saint-Nicolas was used to send feedback received from the public to the Federal minister of energy
- ▶ Climate Coalition network advocated towards policy makers to take firm measures to strengthen and regulate the changes and alternative movements towards a positive climate for the future
- ▶ The organizers solicited the views of experts on climate change
- ▶ Mission delegates lobbied at the political level for clear and ambitious commitments on climate change

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## TITLE

Mobilization campaign on climate “**Ça risque d’arriver près de chez vous**”

## DATE

**September - December/ 2015**

## LOCATION

**Belgium**

## PARTNER

**Inter-Environnement Wallonie (IEW)**



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Fish bowl discussion about ways of protection of journalism and journalists in Greece
- ▶ Fostered knowledge and discussion on press freedoms, increase public access to knowledge and information, inclusion of minority voices in media, and use of communication and information to address pressing social issues
- ▶ Investigated ways to uphold the right to speak and to know, to support public involvement in government and accountability, and to challenge corruption and human rights abuses, as well as to safeguard and promote independent media and quality journalism
- ▶ Forged synergies on exploring new formats of cooperation at the interface between human rights, media, citizens and the state
- ▶ Implemented innovative measures for promoting the right to freedom of opinion and access to information



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## TITLE

**Forum on freedom of media and human rights**



## DATE

**17-20/12/2015**



## LOCATION

**Thessaloniki, Greece**



## PARTNERS

*In collaboration with*

- ◆ **Civic School of Political Studies in Greece**, Greece
- ◆ **Council of Europe platform**, Greece
- ◆ **Thessaloniki Municipal Company for Information**, Greece
- ◆ **National Public TV station ERT3**, Greece
- ◆ **Ministry of Justice**, Greece





## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ Focused on situation in Belarus as a case of bad governance and limitation of citizens' participation, experts presented their reports covering questions, why good governance and active citizen participation is possible in wider Europe, how to improve the situation in Belarus and how to save and share good governance and citizen participation at local level practice in Estonia
- ▶ Current regional reality was compared to last events and provided their prognosis for the near future
- ▶ Participants were experts and guests from the EU, Belarus, and Eastern Partnership countries
- ▶ Participants discussed the role and influences of the local media in the Belarusian 2015 elections, and their expected role for the future developments
- ▶ The plenary session was used to discuss the western and Russian position towards Belarusian authorities and state
- ▶ Participants gave their expectations and predictions of post-election developments
- ▶ Participants focused on regional stability and the strange triangle, Russia-Belarus-Ukraine and their relations during the Russian-Ukraine crisis
- ▶ Belarus was encouraged to learn lessons from the reforms and transformation attempts in Ukraine
- ▶ Participants discussed their expectations and predictions for regional security and challenges for Russia's neighbors in 2015-2016

## SUPPORTING EUROPEAN 2015 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

## TITLE

**RUBYCON 2015. Belarus as factor of regional security and stability**

## DATE

**28-31/10/2015**

## LOCATIONS

**Tallinn, Estonia**

## PARTNER

*In cooperation with*

- ◆ **The German Marshall Fund of the United States**
- ◆ **MYMEDIA** (Denmark)
- ◆ **Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Estonia
- ◆ **Estonian Parliament**, Estonia



## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ The event offered a platform to share participants' experiences on how to deal with democratic issues for city making in Athens and Zagreb
- ▶ The Athens municipality showcased concrete examples on participatory processes aimed at giving more voice and recognition to the marginalized and "unseen" through the Google map platform
- ▶ Participants discussed the open government scheme developed in Athens as a model that brings together groups of people to talk about an effective governance structure and how it can be improved via participatory processes
- ▶ Speakers argued in favour of city makers being elected by the population and not been appointed to ensure accountability over a given time period
- ▶ The debate promoted recommendations according to which policies must have room for scope and scale for failures inasmuch as failure is a way to further creativity and innovation
- ▶ Transparency was advocated as the number one element in the democratic processes. Municipalities shall promote it to its full extent so that citizens can participate fully in the democratic processes
- ▶ Participants agreed on identifying corruption as a major obstacle to democratic processes, and experience and good practices were shared on how to best tackle it
- ▶ Participants discussed the current models of education in Europe as means to promote better functioning of democracy, with the city serving as a learning environment for citizens

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## TITLE

**New Europe City Makers Pre-Summit:** expert session  
Redesigning democracy



## DATES

**05/02/2016**



## LOCATION

**Amsterdam, Netherlands**



## PARTNERS

In collaboration with

- ◆ Genootschap Felix Meritis
- ◆ The Amsterdam Maastricht summer university
- ◆ Netherland Business Academy
- ◆ European Festivals Association
- ◆ European house for culture
- ◆ Cities in transition.eu
- ◆ A Soul for Europe
- ◆ MMNieuws
- ◆ CULTUUR ONDERNEMEN
- ◆ Metropol International Arts Project Geelvinck Fortepiano Festival



## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

**150**

## Partners 2015

**Czech Debate Association** Czech Republic



[www.debatovani.cz](http://www.debatovani.cz)

**ECIT - European Citizens' Rights, Involvement and Trust Foundation** Belgium



[www.ecit-foundation.eu](http://www.ecit-foundation.eu)

**The European Academy of Otzenhausen** Germany



[www.eao-otzenhausen.de](http://www.eao-otzenhausen.de)

**Federation Inter-Environnement Wallonie** Belgium



[www.iewonline.be](http://www.iewonline.be)

**Symbiosis** Greece

*SYMBIOSIS*

[www.symbiosis.org.gr](http://www.symbiosis.org.gr)

**Valgevene Uus Tee** Estonia



[www.valgevene.ee](http://www.valgevene.ee)

**Stichting Vrienden van Felix Meritis** Netherlands



[www.vriendenvanfelixmeritis.nl](http://www.vriendenvanfelixmeritis.nl)



**Eurooppalainen Suomi**  
parempaa Eurooppaa rakentamassa



**SYMBIOSIS**



**FELIXMERITIS**  
Gesellschaft Felix Meritis