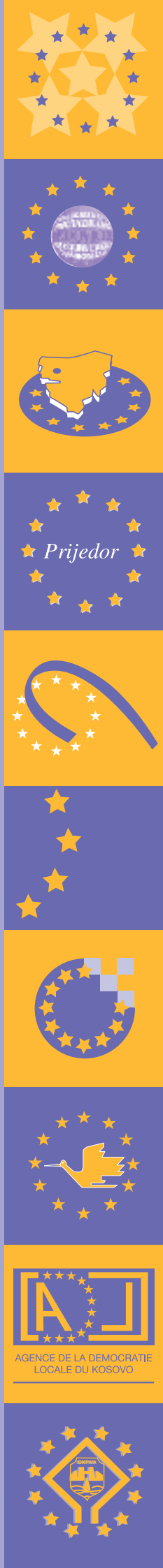




ACTIVITIES 2003

Association of the Local Democracy Agencies



I have the great pleasure to write these few lines for the presentation of the report of the activities 2003 of the Association of the LDA that I have the honour to chair.

In the nineties, when the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe took the initiative to create the first Agencies of the Local Democracy in the countries of former Yugoslavia, very few people would have foreseen a so large and proficient development, and so positive outcomes. I want to thank all those, collaborators, partners colleagues from the Balkans, The Congress, the Council of Europe, donors and who made this possible.

There are many reasons for being proud of our success, but it comes especially from an accurate evaluation, from our side, but also from the Congress and other local European and International Institutions. Let's mention some of them.

First of all, there it was a correct and innovating intuition. After the end of the terrible civil war, an action of material reconstruction of the region proved not to be enough – even if it was necessary. It was also urgent and necessary to start a long and heavy work of reconstruction of a framework for the peaceful co-habitation, for comprehension, interethnic and inter-religious dialog between different communities, who had lived a situation of conflicts. Besides, in these countries it was necessary to continue with the implementation of concrete processes, not only in the institutional field, but also towards a tangible democracy, respect for human and minority rights, promotion of local self government, political education for young people, gender issues, social, economical and cultural development. All these themes are conceived in a constant effort to open the way towards the unification of Europe; and actually, these are the values on which the Council of Europe and European Union are based.

There is another important aspect that stresses the success of the Agencies of Local Democracy : their action is developed at local level, with the precious support of non-governmental organisations, whose experiences are tied to the environment and to the civil society. This is the reason why the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has always expressed its interest and has always given its support to the LDAs.

The LDAs and their Association have just turned their pilot phase. They have strengthen, widened their horizon and are exploring new geo-political areas, always paying attention to socio-economical realities (often difficult) of the countries where they operate. The main aim, to be reached with coherence, is divided into two complementary objectives: promoting democratic integration of the various national entities, respecting their own different identities and their own legitimate autonomy (horizontal integration); strengthening vertical integration with Europe, its institutions, its activity and its political and cultural perspectives. This is a process, not a definitive result acquired once for all.

You may say this is an ambitious project: of sure it is, but the society in which we live, so often empty of ideals and projects, really needs it.

Gianfranco Martini
President of the Association of LDA

2003 was the year of the first concrete opening door proposed by the European Union to the countries of South Eastern Europe. With the European Summit in Thessaloniki, political objectives have been set. Many people would say that the target and guidelines are still too vague and the change of attitude is just cosmetic. However, I considered the momentum very relevant and a new phase has started. The Thessaloniki declaration was powerful and, consequently, the European Commission launched the operative phase of the Cards programme together with the new policies for neighbouring instruments. From then on, speaking about the Balkans in Europe (for some of them we are whispering 2007 as a possibility) is not just thoughts and discussions but passionate advocacy for human rights supporters and civil society groups involved in the region since 1993. It can be now a real action plan.

Obviously, there is a long way to go before the “accession”. The paths will be different from one country to another. Croatia has already applied and started the procedure. For the others, the situation still needs to be stabilized. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to overcome its structural dysfunctioning. Serbia and Montenegro should identify a stable relationship. Kosovo is a pending issue relevant for the security and the assessment of the whole region. On top of everything, the revival of ethnic parties, which actually were the real winners of all the elections held in these last twelve months, brings us to a further reflection: the war is over but the reconciliation is still an open process. The economy struggles to provide a future for the people of the region, which is suffering from a serious of brain drain.

From my point of view, approaching the European Union is not to be interpreted as a goal in itself but as an opportunity to improve the difficulties. In the region – as usual – the European values will be at stake: respect for human rights and minority groups, democracy and rule of law, respect and value for diversity.

The Local Democracy Agencies have a role to play in this process. To this they bring both determination and expertise.

In 2003, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the programme. In 1993, the LDA Subotica and the LDA Osijek were opened – in a very different context than today. The programme has proved its ability to be effective and to adapt itself to the evolving contexts. After the pure need of solidarity, the LDAs followed the democratic and social growth of the region. Today, we are involved in the further step of the enlargement of the EU in the region.

The report of the 10th anniversary, issued by the Council of Europe and presented officially during the Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in June 2003, gave an outline of what has been achieved so far:

- more than 300 projects in capacity building for local authorities and civil society, best practices exchanges and pilot activities;
- a network of about 190 local authorities and NGOs committed all over Europe to assist the process in South Eastern Europe and available to be involved in strengthening democratic processes;
- ten local democracy agencies well established and recognised in four countries of the region;
- a locally owned programme with the effective participation of local authorities and NGOs from the region. Most of our staff is local.

Meanwhile, the report of the Stabilisation and Association Process (ie. the process of enlargement of the EU applied to South Eastern Europe, SAP) identified some improvements but also some shortcomings in meeting the objectives in the region; in particular in the functioning of democratic institutions and in the public administration,

as well in justice and home affairs and in organised crime and corruption, human rights and minority rights and participation of young people. Furthermore, the SAP indicated transborder co-operation and twinning as instruments for tackling these issues.

The LDAs confirm their capacity to change these situations:

- by being in the region for these last 10 years;
- by having established relationships with local authorities and NGOs;
- by having a large European support network;
- by having capacities to implement regional and transborder co-operation, and city to city programmes;
- by having capacities to implement complex, and medium-and long-term programmes;
- by having a comprehensive and multilevel approach.

The Association of LDAs also confirmed its strong political commitment to support the process in the framework of the European Union objectives. This approach was confirmed by the General Assembly and the 10th anniversary Celebration in Subotica (July 2003). We have also concretely started to inform and to share our objectives with the representatives of the European Commission and the European Union both in Brussels and in the region. Our programmes are from now on dedicated to this approach and they are all part of the strategy to meet that goal. The Association is also committed to launch a debate among its members to raise the understanding on the matter. The issue of enlargement of the European Union and the role of local authorities and communities is also the main point of a project supported by the European Commission (DG Enlargement) run by the ALDA from October 2003 to December 2004 (see our documentation on EU Mayors at www.ldaaonline.org). The objectives of the programme are exchanging best practices in the field of local government management and civil society with partners from Italy, France, UK, Ireland, Poland and Lithuania.

In these last years, the Local Democracy Agencies also proved able to combine and create synergies between the actions of the international community (through the Council of Europe, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, other governmental and intergovernmental actors) and the local level (local authorities and civil society). The comprehensive and long term approach is the best guarantee for a long-lasting and-paying action.

2004 is the year of the European Union Enlargement towards East. Very soon, our general context of working and understanding will be totally different. The cultural, political and social framework will evolve and the main task will be to manage the change and to seize the opportunity of the challenges. The risk is that fear of the unknown and refusal of the new members will lead to the development of prejudices. That request- from us, “old Europeans” - a real implementation of those, which are the basis of our historical being together: to consider the differences as a richness and an added value to the group and our culture, to put the citizens and their representatives as the main actors of community life, to consider the freedom of opinions and the public exchange of ideas as a contribution for a common growth and understanding.

Those represent also the objectives, the meaning and the ground of the activities of the Local Democracy Agencies.

Antonella Valmorbida (Director ALDA)
antonella.valmorbida@aldaintranet.org

The Association of the Local Democracy Agencies - 2003

A network of local and regional authorities, active partners in international relations for the promotion of local democracy - 10 years of activities in South Eastern Europe

The network of the Local Democracy Agencies intends to:

- promote practical initiatives to consolidate democracy at local level;
- foster institution-building at the local level through the exchange of know-how and training of local elected representatives and administrators;
- develop a Europe-wide network of citizens committed to the respect for human and minority rights;
- foster the development of a civil society in which all sections of the community participate;
- promote intercultural dialogue and respect for human rights.

Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) and the Association of LDAs are instruments at the disposal of local and regional authorities that contribute, as effectively as possible, to the local development in South and Eastern Europe.

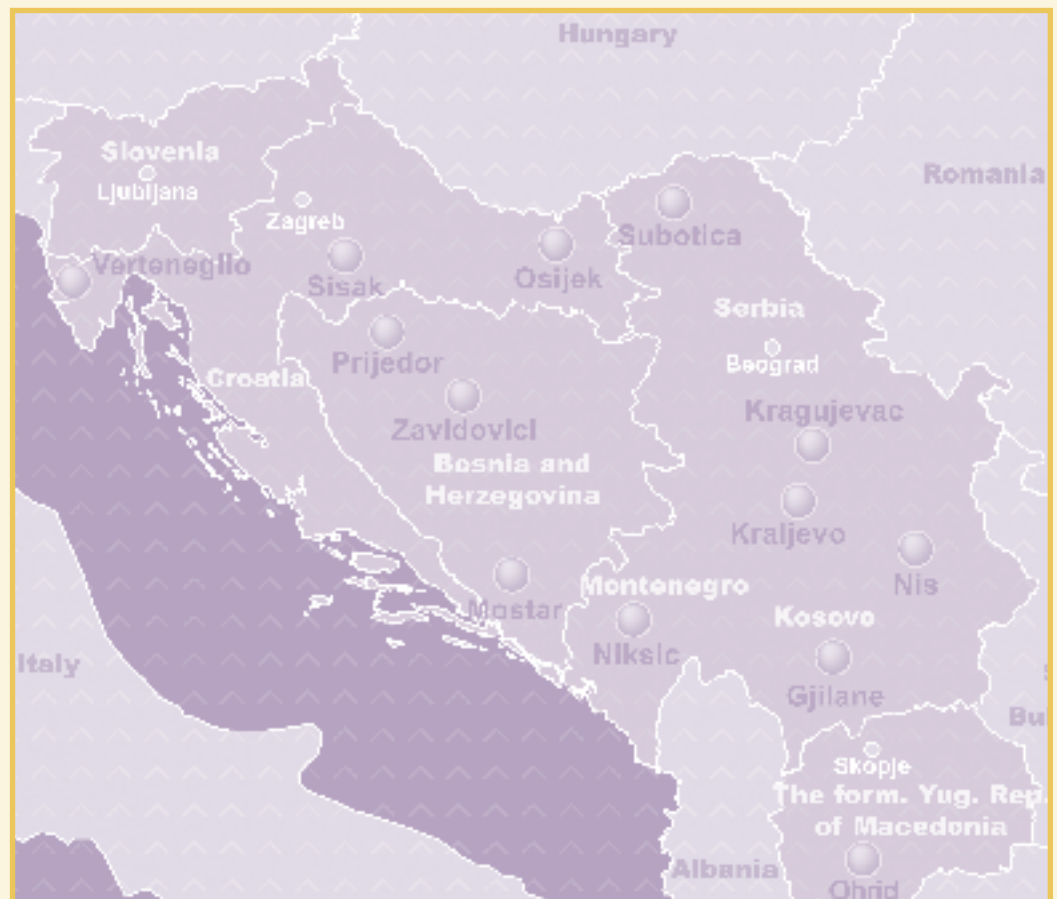


Participants attending the 10th anniversary celebration programme, Subotica, Serbia and Montenegro, July 2003

The Association of LDAs

The Association was set up in December 1999 at the initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE) and the LDA partners.

It is composed of representatives from all participants in LDA networks: the Council of Europe, the CLRAE, partner towns and regions, LDA host towns, LDA Delegates, partner NGOs and, generally speaking, all individuals and institutions interested or involved in LDA projects.



The network of the operational Local Democracy Agencies in 2003

- It co-ordinates the overall LDA activities.
- It contributes to the fundraising and the development of common projects.
- It provides LDAs and Delegates with technical and administrative support.
- It can receive voluntary contributions, from national, local and regional authorities, foundations and other bodies for the purpose of developing general or specific LDA projects.
- It acts as the LDAs' representative in dealing with institutions and sponsors and is responsible for the proper use of funds under its management.
- It devises and runs training courses for Delegates, local assistants and other LDA contact groups.
- It provides a forum for discussing the LDA programme strategy and planning.
- It works to promote LDA activities and the international role of European local authorities in promoting local democracy, human rights and minority rights.

The network connecting the Western Balkans and Europe



The Local Democracy Agencies are supported by partners (local authorities and NGOs from all of Europe).

The partnership is not only project-based but it commits the signatory institutions and NGOs to a long-term political engagement.

Our general network (LDA partners + ALDA members) is composed of:

- Actors involved in the programme: 193
- 27% NGOs
- 59% local authorities
- 3% regional authorities
- 11% others

From 18 countries (from Western and Eastern Europe and from the Western and Eastern Balkans)

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies co-ordinates the work of the Local Democracy Agencies and promotes their work, the partnership and support for the whole programme.

Activities:

- Coordination, networking, promotion, fundraising, daily support for the LDAs;
- Information centre and publications for the LDAs;
- Capacity building for the Delegates and LDA staff.

1) MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- Institutional meetings;
- Governing Board (February- Venice, July – Subotica, December – Strasbourg)
- General Assembly, July- Subotica, Bureau, May - Strasbourg;
- Website for the ALDA (www.ldaaonline.org);
- Following the activities of the Scientific Committee of the ALDA;
- Support and information for the LDAs' Delegate;
- Accounting and report for funds. The ALDA is under the control of an independent account service and an external audit to guarantee the best use of the membership fees and the public funds;
- Evaluation of the results of the LDAs' programmes sponsored by the ALDA;
- Celebration of the 10th anniversary of the LDA Programme, Subotica, July 2003. Adoption of the Position Paper (10)10 on the role of the Local Democracy Agencies in the Stabilisation and Association Process in Western Balkans;



10th anniversary celebration, Subotica, July 2003

From the left:

Chairwomen of the Working Table I - Human Rights and Democracy, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Mrs. Elisabeth Rehn

Presidente ALDA, Gianfranco Martini

Member of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. Voirel Coifan

Ambassador of Italy (Current presidency of the European Union), Mr. Giovanni Carraciolo Di Vetri

- For the 10th anniversary of the LDA programme, the ALDA published a CD-ROM including a presentation of the programme. A full report of activities with data and comparative studies, was prepared for the Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. The report is free for download on the publication area of our website (www.ldaaonline.org);
- Setting up the logistics for the implementation of programmes.

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Council of Europe - Office 1017 - Strasbourg 0033 3 90214593

ALDA Vicenza - Stradella della Racchetta, 22 - 36100 Vicenza

0039 0444 540146

0039 0444 566012



Staffing for the programmes

- Prince Programme Managers:
Mrs. Stefania Toriello
Ms. Dorothee Fischer (also Press Officer)
- ALDA financial officer, Mr. Gianpaolo Giacomini
- ALDA Assistant to the Director, Ms Sophie Bronnimann (until June 2003),
Ms. Julie Debissshop (until December 2003), co-operation with Syni Lausanne, Switzerland
- Council of Europe support:
Mrs. Sylvie Affholder, Ms. Caroline Martin, Mrs. Elisabeth Laforge

2) COORDINATION OF PROGRAMS

a) Ethnic relations and transborder co-operation

The title of the different programmes included are:

- **Ohrid (Macedonia):** Promoting civil society and transborder co-operation;
- **Osijek (Croatia):** Transborder Cooperation in the Euroregion Danube-Drava-Sava;
- **Sisak (Croatia):** The Centre for Women's Rights;
- **Verteneglio (Croatia):** Actors of tomorrow's Europe;
- **Subotica (Serbia):** Advanced Training Seminar for Young Political Leaders;
- **Zavidovici (BiH):** Environment, health, development: an intercommunity project in the Zavidovici area;
- **Prijedor (BiH):** Stage of journalism for a free, independent and multiethnic information course of journalism.

b) Supporting the network of the Local Democracy Agencies

10 programmes for supporting the network of the Agency by co-sponsorship of partner meetings or networking tools.

*Partner meeting of the LDA Sisak,
Preganziol (TV) - Italy, November 2003*



c) Supporting Local Democracy and Civil Society

- In Central and Southern Serbia
- In Kosovo

In February 2003, the LDA in Kosovo based in Gjilane was set with the support of Kosovo Ensemble (lead partner), Association ALFA, Equipe de Paix dans les Balkans, Town of Chelmsford, Town of Arun, Maison de la Citoyenneté Mondiale, Association Française d'Aide et de Soutien Au Kosovo, East West Institute, Youth Planet, Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente, Gjilan municipality, Association of the Municipality of Kosovo.



Inauguration of the LDA Kosovo, February 2003

- In Montenegro

Activities in: youth empowerment, local economic development, transborder co-operation, local authorities capacity-building.

d) Training for Local Authorities in Local Government Management

The Local Democracy Agencies implemented a training for local government officers and political representatives in each Agency following the Training of Trainers of Verteneglio.

e) Sustainable Development and Protection of Environment

Training and exchanges of best practices for local governments in the field of sustainable development and protection of the environment for the Local Democracy Agencies in co-operation with the Canton of Geneva and FEDRE (www.fedre.org).

f) Inquiry for Democratic Citizenship in Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Inquiry and best practices collection of participation of civil society in the decision-making at the local level.

Directly implemented by the Association:

g) Following and attending the partner meetings of the LDAs

LDA Montenegro's lead partner is visiting the City of Neuchatel, Switzerland - partner of the LDA Hosted by the Deputy Mayor, Mr. Eric Augsburger and the Head of Social Services, Mr. Philippe Haeblerli Delegation: Mr. Keith Jones (East Staffordshire Borough Council, UK, partner leader LDA Montenegro), Mr. Dragutin Djekovic (Delegate LDA Montenegro), Mrs. Antonella Valmorbida (Director ALDA)



h) Translation and publication of CD-ROM for Local Government Management

To be downloaded for free on the “publication” area of the website (www.ldaaonline.org)

i) Training in NGO management for LDA Staff

Tivat (Montenegro) -June 2003



*Group of Participants.
Senior trainers:
Mrs. Ileana Iancu.
Mrs. Ancuta Vamesu*

*FOUNDATION
PARTNERS
FOR LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT
- PARTNERS
ROMANIA*

j) Pilot activities in Georgia

The Association of Local Democracy Agencies is setting up the conditions and the partnership for starting an activity in Georgia. The interested partners are local authorities in the UK, in France and the Association of Norwegian Local and Regional Authorities.

k) Project for setting up a Local Democracy Agency in Mostar

Preparatory missions and project planning

Contact with European partners (Vejle, Denmark – Montegrotto , Italy - Heidelberg, Germany - Saragozza, Spain - Kaiseri, Turkey - Regione Puglia and Tuscany, Italy).

l) Supporting the international conference on “Interregional Partnership and the policies on immigration”, Bari, Italy, October 2003 and “United for the Mediterranean”, Palermo, Italy, November 2003

Promoted by Region Puglia, in the framework of the Italian Presidency of the European Union. Participation of local authorities and NGOs from the Western Balkans through the ALDA network.

m) PRINCE, EU Mayors program

EU Commission, DG Enlargement, Programme PRINCE

Awareness campaign, workshops, debates, best practices exchanges and case studies between EU Member States and Acceding Countries and participation of local authorities and NGOs from the Western Balkans.

Partners from France, UK, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland Launching conference, 16th and 17th of December 2003 in Strasbourg.



Photo of the group attending the conference in December, Strasbourg.

Among the speakers, Mrs. Catherine Lalumière, Vice President of the European Parliament.

n) Local Development in the Balkans

Training of trainers (in the LDAs), economic animation and the drafting of an action plan for local development.

Implemented in the 10 LDAs.

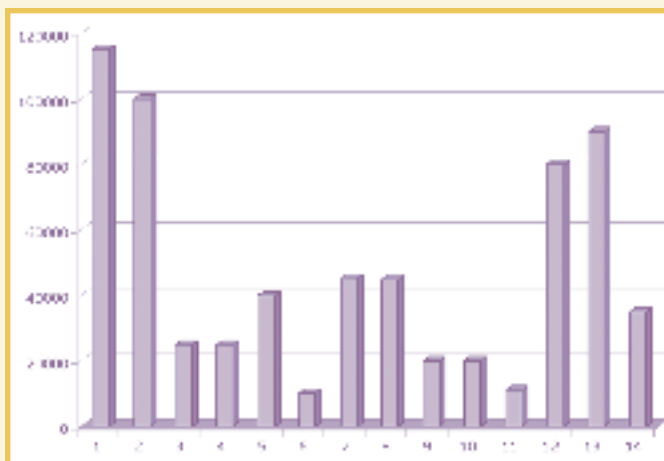
Coordination meeting with the participation of the LDA Delegates and Yves Arnaud, Association Betton Montenegro, and Mrs. Geneviève Salaun, senior trainer in local economic development, expert of the Ministry of Agriculture. Supported financially by the Ministry of Affairs of France.

The Local Democracy Agencies are self-funded also with other resources than indicated here. The programmes here presented are those implemented with support received through ALDA.

In particular, the Confidence Building Measures Programme is a strong support of the activities of some of them in the field of minority rights.

3) RESOURCES

The sponsors of the Association of the LDAs in 2003 are:

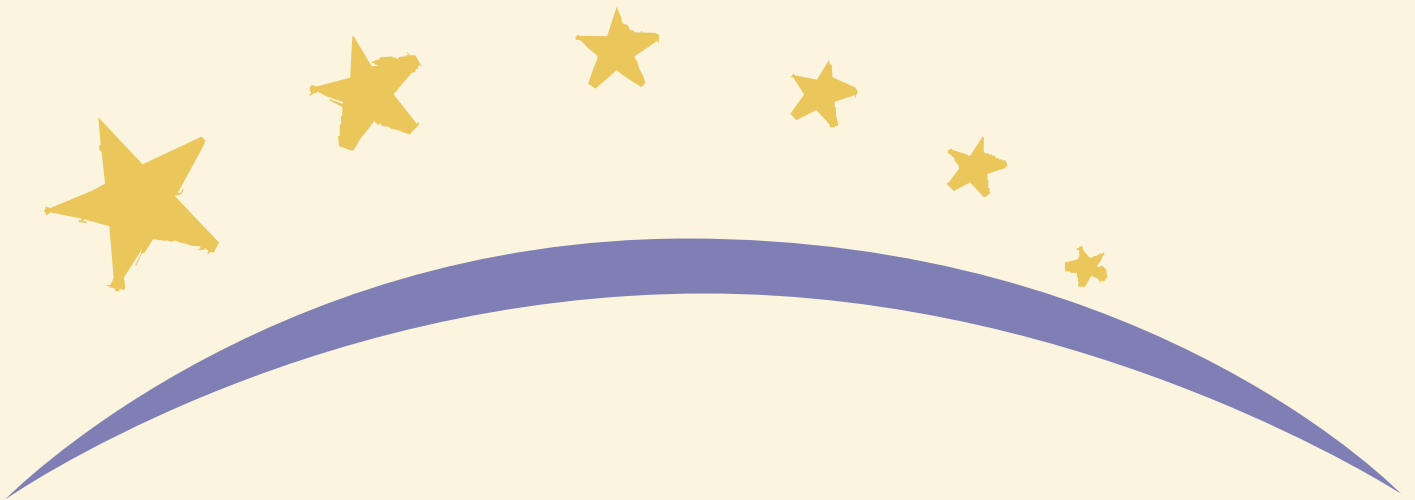


Legend (figures in Euro) :

1. CLRAE
 2. Switzerland
 3. Luxembourg
 4. Finland
 5. Liechtenstein
 6. France
 7. DG Enlargement European Commission
 8. Membership fees
 9. Canton Geneva/FEDRE
 10. Canton Basel Stadt
 11. Region Puglia
 12. Partners for LDAs
 13. Local Government and Public Reform Initiative
 14. Council of Europe
- For a total of 665.000 Euro*

4) NETWORKING

- Contact with partners of the LDAS and members of the ALDA
- Permanent contact with the Council of Europe and other institutions
- Promotional activities (leaflets, posters, brochures, report of activities, public relations, fundraising, project drafting, programme coordination)
- Co-operation with the national Association of Local authorities in the programme
 - Association of Italian Local Authorities (for the Prince Programme)
 - Cités Unies France (Prince programme and Local Development Programme)
 - Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
 - Local Government International Bureau - UK
- Daily contact with the members of the Association of LDAs
- Representation of the LDA programme in different international meetings and events



Subscription Request to the Association of Local Democracy Agencies

Town County Region NGO Mr or Mrs

(Name) _____

Contact person: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code _____

Town _____

Country _____

Tel + _____

Fax + _____

E-mail address: _____

Those interested in becoming a member of the Association of the LDAs and can pay their contributions to the appropriate Association of the LDAs' bank account, and according to the criteria below:

Bank details of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies		Number of inhabitants	Total of Contribution (Euros)
Bank	Société Générale/Sogenal	1 - 10.000	250
Adress	Council of Europe	10.000 - 50.000	500
Bank code	30003	50.000 - 200.000	1.000
Agency code	02363	200.000 - 1.000.000	2.000
Individual number	00050012853	1 milion plus	4.000
RIB	77	Non-governmental organisation	250
IBAN	FR 763003 02363 005001253 77	Actual persons	50

Thank you for your support and for your interest in the Programme of Local Democracy Agencies!

Form to be returned to
Secretariat of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies
c/o Council of Europe, Office B532, F - 67075 Strasbourg



+ 33 (3) 88 41 32 01 + 33 (3) 41 27 51 / 37 47



elisabeth.laforge@coe.int

Members of the Association of Local Democracy Agencies

Local authorities

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- City of Tulza
- City of Zavidovici
- City of Prijedor

Croatia

- City of Brtonigla-Verteneglio
- Region Istria
- City of Osijek

Serbia and Montenegro

- City of Subotica
- Montenegro
- Niksic

France

- City of Suresnes - France

Greece

- City of Karditsa

Italy

- City of Lainate
- City of Mogliano Veneto
- City of Arese
- City of Bellaria
- City of Portogruaro
- City of Greve in Chianti
- City of Borgo Valsugana
- City of Preganziol
- City of Lavis
- City of Roncade
- Region Friuli Venezia Giulia
- City of Ancona
- City of Reggio Emilia
- Province of Venice
- Region Puglia
- Provincia Aut. di Trento
- City of Lecce
- Provincia di Milano

Ireland

- Carlow County

Spain

- Barcelona

Switzerland

- City of Bellizona
- City of Neuchâtel
- City of Lausanne
- City of Lugano
- Canton Basel Stadt

UK

- East Staffordshire
- Kent County Council
- City of Chelmsford
- City of Arun

Norway

- Saltdal
- Buskerud County
- Vefsen
- Levanger
- Fauske

International Association of Local Authorities

- Assembly of European Regions
- ENTO
- CCRE/CERM

Associations of Local Authorities

France

- Cité Unies de France

Italy

- Association of the cities of the Province of Treviso

Moldavia

- Association of the mayors of the district of Chisinau

Norway

- Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities

Switzerland

- Causes Communes Suisses
- Causes Communes Vaud
- Causes communes Ticino

UK

- Local Government International
- Bureau - UK

Non-Governmental Organisations

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Local Citizens' Committee Zavidovici

Bulgaria

- Balkan Assist Association

Croatia

- ADL Sisak

Greece

- ANKA Karditsa

Italy

- Association for the Zavidovici LDA
- Kulturni Centar Tuzla - Bologna
- Circolo Arci "I Ponti"
- Association Project for Prijedor
- International Consortium of Solidarity Genova
- Tavolo Trentino per la Serbia
- Istituto Euromediterraneo Trieste

Lithuania

- Municipal Training Centre, Kaunas

France

- Youth Planet
- ALFA Formation
- Equipes de Paix les Balkans

Individuals

- Ulrich Bohner
- Claude Casagrande
- Paulo Faggian
- Cristina Bertotti
- Contin Agostino
- Diego Bottacin
- Jose Manuel Rodriguez Alvarez
- François Friederich
- Margherita Grigolato
- Daniel Devaud
- Léon Saur
- Malcom Boorer
- Per Vinther
- Rinaldo Locatelli
- Lara franco

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