

21st of November 2024, Brussels
European Committee of the Regions

Antonella Valmorbida
Secretary General of ALDA

European Alliance of cities and regions for the reconstruction of Ukraine - Political Level Meeting

As ALDA, the European Association for Local Democracy, we envision URC 2025 as the conference marking the end of war and the beginning of sustainable peace—grounded in Ukrainian rights and resilience.

On November 21, Ukraine commemorates the Day of Dignity and Freedom. On this day, with an interval of nine years, the two most massive protests in modern Ukraine began: in 2004 - the Orange Revolution, in 2013 - the Revolution of Dignity. The path to true independence really began in November 2013 with Euromaidan.

We welcome the emphasis on local and regional authorities at URC 2025. Our aim is to foster a roadmap supported by European local and regional stakeholders, many of whom are already contributing to Ukraine’s reconstruction and peace efforts. ALDA and the Local Democracy Agencies (LDAs) play a crucial role in this process, promoting social cohesion, capacity building, institution building, recovery, and long-term partnerships.

We are present in all Ukraine but we have a special attention in supporting communities from occupied and de-occupied territories, such as Mariupol, and strengthening participatory democracy at the local level. ALDA is also dedicated to preparing local authorities and civil society to meet the goals of Ukraine's EU enlargement path.

Our 28 Ukrainian members, including two on our governing board, are actively engaged in these efforts. Drawing on 30 years of post-war experience in the Western Balkans, we understand the importance of rebuilding trust between citizens and institutions, ensuring transparency, and

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alda



European Association
for Local Democracy

fostering good governance. We call on European partners to stand firm in their commitment to solidarity and reconstruction, ensuring Europe remains a beacon of shared values and solidarity.

Currently, we operate four LDAs with over 20 partners in Kyiv (for Mariupol in exile), Dnipro, Odesa, and Kharkiv, recently started and soon fully operational with the support of Grand Est and Kharkiv region. In the past year, we organised humanitarian projects but also dedicated programmes for our LDAs and members for communities, as well as 18 training sessions for 400 participants. On December 3rd, we will sign an MoU for a new LDA with the Vinnitsia region, Dijon, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté and Diputació de Barcelona. By 2025, we aim to establish five additional LDAs, involving 30 more partners, and we hope to be able to continue our cooperation with key programs such as Bridges of Trust and U-LEAD for Europe.

Finally, ALDA stands ready to lead the local and regional authorities' component of URC 2025, proposing to lead a steering committee to consolidate inputs, priorities, and plans. Together, we can ensure this conference becomes a catalyst for reconstruction, solidarity, and a sustainable future for Ukraine.

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