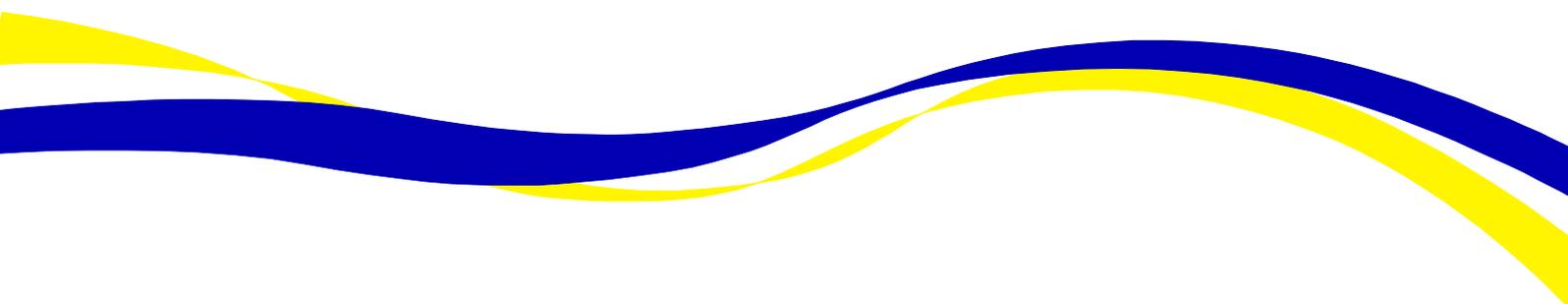




Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
Réseau des Associations de Pouvoirs Locaux de l'Europe du Sud-Est



NALAS STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012





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STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012

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1. OUR VISION

“The citizens of South-East Europe enjoy sustainable cities and communities as well as democracy and regional stability. With the support of strong local government associations (LGAs) and NALAS, they benefit from efficient services of local governments and an adequate representation of their interests.”

Local governments in SEE are a strong pillar of democracy. They are empowered to improve the system of local self-government, have a broad range of competencies, have adopted the best models in the region and offer efficient services to the citizens in line with EU standards. They have a high level of financial autonomy and have improved access to national, European and international funds.

Local government associations (LGAs) in their countries provide quality services and capacity development to their members, enjoy strong support from them and are financially sustainable. LGAs play an active role in putting into practice the principles of good governance and local democracy. They are recognized as the legitimate representatives of LGs in their countries and they actively participate in the development of laws and regulations.

NALAS is the voice advocating towards central governments and international organizations in the region and in Europe for the common interests of local governments of South East Europe (SEE). NALAS supports the development of legislations and the application of the principles contained in the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the European Urban Charter II - Manifesto for a New Urbanity and the European Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at the Local Level. NALAS members use the network to support each other, share experiences, produce knowledge and cooperate on cross border projects. By this, NALAS becomes the strongest network supporting local autonomy in the region. NALAS is consolidated in SEE and extends support to other local government associations beyond the region.

The NALAS Secretariat works in close cooperation with members and offers them the necessary up-to-date solutions and structures for advocacy, communication, knowledge production and sharing as well as project management. It also facilitates access to funds for the network and its members. The Secretariat permanently adopts its size in accordance with its tasks and member demands ensuring its financial sustainability.

European and international organizations, as well as national governments pay attention to the voices of local governments of SEE – either expressed directly or through LGAs or NALAS and take into account their economic, ecological, cultural, social and political interests.

2. OUR MISSION

“We actively encourage the decentralization process in South East Europe through strengthening and connecting our members and thereby contributing to democracy and stability in the region.”

We advocate for local self-government development and decentralization and support the application of the principles contained in the European Charter of Local Self-Government, the European Urban Charter II - Manifesto for a New Urbanity and the European Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at the Local Level. We represent and protect our members' interests and provide services to them.

We operate as the Knowledge Centre and coordination platform on local government issues in South East Europe. We strengthen the capacity of our members, local government associations (LGAs), for the sake of better governance through the exchange of knowledge and experience and through local and regional activities such as pilot projects. We facilitate the access of our members to knowledge situated beyond our region. We also support them in their efforts to become viable representatives of local authorities who are up to negotiate with their national government and international organizations for the benefit of the citizens of the region.

We support our members in building cross-border partnerships between local governments in South East Europe in order to contribute to a modern and efficient local self-government, increased democracy and stability in the region. Thereby, we also contribute to the process of EU integration.

3. WHAT MAKES NALAS UNIQUE

Our network includes relevant local government associations from the region who are the legitimate partners in negotiations with their national governments.

We represent a mosaic of countries in the region with close cultures and traditions, with similar historical and political background and with an EU perspective. Most of them are countries in transition. Some are already EU members, others are candidate countries or potential candidates, yet all still face a lot of challenges in strengthening local democracy.

We have a practical approach in reaching our vision: we work together in task forces and projects and we develop concrete solutions. We value our own expertise and learn from each other.

4. OUR BASIC VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Diversity: We are open, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and inclusive.

Transparency: We operate in an accountable and transparent manner - both internally and towards external stakeholders.

Equal treatment: We guarantee equal conditions and opportunities for all our members.

Promotion of international principles: We promote relevant international principles such as those contained in the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ECLSG), the European Urban Charter II - Manifesto for a New Urbanity, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the European Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at the Local Level.

Bottom up: Our *raison d'être* is to support local self-government through strengthening and supporting our member local government associations (LGAs). However, we base our work on the common interests and identified priorities of local governments and we tend to be visible towards them.

Networking: We give preference to projects that strengthen the network.

Local Knowledge: Although we also facilitate the access of our members to knowledge situated beyond our region, we put our focus on developing knowledge from our own experience, learning from each other, and promoting the involvement of local experts.

Participation: NALAS members continuously and actively participate in the network. While representing NALAS, they represent and advocate for the interests of all members, not only their own.

Sustainability: We strive towards reaching institutional and financial sustainability. Concerning the minimal organisational structure and services of the NALAS secretariat, we want to use donations and membership fees to become independent from external funding.

5. OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – A VIEW OF FUTURE GROWTH

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Strengthening of local governments to provide better services for citizens primarily in the areas of:

- 1.1 Fiscal autonomy/decentralization
- 1.2 Urban development capacity
- 1.3 Water and Waste management
- 1.4 Energy Efficiency
- 1.5 EU Integration

OUTCOMES:

- Improved macro frame for Local Governments;
- More favourable inter-governmental fiscal relations;
- Improved planning process, citizen participation;
- More efficient and effective municipal services;
- LGs prepared to meet EU requirements.

Key Outcome Indicators:

1. Number of policies, laws and regulations adopted, which strengthen local governments in providing better services for citizens, meet EU requirements and were influenced by the results of NALAS task forces and/or other NALAS activities;
2. Knowledge (data from analysis, overviews and recommendations from NALAS Task Forces) is used by LGAs for policy argumentation in their policy process.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

Strengthening the role of member Local Government Associations (LGAs) in the decentralization process.

- 2.1 Reinforce LGAs negotiation power;
- 2.2 Improvements in LGAs structure including networking capabilities;
- 2.3 Improve and complete LGAs service delivery to their members;
- 2.4 Improve LGAs financial sustainability

OUTCOMES:

- Reinforced intergovernmental committees;
- Established, strengthened LGAs policy committee structures;
- Improved access to municipal data;
- Standardized service portfolio;
- Developed model for LGA financial sustainability.

Key Outcome Indicators:

1. Number of successful negotiations;
2. Improvements in structure;
3. Each member LGA improves at least one service due to NALAS interventions;
4. Core functions of LGAs covered by sustainable sources.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

Positioning NALAS as a viable representative of SEE LGAs and LGs within the European and broader international scene.

- 3.1 Advocacy and lobbying in Europe and beyond;
- 3.2 Increased co-operation with Council of Europe and its Congress and with the Committee of Regions and its working groups on accessing countries;
- 3.3 Involvement in the process of institutionalisation of new territorial cooperation, especially in the Mediterranean Zone and Black Sea Region, and the development of the City Diplomacy;
- 3.4 Make operational the mutual membership status with CEMR;
- 3.5 Facilitate twinning between LG and twinning between LGAs, within and beyond the region.

OUTCOMES:

- Member LGAs have increased interaction with EU institutions in Brussels ;
- Increased presence and visibility of NALAS and member LGAs in international arena.

Key Outcome Indicators:

1. Number of relevant international institutions interacting with NALAS as a network and bilaterally with member LGAs;
2. Developed new partnerships;
3. Number of joint initiatives of the network and member LGAs with international partners;
4. Number of international papers, declarations influenced by and / or referring to NALAS.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

Institutional and financial consolidation of NALAS in the areas of

- 4.1 Networking and knowledge generation
- 4.2 Functioning of the NALAS Secretariat / knowledge management
- 4.3 Intercommunication between NALAS Secretariat and each LGA
- 4.4 Balancing resources with ambitions: Financial sustainability of the NALAS network, staff,...

OUTCOMES:

- Produced and exchanged knowledge – active Task Forces, consolidated Knowledge Centre
- Broad member participation, networking at all levels
- Cross-border cooperation on projects that concentrate on key issues of local self-government
- Approved NALAS plan for financial sustainability started to be implemented

Key Outcome Indicators:

1. Number of visits and other statistics of the web-based Knowledge Centre, especially from member countries
2. Members' satisfaction with networking activities
3. Percentage of sustainable revenues for the network core functions

6. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK – NALAS Strategic Plan 2009 – 2012

Intervention logic			
Vision	“The citizens of South-East Europe enjoy more sustainable cities and communities as well as democracy and regional stability. With the support of strong local government associations (LGAs) and NALAS, they benefit from efficient services of local governments and an adequate representation of their interests.”		
Mission	“We actively encourage the decentralization process in South East Europe through strengthening and connecting our members and thereby contributing to democracy and stability in the region.”		
Strategic objectives	1. Strengthening of local government in SEE to provide better services for citizens; 2. Strengthening the role of member LGAs in the decentralization process. 3. Positioning NALAS as viable representative of SEE LGAs and LGs within the European and broader international scene; 4. Institutional and financial consolidation of NALAS.		
		Indicators of achievement	Values: per year
Measures and Outcomes	1. Strengthening of LG in SEE to provide better services for citizens		
	1.1 Improved Fiscal Decentralization; 1.2 Urban Planning; 1.3 Waste Management; 1.4 Energy Efficiency; 1.5 EU Integration; 1.6 other subjects that might come up as new priorities; - Better macro frame for LGs; - Inter-governmental relations; - Improved planning process, citizen participation; - Meeting EU requirements;	1. Nu. of policies / laws/regulations adopted and meeting EU requirements 2. Knowledge used by LGAs in their policy process	
	2. Strengthening the role of member LGAs in the decentralization process.		
	2.1 Reinforce LGA negotiation power; 2.2 Improvements in Structure; 2.3 Service Delivery; 2.4 Financial Sustainability; - Reinforced intergovernmental committees; - Established, strengthened LGAs policy committee structures; - Improved access to municipal data; - Standardised service portfolio; - Developed plan for LGA financial sustainability.	1. Number of successful negotiations; 3. Each member LGA improves structure and at least one service; 4. Core functions of LGAs covered by sustainable sources.	
	3. Positioning NALAS as viable representative of SEE LGAs and LGs within the European and broader international Scene.		
3.1 Advocacy/lobbying in Europe and beyond; 3.2 Co-operation with CoE and with the Committee of Regions; 3.3 Involvement in institutionalisation of new territorial cooperation; and the City Diplomacy; 3.4 Make operational the membership status with CEMR; 3.5 Facilitate twinning between LG and between LGAs. - Member LGAs have increased interaction with EU institutions in Brussels; - Increased presence and visibility of NALAS and member LGAs in international arena;	1. Number of relevant institutions interacting with NALAS and LGAs; 2. Developed new partnerships; 3. Number of joint initiatives with international Partners; 4. Number of declarations papers, influenced by and/or referring to NALAS.		

	4. Institutional and financial consolidation of NALAS.		
	<p>4.1 Networking and knowledge generation; 4.2 Functioning of the NALAS Secretariat/ knowledge management; 4.3 Intercommunication between NALAS Secretariat and each LGA; 4.4 Financial sustainability of the network.</p> <p>- Produced and exchanged knowledge, active TFs, KNC; - Broad member participation, networking at all levels; - Cross border cooperation on projects; - Approved plan for financial sustainability.</p>	<p>1. Number of visits in the web-based KNC; 2. Members' satisfaction; 3. Percentage of sustainable revenues for core functions.</p>	