

PRESS RELEASE

MEETING OF SOUTH-EAST EUROPE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SKOPJE

Skopje, 18 April 2013-Over one hundred representatives of local governments and local government associations from the whole South-East Europe (SEE) will meet in Skopje on 19 and 20 April 2013 for the VIII General Assembly of their umbrella organization, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) and a workshop on Municipal Finance Database. NALAS is a network of 16 local government associations from 12 SEE countries and the Association of Local Self-Government Units (ZELS) from Macedonia is one of its founding members.

The General Assembly will be opened by the current NALAS President, Dr. Ozgen Keskin, Mayor of Yildirim Municipality, Bursa, Turkey, and Mr. Koce Trajanovski, President of ZELS and Mayor of Skopje. Delegates will review NALAS work in 2012, its Strategic Plan (2013-2017), as well as the work plan for 2013. Also, NALAS will inform about the upcoming International Municipal Fair, NEXPO 2013, to be held in Rijeka and Opatija, Croatia, in September this year, as the largest SEE municipal event, its participation in designing the SEE Strategy 2020 and the European Charter on Equality of Women and Men in local life.

Based on the rotation presidency system, Mr. Anton Pershak, Mayor of Trzin Municiplaity, Slovenia, will be appointed a new NALAS President.

On 20 April, NALAS will present its efforts for implementation of evidence-based practices for intergovernmental finance reforms and the use of data in a regional context. Information on municipal finances and performance will assist local government associations in policy design, will strengthen their capacity to advocate reform steps and to actively participate in modernization of local government finances.

The Western Balkans Municipal Finance Review supported by the World Bank ECA Sustainable Cities Initiative and SEE Urban Partnership Program will be presented, as well as ZELS Database. At a roundtable, delegates will discuss what it takes to establish, maintain and sustain a Municipal Finance Database within local government associations and NALAS.

The two-days program will also include visit to ZELS to discuss its e-Governance projects, which are often referred to as a best practice for SEE, and a visit to their new Training Centre.

For more information, please contact NALAS Knowledge and Communications Manager Jelena Janevska, at janevska@nalas.eu, ++389 70 280 582, www.nalas.eu.

About NALAS: NALAS brings together 16 Associations which represent roughly 9000 local authorities, directly elected by more than 80 million citizens of this region. NALAS promotes the process of decentralisation, contributes to the reconciliation and stabilisation process in

the region and henceforth contributes to the process of the European integration of the whole region. NALAS initiates and carries out regional initiatives for its members and helps the associations to become viable representatives of local authorities vis-a-vis central government. NALAS provides services to local governments for the benefit of the citizens in the region, through its Knowledge Centre for local government development in South-East Europe, recognised among all relevant stakeholders. For more information about NALAS: www.nalas.eu

About ZELS: ZELS was formed in 1972 and reconstituted with the new Law on Local Self Government in 1996. It unites all 84 municipalities in Macedonia and the City of Skopje. ZELS: Promotes and encourages mutual cooperation and information sharing among its members; Serves as a lobby group and acts as an advisory body to the central government in the arena of local government; Establishes relations with national and international associations of local authorities; Promotes continuous and constructive cooperation between the local governments and the state authorities; and Organizes training and conference opportunities to its members. For more information about ZELS: www.zels.org.mk

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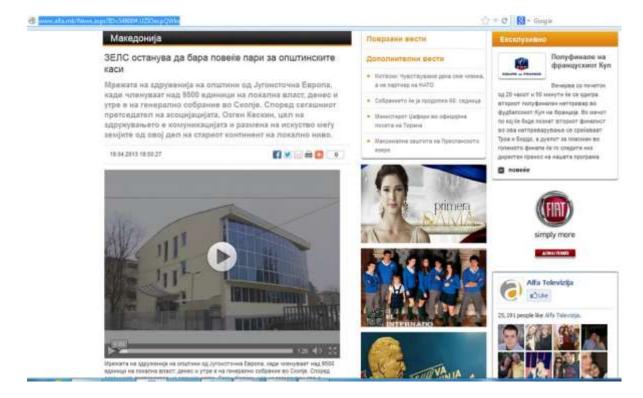
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