

## PRESS RELEASE

### SOUTH-EAST EUROPE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MEET IN PRISHTINA

**Prishtina, 13 April 2016** - Over one hundred representatives of local governments and local government associations from the whole South-East Europe (SEE) will meet in Prishtina on 14 and 15 April 2016 for the XI General Assembly of their umbrella organization, the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) and a thematic session on Increasing Municipal Investment Capacities in SEE. NALAS is a network of 15 local government associations from 12 SEE countries and the Association of Kosovo Municipalities (AKM) is one of its founding members.

On **14 April**, the **thematic session on Increasing Municipal Investment Capacities**, organised in partnership with the World Bank-Austria Urban Partnership Program II, will explore how capital investments at local level can support SEE municipalities to transform into sustainable communities for the benefit of their citizens. Also, the thematic session will focus on the role good governance of municipal finances plays in building investors' confidence. Participants will learn from the experiences of municipalities successful in attracting funding and creating infrastructure value and will get access to information about available funds for supporting municipal investments in SEE.

*"Mayors have to address very complex issues in providing quality services to their citizens, while the public funds for doing so are limited due to the incomplete fiscal decentralization in the region. Grants from central government meet a small part of total needs for infrastructure and services. The international donations are useful but not enough. Local governments must be innovative and introduce new sources like pooled funding. We also need to build new kind of relationship with investors, especially the ones with the private sector",* says Mayor Emil Draghici, NALAS President.

On **15 April**, **NALAS General Assembly** will be opened by the current NALAS President, Mr. Emil Draghici, Mr. Isa Mustafa, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Ms Breda Pecan, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and Mr. Shpend Ahmeti, the Mayor of Prishtina. Delegates will review NALAS work in 2015 and the work plan for 2016, and will discuss policy issues related to the refugee and migration crisis; mainstreaming gender at local level; and solid waste management in rural and coastal areas, that will result with policy recommendations in these three fields.

Based on the rotation presidency system, Mr. Naim Ismajli, Mayor of Shtime Municipality, will be appointed a new NALAS President, who will lead the Network in the next year.

Key sessions of media interest during the two-day event include:

<b>14 April 2016 (Thursday), Hotel Emerald, Chopin Seminar Room</b>	
13:00 – 13:30	Welcome and opening of the thematic session <b>Increasing Municipal Investment Capacities</b>
<b>15 April 2016 (Friday), Hotel Emerald, Chopin Seminar Room</b>	
09:00 – 09:30	Opening of <b>XI NALAS General Assembly</b>

For more information, please contact NALAS Knowledge and Communications Manager Jelena Janevska, at [janevska@nalas.eu](mailto:janevska@nalas.eu), ++389 70 280 582, [www.nalas.eu](http://www.nalas.eu).

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**About NALAS:** NALAS brings together 15 Associations which represent roughly 9000 local authorities, directly elected by more than 80 million citizens of South-East Europe. 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. *For more information about NALAS: [www.nalas.eu](http://www.nalas.eu)*