



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Fiscal Decentralization Expert

to assist NALAS – the Network of Associations of Local Authorities
of South-East Europe

in the framework of

the **BACID III** project -

**Building Administrative Capacities of the Western Balkans and
the Republic of Moldova**



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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The BACID III Program - Building Administrative Capacities of the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova, is co-funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and implemented by the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, KDZ-Centre for Public Administration Research, ReSPA (Regional School for Public Administration) and NALAS (Network of Associations of Local Authorities in South-East Europe).

The main objective of BACID III is to improve good public governance in the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova. BACID III activities focus on two elements of governance:

- Increasing the quality of public administration and public services with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF); and
- Decentralization and local autonomy as key elements of the “Western European Democracy Model” and guarantors for the provision of high-quality local services.

The main outcome of BACID III will be that the quality of public administration and public services are enforced and decentralization and local autonomy in the Western Balkans and Moldova strengthened. From this perspective it is expected that decentralisation and local autonomy as key elements of the “Western European Democracy Model” and guarantors for the provision of high-quality local services in the Western Balkans and Moldova are strengthened through the work of NALAS.

To help the advocacy efforts of LGAs in SEE, NALAS develops studies and conducts peer learning and knowledge sharing events to provide national and local policymakers and analysts with reliable comparative data on municipal finances and up to date information on intergovernmental fiscal relations in South–East Europe. High quality data and information are key to informed decision making, improved policies and public services. But, all around South-East Europe such data is either missing or is difficult to access. To bridge this gap, within BACID II, NALAS and KDZ partnered to develop the NALAS Decentralisation Observatory for South-East Europe www.nalas-observatory.eu. The Observatory facilitates the access to and utilisation of timely, accurate, reliable and comparable data and information on local government finance in South-East Europe (SEE).

BACID III will contribute to the institutional sustainability of NALAS by strengthening its technical capacities in its core areas, in particular advancing the decentralization observatory and fiscal decentralization benchmarks and in developing capacities in digitalization to support the South-East European Local Governments (LGs).

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Scope and objectives

The overall objective of the assignment is the enhancement of the capacities of NALAS to contribute to advancing decentralization and strengthening local governance autonomy in South-East Europe, in particular in the Western Balkans and Moldova, and thereby to contributing to improving local public policies and services.

The specific objectives are the following:

- Support policy advocacy efforts of NALAS member Local Government Associations, as stewards of local democracy and local governance in SEE;

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- Help policymakers, experts, practitioners and researchers in their quest to improving local government policies and services;
- Support local government budget transparency;
- Support evidence-based policymaking and local budget transparency.

2.2. Results to be achieved with support of the expert

- The institutional sustainability of NALAS is ensured through high competence in decentralization and the provision of excellent services;
- Decentralisation and local autonomy as key elements of the “Western European Democracy Model” and guarantors for the provision of high-quality local services in the Western Balkans and Moldova are strengthened through the work of NALAS;

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1. General

The expert will contribute to carrying out the NALAS agenda in advancing decentralization, informing advocacy efforts of the Local Government Associations and decentralisation reforms and promoting local autonomy and sustainable and inclusive local economic development in South-East Europe. This includes the following specific activities within the framework of the BACID III programme (2022-2024).

3.2. Specific activities

1. **Safeguard and further develop the [NALAS-Observatory](#) for Transparency and Decentralization.**
2. **Develop and publish two editions of the [NALAS Fiscal Decentralization Report](#)** in line with the time schedule of the NALAS and BACID III work programme.
3. **Develop and publish three editions of the [NALAS Statistical Brief](#)** with empirical data on local government finance indicators in SEE;
4. **Develop and publish three Citizen Budgets reports.** This includes the development of templates for “Citizens’ Budget” and Municipal Budget Infographics / that can be used by SEE LGs in their citizen engagement and participatory budgeting processes.
5. **Develop and publish one Regional Decentralization Observatory Report**, as per NALAS and BACID work-plan, based on the NALAS Observatory (<https://nalas-observatory.eu/>) where the regional and administrative decentralization assessment as online-assessment will be integrated during project implementation.
6. **Develop and publish one video** based on NALAS Observatory and RDO Report
7. **Develop and publish one NALAS Position paper**, potentially focusing on COVID 19 impact on LGs and including gender equality needs in the Region (2022).

8. **Conduct one regional conference** on advancing decentralization reform and strengthening local governance in South-East Europe (2023), to present results of surveys and studies.
9. **Coordinate the NALAS Fiscal Decentralization Task Force and organize three meetings of the Task Force (2022, 2023, 2024).**

The activities will be implemented and supported by the NALAS local Fiscal Decentralization Expert, with contributions from short term decentralization experts.

3.3. Deliverables

1. **Develop and integrate 40 new indicators in the NALAS-Observatory for Transparency and Decentralization.**
2. **Develop and publish two editions of the NALAS Fiscal Decentralization Report** in 2022 and 2024.
3. **Develop and publish three editions of the NALAS Statistical Brief: Local Government Finance Indicators in South-East Europe** in 2022, 2023 and 2024.
4. **Develop and publish three Citizen Budgets reports.**
5. Support three participatory budgeting processes, including the discussion of the local government budget with citizens through user friendly online tools such as a balancing act simulator.
6. **Develop and publish one Regional Decentralization Observatory Report;**
7. **Develop the online version of the NALAS RDO Questionnaire**
8. **Develop and publish one video** based on NALAS Observatory and RDO Report
9. **Contributing to develop one NALAS Position paper (2022).**
10. **Contributing to conduct one regional conference** on advancing decentralization reform and strengthening local governance in South-East Europe (2023).
11. **Coordinating the NALAS Fiscal Decentralization Task Force (three TF meetings).**

4. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

4.1. Location

This is a regional assignment covering the region of South-East Europe. The expert may work home based-remotely and travel as needed to Skopje/North Macedonia and within the region, on a need basis. Coordination with the NALAS Secretariat shall take place through online tools and in person meetings.

4.2. Start date and period of implementation

The period of implementation of the contract is from 15.04.2022 to 31.5.2024. The maximum envisaged number of working days for the assignment is 270 days.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXPERT

Qualifications and skills

- Master's Degree (or equivalent) in Economics, Public Finances, Public Policy, or other relevant fields.
- Proven analytical capacity and strategic thinking;
- Interpersonal and diplomatic skills, experience in working in international and multi-ethnic environment
- Ability to communicate effectively with all stakeholders and to present ideas clearly;
- Excellent analytical and presentation skills;
- High level of responsibility and organizational capacities;
- Strong results orientation;
- Flexible and responsive with a client-oriented approach.
- Good command in English language both in written and speaking.
- Excellent communication skills
- Demonstrated experience in writing, editing, and consolidating policy papers and technical reports;

Professional experience

- Minimum 5 years of professional working experience in the field of local finance, fiscal decentralization, local governance, public finance and public policy development and implementation;
- Demonstrated solid knowledge of local public administration, intergovernmental fiscal relations and local public finances aspects. Experience at the national and/or regional level in South-East Europe will be an asset.
- Demonstrated experience in the development and preparation of regional comparative studies and reports. Experience on comparative studies on local government reform, fiscal decentralization and intergovernmental fiscal relations in South-East Europe will be an asset.
- Experience in participating in informed policymaking, institutional development and capacity-building at national and regional level in South-East Europe, supporting intergovernmental dialogue, and fostering regional learning and exchange.
- Work experience in regional or international organizations, national or local government governmental institutions, NGOs or private sector / consulting firm in the field of Local Governance and Fiscal Decentralization is a very strong advantage.

6. CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS

The Expert shall be contracted by the Austrian Association of Cities, Vienna, as support to the NALAS Secretariat.



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The tasks shall be performed in close cooperation and agreement with the NALAS Secretariat, while KDZ-Centre for Public Administration Research as implementing Austrian project partner of the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (AACT) is responsible for final approval of deliverables produced.

7. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The interested experts shall submit the CV and requested daily fee **not later than 8th of April 2022 16.30 CET**, at: info@nalas.eu.

The maximum level of fee foreseen for the assignment is 160 EUR per day.

Within the commitment to diversity and inclusion, qualified women are especially encouraged to submit an offer.

Questions to the ToR: Questions about the ToR shall be submitted to Mr. Kelmend Zajazi, NALAS Executive Director via e-mail info@nalas.eu, mobile: +389 70 255 789, no later than 6th of April 2022.

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