



SUMMARY of NALAS



2024



Annual
Operational
Report



Foreword

In 2024, NALAS marked an important milestone, 20 years since Network's Statute was signed in the Council of Europe's Hemicycle during the Plenary Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, in Strasbourg, France, on 27 May 2004. Twenty years after, on 15 October 2024 we returned to Strasbourg and within the 47th Session of the Congress symbolically marked what NALAS is today – a safeguard of local autonomy and democracy in South-East Europe, empowering local voices, strengthening capacities, and driving regional progress.



On this occasion, Mayor Dusan Raicevic, President of NALAS said:

“Over the past two decades, NALAS has strengthened local government associations, supported EU accession efforts, and provided crucial technical assistance to over 7,000 local governments. We have fostered sustainable, inclusive, and resilient municipalities through our Knowledge Centre, regional cooperation, and capacity-building initiatives”.



Summary of NALAS' 2024 Annual Operational Report



Mr. Dušan Raičević
NALAS President
Mayor of Bar, Montenegro

Throughout 2024, with unwavering commitment, we have continued to expand NALAS's impact-empowering our member local government associations, implementing innovative pilot projects, delivering tailored capacity development programs for local elected officials and local government practitioners, and producing valuable knowledge resources to support local governments and their associations.

We owe our success over 2024 and the past 20 years to our leadership, the mayors-presidents and vice-presidents of NALAS, the directors and secretary generals of our member associations, their staff, NALAS Secretariat staff, as well as all partners and supporters. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all of you and reaffirm our commitment to continue growing stronger, smarter, and even more successful in the years to come.



Through 2024 NALAS empowered



INDIVIDUALS

Enhanced capacities of more than **2,800 mayors, experts and practitioners** through **100+ trainings, networking meetings, study visits and peer exchanges**



ORGANISATIONS

Enabled **34 municipalities to modernise municipal services**, including **15 municipalities that introduced social services** for the most vulnerable cities



Supported local governments reach funding opportunities for the implementation of their **Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans**

SOCIETY

Rehabilitated **24 local public facilities** and improved **68 municipal services** in **19 municipalities** in Albania



Developed **Disaster Risk Reduction IT Tool** that enables risk assessment, data visualisation, and public engagement, ensuring informed and efficient responses to disaster scenarios



800+ vulnerable citizens received community-based services that improved their wellbeing and integration



60,000+ citizens of the Region got access to better municipal services



Strengthened the capacities of the **project teams of 11 cities**

Introduced **innovative and smart pilot projects** in two municipalities



Developed **19 knowledge products, grants and mentoring support** that helped member associations strengthen institutional capacity, enhance governance, improve services and policy dialogue

Helped **18 municipalities** to grow their skills in **deliberative democracy** as an innovative method of citizen engagement



NALAS Forum of Women Mayors' recommendations on gender equality at local level were integrated in the **Berlin Forum recommendations addressing the gender gaps** in the Berlin Process

Strategic Objective 1:

Strong Local Government Associations

Flagship products for LGAs

- Setting the Standard
- Guidelines for the establishment and effective operation of LGA's sectoral committees
- Monitoring tool to track the progress and results of LGAs' committees covering water issues
- Baseline Study on the Application of the European Standards in Local Democracy in the Western Balkans
- A Decade of Reforms, Crises, and Multilevel Governance, 10th edition of NALAS Fiscal Decentralisation Indicators Report
- Local Finance Indicators in South-East Europe, 4th edition of NALAS Statistical Brief



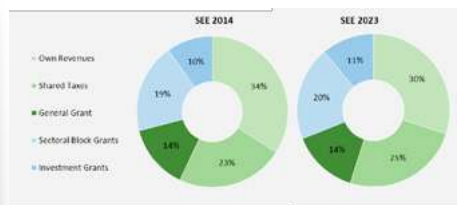


2024 through our flagship products



Flagship products for LGs

- A pool of trainers specialised in deliberative democracy
- Good practices and resources in innovating citizen participation
- [White Paper: 'How can local governments cope with changing urban-rural relations?'](#)
- Catalogue of Good Practices of Municipal Infrastructure Projects from South-East Europe and the European Union
- Municipal Budgeting with EU Funding
- Manual for Implementation and Monitoring of the EU4Municipalities funded projects
- Manual on Financial Management of EU funded Projects: [the EU4Municipalities Experience](#)
- Communication and Visibility Manual for EU funded Projects



Strategic Objective2:

Sustainable, Smart, Inclusive and Resilient Cities and Municipalities

Flagship products for LGAs

- Assessment Report on Social Inclusion Governance and Local Government Associations' Advocacy Capacities
- Methodological Guidelines for development of LGA's Advocacy Roadmap on Social Inclusion
- Practical guidelines on sociocultural participation and coordination mechanisms
- Policy recommendations for social inclusion tailored to the Western Balkans
- A structured approach for data collection and analysis on gender in local governance, exemplified by the Gender Data Report 2023





2024 through our flagship products



Flagship products for LGs

- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) IT Toolbox for knowledge awareness
- DRR IT tool
- Position papers on digital transformation covering: AI, skills and competencies, GovTech, and digital innovation hubs.
- Model for Innovative Remote Digital Elderly Care
- Model for Smart Parking Management and Air Quality Monitoring
- Models of successful coordination mechanisms to foster sociocultural participation
- [Manual How to Prepare a Successful Project Proposal with EU Funding](#)

Strategic Objective3:

Centre of Excellence



Flagship products for LGAs

- Nine regional Quick Response reports relevant for LGAs' work and for different LG issues
- [LoGov Research Report: Intergovernmental Relations of Local Government](#)



Flagship products for LGs

3 new e-learning courses

- [NALAS Decentralisation Observatory](#)
- [LoGov Research Report: Local Responsibilities and Public Services](#)
- [LoGov Research Report: Local Financial Arrangements](#)
- [LoGov Research Report: Structure of Local Government](#)
- [LoGov Research Report: People's Participation in Local Decision Making](#)





What they said about NALAS in 2024

“NALAS is to us a retainable partner, a source of best practice and an advisor on the realities on the ground. Together with the member associations, NALAS helps us bring local and regional issues to the decision-makers in Brussels”,

Mr. Andreas Knaupe, Vice President of the European Committee of the Regions
the 47th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

“I want to thank NALAS and the Association of Local Authorities of Albania for helping us implement this project. It is important that when it comes to implementing, we do it with people who know what they are talking about, so it was great to have NALAS as partners in this endeavour”,

H.E. Silvio Gonzato, EU Ambassador to Albania,
at the Closing conference of EU for Municipalities Project in Albania.

“The investment in people in our Municipality equals to zero, that is why NALAS' project on the EU Projects City Network is so important to us. Our department has advanced a lot thanks to this project”,

Mr. Ivica Arsov, Head of the Local Economic Development Department
in the Municipality of Sveti Nikole.

“Thank you very much for your kind letter and the summary presentation: indeed, it is always very useful and enriching to work with NALAS, so we are looking forward to even stronger further collaboration”,

Ms. Suzanna Matvejevic from CIVEX Commission of the Committee of the Regions.

20 Years Dedicated to Empowering Local Voices, Driving Regional Progress



2001
Initiation
of NALAS

2004
NALAS'
Statute signed

2007
NALAS'
Secretariat

2009
Knowledge Centre
and Task Forces

20
First
International



150+ pilot
municipalities

30,000+
local government
representatives
involved



17 e-learning courses,
with **1,350** alumni





20

20 years
empowering
local voices,
driving regional
progress



2011

NEXPO
Municipal Fair

2013

e-Academy

2018

Regional
Decentralisation Observatory

2020

Revolving Fund for
EU projects

2024

Covenant of Mayors
Office for SEE

Knowledge Centre with

181 publications,

55 comparative studies,

30 regional policy positions,

15 tools, etc.



Over **EUR 3 million**
support for LGAs

Implemented projects
in the value of over
EUR 15 million

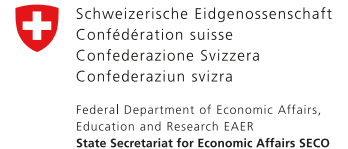
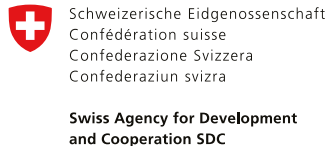


300+
regional comparative
quick responses,
technical assistance,
and support to
intergovernmental
dialogue





The establishment and growth of NALAS have been made possible through the institutional support of the German and Swiss Governments, through GIZ and SDC. In 2024, NALAS was supported by: GIZ, SDC, SECO, EU, Council of Europe, UN Women and ADA. NALAS' financial sustainability, prefinancing and cofinancing of projects is ensured by the Revolving Fund, supported by SDC.





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