

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Engagement of an Expert for a Comparative Survey on Practices on Mayoral Term Limits and Registers of Local Government Acts

Ref. No.: PSGA4 – P3

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Project Title: PLATFORMA

Contracting Authority: Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe

Donor: EU and SDC through institutional support for NALAS.

1. Background

PLATFORMA is the pan-European coalition of local and regional governments engaged in international cooperation for sustainable development. Hosted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), PLATFORMA brings together local and regional governments with their national, European, and global associations.

NALAS is a network of associations of local authorities of South-East Europe. The Network brings together 14 Local Government Associations (LGAs) which represent roughly 9000 local authorities. NALAS promotes decentralisation, fosters regional cooperation, and supports LGAs in becoming effective representatives of local governments in national and international forums. With support from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), NALAS co-finances activities under the PLATFORMA Project.

As part of the PLATFORMA Eastern Partnership (EaP) Programme, NALAS supports advocacy efforts by LGAs in Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. A key priority is enhancing policy dialogue and institutional development of local government associations in Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine.

The Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) expresses its respect and gratitude to all international partners for their assistance to Ukrainian municipalities before and during the full-scale war of the Russian federation against Ukraine. The Association of Ukrainian Cities works actively to advocate for strong local governance and preserve the achievements of the decentralization reform in Ukraine amidst the challenges posed by the war.

To support effective policy dialogue in Ukraine, NALAS and AUC to conduct a survey among member LGAs of NALAS, CEMR and PLATFORMA focusing on two issues of major importance for the future of local governance in Ukraine. The survey aims to collect comparative data and insights on:

- 1) Practices in European countries regarding term limits for city mayors, particularly retroactive application of term limits.
- 2) Practices related to national registers of local government acts and their implications for local autonomy.



Findings from the survey will inform AUC's policy recommendations to the Government and Parliament of Ukraine.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The overall objective of this assignment is to implement and analyze a comparative survey among member associations of CEMR, NALAS, and PLATFORMA, focusing on:

- Term limits for mayors and their legal application.
- Existence and legal basis of national/state registers of local government acts.

The final output will provide evidence-based recommendations to support advocacy by the Association of Ukrainian Cities.

3. Scope of Work

The expert will:

- Provide expert knowledge on European practices related to mayoral term limits and national/state registers of local government acts
- Contribute to conducting a survey instrument (questionnaire) in consultation with AUC, NALAS and PLATFORMA.
- Coordinate with NALAS and PLATFORMA secretariats to disseminate the survey to members.
- Collect and analyze the responses from participating associations. Follow up with LGAs to enable their contributions and clarifications.
- Conduct desk review to complement the survey findings with other European practices.
- Prepare a concise comparative analytical report with comparative findings and practical recommendations.

4. Deliverables

- Review final versions of the survey questionnaire (Google Form format).
- Outreach and follow-up plan with LGAs to maximize response rate.
- Draft comparative analytical report.
- Final analytical report (max. 10 pages), including:

5. Location

The assignment will be home-based with online coordination and communication. No travel is foreseen.

6. Duration and Timeline

Total estimated duration: **10 working days.**

Tentative timeline: **15 August – 20 September 2025.**

Task

Kick-off and consultation
Contribution to questionnaire development
Survey dissemination and response collection
Analysis and draft report
Final report submission

Timeline

15 August 2025
15 August 2025
15 August – 10 September 2025
by 15 September 2025
by 20 September 2025

7. Methodology

The expert will use a mixed-method approach combining:

- Online survey of local government associations via Google Forms
- Targeted follow-up with non-responding associations
- Desk research and review of relevant national legislation or practices
- Analytical synthesis using comparative methods

All steps will be undertaken in coordination with NALAS and AUC.

The expert is expected to develop the study according to the following indicative structure which can be modified in agreement with the contracting authority:

- Executive Summary (1 page)
- Introduction (1 page)
- Comparative overview of term limits for local elected officials in Europe and beyond (3-5 pages)
- Comparative overview of national/state registers of local government acts (3-5 pages)
- Compliance with European Charter of Local Self Government (1-3 pages)

- Key recommendations (1-2 pages)
- Annexes: Survey data

8. Required Qualifications

Qualifications and Skills:

- Advanced university degree in public administration, political science, law, economics or a related field.
- Strong analytical and writing skills.
- Excellent command of English (oral and written)

General Work Experience:

- At least 10 years of proven work experience.

Specific Work Experience:

- Minimum 7 years of professional experience in local governance, decentralization, or public sector reform.
- Proven experience in conducting surveys and comparative research.
- Knowledge of Eastern Partnership and South-East Europe context is an asset.

9. Reporting and Supervision

The expert will report to the NALAS Executive Director or designated representative. The expert will work in close coordination with representatives of AUC and CEMR/PLATFORMA secretariat for input and feedback.

10. Budget and Payment Schedule

Payment will be made in one instalment: 100% upon submission and approval of the final comparative report.

11. Modification of Terms

NALAS reserves the right to adjust the scope, timeline, and deliverables of the assignment in consultation with the expert, based on evolving needs or constraints during implementation.