



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding is concluded between

**THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE (CEI)**

Via Genova 9, 34121 Trieste (Italy)

Represented by its Secretary General, Mr Roberto Antonione.

and

**THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY (ALDA)**

Maison des Associations, Place des Orphelins 1/A, 67000 Strasbourg (France)

Represented by its Secretary General, Ms Antonella Valmorbida.

The CEI and ALDA are hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Signatories".

The purpose of this agreement is to set the general framework of the partnership between the CEI and ALDA to jointly contribute to the achievement of the statutory objectives of both organizations.

The Central European Initiative (CEI) is a regional intergovernmental forum established in 1989, following the fall of the Berlin wall. It gathers 17 Member States in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. It has one central mission: working towards European integration and sustainable development through regional cooperation.

The CEI supports a united Europe with shared values embracing all countries, regions, peoples and citizens; and fosters the strengthening of capacities of its Member States towards good governance, rule of law and sustainable economic development for stability, social cohesion, environmental sustainability, security and prosperity.

The CEI is also a platform for political dialogue through a pillar system and a resource for people, businesses and communities through a strong, result-oriented and multi-partnership approach. It operates in a flexible and demand-driven manner to promote cooperation at intergovernmental, inter-parliamentary and local level.



ALDA, the European Association for Local Democracy, was created in Strasbourg in 1999 on the initiative of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Its mission is to support good local governance and citizen participation, in partnership with local authorities. It acts with the support of its 350 members (civil society associations and local authorities) from all over Europe and neighboring countries.

To implement its statutory missions, ALDA strives in particular to:

- Promote and publicize European values among citizens and member institutions,
- Promote and carry out activities in support of local communities, in collaboration with civil society, to improve good local governance and to enable an inclusive, environmentally sustainable, economic and social society,
- Create links between local communities in Europe and in the neighborhood and to support the decentralized cooperation approach,
- Promote in its programme decentralization and the subsidiarity approach to enable ownership of local governance issues and find solutions to local problems through citizen participation at the local level,
- Support its members in identifying European and other resources for the realization of good local governance projects.

The strategies of the two organizations match more specifically on:

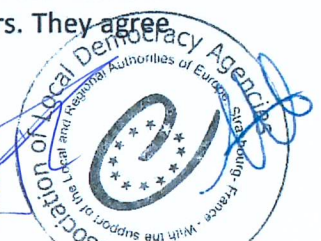
- the development and support to democracy in the region of Western Balkans and Central Europe;
- the willingness of enhancing European affiliation and its values;
- the common geographic areas of interest and membership. (For instance, the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia is a founding member of ALDA and the Secretariat of the CEI is seated in the regional capital of Trieste).

The Signatories agree to work together in the future and join their efforts to achieve complementary results in the shared geographical areas of intervention.

They acknowledge the need for jointly identified, multi-purpose development actions, aiming to the following goals:

- joint advocacy efforts supporting democracy through a local governance approach;
- support regional approach and cross border cooperation;
- work on common themes, such as:
  - o support local democracy and citizens participation;
  - o support civil society empowerment;
  - o support media and freedom of expression;
  - o support to displaced people and refugees;
  - o integration of minorities.

The Signatories commit to work together on the mentioned themes and agree on a regular exchange of information on matters of common interests. They agree on the valorization of the parties' experiences in their own networks for the benefit of their members. They agree



on the mutual involvement and coordination of both signatories in the already existing actions carried out directly by ALDA or by the LDAs (Local Democracy Agencies) in the Western Balkans and Central Europe. Finally, they agree to valorise and communicate on their mutual work.

Any information shared between the parties shall be considered confidential, may only be used for the purpose for which it was given and may not be disclosed without the consent of the other Party.

The present agreement comes into force on the date of its signature. It is concluded for an initial period of two years and is renewable for an identical period, by mutual agreement.

Done in Strasbourg/Trieste, on 17 November 2021.

In two original copies.

For ALDA

The Secretary General

Ms Antonella Valmorbidia



For the CEI

The Secretary General

Mr Roberto ANTONIONE

