

ANNEX: CASE STUDIES

HOW EU MEMBER STATES' NATIONAL
AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES SUPPORT
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITIES IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

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List of Acronyms

| | |
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| ACCD | Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation |
| ADA | Austrian Development Agency |
| AFCCRE | The French Association for the Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe |
| AFLRA | Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities |
| AICCRE | The Italian Association for the Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe |
| AICS | Italian National Agency for cooperation to development |
| AIMF | International Association of French-speaking Mayors |
| ALAL | Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania |
| ANCI | Italian Associations of Municipalities |
| BMZ | German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development |
| GIZ | German Development Agency |
| CAHE | Humanitarian and Emergency Aid Committee |
| CIC | Programme de Coopération internationale Communale |
| CLGF | Commonwealth Local Government Forum |
| CPMA | Central Project Management Agency |
| CUF | Cités Unies France |
| CzDA | Czech Development Agency |
| Danida | Danish International Development Assistance |
| DAECT | Delegation for the external action of local authorities |
| DCDPP | Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme |
| DEALS | Governance of Inclusive Green Growth in Cities |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| EC | European Commission |
| EEA | European Economic Area |
| ELL | Association Estonian Cities |
| EU | European Union |
| FEMP | Federation of Municipalities and Regions |
| FVS | Fons Valencia per la Solidaritat |
| GIS | Gemeentelijke Internationale Samenwerking |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| ICEIDA | Icelandic International Development Agency |
| IDEAL | Inclusive Decisions At Local Level |
| ILCD | International Centre for Local Democracy |
| KDZ | Austrian Competence Centre and Knowledge Platform |
| KL | Local Government Denmark |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| KS | Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities |
| LALRG | Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments |
| LAs | Local Authorities |
| LGA | Local Government Association |
| LGCP | Local Government Capacity Programme |
| LOGORep | Local Government Resilience Programme |
| MFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MIC | Municipal International Cooperation |
| MPP | Municipal Partnership Programme |
| NALAG | National Association of Local Authorities in Georgia |
| NALAS | Network of Associations of Local Authorities of East Europe |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| NSGCP | North-South Local Government Cooperation Programme |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| SAIDC | Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation |
| SALAR | Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions |
| SAMBAND | Icelandic Association of Local Authorities |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Agency |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SMO | Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic |
| SMP | Scotland Malawi Partnership |
| SYVICOL | Luxembourgish association of Towns and Communities |
| UVCW | Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie |
| VNG International | Association of Netherlands Municipalities |
| VNG | Association of Netherlands Municipalities |
| VVSG | Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities |
| ZMOS | Association of Towns and Communities in Slovakia |
| ZMP | Association of Polish Cities |

Introduction

Over the past decade, decentralised development cooperation has been recognised and institutionalised in many European countries, and stimulated through dedicated programmes and funds. To provide an overview, VNG International has carried out a study on which EU member states (and closely associated countries) have national or regional programmes that finance decentralised development cooperation.

The research was carried out in the context of the CONNECT mechanism, which was developed and successfully piloted in 2016-2019 by VNG International and PLATFORMA. This flexible and light mechanism was developed based on our strong feeling that while a lot of activity is taking place in some member states, others still have few or no programmes or funding instruments for decentralised development cooperation, or that the options are decreasing.

By means of this research, for the purpose of which we have surveyed local government associations (LGAs) and regional governments in 26 European countries, this assumption can now be supported. The analysis, main conclusions and recommendations of this study, as well as an overview of the landscape and agenda of decentralised development cooperation and the scope and methodology of this study, can be found in the publication ***A concise overview. How EU Member States' national and regional programmes support local governments' development activities in partner countries*** (2019), published by PLATFORMA and VNG International. This study specifies in which 7 countries national financing programmes for decentralised development cooperation exist, in which 5 countries local governments can sometimes apply to national financing programmes for NGOs (with a slim chance of getting selected due to the vast competition), and in which 12 countries there are no programmes of dedicated funds at all.

Annex: Case studies

This annex offers an extensive set of case studies, upon which the above-mentioned study is based. The case studies show that there is a wide range of decentralised development cooperation in European countries. In the following pages the specific situations per country shall be described.

The case studies are categorised into four categories:

- **Category I: National local government programmes**
Sweden, The Netherlands, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany and France
- **Category II: Regional local government programmes**
Belgium: Flanders, Italy: Piedmont, Spain: Catalonia and Valencia
- **Category III: Civil society programmes that are open to local governments and their associations**
Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Norway
- **Category IV: Currently no programmes for decentralised development cooperation**
The United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia

Each case study in category I, II and III gives a country specific overview of the following aspects of the available programmes:

- Current programmes
- Geographical and thematic focus
- The role of the local government association
- The role of local governments
- Modalities and knowledge sharing
- Application and selection
- Finances

The case studies in category IV outline the following:

- The state of affairs of development cooperation
- Current activities in decentralised development cooperation
- Interest among local governments for international cooperation
- Prognosis for the future.

1 Case Studies

1.1 Category I: National local government programmes

The 'national local government programmes' are defined as programmes financed by the national Ministries of Foreign Affairs, that have the explicit aim of deploying local (and regional) governments in development cooperation. These programmes are currently carried out in Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, France (to be validated), Czech Republic, Austria and Germany.

1.1.1 Sweden

Swedish local and regional governments play an active role in international cooperation and have done so since the 1980s, when the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) first managed the funding made available by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) for twinning with developing countries. In 2000, SKL International (first called SALA IDA) became a separate agency within SALAR, which nowadays specialises in strengthening local and regional democracy and governance in various countries by using expertise and know-how from within SALAR and from local and regional governments themselves. Under SALAR's auspices, the Municipal Partnership North-South programme was launched in 2005, which replaced the former twinning funds. This programme was managed by SKL International until 2009. Today, the management of the programme is one of the responsibilities of the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD) in which both SALAR and SKL International are strongly involved and SALAR holds the chair of the ICLD's board. ICLD disseminates and exchanges knowledge among local authorities in Sweden and in 21 developing countries eligible for cooperation in order to build well-functioning democratic institutions. It combines theory and practice by using and building on Swedish and international research on local democracy and the experience and knowledge that exists in Swedish local and regional governments. In 2015, ICLD's Municipal Partnership Programme (MPP) received a very positive evaluation, carried out by Oxford Research. The evaluators concluded that this programme results in improved knowledge and capacity within the partnerships, focuses on concrete goals and has reciprocal benefits.¹

¹ Oxford Research, *Evaluation of ICLD* (Stockholm 2015), 17

Current programmes

The Municipal Partnership Programme (MPP) is a means through which Swedish local and regional governments can fund their activities in decentralised development cooperation nationally. The programme is managed by the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD). MPP is funded by SIDA and aimed at contributing to sustainable democratic development in a number of Sweden's partner countries for development cooperation, and in Sweden, through the exchange of knowledge and experience. MPP is the only structural programme with Swedish funding in the field of decentralised cooperation that Swedish municipalities can apply to.²

Geographical and thematic focus of the current programme

The MPP programme is based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Sweden's Policy for Global Development. The latter emphasises partnership and the importance of broad participation in international cooperation. The objective of the MPP is to reduce poverty by promoting well-functioning, democratic local and regional governments, within which citizens can influence local and regional political processes. Issues relating to human rights, climate and the environment, gender equality and women's role in development form an integral perspective of local decision-making. Geographically, the MPP targets countries in Central and Eastern Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and Belarus), Asia (India, Indonesia, China and Vietnam) and Africa (Botswana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South-Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia).

The role of the Swedish local government association

SALAR is the largest stakeholder of the ICLD, but ICLD administers and develops the programme and disburses funds. Together, ICLD and SALAR provides support to the members of SALAR in the form of the dissemination of outcomes and examples of successfully implemented partnerships and by providing guidance and advice, and networking. ICLD also provides education and training initiatives aimed at the Swedish partner, the international partner or both, for example on every aspect of project planning in accordance with the Logical Framework Approach. In the assessment of applications for funding from the MPP, ICLD conducts the first selection, and takes the final decision after receiving input from SALAR and SKL International, through a Partnerskapsråd (Partnership Council).

² SKL International does run larger scale development programmes in which municipalities are often engaged, but in these large cooperations municipal participation is not structural. It currently runs 10 different such programmes aimed at Local Government Association capacity building projects and the strengthening of local governance in the process of decentralisation, particularly in Southern Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and in the MENA region. These projects are funded by SIDA, with a total budget of SEK 75-80 million for the year 2017 (approximately €7,5-8 million).

The role of Swedish local governments in the current programme

Around sixty to seventy of Swedish municipalities are active in the MPP, constituting nearly a quarter of all municipalities. By signing a cooperation agreement in the framework of MPP, they commit to a cooperation that must be mutually beneficial to both partners, but not necessarily in the same way. The Swedish local governments need to be committed to the development of their partner municipality, and of their own municipality. Most municipalities commit to a three-year project period, as this has proven to deliver the best results. Swedish local governments and their partnering local governments are the actual implementers of the programme. In order to apply for and join the programme, the Swedish municipality has to find their own eligible partner abroad and vice versa (although ICLD can assist). The Swedish municipalities design project proposals, form steering groups, and carry out monitoring and reporting activities, all in cooperation with the international partner municipality. Participating municipalities report yearly to ICLD after every completed year, the last years' report being a final report.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

The MPP works by strengthening local and regional political governance organisations within one or more of the four core areas it has defined: i) equity/inclusion; ii) transparency; iii) possibility to demand accountability; and iv) citizen participation. There are no fixed modalities in the MPP – this is up to the municipalities to decide. Some modalities used are study visits, various trainings, discussions, and presentations, but the programme does not require or provide guidelines about these modalities. Consequently, all partnerships have a unique structure. Nonetheless, they are all in line with the five general components developed by ICLD, briefly described below

After an inception of maximum one year where the groundwork for continued cooperation is laid out (i.e. getting to know each other's strengths and weaknesses, signing of cooperation agreements, establishment of project plans), proposals for a project and the set-up of a steering group can be sent in. A steering group, composed of elected representatives from both participating municipalities, acts as guarantee of the local support on both sides and meets biannually. Project proposals should include a specific problem or development need at institutional level within the respective municipality's areas of responsibility, as well as the expected effects of change and follow-up. Municipalities can apply for projects with a duration of one to three years. Cooperation partners may apply for funding for multiple projects during one and the same application period. Knowledge can be shared in a bilateral, three-party or multi-party cooperation set-up, although the latter two are less common. Funding for development/expansion can be applied within established partnerships when parties wish to broaden their cooperation. This phase may last up to six months, with the purpose of enabling the partners to explore and define an added common challenge and hopefully continue and broaden their cooperation by applying for a new project after the development/expansion. The programme also features funding for dissemination of results during an ongoing project or following completion. Funds for dissemination can be applied for within the normal project budget, but in cases where the partner wishes to further disseminate results they have the option of applying for added funds during or after completion of a project in order to spread interesting results from their partnership.

Application and selection

Within the programme period, municipalities are invited to apply for the MPP twice a year. Eligible to apply are primary devolved neighbourhood councils, city district councils, county councils, and regions. After the call is announced on the ICLD homepage, municipalities have a month to apply. Applications are drawn up jointly by the applicant municipalities. Once the applications have been submitted, ICLD discusses all applications, checks whether all formal requirements have been met and assesses the applications in terms of relevance, feasibility and sustainability. ICLD then takes the final decision of selection, with input from SALAR and SKL International.

Finances

Participating in the programme involves no costs for the Swedish actors – in fact, municipalities are not mandated to use their own budgets to work in development cooperation, which is deemed a national responsibility funded by the state. All expenditures for cooperation within the MPP (travel expenses, interpreting and auditing costs, wage costs for participants from Swedish local/regional governments) are funded by ICLD. The international partner municipalities are expected to cover their own salary costs, but travel and accommodation costs are covered by ICLD. Approved funds are disbursed to the Swedish participant after submission of the financial accounts and yearly reports, which means that the Swedish counterpart is responsible for distribution of funds among the parties involved and for the project's final accounts. Maximum 50 % of the approved funding may be paid to the Swedish party in advance if the total amount for the project exceeds SEK 1.000.000 per year (in case the Swedish party is engaged in multiple projects). The maximum amount which can be applied for in the Inception is SEK 220.000 for projects in Europe and SEK 275.000 for projects in Africa/Asia.³ For the steering group, this is SEK 300.000 per year, in case two parties are involved.⁴ For projects in Europe, maximum SEK 450.000 is disbursed per year; for projects in Africa/Asia, a maximum of SEK 500.000 is available per year.⁵

³ Inception phase in a three- or multi-party cooperation: SEK 275.000 (EUR), SEK 330.000 (AFR/AS).

⁴ Steering Group, three- or multi-party cooperation: SEK 400.000 yearly.

⁵ Project, three- or multi-party cooperation: SEK 600.000 (EUR), SEK 650.000 (AFR/AS).

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Sweden

Current programme: MPP programme (2016-2019)

Role of the local government association

The ICLD, a non-profit association established by the local government association SALAR, develops, manages and administers the MPP programme. It selects participants, disburses funds and provides extensive guidance and training to participating municipalities.

Role of the local governments

Swedish municipalities participate by sharing their know-how and expertise on local, democratic governance. Together with the international partner, they design projects, carry them out, and report annually to ICLD,

Number of municipalities involved

At the beginning of 2017, 154 collaborations were involved in the MPP programme, of which sixty Swedish municipalities, county councils and regions

Total volume of the current programme

SEK 240 million for a total of four years (2016-2019) (approximately €24,237,600)

Themes and goals

The aim of a municipal partnership within the MPP programme is to increase civil influence by strengthening local and regional political governance organizations within one or more of the following core areas: equity/inclusion, transparency, possibility to demand accountability and citizen participation.

Modalities

No fixed modalities. Generally, study visits, various trainings, discussions, and presentations are used. The MPP has generally five components which structure the programme, including an extensive inception and the fixed installation of a steering group for each project.

Finances

No co-financing from local governments is needed within the MPP programme. All expenditures for cooperation within the programme (travel expenses, interpreting and auditing costs, wage costs for participants from Swedish local/regional governments) are funded by ICLD.

More information?

<http://www.icld.se/en/municipal-partnership>

1.1.2 The Netherlands

In The Netherlands, national government funds for international cooperation initiatives of local and regional governments are channelled through the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG). Nowadays, VNG International (VNG's international cooperation agency) develops comprehensive programmes focused on local governance and democracy to enhance basic service delivery in developing countries. VNG International is responsible for implementing cooperation programmes, enriched by Dutch municipal expertise and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Whereas in the beginning of the 1990s VNG International's main role was to allocate funds to individual municipal partnerships, today the focus has shifted from individual partnerships to a project-oriented approach in which VNG International plays a managing role. Although some municipalities still have individual city-to-city partnerships today, these have become less common over the years and are no longer directly financed by the national government. VNG International's projects have changed over the years as well. Whilst its LOGO South programme (2007-2010) supported independent municipal development cooperation initiatives in various countries, the successor Local Government Capacity Programme (LGCP 2012-2016) was a more coordinated programme focused on local government capacities in the thematic priority areas of Dutch development cooperation.⁶ It received a positive evaluation in 2015, in which VNG International was assessed to be well-suited to address local governance challenges in partner countries, although more thematic focus for overall programme coherence was needed.⁷ Its follow-up programme, IDEAL, correspondingly represents a shift to an integrated programme with strategic objectives (the promotion of inclusive governance and effective service delivery by local governments) directly linked to the priorities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Current programmes

At this moment, VNG International is running three large-scale programmes wherein Dutch municipalities participate on a structural basis. All three are financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. IDEAL (2017-2021) aspires to strengthen local government structures to enable local governments to cope more effectively with fragility risks. Governance of Inclusive Green Growth in Cities (DEALS 2017-2021) supports fast-growing cities in the transition to inclusive and sustainable development in the context of rapid urbanisation and population growth. Finally, LOGORep (2015-2018) aspires to strengthen resilience at local government level in host and Syrian refugee communities. There are a variety of other programmes financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other donor organizations, in which Dutch local governments participate on a short-term/non-structural basis.

⁶ The current thematic priority areas of Dutch development cooperation are security and the rule of law, water management, food security and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

⁷ DEGE Consult Ltd. *Mid-Term Evaluation Local Government Capacity Programme (LGCP) 2012-2016. Final Synthesis Report October 2015*. Copenhagen 2015)

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

Geographically, IDEAL focuses on Burundi, Mali, the Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Somaliland, South Sudan and Uganda. IDEAL thus focuses on fragile states (rather than on specific development goals), and its thematic focus is inclusive governance as a precondition for the social contract between civilians and their local development to enable local governments to better handle fragility.

DEALS focuses on six cities in Ghana, Benin, Myanmar, Colombia, Mozambique and The Philippines – cities with a clear ‘inclusive green growth’ problem statement and an ambition for change. Its core focus is sustainable governance of urban governments and inclusion of stakeholders for sustainable development. Key thematic topics are: city governance of slum development, spatial planning, sustainable public service delivery, inclusive green growth, climate change adaptation, the ‘water-food-energy’ nexus, circular economy and urban-rural connectivity.

LOGORep is implemented in Jordan and Lebanon, and aimed at strengthening resilience at local government level in order to improve the living conditions of the local population and refugees in host communities and refugee settlements. Specifically, it aims to maintain service delivery levels (water, sanitation, waste, transport) at local government level and enable longer-term planning for spatial and economic development in the context of increased urbanization and pressure on resources.

The role of the Dutch local government association

VNG International coordinates, implements and manages the local or regional development programmes for which Dutch municipalities provide their expertise. Dutch municipalities get national government funding for local or regional international development initiatives through VNG International only, since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocates its funds for decentralised development cooperation directly to the association. Furthermore, VNG International assists and provides training to Dutch municipalities active in international cooperation, it advises on their international development policies and activities.

The role of Dutch municipalities in the current programmes

Dutch municipalities participate in the above programmes by making the expertise of their staff available. For every project, VNG International identifies the concrete expertise required and the best actor to deliver the requested expertise. Dutch local politicians as well as technical staff can be involved. Dutch municipalities contribute to the programme in three ways:

1. Project-based institutional cooperation: a cooperation for the length of a programme with a specific objective and with one or more beneficiary organisations abroad;
2. Activity-based institutional cooperation to introduce beneficiaries to the Dutch local government practice, either in The Netherlands or within the framework of an activity abroad. This can take place in the form of receiving a study visit, by facilitating a coaching trajectory, or by giving a training or presentation;
3. Participation of individual politicians or civil servants based on their professional municipal expertise, not necessarily on behalf of their municipal organisation.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

In IDEAL and DEALS the expertise of Dutch municipalities is shared through study visits, coaching trajectories, trainings, presentations, colleague-to-colleague knowledge exchanges, benchmarking, technical assistance, simulation games and roundtable expert meetings, depending on the project and its objectives. Dutch municipal experts are involved in each of the programmes. In LOGORep, the modalities used mostly are colleague-to-colleague support, coaching and technical advice.

Application and selection

VNG International approaches Dutch municipalities to find municipal expertise for a specific knowledge exchange. VNG International does not spread open calls to municipalities to which they can answer. Rather, municipal experts are contacted through the VNG network. They are approached when their expertise matches the specific needs in a project. In the LOGORep programme the participating municipalities were either approached by VNG International or referred to the association by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Municipalities can always reach out to VNG International to announce their interest in participating in a project. Depending on the need and on the expertise, VNG International sees it can accommodate the municipality.

Finances

No co-financing from local governments is needed within IDEAL, DEALS or LOGORep. In all three programmes, experts from Dutch municipalities receive a reimbursement for all travel costs and work days spent abroad. The reimbursement of work days does not always cover all the costs; in that case, municipalities take on the rest, as a in kind contribution.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in The Netherlands

Role of the local government association

The association (VNG) coordinates, implements and manages the programmes, with the use of expertise from the Dutch municipalities.

Role of the local governments

Municipalities participate in nationally funded programmes by making municipal expertise and staff available. Local politicians as well as technical staff can be involved. Institutional contribution can be project-based or activity-based, and individual politicians or civil servants can participate as well. VNG International does not spread open calls to municipalities to which they can answer. Rather, municipal experts are contacted through the VNG network

Number of municipalities involved

At the moment, seven municipalities are involved in IDEAL, five in DEALS and three in LOGORep. Enkel indien er verdere vraag voor Nederlandse expertise ontstaat zal gekeken worden naar uitbreiding.

Total volume of the current programmes

IDEAL: €22.5 million euro for a four-year period (2017-2021); DEALS: €5 million for a four-year period (2017-2021), LOGORep: €9.6 million for a three-year period (2015-2018).

Themes and goals

Thematic focus on inclusive governance (IDEAL), strengthening resilience at the local government level (LOGORep) and sustainable urban development (Deals).

Modalities

Study visits, coaching, trainings, presentations, colleague-to-colleague, benchmarking, technical assistance, simulation games and roundtable expert meetings.

Finances

No co-financing from local governments is needed. Experts from Dutch municipalities are compensated for travel costs and work days spent abroad.

More information?

<http://www.vng-international.nl/>

<http://www.vng-international.nl/our-projects/ideal/>

<http://www.LOGORep.nl/>

1.1.3 Belgium

Belgium started small-scale municipal international cooperation in 2000. The current, more comprehensive framework in which the three local government associations (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels) manage the decentralised development cooperation initiatives of local governments was first adopted in the period 2008-2013. Since then, it has been followed-up by a 2014-2016 programme and the current 2017-2021 programme. The programmes are meant to support existent twinning partnerships, which are very popular in Belgium. In its 2017 evaluation, technical interventions for effective municipal service delivery under the Flemish 'Gemeentelijke Internationale Samenwerking' (GIS; Municipal International Cooperation) branch of the programme were assessed to have been more successful than capacity building activities – but the general observation is that with a small budget, many activities have been organised with efficient use of human, material and financial means.⁸

Current programmes

In Belgium, a federal country with three regions, decentralised development cooperation is funded primarily by the Federal State. A federal programme for decentralised development cooperation guided by the central government priorities and strategy⁹ is complemented with a Flemish regional programme.

The Belgian federal state funds a large-scale multi-annual programme that supports existing twinning partnerships with municipalities in selected countries. The programme has a Flemish and a Walloon-Brussels branch.

The Flemish Programma voor Gemeentelijke Internationale Samenwerking (GIS; Programme for Municipal International Cooperation), which receives approximately €6 million (2017-2021), is managed by the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG). Currently, the programme supports eighteen municipal partnerships and three partnerships between the VVSG and other local government associations. From the Flemish perspective, the programme is seen as a financial impulse, after an autonomous decision by a local government to implement a local global policy has been taken. The financial impulse is only provided if the international activity would also take place without this (extra) financing mechanism. Only for some aspects or elements of these local global policies the Flemish municipalities seek co-financing from larger programmes, such as those funded by the federal government or from the regional decentralised international cooperation programme of the Flemish government which will be addressed later on.

⁸ 'Eindevaluatie Federaal Programma Gemeentelijke Internationale Samenwerking (GIS) 2014-2016', report by South Research SVBA-VSO (Kessel 2017), 7

⁹ The federal government priorities in development cooperation are humanitarian aid, inclusive growth, social development, climate, environment and resources, consolidation of society and conflict prevention, development education and digitalisation for development.

The Walloon-Brussels component of the federal programme, the Programme de Coopération internationale communale (CIC), is jointly managed by the Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie (UVCW) and the Association Ville et Communes de Bruxelles (Brulocalis). To this joint programme approximately €13,3 million (2017-2021) is allocated, of which the Walloon region receives €8 million.

Within this component, the federal government selects and (co-)finances projects; co-financing is also required from the municipalities participating in the partnerships. The municipal projects must be coherent with the political and strategic orientations of Belgian policy. Currently the programme supports 48 Walloon and Brussels' municipal partnerships.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The Flemish GIS programme focuses on capacity building in and cooperation between local governments, aiming to contribute to good local governance through strengthening local government in the South and through stimulating local policy coherence in Flanders. Specific themes include local economics and market management, waste management, water management, governance and gender, as well as social economics. Geographically, it focuses on low and middle income countries in Latin America and Africa. However, the GIS programme is currently working on an exit strategy for Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru, the programme will only fund partnerships with municipalities from these countries until the end of 2019.

The Walloon-Brussels CIC programme focuses specifically on reducing poverty, by reinforcing the capacities of local institutions in francophone African countries, like Benin, Morocco, Burkina, Senegal and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The central themes of the programme are supporting good political governance, effective administration, and citizen participation in decision-making processes. Both the GIS and the CIC programme aim to contribute to the SDGs.¹⁰

The roles of the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels local government associations

The local government associations conceive their respective programmes (together with the Flemish municipalities in the case of the VVSG) and fulfil a managing role (in administrative and financial terms, as well as in the final reporting). The VVSG and the UVCW/Brulocalis receive the national subsidies. After the federal administration has given final approval for specific projects, the associations allocate the subsidies to specific partnerships. The Belgian associations take care of the application and selection procedures. Furthermore, they are responsible for the guidance of all partnerships and for the dissemination of results and sharing of knowledge. Furthermore, they steer the networking processes (such as regular meetings, regional deliberation sessions) of the partnerships involved and advise the participating municipalities on concrete development issues. Also, the associations lobby for the interests of decentralised development cooperation in the political realm in Belgium. The municipalities provide the input for these lobby activities.

¹⁰ In particular: no poverty, quality education, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, peace, justice and strong institutions and partnerships for the goals.

The role of Belgian municipalities in the current programmes

As both the GIS and CIC programme aim at supporting the existing twinning partnerships, the participating Belgian municipalities are generally asked to continue their cooperation with their twinning partner in a structured way, in several thematic areas based on specific common objectives, as assessed by the Federal government. In the current GIS programme, the thematic areas are waste management, local economy and civil society, among others. In the CIC programme, the common objectives are the strengthening of civil society, social rights, local economic development, and/or the management of local administration.

The specific projects (within the programmes) are carried out in and by the partner municipality, to which the Flemish municipality provides strategic (and financial) support. The Flemish municipalities are the implementers of their part of the programme. They deliver the expertise in local public management (political, administrative and technical) and ensure the financial soundness and the correct content of the projects.

The Belgian civil servant responsible for the so called 'local global policy' is thus the principal responsible person for the implementation and monitoring of the programme. Furthermore, the Flemish municipalities which participate in GIS also contribute to the programme by exchanging expertise among themselves, as well as in the partner country in the South where they can attend regional meetings organised by the VVSG. At these events, different partnerships (with representatives from Flemish and partner municipalities) meet one another.

Seeing as the Federal programmes have a heavy administrative-financial workload for Belgian municipalities, Flemish municipalities are encouraged to first participate in the Flemish regional programme where they establish a twinning partnership and explore the relationship between the two local administrations (more about this regional programme on page 40).

In the CIC programme, the Walloon-Brussels municipalities are themselves responsible for developing "municipal centres of competence" in the different partner countries. These centres are set up to support existent local government associations and facilitate the transfer of best practices. Belgian municipalities generally participate for the whole five-year duration of the programmes, with some exceptions.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

Within the GIS programme, the VVSG is responsible for the guidance, knowledge sharing and networking processes of the partnerships involved. This includes the organisation of gatherings, educational activities, drafting of publications and the organization of regional and international conferences. In the CIC programme, the UVCW and Brulocalis support the exchange of best practices and facilitate cooperation among the partnerships. The general methodology used by both the UVCW and Brulocalis is one of mutual knowledge exchange and networking. The programme uses several modalities:

- Expert exchanges/work visits
- South-South exchanges
- Peer-to-peer learning (in political and administrative/technical matters)

- Field-based learning (or 'learning by doing')

Application and selection

The federal administration handles very detailed regulations for its decentralised development cooperation programme. Municipalities can apply to the multi-annual programmes every time they are relaunched. The current programmes run from 2017 until 2021. A new round will be launched at the end of 2021.

In the GIS programme, the application and selection procedures are managed by the VVSG, which also submits the programme to the federal administration for final approval, every five years. When a new programme is launched, the VVSG directly approaches municipalities with an ongoing twinning partnership and asks them to consider integrating their partnership in the broader GIS programme.

The VVSG selects partnerships based on the following criteria: i) completion of the VVSG regional twinning partnership programme; ii) the VVSG's estimation of the quality of the partnership; iii) participation in trimestral consultation and training sessions (i.e. showing willingness to participate in this administratively heavy programme) and iv) the country selection of the federal administration (i.e. only partnerships from the 33 selected partner countries).

In the CIC programme, the UVCW informs all municipalities when a new programme is launched, by email and through news items on the website and in newsletters. The UVCW does not carry out a selection process; the association only checks whether the municipalities are eligible. Eligibility is only based on whether the municipality has nominated a coordinator and a responsible elected official. This explains the growing number of participating municipalities (for 2017 – 2021 nine new Walloon municipalities).

Finances

Both branches of the Federal programme provide co-funding to support existing twinning partnerships. The Federal financing provides a substantial part of the total financing, as the activity costs of the projects are generally covered. Expenses of the Flemish municipal personnel are *not* covered, except for travel and accommodation costs. All participating twinning partnerships annually receive between €20.000 and €70.000 in the current programme. In the Flemish case, municipalities often support additional interventions in the partner municipality from their own municipal budgets (which vary in volume).¹¹ Certain Walloon-Brussels municipalities do this as well, but most have smaller budgets available.

¹¹ For example, the municipality of Zoersel has a €130.000 partnership budget, of which €30.000-€45.000 is provided by the federal programme annually in the 2017-2021 period; Sint-Niklaas' budget is €90.000, of which €50.000 is subsidized.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Belgium

Role of the local government association

The local government associations conceive the programmes (very much in co-creation with the Flemish municipalities in the case of the VVSG) and play a managing role (in administration, finances, reporting). They ensure the allocation of national subsidies (VVSG and UVCW/Brulocalis) and the application and selection procedures (VVSG). Furthermore, they provide guidance, give advice, stimulate knowledge sharing and networking; and lobby for decentralised cooperation at the Federal level.

Role of the local governments

Municipalities participate through the expansion of existing twinning partnerships in several thematic areas. They implement the project and deliver their political, administrative and technical expertise in local public management. Also, they are responsible for the content and sound financial management of the projects. The Belgian municipalities active in GIS are expected to exchange know-how among themselves as well.

Number of municipalities involved

Currently eighteen municipal partnerships are involved in the GIS programme. The GIS programme also covers three partnerships between the VVSG and other local government associations. The CIC programme includes 48 municipal partnerships.

Total volume of the current programmes

GIS programme: €5.923.116,08 over a five-year period (2017-2021)

Walloon-Brussels CIC programme: €13.327.010,02 over a five-year period, of which €8.004.279,67 is allocated to the Walloon region alone (2017-2021)

Themes and goals

GIS places focus on local economics and market management, waste management, water management, governance and gender, and social economics.

CIC aims to reduce poverty by reinforcing the capacities of local institutions. Specific themes include good political governance, effective administration, citizen participation in decision processes, SDGs.

Modalities

Expert exchanges/work visits, South-South exchanges, peer-to-peer learning (in political and administrative/technical matters), field-based learning, 'learning by doing', networking events, conferences.

Finances

The programme provides additional financing to existent partnerships. This covers most activity costs, but no compensation for Belgian staff is provided for, except for their travel and accommodation costs. Partnerships receive €20.000 - €70.000 annually. Flemish municipalities often support additional interventions from their own budgets. Certain Walloon-Brussels municipalities do this as well, but most have smaller budgets available.

More information?

http://www.vvsg.be/Internationaal/Noord-Zuid/Wettelijk_kader/Pages/Federaal_programma.aspx
<http://www.uvcw.be/espaces/international/68.cfm>

1.1.4 Czech Republic

To finance their decentralised development cooperation initiatives, Czech local governments can either use their own municipal budgets or apply for national financing from the Czech Development Agency (CzDA). The CzDA was established by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the implementer of Czech development cooperation in 2010. While national financing is available, municipalities often consider the administrative and financial burden when applying to the programmes too heavy.¹² Other obstacles preventing engagement in decentralised cooperation are a lack of information about the topic, and to a lesser extent, the language barrier, personal capacity and lack of experience in the realisation of development cooperation projects. As a result, the few local governments that are involved in decentralised development cooperation primarily finance projects from their own municipal budgets, while some also apply for and implement EU grants.

Until 2014, local governments were invited to apply to the MFA Transformation Cooperation Programme. This programme aimed at the transfer of good practice in the areas of civil society development, cooperation with local administration authorities, the media, youth and education, and human rights. Since 2014, it is restricted to NGOs only - possibly as a result of the strong position of NGOs in Czech development cooperation and the recognition of their dependency on the national funds.

Current programmes

Currently local governments can still apply to two CzDA programmes. The annual Support of the development activities of regions and municipalities in priority countries programme aspires to support local government organisations in partner countries, and to support civil society organisations, as well as cultural, social, healthcare, scientific and research institutions. Initially, only local governments were eligible to apply. However, in the past years the CzDA has also opened this programme to NGOs, to support the participation of local government associations (which are formally NGOs in the Czech Republic) in the programme. As such, the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic (SMO) can now submit project proposals to the programme, although this situation potentially opens up the programme for typical NGOs as well. The support programme is a grant programme (with 10 % co-financing).

The Temporary expert assignments programme, that has run for approximately decade, aims to share the Czech experience and knowledge from its own transitional period (i.e. the transfer from a centrally planned economy to a market economy in a democratic environment). The programme was set up as a result of the growing demands of the recipients of Czech development cooperation. It allows municipal experts to be involved and facilitates the sharing of Czech know-how and the usage of new effective tools for development cooperation.

¹² Otto Mertens and Šárka Řecková, *Development Cooperation of Czech Self-Governments: Study*. 2014. Pp.22 and 25)

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The Support programme focuses on the priority countries of the Czech Republic for the period 2017 - 2023: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Moldova and Zambia. The activities and aims of the projects must be aimed at the transfer of know-how, the sharing of experiences in economic and social transformation and the strengthening of capacity for good quality administration of public affairs. Project proposals must be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Temporary expert assignments programme is focuses on three pilot countries: Georgia, Moldova and Serbia, which are all aspiring EU membership. Themes covered in this programme include agriculture, ecology, industry, education, health or social sphere and good governance. Special emphasis is placed on the Czech experience in EU legislation approximation and implementation of EU regulatory standards in multiple sectors.

The role of the Czech local government association

Currently, SMO offers support to Czech local governments participating in decentralised development cooperation without direct financial support. Assistance can include consultation on the municipal project proposal, networking, sharing the information and contacts among members and partners, as well as advocacy in the field of development cooperation) without direct financial support.

The role of Czech municipalities in the current programmes

In the Support programme, the Czech municipalities can share their know-how and experiences related to the economic and social transformation from a planned to a market economy with partner municipalities. Municipalities are required to have found a foreign partner before proposing a project and have to design project proposals on their own. The municipalities have to submit yearly reports, as well as a final report on the progress and implemented activities. Applicants for a multi-annual project have to submit proposals annually, to get the grant for the second or third year. In practice, municipalities do not often apply to this programme as they are discouraged by the administrative burden, rules and bureaucracy behind the support – therefore, on average, only two regions or municipalities apply yearly.

In 2016, SMO applied to the Support programme to acquire financing for the preparation of its pilot project “Program of International Development Co-operation of Municipalities”. This project aimed to increase the involvement of Czech municipalities in development cooperation by reducing the administrative burden on Czech municipalities which are associated with development projects, providing them with methodological and direct financial support and background information on quality development projects, and help municipalities to find foreign partners by organising a contact seminar. Due to difficulties in finding enough interested municipalities, the project was finished early – however, SMO aims to carry out these activities in the future.

Similarly, in the Temporary expert assignments, professionals working in local governments provide their consultancy services to foreign partners (state institutions, NGOs or municipalities). Experts from state administration, the private sector, non-profit organizations and academics can also participate. Since all projects are fully covered by CzDA and only require temporary deployment of individual experts, the burden on municipalities is lighter.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

The Support programme aims at a longer-term involvement of Czech municipalities in decentralised development cooperation initiatives through work placements, cultural exchanges, workshops and technical expert exchanges, lasting one or multiple years. In the Temporary expert assignments programme experts engage in knowledge-sharing activities of maximum 25 days which are generally implemented in the partner country. Knowledge is shared through consultations, seminars, cooperation on the preparation of background materials (such as legislations in the EU acquis), fieldwork activities, negotiations with stakeholders, expert consultations or training. The CzDA submits a final report on the progress of the expert activity after his return.

Application and selection

Each year, local governments and local government associations (and to a lesser extent NGOs) can apply to the Support programme when CzDA opens a call for proposals. The call is communicated through the website of the CzDA and the local government associations. Project proposals are selected by an evaluation committee consisting of representatives from the CzDA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who assess the proposal on the extent to which it answers to the needs of the partner country, strengthens the capacity of local institutions and develops relations between the two countries. Other elements are the quality of processing, the expert level of the project and whether it makes use of other financial resources.

In the Temporary programme, local governments in partner countries take the first step in the application by submitting a local request to the Czech embassy in their country. Authorised applicants are public administration institutions in the partner countries of the Czech Republic (at all levels of administration (i.e. national, regional, local)). Applications may also be submitted by public-private partnerships. After receiving the request, CzDA evaluates the necessity and relevance of the request, searches for Czech experts and signs a Memorandum of Cooperation with the two parties. The selection of Czech experts is usually done by employees from line ministries, familiar with the programme. If the employee cannot recommend suitable experts from their department or subordinate institutions, SMO helps in the process. The expert whose education and experience best suit the requirements is selected.

Finances

Annually, between one and one-and-a-half million CZK (approximately €39.100 - €58.700) is allocated for the Support programme. Individual projects can be financed up to CZK 500.000 (approx. €19.550). Usually, grants are provided, with a maximum of 90% funding. Local governments are required to co-finance the remaining 10% of the project, although financing a larger share is rewarded.

In the Temporary programme experts are rewarded for the provision of expert knowledge. They receive a salary compensation for the working hours spent on the implementation of the project in the Czech Republic, as well as for each day spent abroad. Additionally, travel expenses including accommodation, per diem, visa, insurance, vaccination, telephone and other necessary costs are reimbursed to the expert after completion of the project. The maximum budget of individual missions depends on the extent of the expert mission. These figures are an internal matter of CzDA and are not published. The total annual budget of the programme is CZK 3.217.968,07 (approx. €125.900).

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in The Czech Republic

Role of the local government association

Currently, SMO is active in decentralised cooperation projects by providing consultation services to municipal project proposals, networking and sharing the information and contacts among members and partners. It also does advocacy in the field of development cooperation and recommends experts for the Temporary Expert Assignments programme. It plans to play a larger role in the guidance of local governments in decentralised cooperation projects in the future.

Role of the local governments

Local governments participate by making the expertise of their staff available in longer-term partnerships or in short-term expert assignments. They are required to design their own projects, submit reports and to provide co-financing in the Support programme. As the Temporary programme is aimed at individual experts, local governments only contribute by making available experts from their staff.

Number of municipalities involved

On average, two local governments are involved in the Support programme annually. In 2016, the Support programme supported two municipal projects; in 2017, three municipal projects were supported.

In 2016 the Temporary programme supported one project with local government experts; in 2017, two projects with local government experts were implemented.

Total volume of the current programmes

Support programme: 1-1,5 million CZK annually (approximately €39.100 - €58.700)

Temporary expert assignment programme: 3.217.968,07 CZK for the year 2016 (approx. €125.900)

Themes and goals

Focus on the transformation from a planned to a market economy, good governance, support to civil society, and cultural, social, healthcare, scientific and research institutions. Special emphasis is put on the Czech experience in EU legislation approximation and implementation of EU regulatory standards in different sectors. All projects have to be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Modalities

Student exchanges, cultural exchanges, workshops, technical expert exchange, consultations, seminars, cooperation on the preparation of background materials, stakeholder negotiations, expert consultations and training.

Finances

The Support programme offers financing of up to 90% of the project. Local governments are required to co-finance at least 10%, although more is welcomed. Individual projects can be financed up to CZK 500.000 (approx. €19.550).

The Temporary expert assignment programme provides for salary compensation, and fully covers travel and accommodation expenses.

More information?

<http://www.czechaid.cz/temata/tuzemske-projekty/podpora-rozvojovych-aktivit-kraju-a-obci-v-prioritnich-zemich-zrs-ci/>

<http://www.czechaid.cz/projekty/pripravna-faze-k-pilotnimu-projektu-program-mezinarodni-rozvojove-spoluprace-obci/>

1.1.5 Austria

Austria has a highly fragmented development cooperation system in which only a small percentage (2% of ODA) is allocated to decentralised development cooperation. Several hundred municipalities are engaged in long-lasting twinning partnerships geared with European counterparts, mostly financed by municipal budgets. National funding for decentralised development cooperation initiatives of Austrian Local Authorities (LAs) with foreign partners is provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which allocates the budget to the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), the operational unit of Austrian development cooperation. The Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (Österreichischer Städtebund) has supported decentralised development cooperation initiatives since 1992, when it founded the Know-how Transfer Center (KTC) to facilitate knowledge exchange between Austrian cities and towns and their local partners in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. In order to secure higher efficiency of the spent funds and to decrease the administrative burden, the KTC was replaced by the BACID programme in 2014. This programme supplies smaller grants through thematic calls for proposals for the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova. Besides the small grants, the BACID programme includes more comprehensive support to the modernisation of public administration in the target countries, through specific assistance to national public administration and local governments. BACID is primarily managed by the KDZ Center for Public Administration Research, a competence centre and knowledge platform for the public sector, which was co-founded by the Städtebund. It does so on behalf of the Städtebund.

Current programme

As mentioned above, the Österreichischer Städtebund and the KDZ Center for Public Administration Research are currently implementing the BACID programme (2014-2017 and will be continued 2018-2020), with funding from the ADA. BACID has three components: LOGON Danube¹³, the Governance Forums¹⁴ and the BACID Fund. Local governments can participate in BACID by sharing the expertise of their staff through three modules:

1. BACID Fund: a grant scheme which provides funding for short-term know-how transfers implemented by Austrian institutions or experts for the benefit of partners from targeted countries. Municipalities establish a partnership with a partner LA before applying to the programme. Finally, they or the partner organisation provide minor co-financing of the project.
2. Mentoring Support: KDZ organises mentoring for local governments and other organisations from the partner countries, including usually one-week study visit of two or three professionals to Austria. Austrian local governments that are identified as having good practices are invited to share their experiences and lessons learnt (i.e. public-private partnership, organisational development, transparency, open data), under the Governance Forums component.

¹³ A platform aimed at building regional partnerships between the local government associations in the Danube region, implemented through cooperation with the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS).

¹⁴ Organisation of three Governance Forums with representatives of various stakeholders from the Danube region on topics related to Public Governance.

3. Expert assistance to local governments to NALAS: experts from Austrian cities participate in events organised by NALAS in order to share expertise in relevant fields (i.e. migration, energy efficiency, European Integration), under the LOGON Danube component.

Although the BACID Fund was the initial focus of the BACID programme, Austrian municipalities have not shown much interest to participate in this part because of difficulties in meeting deadlines of Calls and a hesitance to speak English. As such, the focus for municipal participation in BACID has shifted to mentoring support, which is organised entirely by KDZ. The latter also offers translation.

Geographical and thematic focus of the current programme

The entire programme is aimed at public administrations from non-EU countries of the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania) and the Republic of Moldova. It aspires to strengthen the governance structures of the local and regional governments in countries in the region and to prepare them for possible accession to the European Union. BACID thus supports the targeted countries in the building of structures and cooperation, and in the process of democratization and regional development. Specific thematic priorities for grants are Smart City¹⁵, Sustainable City¹⁶ and Inclusive City¹⁷. These thematic priorities are defined in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and its Urban Platform Danube Region. The thematic focus in mentoring support and expert assistance depends on the individual experience of the participants.

The role of the Austrian local government association

BACID is implemented by the Österreichischer Städtebund and KDZ. For the BACID Fund, the Städtebund spreads the calls, while KDZ selects applications and provides support to the participating LAs. Both the Städtebund and KDZ assist foreign partners in their search for an Austrian partner, and help them to formulate their needs. The BACID Fund is primarily managed by the KDZ and the Städtebund is involved when requested. In mentoring support, KDZ organises the entire visit of public servants from the BACID target countries to Austrian cities. Participants are trained by KDZ staff and external experts, and subsequently implement their good practices in their own city.

¹⁵ This includes e-government/ICT, energy, governance, mobility/transport, housing, local economic development, modern management, spatial planning and urban renewal.

¹⁶ Health care and social care, human resources, greening cities, disaster risk management, tourism, cultural heritage, culture and creative industries, industrial restructuring, municipal finances, sustainable administration, services of general interest, promoting cities, sustainable urbanisation, urban security, waste management.

¹⁷ Child care and child welfare, civil society participation, disadvantaged groups, migration, diversity policies, equal opportunities, Roma inclusion, youth policies.

The role of Austrian municipalities in the current programme

Under the BACID Fund, the Austrian local governments are invited to participate as partners to their peers in the region, by developing the action plan together, sharing expertise and applying for funding. In-kind contribution from at least one partner is requested in order to show commitment. However, the call is open to other organisations as well. The local government professionals are mostly involved in the mentoring support, where the KDZ experts organise the expert support, including study visits for the local governments and other organisations from the region to Austria and to local governments identified as best practices in the specific field.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

The Austrian expertise is shared through expert support and mentoring; workshops, seminars and training; and the elaboration of reports, studies, surveys and other documents. Usually, the Fund activities are implemented in the partner country and have a duration of several days. The applicant is free to decide on the programme and duration. The Austrian experts visit their partner, lead a workshop and write a final report afterwards. They can also analyse an issue or situation in the partner municipality and develop recommendations. The mentoring support activities take place in Austria, while the expert assistance activities take place within the NALAS¹⁸ framework.

Application and selection

Due to the shift towards mentoring, which specifically targets local governments, the BACID Fund is now open to public as well as private entities/persons (including both the business sector and non-profit organisations). However, applicants from partner countries need to be non-profit-making and involved in local or regional governance. The Fund operates through a 'call-system' in which applicants have to find each other before applying (although KDZ can assist in making the match), and show their commitment to cooperate by signing a partnership agreement. The Österreichische Städtebund spreads the call for proposals among its Austrian members and through the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS). The selection is based on the experience in the field and in the region, the sustainability of the project, and the signing of the partnership agreement. In mentoring support and expert assistance KDZ invites local governments individually to participate based on their experience, through NALAS.

Finances

Five calls for proposals were issued in a three-year period under the BACID Fund, with €200.000 available in total. The maximum grant available per project is €6.000. Applicants and partners are obliged to contribute to the programme, which may include in-kind contributions. In case the activity costs exceed the maximum budget of €6.000, the applicants have to pay the amount themselves. The programme does not allow for pre-financing. Costs are reimbursed once the applicant has completed the final report and sent in a financial statement. The programme covers a partial salary compensation for Austrian experts and trainers, travel costs, the costs of events, and a per diem covering meals, transport, accommodation, insurance and material costs.

¹⁸ NALAS: Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Austria: BACID

Role of the local government association

The competence centre and knowledge platform (KDZ Center for Public Administration Research) coordinates, implements and manages the programme, with the use of expertise from Austrian public or private organisations, on behalf of the association (Österreichischer Städtebund).

Role of the local governments

Austrian municipalities can participate in the BACID programme by sharing the expertise of their staff through three modules: the BACID Fund, Mentoring Support and Expert assistance for NALAS.

Number of local governments involved

Overall BACID programme: all local government associations from the Danube Region.

BACID Fund: ten Austrian local governments and fifteen from the Danube Region (as well as six development agencies/organisations from the Danube Region and one from Austria).

Mentoring: four out of the total of eight mentoring activities involved municipalities.

Moreover, much more municipalities took part in workshops organised in the partner countries as participants at workshops.

Total volume of the current programme

A total budget of €200.000 was available for 2014-2017.

Themes and goals

Focus on strengthening local governance structures in non-EU Western Balkan countries and Moldova, supporting the process of democratization and regional development, specifically in the thematic priorities Smart City, Sustainable City and Inclusive City.

Modalities

Short-term knowledge exchange in the form of expert support and mentoring; workshops, seminars and training; and the elaboration of reports, studies, surveys and other documents.

Finances

Participating municipalities are required to advance all costs and to ensure at least in-kind contribution together with partners. However, the programme does cover a partial salary compensation for Austrian experts and trainers, travel costs, the costs of events and a per diem.

More information?

<http://www.bacid.eu/>

1.1.6 Germany

Germany traditionally has a strong focus on development cooperation, particularly bilateral (as opposed to decentralised or multilateral). In 2017, Germany spent 0.7 % of its GNI on ODA, which makes Germany the second largest donor in the world, in terms of volume. Although the sixteen German Länder (regional governments) are also very active in development cooperation, they mostly concentrate their funds on development education within their own regions. The German municipalities are strongly involved in twinning partnerships and decentralised cooperation: more than 650 municipalities are twinned or participate in project partnerships with cities and municipalities from Asia, Latin America or Africa. The German Association of Cities, the Deutscher Städtetag, is generally not involved in the transfer of funds for decentralised development cooperation, as funds are directly transferred to German regions or local governments via agencies like the “Service Agency Communities in One World” (as part of Engagement Global), on behalf of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Deutscher Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH), a private sector entity owned by the national government, also supports capacity development of local governments and as such does involve municipal experts in many of its programmes. At the moment, one of the main programmes for decentralised development cooperation is ‘Connective Cities’, a joint initiative implemented by GIZ, the Deutscher Städtetag and Engagement Global¹⁹.

Current programme

Rather than a traditional programme, Connective Cities (with two phases: 2013-2015; 2016-2019) with an initial term from 2013 to 2018) is an ‘international urban network for sustainable development’. With the help of networking and dialogue events, it fosters mutual learning and peer-to-peer exchange on a practical level and supports the development of project ideas for international cooperation between local governments. Connective Cities is a joint venture between the Deutscher Städtetag, Engagement Global and GIZ, commissioned by the BMZ. It is currently fully financed by the BMZ, but options are being examined for possible supplementary funding from other institutions.

“Connective Cities creates opportunities for urban practitioners to learn from each other and to exchange on innovative solutions. In the end of the day, what we really want to achieve is to facilitate change processes. The dialogue and peer-to-peer advisory is the first step towards an action-oriented planning for a project”

- Sabine Drees, Connective Cities

¹⁹ Engagement Global facilitates other funding arrangement for climate partnerships, sustainable municipal partnerships etc. on a more ad hoc basis.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programme

The programme aims to promote sustainable urban development and to strengthen a global exchange of experience on innovative solutions. It aims to create a 'Community of Practice' in which German and international know-how on many problems that urban environments face today – issues relating to poverty, traffic and the environment, as well as social integration and social justice – exchange good practices so other cities can benefit from the solutions being applied elsewhere. It has a worldwide scope, aiming to unite urban practitioners from municipal administration and local public companies, but also stakeholders from politics, private sector, science and civil society.

The role of the German local government association

The Deutscher Städtetag is part of the Steering Committee of the joint venture with GIZ and Engagement Global. This Steering Committee decides on all strategic aspects of Connective Cities. The Association is also represented in the Connective Cities Secretariat which provides the operational, internal and external services of Connective Cities as well as the necessary support services. Specifically, the Deutscher Städtetag maintains the contact between the Connective Cities joint venture and the German local governments, and spreads information and calls for participation events among its members.

The role of German local governments in the current programmes

The first step taken by local governments in the programme is the hosting or attending of a dialogue event. After the Deutscher Städtetag spreads a call which asks local governments to present themselves or host a dialogue event on a specific topic of interest they want to cover, selected local governments organise this event with the support of the Bonn-based Connective Cities team. The organisation of the event requires a significant effort, as the local government does not only host the event but also gathers experts and co-funds the event. Between twenty and thirty national and international participants are generally invited. International participants are identified and mobilised through the networks' contacts and through GIZ, which is implementing programmes in 120 countries at the moment. All invited partners prepare good practices of sustainable urban development or a concrete challenge/problem situation from their direct practical environment. At the event the participants present and discuss their good practices, then engage in peer-to-peer advice sessions. Finally, in an "action planning session", municipal participants develop new project ideas together. After project ideas have been developed in the dialogue events, Connective Cities supports the transformation from ideas to projects, in which local governments put the know-how they have gathered to use. Connective Cities acts as a facilitator of these processes and can support the further development of the project idea through expert assignments, study tours, webinars, local project workshops and advice. However, Connective Cities steps out before the implementation of a project starts. This phase is the responsibility of the local governments themselves.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

In the above-mentioned dialogue events and workshops, knowledge is primarily shared through peer- to-peer consulting. After this, Connective Cities identifies the appropriate format to support the further project planning and development, in cooperation with the local government(s), who will be in charge of the project implementation. This project support activity can take the form of local project workshops (for bigger projects), trainings, study tours, and expert assignments (smaller three/four days projects with two or three German experts). For the latter, Connective Cities relies on a data bank of experts, which currently includes one hundred municipal practitioners. Also, Connective Cities offers virtual cooperation (online working groups, webinars, e-learning courses). Finally, Connective Cities organises International Dialogue Events that take place in a foreign country. Modalities used are peer-to-peer advice and multi-stakeholder dialogues. Project ideas coming out of all of these activities need to be operationalised outside of the Connective Cities programme.

Connective Cities methodology:

1. Preparation
2. Presenting challenges and Good Practices
3. Peer-to-peer consulting
Collegial approach to identify solutions
4. Common project development
Developing project ideas that lead to:
 - Project workshops
 - Trainings
 - Study tours
 - Expert assignments

Application and selection

Local governments can apply for the dialogue events by responding to the annual call. The response to these calls differs: in 2016, five cities hosted a dialogue event, but usually three events are hosted annually. If all cities fulfil their requirements, Connective Cities tries to select all of them. In their selection process, Connective Cities looks for topics that either they have not worked on yet, or topics that are relevant both for German municipalities and for municipalities in developing countries. Furthermore, it highly values applicants that not only bring their own technical expertise but also their international connections. Topics must be aimed at technical expertise – not at the political organisation.

The selection process for the International Dialogue Events is different and is taken care of by GIZ implementing partner of Connective Cities. GIZ scans the applications, in close cooperation with GIZ' regional offices around the world. Connective Cities tries to scan their suggestions for topics and partners.

Finances

The initial two phases of Connective Cities were financed by the BMZ. For now, a third phase is also planned, until 2022. As stated above, the ultimate aim is to make the cities' platform sustainable through institutionalisation. Participating local governments are generally expected to pay for their own participation. Connective Cities does not dispose of the resources to finance projects, but it can offer a financial advisory service. This complementary service helps local governments that do not dispose of sufficient means of their own to implement projects to find third-party financing. Engagement Global has some funding modalities for the projects of decentralised cooperation that involve at least one German local government. Another opportunity can be EU-funding. If a German local government receives funding, it is responsible for the management of this funding. Participants of Dialogue Events are expected to assume their travel costs or find third-party funding. Other activities, such as expert assignments, are financially covered by Connective Cities.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Germany**Role of the local government association**

The Deutscher Städtetag spreads the call for dialogue events to its members. Together with GIZ and Engagement Global it is part of the Connective Cities Steering Committee and Secretariat. The latter is responsible for operational, internal and external services and necessary support services. The Steering Committee takes the strategic decisions.

Role of the local governments

Local governments are expected to host, organise and co-fund dialogue events, or to solely attend to them. During the dialogue events, local governments exchange know-how, give each other advice and jointly develop project ideas. Afterwards, Connective Cities supports the further project planning and development, but steps out before the projects takes place. The execution of the project is the responsibility of the local governments.

Number of municipalities involved

Since its launch in 2014, Connective Cities has mobilised more than 600 municipal actors from around 48 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America; around 75 of which are German citizens. 23 dialogue and learning formats have been organised. Usually three German cities apply to be a host per year.

Total volume of the current programme

€7.5 million for 2013-2019.

Themes and goals

Focus is put on sustainable urban development and on strengthening/facilitating a global exchange of experience on innovative solutions for urban issues. Specific topics are good urban governance, integrated urban development, local economic development and municipal services.

Modalities

Dialogue events (including peer-to-peer consulting, multi-stakeholder dialogues, project workshops, trainings, study tours, expert assignments, online training tools); International dialogue events.

Finances

Costs for Connective Cities activities are covered by the Connective Cities programme. Participating cities do in-kind contributions (e.g. venue; local transport)

More information?

<https://www.connective-cities.net/en/>

1.1.7 France

With an experience of over forty years, the Cités Unies France, established in 1975, plays an active role in promoting local democracy. All the members of Cités Unies France become automatically a member of UCLG: United Cities and Local Governments. CUF engages both at the international level as at the national level. At the national level they are strengthening local democracy by promoting decentralized co-operations and providing their members with information and advice. At the international level, CUF provides a platform for French local governments who are involved in the same foreign counterparts. These 'country groups' (34 in total) promote close cooperation and a better understanding of the socio-economic and political situation of the foreign countries French local governments are involved with. Over the years, CUF proved to be a valuable link for both French authorities as for the institutions of the country concerned.

Today, the Cités Unies France is an important advocate for the representation of local governments and communities in the decision-making process. In 2008, CUF became one of the founding member of PLATFORMA, a European coalition of local and regional authorities.

Besides, Cités Unies France, there are other French organisations, who also promote local democracy. The 'Association Française du Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe', created in 1951, is the French association of the CEMR. The Council of European Municipalities and Regions is the European section of UCLG. The AFCCRE assists and advises French municipalities, communities and regions in their activities with Europe, the European Union and her institutions. The AFCCRE strives to participate in an ongoing dialogue with national Associations of local authorities and is a reliable source for information for her nearly thousand members.

The 'Association internationale de Maires Francophones' is also one of the organisations that are closely linked to the Francophonie movement and is based in Paris. This organisation was established in 1979 with the idea of uniting all French speaking municipalities in the world. The organisation is one of the operating entities of the Francophonie. Now, almost forty years later, AIMF consists of 237 towns and 35 associations of elected representatives. Together, they strive to improve the quality of life of all men and women by promoting decentralised multilateral cooperation.

Somewhat its equivalent, created more recently in 2002, is the 'Association internationale de Régions Francophones' based in Lyon.

Current programmes of CUF

CUF has 34 country groups: Armenia, Croatia, Russia, Serbia, Algeria, Israel, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, Turkey, Central America and Cuba, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Haiti, Mexico, The United States, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivor coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Comoros, China, India, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. CUF aims to develop shared activities with the local governments of these groups. This activity is carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign affairs, and other partners.

At this moment CUF has the lead in several European projects. One of them is a project between French and Algerian cities concerning participation of youth in politics. The other project is a capacity building project in Bangui, capital of the Central-African Republic, where CUF supports the local government in its efforts to strengthen their services. French local governments take active part in these programs.

Geographical and thematic focus of the current programme

Cités Unies France works with 34 'country groups'. These groups consists of members who are all involved in the same country. The working groups allow the members to share information, knowledge and experiences in order to promote concerted action. In addition to the knowledge sharing, CUF also accommodates their members with valuable links and contacts between the French local governments and authorities and institution of the country concerned.

Aside from this geographical approach, CUF emphasizes on a thematic focus. Since a few years, CUF has eight 'thematic groups' in addition to the 'country groups'. The thematic groups are: agriculture and food security, climate and environment, crises and rehabilitation, internationalisation, youth, social politics, education and waste management.

The role of the French local government association

As an association exclusively dedicated to decentralised cooperation, CUF provides a platform for its members. A platform where local governments can exchange information, knowledge, expertise and experiences. This is organised through several working groups and country groups.

CUF stays also in close contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for External Action of Local Governments who launches Call of Proposals for decentralised cooperation and informs its members about this call of proposals.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

There are several ways in which knowledge is exchanged between several parties. One way is through the country groups, where members involved in the same country, share experiences and expertise. Expertise is also shared through trainings, (technical) assistance, information meetings and conferences.

Application and selection

The Delegation for External Action of Local Authorities, a part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, organises several projects and calls for applications. There are annual calls for short term projects, calls for specific countries (both short and long term), triennial calls for long term projects, thematic calls and calls from the French Development Agency. The norm is that the local governments apply to such calls. CUF and the Ministry encourage local governments to apply in consortium. The local governments have full autonomy if they want to apply or not.

Finances

Generally, most of the decentralised cooperation is funded by the local and regional governments themselves. In 2013, at least 230 million was spent by local governments on international work. This number represents 2.6% of the official development assistance of France (ODA).

Local governments developed an innovating way to finance international cooperation through the 1% solidarity option. National Law allows local governments and their operating bodies to spend up to one percent of their budgets dedicated to services in a growing number of fields: water and sanitation, electricity, energy and public transportation. The voluntary based initiative has mobilised substantial funding. Projects focussing on water management and sanitation can receive additional funding (with a maximum of 67 million per year) through the law of 'Oudin-Santini' implemented in 2005.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the eldest (more than 30 years) and main source that provides co-financing for international (decentralised) cooperation. The 'Delegation for the external action of local authorities' (DAECT), part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, finances decentralised cooperation projects. More recently, the Agence française de Développement (AFD) launched a facility aiming to support the larger scale projects. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DAECT) and CUF are linked by trilateral agreements, including co-funding

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in France

Current programme:

CUF has 34 country groups and 8 thematic groups. At his moment, CUF has the lead in several European projects.

Role of the local government association

The CUF organises working groups and country groups, provides information and advice, spreads information about calls to action, has taken initiative in several programmes and is involved in the co-financing mechanism.

Role of the local governments

The local governments contribute to the annual budget of CUF and share knowledge, information, contacts, expertise and experiences with other members of CUF in the working groups and country groups.

Number of municipalities involved

Around 3000 local governments

Themes and goals

There are 34 country groups and the eight themes: agriculture and food security, climate and environment, crises and rehabilitation, internationalisation, youth, social politics, education and waste management.

Modalities

Coaching, trainings, (technical) assistance, knowledge exchange through information meetings and conferences.

Finances

Most of the funding for decentralised cooperation is generated by the local governments themselves. Additional funding is provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DAECT) and CUF are linked by trilateral agreements, including co-funding.

More information?

<https://www.cites-unies-france.org/index.php>

<http://www.aimf.asso.fr/>

<http://www.afccre.org/fr#.W6yEbGZIK3A>

1.2 Category II: Regional local government programmes

In some countries decentralised development cooperation is not organised on the national but on the regional level, and is financed with regional budgets. This section presents the programmes that finance and facilitate decentralised development cooperation in a selection of regions, to sketch how decentralised development cooperation can be organised regionally, but is not meant to be an exhaustive list.

1.2.1 Belgium: Flanders

Current programmes

Apart from the federal programme, the Flemish government funds its own regional decentralised international cooperation programmes. For the period 2014-2019, the Flemish government has given 88 municipalities and cities an 'impulse subsidy', which flows directly to the municipalities without interference by the VVSG. The 'impulse subsidy' was originally set up to support the set-up of development cooperation policies within Flemish municipalities – so not necessarily to direct international cooperation, but also to awareness raising activities. Since 2016, this subsidy was integrated in the municipal fund (which provides for the basic funding of Flemish municipalities), which means that municipalities are no longer obliged to spend it on development cooperation, although they still do in practice.

Parallel to this funding mechanism, the Flemish government provides funding to the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) for three-year periods. For the period 2017-2019 it has allocated €520.145,74 to the VVSG (including personnel and operating costs). The primary aim of the funding mechanism is to support the 88 municipalities and cities that received an 'impulse subsidy' in their endeavours. As such, the Flemish government funding to VVSG provides the association with the financial means to provide support to the 88 municipalities, in terms of personnel and in operational terms (with publications, education etc.). Unlike the federal programme, the support is not solely aimed at municipalities with twinning partnerships. In line with its focus on the SDGs, the VVSG has broadened its scope beyond the 88 initial 'impulse' municipalities. Currently, all municipalities with a development cooperation policy or an SDG policy can receive support.

Geographical and thematic focus

The 'impulse subsidy' functioned as additional support to the Flemish municipality's local development cooperation policies. The subsidy was meant to encourage municipalities to broaden the public support for development cooperation in Flanders, with a thematic focus on global policy and global citizenship. Municipalities could also use the subsidy to set up and/or maintain a global partnership with a partner municipality elsewhere.²⁰ The Flemish government funding to the VVSG is used for the support and guidance of municipalities with an international development cooperation policy, and on localizing the SDGs. The content of the programme varies. In the current trajectory for 2017-2019, the VVSG accentuates the local application of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, in the spring of 2017, VVSG has started working on a pilot project with twenty municipalities, in which possibilities for integrating the SDGs into local policy are being explored.

The role of the Flemish local government association

The VVSG plays an accommodating role in this programme. It offers guidance, support, education and networking activities to the Flemish municipalities with the finance which it receives from the Flemish government.

The role of Flemish municipalities in the programme

Municipalities are the implementers of the projects financed by the 'impulse subsidy', and contribute through their activities in the field of development cooperation, by stimulating public support, awareness and capacity building for development cooperation within the municipality, by strengthening a partner local government in the South and possibly by providing emergency aid to the South. Ever since the subsidy has been integrated in the municipal fund, the reporting burden has decreased – the local governments now only have to report to the municipal council. Municipalities can thus design their projects relatively autonomously, although priority actions have usually been specified in their local governments' multi-annual strategic plans (2014-2019).

Modalities and knowledge sharing

- Colleague expert exchanges, political staff exchanges and youth exchanges
- Study visits taking place in Flanders
- Festivities and cultural activities in Flanders to raise awareness (school workshops, exhibitions etc.)
- International school partnerships and exchanges
- Thematic activities in the South on civil society, youth policy, the strengthening of local economy, environmental policy, etc.

²⁰ Dienst Internationaal (2016). Van Noord-Zuid naar Mondiaal. Naar een lokaal mondiaal beleid. Brussels: VVSG, p.70

Application and selection

For this period, the Flemish government selected 88 municipalities out of 127 applications, in 2013. VVSG was not part of the selection process. The Flemish minister selected beneficiaries according to the following criteria: conformity with the policy priorities of localizing development cooperation, in view of expanding local professionalization of decentralised development cooperation, either within the Flemish municipality or in cooperation with a partner in the South; feasibility and sustainability of the municipality's vision on development cooperation in its multi-annual strategic plan; and the relationship between the volume of the solicited subsidy and the aspired results.

Finances

Since 2016, municipalities have relatively easy access to these subsidies, although additional activities need to be in line with the municipalities' multi-annual strategic plans, which have already been presented to the Flemish government in an earlier stage. All activities stimulating public support and awareness for, or education about, development in Flanders or in the partner municipality are eligible for subsidies. Flemish municipalities can receive a full salary compensation and travel and accommodation costs can be reimbursed – but it is up to the municipalities to decide how to spend their grant. Subsidies granted are currently between €13.500 and €50.000 per municipality. In case of twinning partnerships, the usual grants are €36.000 and €50.000. However, the subsidies work with a co-financing mechanism: municipalities have to finance at least 30% of their plans themselves. This does not seem to create a problem for the Flemish municipalities.

1.2.2 Italy

In Italy, decentralised development cooperation mainly runs through the regions. The national government does not provide large amounts of direct funding for decentralised development cooperation, but finances projects proposed by Local Authorities (i.e. Regions, Metropolitan Cities, Municipalities) through specific Call for Proposals. Regions carry out most of their activities using their own resources or European funds. In recent years, the regions of Tuscany, Emilia Romagna, Marche and Piedmont have been most active in decentralised development cooperation. At the local government level, the most important actors are usually the larger cities. Most municipalities are not strongly involved in decentralised development cooperation as they do not have a lot of funding for such activities. AICCRE, the Italian Association of Municipal and Regional authorities-CCRE, is currently involved in a constitutional reform process to give more power and budget to the municipalities in the field of decentralised cooperation, but the potential reform is currently locked, thanks to a referendum that blocked it in 2016. This means that, currently, Regions remain the main actors in decentralised development cooperation. The types of projects depend on the resources of the region and on the best practices that they have, among other things. The regions do sometimes reach out to local governments, through calls for proposals, to involve their expertise. But also in these cases, the project is prepared and carried out at the regional level. Below you will find the example of the Piedmont Region, to give you a better idea of current regional programmes in the field of decentralised cooperation.

1.2.3 Piedmont

The Piedmont region focuses on various elements in its international cooperation, including a culture of peace, the guarantee of access to democratic freedoms and the recognition and protection of human rights. In all its actions, the sharing of common values such as solidarity, international cooperation and education for sustainable development stand central. Its 2016 Plan for Cooperation further specifies the particular political significance of international cooperation in relation to current migration processes that directly affect local realities. By involving local communities in international cooperation actions, the Region aims to inform and raise awareness among Piedmont citizens about the context and processes underlying migratory phenomena. Ideally, this will lead to a higher level of acceptance and tolerance of migrants in the Region. Piedmont issues one or two Calls for Proposals per year, in which the establishment and consolidation of territorial networks (incl. local governments & civil society) stands central. Local authorities of the region can apply to the Calls for Proposals which are issued maximum twice a year. Projects have a duration of twelve to eighteen months.

“At this moment there is no official podium where all actors meet. This is what we are working on. Our target is to create a permanent table with representatives from national, regional and local government, NGOs and civil society. If there would be a real dialogue between civil society and local government, cooperation would be more effective.”

Carla Rey, AICCRE

Current programmes

In 2016, local governments could apply to two calls in the field of “Territorial partnerships for a sustainable future”. One focused on Burkina Faso and one on Senegal. 25 Piedmont municipalities were selected, together with ten Burkinabe and five Senegalese municipalities as their partners. For the 2017 Call, called ‘Piedmont & Sub-Saharan Africa’, the Region received 21 project proposals (eight in Burkina Faso, seven in Senegal, four in Benin and two in Mali), which are currently under evaluation.

Moreover, the Piedmont region currently runs three projects, in which they take the lead. These were granted to Piedmont by the Italian Interior Ministry, the Italian national Agency for cooperation to development (AICS) and the European Union. The total amount of the three projects exceeds € 2.000.000. These projects aim to enforce the ongoing regional projects of decentralised development cooperation (following from the ‘Territorial partnerships for a sustainable future’ and ‘Piedmont & Sub-Saharan Africa’ calls) and their main goals (including the creation of relevant local regional dialogue platforms with all stakeholders, and partners from the South)

Geographical and thematic focus of current programme

The Piedmont region mainly concentrates its actions on the Sub-Saharan Africa area, on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean and on the Balkan region. In 2016, a special focus was put on Burkina Faso and Senegal, with thematic focus on territorial cohesion, social inclusion and basic services or local governance. The 2017 Call focused on projects in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte-d’Ivoire, Mali, Niger and Senegal, promoting local sustainable development, improving the living conditions of local populations and reducing poverty, inequalities and food insecurity.

The role of the association of local governments

ANCI, the Italian association of municipalities, does not play a role in the aforementioned projects. Participating local governments work directly with the Piedmont region, which publishes the Calls for Proposals and finances the projects with regional resources. The thematic priorities of the call for proposals are defined in line with the national and regional guidelines for development interventions. Piedmont region’s primary role is to try to involve as many possible stakeholders of its territory with different types of knowledge as possible, and to create an integrated system for cooperation with all actors.

The role of the local governments in the programme

Generally the local governments' main role is to establish a solid institutional partnership with a counterpart in the South and to invite all the relevant stakeholders within their territory to join, to ensure the quality of the knowledge and expertise that can be shared in the project, and to guarantee the largest degree of participation in the project within the local communities on both sides. They are asked, together with the foreign partner municipality, to co-finance the project.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

Projects can include the exchange of knowledge, skills, experiences among institutional actors, social & professional associations, NGOs, medium and small economic subjects of the territory and of the partner countries.²¹

Application and selection

Piedmont's local governments need to have established a partnership with a counterpart before applying to the Call. This partnership can be new, specifically established for the project proposed, or long-lasting. In the selection of projects, the Region highly values the engagement of the Piedmont local community in the process and a high number of involved partners in Piedmont and in the partner country. Furthermore, involvement of Piedmont's entrepreneurs and the African diaspora in project implementation, as well as actions to support gender equality, are rewarded.

Finances

The Burkina Faso call equalled € 100.000, of which 50% were regional contributions and 50% was co-financing by ACRI (Association of Foundations and Italian Savings Banks). The 2016 Senegal Call had a total budget of € 80.000 and was entirely funded by regional contributions. For both Calls, the networks of Piedmont and the foreign partners carrying out the selected projects had to provide at least 25% of the costs announced in the Call. The maximum percentage for co-financing is 75% of the value of the project with a maximum of € 15.000 per application. The Sub-Saharan Africa Call has a total budget of €272.500, with a maximum amount of co-financing of 75% and a maximum grant of €20.000 for projects and €6.000 for launching start-up phases of decentralised development cooperation partnerships. The programme covers the salary of municipal staff, transport costs, services and general administrative and coordination costs.

"The local governments focus on getting economic actors on board; they try to develop strategies and good practices in a field, and they stimulate the exchange of some goods, industries and their process. African partners then try to apply the model in their country. Sometimes local governments invest in the African countries to get feedback or to have a sustainable exchange, not only in terms of knowledge but also in terms of economics."

Carla Rey, AICCRE

²¹ Regione Piemonte. *Affari internazionali*. http://www.regione.piemonte.it/affari_internazionali/

1.2.4 Spain

In the past decades, Spain has seen an evolution in decentralised development cooperation. The engagement of local governments in decentralised development cooperation has spiralled up thanks to citizen's mobilisations calling for solidarity in the early 1990s. In response, cities started to develop their own international cooperation policies. Decentralised development cooperation is financed by two levels of sub-national government: the Regions, which have their own development laws, policies and agencies; the Local Governments; the provinces which implement their own cooperation initiatives; and the individual cities and municipalities which are committed to contributing part of their budgets to development projects in partner countries and local development education activities. Some of them often do this through collective Funds of Solidarity and Cooperation. The coordination between the state and the sub-national development cooperation is rather weak, despite the existence of an inter-territorial council. A council of mixed composition consisting of regions and other local representatives. The Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) does support members with information and trainings and is the voice of the local governments in the dialogue with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Prior to the financial crisis, local and regional governments in Spain contributed around 15% to the total of Spanish ODA.

1.2.5 Catalonia

The Catalan Autonomous Region has one of the most professional and strongly institutionalised development agencies in Spain. The Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation (ACCD) of the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalonian Government) has a rights-based agenda, aiming to foster human capital and sustainable development by addressing gender inequality and by protecting human and collective rights of peoples around the world, women's rights in particular. The ACCD does not generally provide funding for projects by local governments, as it is primarily a bilateral donor. Nevertheless, its Master Plan for Development Cooperation recognises that one of the most important assets of Catalan cooperation is the added value of the plurality of agents that participate in this public policy. The Generalitat considers municipal cooperation in Catalonia an integral part of a cooperation model that seeks to approach realities, promote change and transform the attitudes of citizens through proximity. It therefore promotes coordination with local authorities and joint work when shared aims and priorities are identified. It also supports (provides core funding) and fosters coordination and joint actions with the Fons Català, an organisation formed by Catalan municipalities and other municipal organisations that allocate part of their budgets to finance development cooperation projects, as a leader in cooperation at the local level and drives joint actions with local councils and supra-municipal bodies.²² However, in 2017 the ACCD has also opened its own small programme for decentralised development cooperation in which municipalities can answer to an Open Call for Proposals.

²²Del Parlament de Catalunya. *Butlletí Oficial Del Parlament de Catalunya*. 2015 <http://cooperaciocatalana.gencat.cat/web/.content/continguts/02dqcd/PlaDirector/Pla-director- aprovat-al-Parlament-20150423.pdf>.

Current programmes

Although the ACCD opens calls for proposals for development cooperation projects and programmes (with a total budget of €15.950.000 in 2017), municipalities are only eligible for funding in one line of a rather small Open Call which was launched in 2017. This Open Call has two lines, a line that supports activities implemented in Catalonia (line 1) to which local governments can apply (with a total budget of €300.000), and another line for projects in the South to improve the living conditions of the countries in the list established by the OECD DAC (line two) that is not open for local governments. However, municipalities have not applied for funding this year. This may be because it is a new granting scheme and they have not yet developed the capacities.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The Fons administers and manages projects of solidarity and cooperation in developing countries, awareness-raising projects in Catalonia, and emergency campaigns. Priority themes are education for peace, intercultural dialogue and racism prevention, participation of immigrant groups and fair trade, solidarity and ethical banking. Geographical priorities are Central, South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Morocco, Palestine and the Occidental Sahara.

Line one of the Open Call local governments can apply to aims to support singular actions and international activities linked to development that take place in Catalonia. It aims to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions in the countries featured in the OECD CAD list, with a special attention to the refugee population.

Fons Català

Although it is not a regional Catalan Government institution, the Fons Català is a very important actor in decentralised cooperation. In practice, it is the agency of cooperation of the municipalities of Catalonia. It manages the financial contributions from its members – municipalities that do not have the critical mass in terms of money or HR capabilities to sustain their own complete development projects in developing countries, as well as resourceful donors such as Barcelona. The Fons consolidates their contributions, identifies and finances projects, either directly to local actors in partner countries or through Catalan NGOs. The ACCD provides an important yearly contribution to the Fons (€200.000 in 2017, as well as €15.000 for refugee shelter cities).

Membership

Currently the Fons has 314 members. Local governments can become member when they pay social and voluntary contributions to projects on an annual basis.

The role of the association of local governments

Catalan local governments do not work with an association of local governments in this programme. The ACCD itself communicates the call to local governments through its network and through the Comissió de Coordinació amb els Ens Locals (Local Authorities Coordination Committee), which operates as a forum for participation, coordination and knowledge exchange between the Catalan government and the local governments.

The role of the local governments in the programmes

The local governments are responsible for proposing and carrying out the project and sharing their expertise. Local governments provide the funding for the projects. The Fons proposes specific projects on its website, in which local governments can choose to collaborate. The local government carries out the project and needs to report to the Fons on the development of the project. The Fons supervises the projects and the correct use of the funds. It also provides support in the process.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

Actions that are supported by the programme are participation and organization of meetings, seminars, conferences in the field of development, awareness, peace and human rights; training and support activities to support quality processes in the field of development cooperation; actions related to research, collection of funds and documentation on development, peace, gender, human rights.²³

Application and selection

The Call is open for NGOs, human rights organisations, Catalan public universities and research centers affiliated to a Catalan public university and local governments. The criteria for local governments to apply is that the action must fit into the objective and purpose of the programme, the amount requested can be maximum €30.000 and the action cannot be part of any project that the organization had been presented in other ACCD's calls for the year. However, applicants need to have previously been active in development cooperation and/or education activities for development.

Finances

Local governments could receive a grant of maximum €30.000 per action of maximum twelve months, which can cover up to a maximum percentage of 100% of the activity. The total budget available for the call line to which local governments could apply was €300.000. Eligible expenses are primarily the direct costs for the actions mentioned above (such as the organisation of meetings, conferences and trainings), as well as the salary of local government staff, lease of movable and immovable property necessary for the execution of the project, supplies, communication costs. Local governments do not need to provide co-funding, but it is a criterion that is valued.

²³ Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya. *Agència Catalana de Cooperació al desenvolupament*. 2017.

http://cooperaciocatalana.gencat.cat/web/.content/continguts/01accd/Ajuts_Subvencions/2017/Oberta/20170628_bases_oberta_catala.pdf

1.2.6 Valencia

There are several actors present in the Valencian community that deal with decentralized cooperation and emphasize the local level of development cooperation. However, one stands out: the Fons Valencià per la Solidaritat (FVS), or the Valencian fund for solidarity. Created in 1992, it was one of the first municipal cooperation funds of the entirety of Spain. The non-profit association fights for development cooperation by bundling the capacities of its members, the municipalities and associations of municipalities in the Valencian Community.

The goal of the association is to raise awareness in Valencia about, and contribute to the development of, the impoverished countries in South America and the problems they suffer from the perspective of the local and regional level. It does this by managing the economic resources that are donated and contributed by associated entities, such as its members. The FVS has 115 members: 106 municipalities and nine mancomunitats, or federations of municipalities²⁴.

Its activities include stimulating Valencian entities to take actions to protect the climate and create the opinion that a new economic order is advantageous, encouraging citizen participation, strive for a 0.7% donation of the gross domestic product to development work, and boost the cooperation between public and private institutions.

The FVS is a member of the Consejo Valenciano de Cooperación (Valencian Council of Cooperation), the Comité de Ayuda Humanitaria y Emergencias de la Comunidad Valenciana (CAHE, Committee for Humanitarian Aid of the Valencian Community) and the Confederación de Fondos de Cooperación y Solidaridad (Confederation of Funds for Cooperation and Solidarity²⁵).

Current programmes

The FVS has eight different long-term programmes running, both in the Valencian community and outside of it. Apart from the societal awareness campaigns such as the *Ser Dona al Sud*, or Being a Woman in the South, and training courses, the FVS mostly focusses on development programmes on municipal levels. There are current programmes regarding the municipal structures in El Salvador, supporting local governments in the micro-region of Nonualcos in El Salvador, and the development of municipalities of the Commonwealth of the Jubones River Basin in Ecuador. However, it also has purely developmental projects such as the institutional strengthening of the water resource strategies for the Jubones River (Ecuador)

²⁴ Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. *Socios*.
http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=50&lang=es

²⁵ Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. *Institucional Fons*.
http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=118&lang=es

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The FSV has a clear geographical focus on two areas: Valencia and its surrounding communities and South America. The projects that it is currently undertaking are either in Valencia or in South American countries, such as Ecuador and El Salvador. The common factor between these two groups is the language: both of these groups are classified Spanish speaking countries or regions, although Valencia's main language is Catalan.

Thematically, the FSV focusses mostly on development of municipal services both in Valencia and South America, although raising awareness is also a big part of its activities.

The role of the association of local governments

The FSV has several different functions. Firstly, it carries out and finances cooperation and awareness projects with the economic contributions made each year by partner municipalities. These economic contributions are put into an economic fund, which serves to execute the approved projects. The FSV manages this fund.

The FSV also organises several activities, such as training sessions and congresses, mostly regarding sustainability and how the population of Valencia can improve their sustainability. Sometimes it sponsors or organises creative activities, such as art shows, as well.

Finally, the FSV is also in charge of the communication with its partner organizations, the Consejo Valenciano de Cooperation, the CAHE and the Confederación de Fondos de Cooperación y Solidaridad.

The role of the local governments in the programmes

The municipalities and mancomunitats are represented in the FSV by contributing to the annual General Members Assembly. In this assembly, the representatives of the members are invited to share their opinion and views on the decisions that the FSV has made and will make. It also ensures the Executive Board, of which the members are elected from the municipalities²⁶.

The FSV also uses the resources from the municipalities. This facilitates the work of local authorities regarding cooperation, guarantees a stable presence of funds, allows joint actions which would not be possible for a single municipality alone, allows basic monitoring and facilitates the management and reduces the costs²⁷.

²⁶ Fons Valenciana per la solidaritat. *Organización del Fons.*

http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=85&lang=es

²⁷ Fons Valenciana per la solidaritat. *Porque formar parte del Fons.*

http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=90&lang=es

Modalities and knowledge sharing

The FSV organises training modules and other activities averagely on a weekly basis, if not more, in which knowledge is shared with the citizens of the municipalities, and the local authorities. This is part of their campaign to raise awareness. Additionally, knowledge is shared to municipalities and mancomunitats by providing information and exchanges advice regarding development cooperation and solidarity.

Finances

The projects from the FVS are financed by two main parties: the Generalitat Valencia, the self-government institution of Valencia, and the members of the FVS. The Department of Transparency, Social Responsibility, Participation and Cooperation from the Generalitat Valencia sponsors a part of the budget for the project that the FVS undertakes. The remaining part is financed by the FVS itself, and thus indirectly by the municipalities and mancomunitats that are the members of the FVS who finance the association.

1.3 Category III: Civil society programmes that are open to local governments and their associations

This category comprises the cases where decentralised development cooperation is financed and organised on the national level, but where programmes are not uniquely open for local governments but also for civil society organisations.

1.3.1 Estonia

Despite its small size, Estonia has been increasing its development cooperation in recent years, from 0.07% of GNI in 2005, to 0.19% in 2016. Estonian development cooperation with partner countries and their institutions is implemented by the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), other ministries, municipalities, representatives of civil society and the private sector. The MFA is responsible for the strategic planning, implementation and coordination of the activities of different participants in Estonian development cooperation. Other ministries and representatives of civil society associations are also involved in drafting, renewing and implementing the Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid. In the 2016-2020 Strategy, the Estonian government states its aim to develop, broaden and strengthen the know-how and (administrative) capacity of all implementers of development cooperation. It explicitly mentions local authorities and the private sector as active partners in shaping Estonia's development cooperation policy and in the implementation of projects.²⁸ However, most Estonian local governments are currently not very active in the field of international decentralised development cooperation.

Current programmes

Once a year, the MFA issues Open Calls for proposals to local authorities for grants, as part of the Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Strategy. These can be open either for local governments only, or for local governments, civil society actors and actors from the private sector. Currently three local governments and counterparts are participating in three different projects.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The projects can be implemented in Afghanistan, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine or Belarus. The Calls are compatible with the general Estonian priority areas of development cooperation activity: supporting the quality of education, the quality of health care, and the development of democracy; guaranteeing peace and stability, and fostering environmentally friendly development.²⁹

The role of the Estonian local government association

²⁸ Republic of Estonia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016–2020*, 15-16

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 4

The Association of Estonian Cities (ELL) and the Association of Estonian Rural Municipalities (EMOVL) spread the calls to their members, but are not involved in any of the development projects themselves.

The role of Estonian local governments in the current programmes

Local governments can be lead partners in the project proposals, alongside partners from the public or private sector (e.g. secondary schools). They can also be participating partners, when another public or private body applies for the grant and is the direct beneficiary. Local governments focus on local issues in the project and on the activities close to their expertise (such as waste collection, participatory budgeting, optimising the school network, promoting business development). They design the projects, implement them and report back to the MFA. Participants commit to a project lasting for two/three years.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

In most projects, local governments have primarily organised study visits, in which they shared their best practices on site.

Application and selection

All local governments can apply to the programme, however, Calls are not always exclusively targeted at local governments. As stated above, in some calls civil society actors and private sector actors can also apply. The MFA's main selection criterion is whether the proposals are in line with the Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016-2020. Support must be given to Estonia's priority partner countries, priority project partners and within the areas specified in the Strategy. These include support for human development, peace, human rights, democracy, the rule of law and sustainable economic development, and information and promotion of world education.

Finances

The participating local governments only have to provide co-financing in the form of paying for their own staff's salary. Expenses financed for participants differ from project to project, but the greatest share goes to cover travel costs and accommodation, as well as some project management costs.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Estonia**Role of the local government association**

ELL and the EMOVL spread the calls to their members. They are not involved in any of the development projects themselves.

Role of the local governments

Estonian local governments design and implement the project, and report to the MFA. They commit to a project that generally lasts two/three years.

Number of municipalities involved

In 2016-2017, three Estonian local governments were involved in projects with three counterparts.

Total volume of the current programme

The total volume of the programme is €2.000.000 per year.

The three projects including local governments have a total budget of €8.087 (one year), €37.070 and €35.906 (two years).

Themes and goals

The programme aims to support the quality of education, the quality of health care, and the development of democracy, to guarantee peace and stability, and to foster environmentally friendly development.

Modalities

Study visits

Finances

Expenses financed by the MFA differ per project, but travel costs, lodging and several project management costs are generally covered. Participating Estonian local governments get no compensation for the salary of their staff.

More information?

<http://vm.ee/en/taxonomy/term/55>

1.3.2 Latvia

Latvia became a donor of international aid in 2004. Until 2010, Latvian development aid was primarily targeted at former Soviet states in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan. From 2011 onwards, the geographic focus was expanded to also include countries of Central Asia. The Development Cooperation Policy Division within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) manages all Latvian development cooperation and allocates funds for decentralised development cooperation activities via Grant Competitions. The Consultative Council for Development Cooperation Affairs, including representatives of ministries and different other stakeholders, serves as a consultative institution and a platform for the cooperation of all the aforementioned institutions and organisations active in development cooperation. The consultative Council for Development Cooperation provides advices for the MFA on the activities and course of action in the field of development cooperation policy. Latvian local governments are involved in decentralised development cooperation together with the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG), offering their expertise on policy and economic reform. In Latvia, decentralised development cooperation is strongly related to twinning partnerships, which are very popular in the country. Many local governments have partners in the Eastern Partnership countries. Only the local governments having cooperation partners in the beneficiary country can apply for the call for proposals organised once per year by the MFA.

Current programmes

In Latvia, there are two types of grant competitions. The MFA issues a grant project competition called “Support for development cooperation projects in recipient countries defined by the Republic of Latvia”. This programme is very popular: the MFA receives many more applications than it can fund.³⁰ The competition allows ministries, local governments, as well as civil society organisations to apply for this call. Likewise, every year the MFA issues also a co-financing grant project competition “Support for the development cooperation and development (global) education projects funded by the European Commission and other international aid donors in recipient countries defined by the Republic of Latvia and in the territory of the Republic of Latvia”. The grant competition called “Support for development cooperation projects in recipient countries defined by the Republic of Latvia” call is the only competition to which local governments can also apply. When projects are awarded to local governments, the additional budget is primarily used to expand activities which are already part of their twinning partnerships. Guidance is provided by the MFA throughout the project implementation period, through the organization of seminars for participants and other events.

³⁰ For example, in the past two years, 19 (2016) and 16 (2017) proposals have not received funding while meeting all expectations, due to the limited budget of the programmes/calls.

In the 2018 Call one of the projects selected is implemented by the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments in cooperation with three Latvian local governments, as well as Association of Municipalities of the Kyrgyz Republic and Development Policy Institute in Kyrgyz Republic. The aim of the project is to promote good governance in Kyrgyz Republic by strengthening the capacity of local governments and their association.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The grant project competition regulations of the MFA specifically target certain beneficiary countries and priority areas. In the last calls, according to the “Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines for 2016 – 2020”, the targeted countries were three of the EU’s Eastern Partnership countries – Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – as well as the Central Asian countries Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In line with Latvia’s Development Cooperation Policy Guidelines for 2016 – 2020, priority areas for the 2018 call were the development and capacity building of public administration, support for business development and the strengthening of export capacity, support in decentralisation and strengthening of local/regional authorities and the facilitation of democratic participation. In 2018, a new call was launched. The LALRG will be implementing a new project in Kyrgyzstan by November 2018.

“Somehow, Eastern Partnership countries aren’t considered as real development cooperation countries by the Latvian municipalities. If they get the chance to cooperate with Eastern Partnership countries our municipalities are eager to use all their possibilities.”

Agita Kaupuža, LALRG

The role of the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LARG)

The LALRG provides in all phases information and assistance to local governments in establishing their twinning partnerships, as well as general advice. The LALRG is participating in the aforementioned Latvian Consultative Board for Development Cooperation Policy, which was established to promote an active and responsible involvement of Latvia in the formulation and implementation of the European Union’s development cooperation policy, enhance the role of Latvia as a bilateral donor, raise awareness among the general public of the goals and policy of development cooperation, and offer assistance in its implementation. The Consultative Council brings together experts from line ministries, civil society organisations and various sectors and has considerable influence on the direction and priorities of Latvia’s development cooperation.

The role of Latvian local governments in the current programmes

Participants (NGOs, local governments, etc.) commit to an intense one-year project, therefore only applicants who already have a partnership and know-how are able to participate. Participants need to prepare a project proposal and are the executors of the project. When a local government association is the direct beneficiary of the grant, what can be the case sometimes, local governments are involved in the implementation of specific activities.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

Local governments and the LALRG can contribute to the programme by sharing their knowledge, expertise, information and analysis. They advise stakeholders on various topics and provide recommendations to decision-makers on European best practices and procedures on local and regional development and related policies. Modalities used are trainings, study visits, knowledge exchanges, series of thematic workshops (and the organization of such series), focus groups, as well as the provision of analyses.

Application and selection

As mentioned above, the two calls administered by the MFA are open for central government institutions, local governments, NGOs, businesses, and trade unions to apply for co-funding for their decentralised development cooperation activities. At least 50% of the available funding is envisaged for projects which are run by NGOs.

Finances

The total funding available in the 2016 Call for proposals was €231.000. In 2017, €157.000 was made available. A single grant project could receive between €20.000 and €40.000. In 2018, €213.013 was made available for grants for project proposals. The local government can choose whether to apply for 100% funding for their project or to attract co-financing (0,1-50%). The lower the percentage, the higher it will score in the selection process. In most cases the MFA requires the local governments to provide co-financing, in order to stimulate a feeling of ownership for the projects and to facilitate the responsibility for project's results. This is not compulsory criteria, no certain amount of % is indicated. It is up to the project applicant. Expenses that are covered by the programme, are project implementation costs and project administration costs. This includes: a partial salary compensation for experts, daily expenses and accommodation expenses for experts, health insurance, transport and expenses necessary for the implementation of projects (including catering, communication services, purchases of goods).

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Latvia

Role of the local government association

LALRG provides information and advice to local governments about twinning partnerships, helps establishing partnerships, and provides general advice on decentralised cooperation.

Role of the local governments

Local governments establish a partnership prior to the call for proposals (or continue the partnership they already have), submit a project proposal and execute the project. The same can apply for local government associations.

Number of local governments involved

In 2017, ten local governments were involved in a project led by the Latvian Rural Communities Parliament.

Total volume of the current programme

2016 Call: €231.000

2017 Call: €157.000

2018 Call: €213.013

Themes and goals

Development and capacity building of public administration, business development and the strengthening of export capacity, governance and reforms of national security structures, facilitation of democratic participation, and the development and education of civil society.

Modalities

Trainings, study visits, knowledge exchanges, organization of series of thematic workshops, focus groups, as well as the provision of analyses.

Finances

Projects can be co-financed (0,1 to 50%) or fully covered by the programme. A single grant project can receive between €20.000 - €40.000. Expenses covered by the programme are a partial salary compensation for experts, daily expenses and accommodation expenses for experts, health insurance, transport and expenses necessary for the implementation of projects

More information?

<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/latest-news/57315-the-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-awards-funding-to-development-cooperation-projects-in-eu-eastern-partnership-and-central-asian-countries>

<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/latest-news/54211-the-foreign-ministry-awards-funding-to-development-projects-in-the-eastern-partnership-and-central-asian-countries>

<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/latest-news/54427-additional-grants-to-be-awarded-to-development-cooperation-projects>

1.3.3 Lithuania

In recent years, Lithuania has quite severely increased its budget for development assistance. In 2016, ODA reached 0.14% of GNI; an increase of 19,9% in real terms compared to 2015. The provision of development assistance is highly centralised and funded by the state through the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Via its Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme, the MFA provides co-financing for decentralised development cooperation activities of state and municipal institutions and agencies. The programme started functioning in 2015 and has launched five Calls for Proposals since. It is currently jointly managed by the MFA and the Central Project Management Agency (CPMA: an organisation who helps public institutions manage public investment by providing the methodological support), which has been active in development cooperation and humanitarian aid since 2008, specialising in programme and project management, training, consultations, study visits, individual expert activities and twinning projects.³¹ Calls are launched biannually.

Current programmes

The Development Cooperation and Democracy Promotion Programme (DCDPP) is now in its second year. It functions through biannual Calls for Proposals to which state and municipal institutions and agencies, NGOs and civil society actors can answer. The programme is coordinated and managed by the MFA. Since 2017, the CPMA jointly implements the programme with the MFA. In the last Call for Proposals (October 2017), proposals had to be sent directly to the CPMA. The CPMA also manages and administers the projects, except when the applicant is capable of doing so on its own, with greater efficiency. In the last Call (October 2017), 157 proposals were submitted. 18 proposals of municipalities, cities or city councils were selected. Thus, the programme is primarily used by NGOs and different types of associations which represent different areas of the social sector: youth, education, communities etc.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The objectives of the programme are the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals approved by the United Nations, as well as ensuring peace, global economic growth and social stability, reduction of the disparities between developed and developing countries and integration of developing countries into the global economy. When local governments apply, their projects need to help transfer the experience of Lithuanian institutions gained when implementing democratic reform and good governance, and contribute to the development of democracy, security and stability abroad. The geographical focus of the programme is Central and Eastern Europe, and more particularly Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The programme also issued three Calls for Proposals in 2017 which were aimed at preventing irregular migration in West Africa, mainly in Mali.

³¹Central Project Management Agency (z.j.) *International cooperation*.
<https://www.cpva.lt/en/about/international-cooperation/services-for-public-sector.html>

The role of the Lithuanian local government association

The Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania (ALAL) spreads the information among municipalities concerning calls and programme news, represents the local level at the National Commission of Development Cooperation (a national commission which coordinates the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals), and sometimes also participates in the programme, as an implementer of projects. Between 2010 and 2014, ALAL implemented eight projects in Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia and Moldova. More generally, ALAL participates in the alignment of the legislation related to development cooperation policy, and organises and participates in meetings with government institutions and NGOs to discuss the implementation of development cooperation policies.

The role of Lithuanian local governments in the current programmes

When they apply to the programme, Lithuanian local governments are responsible for finding their own foreign partner and for drawing up their own procedures for the implementation of development cooperation activities. They are the actual implementers of the project. In case the local government has successfully managed a similar project within the last three years and has a sufficient number of qualified civil servants capable of ensuring successful project management, the local government can be the project administrator as well – otherwise, the project is managed and administered by the CPMA. During the project, the implementer needs to report on the use of funds. After completing the project, the implementing local government has to submit a project implementation report to the project administrator at the CPMA.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

There is no standard modality or methodology for all the projects – project implementers can decide on their own modalities. Usually, municipalities organise study visits, seminars and workshops.

Application and selection

Applicants can apply to two types of Calls within the biannual MFA Calls: a call for applications following the project proposals developed by the MFA, and a call for project proposals. In both cases, applicants need to specify their partner in the application and need to add the partner's consent to cooperate on project implementation and need to submit a detailed budget. The MFA makes the final selection of projects and decides on the allocation of budgets, in line with its development cooperation priorities. The general project evaluation criteria are project relevance, efficiency, justification of financing, project continuity and impact, and the ability of the implementer to organise, manage and publicise the project. The latter is important to promote Lithuanian public support for development cooperation and increase the international visibility of Lithuania. In the cases where the project administration is carried out by the CPMA, the MFA agrees with the CPMA on project selection, contracting, supervision of the implementation, the payment procedure and the allocation of funds to the CPMA. CPMA receives funding (maximum 10% of the value of a project) as a compensation for its expenses related to the administration of these projects.³²

Finances

In the last Call for Concepts, which ended in October 2017, the MFA reserved a total of €100.000 for all project proposals (the total value of the thirty concepts submitted being €931.302), and a total of €623.500 for all applications following the project proposals developed by the MFA (the total value of the 127 project applications submitted being €5.287.223). Needless to say, the MFA's co-financing is small. The project implementer needs to provide a contribution of a minimum of 20% of the project budget. International donors or partners are therefore often invited to donate a financial contribution. Furthermore, the project implementer must be able to advance all expenses related to project implementation until the project is completely finalised. After submitting the project implementation report, the following costs are reimbursed by the MFA: costs for planned activities³³ and planned project implementation costs³⁴. Some project management costs incurred by the implementer are also reimbursed, most importantly salary remuneration for the working hours of staff working on the project, contingency costs, project implementation costs like speaker costs and transportation. The programme only reimburses meals, per diem and accommodation costs for staff in specific situations.

³² Republic of Lithuania Government, *Resolution amending resolution no 278 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 March 2014 'On the approval of the description of procedure for the implementation of development cooperation activities by state and municipal institutions and agencies'* (22 February 2017, Vilnius)

³³ Wage costs for experts and speakers and their social insurance contributions, project-related goods/services, travel, accommodation, catering, and publicity costs.

³⁴ The costs of office space, vehicle rental and maintenance, short-term tangible asset acquisition or rental, communications, financial services and external audit fees.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Lithuania**Role of the local government association**

ALAL communicates the Calls for Proposals to the municipalities and sometimes participates in the programme, as implementer of projects. In that case, it includes expertise from municipalities.

Role of the local governments

Local governments establish a partnership, submit a project proposal and execute the project.

Number of local governments involved

Call October 2016: four local governments (out of 113 projects).

Call October 2017: eighteen local governments (out of 157 projects).

Total volume of the current programme

Projects have a maximum duration of one year. For the most recent Call in October, the MFA allocated a total of €723,500.

Themes and goals

Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring peace, global economic growth and social stability, reducing disparities between developed and developing countries. Also, the transfer of Lithuanian experience in democratic reform and good governance to promote democracy, security and stability abroad.

Modalities

No fixed modalities – study visits, seminars and workshops are often organised.

Finances

Co-financing of a minimum of 20% from the applicant is needed and donations from international partners or the private sector are encouraged. The programme funds the expenditures for planned activities and project implementation costs, as well as salary costs for Lithuanian staff involved, but no per diem, meals or accommodation costs for staff (except under specific conditions).

More information?

<https://orangeprojects.lt/en/calls-for-proposals/ministry-of-foreign-affairs>

1.3.4 Poland

In Poland, the provision of development aid is centralised and placed under the responsibility of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Its development cooperation agency, Polska Pomoc (Polish Aid), distributes funds for development cooperation. Local governments' participation in Polish development cooperation began in 2006, when they were invited to submit proposals for development cooperation to Polska Pomoc in annual grant competitions³⁵. Twinning partnerships are very popular in Poland, especially with the Ukraine. Around 300 municipalities and 100 counties and regions in Poland have signed direct twinning partnership agreements with local governments in the Ukraine in the past years. Most of these are still active. Local government associations such as the Association of Polish Cities (ZMP Poznan)³⁶ encourage the municipalities in less active partnerships to use MFA funds to strengthen their mutual engagement.

Current programmes

Polska Pomoc organises a wide array of grant competitions each year, for different actors. Local governments can apply to the Polish Development Assistance competition, as well as NGOs, public and non-public higher education schools, research institutes, and the Polish Academy of Sciences and its organisational units. In order to participate, the entity submitting a proposal has to be registered in Poland, which is also open to NGOs. For the 2017 Call, 32 project proposals were selected; only one of which came from a regional association of municipalities and one was from a region. It is unknown how many local governments had applied to this call. In the 2016 Call, 53 project were submitted; one region and one county were selected. No municipalities were selected. Projects usually last eight to ten months.

Local governments can also make use of the Solidarity Fund, which combines national government and foreign funding, as well as Program RITA, which operates on the basis of the US-based support of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. The latter is mostly used by NGOs at the moment, because they are specifically addressed to NGOs.

Geographical and thematic focus of current programmes

The Calls from Polish Aid primarily focus on Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Palestine, and on various countries in Africa (Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and Senegal) and sometimes in Central Asia and Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Myanmar). The projects in Africa and Asia are all carried out by Polish NGOs and church charity organisations. Local governments and local government associations are only active in Ukraine, and to a lesser extent in Georgia, Moldova and Belarus. In these countries the thematic focus lies on respectively good governance, human capital and entrepreneurship and the private sector; good governance and human capital; and good governance and agriculture and development of rural areas.

³⁵ Such as: "Humanitarian Aid in the Middle East- cofinancing"; "Global Education"; "Polish Aid Volunteering Programme"; "Humanitarian Aid in the Middle East"; "Polish Development Assistance"

³⁶ There are 6 Associations of local and regional government in Poland:

Association of Polish Cities, Association of Polish Counties, Union of Polish Metropolises, Union of Rural Municipalities of the Republic of Poland, Union of Small Towns, Union of the Provinces of the Republic of Poland

The role of the Polish local government association

Polish local government associations at the national and the regional level can apply to the grant competition with project proposals. This is done by three to four associations. In the projects coming from this grant competition, the associations involve their member local governments but manage the projects themselves. The Association of Polish Cities (ZMP), for example, involves approximately five to ten local governments per year in its projects.³⁷

The role of Polish local governments in the current programmes

Local governments can either apply to the programme directly and thus carry direct responsibility for the organisation, management and carrying out of the project, or can participate indirectly via their association. Local governments contribute by sharing their specific expertise.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

Modalities used include study visits for municipal officials or staff, conferences or job shadowing for one or two weeks for Ukrainian municipal employees and assistance to Ukrainian municipalities (e.g. preparation of a local development strategy, service improvement plan or feasibility studies).

Application and selection

The calls are open to NGOs, public high schools, research institutes, the Polish Academy of Sciences and its organisational units, associations of local governments and local governments. They can apply through the Polska Pomoc website, where the calls are announced.

Finances

The national programme provides part of the financing only; applicants need to co-finance the project. The total national budget available for the 2017 Call was PLN 24,5 million (approximately €5.8 million). In the 2016 Call this was PLN 27 million or €6,6 million. The minimum amount that can be requested for projects in Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine is PLN 200.000 (€47.700). The applicant is obliged to provide a contribution of at least 20% of the total costs of the project by financing the costs of full salary compensation for municipal staff working for the project, accommodation costs, and travel costs related to implementation of the project – which ensures commitment of the municipality to the project.

“Many Polish municipalities are primarily assisting Ukrainian municipalities. This assistance is still much needed and expected. This cooperation goes well and is highly regarded on both sides. Polish local government leaders and staff still remember how 25 years ago they received similar assistance from Western European municipalities and association. So we try to reciprocate.”

Tomasz Potkański, Association of Polish Cities (ZMP)

³⁷ ZMP currently runs 1 project from Polish Development Assistance

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Poland**Role of the local government associations**

The Polish local government associations can apply to the calls with project proposals, involving their member local governments. In these projects, the associations perform the management tasks, whereas local governments provide specific expertise.

Role of the local governments

Local governments can either apply to the programme directly and thus carry direct responsibility for the organisation, management and carrying out of the project, or can participate indirectly via their association. Local governments contribute by sharing their specific expertise.

Number of municipalities involved

In 2018, so far, 36 projects are selected to participate (one from the city, one from regional association, one from the Association of Polish Cities and one from the region). In the 2017 Call, one regional association of local governments was selected to participate (representing 96 municipalities), as well as one region. In the 2016 Call, one region and one county were selected.

Total volume of the programme

The total budget for projects selected in 2018 is PLN 29.921.939,56 (7.125.000 Euro). The total national budget available for the 2017 Call was PLN 24,5 million (approximately €5.8 million). Of this budget, one regional association of local governments received a total grant of PLN 1.340.930 (approx. €321.280); one region received PLN 467.604 (approx. €112.000). In the 2016 call, one region and one county received funding.

Themes and goals

In Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Belarus the focus is put on good governance, human capital, entrepreneurship and the private sector, agriculture and development of rural areas.

Modalities

Study visits; conferences; job shadowing; assistance in preparation of local development strategies, service improvement plans or feasibility studies.

Finances

The national programme provides part of the financing only; applicants need to co-finance the project. The minimum amount that can be requested for projects in Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine is PLN 200.000 (€47.700). The applicant has to cover the costs of at least 20% of the total value of the offer.

More information?

<http://www.polskapomoc.gov.pl/Calls,for,proposals,2017,2588.html>

1.3.6 Norway

Norway is one of the largest donors of ODA, spending 1.05% of GNI on development cooperation. For cooperation with local governments from other European Economic Area (EEA) countries, Norwegian municipalities can access EEA and Norway Grants.³⁸ For municipal cooperation with non-EEA partners options are currently more limited. In 1997, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) started the Norwegian Municipal International Cooperation (MIC) programme funded by Norad, a specialised directorate for development aid under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The MIC programme operated in a range of countries in East Africa, Southern Africa and Central America. It was discontinued in 2014 by Norad, after a critical evaluation. The two basic preconditions in order for MIC to function, functional equivalence between municipalities across state borders and added value of bringing municipal equivalents together in specific activities, were assessed to be problematic.³⁹ Since 2014, no national programmes directed at the decentralised development cooperation activities of Norwegian municipalities with local governments outside the EEA exist. However, KS can still access funding for projects involving local governments in ODA-eligible Eastern European countries, through an MFA grant scheme.

Current programmes

At the time of writing (July 2017), KS can access MFA funding under the “Grants to other ODA-eligible OSCE countries (Eurasia)”-call. The grant scheme is open to non-governmental organisations, foundations and commercial businesses, which form competition for KS. The objective of the grant scheme is to support democratic development in the Eurasian Region. KS currently runs three projects aimed at strengthening local government associations, in which Norwegian local governments are brought in to share good practice from their municipalities. Individual local governments do not apply to the grant scheme.

Also, KS at the time of writing has reason to think that an earlier grants scheme for Western Balkan countries will be re-established as of 2018. This would likely work in a similar way as the ‘Grants to other ODA-eligible OSCE countries’ scheme. In this case, KS will reconnect with earlier partners in the Western Balkan region.

There are two other programmes/organizations worth noting in this case study: Fredskorpset is an agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that facilitates international mutual exchanges of employees or members between organisations or businesses based in Africa, Asia or Latin America for a three to twelve month period. It offers small administration grants to all partners. Between 2012 and 2017, three Norwegian municipalities participated in the programme (two in 2017). However, these exchanges are mostly people-centred exchanges and not specifically focused on decentralised development cooperation.

³⁸EEA Grants (z.j.) <https://eeagrants.org/>

³⁹ Holm-Hansen, ‘Norway’s Municipal International Cooperation’, 4

Cultural exchange between local governments are (also) possible under Vennskap Nord/Sør, an NGO established in 1990, which receives public funding that allows people, municipalities, institutions and organisations to engage in ‘friendship’ partnerships with countries in the South. It aims to be a forum for discussion, exchange of ideas and of experience in North-South partnerships. However, Vennskap has received signals from NORAD that it will no longer be able to support its work in the future.

Geographical and thematic focus of the current programme of KS

All current projects at the time of writing of KS take place in Eastern Europe. The thematic focus of the three projects of KS differs. The main objective in Moldova is to support effective, consultative and devolved governance. In this project, KS partners up with the Congress of Local Governments from Moldova. In Georgia, KS supports the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) in providing quality products and services to its members. And in Ukraine, the project focuses on capacity-building for Ukrainian local governments in service provision and evidence-based policy dialogue, strengthening of local democracy and participation. This project is carried out together with the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research and the Association of Ukrainian Cities.

The role of the local government association in the current programme of KS

KS coordinates, implements and manages its current projects in Eastern Europe. It provides counselling services to its partner local government associations and brings in experts from Norwegian municipalities to share good practices with local governments in the partner country.

The role of Norwegian local governments in the current programme of KS

In the above-mentioned KS projects, Norwegian local governments are brought in to share good practices with local governments and associations in beneficiary countries. Norwegian local governments commit themselves on a case-by-case basis, based on the specific project deliverables. There is no (need for) continued cooperation or longer-term commitment from Norwegian municipalities.

Modalities and knowledge sharing

The projects apply a variety of modalities, including training, expert exchange, sharing of good practices, advising through studies, seminars, study tours and more.

Application and selection

KS contacts Norwegian local governments directly; participation in the projects can only take place by invitation. In its selection process, KS looks at local governments with good practice to share, which are interested and available, and with staff who are good communicators, can work in English and can effectively operate in a different cultural context.

“Until 2014, KS managed an umbrella grant from Norad, through which we were able to re-grant to local governments for funding of their projects. From 2015 we lost our Norad accreditation. We hope to regain it, although no indication on when is available.”

Bjørn Rongevær, KS

Finances

Below, you will find the total amount of grants that KS has received in the past years, for the three running projects, for a period of three years.

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| Georgia | € 540.000 |
| Moldova | € 730.000 |
| Ukraine | € 1.370.000 |

Participating Norwegian local governments are compensated for their costs, including travel and staff time.

National programmes for decentralised development cooperation of local governments in Norway

Role of the local government association

Under the MFA's "Grants to other ODA-eligible OSCE countries (Eurasia)" scheme, KS can access funding for cooperation with national associations of local governments. KS currently manages, coordinates and implements three projects, in which it brings in Norwegian local government staff for the exchange of best practice.

Role of the local governments

Municipal staff members are invited by KS to share their expertise with counterparts in the partner countries. In these exchanges they share Norwegian best practices, as part of a short-term assignment.

Number of Norwegian local governments involved

Ten Norwegian local governments have been involved in the three running projects.

Total volume of the current projects

Total grants for (overlapping) three-year periods:

Georgia € 540.000 (2015-2018)

Moldova € 730.000 (2014-2017)

Ukraine € 1.370.000 (2015-2018)

Themes and goals

Supporting democratic development, strengthening local government associations, supporting effective, consultative and devolved governance, capacity-building for local governments.

Modalities

Training, exchange, sharing of good practice, advising through studies, seminars, study tours and more.

Finances

The Norwegian local governments participating in these projects are compensated for all their expenses, including travel costs and staff time.

More information?

http://www.ks.no/globalassets/vedlegg-til-hvert-fagomrader/samfunn-og-demokrati/internasjonalt-samarbeid/ks-arsrapport16_dig.pdf

https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/grants/proposals_calls/proposals_grants/id2542885/

1.4 Category IV: Currently no programmes for decentralised development cooperation

This section delves deeper into a selection of countries where the local government associations have indicated that there are currently no programmes for decentralised development cooperation. It outlines the state of affairs of development cooperation and of decentralised development cooperation initiatives in these countries. Also, it describes the general interest among local governments to engage in international knowledge exchange activities and includes a prognosis of what can be expected in this field for the future.

1.4.1 United Kingdom

Cooperation

In 2015, British government committed to spend 0.7 per cent of its Gross National Income (GNI) on Overseas Development Aid (ODA) in each calendar year.⁴⁰ This makes the United Kingdom (UK) one of the largest donors of ODA, both in terms of percentage, and in volume. Looking at volume, the UK is the second largest donor in the world, after the USA. The UK's national Department for International Development (DFID) is responsible for the planning and implementation of development cooperation. It also channels the majority of UK aid. However, the devolved governments – Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland – have also started to develop their own policy and strategy for international development cooperation. The Scottish Government, for example, has a policy which is linked to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and supports activities in four partner countries.

⁴⁰ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/unitedkingdom.htm>

Although the UK is a generous donor, there currently is no national programme which specifically supports or facilitates decentralised development cooperation in the UK. The Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) has run multiple decentralised development cooperation programmes which received government funding. Evaluations of such programmes were positive. They pointed out the trust and political cover which a partnership gives to enable local governments to test and try out new ideas; the cost-efficiency of this way of building capacity in a sustained way on both sides of a partnership; and the fact that it can also lead to many additional, unplanned benefits such as community links and trade opportunities. However, local governments in the UK has faced a significant reduction in funding from central government in recent years. As a result, the role of local councils in international development cooperation has reduced.⁴¹

Current activities in this field

Despite the current funding climate, many local councils in the UK are still involved in twinning partnerships. Although no comprehensive support programme exists, councils from the UK work in partnership with others and source funding from a range of sources. Resources often come from the Government or the EU – often for country-specific activities or activities with other EU partners. Councils also fund decentralised development cooperation activities from their own budgets or with other funds.

Only a limited number of local councils participate in broader programmes.

Recently, the focus of twinning partnerships has shifted to focus more on economic links. For example, Birmingham City Council and the Midlands have established strong trade ties with China, India and Silicon Valley. Essex County Council has links with the Jiangsu province in China, with an office in Nanjing cementing trade relationships. Initiatives such as “Liverpool Vision’s 2016 International Business Festival” and “Invest in Cornwall” have also spurred international trade links and investments. Kent uses its existing twinning partnerships in the US and the Caribbean to promote trade links, whilst at the same time offering bursaries for students and training.

“The recent austerity in the UK means UK councils are currently operating within massive budget constraints, and many of them are only just starting to feel that they can re-engage internationally. Councils are working to ensure that their municipal links are mutually beneficial and promote shared opportunities and learning. This is particularly important when there are limited resources available for decentralised cooperation.”

Lucy Slack, CLGF

⁴¹ See LGA response to Local Government Finance Settlement
<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/councils-responds-local-government-finance-settlement>

Local Government Association (LGA)

Similarly, the LGA's current international policy work has placed a strong emphasis on encouraging a national trade and investment policy that explicitly draws on the strengths and expertise of UK cities, counties and towns.⁴² The LGA also plays an important brokerage role, for example through working with the Government in identifying councils to engage in international project work. Decentralised development cooperation is often implicitly part of the approach.

Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)

As stated above, CLGF has run programmes that facilitated decentralised development cooperation in the past. The DFID-funded Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme actively involved UK local governments in decentralised development cooperation between 2000 and 2010. CLGF still brings together central, provincial and local spheres of government throughout the Commonwealth and mobilises exchange of municipal expertise across many countries. This is not done with the explicit aim of creating (new) municipal linkages although in some cases the councils themselves may decide to establish more formal partnerships.

Interest

As outlined above, significant reduction to local government funding have impacted the international activity of local councils. According to CLGF, local councils are only now beginning to raise their international profiles again (despite continued financial constraints). Many councils would be interested to engage in mutually beneficial decentralised development cooperation more often, especially if they could access dedicated resources for this work.

Future

The Scottish government is currently looking at funding some decentralised development cooperation activities under its Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP), which is the main international Scottish international development activity. The UK government, however, does not currently have a programme to fund decentralised development cooperation in the near future.

⁴² For further information, please see the LGA's response to the Trade White Paper in November 2017 <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/hmg-white-paper-future-uk-trade-policy-lga-response-november>

1.4.2 Denmark

Cooperation

Although Denmark is one of the most generous donors of ODA (0.85% of its gross national income in 2015), local governments play a negligible role in the implementation of development programmes. Funding for programmes is disbursed by the Agency for Danish International Development Assistance (Danida), which is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There are no national programmes in Denmark that fund decentralised development cooperation initiatives of local governments, nor have there been in the past.

KL Consultancy

However, since the 1990s, the Danish Association for local governments, KL (or Local Government Denmark), does offer International Consultancy Services to partners in Central and Eastern European, Asian, African and Latin American countries. These services are usually financed by the Danish Government (Danida), the EU, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other international development banks or donors. The services include study visits of partner local governments to Denmark and are mostly aimed at sharing the principles of local governance rather than the practice of the implementation of Danish local governance.

Current activities in this field

Whilst there is no national monitoring of international activities of individual municipalities, few Danish municipalities appear to be active in individual decentralised development cooperation initiatives. Activities that are undertaken usually take the form of twinning partnerships, as extensions of former friendship agreements, in support of private sector export campaigns or through international thematic networks for exchange of experiences (the climate agenda, anti-radicalisation etc.). The majority of the partner municipalities are located within the EU. Danish municipalities make limited use of EU or other international programmes that finance decentralised development cooperation, as they are generally not sufficiently aware of the existing facilities. Therefore, Danish municipalities usually pay for their international cooperation activities from their own municipal budgets.

“I believe there is a genuine interest, especially within the climate agenda and agenda for sustainable development, or in support of the promotion of the Danish private sector and knowledge institutions.”

Jens Peter Christensen, KL

Interest

There does seem to be a genuine interest among Danish municipalities to participate in international knowledge exchange activities more often, especially within the thematic areas of the climate agenda, sustainable development, or in support of the promotion of the Danish private sector and knowledge institutions. If the political will is present, Danish municipalities are capable and willing to use their own resources to engage in international work.

Future

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, remains sceptical about decentralised development cooperation; it prefers development to remain a highly centralised affair. Consequently, national programmes that fund decentralised development cooperation are not anticipated for the future. Nevertheless, KL would like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be more active in this area. It has lobbied for the creation of a programme for decentralised development cooperation several times, but without success. Its next challenge is to lobby for financial support for the engagement of Danish municipalities in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

1.4.3 Finland

Cooperation

Much like Norway, Finland used to have an extensive programme for decentralised development cooperation funded by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and managed by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (AFLRA). The North-South Local Government Cooperation Programme (NSGCP) aimed at increasing the capacity in the local governments in developing countries, for improved and increased service delivery. The transfer of expertise and know-how from the Finnish local governments to local governments in Sub-Saharan Africa stood central. The programme was funded by the MFA between 2002 and 2015. After allegations by the (previous) government of misuse of funds and the difficulty of measuring results, the government discontinued the NSGCP. After the current government's structural reforms to development aid, the total budget for development cooperation has been cut from EUR 114 million in 2015 to EUR 65 million in 2016. This huge decrease of budget has further restricted options for municipal decentralised development cooperation.

The AFLRA, which used to be the main vehicle for the implementation of decentralised development cooperation and the allocation of funds, is no longer involved in decentralised development cooperation. KEPA, an NGO platform and knowledge centre on global development representing civil society organisations, is now responsible for the dissemination of information on decentralised development cooperation. However, there are currently no programmes left that are specifically aimed at the exchange of municipal expertise.

Current activities in this field

In practice, AFLRA remains the organisation the Finnish municipalities rely on in terms of decentralised development cooperation – more so than the civil society platform KEPA. Although there are no programmes for decentralised development cooperation in Finland at the moment, some municipalities apply to open calls from the MFA, for funding alongside NGOs. These open calls are issued once every two years. During the last application round (in 2016), 43 NGOs and one municipality were selected to receive a grant (166 NGOs and two municipalities had applied). Needless to say, with lack of external funding, municipal participation in decentralised development cooperation is currently negligible. Nonetheless, some municipalities are still active in international work via (international) programmes for international cooperation.

Interest

AFLRA has been approached by some Finnish cities with the question whether it could lobby for future funding for decentralised development cooperation. This request came, for the most part, from cities that have more than ten years of good experience in this field. However, in the present political climate this does not seem possible to achieve.

Future

Although AFLRA no longer plays a role in decentralised development cooperation, it does try to lobby for the creation of a new local government cooperation programme. However, since the current government takes a very critical stance towards development cooperation, the creation of a new programme does not seem likely to happen in the near future.

“As Finland is a highly decentralized country, AFLRA sees it as a missed opportunity that the expertise of the local government sector is not used when the MFA and the government try to improve the conditions in the developing world.”

Heikki Telakivi, AFLRA

1.4.4 Iceland

Cooperation

Icelandic development cooperation is managed by the Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) which is part of the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Iceland spends 0,29% of its gross national income on development cooperation, but none of this is spent on decentralised development cooperation. No programme for decentralised development cooperation exists, or has in the past. According to SAMBAND, the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities, this has to do with the fact that Iceland is a very small country with a population of about 330.000 inhabitants. The country's development cooperation activities have been quite limited compared to its neighbouring countries and the focus much narrower. The structure and size of the local governments could also explain their absence in the national development programmes. The vast majority of the Icelandic municipalities are very small: only six out of the 74 municipalities have more than 10.000 inhabitants and more than half of them have less than 1000 inhabitants. The capacity of the majority of the Icelandic municipalities for extensive development cooperation is therefore quite limited.

Current activities

Icelandic municipalities are mostly involved in twinning partnerships with other Nordic municipalities and in some European programmes, to which they have access on the basis of the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. Especially municipal schools and kindergartens are active in European cooperation projects. Reykjavík City, by far the largest municipality in Iceland with 123.000 inhabitants, has the greatest potential for international cooperation. Akureyri in Northern Iceland, which is the biggest municipality outside the capital area with 18.000 inhabitants, is active in some arctic cooperation. In spring 2017, municipal staff from the Sandgerði municipality exchanged skills and knowledge with colleagues in Cambodia in the pilot phase of PLATFORMA and VNG International's CONNECT project.

“The international cooperation of Icelandic municipalities revolves mostly around Nordic twinning connections and to some extent participation in the European programmes.”

Anna G. Björnsdóttir, SAMBAND

Interest

Especially Reykjavík City is interested in further international knowledge exchange and has the capacity to do so. SAMBAND has promoted the participation of municipalities in the EEA grants project.⁴³ However, it would require a considerable effort in terms of lobby and knowledge and competence building among the majority of local authorities to develop and implement an Icelandic decentralised development cooperation programme. Nonetheless, SAMBAND believes there might be interest and capacity among individuals that work in the municipalities for participation in projects developed by actors outside of Iceland – as was the case in the Cambodia exchange referred to above. Due to the small number of municipalities, SAMBAND has a good view on which municipalities might have potential candidates if such international cooperation opportunities avail themselves.

Future

Until now, SAMBAND has not found the resources to set up a lobbying campaign for the creation of a national programme for decentralised development cooperation. It did present the idea for such a programme in recent policy work for the Foreign Service, but without success. Seeing as the experience of Icelandic municipalities in the field of decentralised development cooperation is limited, it does not seem likely that such a programme will be created in the near future.

⁴³EEA Grants. *Who we are*. <https://eeagrants.org/Who-we-are>

1.4.5 Luxembourg

Cooperation

In terms of percentage, the small country of Luxembourg is one of the largest donors of ODA, providing 0.93% of GNI in 2015. The Luxembourg Development Cooperation Directorate within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has overall responsibility for development cooperation, which is delivered through the executing agency Lux-Development. Luxembourgish local governments do not play a significant role in development cooperation. Decentralised development cooperation is scarcely mentioned in the national legislative framework for development cooperation, and no programme for decentralised development cooperation exists or has existed in the past.

Current activities in this field

A large number of Luxembourg's local governments are involved in twinning partnerships, but mostly with local governments within the EU or in the USA. SYVICOL, the local government association, supports these existing partnerships and helps local governments in finding partners upon request. SYVICOL provides support by sharing best practices and information, providing a regularly updated list of all the twinings and by redistributing an incentive subsidy made available annually by the government to municipalities that have concluded new twinning partnerships or carried out interesting activities in the framework of existing twinings. However, SYVICOL is not involved in international projects or programmes itself. Currently, only NGOs receive state funds for international cooperation. Local governments can potentially benefit from this, as a partner of the NGOs.

Interest

Although no programmes for decentralised development cooperation are foreseen in Luxembourg, there does seem to be a moderate interest among local governments to be active in development cooperation as is showcased by the current activities in this field, twinning especially. SYVICOL actively encourages twinning partnerships through the mechanisms stated above.

Future

As the existing system in Luxembourg – indirect local government participation in development cooperation with NGOs & direct participation in twinning partnerships – is generally deemed to function satisfactorily, there is no lobby for the creation of a programme that facilitates decentralised development cooperation activities directly. It is therefore unlikely that such a programme will be created in the near future.

“It would without a doubt be very interesting for Luxembourg's municipalities to participate in international conferences on the exchange of best practices. This could create a dynamic on the local level by thematising this issue and by encouraging the municipalities to get involved directly.”

Johanne Fallecker, SYVICOL

1.4.6 Slovenia

Cooperation

Slovenia is one of the smaller contributors in the field of international development cooperation: their official development assistance is 0,18% of the gross national income. Funding for development aid is disbursed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the moment, the level of decentralised development cooperation is negligible. No programme for decentralised development cooperation currently exists in Slovenia, nor has one existed in the past. Slovenia only became a donor country in the early 2000s and it operates a limited development aid budget, ranging between fifty and seventy million euros in the last years. Development aid is mainly focused on the Western Balkans region. Because of the limited resources available for foreign aid, expanding the scope to decentralised development cooperation is currently not realistic.

There are still many challenges in the financing system of decentralised development cooperation initiatives of local governments. Besides budgetary limitations, the smallness of Slovenian municipalities – in terms of size, population, financial and human resources (212 municipalities for two million citizens) – doesn't allow the municipal administrations to focus more deeply on international development cooperation. Furthermore, a regional level of government that could perhaps pool resources from the local level does not exist in Slovenia. In general, mayors are mainly interested in local development of their municipalities while international cooperation is not high on the agenda (except in the framework of attracting new investments, hence also some new partnerships with Chinese cities in recent years).

Current activities in this field

Slovenian municipalities are active in international cooperation in the form of twinning partnerships. Out of 212 municipalities in Slovenia, 87 municipalities are involved in twinning partnerships with partners in non-EU states.⁴⁴ Theoretically, this could include the exchange of municipal knowledge and expertise, although no state-supported programme promotes this. The only way for Slovenian municipalities to obtain funds for decentralised development cooperation activities is through EU or other international programmes. The best-known programme for knowledge exchange is the EU programme URBACT.

“I think that if a national programme for decentralised cooperation would be established, Slovenian municipalities would take advantage of that.”

Miran Košpenda, ZMOS

Interest

Despite budgetary and human resources limitations, municipalities have an increased understanding of why the exchange of best practices is important and are interested in exchanging knowledge and skills with colleagues.

⁴⁴ The majority of the twinned towns from non-EU members are located in Bosnia and Herzegovina (12), Serbia (41), Macedonia (8), Montenegro (6), China (12) and Russia (7).

Future

There currently is no lobby for a decentralised development cooperation programme in Slovenia, and there do not seem to be plans for the creation of such a programme in the foreseeable future.

1.4.7 Slovakia

Cooperation

Slovakia has made the transition from aid recipient to donor of development assistance in 2003, and it has since been engaged in bilateral assistance programmes and projects. Slovak development assistance had been provided by the form of voluntary contributions to the international organisations, specialized programme and humanitarian assistance until 2003. Official development aid of the Slovak republic "SlovakAid" was created in 2003; to the programme and projects of the official development aid was devoted approx. 18, 37 mil. EUR (0,046% of GDP, compared to 2002 – double the amount). In 2017 0,12% of GDP was spent on programmes and projects. The aim is to spent 0,33% of GDP on assistance programmes and projects in 2030.

Slovak Government for the first time approved the document "Medium-Term Strategy for development cooperation for 2003-2008 (within the five year is approving the national programme for development aid on yearly basis). Another important step in SK development cooperation was the adaption the Act on Development Cooperation (2007) as the base for establishing the Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation. Revised Act on Official Development Cooperation (2015) for the first time mention the public bodies including local governments as actors of the Slovak Development Cooperation. In 2013 SR has become the member of OECD Committee for Development Cooperation (OECD/DAC). Nowadays, the priorities of the Slovak aid are based on the fourth Medium-Term Strategy for Development Cooperation of the Slovak Republic for 2014-2018. In these days the ministry preparing the new medium term strategy for 2019-2023. Geographically, among Slovakia's priority partner countries are proposed: West Balkan (Albania, Bosna a Hercegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Serbia), East Partnership of EU (Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova), South African (Kenya, South Sudan) and Afghanistan. Strategic partners are Moldova and Kenya..

The key national institutions involved in development cooperation are the Slovak Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and its Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation (SAIDC), responsible for contracting and administering bilateral programmes and development projects in the recipient countries, although other ministries provide bilateral aid and are included in the multilateral development cooperation as well.

Actors of the Slovak development cooperation are governmental bodies, academic and private sectors, NGOs and local governments. In a practice, the implementation of development projects are mainly carried out by governmental institutions, NGOs, PLATFORMA, private entities, academic institutions, but not by local governments.

The Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS) is a national association of local governments representing 95% of Slovak local authorities. ZMOS is the largest non-governmental organization of local governments in Slovakia. Its goal is to promote and defend the common interest of the associated members, to address common issues and propose a solution and strengthen local governments in the execution of their tasks.

Current activities in this field

National programmes that finance decentralised development cooperation are included in the programme called “Slovak Aid” managed by the Slovak Agency for International Development Cooperation. Implementation mechanism SlovakAid consists of following tools: framework agreements, grants (to development projects, humanitarian and post humanitarian projects, projects of development education, building capacities projects, transmitting volunteers and experts to developing countries), financial contributions, micro-grants, awarding contracts for development projects, Transformational Experience Sharing Tool SR - Slovak Experience Transfer (SET), scholarships, providing an advantageous export credit. However, the significant tool of bilateral development cooperation are the grants. ZMOS, as well as its member’s towns and municipalities as legal entities, are eligible for applying for grants from SlovakAid programme. The practice has showed that local governments are not applying for these grants as there is low visibility about the programme possibilities at local level, low interest about the topic of development cooperation at local level and low interest of the relevant ministry to include local government in Slovak development cooperation. Slovak local governments do not have the financial resources to carry out decentralised development projects, and do not contribute to the above-mentioned projects financially. They are only included in projects that are already set up, and can give added value with their best practices, skills, and knowledge. ZMOS developed and implemented several projects from Slovak Aid Programme, UNDP Trust fund and International Visegrad Fund with Moldavian, Georgia and Ukraine Association of Local Authorities, (2014-2016) focused on transform and sharing experiences from the SK decentralization and reform process – building local and regional self-government – fiscal decentralization undertaken in SK between 2001-2004).

Nowadays, ZMOS participates in Slovak development cooperation through representation in the Coordination Committee for Development Cooperation of the SR established by the Foreign Ministry of the SR - is a basic instrument of the ministry for coordination of the Slovak development aid. Members are ministries, non-governmental organizations (including ZMOS), private sector or academic institutions participate in the implementation of official activities of the SR or perform their own activities in the developing countries. In these day the Committee is preparing new Slovak Mid-term Strategy for development cooperation for 2019-2023.

Interest

At the moment, there is no sign that there will be programmes for decentralised development cooperation in the short run. One of the causes is the lacking support from central authorities for these types of projects. Decentralised development cooperation is not high on the national political agenda.

ZMOS main aim is to contribute to the preparation of the Slovak medium-term strategy for development cooperation for 2019-2023. ZMOS approved its position to the Strategy with a main mission “to foster conceptual approach to local governments and cooperation based on partnership with other relevant actors in development cooperation”. Another our aim is to share experiences with Ukraine concerning the national project “Modernization of local territorial government” and to develop raising awareness activities on development cooperation, global education, calls from SlovakAid programme at local level.

Future

There are strong municipal experts and best practices in Slovakia, particularly related to the transformation experience (i.e. building independent state institutions, developing a market economy and meeting the principles of democracy), but disseminating these capacities can be difficult. A few of the problems faced in decentralised development cooperation are the language barrier, and missing support from central authorities. ZMOS and its members in this field aspire to become an active partner with an added values (local government dispose with reach experiences from fiscal and decentralization process – reform of the public administration – building local and regional self-government).

1.4.8 Croatia

Cooperation

Croatia is one of the most recent donors of development cooperation in the EU, spending 0,11% of GNI on ODA in 2014.⁴⁵ Since 2009 it has a law on Development Cooperation and External Humanitarian Aid. After joining the European Union in 2013, Croatia adopted its first National Strategy for Development Cooperation for the period 2015-2020, in 2015. Most of Croatia's bilateral development assistance is given to Bosnia and Herzegovina through programmes and projects that are implemented by the line ministries.⁴⁶ For the moment, the National Strategy for Development Cooperation does not offer any space for decentralised development cooperation at the moment. In general, the vast majority of funding for projects still comes from EU sources, programmes and platforms rather than the national government.

Current activities in this field

There are currently no national programmes which finance decentralised development cooperation. The EU funds could create opportunities for twinning partnerships, but Croatian local governments will remain beneficiaries of EU programmes until 2019, implementing reforms and performing required reorganisations as recommended by their twinning partners.⁴⁷ Croatia's twinning partners are generally from EU countries.

Interest

The Croatian associations of local governments contacted for this study (i.e. the Croatian County Association and the Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Croatia) have limited oversight on the international activities of their members. Although there has not been research on this topic, the Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Croatia assumes that local governments would be interested to participate in knowledge exchange activities more often.

Future

There are currently no lobby efforts by the associations of local governments for the creation of a programme to finance and facilitate decentralised development cooperation. Also, there is no awareness on whether such programmes are planned for the future, at national level.

⁴⁵ European Commission. *Croatia, policy framework*. July 2016
https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/hr-dp-july-2016_en.pdf.

⁴⁶ European Commission. *Croatia, policy framework*. July 2016
https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/hr-dp-july-2016_en.pdf.

⁴⁷ CFCA. *Twinning*. <http://www.safu.hr/en/twinning> CFCA. *Implementation of Twinning project in Croatia*. <http://www.safu.hr/en/twinning/tw-implementation-system-in-the-republic-of-croatia>

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Consulted websites per case study

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Austria | www.bacid.eu |
| Catalonia | cooperaciocatalana.gencat.cat |
| Croatia | CFCA. Implementation of Twinning project in Croatia. http://www.safu.hr/en/twinning/tw-implementation-system-in-the-republic-of-croatia |
| CFCA. Twinning. | http://www.safu.hr/en/twinning |
| The Czech Republic | www.czechaid.cz |
| Estonia | m.ee/en |
| Flanders | www.vvsg.be |
| Germany | www.connective-cities.net/en |
| Latvia | www.mfa.gov.lv/en |
| Lithuania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Project Management Agency (z.j.) International cooperation. https://www.cpva.lt/en/about/international-cooperation/services-for-public-sector.html • orangeprojects.lt/en |
| The Netherlands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.vng-international.nl • www.LOGOReP.nl |
| Norway | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.ks.no • www.regjeringen.no/en • EEA Grants https://eeagrants.org/ • EEA Grants. <i>Who we are.</i> https://eeagrants.org/Who-we-are |
| Piedmont | www.regione.piemonte.it |
| Poland | www.polskapomoc.gov.pl |
| Sweden | www.icld.se/en |
| United Kingdom | OECD. <i>DAC member information: United Kingdom</i> http://www.oecd.org/dac/unitedkingdom.htm |
| Valencia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. <i>Socios.</i> http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59&Itemid=50&lang=es • Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. <i>Institucional Fons.</i> http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=118&lang=es • Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. <i>Organización del Fons.</i> http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55&Itemid=85&lang=es • Fons Valencià per la solidaritat. <i>Porque formar parte del Fons.</i> http://www.fonsvalencia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=90&lang=es |
| Wallonia | www.uvcw.be |
| OECD | www.oecd.org |

Annex 3. CONNECT: a new matchmaking mechanism

Based on analyses displaying that the European development effectiveness in the local and regional government sector could be enhanced with increased availability of practical local and regional government expertise and peer-to-peer advice, a 'Strategic Partnership' was created in 2015 between the European Commission and PLATFORMA, the European coalition of local and regional governments – and their associations – active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. One of PLATFORMA's partners, VNG International, and PLATFORMA then jointly developed a mechanism called CONNECT in order to unlock existing European local and regional government expertise and link it to concrete demands from local and regional governments in EU partner countries.

Introducing CONNECT

CONNECT links the need for local and regional governments to be capacitated in order for them to take on a new role in development cooperation with the wish of the European Commission to have local and regional governments (and their associations) play a more active role themselves in contributing to development. The European Commission has expressed its wish to make use of the existing expertise, available in local and regional governments in EU Member States and beyond, in the implementation of EU development policies and in projects and programmes of co-operation with partner countries. It is a financially attractive approach as well, given that research has shown that the involvement of local and regional governments' expertise proves to be very cost-effective compared to hiring experts in the business market.⁴⁸

This approach is called colleague-to-colleague learning. Colleagues from different local governments, from various countries and even from diverse continents, understand each other easily. They have a good understanding of the political and administrative context in which policies are implemented, and above all, they are practical problem solvers. EU local and regional governments are involved in many international relations with local and regional governments across the world, in which expertise is developed in a peer-to-peer setting. They are very experienced in this method of capacity development.

What was missing until recently, was an instrument providing quick and adequate connections between the demand for and supply of local government expertise. This is how, in 2016, CONNECT came into existence.

⁴⁸ See, for instance: Towards Improved Local Governance through strengthened Local Governments. Evaluation of the LOGO South programme 2007 – 2010. University of Utrecht and University of Amsterdam (2010).

The aim of CONNECT

The purpose is to facilitate an effective transfer of specific local and regional government know-how that will allow local and regional governments in partner countries (the demand side) to find available expertise in European countries (*North-South exchange*) or other partner countries (*South-South exchange*) (the supply side) in order to contribute to capacity development and learning.

The added value of CONNECT

The strength of the CONNECT approach is based on the “colleague-to-colleague” approach, whereby an exchange of knowledge, experience and skills takes place between local/regional government staff or elected officials with the same job or in a comparable position, with similar tasks and responsibilities. Practitioners exchange views and work together in analysing and solving problems. Key factor for success of the approach is the mutual trust and familiarity that exists between “colleagues” working in comparable environments. The evaluation of the pilot phase of CONNECT was positive about the mechanism, as a new but complementary and innovative model within the broad field of decentralized cooperation.⁴⁹

Modalities

- Temporary Work Placement
- Colleague-to-Colleague Assignment
- Round Table Expert Meeting
- Group Exposure Visit

How does CONNECT work?

Please find an infographic displaying how the CONNECT mechanism works below. For all other information about CONNECT, please visit

www.connectfordevelopment.eu or contact

Jessie Post at VNG International

(jessie.post@vng.nl)



⁴⁹ Dhaene, C. *CONNECT: pilot phase. Evaluation rapport 2016-2017*. VNG International and PLATFORMA, November 2017.

Annex 4. Questionnaire

Depending on whether their countries had programmes that facilitate and finance decentralised development cooperation or not, the local government associations were asked the following questions:

Nationally or regionally financed programmes for decentralised development cooperation

Application and selection

- To which nationally funded programmes for decentralised development cooperation can local governments currently apply?
- How are the programmes communicated to local governments?
- How are local governments selected to participate in the programmes? Can all local governments apply?

Content and modalities

- Do the programmes have specific themes or targets, or a geographical focus?
- How do local governments contribute to the programmes? What is their role?
- Which modalities are used for knowledge exchange?
- What role does the local government association play in the programmes?

Volume

- What is the duration of the programmes?
- How many local governments currently participate in the programmes?
- What is the total budget for the programmes/projects?
- Where does the budget come from?
- Is there a maximum grant?
- Which expenses are financed for participating local governments?
- Is co-financing by the local governments needed or are the costs fully financed by the programme?

No nationally financed programmes for decentralised development cooperation

- Why is there no national financing programme for decentralised development cooperation initiatives of local governments in your country?
- Has there been such a programme in the recent past, and is one planned for the future?
- Does your organisation lobby for the creation of such a programme?
- Are local governments in your country currently active in decentralised development cooperation activities, outside of national programmes?
- Are local governments interested to participate in international knowledge exchange activities more often?

Annex 5. List of respondents to the questionnaire of the study

| Country | Local government association / region | Contact person |
|----------------|--|---|
| Austria | KDZ Centre for Public Administration Research | Mr. Thomas Prorok – Deputy Managing Director/BACID Team Leader Mrs. Marija Šošić – BACID Project Management and Local Government Expert |
| Belgium | Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) | Mrs. Betty de Wachter – (Former) Team Coordinator International Staff Mrs. Hanne Albers – International Staff Member Mrs. Karlien Gorissen – International Staff Member |
| | Union of Walloon Cities and Villages (UVCW) | Mrs. Clarisse Goffin – Advisor Europe/International Service |
| Czech Republic | Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic (SMO CR) | Mrs. Šárka Řechková – Section of Projects and External Relations |
| Denmark | Local Government Denmark (LGDK) | Mr. Jens Peter Christensen – Senior Advisor Ms. Lone Sorensen – Chief secretary |
| Estonia | Association of Estonian Cities (ELL) | Mr. Kaimo Käärmann-Liive – Consultant |
| Finland | Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (AFLRA) | Mr. Heikki Telakivi – Director International Affairs |
| France | Cités Unies France | Mr. Nicolas Wit – Senior Advisor |
| Germany | Deutsche Städtetag (DS) | Mrs. Sabine Drees – Senior Advisor International Affairs |
| Iceland | Association of Local Authorities in Iceland (SAMBAND) | Mrs. Anna G. Björnsdóttir – Division of Development and International Affairs |
| Italy | Associazione Italiana del CCRE (AICCRE) | Mrs. Carla Rey – Secretary General |
| Latvia | Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG) | Mrs. Agita Kaupuža – Adviser to the Chairman on EU Issues, Head of Brussels Office Mrs. Elita Kresse – Adviser on Foreign Affairs issues |
| Lithuania | Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania (LSA) | Mrs. Modesta Kairytė – Head of Brussels Office |
| Luxembourg | Association of Luxembourg Cities and Municipalities (Syvicol) | Mr. Gerard Koob – Secretary Mrs. Johanne Fallecker – Administrative Attaché |

| Country | Local government association / region | Contact person |
|-----------------|---|--|
| The Netherlands | International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG International) | Mr. Chris van Hemert – Deputy Business Unit Manager Mr. Arne Musch – Business Unit Manager Mrs. Irene Oostveen – Senior Project Manager Mr. Tim te Pas – Senior Project Manager |
| Norway | Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) | Mr. Bjørn Rongevær – Senior Adviser |
| Poland | Association of Polish Cities (ZMP POZNAN) | Mr. Tomasz Potkański – Deputy Executive Director Mrs. Katarzyna Paczyńska – Head of International Relations |
| Slovakia | Association of Towns and Communities in Slovakia (ZMOS) | Mrs. Barbara Vachová |
| Slovenia | Association of Urban Municipalities of Slovenia (ZMOS) | Mr. Miran Košpenda – Coordinator |
| Spain | Generalitat de Catalunya | Mr. Javier Sánchez Cano – Directorate General for Development Cooperation Mr. Julian Artacho Valverde - Technical Advisor |
| | Agència Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament | Mrs. Núria Mercader Reixachs - Head of Institutional Relations and Coherence of Policies |
| | Generalitat Valenciana | Mr. Daniel González Serisola – Chief Cabinet of the Vice Minister of Transparency, Social Responsibility, Participation and Cooperation |
| Sweden | Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) | Mr. Gabriel Werner – International Policy Advisor Mrs. Matilda Lindberg – International Policy Advisor |
| United Kingdom | Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) | Mrs. Lucy Slack – Deputy Secretary-General |
| | Local Government Association (LGA) | Mr. Russell Reefer - Officer lead for International Activity and Policy Mr. Daniel Gardiner – Advisor |

List of respondents with whom interviews were carried out

| Name | Local government association / region | E-mail address |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Matilda Lindberg | SALAR | matilda.lindberg@skl.se |
| Daniel Gardiner | LGA | Daniel.Gardiner@local.gov.uk |

| Name | Local government association / region | E-mail address |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Thomas Prorok and Marija Susic | KDZ | prorok@kdz.or.at |
| Carla Rey | AICCRE | rey@aiccre.it |
| Sabine Drees | DS | sabine.drees@staedtetag.de |
| Agita Kaupuža | LALRG | Agita.Kaupuza@lps.lv |
| Julian Artacho Valverde | Generalitat de Catalunya | jartacho@gencat.cat |
| Nicolas Wit | CUF | n.wit@cites-unies-france.org |