



SUMMARY REPORT

NATIONAL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES ON DEVELOPMENT

AN INSPIRING MODEL FOR
ASSOCIATIONS OF TOWNS AND REGIONS
AS KEY PLAYERS OF THE 2030 AGENDA



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AICCRE: Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions

CBO: Community-Based Organisation

CEMR: Council of European Municipalities and Regions

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

EU: European Union

FEMP: Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces

HLPF: High-Level Political Forum

LALRG: Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments

LG: Local Government

LRG: Local and Regional Government

LRGA: Local and Regional Government Association

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NMSDD: National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

UCLG: United Cities and Local Governments

UN: United Nations

VNG International: International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities

VNR: Voluntary National Review

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the main findings of the implementation of the project 'National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development' (hereinafter "NMSDD" or "the Dialogues"), a PLATFORMA initiative conducted as part of its Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) signed with the European Commission in 2015. The project's general aim was to strengthen the role of PLATFORMA's partner associations in relation to the definition, implementation and monitoring of international development cooperation policies at national level, with a particular focus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the localisation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The purpose of this document is to distil the lessons learned and to inspire other local government associations. The report sums up the common and/or specific key challenges, opportunities and success-and-failure factors brought to light by the NMSDD project. More information about the project and the specific roles and activities of the associations have been provided in a comparative report and in individual country reports¹.

About the NMSDD project

The project was implemented during the 2015-2018 period by four local government associations, all partners of PLATFORMA:

- 1. Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions** (AICCRE, Italy),
- 2. Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments** (LALRG, Latvia),
- 3. International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities** (VNG International, Netherlands),
- 4. Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces** (FEMP, Spain).

The four implementers decided to use the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN in 2015 as a general framework for their respective strategies. As a matter of fact, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was proposed as the new narrative for global development, with a focus on poverty eradication and sustainability. The four strategies thus focus on **the roles of European local and regional government associations (LRGAs) in supporting their members' contribution to the design, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs** in their own country (and abroad for decentralised cooperation strategies), that is, in **localising the SDGs**.

Although the four pilot cases shared the same overarching structure, they differed from one another in the solutions and strategies deployed, which were in response to the specific needs, challenges and opportunities of their respective national policymaking contexts and local and regional governments (LRGs).

Specific objectives

The Dialogues were designed with the objectives of inciting the LRGAs and their members (local and regional governments) to get involved in the discussions about the SDGs and international development policies being held in each of the four countries, and to strengthen their collaboration with key stakeholders. These include representatives of national governments, national policymaking bodies, civil society organisations, academia, the private sector, citizens and European institutions.

An essential component of the Dialogues is the exchange and peer learning between the four implementers. Over the last two years of the project's implementation, the PLATFORMA secretariat has organised five coordination meetings, providing the implementers with the opportunity to discuss specific shared challenges encountered and to exchange expertise regarding the tools and solutions employed.

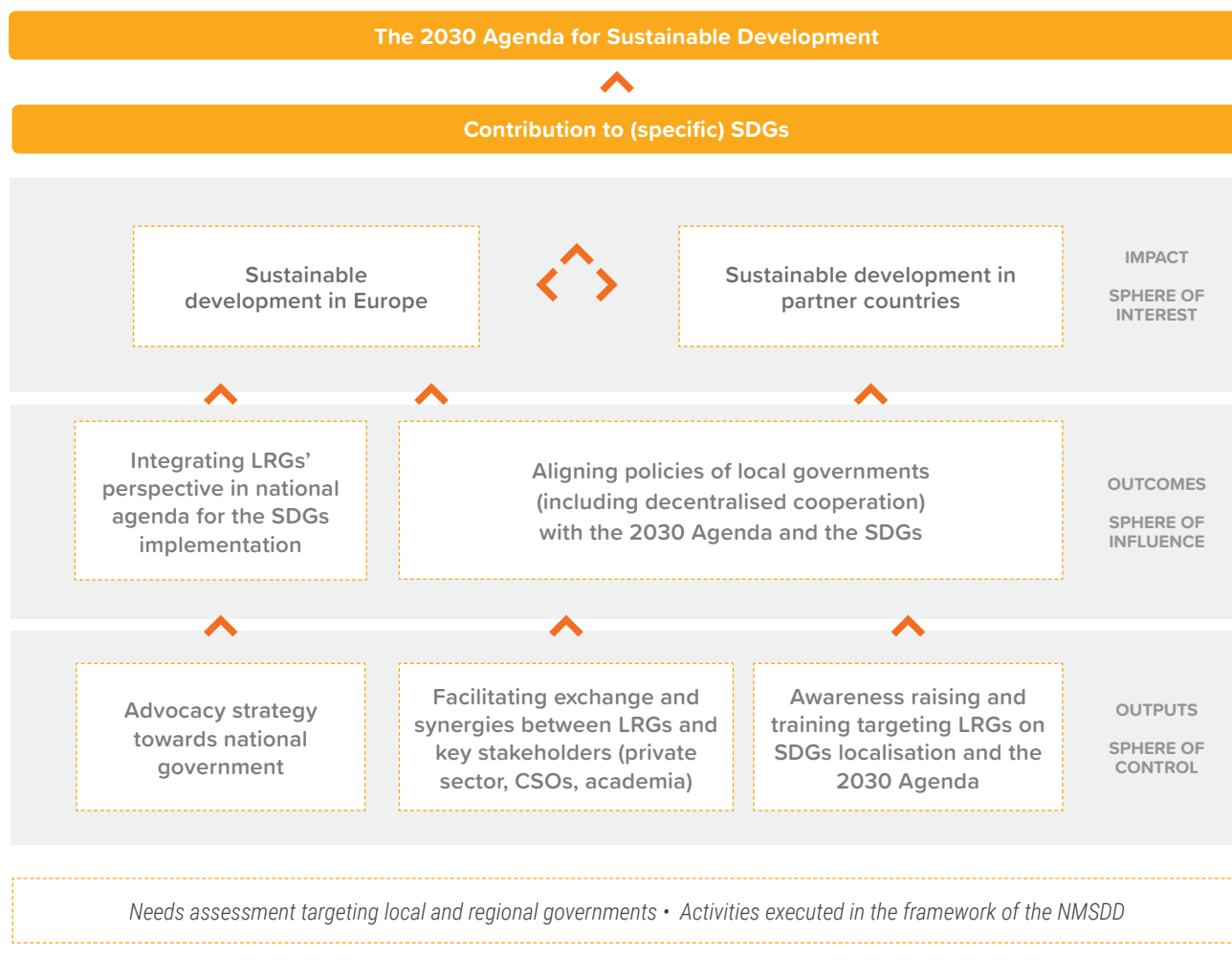
The short and long-term objectives of the NMSDD project are presented in Figure 1.



¹ Check on <http://platforma-dev.eu/publications>

– Figure 1 –

Activities and projected outcomes and impacts of the NMSDD project
(source: author and PLATFORMA)



NMSDD in practice

The National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues acted as a large canopy covering a variety of activities. The four pilot implementers would organise different activities according to, for example, the topic under discussion, what was being advocated or the needs for effective communication. For instance, a series of regional meetings could be held to involve a wide range of key stakeholders (national representatives, NGOs, private sector, etc.) or smaller initiatives might be organised if a specific group of actors was the target. Identifying the relevant stakeholders is a question strongly related to context, so the type of actors associated would differ in each country.

For the most part, the implementation of the dialogues involved two main types of activities:

- 1. Advocacy aimed at national governments** to build a strong case for localising the SDGs and to promote the key role of local governments in the design, implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.
- 2. Awareness-raising and capacity-building** in relation to the 2030 Agenda targeting local governments and their role in its implementation.

Both lines of actions resulted in the development of specific tools or methods, examples of which have been included in this report.

THE PILOT CASES

This chapter presents essential information about the activities of the NMSDD pilot implementers. More information on the associations can be found in Annex 1.

Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AICCRE, Italy)

AICCRE launched the NMSDD by organising a series of regional meetings to assess the needs of its membership. Based on its findings, namely that the 2030 Agenda was widely unknown and that LRGs found it difficult to concretely implement the SDGs at their level, AICCRE opted for a multi-level and targeted approach focusing first on local and regional stakeholders, and then broadening to involve key national and European stakeholders. The association organised training sessions for mayors and used its new website to disseminate key information on the results of its dialogues.



Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG, Latvia)

LALRG's work focuses on both domestic and external affairs and closely collaborates with the national government. From the start of the NMSDD project, LALRG organised various meetings involving the participation of different stakeholders. After a general information event held in Riga, a series of regional meetings were organised focusing on specific SDGs that were particularly relevant for each Latvian region. Development education, understood as awareness raising on global sustainable development and international cooperation issues, was an important part of the project for which the association collaborated with primary schools to conduct a competition on animated films focusing on the SDGs, among other activities.

International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG International, Netherlands)

VNG International is a relatively large organisation and was able to build on its previous "Millennium Municipalities Campaign" linked to the UN Millennium Development Goals (2000) that mobilised over 170 municipalities (2007-2015). VNG International used the NMSDD project to strengthen existing activities both in terms of awareness-raising and advocacy. The organisation also developed various tools, such as a "time capsule" – to collect personal wishes, dreams and ideas for 2030 –, a menu of inspiration, a booklet for local governments and a SDG matrix to help align local public policies with concrete SDG targets.

Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP, Spain)

The Spanish association FEMP works on behalf of various local entities (city councils, provinces and insular town councils). After the national elections in Spain in 2015, the belated formation of a government delayed the start of the NMSDD. FEMP generally focused its efforts on multi-stakeholder dialogues at the national level. FEMP initiated training for local government and a series of bilateral meetings with key CSO players considered to be essential partners. FEMP also ensured that international cooperation became an important pillar of its Dialogues by associating its counterparts in Latin America and by strengthening ties with the State Secretariat for International Cooperation and for Ibero-America and the Caribbean.

GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE NMSDD

Implementing the SDGs is context-specific and each pilot country is marked by many differences in terms of country size, territorial structure, governmental bodies, the role of local and regional government associations and the mandate of local governments. Thus, there are no characterising blueprints or universal formulas to be applied, but this report highlights specific tools, shared approaches and common challenges that can inspire other associations.

1. GETTING STARTED

Building LRGAs' capacities in relation to the 2030 Agenda

National associations need to assess and strengthen their own knowledge and awareness of the 2030 Agenda, including its relevance for the local and regional level, the national reference points for the design of the agenda, the national reporting mechanisms and processes, etc. For this, associations can benefit from knowledge exchange with peers and learning initiatives at European and global level. As a matter of fact, the **sharing of knowledge and the exchange of best practices** between the four implementers during coordination meetings was an unanticipated added value of the project. National associations can benefit from the work of European and global networks in terms of the management of knowledge about the 2030 Agenda².

Objectives and budget

The identification of **clear and realistic objectives**, as well as setting a clear NMSDD strategy is important. What exactly do associations want to achieve in terms of increasing their members' knowledge of the 2030 Agenda and strengthening its role in the national processes of designing, implementing and monitoring the global agenda? What can they realistically achieve given the resources available to them?

The considerations on the **budget available and/or necessary** to achieve the identified objectives should also be taken into account in the initial phase. In the case where the budget is too limited to achieve the desired objectives, additional funding might be needed and for these funds at municipal, national or international level from donor organisations (see 'useful references' below) can be useful. In the case of the NMSDD project, the financial support provided to the LRGAs was important for the organisation of activities.

Assessments

In the case where the LRGAs have little or no knowledge regarding their level of awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, **an assessment** can be a good starting point. This assessment can take on various forms and will help in acquiring a more complete view of the needs of local governments. It can also be helpful in understanding to what extent the SDGs are concretely embedded in current local policies, as well as to pinpoint and establish the best **form of communication** to reach its LRGs.



AICCRE in Italy started the NMSDD project by organising a series of meetings with local governments at regional level in order to ascertain their views and needs in relation to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda localisation. Based on this assessment, AICCRE opted to proceed with a 'stratified approach', starting from the local level and adding key stakeholders progressively (CSOs representatives, academia, national government, European representatives, etc). The association also adapted its communication strategy to focus on online tools such as Twitter, newsletters and a dedicated new website to share the conclusions of meetings and mobilise members and key partners.

² At the time of finalizing this report, CEMR and PLATFORMA had just edited "Sustainable Development Goals. How Europe's towns and regions are taking the lead", a survey-based assessment on the role of European LRGAs in the localisation of the 2030 Agenda presented at the 2018 High Level Political Forum in New York (<http://bit.ly/2NtFB43>).

2. ADVOCACY

Securing a position at the national SDG table by participating in the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)

As part of its implementation and follow-up mechanisms, the UN encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels" (paragraph 79 of the Agenda declaration). The Voluntary National Reviews are presented to the annual meeting of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). The Netherlands and Italy presented their VNR at the HLPF 2017 while Latvia and Spain presented theirs at the HLPF 2018.

Taking part in the drafting process of the voluntary national review on the implementation of the SDGs is an important way to strengthen cooperation with the national government and to advocate for the better positioning of local and regional governments as key actors in the implementation of the SDGs.

The first step is to **identify and assess the appointed national-scaled bodies in charge of the definition, implementation and reporting of the national strategy on the 2030 Agenda**. Each national context is different: inter-ministerial body led and coordinated by the SDG's special ambassador (Spain), single-appointed ministry and no formal consultation mechanisms (Italy, early 2017), SDG reference points within each ministry and open multi-stakeholder consultation (The Netherlands), national consultation table open to stakeholders (Latvia). It is also advisable to **identify key stakeholders** (CSOs, private sector, academia, etc.) **with which partnerships are to be foreseen for a more effective inclusion** in the process.



3. AWARENESS-RAISING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

When considering which **key players should be involved in awareness-raising activities**, LRGs must take into account these players' accessibility (how can you reach them?) and relevance (which ones are important to involve for the purpose of achieving the objectives?). The type of players will vary according to the country, region or local government. Two **types of players** can be identified in this regard:

- 1. Target audience:** LRGs' work is mainly focused on the local and regional governments that make up their membership. Their role also consists of supporting their members by mobilising local key stakeholders, such as CSOs, schools and academia, private sector, among others. Figure 2 (on the right) presents an overview of key stakeholders to be considered in regards to awareness raising strategies and the links of collaboration that can be established based on the NMSDD experience.
- 2. Players supporting dissemination, knowledge exchange and learning:** European and global platforms of LRGs can be important in disseminating knowledge and providing access to concrete innovative practices. This applies to UCLG, PLATFORMA, CEMR and UN (Habitat) (see also 'useful references').



In the **Netherlands**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of coordinating the Voluntary National Review (VNR) invited VNG and non-governmental players to actively contribute to it, as well as to the first national progress report, which was presented to the National Parliament in 2017 and 2018.

In **Italy**, unlike the Dutch case, no formal consultation was organised by the national government to draft the VNR in 2017. At the time, AICCRe contacted the coordinating Ministry of Environment, but the drafting process was already well underway and, as a result, the report to the UN was lacking in local and regional perspectives on the progress of SDG implementation.

The Secretary General of the LALRG (**Latvia**) approached the Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre of the Republic of Latvia (responsible for the introduction of the SDGs in Latvia). The association was invited to join the working group for the preparation of the VNR (2018). The experience of VNG International motivated LALRG to proactively approach the bodies in charge.

In **Spain**, FEMP fostered its links with the reference body in charge of coordinating the drafting exercise as soon as it was appointed in early 2018 (the High-Level Group for the 2030 Agenda) and, as a result, could input the VNR and join the Spanish delegation at the High Level Political Forum in July 2018. The document included a chapter on the role of LGs and FEMP in implementing the SDGs.

– Figure 2 –
Potential players and their possible roles and key activities

Player	Assess/check	Possible activities
National government	<p>The extent to which the SDGs are embedded within the national government: how involved are the various ministries? Is there inter-ministerial coordination?</p> <p>The extent to which LRGs, together with other stakeholders, are perceived as key contributors to the definition and implementation of the Agenda 2030</p>	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Funding</p>
Local governments	Existing knowledge and specific needs to enable them to effectively contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs	<p>Awareness raising</p> <p>Knowledge exchange</p> <p>Facilitation</p> <p>Co-funding</p>
Civil society actors	Relevant NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), national platforms of civil society, Local SDG /decentralised cooperation platforms	<p>Awareness raising</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Co-funding</p>
Private sector	Relevant small and medium enterprises and large-scale (international) cooperation	<p>Awareness raising</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Stimulation of Corporate Social Responsibility</p> <p>Address SDGs in PPPs</p> <p>Co-funding</p>
Educational institutions, specifically universities	Available knowledge, ongoing research projects	<p>Learning, strengthening own organisation</p> <p>Collaboration</p>
(Mass) media	Target groups, number of people reached and geographical focus areas	Awareness raising
Citizens, and specifically young people and students	Existing knowledge about the SDGs, key characteristics of target groups	Awareness raising and engagement of citizens in various roles
International institutions (that have a presence in the country)	Available knowledge	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Learning</p> <p>Strengthening own organisation</p> <p>Funding</p>
(Other) local government associations in Europe and abroad, networks of LRGs	The strategies and tools developed by other LRGs in both decentralised cooperation and 2030 Agenda, as well as research publications produced by networks of LRGs	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Learning</p> <p>Strengthening own organisation</p> <p>Funding</p>
Partner LRGs from non-EU countries	Potential to build on existing cooperation projects to further integrate the SDGs into decentralised cooperation policies	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Learning and knowledge exchange</p>

Kicking off

In order to raise-awareness, organising a **large kick-off event at national or regional level** (depending on size, differences within the country) can be a good way to reach and involve many actors. It may be possible to connect a kick-off event to an existing event, which increases efficiency, both for the associations and participants. Alternatively, **SDG information seminars organised at municipal or regional level** can contribute to entrench the SDGs on the field and is also helpful in gaining a better understanding of the regional or local contexts.



LALRG (Latvia) organised a series of awareness raising seminars in different regions, targeting key stakeholders including the regional and national authorities, CSOs, academia and schools, etc. Although the localisation of the SDGs was the overarching common topic, each of the regional seminars addressed it through a tailored thematic approach depending on the territorial priorities. For instance, the seminar held in Amata focused on innovation and digitalization (September 2017), while the one in Daugavpils (July 2016) specifically addressed the importance of multi-stakeholder approaches and partnerships in the implementation of development cooperation policies.

Multi-stakeholder meetings versus targeted approaches

In addition to the advocacy work aimed at the national government, the NMSDD provided an opportunity for LRGAs **to establish or strengthen collaborative links with CSOs, universities and the private sector**. Depending on the existing partnerships and the specific national contexts, the dialogues relied on different approaches in each country.



While **LALRG** and **FEMP** chose to organise regional or national-scaled events involving different stakeholders each time, **AICCRE** opted for targeted meetings focusing on local officials in a first stage, to later on enlarge the scope and organise broader events gathering regional and national-scaled CSOs platforms, national government and European representatives, among others.

Connect the SDGs to the daily work of local governments

In order to facilitate the integration of the new global development narrative within the local context, it can be useful to **identify concrete links between the SDG targets and the day-to-day local governments' responsibilities** so that they are not perceived as too abstract or as a burden.



In the Netherlands, **VNG International** developed an 'SDG matrix' through which local competencies and policies were put in relation to the SDGs to illustrate their relevance to local affairs (see the comparative report for more information).

In Latvia, the term "SDG" was intentionally not used by **LALRG** in the main title of some of the meeting as the association understood it might act as a sticking point for local governments. For instance, the final event organised in Riga (November 2017) and focused on decentralised cooperation was entitled: "Building bridges between municipalities: from West to East".

Using SDGs as a new framework to address decentralised cooperation

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs point to the need to improve policy coherence as well as to the co-responsibility of all actors in tackling global development issues. The SDGs can be used as a starting point to **discuss effective and coherent international cooperation policies and to promote LRGs' decentralised cooperation initiatives aligned with the SDGs**. LRGs can thus effectively advocate for decentralised cooperation by using the SDGs as a new narrative.



FEMP (Spain) understood the Dialogues as an opportunity to strengthen its links with international partners in Latin America (for instance, with DEMUCA, the Centro American Foundation of Municipal Development) and raised the issue of linking international cooperation with the 2030 Agenda at a multi-stakeholder conference in April 2017. Thus, FEMP positioned itself as a strategic actor with longstanding experience in international cooperation.

The organisation of training events for elected officials and policy officers

Targeted training opportunities can be helpful in **promoting the implementation of the SDGs at local level and the adoption of concrete tools** regarding the alignment of local policies with the SDG targets or the collection of data to fulfil monitoring duties. Training sessions can be organised in cooperation with, for example, NGOs, European or global LRGs networks and universities.



FEMP (Spain) organised a series of training sessions targeting local and sub-national elected officials and civil servants. The use of specific tools such as the SDGs Training course (created by the UCLG-lead Global Task Force) to demonstrate concrete ways to effectively align local policies with the 2030 Agenda is to be noted. FEMP has also started working with a group of municipalities and provinces (Soria, Madrid, Province of Córdoba) to support the definition of tailored strategies to implement the 2030 Agenda at their territorial scale.

Open and transparent communications through websites and social media

The four pilot implementers shared information about their activities through their websites and two of them developed new **online platforms specifically dedicated to the SDG localisation as a service to their members**. Online tools are useful to raise awareness and strengthen capacities.



AICCRE (Italy) fully renovated its website (www.aiccre.it) and posted several videos of their meetings as well as an online map featuring decentralised cooperation projects promoted by Italian municipalities, while **FEMP** (Spain) created a targeted web portal (<http://localizandoods.es/en>) on the topic of the localisation of the SDGs to promote its events and meetings and share main conclusions and tools.

In the frame of **VNG International** (The Netherlands) Global Goals municipal campaign ('Gemeenten4GlobalGoals'), municipalities were invited to tailor the logo and campaign visuals to make it more appealing. 'Utrecht4GlobalGoals' is used on Twitter, for instance.

Apart from using Twitter, **LALRG** (Latvia) identified Facebook as a valuable tool to reach new audiences and used its profile to communicate about their activities.



4. AWARENESS-RAISING TOOLBOX

The Netherlands

A **time capsule** was created **to increase awareness among elected officials and the wider public**. Dutch mayors and aldermen were invited to formulate their wish ahead of 2030 and to share it with local stakeholders CSO representatives and schools, among others. These messages have been enclosed in cylindrical wooden capsules and are to be opened by the year 2030.



The Time Capsule in Sitterd Geleen, the Netherlands

(photo: Hub Hamers)

The title of **Most Inspiring 'Global Goals Municipality'**, is awarded at the beginning of each year, generating a lot of publicity and inspiring other local governments.



Marloes Borsboom, Vice-Mayor of Rijswijk, member of the VNG committee on European and international affairs handles the 2017 title of most inspiring 'global goals municipality' to Utrecht and Oss' delegations.



Latvia

A **video-animation contest on the SDGs** was organised by LALRG in collaboration with different schools. The association facilitated the production of the videos and partnered with academia to address the concrete implications of the concepts of global sustainable development and the role of latvian municipalities in it.

LALRG puts focus on its work with schools and academic centres through visual and comprehensive tools on the SDGs.



Italy

An **inspirational and participatory workshop targeting (up to 100) mayors** with the aim of jointly formulating Municipal Strategic Plans linking the SDG targets with concrete local policy areas in relation to social services (SDGs 1,2,3,4,5), economic development (SDGs 7,8,9,10,11) and environmental urban policies (SDGs 6,12,13,14,15).

More than 100 Italian mayors took part in the participatory and interactive working session organised by AICCCE.

Spain

Training sessions targeting local officials and civil servants working in international relations department or others is an effective way to foster long-lasting changes in local public policy making. The SDGs are translated into concrete targets and priorities, as for instance the need to strengthen interdepartmental cooperation for a more holistic, coherent and effective implementation of sustainable development local policies with a global perspective.

First workshop organised by FEMP on the SDGs targeting local civil servants.



The Netherlands

A **practical and concise booklet** has been created to **highlight the specific municipal competencies, policies and concrete actions relevant for each of the SDGs**. For example, the implementation of SDG 11 at the local level may involve the active participation of citizens in city planning, providing space – physically and

financially – to citizens' grassroots initiatives, encouraging greater bicycle use through investments in infrastructure and promoting the use of sustainable energy, etc. The booklet is available in Dutch on the Global Goals Campaign's website: www.vng.nl/global-goals-gemeenten-sustainable-development-goals-sdg.

– Figure 3 –


SDG 11 matrix for the Dutch municipal context³



³ Developed by VNG International and translated into English.

5. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES ORGANISED UNDER THE NMSDD

	Assessment	Awareness-raising		Advocacy		Examples of specific tools developed
		Information meetings	Training	Multi-stakeholder meetings	Contribution to 2030 Agenda: national plans and reports	
AICCRE (Italy)	Various assessment meetings held at regional level.	Meetings at regional level. Information on all activities published on website.	Training for mayors.	Stratified approach targeting specific players (e.g. local and regional officials, mayors). Later, organisation of multi-stakeholder meetings at national and European level.	Early contacts with Ministry in charge of VNR drafting to secure recognition as a key player in the design, implementation and reporting of the SDGs as a first step towards further involvement.	Website as an open and transparent channel where all (video) reports of meetings are accessible.
LALRG (Latvia)	No specific assessment but meetings at regional level useful to learn about perspectives of LGs.	One large introductory meeting on the SDGs. Final conference in Riga included important awareness-raising component with outside speakers presenting the SDGs to Latvian local representatives.	Regional meetings included best practice exchange on specific SDGs, and involved partners like Moldova.	All regional meetings systematically involved a broad range of key stakeholders. (e.g. CSO and NGO representatives, academia, private sector, etc.)	Participated in the round-table discussions on the national plan for implementing the SDGs and was invited to contribute to the VNR.	SDG animation contest for children. Facebook and Twitter campaign to communicate about the dialogue activities.
VNG International (The Netherlands)	Regional meetings doubled as an assessment.	Development of various awareness-raising materials (see last column). Use of concept 'municipalities4 GlobalGoals' to label a broad range of activities promoted by LRGs.	Training for civil servants at regional level.	Participation in the SDG Charter, a multi-stakeholder initiative, and promotion of multi-stakeholder meetings at municipal and national level.	Drafted a chapter for LGs in National SDG progress reports. In close contact with the SDG network of ministerial Focal Points.	Time capsule to capture municipal wishes regarding the SDGs, Award for most promising global goals municipality, 'Matrix' of SDGs to link the SDGs (targets) with municipal competencies (see below for further information)
FEMP (Spain)	No specific assessment but meetings at regional level useful to learn about perspectives of LGs.	Organisation of high-level national events gathering key stakeholders and dissemination of information on the 2030 Agenda through specific website.	Training sessions targeting local elected officials and civil servants on the 2030 Agenda and its localisation.	Key national representatives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), CSOs, journalists and UN participated in meetings at national level, and bilateral meetings were held with specific key partners on the localisation of the SDGs.	Established relations with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, key ministries and governments of different Autonomous Communities. Active in round-table negotiations to design the national SDG implementation plan and prepare the VNR.	Approval of strategy to support local governments in implementing the SDGs. A specific website developed to inform a broader audience about the localisation of the 2030 Agenda in Spain

A black Eames-style chair is positioned in the center of the frame. A white rectangular sign is placed on the chair's seat. The sign contains the text 'THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. The background is a light gray wall with soft, out-of-focus shadows of branches or leaves. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the chair's sleek design and the sign's message.

**THINK
OUTSIDE
THE BOX**

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Getting started

- Do not overlook capacity-building within the LRGA, not only for the departments or teams dedicated to international programming, but also for those working on sectoral departments.
- Start with some form of assessment to evaluate the level of knowledge of local and regional governments and any specific experiences regarding the 2030 Agenda. This can be done through site visits, questionnaires, exploratory meetings, etc.
- Build on existing structures, such as territorial or national multi-stakeholder networks.
- Localising the SDGs by customising the approach requires funding. In the case where an association has limited or no funds, it might prove necessary to explore other sources inside and outside the municipality. (see 'useful references').
- Benchmarking of available tools, publications and experiences (see 'useful references') can be useful in finding inspiration and in acquiring the knowledge necessary to get started.

Advocacy

- Collect information on the main obstacles and strengths of local and regional governments in terms of any contribution to SDG implementation in view of establishing a dialogue with the national government.
- Actively engage with national government, for instance, by inviting them to meetings and events.
- Identify the key reference points within the national governments concerning the design of the national SDG strategy and its reporting process as a first step towards advocating for LRG contribution to the overall strategy design, implementation and reporting process. This has proven to be an effective way to increase attention and recognition for the role of local and regional governments in achieving the SDGs.
- Take part in international and European forums on the SDGs as a way to help position LRGs as key stakeholders in the design and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Strengthening links with global and European networks (UCLG, CEMR-PLATFORMA) and with partner LRGs in non-EU countries can also increase knowledge on how to better advocate for LRGs contributing to the agenda.
- Showcase LRGs' international partnerships with peers in European and/or partner countries in order to bolster LRGs' position in national governments' discussions on the 2030 Agenda. International cooperation is in fact a component of the Agenda and national governments are always seeking inspiration from other countries for their own strategies.

Awareness raising and capacity-building

- As much as possible, try to organise meetings in different regions to engage different actors including local governments, NGOs, learning institutions and the private sector.
- Organise training for policy-makers and elected officials on the SDGs and how they can be linked to the daily work and practices of local governments.
- Scale up successful activities. Facilitate and encourage the extrapolation of lessons from effective practices within the country by, for instance, highlighting relevant information on websites and promoting the sharing of know-how between municipalities.
- Use (mass) media and social networks to good advantage to raise awareness.
- Partner with academia, including local schools or universities, in order to broaden citizens' knowledge about the 2030 Agenda and highlight local and regional governments' role as key contributors to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Exchange experiences with partner organisations abroad, including European peers and LRGs from non-EU countries. The SDGs offer an ideal opportunity to strengthen existing cooperation links and to promote new and more effective practices under the SDG framework.

KEY INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS OF THE PILOT IMPLEMENTERS

AICCRE is the Italian association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, with headquarters in Rome and representation all across Italy through its 20 regional federations. AICCRE brings together regions, municipalities, provinces and the elected representatives of local governments (metropolitan areas, districts, mountain communities), furthering their commitment to the construction of a federal Europe, founded on the recognition, reinforcement and enhancement of regional and local authorities.

Contact person: Carla Rey

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🌐 www.aiccre.it

🐦 [@aiccrenazionale](https://twitter.com/aiccrenazionale)

LALRG is the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments unifying the 119 local governments of Latvia around a voluntary principle. LALRG is a member of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Innovation Circle. LALRG is responsible for coordinating the work of the Latvian delegation in the Committee of the Regions and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

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🌐 www.lps.lv/en

f <http://www.facebook.com/PasvaldibuSavieniba>

▶ <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMFwNiqaNmJ0pQGJzr8esWw>

🐦 [@lps_lv](https://twitter.com/lps_lv)

VNG International is the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG). VNG represents the interests of all 390 Dutch municipalities and delivers services aimed at them. VNG International, a daughter company of VNG, is involved in development cooperation activities and therefore participates actively in PLATFORMA. In close cooperation with the city of The Hague and UCLG, VNG International established The Hague Academy for Local Governance.

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🌐 www.vng-international.nl

🐦 [@VNGi](https://twitter.com/VNGi)

FEMP is the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces is an association of local and intermediate entities (city councils, provinces and insular town councils) headquartered in Madrid. One of its objectives is to promote ties of friendship and cooperation between local authorities and their organisations at international level, with a particular focus on Europe, Latin America and the Arab countries. FEMP is the Spanish Section of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and houses the Ibero-American Organisation for Inter-Municipal Cooperation (OICI).

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🌐 www.femp.es

f www.facebook.com/fempcomunicacion

🐦 [@fempcomunica](https://twitter.com/fempcomunica)

USEFUL REFERENCES

CEMR - PLATFORMA

Sustainable Development Goals. How Europe's towns and regions are taking the lead.
A survey-based assessment on the role of European LRGAs in the localization of the 2030 Agenda presented at the 2018 High Level Political Forum in New York

🌐 <http://bit.ly/2NtFB43>

Handbook for a successful project
A publication including tips relating to budget

🌐 <http://platforma-dev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/PLATFORMA-v2-EN-1.pdf>

Other relevant information

🌐 www.platforma-dev.eu

UCLG

Roadmap for localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at subnational level

🌐 https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/roadmap_for_localizing_the_sdgs_0.pdf

UCLG learning module: Localizing SDGs

🌐 <https://www.learning.uclg.org/localizing-sdgs>

The Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs in the municipal map

🌐 www.learning.uclg.org/sites/default/files/documents/the_sdgs_in_the_municipal_map_0.pdf

App on what local governments need to know about the SDGs

🌐 <https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/new-app-has-been-released-what-local-governments-need-know-about-sdgs>

UN

17 goals to transform our world

🌐 www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

SDG action campaign

🌐 <http://sdgactioncampaign.org/>

SDG Toolbox created by UNDP, UN-Habitat & Global Task Force

🌐 <http://localizingthesdgs.org/about-us.php>

LIST OF PLATFORMA'S PARTNERS

PLATFORMA is the European coalition of local and regional governments – and their associations – active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. Since its creation in 2008, PLATFORMA has been representing more than 100,000 local and regional governments. All are key players in international cooperation for sustainable development.

The diversity of PLATFORMA's partners is what makes this network unique. PLATFORMA reflects the diversity of local and regional governments' realities in Europe and across the world.

The aim of PLATFORMA is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, but also to strengthen the specific role of local and regional governments in development policies.

In 2015, PLATFORMA signed a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) with the European Commission. Its signatories commit to take actions based on common values and objectives to tackle global poverty and inequalities, while promoting local democracy and sustainable development.

The Secretariat of PLATFORMA is hosted by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).

www.platforma-dev.eu



AEXCID: Extremadura Agency for International Cooperation for Development
www.juntaex.es/aexcid



AUC: Association of Ukrainian cities
www.auc.org.ua/en



AFCCRE: French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.afccre.org



CALM: Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova
www.calm.md



AICCRE: Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.aiccre.it



CCRE/CEMR: Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.ccre.org



AIMF: International Association of French-speaking Mayors
www.aimf.asso.fr



CLGF: Commonwealth Local Government Forum
www.clgf.org.uk



ALAL: Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania
www.lsa.lt/en



CPMR: Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions
www.cpmr.org



ANCI: National Association of Italian Municipalities
www.anci.it



CUF: United Cities France
<http://cites-unies-france.org/>



DIBA: Province of Barcelona
www.diba.cat



EEL: Association of Estonian Cities
www.ell.ee



Euskal Fundoia: Basque Fund - Association of local authorities from the Basque country for international cooperation
www.euskalfundoia.org



Famsi: Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity
www.andaluciasolidaria.org



FEMP: Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces
www.femp.es



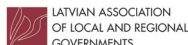
Fons Mallorquí: Majorcan Fund for Solidarity and Cooperation
www.fonsmallorqui.org/ca



Generalitat de Catalunya: Autonomous community of Catalonia
www.gencat.cat



KDZ: Centre for Public Administration Research - Austria
to be replaced by the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (AACT) as of 1st March 2019
www.kdz.eu



LALRG: Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments
www.lps.lv/en



LBSNN: National Town-Twinning Council Netherlands-Nicaragua



NALAG: National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia
www.nala.ge/en



NALAS: Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
www.nalas.eu



Nantes métropole: Nantes Metropolis
www.nantesmetropole.fr



Région Sud-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur: Region of South-Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
www.maregionsud.fr



Regione Toscana: Region of Tuscany
www.regione.toscana.it



RGRE: German Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions
www.rgre.de



SALAR: Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
www.skl.se



SMO ČR: Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic
www.smocr.cz



UCLG: United Cities and Local Governments
www.uclg.org



Ville de Paris: City of Paris
www.paris.fr



VNG International: Cooperation agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities
www.vng-international.nl



VVSG: Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities
www.vvsg.be



ZMOS: Association of Towns and Municipalities of Slovakia
www.zmos.sk

The purpose of this Summary report is to distil the lessons learned from the "National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development" (NMSDD) project and to inspire other local government associations.

This project led by PLATFORMA was implemented during the 2015-2018 period by four local government associations: the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AICCRE), the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG International), the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments (LALRG) and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP).



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