



COMPARATIVE 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

1. BACKGROUND

This report presents the main findings of the implementation of the project 'National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development' (NMSDD), a PLATFORMA initiative¹. Under the framework of the Specific Grant Agreement signed by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)², the partners of PLATFORMA and the European Commission in 2015, four PLATFORMA partners took on the commitment to organise a series of advocacy and awareness-raising activities on local governments' international action. These activities were structured using a three-year strategy set up by each of the four partners and entitled the National "Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development", also referred to in the report as "the Dialogues". The four implementers are national associations of local governments:

1. Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AICCIRE, 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 project's general aim was to strengthen the role of local and regional government associations regarding their contribution 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). More specifically, the Dialogues seek to strengthen the associations' role as 1) national platforms for advocacy, promoting local and regional governments contribution to national policy decisions on international development cooperation; 2) national reference points for raising awareness about decentralised cooperation, global sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda.

The four associations chose to specifically focus on the SDGs, as this was connected to the main discussions regarding international development cooperation policies being held internationally and in the respective countries.

The Dialogues were designed and implemented with a focus on the involvement of the LRGAs' members (local and regional governments), as well as key stakeholders, in the discussions on national development policies and the SDGs in particular. Other stakeholders include representatives of national governments, national policymaking bodies, civil society organisations, universities, the private sector, citizens and European institutions.

An essential component of the Dialogues was the exchange and peer learning between the four implementers to enrich the parallel processes. The four pilot cases shared the same overarching structure but differed in the solutions and strategies that they used, which were in response to the specific national policymaking contexts and the LRGs' needs, challenges and opportunities. In the last two years of implementation, the PLATFORMA Secretariat organised five coordination meetings, allowing the pilot promoters to discuss specific and common challenges encountered over the course of the project and to exchange knowledge regarding the tools and solutions employed.

This report highlights the common and/or specific key challenges, opportunities and factors of success and failure of the four countries involved in the NMSDD project. More information on the specific roles and activities of the associations can be found in the specific country reports. The report also includes the results of a needs assessment that was carried out among five partners of PLATFORMA (see annex 2). The conclusions of the project are intended to be applicable to other national and/or regional associations of local and regional governments willing to develop their own dialogues with other key stakeholders and levels of governance, on development cooperation.

¹ PLATFORMA is the European coalition of local and regional governments – and their associations – active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation. More information www.platforma-dev.eu

² The NMSDD project is implemented in the frame of PLATFORMA's multi-annual strategy linked to the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) signed with the European Commission in 2015, and which is being implemented until the end of 2020. The Specific Grant Agreement (Action Grant) DCI-NSA/2015/362-870 was signed on 31 July 2015, and is under implementation from 1 August 2015 to 28 February 2019.

2. METHODOLOGY

To assess the NMSDD, a mixed methodology approach was used. First of all, a desk research was carried out to examine the NMSDD activity reports and relevant documentation produced by the pilot implementers. Secondly, in-depth interviews were conducted with each of the Dialogues' implementers.

Additionally, a needs assessment was performed in order to obtain more insights into the needs other national associations of local and regional governments in Europe, with regards to their own lobbying and awareness-raising strategies and experiences relating to the SDGs and decentralised cooperation. Five PLATFORMA partners³ were selected to participate in this needs assessment (see Annex 2). The selection was made

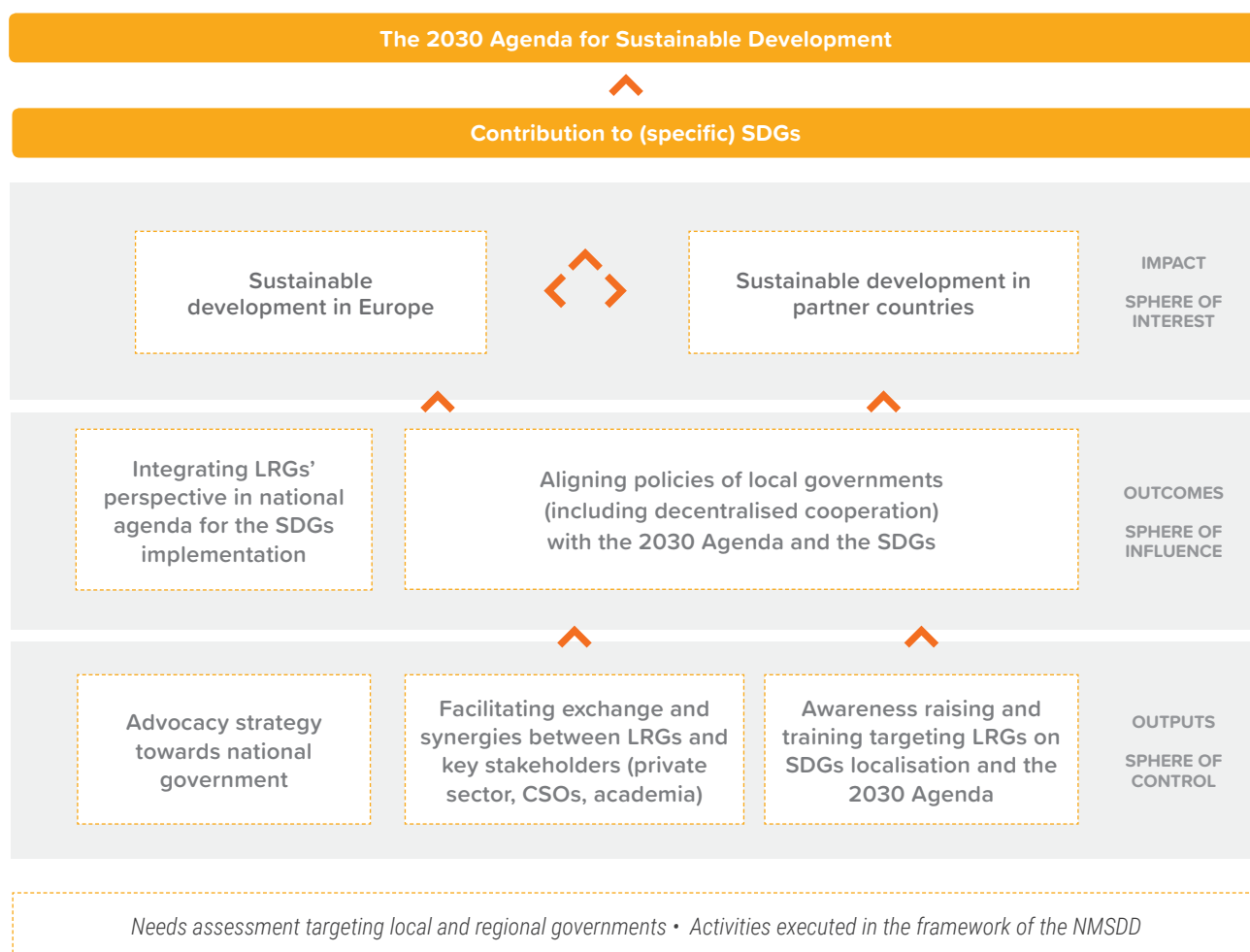
in consultation with PLATFORMA, taking into account the geographical distribution and coverage of the pilot associations. For instance, UCLG was selected as the global association, having published several documents and tools on the localisation of the SDGs and has close links to the UN.

Finally, the author participated in the fifth coordination meeting held on 16 April 2018 at AICCRE's offices in Rome, Italy. At this meeting, the preliminary conclusions were presented. A group discussion with the four implementers was organised during which the participants were invited to jointly construct a first version of an inspirational model for other associations of local and regional governments based on their experience.

– Figure 1 –

Activities and projected outcomes and impacts of the NMSDD project

> Source : author and PLATFORMA



³ Those are: the French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AFCCRE), Cités Unies France (CUF), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the Center for Public Administration Research of the Austrian Association of Cities (KDZ) and the Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS)

INTRODUCTION TO THE PILOT CASES

1. THE 2030 AGENDA, THE SDGs AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in September 2015 by the United Nations. The new global agenda – consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets – encompasses four pillars of sustainability: the social, environmental, economic and governance pillars. The adoption of the SDGs also transformed the global development framework from development aid into a universal and holistic agenda for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda implies not only the need for action in low- and middle-income countries, but also in higher-income countries. Moreover, the SDGs call for partnerships of all kinds of players, including national governments, civil society organisations (CSOs), local and regional governments (LRGs), the private sector, educational institutions and citizens. Setting up operations and implementing the SDGs in European countries will require political will, new approaches and strategies for all stakeholders.⁴

Local and regional governments play a crucial role in achieving the SDGs⁵. All SDGs have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, particularly to their role in delivering basic services. Local and regional governments play a vital role in promoting integrated, inclusive and sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda, having competences in water and waste management, air quality and transport. Moreover, one of the SDGs specifically focuses on sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11). Local and regional governments can transform and must translate the broad and abstract 2030



Agenda into concrete actions at the local level by aligning local policies to the SDGs considering specific territorial conditions. They can also help their citizens, as well as other key local players, understanding how local actions can contribute to achieving the SDGs.

This report focuses on the particular role 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, that is, in localising the SDGs, and in their decentralised cooperation strategies.

In brief, associations of local and regional governments contribute to the localisation of the SDGs through 1) advocacy, 2) awareness-raising, 3) establishing partnerships and dialogue, 4) capacity-building, 5) support to aligning local and regional development plans with the SDGs and 6) monitoring and reporting on the SDGs⁶.

⁴ Policy Forum on Development (2016). PFD Research, National Strategies Supporting the Implementation of 2030 Agenda, The Netherlands, June 2016 (Research carried out by Edith van Ewijk).

⁵ 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>.

⁶ UNDP, The Global Taskforce of local and regional governments, UCLG, UN-Habitat, the Province of Barcelona (2017). Learning Module 1, Localizing the SDGs/Trainers Guide, July 2017, supported by the European Commission: https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/learning_localizing_sdgs.pdf

2. CONTEXT MATTERS

Implementing the SDGs is context-specific and each pilot country is marked by many differences in terms of country size, variety of regions, government structure, level of territorial decentralisation, and the role and capacity of local and regional government associations and their members.

– Table 1 –

Overview of national contexts in terms of decentralisation in the four pilot countries

Pilot case	National association	Territorial structure – Sub national composition	Number of Subnational governments	
			Local	Regional
Italy	AICCRE	Unitary state – Municipalities, provinces and regions	8,006	20
Latvia	LALRG	Unitary state – Municipalities and cities	119	5
The Netherlands	VNG International	Unitary state - Municipalities and provinces	390	12
Spain	FEMP	Unitary state – Municipalities, county councils, Canary Island county councils, Balearic Island county council, autonomous cities and autonomous communities	8,167	19

Source: “Local and Regional Governments in Europe: Structures and Competences” by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (2016 edition).⁷

National government level

At the start of the project, the engagement of the national governments in implementing the SDGs was different from one pilot country to another. In Spain, for instance, after the national elections of 2015, the belated government formation delayed the start of the NMSDD. In the Netherlands, the national government was already engaged in supporting the SDG Charter Foundation, a multi-stakeholder group including private companies, NGOs, educational institutions, philanthropists and municipalities that have pledged to contribute to the SDGs by signing the SDG Charter. This arguably eased the way into further consultation mechanisms.

In the four countries, the national associations focused their advocacy to the national governments on emphasising the role of local governments in implementing the SDGs and they managed to establish good contacts with the national governments. Contributing to the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) to the UN was an important way of lobbying for local governments to be

recognised and play a more important role in contributing to the SDGs.

Local government level

The pilot associations initiated different forms of assessment to learn more about the level of awareness of local governments with respect to the 2030 Agenda, the 17 SDGs and, more broadly, international development cooperation policies. Generally, their knowledge of these issues was limited, although there were substantial differences between countries and between geographical areas within a country. In the Netherlands, VNG International was able to build on its previous Millennium Development Goals Campaign (linked to the Millennium Development Goals, see www.un.org/millenniumgoals) to formulate its strategy to address the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The association, together with a number of ‘millennium municipalities’, had already begun thinking about concrete methodologies by the end of its Millennium Development Campaign to continue and renew their work on sustainable development.

⁷ www.ccre.org/img/uploads/piecesjointe/filename/CEMR_structures_and_competences_2016_EN.pdf

3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS AND PRACTICES OF THE PILOT COUNTRIES

The associations that were part of the NMSDD project all shared the ambition of being a leading player in the design, implementation and monitoring process of the SDGs in their countries. In Italy, AICCIRE focused specifically on decentralised cooperation and the SDGs, while the associations in Latvia and Spain concentrated on domestic and foreign affairs. VNG International had a specific desk dedicated to international relations and SDGs. Although all the associations have an established presence in their own countries, most of them still need to work on advocating for a more active role in implementing the national 2030 Agenda and reporting on this to the UN. This chapter briefly describes the focus of the associations in terms of the NMSDD. General key information about the pilot associations can be found in Annex 1, while the main activities of the four pilot cases are presented in Table 3.

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

AICCIRE, the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, longstanding partner of PLATFORMA, launched its NMSDD activities by organising a series of regional meetings over the course of one year all over the country. Bringing together local and regional key players, including mayors, citizens and representatives from CSOs or the private sector, AICCIRE was able to determine that awareness on the 2030 Agenda was generally poor, and that LRGs found it difficult to concretely implement the SDGs at their level. Based on this assessment, AICCIRE opted for a multi-level and targeted approach that first focused on specific local and regional stakeholders, and which was later broadened to other levels including national and European key stakeholders. The association also organised training events for mayors and shared information about its activities on its website.

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

The Latvian association'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 a primary school 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 that was able to cultivate its close relations with the national government and other key stakeholders throughout the project. This facilitated LRGs' key contribution to the various national implementation reports on the SDGs. In its implementation of the SDGs, the Dutch government used a bottom-up approach involving local governments, CSOs, educational institutions and the private sector. VNG International used the NMSDD project to strengthen its existing activities in terms of awareness-raising and advocacy. Owing in part to its solid work for the Millennium Development Goals campaign (2007-2015), VNG International developed various tools, such as a "time capsule" – to collect personal wishes, dreams and ideas for the year 2030 – a menu of inspiration, a booklet for local governments and an SDG matrix (see section 4.2).

Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP, Spain)

The Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) is an association of local entities (city councils, provinces and insular town councils), with a solid long-standing work in the field of international action of local and regional governments. After the national elections of 2015, it took ten months for a new government to be formed, which delayed the start of the NMSDD. FEMP focused on multi-stakeholder and multi-level dialogues at the national level by organising conferences that brought together representatives from the national ministries, mayors from a broad geographical spectrum and CSO platforms. FEMP also developed and conducted training sessions for local governments and held a series of bilateral meetings with key NGOs and CSO players, with whom collaboration was seen as essential. FEMP made international cooperation an important pillar of its Dialogues project by involving its counterparts in Latin America and strengthening links with the State Secretariat for International Cooperation and for Ibero-America and the Caribbean.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As part of this project, a needs assessment was carried out to obtain more insights into the needs of other national associations of LRGs in Europe in relation to their own national lobbying and awareness-raising strategies (see methodology and Annexes 2, 3 and 4).

The needs assessment showed that there certainly were benefits to be gained from learning about the experiences of the pilot countries involved in the NMSDD. Disseminating these practices was also seen as part of the key role of PLATFORMA.

“How do you make the SDGs more concrete? How do you organise a debate? How do you concretely address the SDGs? And how do you create a link to decentralised cooperation?”

CUF, France

The role played by the national governments with respect to the 2030 Agenda (design of a national plan, implementation strategies, monitoring systems, consultations, etc.) and international cooperation policies was limited in most of the countries surveyed, a situation that was perceived as a challenge or significant burden by the national associations of LRGs. Local governments' knowledge about the SDGs and decentralised cooperation was also generally limited. Associations had in most of cases 'just started' informing their members about the SDGs and were defining their own roles with regard to the 'localisation of the SDGs' and the alignment of local plans to the SDGs.

“You have to be able to see it - something which the mayor can use. Simply stating that you can use the SDG is not enough. You need a picture, a story. We still don't have this.”

KDZ, Austria

Respondents stated that they were eager to learn from the NMSDD and indicated that documented concrete examples could be particularly helpful. Establishing methods that focused on how to convince individual local governments to become active partners in development cooperation and SDGs was also mentioned, as well as tools to share information about the SDGs and their added value. The monitoring of the SDGs was also brought up as a concern for local governments, especially in terms of what national governments would expect from the local level. Finally, language barrier to access knowledge and best practices is certainly an obstacle, as some practices from other countries are published but are not available in English.

In conclusion, the needs assessment showed that:

- There is a clear need to learn from the experiences of other LRGs regarding awareness-raising, lobbying and advocacy and the implementation of the SDGs at the local level,
- According to the associations, both the national governments and local governments are still not very active in terms of implementing the SDGs at their respective levels,
- LRGs are eager to learn through practical and concrete examples and tools on how to link the SDGs with international cooperation,
- The role of LRGs with respect to the monitoring of the SDGs calls for particular attention.



GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PILOT COUNTRIES

This chapter discusses the general lessons learned based on the implementers' experiences. These lessons are summarised as 1) self-assessment, 2) raising awareness and strengthening knowledge about the SDGs at the local level and the link with international cooperation, and 3) advocating for LRGs' contribution to the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

1. SELF-ASSESSMENT

The strategies behind the NMSDD project in the four pilot countries were conceived after first assessing the LRGAs' and their members' own knowledge about the 2030 Agenda. The need to build up the pool of knowledge within the LRGAs in view of better supporting local and regional governments further down the road was an unexpected finding of the NMSDD project.

Another essential element to be assessed was the existence and nature of the national structures and processes in place to design, implement and monitor the national plans to achieve the SDGs, and the ways in which these structures allowed LRGAs to take part in the discussions on the national priorities and implementation guidelines regarding the 2030 Agenda. Each national context is different: inter-ministerial body led and coordinated by the SDGs ambassador (Spain), single-appointed ministry and poor 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.

The initial assessment conducted by the LRGAs resulted in the design and implementation of different types of actions that would combine with each other depending on the main targets, levels, aims and outcomes sought.



– Table 2 –

Typology of some illustrative actions implemented under the NMSDD framework

Action	Key stakeholders involved	Main aims	Anticipated outcomes
Awareness-raising events at municipal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens • Local and regional elected officials and civil servants • CSOs • National governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness about SDGs among LRGs and citizens • Strengthen local and regional partnerships between LRGs, CSOs or other stakeholders • Bolster the engagement of elected representatives • Enhance SDG localisation practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened knowledge about the SDGs at the local level and among citizens • New partnerships at the local and regional levels
Multi-stakeholder regional meetings on the 2030 Agenda (with possible focus on a specific topic/SDG depending on regional policy priorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional elected officials and civil servants • CSOs • Academia • Private sector • National governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness about the SDGs among LRGs • Strengthen territorial partnerships with key stakeholders • Define, exchange, enhance SDG localisation practices • Bolster the engagement of mayors • Strengthen the position of LRGAs in the regional and national contexts in regard to the 2030 Agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better knowledge about the SDGs among LRGs and key stakeholders • New partnerships at the local level • LRGA acknowledged as a strategic player for the 2030 Agenda
Multi-stakeholder conferences at the national level on the 2030 Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional elected officials • National government, European Institutions and international organisations • (National platforms of) CSOs, • Academia • Private sector • MEPs, EU and non-EU partner countries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the positioning of LRGAs in the regional and national contexts in regard to the Agenda 2030 • Advocate to the national government in favour of an inclusive approach to SDG design and implementation • Strengthen partnerships between LRGs and key stakeholders at national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRGA acknowledged as a strategic player for the 2030 Agenda • Synergies and alliances with key stakeholders are formalised



2. RAISING AWARENESS AND STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE SDGs AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Identifying needs and awareness-raising as a first step

At the start of the NMSDD project, the SDGs were not well known at the local level in the four pilot countries. An assessment study was thus an initial step to analyse the needs of the members of the associations. Associations emphasised the importance of working at the local level from the start of the project in order to fully grasp the views, needs and challenges.

The initial assessments were also useful to identify municipalities with a stronger and broadened knowledge about the SDGs with different needs. Here, the importance was to generate spaces for concrete exchanges of tools and best practices on the effective integration of the 2030 Agenda into local policy strategies.



In the Netherlands, **VNG International** developed an 'SDG matrix' through which local competencies and policies were put in relation to the SDGs to illustrate that LRGs were already localising the SDGs and to highlight their relevance to local affairs (see the Awareness-Raising Toolbox below for more information).

SDGs as a new framework to address decentralised cooperation

LRGAs have a key role to play in advocating for decentralised cooperation as a means to tackle global development issues.

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs represented an opportunity to promote LRGs' decentralised cooperation initiatives and to strengthen their links with other local policy areas to enhance sustainability, coherence and effectiveness overall.



AICCRE (Italy) started with assessments at the regional and local levels in order to determine what subnational governments already knew and what their main needs were. Based on this assessment, AICCRE opted to proceed with a 'stratified approach', focusing on the local level at first, and adding key stakeholders progressively (CSOs representatives, academia, national government, EU 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 players.



LALRG invited its partner, the Congress of local authorities from Moldova, and promoted exchanges between Latvian and Moldovan mayors. Such exchanges aimed to support and strengthen the contribution of both associations to national discussions on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Connecting SDGs to daily work

Associations mentioned the importance of connecting the SDGs to the daily work of local governments so that the SDGs would not be perceived as a significant burden, an 'add-on' or extra activity.



In Latvia, the term "SDGs" was intentionally not used in the main title of some of the meeting as **LALRG** understood it might act as a sticking point for local governments. Other lessons learned regarding how to attract audiences to multi-stakeholder meetings involved thinking of catchy event titles (for instance, "*It's not rocket science! Innovation and digitalisation in municipalities and development cooperation*"), and connecting topics to current events and providing information on further project and funding opportunities.



It was easier to explain the concept of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, and how you can achieve them through development cooperation."

AICCRE, Italy



FEMP organised a multi-stakeholder event in April 2017 with an important representation of the association's international partners.



FEMP understood the dialogues as an opportunity to strengthen its links with international partners in Latin America (for instance, with DEMUCA, a cooperation instrument funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and focalised on local development and institutional strengthening in Central America and the Caribbean) and raised the issue of linking international cooperation with the 2030 Agenda at a multi-stakeholder conference in April 2017. FEMP is closely collaborating with the State Secretariat for International Cooperation and for Ibero-America and the Caribbean, positioning itself as a strategic player with longstanding experience in international cooperation.

Multi-stakeholder meetings versus targeted approaches

The NMSDD gave latitude to the implementers to develop their own agenda and own set of activities, as well as 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.



Thanks to the series of national multi stakeholder meetings organised by **FEMP**, the association reinforced its links with research centres specialised in sustainability and development. FEMP now foresees to work on a set of indicators to help Spanish municipalities better monitor and report on their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

While the implementers in Latvia and Spain chose to organise events on a regional or national scale involving a wide spectrum of stakeholders, Italy opted for targeted meetings focusing on local officials, to later on enlarge the scope and organise broader events gathering regional and national CSOs platforms, national government and EU representatives, among others.

“If we had to mobilise mayors now, we would do it by organising a dynamic session. If there would be need to involve NGOs and national governments, a large event would be organised. We now know how to approach the various players using different methods.”

AICCRE, Italy

The organisation of training events for elected officials and civil servants

Training events for elected officials and civil servants were organised in all four pilot countries and were considered useful in promoting the implementation of the SDGs at local level and in the adoption of concrete tools for the alignment of local policies with SDG targets or for the collection of data for monitoring purposes.

“One of the opportunities stems from the awareness work we have developed, like information sheets, workshops, working documents, meetings, etc. Many of them [local governments] want to incorporate the Agenda into their municipal strategy.”

FEMP, Spain

Associations cooperated with NGOs, network organisations and universities to develop training modules. An alternative to dedicated training sessions is the organisation of workshops in conjunction with regular events already being attended by the various players. This makes it easier for people to participate and boosts efficiency.



AICCRE organised a participatory workshop targeting (up to 100) mayors with the aim to jointly formulate 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) (Italy).



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



FEMP organised a series of training sessions targeting local and sub-national elected officials and civil servants. The association used specific tools such as the SDG Training course (created by the UCLG-lead Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments) to demonstrate concrete ways to effectively align local policies with the 2030 Agenda.



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

Campaigns and communication tools

The four national associations developed concrete tools to support their members' efforts to communicate on the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. On this regard, the aim was to work on dynamic, innovative and user-friendly tools and ideas to be later on adapted and tailored to the concrete local needs and context.



VNG International has been particularly active in developing concrete tools that have been widely used by Dutch municipalities. The Time Capsule was created early in the process to increase awareness among elected officials and the wider public. Dutch mayors and aldermen were invited to formulate their personal wish for the world in 2030 and to put it in a cylindrical wooden capsule. This action would become the opportunity for the organisation of public events in which schools, groups of citizens or CSOs were invited to join the mayor.



The Time Capsule in Sitterd Geleen, the Netherlands (photo: Hub Hamers)



On the other hand, **LALRG** focused on schools and global development education as one of its main priorities regarding awareness-raising. A video-animations contest on the SDGs was organised in collaboration with schools. The national association facilitated the production of the videos and partnered with academia to develop a narrative on sustainable development to be used at school.



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



The "Most Inspiring Global Goals Municipality" is another initiative promoted by **VNG International** for which municipalities are awarded for their efforts to integrate the 2030 Agenda in local policy at the beginning of each new year. The award ceremony has become an important event which attracts a great deal of publicity and is used as an inspiration to 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.

VNG International developed an **SDG matrix** (see Figure below) focusing on different fields such as social or urban affairs. For each SDG, the relevant municipal framework and policies are identified. The main local competencies are highlighted and linked to concrete roles and tasks. For example, the implementation of SDG 11 at the local level may involve the active participation of citizens in city planning, providing space and support to citizens' grassroots initiatives to set up sustainable initiatives; encouraging greater bicycle use through investments in infrastructure and promoting the use of sustainable energy, etc. This matrix was ultimately transformed into a brochure for Dutch municipalities⁸.



– Figure 2 –

SDG 11 matrix for the Dutch municipal context⁹

Relevant targets for local governments

11.1 by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums,

11.2 by 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improve road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

11.3 by 2030 enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries

Relevant frameworks, legislation and policy for municipalities in the Netherlands

- Local Agenda 21, Agenda Stad (NL), Urban Agenda for the EU, HABITAT III, New Urban Agenda, Leipzig Charter
- Housing law, housing agreements
- Multiannual infrastructure, space and transport program MIRT (see SDG 7), GreenDeal electric transport 2016–2020, SURF program, VerDuS administrative agreement on zero-emissions bus transport
- Environment legislation (National Environmental Vision, NOVI), environmental vision, structural vision, zoning plans

Main tasks (regulation and management)

- Urban renewal in cooperation with citizens, businesses and civil society organisations; keeping (inner) cities and village centres livable and accessible, mainly through flexible functionality; suitable housing for everybody, livable countryside, social cohesion; preventing empty housing
- Accessibility, traffic safety, public transport; make own car fleet more sustainable and foster agreements with suppliers; spatial planning/urban planning and set in regulations to maintain and strengthen the social environment; monument care;

Role as booster, connector, facilitator, etc.

- Involve residents actively in city planning and neighbourhood-oriented approach; neighbourhood coordinators;
- Give physical, legal and fiscal space to sustainable initiatives by residents and cooperatives; actively cooperate and adjust rules where necessary; sustainable meeting places; City Deals.
- P & R, Park & Bike projects; Stimulate car sharing; charging stations for electric traffic; stimulate the use of public transport and bicycles via investment infrastructure; Hydrogen buses;
- Social cost-benefit analysis: give more importance to social and ecological values; involve citizens in an early and active way in environmental vision and area development.

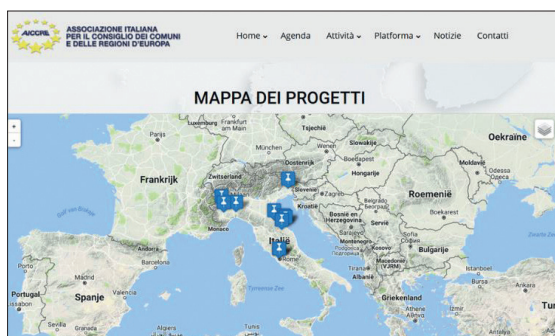
⁸ <https://vng.nl/files/vng/5971.002-04-globalgoalsbrochure-wtk-lr.pdf>

⁹ Developed by VNG International and translated into English.

The four pilot cases saw the importance of online tools to keep track on and disseminate the conclusions and lessons learnt in the different exchanges and seminars organised at municipal, regional and national level. All of the pilot associations shared information about their activities through their websites and two of them developed new online platforms specifically dedicated to the SDG localisation strategies.



AICCRE (Italy) fully renovated its website (www.aiccre.it) and posted several videos of the meetings as well as an online map featuring decentralised cooperation projects promoted by Italian municipalities.



Project map on AICCRE's website: www.aiccre.it



FEMP created a targeted web portal (<http://localizandoods.es/en>) on the localisation of the SDGs to promote its events and meetings and share main conclusions and tools.



FEMP developed a new and dedicated website to the work of the association on the SDGs (<http://localizandoods.es/en>)



In the framework of **VNG International** Global Goals municipal campaign ('Gemeenten4GlobalGoals'), municipalities were invited to tailor the logo and campaign visuals. For instance, '@Utrecht4GlobalGoals' is used on Twitter and on the website (www.utrecht4globalgoals.nl).



@Utrecht4GG Twitter profile is regularly fed with information and news regarding the city's strategy to localise the SDGs.



Besides using Twitter, **LALRG** (Latvia) identified Facebook as a valuable tool to reach new audiences and uses its account (www.facebook.com/PasvaldibuSavieniba) to communicate about its activities.



LALRG's Facebook webpage is a useful tool to communicate on the association's activities

3. ADVOCATING FOR LRGs CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2030 AGENDA AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Obtaining a seat at the national SDG table by participating in the voluntary national review

A key NMSDD activity was the participation of the associations in the drafting process of the Voluntary National Reviews on the implementation of the SDGs, to be presented at the annual UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). Participating in the drafting process proved important for strengthening cooperation with the national government and for advocating for a greater recognition of local and regional governments as key players in the implementation of the SDGs.

The four associations had to firstly identify and assess the appointed national bodies in charge of the definition, implementation and reporting national strategy towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It became also important to partner up with key stakeholders (national platforms of CSOs, private sector, academia, etc.) equally interested in contributing to such processes.

The Netherlands and Italy presented their VNR at the HLPF 2017 while Latvia and Spain presented theirs at the HLPF 2018¹⁰.



– Table 3 –

Overview of institutional framework for the design, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs' and the level of participation of LRGs.

Country	National Association of local and regional governments	National institutional framework for coordination and follow-up on the SDGs	Voluntary National Reviews to the UN	
			Due	Contribution to VNR
Italy	AICCIRE	No formal coordination. Weak cross-sectoral and multi-actor consultation	July 2017	Limited consultation by national VNR drafting body
Latvia	LALRG	Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre in cooperation with sectoral ministries	July 2018	Fair contribution to the national VNR drafting exercise
The Netherlands	VNG International	SDG ambassador and coordinator, establishment of ministerial focal points. SDG charter for multi-stakeholder engagement.	July 2017	Fair contribution to the national VNR drafting exercise
Spain	FEMP	"Ambassador on Special Mission for the 2030 Agenda" to coordinate the High-Level Group for the 2030 Agenda	July 2018	Fair contribution to the national VNR drafting exercise

Source: in-depth interviews with LRGs and NMSDD implementation reports.

¹⁰ For further information on the countries having presented their VNR so far, please visit the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>



In the **Netherlands**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of coordinating the report invited VNG and other non-governmental players to actively contribute to the report, as well as to the first national progress report, which was published in Dutch and presented to the Parliament in 2017.

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), indicating that the LALRG wanted to be involved in drafting the Voluntary National Review. The experience of VNG International motivated LALRG to proactively approach the bodies in charge.

In **Spain**, the preparation of the Voluntary National Review was significantly delayed. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed an 'Ambassador on Special Mission for the 2030 Agenda', to coordinate the work of the High-Level Group for the 2030 Agenda, an inter-ministerial body in charge of the overall process of designing, implementing and monitoring the national strategy. FEMP has kept in regular contact with this ambassador, providing input and contributing to the high-level group's work. FEMP's contributions have been the result of the coordinated and joint actions of the LRGA's own members as well as other key stakeholders, such as CSO representatives and sub-national governments, working together to enrich FEMP's 2030 Agenda strategy.

Participating in international and European forums on the SDGs can also help to position LRGAs as key stakeholders in the design and implementation of the national strategies. Strengthening links with global and European networks (UCLG, CEMR) and with partner LRGAs in non-EU countries can in turn help build

on available knowledge. As partners of CEMR and PLATFORMA, the four pilot implementers have been able to closely follow discussions at European and global level on the 2030 Agenda and have had the opportunity to share their own experiences and get inspired from others.



4. 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

LEARNING FROM THE EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE PILOT ORGANISATIONS

The NMSDD project enabled the implementers to exchange and learn from each other. This contributed to strengthening and enriching the four national associations' strategies. Though the four associations were "learning by doing" through the implementation of the dialogues, concrete lessons learned, experiences and best practices were shared from the very beginning and became an important source of inspiration.



The fifth coordination meeting was hosted by AICCRE in Rome, March 2018.

PLATFORMA organised five coordination meetings, each of them hosted by one of the four implementers and one being online. The limited number of participants, as well as the continuity in time (five coordination meetings over a period of two years) effectively contributed to the knowledge sharing. As stated in the previous chapter, the contexts of the four countries differed and localising the SDGs is a context-specific process. Simply transposing approaches from one context to another is therefore not feasible nor desirable. Rather, the exchange between associations inspired others, who were able to acquire new knowledge and adapt it in order to make it suitable to their own context.

“If you have the right people around the table, you can exchange a lot. It is a sort of pushing each other. A group of friends with mutual exchange.”

AICCRE, Italy

Exchange meetings systematically allowed for a general update on each pilot's state of play, while a specific time was devoted for in-depth discussion on specific aspects of the dialogues (communication tools, dialogue with national government, contributing to the VNRs, mobilising stakeholders, etc.). Implementers were invited to use visuals and present concrete tools to their peers to ease the understanding of how certain practices were effectively used.

The financial support, which allowed for these exchanges, was thus considered important both for strengthening activities under implementation and for transfer of knowledge.

KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. CHALLENGES

- Generally speaking, political support from national governments for decentralised cooperation has been limited and has also been decreasing, making it hard for LRGAs to address the role of local governments in development cooperation. This fragile support is also linked to the growing importance given to migration, refugees, safety and security topics in many European countries.
- Similarly, national associations realised that in some cases the process of designing national plans and mechanisms to implement the SDGs was in a very early stage by the start of the project (2017). Knowledge about the SDGs among local governments, but also within ministries was limited, and LRGAs therefore had to work as pioneers to some extent.
- Elections and changes in national governments can also present important challenges to LRGAs, although in some cases elections brought new political commitments regarding the 2030 Agenda. VNG International took advantage of local elections to advocate for according greater importance to the SDGs during the campaign and in the new municipal policies.

2. OPPORTUNITIES

- Stronger collaboration links with key stakeholders can generate opportunities for strengthening knowledge and raising awareness (Universities) or funding (private sector), and can contribute to national associations' aim of supporting their own members.
- The SDGs offer an ideal framework for strengthening transnational ties with partners across the globe, as every country and their players have a role to play in implementing the universal agenda. Exchanges between partners, such as those developed under the NMSDD project, can be helpful in learning from each other. PLATFORMA can provide a good platform for knowledge exchange and learning between its members.
- The SDGs are increasingly being incorporated into funding structures, which creates the possibility for new opportunities. Liaising with European and global networks (as CEMR-PLATFORMA or UCLG) can also help gaining funds to not organise specific activities but also to coordinate strategies with peers.
- Online platforms and social networks can be used as valuable tools to communicate to LRGs about the SDGs, as well as to capitalize on local and regional experiences regarding the alignment of public policies with the SDG targets.
- The Voluntary National Reviews, provide an opportunity to establish a specific lobbying agenda for LRGs and to take action in terms of positioning the LRGAs strategically and lobbying the national government.

CONCLUSIONS

The NMSDD project is structured around two key elements: supporting the implementation of a strategy by national associations of LRGs, centred around lobbying, advocacy and awareness-raising on global development issues and national development policies; and holding peer-to-peer knowledge exchanges between these pilot associations.

Through the project, pilot associations were able to organise a number of meetings targeting different players within their own country, more effectively conduct their advocacy work aimed at national governments to be better recognised and positioned as pioneers and to broaden their members' knowledge about the SDGs and the global agenda by providing training and online information and developing communication tools.

The peer-to-peer exchange between the four pilot associations was a key part of the project. Although the contexts differed, there were many similarities with regard to the role of the pilot associations and their ambition to become a key player in the definition of the national SDGs strategies, and in their implement and monitoring. The associations were able to exchange knowledge even while they were still engaged in the process of defining their own strategy.

Some shared features:

1. Some form of **assessment** was regarded as important in acquiring a better understanding of LRGs' knowledge about the SDGs and their needs in terms of being able to localise the SDGs.
2. Associations conducted both **targeted activities for specific groups** (like training events for mayors) and **multi-stake holder meetings**, broadly aimed at national governments, NGOs or local government players. It was relatively more challenging to involve the private sector.
3. In most countries, the websites of the organisations, as well as social network profiles, were importantly used to **disseminate information** about the activities to a larger group of local governments and stakeholders.
4. All national associations took the Dialogues as an opportunity to develop and test specific **tools aimed at supporting local policy making in line with the SDG targets or at raising local officials, mayors or citizens' awareness on the role that cities and regions must play in implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda** (see the Awareness-Raising Toolbox pages 14-15 of the Summary report).¹¹

With the end of the NMSDD project in sight, the pilot associations have expressed their eagerness to share their experience with other PLATFORMA partners and to build on the achievements made in their own country.

¹¹ http://platforma-dev.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NMSDD_Summary-report.pdf



KEY INFORMATION ON THE PILOT IMPLEMENTERS AND CONTACT DETAILS

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.

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✉ segretariato@aiccre.it

🌐 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.

Contact person: Agita Kaupuža

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📘 [PasvaldibuSavieniba](https://www.facebook.com/PasvaldibuSavieniba)

▶ [channel/UCMFwNiqaNMJ0pQGJzr8esWw](https://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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🐦 [@VNGi](https://twitter.com/VNGi)

FEMP is the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, 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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🐦 [@fempcomunica](https://twitter.com/fempcomunica)

LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED (MARCH-APRIL 2018)



Mercedes Sánchez,
FEMP, Spain.

‘Concerning our work on the SDGs, our main focus has been on our members (local governments and provinces) and the other levels of government (regional and national). We are developing a strategy for the localisation of the SDGs at local level from a national, European and global perspective. In terms of decentralised cooperation, our aim is to help our associates in Latin America increase their capacity and knowledge on how to localise the new 2030 Agenda and how to develop a dialogue with the national government to influence national policy on development cooperation.’



Carla Rey,
AICCRE, Italy

‘We accomplished a lot of activities with the support of this project. We first needed to build up trust among strategic stakeholders and to determine the best approach. Every dialogue required a different approach. Now, when we have to involve mayors in our action, we do it through a dynamic working session. When we need to include NGOs and government, we organise a large event. AICCRE has strengthened its mission and offers a platform using social media and a website to represent our members.’



**Renske Steenbergen
and Eline Vermeer,**
VNG International, The
Netherlands

‘We focused our NMSDD work mainly on the national level. It allowed us to play an active role in contributing to the national SDG progress report and the Voluntary National Review of the Netherlands to the UN. The Chair of VNG, the Mayor of Utrecht, was invited to join the national delegation to the UN High-Level Political Forum 2017 where this report was presented. The Dialogues helped strengthen our activities.’



Agita Kaupuža,
LALRG, Latvia

‘The Dialogues provided the opportunity to focus on several SDGs and to explain them to the municipalities; to make them understand that they are already linked to their daily lives, that they are not something abstract. The lessons from the other partners opened new doors and allowed us to develop new skills.’

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Edgardo Bilsky, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Felix Henou, French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AFCCRE, France)

Nicolas Wit, Cités Unies France (CUF, France)

Thomas Prorok, KDZ Center for Public Administration Research of the Austrian Association of Cities (AACT/KDZ, Austria)

Anna Labátová, Association of Towns and Communities of Slovakia (ZMOS, Slovakia)

INTERVIEW GUIDE: PILOT IMPLEMENTERS

BACKGROUND:

1. What were the specific objectives for your organization to become engaged in the Dialogues?

WORK IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY:

2. Key information to obtain a good understanding of the policy making context in your country (e.g. upcoming elections, decentralization processes).
3. Main focus of your organization in relation to decentralised cooperation and/ or the SDGs.
4. Specific role of your organization regarding awareness creation and lobbying for the SDGs.
5. Main needs of local governments in your country.
6. Specific initiatives related to a) awareness raising, b) advocacy, c) multi-stakeholder partnerships *as a result of participating in the Dialogues*.
7. Key challenges and opportunities related to: a) awareness raising, b) advocacy and c) Participating or playing a role in facilitation of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

PEER LEARNING AMONG PILOT STUDIES

Your views on:

8. The knowledge exchange between the four pilot-association. (Proving: usefulness, openness, equality, frequency, face-to-face exchange, exchange between meetings)
9. Examples of learning between the pilot associations.
10. Examples of application of lessons learnt (if any).
11. Main challenges and opportunities in the exchange between pilot studies.
12. Mutual exchange of knowledge.
13. Is there any information you would like to add? Important issues which were not yet addressed?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: NEEDS ASSESSMENT WITH A SELECTION OF PLATFORMA'S PARTNERS (SEE ANNEX 2)

BACKGROUND:

"Under the Specific Grant Agreement 2015–2018 (SGA), four PLATFORMA Partners (AICCRE Italy, FEMP Spain, LALRG Latvia, VNG Netherlands) have engaged in the National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development (NMSDD) in order to explore, among others, the potential for awareness-raising of national governments and other national stakeholders towards decentralised cooperation. In all cases, the focus topic of these dialogues was the localisation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals."

1. Were you familiar with the NMSDD before you were approached for this interview?

NATIONAL LEVEL:

2. Current policies of the *national* government in your country related to decentralised cooperation and the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Key actors involved in your country related to decentralised cooperation and the Sustainable Development Goals. Existing multi-stakeholder partnerships (if any).
4. Key information to obtain a good understanding of the policy making context in your country (e.g. upcoming elections, decentralisation processes).

ROLE OF YOUR ORGANISATION:

5. Main focus of your organisation in relation to decentralised cooperation and/ or the SDGs.
6. Specific role of your organization regarding awareness creation and lobbying and advocacy for decentralised cooperation and/ or the SDGs.
7. Key challenges and opportunities related to awareness raising and lobby and advocacy for decentralised cooperation and/ or the SDGs.

LOCAL LEVEL:

8. Current policies of *local* governments in your country related to decentralised cooperation and the Sustainable Development Goals.
9. Main needs of local governments in your country related to decentralised cooperation and/ or the SDGs.

NATIONAL MULTI STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES ON DEVELOPMENT (NMSDD):

10. Do you feel sharing of experience of the NMSDD could be beneficial for the work of your organisation?
11. Are you interested in specific experiences in initiating or stimulating partnerships between various actors (multi-stakeholder initiatives) in your country?
12. Main foreseen benefits and added value of dialogues and their final outputs. What kind of information would you hope to receive?
13. Is there any information you would like to add? Important issues which were not yet addressed?

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



CCER/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/>



Diputació Barcelona

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

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: 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 Comparative report is to distil the lessons learned from the "National Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues on Development" (NMSDD) project, to complement the Summary report 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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