

**EUROPEAN SUB-NATIONAL AUTHORITY  
NETWORKS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:  
MYTH OR REALITY?**

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores the reasons behind the emergence of European local and regional authority networks in development cooperation and the role of European Commission funding in network emergence and sustainability. By using Kingdon's policy stream model in a critical realist ontological setting the paper reveals the complex mechanisms behind network development and sustainability, which have been neglected in existing research.

Basing on interviews with main network actors permanent secretariat employees, European Union representatives and partners, policy documents and the network mapping software the paper argues for the network dependency on EU funding. The case studies show that networks change their agenda to sustain the EU funding or are closely incorporated as knowledge communities for the Commission. It also depicts the power disparities, despite the horizontal arrangements of networks and lack of assumed knowledge exchange and socialization among its members. These findings can help better understand the recent trend in local and regional authority emergence and serve as a ground for future policy development to foster their sustainability and independence.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ALDA – Association of Local Democracy Agencies

ARLEM - The Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly

CEMR – Council of European Municipalities and Regions

CONCORD - European NGO confederation for Relief and Development CONCORD

CoR – Committee of the Regions

CORLEAP - The Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership

DG DEVCO – Directorate General for Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid

EC – the European Commission

ENPI – European neighbourhood and partnership instrument

EU – the European Union

LA – Local Authorities

LRA – Local and Regional Authorities

MDG – Millenium Development Goals

NGO – Non-governmental organizations

ODA – Official development assistance

WTD – Working together for Development

NSA-LA – European Commission non-state actors – local authority programme

EAP – European Union Neighborhood Instrument Eastern Partnership

## INTRODUCTION

Within the last decade local and regional authorities (LRAs) have been actively lobbying for their recognition as development cooperation actors. To achieve their aim, LRAs have developed sub-committees, executive networks and working groups in existing networks and united in European networks, most notable being – ALDA (1999), Platforma in 2008. The European LRA networks have been described by Kern and Bulkeley (2009: 309-310) as having three unique characteristics – cities are “autonomous and free to join or leave”, these networks are a “form of self governance” due to being “non-hierarchical, horizontal and polycentric” and the decision makers are also the implementers. But the facts, that most of the network financial resources are based in EU project funding and that development cooperation in a national policy area raises questions about the validity of these statements.

Therefore this research will focus on LRA networks to understand their developed, functions and internal and external power dynamics. The case studies are two European LRA networks – The Association of Local Democracy Agencies – ALDA (established in 1999) and the European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities for Development “Platforma,” established in 2008. Both focus on decentralised development cooperation, are financed through project funding, but have different relations with the Commission. Thus this paper asks – can they be considered networks and do they behave as such?

The aim of this paper is twofold:

- to analyse the reasons for European local and regional authority networks development,
- To analyse the impact of dependency on EU funding on their internal and external governing capabilities and sustainability.

Through analyzing and identifying the institutional dynamics on national and European level, this paper reveals the embeddedness of LRA network development in the hierarchical power relations within the EU and their interaction. Existing analysis has been done through policy network and europeanization theories, with a focus on the role of networks in domestic policy change and European integration (Bennington and Harvey 1998, Betsill and Bulkeley 2004). As Exadaktylos and Radaelli (2009: 513) point out, europeanization literature has always struggled with the prioritization of either “mechanism-oriented versus variable-oriented design” to explain causality. Therefore to better depict the power relations the critical realist ontological setting (eg. Archer 2003, Bhaskar 1998) is used to show the dynamics between the interaction of actors and structures in a multi-level setting. The rich analytical stratification of critical realism is used together with Kingdon’s policy streams model and organizational studies literature (eg. Reed 2001, Newton et.al. 2011, Baraldi et.al. 2012). This framework also allows to test existing LRA network observations (eg. Betsill and Bulkeley, Heinelt and Niederhafner 2008, Wand and Williams 1997) by looking beyond the network borders and deeper in their emergent properties. The discovered dynamics is another value added of this thesis with implications to future public policy drafting.

To achieve this, the paper is structured into four parts. The first chapter gives a background of European decentralized development cooperation and local authority role in it. The second chapter gives a literature overview of existing assumptions on the networks and outlines the analytical framework. Basing on the framework, the third chapter draws upon empirical material to identify the reasons behind network development. The forth chapter analyses the dynamics within LRA networks and their sustainability.

Because several authors note (John 2000, Leitner and Sheppard 2002, Payre 2010), that little is known on the agenda setting and internal dynamics of LRA networks – giving

closed environment and large data gathering as main reasons. The empirical material is based on fieldwork interviews with experts and practitioners working with decentralized development cooperation in the European institutions, the members of the network and their partners (for a full interview guide see Appendix 1), executed from April until June 2012 by the author. The interviews were audio recorded,<sup>1</sup> part, but each of the interviews included an off-the record which will be used and quoted anonymously. The findings are cross-validated through policy documents and publicly available materials, as well as network mapping software. These insights will be another value added of the thesis – decentralized development cooperation is a new and not researched topic. It also shows the differences between new and old member state network members in this new area – decentralized development cooperation.

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<sup>1</sup> Mp3 recordings are available upon request to [madara.silina@gmail.com](mailto:madara.silina@gmail.com)

## **CHAPTER 1: DEFINING EUROPEAN DECENTRALIZED DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITY NETWORKS IN DEVELOPMENT**

The role of LRAs is considered “as a useful and necessary complement to national and European union development policies” (Smith 2011: 3), making „ a significant and positive impact on overall foreign aid programmes and policies” (Copsey and Rowe 2012: 3). In addition, The Council of European Union (1998: Preamble 4) stresses local authorities as filling the gap “in specific situations and difficult partnerships where traditional instruments cannot be used or are not relevant.” Decentralized development cooperation does not only imply support to political decentralization. The main benefits from it are considered the practitioners experience and knowledge of technical processes of local resource (water, waste) management, sustainable local development and service provision (education, security and order, social welfare) to development of tailored programmes in capacity strengthening and local democracy building (see Lightfoot 2008, Dearden 2003, Edwards 2006). Therefore this chapter gives an overview of major developments on EU level in this policy area highlights the characteristics of the networks.

### ***1.1. Recognition on European level***

The European Commission Regulation No 1659/98 was the first European document to note „local (including municipal) authorities, [...], non-governmental associations and independent foundations” as development actors. Within the general framework of European Consensus on Development in 2007 a new financial instrument – the European Development Fund and the Development Cooperation Instrument was launched. The fund has a separate thematic non-state actors and local authorities programme since 2008, of which 15% (€30 million euros) are earmarked for LRA development cooperation from 2011 until 2013 (Platforma 2012a). A financial pool of 17 million euros is allocated for ‘coordination resources’. These finance multi-country projects for “coordination and communication

between civil society and local authority networks, within their organisations and between different types of stakeholders active in the European and global public debate on development” (European Commission 2012a). Both of the networks used as case studies in this paper are funded through this programme.

In addition to network development and activity support, DG DEVCO also fosters deliberation processes on the European level. Most recent and notable information and knowledge exchange programme was the Structured dialogue for an efficient partnership in development from 2010 until 2011<sup>2</sup>. The year long invited closed negotiation process was considered as a “confidence and consensus-building mechanism” (Technical Assistance Team 2010) to foster and discuss knowledge exchange and cooperation between civil society organizations and local and regional authorities. As noted by the DG DEVCO representative, the main aim of Structured dialogue programme was “a pilot experience” to discuss the role of civil society and LRAs in development and find possible ways to apply the method of multi-actor deliberation to Latin America and Africa. The strategy is to “bring [Structured Dialogue] down to the ground to the regions and then bring back the experiences, knowledge and ideas to Brussels”. Parallel to the process of consolidation of EU development cooperation policy was the raise of regional power recognition on EU level.

### ***1.2. European level municipal networks in development cooperation***

Starting mid-1980s with the Single European Act and the Maastricht treaty, the role of LRA rose with the implementation of partnership principle in decision making and cohesion policy (Payre 2010: 268; Kern and Bulkeley 2009: 312). In the context of these developments regional powers started establishing offices in Brussels and developing sectoral and issue associations to lobby decision making. According to the last public information

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<sup>2</sup> Before Structured dialogue DG DEV implemented Quatrialogue as an official deliberation and consultation procedure with decentralized development partners – non-governmental NGOs (represented by CONCORD), European Commission, member states, without the involvement of local authorities.

there are around 220 regional offices represented in Brussels (EU Publications office 2008), the interviewed expert at the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) says there are around 340, in addition there are hundreds of networks involving sub-national authorities and their numbers are rising. As Geddes (in Davies 2011: 34) notes, “it is clear that local and regional partnership is becoming hegemonic across the whole of the EU”. This can also be seen in development cooperation. There are several European and Global LRA networks working with development cooperation as part of their activities, such as the Association of European Border Regions, United Cities and Local Governments and the Committee of Regions. Due to the limited word count and very recent development that affects data availability, this paper will analyse two of the networks – ALDA and Platforma.

### **1.2.1. ALDA: developing local democracy in post-soviet space**

The first network specifically for decentralized development cooperation was established in 1999 under the umbrella network Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE). Its target was a sub-category of development cooperation, focusing on local democracy promotion “to carry out development cooperation activities in favor of third-world populations” (ALDA 2010: Article 3).

ALDA’s main tasks are coordination and information exchange for LRAs and CSOs, network building between European and developing countries’ communities to foster local democracy – a subsection of development cooperation. In addition to advising and coordinating its members, ALDA works to foster good governance and civil society inclusion through projects and develops region and country development strategies (ALDA 2012a). Initially its geographical focus was former-Yugoslavia, but after the last two EU enlargements it has expanded the scope to EU Eastern partnership countries. ALDA is a mixed membership network, uniting NGOs and LRAs from EU and developing countries, but it was chosen because most of its activities are implemented and initiated by the LRAs with

civil society organizations serving as partners. Currently the network includes more than 150<sup>3</sup> members from 30 countries, of which LRA and LRA associations from EU are:

- 29 out of 54 municipalities: Denmark, France (4), Greece, Italy (21), Poland, UK (2);
- 10 out of 10 regions: Italy (2), Romania, Croatia, France (2), Italy (4);
- 12/18 LRA associations: Belgium, France (2), Italy (5), Malta, Poland, and Romania.

In 2011 ALDA launched a new networking project Working Together for Development (WTD), financed through the previously mentioned European Commission NSA-LA ‘cooperation’ programme. The programme unites LRA associations and NGOs from seven EU member states (Bulgaria (2 members), France, Italy (2), Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia (2)) and nine Eastern neighborhood countries as associate members. WTD aim is to foster the role of these actors in development cooperation through “enhancing their capacities to act as development agents in and outside Europe, partnering with the European Institutions in the implementation of the EC development policies” (ALDA 2012b).

### **1.2.2. PLATFORMA: advocating for recognition in Brussels**

Platforma was established in 2008 (development cooperation network) by the second municipal umbrella network - Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). It has a very technical goal - recognition of decentralized development cooperation and the plurality of actors on the European level. To achieve it, the network has three major objectives – “acknowledgment of the action LRAs in development cooperation, a solid dialogue between European local and regional authorities and EU institutions in charge of Development policy and the promotion of an efficient decentralised cooperation” (Platforma 2012a) through conference and training organization to exchange experience among members. It has 24 members, which include European and International LRA associations, nine EU member state national LRA associations from France, Spain, Netherlands, United

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<sup>3</sup> 50 local and 19 regional authorities, 19 national LRA associations, 47 NGOs, 25 individuals, 2 universities, 11 local democracy agencies

Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Romania, Latvia and Sweden, as well as 5 European cities and the region of Tuscany.

Even though Platforma is also a relatively new network, it was included in the analysis because it depicts the power shifts in relatively horizontal European region networking. The main reasons for this are raising role of the EU and Committee of the Regions as its only official LRA consulting institutions. CoR does not have its own financial resources, thus all the other umbrella or peak networks have developed their own initiatives in various policy areas, leading to over-networking on European level in general. As one Brussels official noted, currently there is a situation of having several networks “each willing to sign under a document”, giving the impression that “everybody is representing local authorities.” ALDA existed before the EC network support programmes were available, while Platforma was developed “to make an effort to work together with one voice,” even though several other organizations could have served as basis.

To analyze these dynamics, same as the European level networks themselves, also their analysis from academics has been emerging recently. First major publications in policy and political science journals date from early 1990s from the policy network perspective and the last decade - policy uploading and advocacy through the concept of europeanization. The next chapter will provide a literature review on the aspects and mechanisms and outline the analytical framework of network development for a successful empirical analysis.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORIZING EUROPEAN LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITY NETWORKS**

European multi-level governance analysis involves a plentitude of variables. As Mortensen (2010: 357) notes, agenda setting is “often the outcome of a complex mix of new ideas, level of conflict in existing subsystems, re-defined policy images, clever policy entrepreneurs, focusing events, media coverage, national mood, expired legislation, technical innovations and so on.” In addition, on European level, the cities also react to supranational norms, practices and regulations (Marshall 2005, 669). The following chapter will outline the existing assumptions on LRA research –briefly outlining the typologies, secondly, showing highlights of policy network and europeanization literature in LRA network context. Lastly, even though the interplay of variables makes authors (see Benington and Harvey 1998 for an overview) state that all-encompassing theoretical frameworks are impossible to construct, this paper will try to develop an overarching framework for analysis. Firstly, it will divide the existing assumptions in three Kingdon’s streams and, secondly, tie the “window openings” to critical realist ontology. This way going beyond the analysis of events and experiences.

### ***2.1. Local and regional authority thematic networks for development cooperation***

European local and regional authority networks (ELRANs) can be categorized in four types – peak groups, spatial, thematic, and sectoral (Bennington and Harvey 1998, Ward and Williams 1999). Peak groups are wide in membership and almost all-encompassing in agenda, such as the Council for European Regions and Municipalities, the Committee of the Regions. In European context the local authorities in peak groups are usually represented or coordinated by the national local and regional authority associations. Sectoral networks unite regions with similar economic characteristics and focus on “the impact on their regional and local economies of the global and European restructuring of key industrial sectors” (Bennington and Harvey 1998: 149). Spatial networks have their agenda drawn on the basis of distinct spatial or physical geographical characteristics of space. These geography based

networks are involved in a wide variety of themes, also including development cooperation, especially within the EU thematic programmes, such as European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument. This includes also two Platforma members – Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions and the Association of European Border Regions.

Within this paper the focus is on the last category - thematic networks, which are organized around an issue or specific problem, characteristic of the cities. Both ALDA and Platforma are thematic networks, but membershipwise include LRAs as well as their national associations and other spatial networks. Platforma and ALDA are one of the many examples how the coordination of issues and representation in Brussels is mostly delegated to the national associations and their offices, instead of LRAs directly. This is done to save financial and time resources, through paying the membership fees from common financial pool and having centralized Brussels offices for all regions of the country.

## ***2.2. ELRANs through Europeanization policy network perspective***

The focus of policy network literature stresses the role of mutual resource dependencies and common interest in a particular policy area or issue, due to which the relations are developed (Borzel 2009, Peterson 2003). Stemming from this, ELRANs are characterized as having a high emphasis on value exchange and mutual learning, producing plurality and divergences “in urban political systems” (Corsaro and Snehota 2012: 56, John 2000). This plurality comes from the dialectical relationship between the network and its members, thus producing “in house innovation” (Håkansson and Snehota, in Corsaro and Snehota 2012: 58). Because of the new institutionalist turn in European Union studies, the second wave of ELRANs literature analyzes network emergence and governance through europeanization, still incorporating the policy network literature, but adding a higher focus learning and socialization.

Highlight is on three distinctive characteristics (Kern and Bulkeley 2009, 309-310) – cities are “autonomous and free to join or leave”, these networks are a “form of self governance” due to being “non-hierarchical, horizontal and polycentric” and the decision makers (the members) are also the implementers. The ideational uncontamination of the inside group plays an important part, going in line with Borzel and Heard-Lauréote’s (2009) statement the network membership strongly influencing the agenda setting power. Kern (2009: 311) in her research suggests that ELRANs are “a new and emerging form of Europeanization primarily networks of pioneers for pioneers”. Implying that these networks in their emergent form are elitist ideational groups, but equal and strict common values within network borders. The dimension of Europe adds to the variety of its policy options, but, most notably, as Betsill and Bulkeley (2004: 481) summarizes, the membership

“provide[s] personal benefits, including opportunities to voice concerns, learn from others in a supportive environment, gain international experience and access to financial resources, and promote their interests within local government”

To analyze the reasons for development, all the previously mentioned authors stress europeanization – upload, download and crossload. Marshal (2005: 672) defines upload Europeanization in local setting as the process in which the “innovative urban practices” are transferred to European level, where through interaction they can be translated and implemented by other actors to their local arena. He continues, that download europeanization, on the other hand is a response to European norms and regulations. The success of these methods and the response to an EU initiated programme depends on through the institutional ‘goodness of fit’, the mediating institutions and local level structural change.

These terms are very similar to the horizontal and vertical venue shopping, used in analysis by Princen (2011). Same as europeanization, venue shopping is the political construction of scale through “linking issues” to the competencies of the relevant EU institutions. The process of linking is “a distinct quality” (Kern and Bulkeley 2009: 311) due

to the already mentioned embeddedness of LRA networks in state hierarchies. They can be - parallel and supportive to the hierarchical state, the market enterprises and the non-governmental organizations. However, Henelt and Nederhafner (2008: 175) stress the local legitimacy, because

“as the elected government bodies nearest to the people, they are able to express the interests and concerns of a broad constituency and do not represent just the concerns and demands of certain (self-interested) stakeholders.”

Princen (2011: 931) continues, that while shopping for venues, the network and its actors can use ‘the big words strategy’ through showing their expertise, the technical benefits and aspects of the policy, snowballing the issue. The horizontal venue shopping happens between EU institutions and policies, vertical – through the geographical and institutional power hierarchies. To successfully modify the venue, the connections and strategic alliance building in vertical and horizontal space is important. It requires finding the right partners and supporters for the problem and their mobilization. According to John (2003: 494), the strongest agents are the policy entrepreneurs, “who are activists with a particular interest in the success of the policy, though in a less acute sense everyone is an entrepreneur who has a stake in the policy outputs and outcomes”. It is important to gain the attention of the policy makers, framing the importance of the issue and the necessity of dealing with it on European level (Princen 2011). As one French official (Payre 2010: 275) notes, the realist strategizing is very important, because “you have to take up a theme [ . . . ] you have to make it your own and then involve a hard core of cities [ . . . ] have 5 or 6 cities driving it and create a real work dynamic, real output, a real return, within a given time.”

Within the vertical venue shopping, researchers (Benington and Harvey 1998: 166) note the role of the European Commission and the “symbiotic relationship” between the Commission and the networks. The EC is the executive body of the EU and has the formal right to initiate legislation and responsibility for drafting legislative proposals. Through the

download (top down) europeanization the municipalities try to respond to the policy developments in Brussels, which affect them locally. One of the EC coordination methods is promotion and development of “European networks of experts and stakeholders” (Leitner and Sheppard 2002, Heinelt and Nederhafner 2008, Benington and Harvey 1998), because EC has become “progressively more dependent on interest groups” as information and expertise sources (Kern and Bulkeley 2009: 313).

These existing theoretical develop mostly locally based assumptions on why the ELRANs are developed, focusing on local issues and pooling in problem solving, the mutual exchange between the involved parties and their interaction, but the empirical data early on showed a different context and lack of internal horizontal cooperation, as well as the role higher role of seemingly external factors and interaction with other institutions and networks. Therefore to depict and analyse these complexities organizational theories have started using post-structurational ontological settings in combination with existing secondary theories for institutional formal and informal network interaction analysis (eg. Fleetwood 2005, Newton et.al. 2011, Davies 2011). Because the plenitude of variables makes it hard to distinguish the causal relationship between network members and the network, as well as the external factors. By using critical realism in the analysis, the horizontal network theories are able to overcome the theoretical weaknesses of giving too much influence of either through, as Baskhar argues “combin[ing] and reconcile[ing] ontological realism, epistemological relativism and judgemental rationality” (Bhaskar 1998a: xi). Critical realism explanation of emergence can be combined with the policy streams model, which also stresses the dis-linearity and multi-factor influence in policy making and agenda setting, having networks as one of the variables.

### **2.3 Critical realism main assumptions**

In critical realism (Archer 2003), the understanding of networks emergence can be divided in three phases. Firstly, the ‘structural conditioning’, which takes the power balances and bargaining power of each agents and actors in consideration as a starting point. The next step of analysis is the interaction process of these culturally and structurally preconditioned actors with other. The third phase is the structural elaboration, which succeeds or fails based on the various combinations happening in the social interaction process, leading to morphogenesis (change) or stasis (continuation). To look at a development of governance network means analysis of the “power relations they embody, hierarchical or otherwise their authority as vehicles for democratic inclusion or their changing form and function over time” (Davies 2011: 56), therefore the analysis has to be done in the “space-time-matter” nexus, ‘spatiality’ being a three dimensional setting for “relations between (and within) the constituents of space” (2000: 111, 113). This stratification helps to include the seemingly external factors in the analysis. Further, there are three stratas of ontological depth - the intransitive “independent reality of being” (‘the real’), the transitive dimension, knowledge (‘the actual’) as epistemological grounding (the experience), and ‘the empirical’ – events and processes. The ‘real’ objects of knowledge (Bhaskar 2008) are structures with independent generative powers. Each of these stratas (real, actual, empirical) have three various horizontal aspects for analyzing the developments of particular events: structure, cultural systems, and human agency as mediator.

The interaction of ESANs powers with other actors condition the result of exercising the power. As Sayer (1992: 94) notes: “they depend on the context, on the contingent presence of other objects with their own causal powers.” This aspect is very much ignored within the existing literature analysis, even though it is noted, that LRAs, opposed to non-governmental organizations, are also part of the official state hierarchies. These networks

can not be fully distinguished from hierarchies and markets. ESANs can be described as ‘prisoners’ of the markets and hierarchies, because they have their institutionalized tasks, histories as well as economic systems in which they are embedded.

The development on networks depends on the creative powers of ‘real’ entities from the political and policy streams of the Kingdon’s model. The generative powers can be “possessed, unexercised, exercised, and actualized” by the human agency (Bhaskar 1998: xii). The power ‘possessed’ are the “particular cluster of components” that endure (are transfactual). Baraldi et.al (2012: 267) calls it the “organizational resource bundle” of a particular moment (the structural, cultural and agency properties). These local factors, which are well elaborated in the europeanization theories, can strengthen or weaken, but not determine, the particular network member to participate in networks.

#### ***2.4. The ‘window openings’ within the critical realist ontology***

This process of emergence (power actualization) in the context of networks can be combined with Kingdon’s stream model, where the actualization (‘window openings’) happens through the interaction of political, policy and problem stream. Even though Kingdon argues, that these streams are not interrelated and “operate relatively independently from each other” (1994: 165), using the critical realist ‘real’ as a base line for streams, the opening the policy window is an process of constant interaction. In certain moments they develop necessary compatibilities fostering a particular solution and agenda setting. These necessary compatibilities are the ‘right’ ‘positioned practices’ (Archer 2003), which emerge through the dialectic relationship between the streams and the organizational bases. By using the streams as starting points of retruduction method analysis for events and experiences, the reasons for the network development and its functioning can be understood in a deeper level.

#### **2.4.1. The problem stream: what is the problem for the networks?**

The problem stream of agenda influence is responsible for the definition of issues as problematic, why the issue has to be put on agenda and tackled on a particular setting (Kingdon 1994, Princen 2011). The problem definition in local government cooperation comes from the local setting. Simultaneously after the network has emerged with its particular properties and tendencies, the problem definition focus is the network as a whole, that is, its main corporate agent view. The corporate agents (Archer 2003) being like policy entrepreneurs, having the power over the decision making process and, in this context, the europeanization arenas, veto points, available policy options etc. The primary agents, on the other hand, are as novices, who work within the system, without changing its groundings.

For an issue to be in the EU problem stream, it is important to gain the attention of the policy makers, framing the importance of the issue and the necessary of dealing with it on European level (Princen 2011). As Davies (2011: 2) notes, networks are developed to achieve the control and leverage over the agenda, The participation in networks, that have institutionalized cooperation with EU decision making institutions, gives validity to the interests and expertise, as Payre (2010: 263) rightfully states, on the European level “expertise becomes a resource for representing interests”.

Therefore network development is essentially a possibility to gain power and raise a higher voice – by developing inclusion and exclusion with the institutionalization of boundaries. In European context this proliferation of formal networks can come before the development of informal networks and actual ideational ties between the actors. As Jensen (in Davies 2011: 4) notes, the ‘connectedness is a form of power and can be a medium of exclusion, or ‘netsploitation’’. To analyse this, in addition of the actors mentioned with the ELRANs by Kern and Bulkeley (2009: 315) - international sectorial and national councils or member representatives, administrative institutions (Presidency, Board and General

Assembly) and the member cities and their framing of the problem, the problem definition by other actors, such as the European Commission, other networks, etc.

#### **2.4.2. The policy stream: what are the possible solution alternatives?**

Policy stream is the availability of options, where the “potential policy alternatives that reflect both the advantages in technical and scientific knowledge and basic consensus on specialists’ values (Kingdon 1994: 115). But existing trust is not the only reason why certain policy options exist and others don’t in the ‘garbage can’ of decision making. Instead, actors can manage the value constellations (Corsaro et al 2012: 58), develop them based on the relations in “four dialectically interdependent planes: material transactions with nature, interpersonal relations, social structures and the stratification of the personality”(Archer et al. 1998: 197). Policy stream is the upload Europeanization and horizontal at the European level, but the success of this interaction depends on the compatibility of the arenas (the necessary compatibilities or lack thereof), leading to the political stream.

The strongest agents or policy developers are the policy entrepreneurs; it is the matter of the socio-economic base to determine how possible it is to be the central and most successful policy entrepreneur. Kennis and Oerlemans (in Davies 2011: 131) argument, that “the centrally positioned actors in any network are more likely than not to form ties with organizations of similar status or interests. This is especially true in development cooperation, which has traditionally been considered a part of national government foreign policy, thus the analysis of local authority networks should include the strength of state power in contrast to the local level and European one. Leitner and Sheppard (2002: 495) go as far as noting that the development of ESANs is a process “initiated and financially supported” by the European Commission (implying the commission and corporate agent) and member states are “effective channels for disseminating a neoliberal agenda”.

### **2.4.3. The political stream: what conditions the problem and the options available?**

The political stream contains events that can influence a network's agenda, such as "national mood, organized interests, election repercussions, the orientation of elected officials" (Kingdon 1994: 163). In subnational setting influential events are happening on a multi-scale setting – national, sub-national and supra-national, as well as receiving country dynamics (and sub-scales). The role of seemingly external events depends on the intensity of network ties, which can vary in terms of strength of actor involvement, the direction of the ties (sent and received), the intensity, such as frequency of interaction and amount of outputs and results and content (Lewis 2006: 2128). The affective commitment to the network involves the changes of political stream in each of the network members. Depending on the quality of their agency and position in the network, it affects micro, meso and macro events (Lee and Kim 2010: 208). For example, the access to "pots of money" as the "main advantage of engaging with Europe" (John 2000: 879, see also Marshall 2005: 669) is sometimes cited as the main reason for subnational network development, thus the socioeconomic changes both internal and external "may act as a constraint on political action, but the action needs particular conditions to indicate the strength and nature of that influence" (John 2003: 485).

Ideas are transmitted and can be actualized only through human agency in necessary conditions, thus the interaction between all of these factors determines the success or failure of a network to affect the policy agenda (be a transferor or a policy recipient). The LRA triggering (actualization, even if the powers are exercised) can be blocked by a multitude of actors – other LRAs, their associations, peak and thematic networks, European Commission.

The LRA triggering (actualization, even if the powers are exercised) can be blocked by a multitude of actors – other LRAs, their associations, peak and thematic networks, European Commission. The activities of regions on the EU playing field raise several issues

on power disparities and traditional policy hierarchies. In the cases when the domestic interests diverge from the national ones, the European level networking can be a possibility to influence the national decision making through what Kech and Sikkink (1998) call 'boomerang effect'. Is the equality and horizontality of members especially in the current post 2004 and 2007 EU still intact? Is the information exchange and relationships between the members based on reciprocity? How are the various interests between the involved parties managed? What is the role of European Commission activities? Starting by exploring the different reasons for participation in the network, the next two chapters will explore and draw conclusions on the network emergence, sustainability and effectiveness.

## CHAPTER 3: THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY NETWORKS

This chapter looks at the necessary compatibilities between the policy, political and problem stream from the sides of all involved actors, to understand the reasons why the development cooperation networks emerge.

### *3.1. The Problem stream: why these networks are needed*

The interview with the Brussels institutions representatives in CoR, stress the role of raising the voice of local authorities in Brussels, to “have their own say, neglecting the national level”, thus the common articulation of the network issue and its goals should come from the network members. Three groups of local issues can be considered problematic, stemming from LRA place in the state power hierarchies and bottom-up legitimacy from their constituency and can be categorized in three groups – legal frameworks, financial resource availability and interest in development cooperation.

Firstly, the differences lie in the roles of local authorities in national development cooperation strategies and programmes. According to Copsey and Rowe (2012: 2) there are five clusters, based on the national legal frameworks and local authority role in them. Drawing from their findings and the membership, mostly countries with supportive national legal frameworks and clearly defined role of LRA activities in the provision of Official Development Assistance (ODA) are active on European level (Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Latvia, and Romania). The countries, who would be in need of the network support, because their legal framework „actively constrain[s] the ability of LRAs to engage in ODA provision” - Luxemburg, Ireland, Greece, Czech Republic, Cyprus and Slovakia do not use EU level as a venue shopping place.

Secondly, conditioned by the law and national conditions, financial resource availability is mentioned as a reason for joining. It is of no surprise, that the biggest financial

division can be seen through the ‘old’ member states and the countries from the last three accession rounds. On the other hand, also administratively decentralized countries with high level of ODA, such as the Netherlands, Sweden, join the network to solve the conditionality of highly centralized funding. . For example, Swedish local authorities cannot use local budget resources for co-financing development cooperation projects, therefore lobbies for dismissal of co-funding for EU projects.

Lastly, only Romanian representatives stress raising awareness and information dissemination to their members as the reason for participation in the network of networks, that there is no consensus on the benefit from the participation.

The interview answers stress the role of those members, who, according to the websites of LRA associations, already had the institutional set up in early 1990s – French LRAs (1992), the Dutch LRA organization VNG International (set up in 1993). Spain and Belgium, with highly decentralized state systems and weak national governments are also mentioned as the ones defining the need for a common organization. This goes in line with Kern’s argument, that ELRAN members are “pioneers of pioneers”, but goes against the argument to of networks pressuring for national level change. Simultaneously Payer’s argument on domestic interests coming first is under question, because the domestic problem stream according to the members differs, ending up with a very broad problem definition, “to recognize local authorities as equal partners, show that we can offer help” (Secretary General of Latvian Association of Local and Regional Authorities).

All the interviewed, except the French Association of Cities, noted that they ‘joined’ not initiated the network development. While the French main argument for the development of a European level network is a common lobbying power in EU decision making. This stems from the strength of the French LRAs on the world stage and includes another political

stream - the French presidency of the EU in 2008, during which the first EU level document “European Development Cooperation Charter in support of Local Governance” was developed, as well several activities and seminars took place on regional and NGO-local authority cooperation. (The French Presidency 2008).

The French representative adds that the process was initiated together with VNG International, the branch for International cooperation for the Netherlands association for LRAs. The interview with the latter states, that the EC did not want “all the French different municipalities walking around asking “Do they have funding for us?”.” This goes in line with John’s (2000, 879) thesis on the access to “pots of money” as a reason for LRA European level networking, but only for the central network players.

The problem stream shows, that there is no unified problem definition on the need for the networks, thus the understanding in why the networks are developed cannot be analysed without the broader power hierarchies and institutional setting of European Union.

### ***3.2. The political stream: the role of European Commission***

The process of local authority mobilization on European level firstly started with the opening of structural fund programmes, many local authorities already had their lobbying offices in Brussels. In development cooperation DG for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DG DEVCO) is responsible for drafting legislative proposals in decentralized development cooperation. During mid2000s the DG DEVCO started Quadralogue - a formal consultation procedure with the institutions, member states and the European CSO network CONCORD, but without the LRAs. Thus in 2007 when the separate funding programme was introduced, LRAs were the only ones without a unified representation. The French, CoR and CONCORD experts stress the role of Development commissioner Louis Michel from Borroso first Commission (2004 - 2009), Concord representative stating that during his chairmanship the DG “was pushing a lot for local authorities to be important actors”. In

addition, the changes within the Commission - DG Development and Cooperation was merged with EuropeAid leading to development policy and finance consolidation in one DG. Simultaneously the LRAs were included in the new policy drafting process as part of the Structured Dialogue. This programme is considered as the main reason for development of Platforma – which was the official partner for local and regional authorities within this process. As ALDA representative pointed out, this makes one of the dialogue partners “100% a project that is financed by the EC and simultaneously gives feedback to EC”.

These developments show the role of European Commission in the political stream, because none of the existing strong networks working in decentralized development were allowed to participate in consultation process. The interviews with VNG International representatives note that the EC did not want to cooperate with a network that is based outside the EU. Also the interview with the CoR representative supports the argument that Platforma “was developed *in* European Commission as an institution who gives a single voice, representation.” Moreover, ALDA describes Platforma as “a project of CEMR, hosted by, financed by European Commission”.

### ***3.2. Are there alternatives for network development in the policy stream?***

The view from the political and problem streams from a wider actor perspective show, that network emergence has to take into considerations a broader governance mechanism. The policy stream model shows that in network emergence, the European Commission is the corporate agent, which promotes the network development and shapes their forms through the necessary compatibilities with the French LRAs and their associations. In addition, the high number of already existing networks where the local authorities already pay membership fees conditioned the weak formality of the network and its financing from the EC funding schemes.

LRA network over development in such a niche policy as decentralized development cooperation has to take into account the observations on the lack of policy coherence and ‘development cooperation identity’ of the European Union higher policy level. Local government policies and regions are under the DG for Regional policy, town twinning and cross-border cooperation; including ENPI is coordinated and implemented by DG Enlargement and the European External Action Service (EEAS), while development cooperation is the sole competence for DG DEVCO. Each of these DGs develops its own networking policy, trainings and consultation programmes, creating an overlap between the policies and ultimately also networks. The most recent is the initiation of CORLEAP and ARLEM programmes by EEAS and CoR, with the aim “to bring a regional and local dimension into the Eastern Partnership” (Committee of the Regions 2012a), while there is already an Association of European Border Regions in place.

Also in response of not being invited to join the Structured dialogue consultation process for DG Development, ALDA developed another networking programme “Working together for Development” through the same European Commission financial grant from which Platforma is financed.

This artificial fostering of networks and overlap, the role of European Commission’s financial stipulations raises new questions for network existence de facto, their sustainability and interaction assumptions. Also members note the role of vertical venue shopping, stating that this programme was “put forward to exchange knowledge with the European Commission, [for them] to understand what our cooperation is about, [for us] to look at new EU policy, try to be involved in decision making with EC, CoR, European parliament” leads to conclude that these activities are indeed organized to foster vertical, not horizontal information exchange.

The Brussels institutions recognize, that “the ultimate failure” is the lack of “effort to work together with one voice” to represent regions on European level. Also the Dutch and Swedish associations are the most careful in evaluating the success or failure of Platforma (“that remains to be seen”, “curious to see what the outcome will be”). They see the participation in the network as a possible solution for the “underutilization of the experience developed at the local level” through helping to identify the best way to incorporate them in EU policies through giving “better recommendations to the commission to initiate changes that would be postponed”.

Through the proliferation of networks and stronger ties on micro-level local interest based projects (through Structural, Cohesion, Cross-border and other EU multi-country funds) keep the regions out of the major decision making in Brussels. In this way instead of opposing the agenda of European Commission, the networks reproduce it on the local level through the aims of each project call.

## CHAPTER 4: THE SUSTAINABILITY OF FINANCE FOSTERED LOCAL AUTHORITY NETWORKS

The streams and their connections create particular kind of membership. For Platforma the members are the most knowledgeable and experienced decentralized development cooperation actors. While ALDA focuses on more localized initiatives, including new and old EU member states with various levels of experience. The following chapter will look at the influence of power centrality and role of EU financial support for the sustainability and knowledge exchange within the network. The opening of the policy window for network development is not based on a strong commitment to the aim of the networks (only a small part of the members benefit from advocacy on European level), thus raises questions of their longitude and internal dynamics.

### *4.1. Role of funding in sustainability*

“There is quite a significant part to consider how much happens because there is a real genuine interest and reality behind it to support and how much happens because there is money from the European Commission” (LRA network representative)

As described earlier, the development of Platforma and ALDA's programme, Working Together for Development was strongly influenced by the availability of European Commission funding. The networks are based on EC approved projects, the co-financing being covered through membership fees cover the network maintenance and activity costs. The Objective 3 finance, on which Platforma and Working Together for Development are based, has a start and ending date, the application has to be submitted and reviewed again. Working Together for Development timeline is 30 months (ALDA 2012c), while for Platforma the financial grant ends in December 2012. Both network representatives do not know what will happen with the specific developed networks afterwards. Platforma stresses its close relationships with European Commission's DG DEVCO Civil society and local

authority unit, nodding that it has shown its need for the system and renewal of the grant would not be a problem. Mostly likely, Platforma will be able to receive the permanent funding as the sole representative of member-state local authorities in development, similarly as CONCORD – the only European NGO network.

Platforma is a three year old network, therefore its sustainability and future of the network is relatively hard to predict, even though the previous chapter tried outline its close incorporation in existing power structures, leading to the argument, that it could become an institutional arm of the European Commission. However, the process tracing of ALDA, which is active for more than a decade, can be analysed over time and conclusions on the sustainability can be made.

Initially ALDA was financed through its peak organization CLRAE, but with the raising EU finance for region development and establishment of EU consultancy procedures, the network has developed closer ties with EU. Since its establishment ALDA has implemented 34 project based activities, majority of which - 29 with the European Commission being the lead financer. 17 of these projects are financed through the Europe for Citizens programme, (ALDA 2012b). EC funding stipulations put a focus on multi-country calls and cross-border partnerships, which foster LRA cooperation on European level, noted also by the networks: “EC programmes for multi-country calls are perfect for ALDA”. The mixed membership base of LRAs and CSOs works is an asset for project calls, because the organization can have both LRAs and CSOs as leading project partners, developing more applications. The organization project track record of activities supports the role of EU funding - the association acts as a business contact exchange network for new partner search for EU projects.

Most of these projects focus on new thematic network development, fostering cooperation and broadening membership. When EU opened new programmes on ENPI, ALDA widened its partnership and opened new offices in Georgia and Armenia, as the representative noted “through a desire to expand the positive experience in the ex-Yugoslav countries”. An additional shift was done by the network on their strategy to “have an idea where the money is and how can that fit in what we would like to do” to work within the EU with European citizenship projects. This, again, can be directly related to the opening of European Commission Europe for Citizens programme. The aim of this programme, launched in 2007, is direct partnership building between European local and regional authorities and funding of these activities.

With the changes in political stream of the EU - the enlargement and development of ENPI, as well as possibilities of EU funding, ALDA has been able to adopt and continue its activities. One of the reasons is the network’s high adaptation to problem stream change, which is embedded in its loose coupling of wide membership. The network is able to sustain its membership numbers through changing and expanding identity and regional scope. Interestingly, despite the high level of ALDA activities, interviewed Platforma members, as well as Platforma representative describe ALDA as an “inactive network” in development cooperation. While ALDA representatives simultaneously notes that Platforma’s development without the Commission’s support programme would be questionable. Thus it seems that the European sub-national authority networks can be sustainable through a tradeoff between their ideational base and high level political agenda setting.

Lack of advocacy power and lack of financial benefit due to the shared multi-country projects from the network is one of the reasons why there is low level of representation of major decentralized development cooperation actors. From the major players only Italy and France are widely represented. The unnecessary of ALDA’s services to the Nordic countries

is noted by the association itself, stressing that participating in ALDA “is an extra step you take, it is not necessary if you have strong contacts”. These local governments have strong national programmes and knowledge, as well as a different regional interest. The Danish Association of LRAs was a member of ALDA, but left the organization, because “they look at it more as charity, do the good deeds, but not because they need it.” The same reason, according to the ALDA project manager, applies for Norway.

On the other hand, these small financial grants for national micro-projects attract the new member states with almost no financial availability to implement development cooperation projects themselves. As Latvian association mentions the biggest benefit from participation in ALDA is the financial structures available for local governments in Latvia. The finance as a long term attraction can be seen as a strategy of sustainability for ALDA, because “for new countries we give them extras so they should participate”, such as development of conferences and seminars in their countries.

This constant change in problem stream of ALDA’s agenda makes its classification hard – instead of venue shopping to implement the ideas, the actual process leads to conclude that the political stream of EU ideas, embedded in the project calls, stipulates the venues to which the ideas have to be found. This strategy could be called EU conditioned ‘vertical idea shopping’ instead of ‘venue shopping’.

#### ***4. 2. Knowledge exchange within networks: big words, small deeds?***

The main idea of EU networking is to foster knowledge and information exchange. Both networks, ALDA and Platforma stress the role of good practice exchange, mutual learning, but the interviews, implemented projects and network analysis tool Issuecrawler data reveal the high level of clustering and centre – periphery relations within the network. The empirical case studies on subnational ELRANs before the enlargement, stressed “the circulation of knowledge organized by these networks” (Payre 2010: 262) to search for the

venues of their ideas. Now, with 27 member states and different national problem and political streams, the connectivity and consensus in the policy stream after the establishment of the network is weak.

In Platforma's case, according to the interviews, learning and cooperation happens outside of the network with their already existing partners. There is a cluster of Southern LRAs, which is also depicted in membership, having majority of networks and cities from France. These LRAs work together on such issues as migration and development cooperation based on local diasporas. The strong presence of the Mediterranean countries gives empirical evidence to Kennis and Oerlemans (in Davies 2011: 131) argument, that "the centrally positioned actors in any network are more likely than not to form ties with organizations of similar status or interests [... and] with the most resources." Also the Swedish association notes that true network ties are developed within the Baltic region, where other thematic networks are present.

Swedish representative also noted, that cooperation and experience exchange mostly happens with other Nordic countries and the Netherlands, with which they have common institutional set up for development cooperation. While in ALDA the cooperation is done on the basis of 5-10 project partners, within the whole organization.

This issue of lack of policy influence as new partners within Platforma is mentioned by both Romanian and Latvian representatives. The Romanian Association stresses the over-representation of Southern Local Governments and their associations and a need for a strategy to involve more new member states who are active in decentralized development cooperation, such as Poland and Czech Republic.

The new member states also emphasize that their context and approach is different, thus there is no one to actually learn from. Platforma management tries to socialize them

through seminar and conference organizing in these countries, but the interviewed representatives from ‘old donor’ community all answered that they do not have the overview and information on the new member state activities. Even though each of the major donors was involved in training the new member state local governments during transition process – Italians in Romania, the Netherlands in Czech Republic, Sweden in the Baltic States, France in Slovakia, Romania. VNG International more notes the issues that new member state local authorities are not willing to get involved in development cooperation.

While the Latvian association representatives acknowledge the technical role of Platforma, because “when the talk goes to projects, then each is in her own project and there is no huge love or sharing”. The focus on policy lobbying is supported by the Issuecrawler analysis (appendix 2, 3) of top 20 send and received ties from Platforma and its members websites. It shows the interconnectiveness of Platforma with other major world and European development institutions (UN Habitat, World Bank, URBACT among others). The only LRAs in the cluster map are French and Belgium Associations, giving support to the argument that Platforma serves as a venue for channeling French interests and lobbying for EU.

On the other hand, ALDA management seems more knowledgeable about the new member state expertise as valuable assets in the recent transition, knowledge of Russian and receiving country tailored programmes, describing the Latvian partners as “very active, very engaged, taking up a lot of initiatives”. Still, the leading partners even in the countries where the new member states are experts (eg. Armenia and Georgia), are Italians and French local authorities. The Issuecrawler map on organization website connections shows that among the highest 20 network nodes (appendix 4,5), based on their websites, only four are connected to European institutions, while the rest are Italian local and regional, as well as national

government sites. This leads to an observation that the network functions more as a tool for Italian local authorities in EU funding approbation.

Even though both of the networks serve different purposes, ALDA is a practitioners and Platforma is an advocacy network, the information on the knowledge exchange within the networks depict their internal hierarchies. In ALDA's case the analysis seems to show that the network is part of the Italian local and regional government policies and serves their interests. While in Platforma's case, the network analysis shows its interrelations with major EU level policy makers – institutions and networks. Which serves the purpose of the organization, but as the interviews show, there is no exchange among different types of decentralized development cooperation polities. Even though DG DEVCO official stresses that Platforma is the “most accurate representation of local authorities in development”, it would be more accurate to say that it is a unidirectional information channel for the already established LRAs working in the southern countries to higher levels of EU.

## CONCLUSION

The literature on European Local and regional authority networks characterizes the European Local and regional authority networks as horizontal, with high level of knowledge exchange, self organizing and based in local issue solving. It also notes the possibilities to attract EU financial resources as an incentive for policy transfer. EU has generously been supporting the development of local and regional authority networks, to foster legitimacy, europeanization and exchange of experiences. However, the EU funding stipulations and wide variety of funds not only fosters, but is necessary for network development.

Through using a materially based critical realist ontology with policy stream model, this paper looks at local authority networks as part of power hierarchies between EU institutions, member states, among other factors. It evaluated the reasons for recent emergence of European sub-national networks in development cooperation and their sustainability, focusing on the roles of the involved actors and their interaction. The two different cases of a practitioners network ALDA and an advocacy network Platforma reveal shortcomings in the existence of local authority networks on European level and their aims.

These cases go against the assumptions on networks as fostering horizontal integration– high level of consensus and sustainability, serving as new arenas for deliberation.

The development of Platforma is the result of the necessary complementarities between the active French local governments, the French presidency and the changes in European overarching development cooperation. Moreover, the high number of existing EU networks fostered its emergence as a weakly coupled project. The Platforma serves as new arena for existing experts and practitioners to lobby for necessary programme development in the European Commission Directorate General for Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid. The cooperation between the major actors – French, Dutch and Spanish local authorities and

the DG can be considered successful lobbying process. But instead of fostering the development of knowledge exchange and involvement of new member states, the policies strengthen the positions of these already active members. Moreover, with the new EU Neighbourhood and policy instrument, this might lead to a higher focus on a particular geographical area.

On the other hand, the case of ALDA depicts a different form of network capture. To keep the networks membership base and EU financial possibilities for cooperation, ALDA has been changing its profile to suit the various project calls. And, as the network analysis shows, the core of the network are Italian local governments, not the whole network. This is also supported through its changing membership base – it does not include high profile development cooperation actors, but attracts knowledgeable new member state local authorities which lack financial resources.

These findings reveal, that EU local and regional authority networks should be rather called Brussels financed networks or artificially developed EU organized networks, because they would not exist without the funding. To foster genuine learning and experience exchange, thus cohesion and most importantly, new member state involvement, EU funding should foster thematic sub-spatial or sub-topical network development.

It has to be noted, that further research is needed to understand the full generalizability of these case studies, as well as the application of the results on NGO network development. To add, the internal dynamics of Platforma revealed further areas of research, such as the high level of network overlap among local and regional authorities, competition between the existing peak networks and changes in their role with the raise of EU influence.

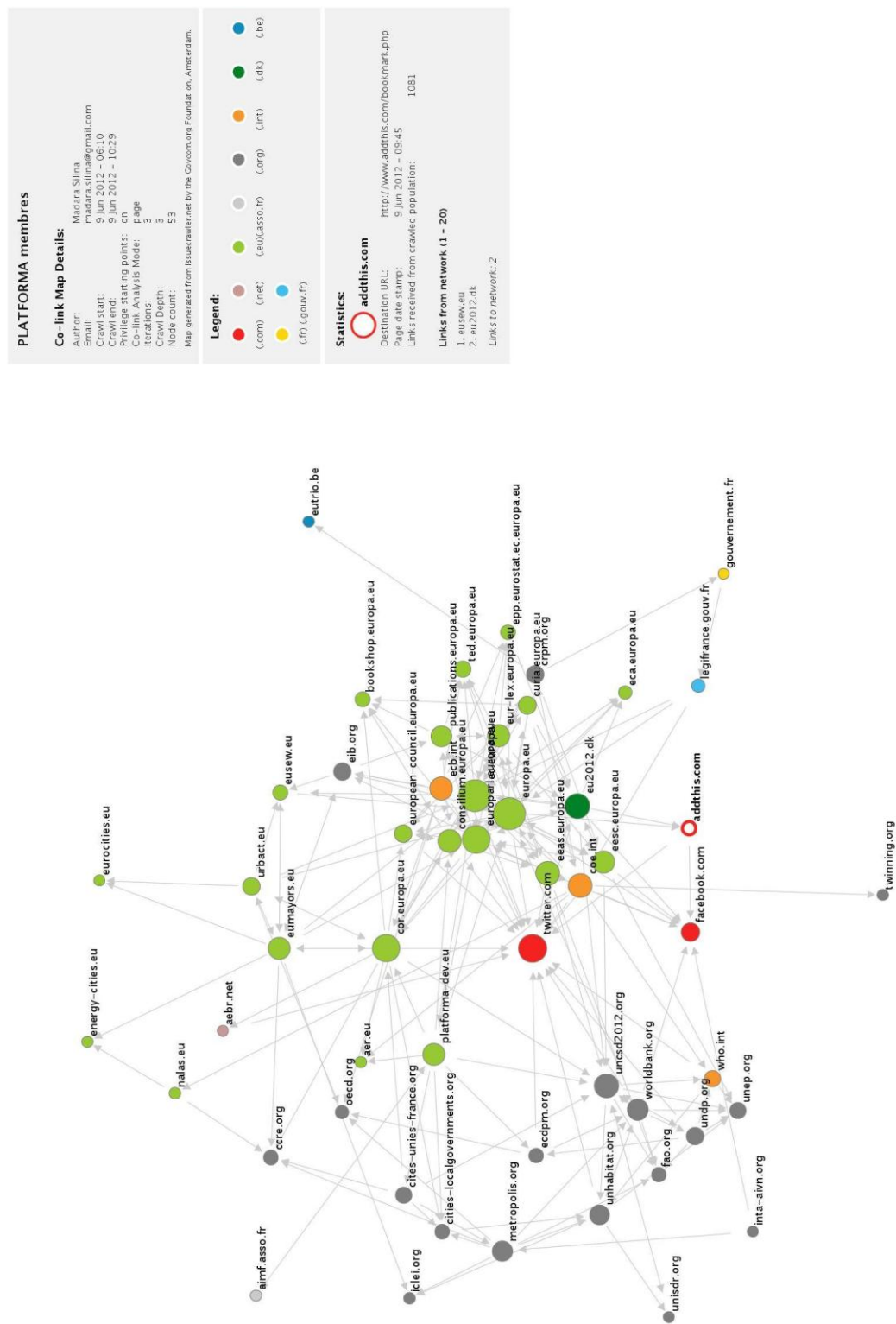
## APPENDICES

### *Appendix 1: List of Informants*

- European Commission Directorate General Development Unit “Civil Society and Local Authorities”, Antonio Marquez Camacho;
- European NGO confederation for Relief and Development CONCORD:
  - project manager for Quadrilogue Taskforce Elise Vanormelingen,
  - Policy coherence for development (PCD) task force Romain Philippe;
- Committee of Regions Decentralized Development Unit, Roman Alba Aquilera;
- Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA), Policy Officer Peter Sondergaard;
- Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments:
  - Secretary General Mudite Priede,
  - Chairman Andris Jaunsleins,
  - Representatives in the Committee of the Regions CIVEX Working group
    - Indra Rassa,
    - Nellija Kleinberga;
  - Adviser to the Chairman on EU Issues, Head of Brussels Office Agita Kaupuza;
- Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation, chairperson Mara Simane;
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Economic Relations and Development Cooperation Policy Department Development cooperation policy office Deputy Head Anda Grinberga;
- The European Platform of Local and Regional Authorities for Development Platforma Project manager Lucie Gulliet;

- Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania, Advisor on EU Issues Arunas Grazulis;
- The International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities VNG International:
  - Project Manager ARIAL Elisabeth Wunderle,
  - Project Manager Renske Steenbergen;
- Italian Association for the Council of Municipalities and Regions of Europe (AICCRE) project manager Francesca Battisti;
- Cités Unies France Deputy manager Nicolas Wit;
- Expert on Romanian Development cooperation;
- SKL International (a company, owned by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)), Managing Director Håkan Gustafsson;

## Appendix 2: Issuecrawler analysis – Platforma (all sent and received nodes)



Appendix 3: Issuercrawler analysis – Platforma (top 20 sent and received nods)

**PLATFORMA membres**

**Co-link Map Details:**

Author: Madara Silina  
Email: madarasilina@gmail.com  
Crawl start: 9 Jun 2012 - 06:10  
Crawl end: 9 Jun 2012 - 10:29  
Privilege starting points: on  
Co-link Analysis Mode: page  
Iterations: 3  
Crawl Depth: 3  
Node Count: 20  
Map generated from Issuercrawler.net by the Govcom.org Foundation, Amsterdam.

**Legend:**

- (.com) (eu) (org) (int) (.dk) (.gov) (.fr)

**Statistics:**

**addthis.com**

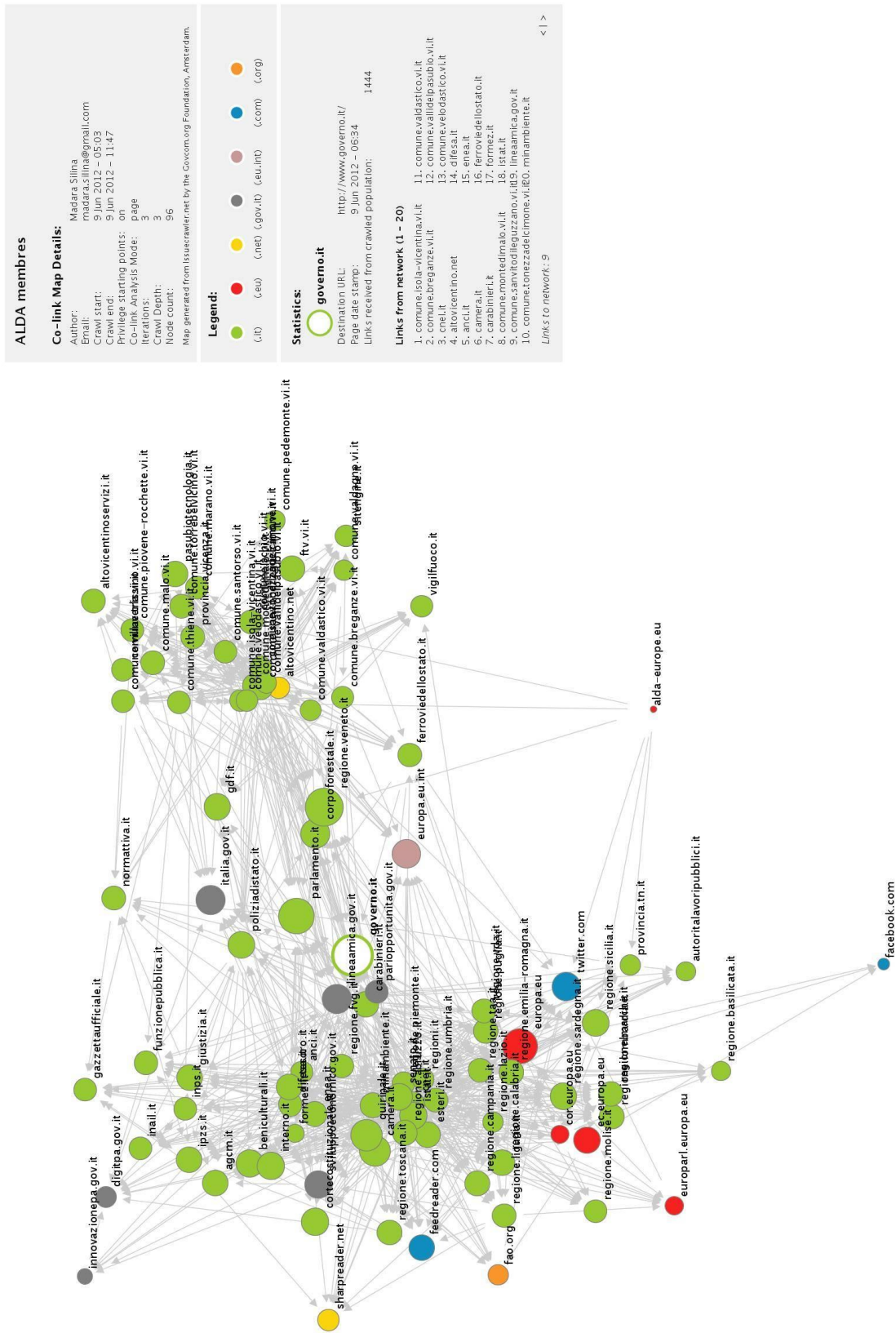
Destination URL: http://www.addthis.com/bookmark.php  
Page date stamp: 9 Jun 2012 - 09:45  
Links received from crawled population: 1081

**Links from network (1 - 20)**

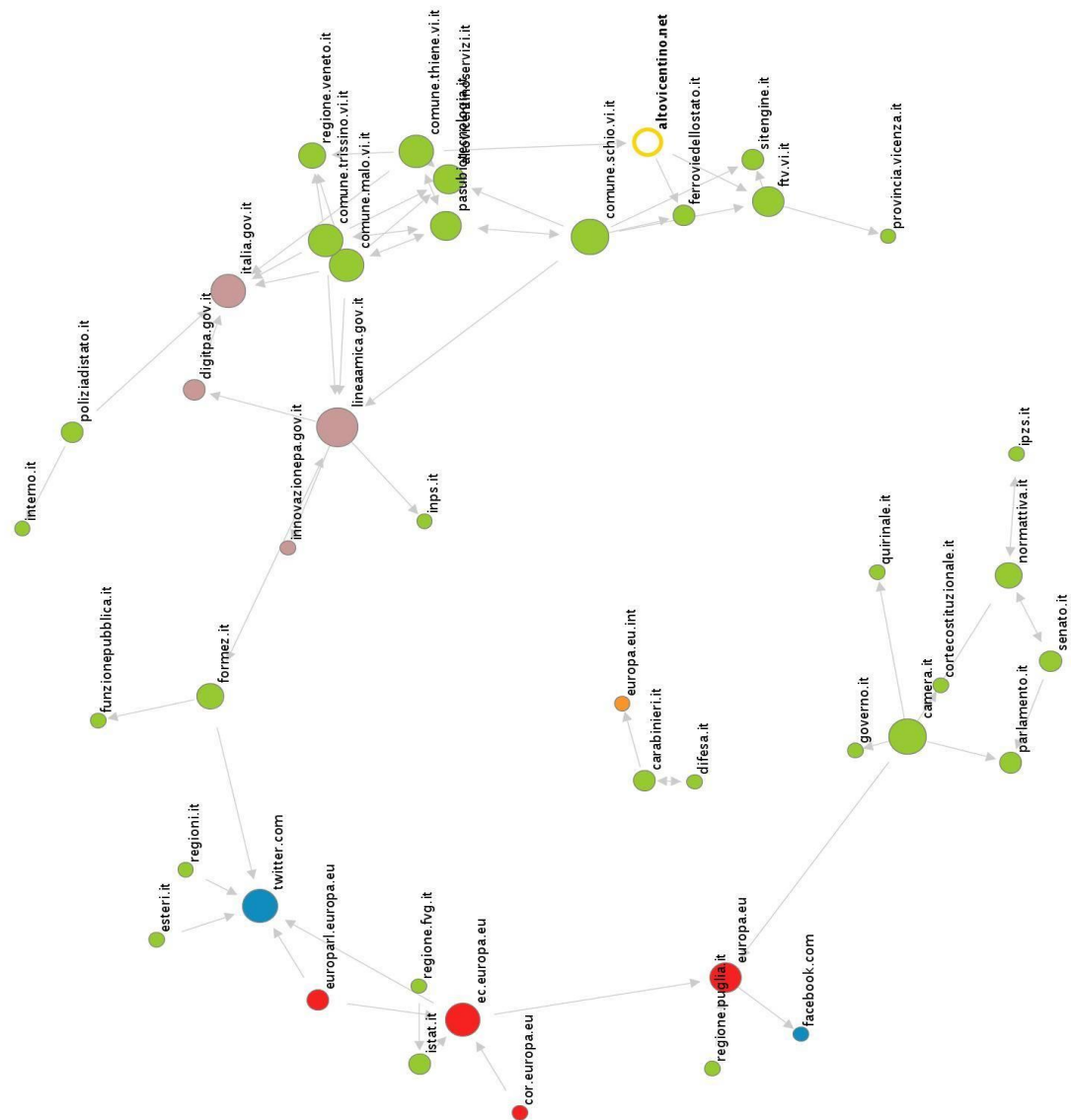
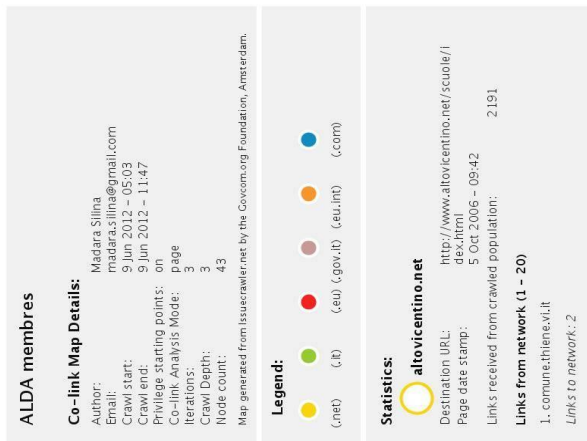
1. eu2012.dk  
Links to network: 2



#### Appendix 4: Issuecrawler analysis – ALDA (all sent and received nods)



## Appendix 5: Issuecrawler analysis – ALDA (top 20 sent and received nots)



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