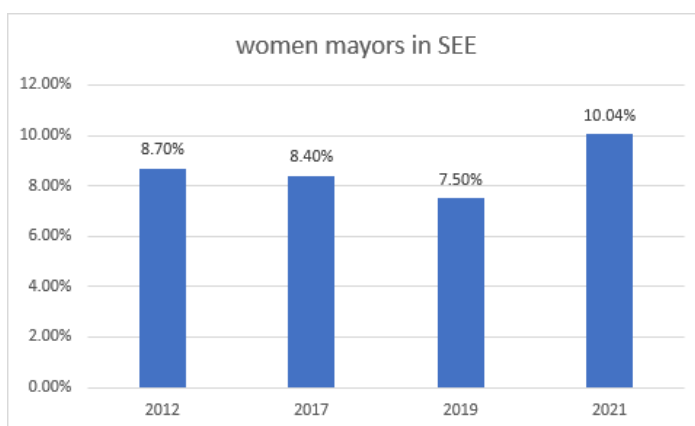


NALAS' contribution to advancing gender equality at local level in South-East Europe

Do you want to see the glass half full? We might start this article by proudly saying that in 2021 we witnessed the highest percentage of women mayors in South-East Europe since 2012, when the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) launched its strategy for advancing gender equality at local level.

Well, if we judge by the numbers, it is more than certain that we have a long way to go. Namely, only 10% of the SEE mayors are women, while in many parts of the region there are either none or symbolic numbers of women mayors. On the positive side comes Moldova, with a constant growth of the number of women mayors in the last three local electoral cycles, reaching 22% after the last local elections in 2019. In the last 10 years, Moldovan women mayors receive a strong support from their Women Mayors' Network within the Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova (CALM).



As of 2013, within its Gender Strategy, NALAS has pioneered a number of initiatives for enhancing capacities of municipalities and their Associations, promoting and advancing gender equality at local level.

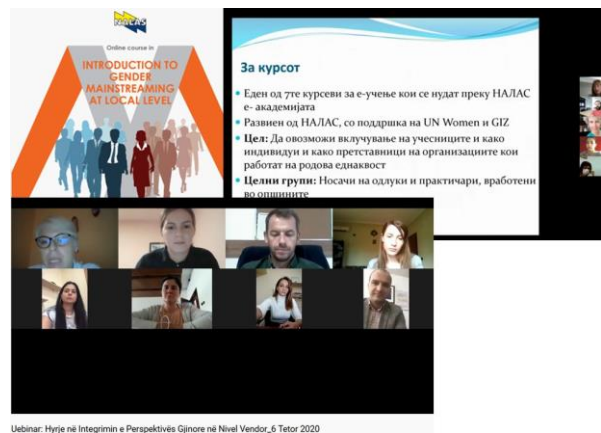
In 2015, NALAS organised the [GENiYOUTH awards](#) for local governments' good practices - initiatives, experiences, successes and lessons learnt – in inclusion of women and young people in the local community. The awards were handed at a ceremony during the [NALAS Annual Forum of Local Authorities in South East Europe](#), held 16-19 May 2015 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, while the [book "GENiYOUTH Municipal Initiatives in South East Europe"](#) with **56 practices** remains a source of inspiration.



In 2016, NALAS developed [Policy Positions to Promote Gender Equality at Local Level](#), used for regional and national advocacy and lobbying for implementation of the European Charter on Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. In 2021, these policy positions were complemented with recommendations on [promotion of Gender Responsive Budgeting](#).

As of 2016, one of the NALAS flagship products, the [Fiscal Decentralisation Indicators Report](#) for South-East Europe has been enriched with **gender indicators** and gender responsive budgeting indicators.

In 2017, NALAS developed the [e-learning course in Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming at Local Level](#), in English language, and through the years made it available also in local languages. To date, over 500 local government representatives have successfully [completed the course](#).



NALAS continuously collects [data on the women representation](#) at local level and produced series of **factsheets and posters** that appealed for increased gender equality at local level.

In 2018 NALAS published a special edition of its [Newsletter focused on gender equality](#).



In December 2019, NALAS organised the [First Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe](#). Over 50 women mayors and women presidents of the municipal assemblies representing local governments from 12 SEE countries gathered in Sombor, Serbia with the aim to:

- Empower and build coalition for enhanced gender mainstreaming in policy and gender responsive budgeting
- Facilitate networking opportunities, and strengthen co-operation and synergies among women mayors in SEE and women municipal council presidents
- Produce regional policy recommendations for gender responsive budgeting at local level in the region of SEE.

[The Second Forum of Women Mayors in South-East Europe](#) was organised online, on 14 April 2021, focused on inclusive local economic development, gathering over 200

participants. The [third Forum](#) was organised on 2 October 2021, within the MARUF-Marmara Urban Forum, focused on the role of women in meeting urban challenges.



In April 2021, NALAS got its **first female President**, [Mayor Tatiana Badan](#) from Moldova, who is a true advocate for gender equality at local level and puts this topic high on NALAS' agenda.

At the moment, NALAS finalises the collection of **best practices in Gender Responsive Budgeting at local level in SEE**.