



Forum Cities and Regions for International Partnerships

Cities, regions and Global Gateway – Mapping of evidence and opportunities
for local and regional authorities to deliver on the strategy

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Cities, regions and Global Gateway

Mapping of evidence and opportunities for local and regional authorities to deliver on Global Gateway

Final report

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Summary

This report examines how Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) are involved in the EU's Global Gateway (GG) strategy and associated 360-degree approach. Introduced in 2021, Global Gateway aims to shift the EU's external action toward mutually beneficial partnerships, with large-scale investments in connectivity, green and digital transitions, energy, transport, education, and health. While centrally driven, the strategy increasingly recognises the importance of LRAs for ownership, sustainability, and territorial impact. In this context, DG INTPA's Unit G2 commissioned a mapping to identify where LRAs already play meaningful roles in GG flagship projects and where opportunities for deeper engagement exist.

The methodology combined extensive desk research with a structured analytical framework and 42 interviews with EU Delegations in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the EU's neighbourhood. Starting from 264 GG flagship projects adopted by the Council (2023–2025), the research produced 46 relevant case studies across 40 countries, representing all GG priority sectors and a range of funding modalities. The analytical framework assessed the depth of LRA involvement—from consultation to leadership—as well as the financial, institutional, and governance conditions shaping their participation.

The findings reveal an uneven but significant LRA presence in various roles: from being informed or consulted, LRAs can also be beneficiaries, implementing partners, and/or in the driving seat. The study also identifies eight structural bottlenecks—centralised investment governance, sectoral approaches, weak decentralisation, restrictive legal frameworks, limited incentives for central governments, local capacity gaps, misaligned localisation strategies, and the early-stage implementation of GG. At the same time, the report highlights concrete examples where projects successfully navigate these constraints, offering valuable lessons for strengthening LRA engagement in future Global Gateway initiatives.

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The study has been conducted by Amandine Sabourin (ECDPM/TALD Facility). It aims at identifying Global Gateway projects, in which local and regional authorities have been involved.

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Acronyms

AFD	Agence française de Développement
AIMF	Association internationale des maires francophones
CLGF	Commonwealth local governments forum
CoR	European Committee of the Regions
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
EIB	European Investment Bank
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ESG	Environmental, social and governance standards
EU	European Union
EUDs	EU Delegations
FEC	Fonds d'Équipement Communal (Morocco)
FNLC	Financing not linked to cost
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
GG	Global Gateway
INTPA	International Partnerships
JEFIC	Joint European Financiers for International Cooperation
LAs	Local authorities
LRAs	Local and regional authorities
MS	Member states
NIUA	National Institute of Urban Affairs (India)
PPP	Public private partnership
RMF+	Risk Management Framework+
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund

1. Background

Since 2021, the European Union (EU) has introduced the Global Gateway (GG) strategy, an external policy framework that aims at moving from traditional aid relationships towards mutually beneficial partnerships (Sabourin & Hunter, 2024) with partner countries and organisations in the Global South (Sabourin et al, 2023; Sherriff & Veron, 2024; Veron & Sherriff, 2024; Veron, 2025). This strategy prioritises areas such as infrastructure, green and digital transitions, education and research, and health. It has also integrated economic, social, environmental, and governance (ESG) standards and dimensions into large-scale multistakeholder projects aligned with sustainable development goals through a 360-degree approach (European Commission, 2024), a concept that was introduced in 2024. In total, 264 flagship projects have been approved by the Council of the EU since 2023 (Council of the EU, 2023a; Council of the EU, 2023b; Council of the EU, 2024). In all of this, the role of partner countries' governments and especially local and regional authorities has been deemed key by ECDPM's past research (Bossuyt & Sabourin, 2024).

Within this context, unit G2 of the EU's DG International Partnerships (INTPA), responsible for Local authorities (LAs), has commissioned ECDPM to conduct a mapping study. The study's purpose is to identify best practices and opportunities for meaningful involvement of Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) in GG flagship projects, as well as in satellite '360-degree' projects. Specifically, it aims to highlight cases where 'local and regional authorities have played an important or crucial role, or where there are significant opportunities for their active involvement in the future'. More specifically, first, it aims to **showcase instances where LRAs have played a significant role in decision-making, implementation, or advocacy**. Second, the mapping seeks to **pinpoint opportunities where LRAs could enhance their engagement in the future**.

By examining both **successful examples and untapped opportunities**, the research offers insights into effective strategies for LRAs participation and generates evidence to inform EU (HQ and Delegations) and other relevant stakeholders. The findings aim to foster collaboration between LRAs and other actors, particularly in identifying viable, high-impact projects. Ultimately, the goal of this mapping is to contribute to analysing the context in which LRAs can (potentially) **play a more active, influential and impactful role** in relevant GG projects, also via decentralised cooperation. Lastly, the projects identified aim at being presented and discussed at the forum of cities and regions for international partnerships to be organised in Brussels (8-10 December 2025) by DG INTPA and the Committee of the Regions.

2. Approach and scope

This study focuses on identifying good practices within GG interventions and flagship projects in partner countries where **local and regional authorities have played an important or crucial role, or where there are significant opportunities for their active involvement in the future**. To lead the research process, and the interviews with the key informants especially, ECDPM has developed an analytical framework with a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators that inform the context of the project, the level of involvement of local and regional authorities, as well as the form and the amount of the support received by local and regional authorities. The full methodology is summarised in Annex 1 below.

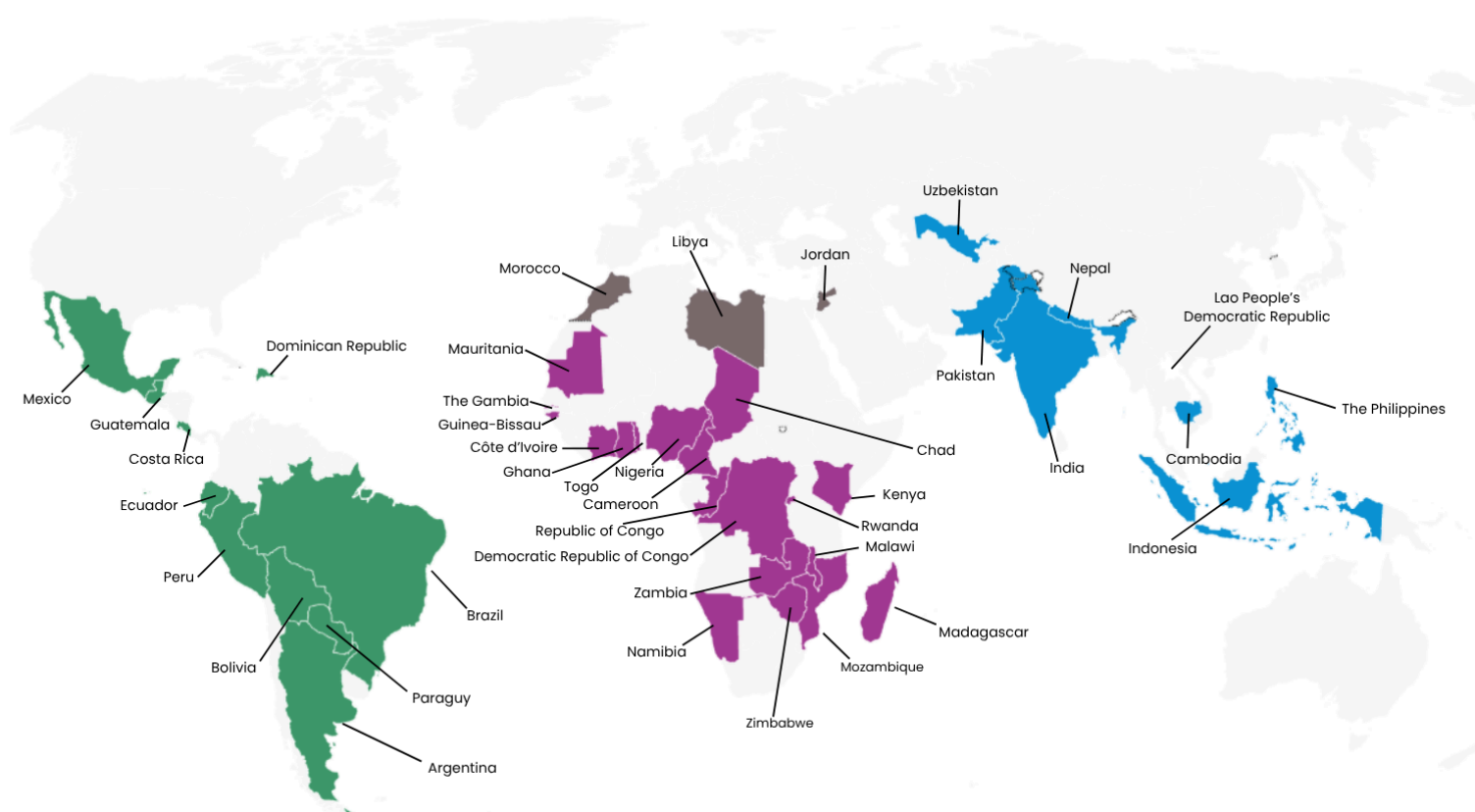
Focusing on mapping and analysing the EU's Global Gateway projects where LRAs play a role, **the initial desk research looked at the 264 flagship projects adopted between 2023 and 2025 by the Council** (Council, 2023a; Council, 2023b; Council, 2024). Following our sample criteria and analytical framework (see Annex 1), an initial set of 46 countries were pre-selected.

In addition to the desk-based review and analysis, as well as initial interviews conducted with networks of LRAs, some development finance institutions and DG INTPA's headquarters, **key informant interviews were conducted with 42 EU Delegations**¹ (head of delegations, heads of cooperation, heads of sectors/team leaders, programme managers) to provide a more accurate and up-to-date picture of the involvement of the LRAs in Global Gateway projects and initiatives (flagship and beyond) in the pre-selected countries.

In total, **40 selected countries** were retained for the final selection, and they reflect a certain geographical diversity, being distributed as follows: 19 countries from Africa, 10 countries from Latin America, 8 countries from Asia and 3 countries from the EU's Southern Neighbourhood. This is detailed in figure 1 below, and in Annex 3.

¹ Some interviews could not take place with some other pre-selected countries, like Malaysia, and Mongolia. Although additional interviews were conducted in Benin, Colombia, and Egypt, the conditions did not allow for their inclusion in this study.

Figure 1. Geographical distribution of the 40 countries analysed



Source: ECDPM

3. Driving greater inclusion of LRAs: Global Gateway 360-degree approach

The 360-degree approach links major Global Gateway investments with locally grounded interventions, ensuring that infrastructure, governance, capacity, and community needs are addressed together—while also preparing the ground for future, larger-scale public and private investments.

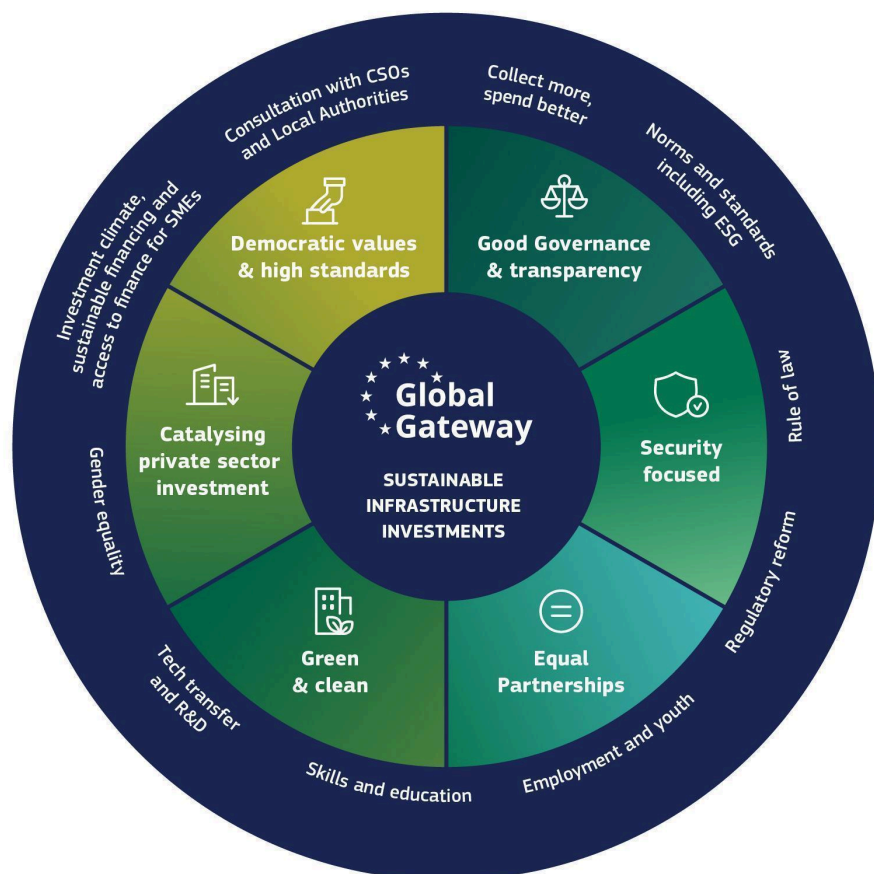
While the Global Gateway strategy is driven by centrally defined priorities, **the 360-degree approach offers complementary mechanisms that support its implementation by engaging local actors, including local authorities, and by enhancing the quality, ownership and sustainability of the investments**, as figure 1 below explains. Moreover, the 360-degree approach to Global Gateway, entails that physical investments:

- are accompanied by initiatives to enhance the enabling environment, regulatory frameworks, norms and ESG standards, technology transfer, know-how, skills and education, etc.
- are screened against risks and opportunities in those principles and other dimensions by using such internal tools as the Risk Management Framework+ (RMF+).

This approach has been taken into account for this mapping, especially since it has a potential in:

- **Enhancing multi-level governance, decentralisation, and public finance management (PFM)** while advancing business climate reforms at the local level. This aims to create a more conducive investment environment, empowering local authorities to identify investment needs and improve resource mobilisation and access to funding.
- **Strengthening public policies and capacity development at the local level to support the “enabling” dimensions** of Global Gateway infrastructure investments in specific sectors. This includes ensuring the maintenance of public infrastructure and facilitating citizen access and usage, responsibilities that often fall under local authorities.
- **Strengthening a whole-of-delegation approach** that ensures a systematic, context-specific application of the 6 key principles that underpin the Global Gateway strategy - ranging from democratic values to private sector engagement.

Figure 2. The Global Gateway’s 360-degree approach

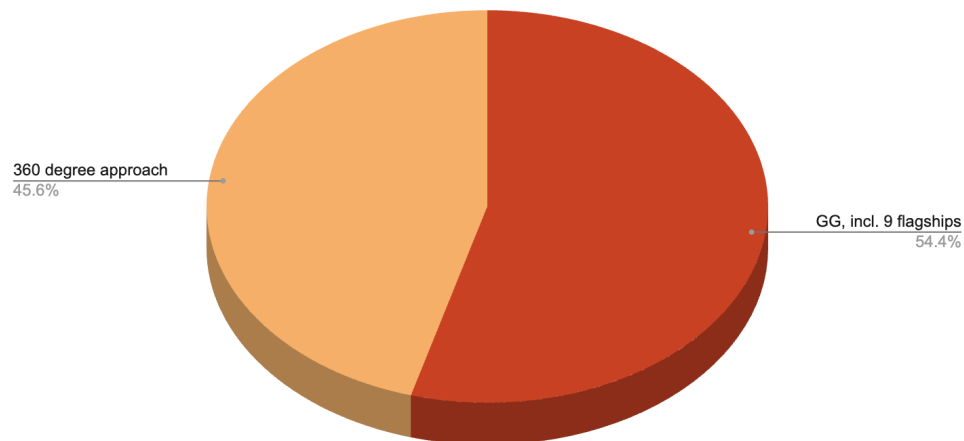


Source: EC, 2024

Out of the **46 initiatives and projects across the 40 selected countries** (see Annex 4), 31 are designated as Global Gateway initiatives or projects, including **9 flagship projects** - Brazil, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, and Uzbekistan. These projects focus directly on investments framed under the Global Gateway strategy.

In parallel, **26 projects apply a 360-degree approach**: they go beyond the investment dimension, adopting a more systemic perspective or laying the groundwork for future investment opportunities. These include 11 cases that combine elements of both the Global Gateway initiative and the 360-degree approach. This distribution is reflected in the chart below.

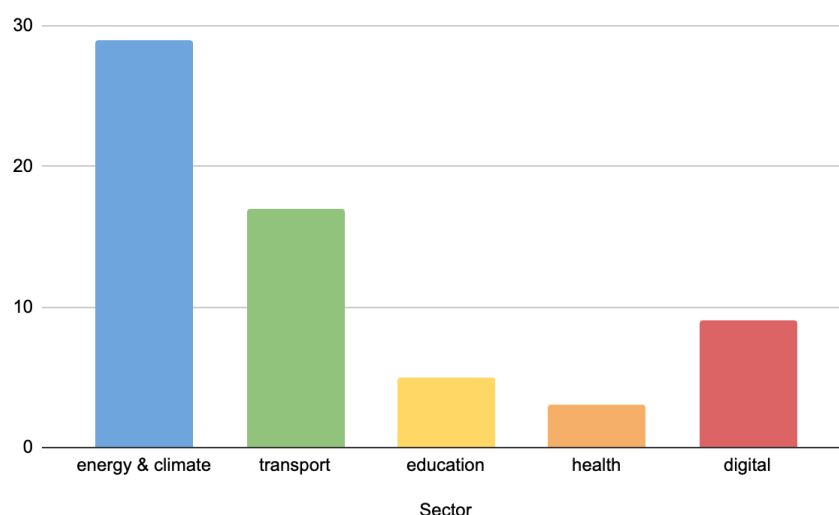
Figure 3. Breakdown of case studies: Global Gateway vs. 360-degree approach



Source: Author

The projects and initiatives included in the **case studies cover all the priority sectors of the Global Gateway strategy**, although a clear majority of projects focus on energy and climate (29), followed by transport (17) and digital (9). A smaller number of projects address education (5) and health (3). See Annex 4 for the detailed list of selected case studies, including the title of the projects/initiatives mentioned.

Figure 4. Breakdown of case studies by GG priority sector



Source: Author

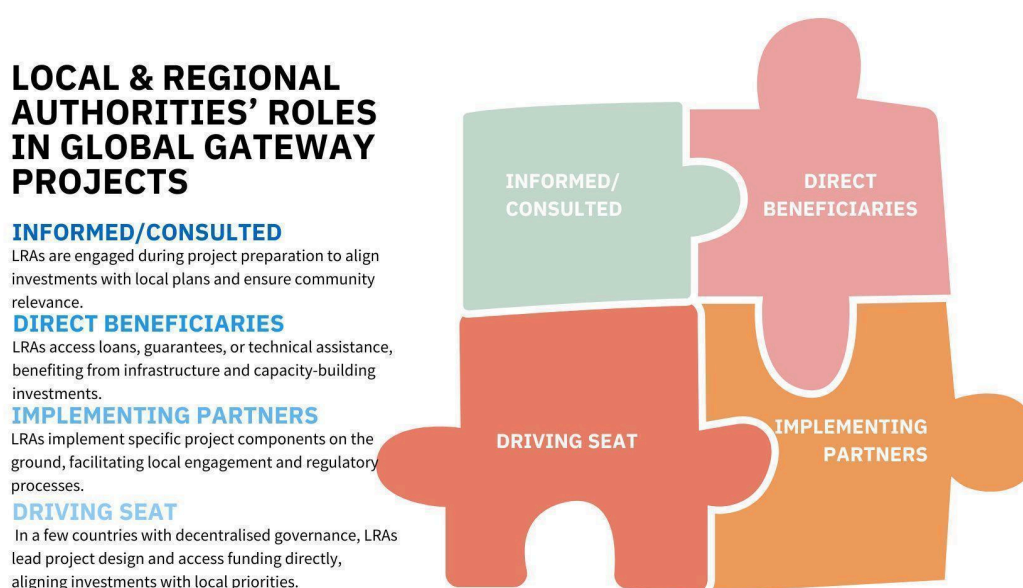
Among the projects applying the 360-degree approach, examples from this research also include **urban resilience programmes**, reforms to improve **local investment climates**, and **capacity-building efforts** (on various dimensions, from the administrative management of the territory to the mobilisation of private resources, including gender budgeting, for instance), including some support to the **decentralisation process**. While these activities may not be formally linked to a specific infrastructure investment, they are **essential for maximising long-term impacts and fostering local ownership**.

4. From consultation to the leadership: the uneven roles of LRAs in Global Gateway and 360-degree approach projects

As the Global Gateway strategy is being further implemented, the involvement of LRAs remains uneven but is increasingly recognised, also by EU stakeholders, as essential for ensuring the sustainability, inclusivity, and long-term territorial impact of investments (Bossuyt & Sabourin 2024; CoR 2023). Our research has been structured around four main categories of LRAs roles:

- LRAs have been informed or consulted,
- LRA are direct beneficiaries of the project,
- LRA are implementing partners,
- LRAs are in the driving seat of projects.

Figure 5. The different roles of LRAs in Global Gateway projects



Source: Author

The research confirms that **these categories² apply to the specific context of Global Gateway projects and projects applying a 360-degree approach.** The research also indicates that **the various modalities of involvement can exhibit different levels of depth and intensity, and may overlap or co-exist.** The projects analysed also show that in most cases, LRAs are at least **informed and consulted (in 41 cases, out of 46).** Moreover, they are often not only informed and consulted at an early stage, but also **direct beneficiaries (in 39 cases),** and even also involved as **implementing partners (in 27 cases).** Finally, they are at the **driving seat in 13 cases** (a bit more than one fourth of the total cases selected).

4.1 LRAs as informed or consulted stakeholders - the minimum floor

In most contexts (89% of the cases analysed), LRAs are informed or consulted during project design, preparation, and/or implementation phases. Early engagement of LRAs contributes to aligning investments with local development strategies, anticipating governance challenges, and ensuring projects respond to local needs. Although the depth and timing/regularity of consultations remain uneven, positive examples are emerging where **EU delegations and project developers involve LRAs in feasibility studies, stakeholder consultations, and investment climate assessments** for instance — key for **enhancing project sustainability and local ownership.** There are also examples reported of the **private sector involving the local and regional authorities and communities,** which is also a requirement as part of the Consultation and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).

² These categories were proposed as part of our methodological framework, see annex 1.

4.2 LRAs as direct beneficiaries of financial modalities - blending and guarantees

In a limited number of partner countries, mainly those with well-established decentralisation (legal) frameworks and decentralised fiscal autonomy, **LRAs can directly access financial instruments such as blending and guarantee schemes under the Global Gateway**. Examples from seventeen countries, which include Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Morocco, for instance, show that cities and regional authorities are **legally authorised** to borrow or contract debt independently, most with approval and/or oversight from the central level (in ten countries). In practice, subnational authorities do not necessarily have the capacity to borrow in all countries. Nevertheless, the research identified five countries where **LRAs actually benefit from a loan - provided by Development finance institutions (DFIs) - in the framework of Global Gateway investments**: Argentina, Brazil, India (indirectly, through the national government), Nigeria and Morocco.

Across the 40 countries analysed, legal frameworks tend to be less enabling when it comes to **guarantees, which are generally required to be channelled through central governments**. The city of Cuenca in **Ecuador**, for instance, stands out as the first local authority in Latin America to directly benefit from an EFSD+ guarantee (EEAS, 2024).

Moreover, guarantee programmes like FastCities and CityRIZ (implemented by AFD) aim to **de-risk lending to LRAs, enabling them to access loans on favourable terms**. However, uptake remains modest at this stage: i) the legal and regulatory framework sometimes do not allow LRAs to use financial instruments; ii) the institutional capacities of LRAs to manage financial instruments are limited. To facilitate LRAs engagement, **partner countries' governments can either back the transaction by providing a guarantee, to mitigate the risks of international financial institutions, or borrow themselves from international financial institutions and pass on the financing to LRAs**. Yet, this only happens when there is a clear incentive for central governments to support LRAs.

In other cases (like Morocco and to some extent Cameroon), **intermediary public entities allow secondary or more vulnerable cities to access financial modalities** as they endorse the risk, also benefiting from the support of EDFIs.

In addition to financial instruments, many LRAs also benefit from **technical assistance programmes relating to Global Gateway-supported investments, as part of blending operations**. This can include municipal infrastructure upgrades, improved connectivity, or targeted capacity-building. In this setup, LRAs often have little influence over project priorities and decision-making processes, limiting opportunities to align investments with territorial development plans.

4.3 LRAs often act as implementing partners, with limited room to contribute to strategic decision-making

More commonly (in 57% of the cases), **LRAs serve as implementing partners for specific components of Global Gateway and 360-degree projects**. In this role, they are responsible for executing certain activities on the ground, facilitating local stakeholders engagement, or contributing to regulatory processes such as land-use planning and permitting. This also occurs **within investment frameworks managed by private sector operators**.

The Sustainable Waste Management Project in **Argentina's** Province of Jujuy places local authorities at the centre of implementation. The province is the main partner, benefitting from a €44 million loan from the EIB and an €11.7 million contribution from the European Commission, with a sovereign guarantee from the national government. **The provincial government works in close coordination with all municipalities, ensuring that each develops and applies integrated waste management programmes.** Through this, local authorities are supported not only financially but also via technical assistance and capacity building, enabling them to phase out untreated waste dumping, improve recycling systems, and create jobs in waste treatment.

In **Morocco**, several Global Gateway-related projects illustrate how **loans are channelled to local and regional authorities through the Fonds d'équipement communal (FEC) and directly to regional governments.** More than 100 municipalities, many of them fragile, benefit indirectly from an AFD loan of over €100 million channelled via the FEC, enabling investments in local services and infrastructure. At the regional level, the Guelmim-Oued Noun Region accessed a €12 million loan from the EBRD, guaranteed by the EU's EFSD+.

4.4 LRAs in the driving seat: a rare occasion

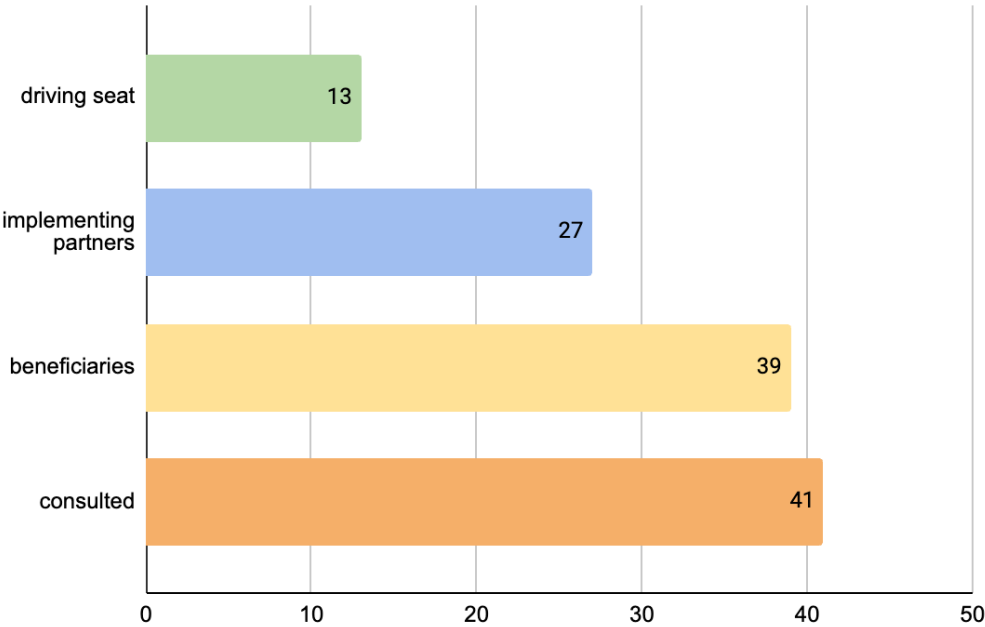
In a more limited number of cases (13 out of 46 cases), LRAs have taken a **leadership role in the design and implementation of Global Gateway flagship projects, or infrastructure-related programmes.** This tends to occur in countries with **effective decentralised governance systems and enabling legal provisions** that allow subnational borrowing or project ownership, like in Mexico where the first pilot project of Financing not linked to cost (FNLC) involves Sonora, and in Nepal, where an interesting project works on creating a favourable environment and strengthening the capacity of cities to mobilise resources from banks and private sector.

In Ecuador, the Fast Cities initiative demonstrates how EU guarantees can enable municipalities to **access international financing for essential services.** The Municipality of Cuenca, through its sanitation company EMAC, received a USD 25 million loan from AFD, backed by a 70% EFSD+ guarantee from the European Commission. This structure reduced financial risk and allowed the city to invest in modernising its solid waste management systems. The initiative illustrates how Global Gateway can directly empower municipalities to lead infrastructure projects, with **LRAs acting as both borrowers and implementers.** The project strengthens local service delivery while also enhancing municipal credibility in managing international finance.

This mainly takes in subnational governments that have a critical size and capacity to endorse projects of substantive size, like Brazilian federate state (GG flagship project on Digital connectivity and inclusion), Argentinian provinces (Jujuy and the critical raw materials), or capital cities (GG flagship of Lagos waterways, GG flagship in the Greater metropolitan area of Costa Rica), past capital where the political attention of the central government allows some big projects to be developed (like in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, also a GG flagship project).

In these instances, **LRAs may directly access financial resources — including loans, guarantees, or EU grants — and have the capacity to steer project priorities to align with local development plans.** However, such leadership roles remain rare due to legal, fiscal, and capacity constraints in most partner countries.

Figure 6. The various roles of LRAs in the pre-selected projects



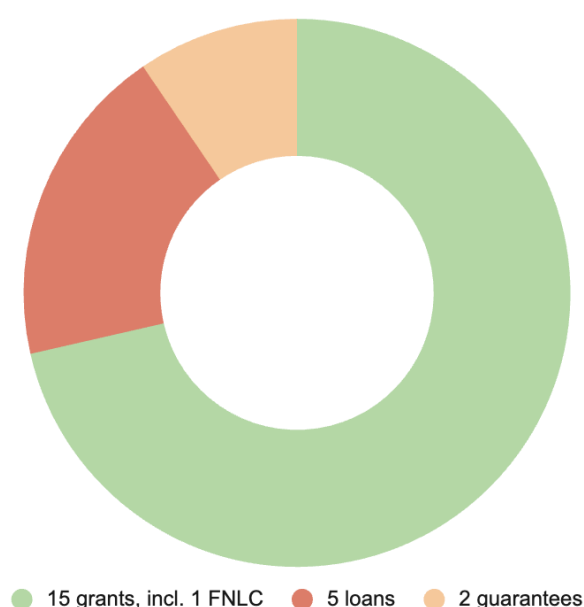
Source: Author

5. The EU's toolkit to engage and involve LRAs in Global Gateway projects

Building on this, the research also examined the types of support these authorities have received. This includes **both financial instruments and non-financial modalities, direct and indirect support**. All of those are essential to enable LRAs to engage more meaningfully in investment processes and to maximise the local benefits of Global Gateway projects.

Out of the 46 projects analysed, seventeen included some direct funding for LRAs (approximately 37%). Among LRAs receiving direct funding, fifteen received grants (including one FNLC), five benefited from a loan (in Argentina, Brazil, India via the Ministry of Finance, Morocco via the Fonds d'équipement communal, and Nigeria) and two from a guarantee (in Ecuador and in Morocco), as shown by figure 6.

Figure 7. Distribution of direct funding among loans, grants and guarantee



Source: Author

When supporting LRAs, **the EU employs a diverse range of financial and operational instruments, delivered through multiple channels and institutional actors**. At a strategic level, this means including LRAs in **policy dialogues** or **applying a territorial approach instead of a sectoral one** (through the Territorial Approach to Local Development, for instance).

In more operational terms, our research shows the **variety of available tools**, including **grants and various financial instruments such as debt, loans, equity, or guarantees used for Global Gateway projects**. Co-financing is also common at the local and regional levels, with EU funds often used as **leverage to mobilise additional public or private investment**, including public-private partnerships. One of the main findings of the research on mobilising private investment at the local level in partner countries is the **limited interest from large companies in small-scale projects, as well as the difficulties in mobilising**

small and medium-sized enterprises, which are not always ready or able to invest internationally.

Funding can come from several sources: the European Commission headquarters, typically through thematic or regional programmes; EU Delegations, which provide country-based support tailored to local contexts; European development financial institutions like the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), as well as member states' development banks (some of them being gathered within the Joint European Financiers for International Cooperation (JEFIC) network); and indirectly through civil society organisation (CSO)-led projects partnering with local authorities on service delivery, infrastructure, or governance initiatives.

The EU offers a **broad range of direct support mechanisms to engage with LRAs in partner countries**. These mechanisms vary in form and flexibility, enabling tailored approaches depending on local contexts and project objectives.

Direct grants. The EU can support LRAs directly through grants, including capacity-building through specific modalities related to strengthening the public sector expertise (Twinning and TAIEX³) or peer-to-peer cooperation. This also includes technical assistance, which can be integrated into blended finance operations or instruments. These grants aim to reinforce institutional capacity and improve service delivery at the local level, concurring to achieving the objectives of the 360-degree approach.

Financing not linked to cost. FNLC is a form of grant that allows the EU to provide direct funding to LRAs without requiring detailed proof of expenditure on specific activities. Instead, it offers flexible, lump-sum financing to support a wide range of projects and policies, including local governance reforms, capacity development, and broader development infrastructure projects. It helps local authorities in partner countries to implement agreed-upon policies, reforms or investments with greater autonomy. This results-based financing model reduces administrative burden and is about to be piloted in four countries namely Mexico, Mauritania, Cameroon and Colombia.

Sub-sovereign operations. The EU can also support sub-sovereign operations, providing loans directly to LRAs or their owned entities. This may also take the form of decentralised budget support (Pakistan for instance), or investments channelled through special-purpose vehicles such as municipally owned utilities, public agencies, or state-owned enterprises operating at the sub-national level.

External guarantees. Two EU-backed guarantee programmes have been launched to promote sustainable urban investments: one with the French Development Agency (AFD), called FastCities (AFD, n.d.a) and CityRIZ (AFD, n.d.b). These dedicated guarantee schemes established by the EU and AFD are designed to encourage banks to take on the risk of lending to local authorities, enabling cities of all sizes to access loans on favourable terms.

Lastly, in some partner countries, financing is channelled indirectly through central governments via sovereign operations, where national authorities are the primary

³ LRAs cannot request any TAIEX or Twinning but can take part in such projects of exchange of expertise (EC, 2020)

counterpart for project financing, implementation, and oversight (like in India, for instance). This can include budget support, but also loans and guarantees that are channelled through central governments.

6. Addressing structural bottlenecks and barriers to decentralised investment planning and LRAs active involvement in GG projects

Following the second phase of the research, and the interviews with key informants in the 42 EUDs, several factors were identified and/or confirmed, which explain the context of the involvement (or lack thereof) of LRAs in Global Gateway projects. This analysis also builds on previous ECDPM work on the topic (Bossuyt & Sabourin, 2024) — see Annex 5 for the main limiting factors.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of LRAs in driving sustainable development (Filippi & Aiello, 2025; Salvador & Sancho, 2021), also ensuring ownership and long-term impact of the investments, several structural and institutional challenges continue to constrain their meaningful involvement in investment planning and implementation under the Global Gateway strategy.

Moreover, central governments’ political incentives remain a foundational bottleneck for meaningful LRA involvement in investments. In many contexts, central authorities have limited interest in devolving influence over strategic sectors, concerned about losing oversight or complicating coordination of major pipelines (Faguet, 2023). When such political dynamics are not recognised upfront, even technically sound local interventions face limits: the catalytic impact of GG investments risks stalling once funding diminishes, as structural incentives for sustained local engagement remain weak.

Without claiming to represent Global Gateway implementation as a whole, the research brings specific examples that respond to each of the identified structural and institutional challenges limiting LRAs engagement in GG projects.

Table 1. Key bottlenecks limiting the involvement of LRAs in Global Gateway projects

Institutional & Political	Policy & Strategic	Operational & Legal
• Centralised investment governance	• Preference for sectoral over territorial approaches	• Restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks
• Weak decentralisation & limited political recognition of LRAs	• Misalignment in ‘Going local’ strategies	• Capacity constraints at the local level
• Limited incentives for central governments	• Early-stage implementation & learning curve	

6.1 Centralised investment governance

The research also indicates that the various modalities of involvement can exhibit different levels of depth and intensity, and may overlap or co-exist. The projects analysed also show that in most cases, LRAs are at least informed and consulted (in 41 cases, out of 46). Moreover, they are often not only informed and consulted at an early stage, but also direct beneficiaries (in 39 cases), and even also involved as implementing partners (in 25 cases). Finally, they are in the driving seat in 13 cases.

- **Argentina - Green Hydrogen Project:** Despite Argentina's federal structure, the **provinces of Chubut, Santa Cruz, and Tierra del Fuego** are engaged directly in regulatory, planning, and implementation processes, showing how decentralised contexts can allow LRAs to co-lead the development of strategic projects. Notwithstanding this reality, provinces are hoping that the Federal Government can approve a hydrogen law with national scope to facilitate the development of, and investment in, Argentina's hydrogen sector.
- **India - CITIIS Programme:** Despite a highly centralised loan architecture—where all financing is managed by the Ministry of Finance and channelled through state governments—**cities were still able to shape investment through dedicated design phases**. Under CITIIS, municipalities proposed their own project ideas and received direct technical assistance and capacity building from the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA). This support **strengthened their ability to participate meaningfully despite limited financial autonomy**. The programme therefore created structured pathways that allowed LRAs to influence project content even within a centralised financing system.
- **Nigeria - Lagos waterways:** Although subnational borrowing in Nigeria is tightly regulated by federal authorities, **Lagos State played a central role in the Omi Èkó project by acting as the project owner and driving decision-making**. LASWA managed procurement, safeguards, financial reporting and overall implementation, ensuring strong LRA leadership despite federal oversight. Lagos also contributed significant counterpart funding, reinforcing its ownership of the investment. Through these roles, the state effectively overcame centralised constraints and maintained control across all stages of the project.

6.2. Preference for sectoral over territorial approaches

Key stakeholders—including governments, development agencies, and financiers—tend to favour narrowly defined, sector-specific investment strategies over integrated, territorial approaches. This preference often results in fragmented interventions that overlook the cross-cutting, place-based dynamics critical for effective local development. It also sidelines LRAs, whose mandates and perspectives are better suited to integrated planning.

- **Bolivia - Critical Raw Materials (CRM):** While still in preparatory / preliminary phases, the project prepares the ground for future investments at local level, by integrating the perspective of sector investments into a **territorial governance**

framework, involving **indigenous and municipal authorities**. The approach emphasises environmental justice, inclusion, and community-level planning.

- **Costa Rica - mUEve**: The project explicitly adopts a sub-regional territorial approach, **involving 15 municipalities along the electric train corridor**. LRAs jointly develop a Sub-Regional Urban Development Plan, implement infrastructure improvements, and coordinate through an intermunicipal cooperation agreement. This contrasts with Costa Rica's highly centralised sectoral governance in transport, where central agencies normally dominate decisions. **Territorial cooperation enabled better alignment of mobility, land-use planning, and community needs—something sector ministries alone could not achieve.**
- **DRC - Green Corridor**: The project's core logic is territorial: **biodiversity, energy, agriculture, protected areas, local employment, and value chains are addressed together along a 100,000 km² corridor**. LRAs take part in planning, local economic facilitation, infrastructure maintenance, and identification of territorial priorities. In a fragile context where the central state is weak, **territorially anchored interventions are the only workable governance model, as sector ministries cannot operate effectively**. This confirms that territorial approaches outperform sectoral ones in areas requiring local legitimacy and conflict-sensitive planning.

6.3. Weak decentralisation and limited political recognition of LRAs

In many partner countries, decentralisation remains incomplete or ineffective. Sector ministries, infrastructure units, and financing institutions frequently perceive LRAs merely as implementing partners rather than as legitimate political actors with governance mandates. This limits the ability of LRAs to influence policy, attract resources, or take ownership of development outcomes.

- **Cameroon - Waste & water management - Flood prevention and sanitation in Douala**. The municipality of Douala is not only an implementer but also manages planning, governance, and monitoring. Their institutional role is strengthened via capacity building, showcasing recognition as an actor with a governance mandate.
- **Libya - Zliten fish processing centre**. The Zliten fisheries project shows how municipalities can gain meaningful roles despite the absence of a functional decentralisation framework. The municipality of Zliten is directly involved in the project's coordination and even contributes its own co-financing, an exceptional development in a context where municipal autonomy is extremely limited. This role has also been strengthened through decentralised cooperation under the Nicosia Initiative⁴.
- **Guatemala - Strengthening Local Governance for Water, Trust, and Sustainable Development**. The Lake Petén Itzá project demonstrates how municipalities can gain

⁴ The Nicosia Initiative is a Committee of the Regions-led cooperation platform launched in 2016 to support Libyan municipalities through technical assistance, training and peer-to-peer exchanges. It aims to strengthen local governance and service delivery by linking Libyan cities with EU regional and local authorities.

influence through territorial governance mechanisms. Municipalities are directly involved in designing territorial and urban planning instruments, approving local regulations, and participating in the Mesa Técnica, the interinstitutional platform that coordinates basin governance. **By working collectively across the lake basin, municipalities strengthened their strategic position and contributed to coherent planning.**

6.4. Restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks

The legal and financial frameworks governing subnational borrowing and guarantees remain underdeveloped in most partner countries. Overall, the constrained legal framework often restricts the autonomy of LRAs and limits their role in mobilising investment. Only a few of the countries interviewed—such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico⁵, and Morocco—allow LRAs to contract loans and access guarantees directly. In other cases, national governments act as intermediaries or impose strict conditions, as is the case in India, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

- **Argentina - Jujuy Waste Management:** Provinces can contract loans without national guarantees, but this raises the risk profile of the loan operation and cost of the loan. The **Province of Jujuy** benefits from an **EIB loan with the sovereign guarantee** provided by the Federal Government, showing how central-LRA coordination can still enable subnational financing within restrictive frameworks.
- **Ecuador - Solid Waste Management, Fast Cities EFSD+ Guarantee in Cuenca.** This project shows how a medium-sized municipality can directly access international financing under GG: Cuenca, via its sanitation company, secured a USD 25 million AFD loan backed by a 70% EFSD+ guarantee, giving the city financial leverage and risk mitigation to modernise its waste system.

6.5. Limited incentives for central governments

From a political economy perspective, central governments may have few incentives to support stronger LRAs involvement (Eaton, 2019). They may be reluctant to share fiscal space or political influence, and often avoid assuming financial risk on behalf of subnational entities. This lack of incentive structure further discourages reforms that would enable greater subnational engagement in investment processes. Yet, as the following examples illustrate, a range of programmes and financing arrangements have managed to circumvent these weak incentives—by creating alternative coordination spaces, leveraging financial intermediaries, or anchoring projects territorially in ways that make LRA participation both necessary and feasible.

- **FastCities (France + EU):** This guarantee instrument is designed to **de-risk lending to cities**, making it more attractive for banks and reducing the burden on national governments. Although not tied to one country case, it is highlighted as a model to overcome reluctance to support LRA financing.

⁵ In Mexico, local and regional authorities can take loans from IFIs, via the Federal Government.

- **Morocco – Fonds d'équipement communal:** it plays a pivotal role in facilitating access to finance for LRAs. Acting as a dedicated public financial institution, the FEC channels **loans to subnational entities**, enabling them to invest in infrastructure and public service delivery while supporting the country's broader regionalisation policy.

6.6. Capacity constraints at the local level

Many LRAs face significant capacity gaps that hinder their ability to participate meaningfully in infrastructure planning and finance. These include limited technical expertise, weak project preparation capabilities, and insufficient financial engineering skills. Whether these deficits are real or merely perceived, they contribute to a higher risk profile for investors and donors, and often result in increased transaction costs and project delays.

- **Chad – Secondary Cities:** Local authorities receive **governance training, financial management support, and planning tools** to strengthen their role in project development and reduce perceived investment risk.
- **Bolivia – CRM Projects:** Includes **technical training in environmental and social governance, local finance, FPIC, etc., as preconditions for deeper engagement.**
- **Nepal – Cities 4 Women:** the programme supports inclusive and climate-resilient urbanisation by directly strengthening the planning and implementation capacities of municipal governments. Through targeted technical assistance and infrastructure investments, it enables local authorities to integrate gender-sensitive and climate-resilient approaches into urban development.

6.7. Misalignment in 'Going local' strategies

While the EU, its Member States, and development banks have increasingly adopted **'localisation' as a guiding principle** (UN, 2024; CoR, 2023), aid and investment flows are often directed to subnational levels without adequate analysis of local governance ecosystems. This lack of **contextual understanding** leads to gaps in programme design, misaligned roles among stakeholders, and weak coordination at the local level—undermining the effectiveness of interventions.

- **Costa Rica – mUEve Project:** Strong coordination with **15 municipalities**, national LRA associations (UNGL, ANAI), and international peers (e.g. VNG, San Sebastián), demonstrates a well-mapped, context-aware local governance ecosystem guiding infrastructure and urban development

6.8. Early-stage implementation and learning curve of the Global Gateway

The Global Gateway strategy is still in its early phases, which necessarily involves a period of learning, experimentation, and adaptation. Identifying effective modalities to integrate LRAs into investment pipelines takes time. Initial challenges should be viewed as part of this evolving process, with a need to invest in pilots, feedback loops, and institutional learning.

- **Bolivia – CRM Sector:** Still in pre-implementation, this initiative focuses on **dialogue, mapping, and regulatory groundwork**, highlighting the EU's adaptive, learning-based approach to integrating LRAs in a complex governance context.
- **Ecuador – Fast Cities EFSD+ Guarantee:** A **first-of-its-kind** regional initiative using guarantees for municipal waste management, showing the EU is **piloting innovative financing instruments** targeting LRAs.
- **Mexico – FNLC pilot in Sonora: Port of Guaymas Master Plan** illustrates how Global Gateway initiatives can engage local authorities in strategic infrastructure planning. The project strengthens the capacity of subnational actors to define commercial strategies and align investment priorities with regional development goals, fostering territorial ownership and economic integration. The local government of Sonora develops the Master Plan with technical support from the Port of Antwerp-Bruges

7. Adapting the narrative: Reframing local governance to enhance investment outcomes

Building on the mapping and analysis of current LRA involvement in Global Gateway projects across 46 projects/initiatives, several lessons can be drawn to help shape the agenda of the upcoming forum of cities and regions for international partnerships, to be organised by DG INTPA and the CoR on 8-10 December 2025. A set of general observations can contribute to reframing the narrative around the role of local and regional authorities within a more investment-driven approach to external action.

The research shows that the effective implementation of mutually beneficial partnerships under the Global Gateway strategy depends not only on **mobilising high levels of investments** but also on the EU's **capacity to foster inclusive governance and local ownership**, and **the political interest of central governments in Global Gateway and in decentralised mechanisms**. Integrating local and regional authorities more effectively is a practical strategy for delivering better outcomes on the ground to the benefits of local communities.

Investing in formal inclusion mechanisms is key. To strengthen the effectiveness and local anchoring of the Global Gateway projects and initiatives, the EU should develop (or strengthen existing) **formal mechanisms for systematically involving local authorities** in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of flagship projects. This could include establishing dedicated **local authorities' advisory platforms or working groups linked to major infrastructure investments**, ensuring that the voices of municipalities and regional authorities are heard alongside national governments and private sector actors. The research shows that it's crucial to accompany them with a strong capacity-building and training component, which ensures that **key actors are well informed, and also better equipped to take ownership of their territorial development strategies**. Embedding participatory governance requirements in project agreements — such as mandatory local consultations and ESG impact assessments — would help anchor projects in local priorities, ensure an inclusive implementation, and increase community ownership.

Additionally, the EU should **capitalise on its long-standing experience in decentralised cooperation and city-to-city partnerships** by systematically exploring how to integrate these models into the Global Gateway framework as opportunities of extra funding. European municipalities and regions have developed a rich tradition of international cooperation through networks such as PLATFORMA, Association internationale des maires francophones (AIMF), Commonwealth local governments forum (CLGF) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). These platforms foster peer learning, technical assistance, and joint project development in fields like sustainable urban planning, climate resilience, public services, and digitalisation. By scaling up these partnerships within the context of Global Gateway, the **EU can channel valuable local expertise, promote best practice exchanges, and help partner country municipalities strengthen their administrative, financial, and governance capacities**. Moreover, involving these networks and their members offers a practical way to identify credible local actors, mediate between different levels of government, and mobilise bottom-up initiatives that align with both EU priorities and community needs. When possible and relevant, embedding decentralised cooperation more formally in Global Gateway projects would not only enhance project relevance and local ownership but also reinforce the EU's distinctive, values-based approach to international infrastructure investments.

The softer skills associated with their leadership, facilitation and coordination role - as based on their general mandate - are also important in fostering their engagement in GG processes. Beyond strengthening them through governance-dedicated programmes, the EU -and more broadly, Team Europe- needs to **invest more in contributing to build the technical and institutional capacity of local authorities in partner countries**. Several questions, however, remain and should be addressed as part of needs assessments and risk-management processes: for instance, whether capacity-building should focus exclusively on Global Gateway projects, how the required capacities should be identified and prioritised, and how to ensure that such support strengthens LRAs in a sustainable and system-wide manner. Many municipalities lack the financial, legal, or administrative tools to engage in complex infrastructure initiatives or access EU financing opportunities. Tailored technical assistance, training programmes, and financial instruments targeting sub-national actors could **close this gap and make local participation more feasible**. The EU should also allocate funding for local-level pilot projects within the Global Gateway, enabling municipalities to deliver visible, community-driven initiatives in areas like renewable energy, urban mobility, and digital services.

Finally, **promoting multilevel governance platforms** in partner countries — where national, regional, and local governments (ideally) jointly plan and coordinate infrastructure strategies — would help embed the Global Gateway within coherent, inclusive development frameworks, enhancing both its impact and sustainability.

Table 2. Reframing the narrative: some ways forward

Recommendation	Rationale
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Continue creating local authority engagement frameworks and spaces for dialogue	Establish or strengthen the policy dialogue between the EU and local and regional authorities, including through working groups, or advisory bodies for Global Gateway flagship projects.
Intensify technical assistance and capacity building	Support local authorities in partner countries through capacity-building, training, administrative reforms, and infrastructure project management support.
Leverage EU decentralised cooperation experience	Build on existing city-to-city cooperation models and regional partnerships (like UCLG, PLATFORMA, AIMF, CLGF) to involve local and regional authorities.
Embed local participation requirements in project agreements	Ensure that GG projects (and the PPP linked to it) include local and regional authorities' consultations, participatory planning processes, and ESG impact assessments.
Fund local-level pilot projects within the Global Gateway	Allocate funds for small-to-mid scale local infrastructure and connectivity projects as part of the wider strategy.
Facilitate multilevel governance platforms in partner countries	Promote frameworks where national, regional, and local governments coordinate on infrastructure investments.
Strengthen partnerships with local civil society and business networks	Encourage inclusive project design and oversight by involving local NGOs, SMEs, and community groups alongside local and regional authorities.

8. Concluding remarks

This research aimed to map and assess the extent and nature of LRAs' involvement in Global Gateway projects—identifying which LRAs were engaged, in what roles, and at what stages of the project cycle. The findings reveal a highly uneven landscape, but LRAs are generally involved in the projects, even though they might not be at the driving seat of the investments yet.

As the Global Gateway strategy is still in its early stages, a period of learning, experimentation, and adaptation is to be expected. Integrating LRAs effectively into investment pipelines takes time, requiring investment in pilot projects, feedback mechanisms, and institutional learning, as well as a country's favourable environment. Initial challenges should be seen as part of this evolving process.

Nevertheless, even when not directly involved in Global Gateway flagship projects, LRAs often play a crucial role through complementary or satellite initiatives. These projects help 'prepare the ground' for larger infrastructure investments by improving local governance, public service delivery, and investment conditions within the 360-degree approach.

The research also uncovered numerous interconnections, showing that EU delegations already engage with LRAs not only on Global Gateway projects and initiatives, but also on infrastructure and investment-related projects and programmes that are not (yet) labelled as Global Gateway.

Overall, while these findings are encouraging, the analysis also highlights a persistent gap between the Global Gateway's ambitions for territorial and inclusive investments and the practical realities of LRAs involvement. This underscores the need for clearer frameworks and more consistent practices to engage subnational actors effectively, as well as the need to adapt the Global Gateway's ambitions to subnational contexts, where investments may be smaller in scale and where political realities will require context-specific approaches.

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Annex 1. Methodology

Desk research

First, desk research has focused on mapping Global Gateway projects but also ongoing/upcoming blending operations as well as guarantees, where LRAs have played a meaningful role. The core focus of our analysis has been the 264 Global Gateway flagship projects adopted by the Council of the European Union in successively [2023](#), [2024](#) and then [2025](#), also based on indications and first mapping of projects received from DG INTPA and the CoR.

Also building on [recent analysis](#), it highlights that while LRAs are essential for territorial development, they are often sidelined in favour of national governments and the private sector. The study identified opportunities to strengthen local involvement in the Global Gateway strategy but also noted challenges such as weak decentralisation, limited local capacity, and misalignment between national and local plans, which the EU must address to enable more effective LRA participation.

Based on the methodological framework developed in this note (see below) and the limited information available on Global Gateway projects, ECDPM has conducted an initial data collection through an extensive mapping. Building on this, DG INTPA and ECDPM have pre-selected some countries where it would be relevant to conduct further interviews with the EU Delegations (EUDs), following these overall criteria:

- [Geographic balance](#) - the cases will cover Africa, Latin America and Asia.
- [Sectoral balance](#) - the cases will cover the five priority sectors of the Global Gateway strategy (digital, energy and climate, transport, health, education and research).
- [Local ecosystems](#) - Type of local / regional government / actors involved in the project (in both Global South countries or Europe, when and if relevant)
- [Accessibility of information](#) - information available in the public domain, and possibilities to interview to a selected number of key informants (provided the tight timeline and the remote character of the assignment)
- [Funding modalities](#) - if possible, the 20-30 cases will aim at representing the broad variety of funding modalities available for local and regional authorities, as described below.

A large number of samples have been identified, priority was then given to balancing the aforementioned criteria to ensure a diverse range of situations, allowing for a broader set of lessons learned.

Analytical framework

Based on the identification of 46 potentially relevant case studies during the initial phase of the mapping, a tailored analytical framework, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative indicators, has helped seize the extent to which local and regional authorities have been involved in the flagship projects, and at what phase of the decision-making process.

Local and regional authorities' involvement in GG projects

What role do LRAs play in the project? If so, which LRAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of local and regional authorities is involved in the project • What role and responsibilities have local and regional authorities played in the project: promoter, consultation role, advisory role, implementation role / fund manager, high-level role (overseeing implementation), advocacy or other?
At what stage of the projects have LRAs been involved in the process: the design, the project preparation, its implementation, the monitoring, the reporting, etc.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional authorities have been informed about the Global Gateway flagship projects at an early stage by EU interlocutors • Local and regional authorities have been consulted as part of the design and preparation of the GG flagship project, including on exploring the synergies with existing local and/or territorial plans • Local and regional authorities' involvement in EU-supported activities and/or programmes relate to a Global Gateway hard infrastructure initiative, including in terms of creating a conducive local environment for investments • LRAs are in the driving seat of a Global Gateway programme design and implementation, eventually with direct access to funding
Has there been a collaboration with some partners at territorial / national level? Which ones?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At territorial level, LRAs have played their key role as catalysts of local development policies • At territorial level, LRAs have been (key) partners of development financial institutions and EU institutions • Within the national context, LRAs have been involved in the decision-making process and developed collaboration with the national government

Activities and funding - support received

In which activities are LRAs involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are LRAs involved in activities related to direct investment in infrastructure? To the mobilisation of the private sector? • Are LRAs involved in the decision-making process related to activities (including on looking for synergies with territorial plan / consultations / ...)? • Are LRAs involved in creating an enabling environment for the investment to happen? Or in downstream activities related to the investment (for instance infra use or maintenance)
Financial support received?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding source/channel: the funds originate from the European Commission (Headquarters), the Delegations of the European Union (including through country based support measures), European development financial institutions, or CSOs; • Direct or indirect funding: channelled to local and regional authorities through central governments (ex: sovereign operations); or directly channelled to LRAs (ex: sub-sovereign

	<p>operations, financing not linked to costs, budget support); or LRAs special purpose vehicle (ex: non-commercial sub-sovereign like state owned enterprise);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of funding: grants or financial instruments (ex: debt, equity or guarantee instruments); • Co-financing: mobilisation of additional public or private funding (e.g. public private partnerships).
Non-financial support received?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there technical assistance (capacity building or other) provided? By whom, how to do what? • Has there been any political support for the inclusion of local and regional authorities in the projects (if yes, by whom? As part of the political dialogues?) • Is it complemented by public sector expertise through specific funds (ex: TAIEX, Twinning)

Annex 2. Template for the case studies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1 • Day 2 • Day 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing DC • Potential DC • Signature / announcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Gateway • 360 degree approach • Both
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1. Project identification

Title and sector(s) of the project	
Size of the project (amount)	
Partners involved	
Objectives of the project	
Follow-up of a previous project?	
State of play / Timeline of the project	

2. Local and regional authorities' involvement

<p>What role do LRAs play in the project? If so, which LRAs? And at what stage of the project have LRAs been involved in the process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving seat (design and access to resources) • Implementing partners • Beneficiaries • Informed / consulted 	
<p>Is there a national association of LRAs in the country and if yes, has it been involved in the project? Are regional/international LRAs networks involved?</p>	

Are there peer-to-peer partnerships between the partner countries' and European LRAs in connection with the project? Are there opportunities for DC in the future in connection with the project?	
Relevant elements of context that enable or limit the involvement of LRAs in GG projects in this country?	

3. Financial environment & mobilisation of the private sector

What kind of support (financial or non financial, direct or indirect) has been received by the local authorities in connection with this project? Do LRAs have access to direct funding under this project? Yes No	
Does the country's legal framework allow loans & guarantees at subnational level?	
Is the private sector (local / foreign) involved in the project? Is there a PPP? Are some European public utilities involved?	

4. Is there an interest of the concerned EUD to participate in the Forum?

YES/NO - explain

5. Is there a potential announcement or signature to be made at the Forum?

YES/NO - explain

6. Contacts of relevant LRAs to be invited

WHO - explain

Annex 3. Breakdown of the 40 countries analysed by geographic area

Africa 19 countries	Latin America 10 countries	Asia 8 countries	Neighbourhood 3 countries
Cameroon	Argentina	Cambodia	Jordan
Chad	Bolivia	India	Libya
Democratic Republic of Congo	Brazil	Indonesia	Morocco
Ghana	Costa Rica	Lao People's Democratic Republic	
Guinea-Bissau	Dominican Republic	Nepal	
Ivory Coast	Ecuador	Pakistan	
Kenya	Guatemala	The Philippines	
Madagascar	Mexico	Uzbekistan	
Malawi	Paraguay		
Mauritania	Peru		
Mozambique			
Namibia			
Nigeria			
Republic of Congo			
Rwanda			
The Gambia			
Togo			
Zambia			
Zimbabwe			

Annex 4. List of the 46 selected case studies

Country	Project
Argentina	Investment Agenda Global Gateway - Green Hydrogen in Argentina, with the provinces of Chubut, Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego
Argentina	Sustainable Waste Management Project with the Province of Jujuy
Bolivia	Projects related to the exploitation of rare earths and other critical resources
Brazil	Pará and Maranhão More Connected
Cambodia	Bakheng water supply project
Cameroon	Waste & water management – Flood prevention and sanitation in Douala
Cameroon	Support to Urban Mobility, to develop a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Yaoundé
Chad	TEI on green secondary cities
Costa Rica	Promoting sustainable urban mobility in the Greater Metropolitan Area of Costa Rica, including Electrification of San José's bus fleet
Costa Rica	mUEve: Movilidad Sostenible, Urbanismo, Equipamiento, Valoración del Espacio Público, y Enverdecimiento y Equidad
Democratic Republic of Congo	Green corridor Kivu-Kinshasa
Dominican Republic	Local authorities and non-motorised transport
Dominican Republic	Comprehensive Programme for Tourism and Urban Development of the Colonial City of Santo Domingo
Ecuador	Solid waste management - Fast Cities EFSD+ guarantee
Ghana	Urbanisation programme
Guatemala	Strengthening local governance for water, sustainable development and to build trust
Guinea-Bissau	EU for Green and Inclusive Cities
India	CITIIS programme
Indonesia	Support for Infrastructure Investments in Indonesia
Ivory Coast	Urban mobility and planning in the city of Bouaké - Mambo project
Jordan	Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans SECAPs in Greater Amman, Madaba, Mafraq & Um El-Jimal

Kenya	Involvement of County Governments in Kenya's Digital Transformation and Informal Settlements Improvement under the Global Gateway Initiative
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Team Europe Partnership with Lao PDR to increase sustainable and inclusive Trade, Investment and Connectivity in the Agriculture and Forestry sectors
Libya	Zliten fish processing center
Madagascar	'Tous redevables': an integrated approach
Malawi	Ulimi ndi Chilengedwe m'Malawi – Greening and Growing programme
Mauritania	support for the Nouakchott region for resilient and equitable sustainable development
Mauritania	Coordination unit with LAs for an integrated package of actions
Mexico	Completion of the Master Plan and definition of a commercial Strategy for the Port of Guaymas, Sonora
Morocco	Supporting the regionalisation policy of the country through several projects
Mozambique	VAMAZ Digital
Namibia	Implementation of partnership on raw materials value chains and renewable hydrogen
Nepal	Cities 4 Women: Inclusive and Climate Resilient Urbanization in Nepal
Nigeria	Omi Eko - "Waterways Investment for the Development of the Environment of Lagos State"
Pakistan	EU support for sustainable economic development through demand-driven TVET
Paraguay	Accompanying the PARACEL investment with a contribution on TVET
Peru	Bridging Water and Sanitation gaps in Chimbote & Nuevo Chimbote
Republic of Congo	Green resilient cities
Rwanda	Hanga Hubs
Rwanda	Inclusive, smart, and climate-proof urban development of Rwandan satellite cities
The Gambia	Projects in local governance, basic services, and sustainable development
The Philippines	EU-PH Green Economy Partnership (Green Local Government Units)
Togo	GEDEC - Waste management and sanitation at city level

Uzbekistan	Digitalisation and Integration of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure in Uzbekistan
Zambia	NEWZA – Nexus Energy and Water Programme for Zambia
Zimbabwe	Building resilient and inclusive cities

Annex 5. Some factors explaining the limited inclusion of LAs as an actor on its own in Global Gateway.

Obstacle	Description
Top-down governance structures	Centralised management mode of operation limiting legal and institutional space for local authorities.
Capacity gaps	Local and regional governments may lack the administrative, technical, or financial capacity to engage in complex international projects.
Limited frameworks for involving local authorities	The EU's Global Gateway is largely driven by its institutions and major private-sector players, with insufficient formal mechanisms for involving municipalities.
Fragmentation of local actors	Local authorities are often numerous and uncoordinated, making it hard to engage them effectively at scale.
Risk and accountability concerns	Especially in fragile or authoritarian contexts, EU actors may perceive working with local authorities as risky or politically sensitive.
Information asymmetries	Local actors are often unaware of Global Gateway opportunities or how to access EU funding and partnerships.

Source: [ECDPM](#), 2024

