

**POSITION PAPER SUBMITTED AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE
UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION,
AND
TO THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES**

The current migration situation, which is characterised by large movements of both refugees and migrants, requires joint action, increased cooperation, and a better division of roles and responsibilities between states, as well as between states and cities, non-governmental actors and private organisations.

In order to achieve the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** as a whole, and with a particular focus on those related to migration, refugees, and development, a concerted effort needs to be made by states, regions and cities of origin, transit, and destination, while also putting common initiatives and approaches in place.

As a result, and in response to the appeal made by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the countries that gathered at the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on 19 September 2016 signed **the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016 (A/71/L.1))**. In this Declaration, the countries committed to drawing up the **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** and the **Global Compact on Refugees** (herein referred to as the Compacts). These Compacts will establish a series of principles and commitments between member states, covering every aspect of international migration. They will contribute to strengthening global governance and the coordination required for international migration.

In October 2016, UN member states adopted the **New Urban Agenda**, which recognises and entrusts local authorities with a key role in matters related to migration. The New Urban Agenda includes commitments made by member states, including through international cooperation, to ensure full respect for human rights and support for host cities, considering that migration provides significant social, economic and cultural contributions to urban life.

Despite recognition of the critical, central role municipal governments play in international migration, cities are still under-represented when defining international policies and monitoring their implementation. Although bodies within the United Nations have stated their willingness to involve local leaders in defining the Compacts, there are still limited opportunities for participation, just as the mobilisation and contributions of cities are yet to be achieved.

It is within this context that **Metropolis - World Association of the Major Metropolises**, recognising the key role played by cities in terms of migration, diversity management and inclusion, will take steps to implement the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, as well as to contribute to developing the Compacts. The aim is to ensure the Compact processes take into account the unique, frontline role cities play in migration, and to use city experiences to inform the Compacts while asserting local leaders' roles and responsibilities in this area.

ACCORDINGLY, IN THIS FIRST STAGE OF CONSULTATION TO DEFINE THE COMPACTS, THE METROPOLIS MEMBER CITIES * SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING:

OUR VISION: THE PERSPECTIVE OF CITIES ON MIGRATION

Global issues, including migration, have a local scope and an impact on urban life. While migration and immigration policies are determined at the international and national level by states, cities are at the forefront of managing the impact of migration - transit, arrival, integration, as well as the promotion of inclusive, safe and sustainable societies.

In the context of cities, migration is understood primarily through the lens of human experience, as well as migrants' contributions to local communities' socio-economic fabric, beyond issues of status and control.

Cities therefore provide fertile ground for innovative solutions and concrete actions, which can produce results applicable to policy and decision-making at the national level. Through their work, cities make a significant contribution to achieving the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, as well as working towards reducing inequalities and creating a world that is safer, more inclusive, and more sustainable.

We hereby state that:

- Cities are at the heart of migration. They are places of origin, transit and arrival, and are the main destination for migrants. Migration makes a significant impact on population growth in cities. This means that cities have a crucial part to play.
- Migrants are at the heart of the economic, social, and cultural development of cities. Migration poses both opportunities and challenges that, when thoughtfully managed; contribute to vibrant, resilient communities. Our successes at the urban level have had a positive impact on our countries as a whole.
- The role played by cities is complementary to the role played by countries. Cities provide community-based services, and are responsible for responding to the immediate needs of migrants. They provide basic services, promote social cohesion, and protect migrant rights. Cities do not dictate national immigration policies, but they can make constructive contributions.
- Cities are a force for change. They are involved in city exchanges and networks at local, bilateral, and multilateral levels to better meet the needs of migrants by documenting and sharing good practices, contributing to policy development, and ultimately, we hope, by helping to shape international migration policies and goals. The creative policy and program solutions cities have developed could bring much-needed innovation to national and international discussions on migration.
- Cities value the contributions migrants make to society, and acknowledge the importance of empowering them to participate in civic life. Greater efforts must be made to provide them with a voice and ensure inclusive growth.
- Cities need to increase their presence on the world stage, including within the different bodies of the United Nations, to promote their vision and contributions the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, and in particular, the Compacts.

OUR ACTIONS, OUR CONTRIBUTION

Our local actions:

- Currently, the distribution of responsibilities related to migration varies by country, region, and city. Each city's unique circumstances therefore dictate its priorities, as well as the means used, which makes it difficult to summarise or define cities' actions as set.
- At the local level, the actions cities take vary by location, and are increasingly adapted to the diverse reality of their migrants and citizens.
- Whether they are places of origin, transit, or destination, cities have no choice but to act and innovate. City interventions can empower migrants by acknowledging their positive contributions to growth and sustainable development, while also strengthening city resilience through the promotion of living together.

Our bilateral actions:

- Bilateral actions carried out by cities make it possible to share good practices and contribute to improving urban interventions with respect to migration.

Our multilateral actions:

- There has been a considerable increase in the number of city networks over the years. More than ever, cities act as part of networks, joining forces to define the urban agenda, take action, encourage debate and ensure that city voices are heard across the global stage.
- Global networks like Metropolis and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) play a key role in advancing global issues by supporting urban diplomacy, documenting good practices, strengthening the member capacities, monitoring the progress of cities, as well as implementing projects and taking part in major international meetings.
- Although there is no city network that is solely dedicated to migration and refugees, a number of actions related to these issues do receive support from pre-existing networks. In order to better understand the range of actions in progress, Metropolis is conducting a mapping of the main networks and initiatives in place.
- As with states, the current situation calls for joint action and increased coordination and cooperation between cities, but also between cities, states and international organisations.

OUR OBJECTIVES, OUR COMMITMENTS

Our international commitments:

- Metropolis member cities * are committed to working towards achieving the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.
- As part of the **Global Mayoral Forum on Human Mobility, Migration and Development** ("The Mayoral Forum"), which was launched during the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the UN General Assembly in 2013, cities committed to continuing the efforts outlined in related Declarations. Metropolis endorses the Declarations and recommendations made during the Forums held in Barcelona (2014), Quito (2015), Quezon (2016), and Berlin (June 2017).
- As part of the Montreal Declaration, adopted at the Metropolis World Congress (June 2017), cities acknowledged the impact of migration on urban life as well as the responsibility to act. They also stated their commitment to working together with national and international institutions.

In the context of defining the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees, Metropolis is committed to the following:

- Furthering issue area knowledge and contributing to the coordination of multilateral actions by cities and their networks in order to support collective action and strengthen intercity and network bonds;
- Contributing to the debate and search for global, joint solutions and encouraging the establishment of common priorities, as well as concerted actions to increased cooperation between cities;
- Taking action on several fronts: urban diplomacy, identifying and sharing good practices, strengthening the capacity of Metropolis and its members; supporting the implementation of joint projects, providing opportunities for experimentation so that innovative solutions can emerge, and putting a peer review system in place;
- Sharing experience gained through action in order to better define global policies, standards, and norms; and
- Measuring cities' progress on migration issues, while feeding this into the monitoring mechanisms used to implement the SDGs and the NUA.

Member cities * pledge to continue their efforts to:

- Contribute to the reduction of inequality, promote more peaceful and inclusive societies, and encourage living together;
- Put innovative and inclusive policies, programmes and services in place;

- Establish environments that leverage migration as a positive contributing factor to sustainable development; and
- Respect, protect and guarantee the human rights of migrants.

APPEAL TO STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Finally, Metropolis members * call on states and international organisations to:

- Acknowledge the unique circumstances cities face, as well as their roles and responsibilities in terms of migration;
- See cities as partners in defining and implementing international instruments related to migration;
- Give cities a seat at the table in the discussions that will lead into the negotiations of the Compacts. A first opportunity to enable city participation is in the Compacts consultation phase, notably in Mexico and Geneva in December 2017. Acknowledge their contributions to Compact stocktaking sessions and provide a space for cities in the negotiations to follow;
- Respect the commitments made under the NUA to support cities in their actions, including through international cooperation, taking into account that migration brings important social, economic, and cultural contributions to urban life.

* The list of Metropolis members can be found at www.metropolis.org

Further, non-member cities wishing to endorse this paper can communicate with Metropolis and they will be identified in future communications .