

Mediterranean City-to-City Migration

Dialogue, Knowledge and Action

Urban challenges and opportunities for the Mediterranean region

Policy Recommendations

Introduction

Migration, asylum and urbanisation are defining features of local realities. Cities are places where people come together to live, work and find opportunities. Increasing global urbanisation and migratory flows have made cities hubs of diversity and innovation, thus transforming local governments into key stakeholders in the world stage.

While migration is managed primarily by national governments, local authorities are assuming the daily reality of social and economic accommodation of newcomers and their interaction with the host community. Although ridden with opportunity, this increasing diversity and demographic changes brought about by migration has also instigated a series of challenges for governments. Among these, the capacity of local governments to provide equal access to rights and basic services for all, including migrants and refugees, has been often hindered by a series of limitations. In the Mediterranean region, these limitations are exacerbated by the complex reality of mixed migration flows and the limited role and resources of city authorities to optimise on diversity and enact effective inclusion of residents.

Within this context, the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project has identified the need to enhance multilevel governance mechanisms in order to strengthen dialogue between spheres of government and improve the inclusion of migrants.

Against this framework, and building on the main findings from the project, this paper puts forward a series of recommendations aimed to address the gap between potential opportunities and challenges diversity can bring about in terms of access to rights and services, as well as in term of the governance of migration.

These recommendations build upon the draft recommendations agreed in the MC2CM mid-term conference which took place in Tangier on 29 November 2016, as well as upon relevant existing declarations and commitments including the New York Declaration, 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and relevant Mayoral Forum Declarations.¹

They will be discussed and adopted by city leaders at the MC2CM High-Level Conference taking place in Beirut on 7-8 November 2017 and will form the basis for implementation of the follow up of MC2CM as a benchmark and roadmap to bring the work of migrant inclusion and urban development forward.

¹ New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (2016) and UN General Assembly Resolution on the modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration (April 2017); Mayoral Forum Declarations from Barcelona (2014), Quito (2015), Quezon City (2016), and Berlin (2017), as well as results from OECD-EC initiative on the territorial approach to migrant integration (2017).

Recommendations

Main premises

- I. **Cities are key players on migration and asylum.** Many cities have proven to be committed to the inclusion of migrants and refugees. In order for policies to effect change, local authorities need to be involved in the development and implementation of migration-related policies through multilevel governance frameworks.
- II. **Cities are committed to ensure access to rights for all.** Although some specific measures targeting migrants, asylum seekers and refugees might be required to foster their integration, building cohesive societies implies designing inclusion policies for everyone living in the territory.
- III. **Diversity is a lever for social capital and economic development.** If dealt with in an effective manner, cities can make use of their diverse population to boost social transformation, innovation and local development, as well as long-term prosperity.

Recommendations for local authorities

Provision of welcome instruments

- Design specific measures related to the welcome process for newcomers to ensure their inclusion in the host city.
- First arrival instruments include one-stop-shops or welcome packs in different languages providing information about how to access services related to health, housing, education as well as guidelines on how to use public transportation, purchase essential products or get help in case of emergency, how to participate in the daily and political life of the city, or about the most relevant legal framework of the host country (i.e. related to child protection, rights and obligations of citizens).
- Ensure the participation of translators and cultural mediators, as well as local migrant associations, which can contribute to the success of the arrival and adaptation process.
- Support training of municipal staff in matters of diversity and discrimination to enable the city to provide services that are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Access to education

- Provide local language learning courses and socio-cultural guidelines to help migrants feel part of the host society and contribute to their personal and professional success (in terms of labour market or school performance).
- Develop educational leisure activities that can enhance skills and cultural interaction, ultimately increasing school achievement.
- Make post-compulsory education guidance programmes or positive references of academic success available so as to reduce the risk of social exclusion of young migrants and refugees.

Access to health

- Protect individual welfare and public health by facilitating the access of all, including migrants and refugees, to basic health services. Gender mainstreaming and fighting discrimination are key in this respect.
- Assist hospitals and health institutions to provide better service to newcomers and people on the move by sharing health-related information, recommendations and knowledge about specific diseases and their treatment, including vaccination protocols.

Urban planning and access to adequate housing

- Support migrants' and refugees' inclusion in the city through participatory urban planning and prohibiting discrimination in its access on grounds of nationality, race, ethnicity, or religion, and ensuring that standards and building codes apply to all population groups.
- Explore innovative and more sustainable housing development and finance solutions, and invest in funding opportunities in order to obtain additional resources needed to facilitate migrant and refugee access to adequate housing.
- Foster local urban planning that favours well located and mixed used neighbourhoods that also take into consideration the need of migrant and refugee populations through participatory design processes.

Access to labour market, entrepreneurship, and vocational training

- Promote a diverse economy and support new labour opportunities involving local entrepreneurship, innovative economic sectors and vocational training as efficient tools to foster access to employment.
- Facilitate dialogue with trade unions and social entities, thus contributing to a proper monitoring of the labour market and avoiding exploitative measures towards migrants.
- Facilitate qualifications and skills recognition to enable the incorporation of newcomers in the labour market, along with the introduction of new skills and opportunities in local economies.

Access to social and political participation

- Enable migrants and refugees to become engaged in local policies and actions through engaging them in public consultative processes and bodies or creating migrant fora to address relevant matters to engagement in participatory planning processes in the city. This can address disenfranchisement among these groups.
- Facilitate integration of newcomers in the associative life of the city (through neighbours' association, trade associations, parents' associations). This has proven to be effective in building diverse and inclusive societies.
- Encourage intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation among different cultural and religious communities as a way of creating the conditions for better mutual understanding.

Protection against discrimination

- Provide training for local staff, raise awareness and develop actions against hate speech so as to minimize situations of discrimination.

Multi-level governance and cooperation

- Engagement with the private sector is necessary to facilitate labour market access for migrants and vulnerable groups, not only as a potential employer but also as a committed partner in providing vocational and language training for the workforce
- Effective integration measures and inclusive policies require multistakeholder governance mechanisms. Civil society organisations are needed to provide or support access to public services. Their role is also crucial in helping local communities understand diversity without tensions and explore common values.

Recommendations for national governments

- As key players, local authorities should be considered and involved in developing and implementing of policy guidelines related to migration and asylum issues. Mechanisms must be established to ensure policy coherence and provide city authorities with the necessary role and resources to address opportunities and challenges of migration and asylum.
- Migration policies should be developed and implemented on the basis of evidence and good knowledge of the situation on the ground. In this regard, the involvement of Local Authorities Associations is fundamental in policy-making.

Recommendations for international organisations and global platforms

- Cooperation and dialogue among cities worldwide should be further promoted through municipal networks, city-to-city projects and peer dialogues as tools for knowledge sharing, mentoring and capacity and institution building.
- Generate joint global and regional programmes on migrants and refugees and cities, with a strong focus on local authorities, urban and housing policy development and human rights. Developing joint normative tools, capacity building modules and field operations.

Way forward

The MC2CM project will support the implementation of the aforementioned recommendations. This will be done by:

- **Promoting the role of cities as credible agents in migrant and refugee inclusion** through empowerment of local governments, even in highly centralised contexts, to foster equality and enable access to basic services.
- **Supporting the set up of inter-administrative cooperation and multilevel governance** necessary for policy coherence and better management of migration and asylum through a rights-based approach.
- **Helping to strengthen collaboration with local stakeholders on migration and asylum**, including cooperation with private sector, civil society organisations and the diaspora.
- **Sharing local practices, experiences and *know-how*.**
- **Further developing the knowledge and data sets amassed on local migration contexts** to provide a solid evidence-base to future local actions.
- **Supporting and piloting actions** that can be catalysts for institutional and policy changes in urban contexts
- **Developing a tool to monitor and evaluate** the implementation of these recommendations. A report shall be produced in the framework of MC2CM in 2 years' time to measure progress in implementation.

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Background:

The Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project aims at contributing to improved migration governance at city level. It was implemented by a consortium led by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in partnership with the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as associate partner, in the framework of the Dialogue on Mediterranean Transit Migration (MTM). The project is funded by the European Union (EU) through the Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement negotiations (DG NEAR) and co-funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The project has involved the cities of Amman, Beirut, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Tangiers, Turin, Tunis and Vienna and has delved into the local context of each city by producing City Migration Profiles and Priority Papers validated by the city authority and stakeholders. It has also applied a regional approach to issues of interest through thematic events on the topics of relevance to local authorities, including: social cohesion and intercultural and interreligious dialogue; employment and entrepreneurship; human rights and access to basic services; refugees hosting; urban planning and housing; education; and inter-institutional coordination.

MC2CM has provided the opportunity to showcase the numerous efforts made by local authorities, despite the obstacles they face, to come up with creative solutions to address fractures and policy gaps.

The possibility to share experiences and engage in peer learning processes has also provided a unique opportunity to MC2CM cities to confront similar challenges. Albeit the existence of clear differences between Mediterranean cities, the MC2CM project has shown to provide a common framework to engage in dialogue and cooperation between cities in order to improve their capacities to foster the inclusion of migrants.

These policy recommendations aim to gather, analyse and summarise the results and knowledge amassed from the MC2CM project outcomes.

The recommendations have been drafted on the basis of work prepared by expert Gemma Pinyol-Jiménez from Instrategies with input collected from MC2CM project outputs, partners and network.