Towards the Lampedusa Charter

Dignified Human Mobility and Territorial Solidarity
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UCLG
United Cities and Local Governments

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Against the background of unprecedented transformations whereby the lives of our communities will never be the same, the Pact for the Future will be our driving commitment. The municipalist movement acknowledges that a new social contract can only happen as long as it includes and recognizes all.

The municipalist agenda on human mobility is rooted on the legacy of the Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City, on the Marrakech Mayoral Declaration and the Durban Manifesto on Migration. Those global commitments are embedded in our action and territorialised with the work of UCLG Committees and regional voices, namely the Charter of Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration and the Gaziantep Declaration. Building on these efforts, UCLG has taken the responsibility to shape a renewed global commitment on migration and displacement that fully represents our shared values and portrays our diversity, while building on our transformative strength as a network.

At the World Council of October 2020, Totò Martello, Mayor of Lampedusa and Councillor of the Policy Council on the Right to the City and Inclusive Territories, proposed to work together to renew our narrative on human mobility. The Policy Council embraced the commitment to foster a new vision rooted on inclusion and pursuing the respect of human rights, solidarity and peace. The UCLG Executive Bureau endorsed this process and invited the different parts of the network to lead territorial consultations. This report summarises the key milestones of the process and the defining features of the Lampedusa Charter, to be launched in October 2022.
The Lampedusa Charter is a step further in a long path of local efforts and global advocacy to overcome border-centred approaches and shape a notion of citizenship that acknowledges all communities as neighbours and, as such, as right holders and community developers. Below are listed some key examples in a non-exhaustive manner.

**CCRE Charter for the Equality of Women and Men in Local Life (2005)** (Article 10.3): The Signatory commits itself, across the range of its competences, to take all reasonable actions to combat the effects of multiple discrimination or disadvantage including: taking specific measures to address the particular needs of migrant women and men.

**Global Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City (2012):** The Charter Agenda set an unprecedented global framework calling for the recognition of the role and responsibilities of local and regional governments in the effective provision of human rights for all city inhabitants without discrimination.

**Charter of Local and Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration (2018):** “Opposing firmly and unequivocally all forms of xenophobic violence and discrimination against migrants both on the Africa continent and in other regions”.

**Marrakech Mayors Declaration “Cities Working Together for Migrants and Refugees” (2018):** “Reaffirming that migration remains primarily an urban and local phenomenon. While acknowledging that immigration is a state prerogative, cities of every continent are at the forefront of managing the impact of migration as well as the promotion of inclusive, safe and sustainable societies. (...) Cities are a force for change, and that our efforts and active participation are essential to achieving the GCM and the GCR objectives”.

**UCLG Manifesto on Migration (2019):** “Local and regional governments have a critical role to play in the construction of inclusive and pluralistic societies, not only through catalysing dialogue but also through guaranteeing access to basic services and fostering policies that will make newcomers welcome. The deployment of the Right to the City for all plays a critical role in leaving no one and no place behind and is the sole antidote to the rise in discriminatory and xenophobic discourse”.

**Gaziantep Declaration on Local Solutions to Migration and Displacement (2019):** Committing to promoting, deepening and replication at scale of the forward-looking and accelerating efforts in a range of communities globally to transition from emergency to resilience, to solutions and development in responding to complex refugee and migration situations.
VISION: NOT A BORDER TALE: TERRITORIAL SOLIDARITY AND RIGHTS FOR AND BY ALL COMMUNITIES

Human mobility is a natural and legitimate phenomenon. Through their action on the ground and their international advocacy, local and regional governments are reshaping a notion of citizenship that is built on community and truly includes all people as neighbours around the values dignity, human rights, peace and collective memory, regardless of status.

As the sphere of government that works closest to the people, local and regional governments have been addressing the multidimensional nature and effects of human mobility with limited mandates and often scarce resources. The impacts of climate change, persistent violence, growing inequalities and insufficient pathways for regular migration, strongly affect the governance of human mobility at the local level.

For local and regional governments, migration and displacement are more than an issue of borders as these phenomena include a variety of flows within countries. Beyond trends of workforce concentration, rapid urbanization and growing territorial imbalances, a variety of interrelated factors related to climate change, inequalities and other forms of oppression, expose growing parts of the population to move in extremely harsh conditions, particularly for those groups that have been structurally discriminated for reasons like gender, age, race, religion and many other.

Women and children are particularly touched by the harsh conditions imposed by some migratory experiences. Although half of the world’s migrants and internally displaced populations (IDPs) are women fleeing from conflict and violence, but also from disasters, their rights, decision-making power, challenges and hopes are not accounted for in most public policies. The adverse effects of climate change further reinforce their greater risk of discrimination and violence in territories of origin, transit, and destination. These situations directly impact the rights and aspirations of children and youths moving alone or with their families.

Beyond the provision of basic services and the protection of the groups of the population that are more exposed to vulnerability and structural discrimination, municipalities and territories have a key role to play in transitioning from border-centred approaches to a people-centred vision of citizenship, underpinned by a sense of community. Irrespective of administrative status, people centred approaches are driven by the notions of care, human rights universality, participation and diversity.

With the Lampedusa Charter, local and regional governments take the responsibility to put dignity, memory and peace at the forefront of a discussion that needs to be tackled by involving the whole society and all spheres of government, in a meaningful
way, with a renewed vision centred on the power of communities and the value of diversity in our societies. Local and regional governments have a key role to play in raising awareness among the communities.

The Not a Border Tale campaign

As part of the UCLG Lampedusa Charter Process, a UCLG delegation visited the Italian island of Lampedusa last 3 October 2021 to participate in a yearly event to honor the victims of the shipwreck where 368 people died in 2013. Against this background, our short film ‘Not A Border Tale’ follows the work of Mayor Totò Martello and dives into his motivations to bring forward the Lampedusa Charter process towards a global commitment on Human Mobility driven by communities.

The short film was launched on the International Migrants Day, last 18 December 2021, with a global campaign that recalled that the mandate of LRGs is to protect people and not borders.

Watch the Not A Border Tale short film: www.youtube.com/watch?v=At9LI6UQYzQ

DRIVING PRINCIPLES OF THE LAMPEDUSA CHARTER

The driving principles of the Lampedusa Charter are the result of a co-creation process whereby key axioms of the municipalist legacy and global agendas on human mobility, including the Global Compact for Migration, the Global Compact for Refugees and the 2030 Agenda, were identified, discussed and enriched with the support of UCLG governing bodies, consultation mechanisms and key partners. During 2021 and 2022, our constituency shaped the Lampedusa Charter draft text through #CitiesAreListening sessions, written inputs from UCLG sections and thematic sessions of the Executive Bureau, among others. The text is open to inputs and available for consultation by UCLG members and partners at the #UCLGMeets Platform.
DIGNITY

Humanitarian assistance and human rights protection

Migration must not be seen only through a vector of vulnerability, but as a natural phenomenon, a universal right and a source of opportunities and innovation. Migrant and displaced populations should not be defined as vulnerable citizens that must receive protection, as it is not the migratory process that defines the vulnerabilities, but the discriminations and human rights violations that certain groups of the population endure across the process.

Ensuring the dignity and protection of the rights of all persons at all stages of the migration process, regardless of their reasons behind migrating and regardless of their legal status, also includes the importance of protecting those who protect and finding alternatives to migrant detention and violent measures that further criminalise and stigmatise migration. The human rights approach recalls how inequalities are not natural, and highlights policy making capacity to address the structural causes of these inequalities as human rights violations. It also offers an opportunity to review public service delivery schemes by focusing on people and to ensure the relationship between public administrations and residents is based on accessibility and respect for human rights - building residents’ trust in the long term.

EQUITY

Universal access to basic services

By assuming human rights as inalienable and independent from administrative status, the Right to the City approach upholds basic services as channels for their protection. Local and regional governments play a crucial role in the inclusion of migrant and displaced communities. A well structured and effective inclusion process is not conceivable without local and regional governments providing social and health care services, decent housing, youth and children welfare and schooling. Inclusion and social cohesion will not happen unless universal access to basic services are provided in a safe and unconditional manner regardless of migration status. Implementing those through intersectional approaches is key to include populations that have been structurally discriminated against on the basis of gender, economic circumstances, legal status, race, diversity of abilities, amongst other factors. Through integrated care, local public policies promote all rights and articulate protection and accompaniment actions.

Inclusion entails meeting the needs of the inhabitants and adapting the local and regional administration to them. This requires a two-way process in which all the involved stakeholders play a role according to the possibilities and room for actions they have.

Numerous possibilities for inclusion reside in the collaboration between the three main stakeholders involved in the discussion: national governments, LRGs and migrants’ representatives.
RECOGNITION
Addressing administrative barriers and enhancing legal pathways

The roots of humanity are nomadic. For centuries, our ancestors have been migrating across territories, countries and continents, enriching our cultural heritage and co-creating our contemporary cities and towns, making them what they are today. Yet nowadays, in many cases, even for those moving to the places where their ancestors came from, administrative barriers prevail. Due to these, many citizens lack the right to explore, enrich their identity in a different territory from their birthplace.

There are no illegal people. Speaking of illegality is a reductionist way of eluding the responsibility towards residents with a different identity that require proactive actions to welcome, include and protect them. Efficient, coherent and coordinated administrative processes are key to enhance regular pathways and guarantee the right to move, making sure all realities are reflected by including the regional dimension.

Recognising diversity as an asset and acknowledging the contribution of all communities to the development of cities and territories is critical to advance towards a new social contract. Recognition also implies transparent and accountable governance mechanisms that take the responsibility and addresses the varied forms of discrimination and violence that have been normalised in our societies, creating the conditions for a new notion of inclusive, supportive and transformative citizenship.

This also entails strengthening cooperation and transforming narratives to ensure that migration becomes an option and not a necessity, by generating spaces where human mobility is addressed in a different positive manner by host communities and newcomers, contributing to developing cities and territories of peace.

As we push for equal rights for all migrant and displaced communities in their destination countries and cities, regardless of their origin, it is important to take into account the history of migration, ensuring that these rights also transcend across time and for the benefit of all generations.

PARTICIPATION
Access to rights, political participation and public space

While recognising the relevance that LRGs have in providing services to newcomers, it is also important to encourage and enable the engagement of foreign residents in community-building through different forms of participation: the right to vote in local elections, various forms of local citizenship and residence permits, as well as different forms of recognized representation in the civil society.
There is a significant difference between engagement and active participation. Local communities should not be merely engaged, but should be actively involved in building local capacities for an all-inclusive delivery of basic services and in political decisions that concern their livelihoods. Opening spaces and channels for migrants, displaced persons and refugees to be part of public life as de facto residents, is key to transforming the vision of the migrant population from mere users of services to agents of community development, particularly where public policies directly concern all residents.

Participation must also be inclusive of migrant associations that can, in turn, identify and lend a voice and medium to these migrant leaders and volunteers who generate positive change.

Local development plans must contemplate and meaningfully include the needs, aspirations and contributions of migrant and displaced populations, anchoring particular provisions on human mobility in decentralisation frameworks. Migrant and displaced populations should not be seen as a threat, but as developers of local economies and creators of knowledge. Intersectional approaches are essential to enable all communities to participate in the reformulation of an inclusive concept of citizenship. Participation in local public affairs is also a fundamental right and a vehicle for inclusion, especially through participatory democracy mechanisms and co-creation of local policies.

COMMUNITY

Collective memory and recognition of diversity

Human mobility is a natural phenomenon that concerns all societies and places. Therefore, its governance must involve the whole of government and the whole of society. In cities and territories, communities must actively participate in the elaboration of strategies, decision-making and implementation of activities that promote coexistence, equality and access to the Right to the City for all.

As recalled by the Rome Charter, the Right to Participate Fully and Freely in Cultural Life entails the possibility to discover, create, enjoy, share and protect. As the Charter states, culture and memory play a key role in this endeavour as channels for the expression and redefinition of shared values. Culture is a common, renewable resource in which we meet one another, learn what can unite us and how to engage with differences in a shared space. Those differences must be acknowledged and engaged with. Culture can also help connect present day narratives and struggles on belonging with the memory of urban territories, and how human rights struggles and human mobility made decisive contributions to city-making.
LRGs have the responsibility to promote social cohesion and assertive communication to protect the respect for the inherent diversity migrants bring. Inclusive cities that embrace people are respectful of and open to the defining features, habits and rituals of every community.

Co-creating culturally diverse cities and intercultural societies is not only an ethical imperative, but a necessity for peaceful coexistence. The contribution of migrants to the local economy is essential for global sustainable development.

SOLIDARITY
Dialogue and action from the ground

No State or territory can address migration and displacement alone. Safe and well-governed mobility requires cooperation and bolder coordination among all spheres of government and all of society. As global trends strike, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or climate change, collective and coordinated responses are needed to ensure that all people, and especially those that need the most, are supported, protected and cared for - leaving no one and no place behind.

One-size-fits-all approaches have proved wrong and solutions must come from the ground, from humanistic perspectives based on solidarity. Local governments need support at many levels. At a social level, to translate perceived migration challenges into opportunities through effective diversity governance, and at legal and financial level, to cover the needs and support the aspirations of all residents.

It is essential to involve local governments in policy dialogues with central governments regarding pathways for regular and safe migration, as well as decentralised mechanisms for human rights protection. Building bridges across levels of government is crucial to advancing the municipalist vision on a new notion of citizenship in accordance with international agreements.

Solidarity and responsibility sharing mechanisms are instrumental at the local level as they enhance more manageable flows of newcomers and less pressures on local finances. At the same time, improvements are needed in return policies to ensure that they work for the individuals that want to benefit from them.

Ahead of looming climate change related migration that has been predicted already, we have to show solidarity from now on, take charge of this reality as a city and recognise our limits in order to make them reach the national level.

Our countries are macrocephalic. Mobility tends to converge towards capitals, while intermediate cities and well-connected rural areas may be able to accommodate and provide opportunities.
With the Lampedusa Charter, the territorial solidarity framework is a central piece of a new vision whereby mobility works for all, including city-to-city cooperation and further progress between sibling countries and cities so that no one feels like a foreigner in another land.

**RESILIENCE**

Addressing the impacts of climate change and preparing for future periods of distress

Crises and conflicts are common in humanity’s history and interchangeably result in displacement and migration. The impacts of climate crises are underestimated, especially pertaining to the effects on lives and livelihoods globally.

To date, climate change related mobility has been mostly internal. Current trends confirm that it is increasingly an urban phenomenon, which also entails cross-border movements, particularly where climate change interacts with conflict and violence.

Nowadays, human mobility is globally recognized as a consequence of and a strategy for adapting to climate change. Although international institutions and both climate and migration frameworks increasingly recognize the links between climate change and human mobility, no nation offers asylum or other legal protections to people displaced specifically because of climate change. While cities are at the forefront addressing migration and displacement fluxes, cities are largely excluded from the definition and implementation of policy frameworks that regulate these flows. A stronger role and engagement of LRGs in the definition of this new framework is critical to make sure that these global challenges are properly addressed.

Cities will need to formulate and implement comprehensive disaster risk reduction and management and climate action plans that also account for climate mobility. The success of these initiatives will hugely rely on the integration of the sustainable development goals and migration agendas into the municipal development plans and local migration indicators, linked with relevant global agendas such as sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, and climate action.

The emergency perspective towards human mobility must be replaced by a more integrated vision that puts resilience and sustainability at the centre. Unplanned migration often creates marginalised landscapes of inequality and high levels of informality in human settlements and the labour market.

Not only displacement camps, detention facilities, reception centres and emergency shelters on border enclaves lack the means to protect the dignity, but they have also proved not to be sustainable solutions.
Building on the above-mentioned principles, our constituency will embrace with the Lampedusa Charter the responsibilities embedded in the quest for this new vision, which will feed into the People’s pillar of the UCLG Pact for the Future.

This set of commitments has been consulted and remains open to inputs at the #UCLGMeets platform.

According to the current draft, local and regional governments that adopt the Lampedusa Charter:

**ACKNOWLEDGE**

- Migration as a natural phenomenon that shapes our communities and a lever for equitable, sustainable and resilient development.
- The moral and ethical obligation to stop talking about illegality and to include and protect all residents as neighbours, with due respect and acknowledgement of their origins, diversity and administrative situation.
- Universal and equitable access to services as a fundamental vehicle for human rights provision, powered by the instrumental role of accessible identity documents and efficient administrative processes.
- The need to develop distinct spaces of debate and political participation that go beyond the administrative limits imposed by state and regional prerogatives to address life conditions and aspirations that take place at local level.
- Forced migration and displacement as phenomena that need to be addressed from their root causes and that require the solidarity of all communities.
- The contribution of migrant and displaced communities to foster economic development, solidarity and innovation.
- The need to address and protect human rights across all phases of migration and displacement, including the protection of those who protect.
- The urgent need to end racism, xenophobia and any form of discrimination based on gender, class, race, age or administrative status.
- The urgent need to restore dignity and memory for those that have lost their lives and suffered violence and deprivation in their quest for a better life.
- The failure of border-centred approaches that build on securitization and detention as first response to human mobility and the impact of such policies on border territories.
ENDORSE

- The municipal legacy, built on innovative territorial approaches and rights-based political agendas as valuable building blocks proving the commitment of LRGs to people-centred approaches to a fair and effective governance of migration and displacement.
- The Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees.
- The 2030 Agenda, as a valuable framework for cross-cutting multilevel action towards a more equal and sustainable future.
- Other intersectional regional and global agendas with a strong impact on human mobility trends, and particularly climate agendas.

COMMIT TO

- Preserve, as per their mandates, resources and capacities, the fundamental right to migrate, stay or return with dignity for all, with particular efforts to preserve the rights of those that are more exposed to violence, such as women, children and racialized communities.
- Provide universal access to services, public space and rights for all and promote meaningful participation in shaping the decisions that concern all residents.
- Enhance local action and global advocacy to promote community-based approaches to human mobility, consolidate a notion of citizenship that recognizes the power and role of the community in building memory, trust, belonging and dignity, including everyone regardless of status.
- Review the links between citizenship, residence and nationality as well as between culture and social cohesion.
- Assess the different ways to encourage migrants’ employment while exploring the different approaches to enhance and guarantee housing policies for migrants.
- Strengthen the participation of migrants and foreign residents in local life and community-building by letting them be agents of change.
- Address the implications of shifting from citizenship-based to residence-based participation in local and regional levels.
- Recognize the contributions of all people to building diverse, rich, innovative and resilient cities.
- End all forms of discrimination and build a collective memory that contributes to recognize, heal and unite all communities around shared values of solidarity and peace.
- Promote solidarity and cooperation among border territories with territories of origin and destination.
CALL FOR

- Meaningful dialogue and cooperation with all spheres of government and all stakeholders.

- Meaningful inclusion of LRGs at all phases of international policy processes related to migration and displacement.

- Awareness-raising on the principles and objectives of the Global Compacts for Migration and Refugees, and strengthened participation of local governments facilitated by national governments and international organisations.

- Access to information and financial resources in order to effectively implement actions that contribute to the achievement of global agendas.

- Eradicating the criminalisation of migration, promoting alternatives to detention and enhancing care, particularly for children and youth.

- A shift in legal frameworks entailing decentralisation, policy coherence and flexibility to respond to realities on the ground.

- Expanded protection frameworks and instruments to protect all migrants and displaced individuals, regardless of the circumstances or motives behind their mobility and their race, colour, ethnicity, nationality and religion.

- The effective implementation of universal access to vaccination and health coverage for all, regardless of migration status.

- Human rights policy as a state policy, including migrants and indigenous peoples.

- Restoration of dignity and memory for those that have suffered violence and died in their quest for opportunities.

- Solidarity among territories and communities to find shared solutions to common realities.

- Overcoming the emergency perspective on migration that has prevailed since the 1990s.

- Global alliances to oppose the creation of “enclave settlements” or camps, working towards ensuring that all migrant and displaced populations have a right to move to the cities and intermediate towns that offer them livelihoods in dignity.

- City to city knowledge sharing and cooperation in the field of local intercultural action to engage foreign residents through peer-to-peer learning mechanisms.
ROADMAP: KEY MILESTONES OF THE LAMPEDUSA CHARTER PROCESS

November 2020:
UCLG World Council adopts the proposal by Totò Martello, Mayor of Lampedusa and UCLG Policy Councilor for the Right to the City and Inclusive Territories, to promote a Global Charter on Migration by UCLG

February 2021:
The UCLG World Secretariat launches the Lampedusa Charter process at UCLG Retreat in a thematic discussion with members and partners

May 2021:
The founding principles and commitments of the Charter are consulted in a Cities Are Listening Session chaired by the Mayor of Lampedusa

May 2021: The first draft of the Charter is discussed at a thematic session organised under the umbrella of the Political Councils on the Right to the City and Opportunities for All and approved by the Executive Bureau.

October 2021:
A UCLG Delegation, led by Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General and Wajdi Aydi, deputy mayor of Sfax, visits Lampedusa to support the 3rd October Memory Day initiative, in remembrance of lost and missing migrants in the Mediterranean.

November 2021:
A process of regional consultations led by UCLG sections start, with contributions from Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific

December 2021:
Global launch of the Not a Border Tale campaign

February 2022:
The Lampedusa Charter Process is discussed and adopted as part of the agenda of the organised constituency at the Annual Meeting of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)

May 2022:
The Charter is discussed with international partners at a side event during the first-ever International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) at the Headquarters of the UN

June 2022:
The final draft of the Lampedusa Charter to be discussed and approved at the UCLG Executive Bureau in Seville, held in the framework of the Mediterranean Urban Migration Forum (MUMF)

October 2022:
Official Launch of the Lampedusa Charter