

THE LAMPEDUSA CHARTER

for Dignified Human Mobility and Territorial Solidarity

Summary

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.

Building on the legacy of the Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City, on the Marrakech Mayoral Declaration and the Durban Manifesto on Migration, as well as in the work of UCLG Committees and regional voices, namely the Charter of Subnational Governments of Africa on Migration and the Gaziantep Declaration, 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 Councilor of the Policy Council on the Right to the City and Inclusive Territories, proposed to work towards the co-creation of our collective narrative on human mobility. The Policy Council embraced the commitment to foster a new narrative rooted on inclusion and pursuing the respect of human rights protection, solidarity and peace. The UCLG Executive Bureau endorsed this process and invited the different parts of the network to lead territorial consultations.

Supported by the World Secretariat, a period of online consultations has been undertaken to co-create a draft Charter that reflects the priorities and realities of all parts of the network.

This report summarizes the key highlights of the process so far, with a view to allow for further contributions by UCLG members and partners to the final text due to be finalized in 2022.

1. Background: building on the legacy of the municipal movement

The Lampedusa Charter builds on a long path of local efforts and global advocacy to overcome border-centered approaches and shape a notion of citizenship that acknowledges all communities as neighbors and, as such, as right holders and community developers.

- [Global Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City](#) (2012): The Charter Agenda marked an essential step and 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 migration¹ 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 catalyzing 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.

¹ Migration here is understood in a broad sense and addresses human mobility across all territories, comprising internal and international migrants, internally and internationally displaced people and refugees.

2. Fostering a new narrative based on rights and driven by communities

As the level of government 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 effects of climate change, persistent violence, growing inequalities and the shortage of pathways for regular migration have a direct impact on 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 other.

Women and children are particularly touched by this reality. 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 reinforces 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 and the notions of dignity, care, human rights universality, peace, collective memory and belonging, participation and diversity, irrespective of administrative status.**

Despite their scarce competencies and resources, local and regional governments uphold their responsibilities in the governance of human mobility by protecting rights, promoting access to public services and social inclusion pathways, fostering pragmatic solutions and actively contributing to the implementation of global agendas on human mobility and

development. In their continued dialogue with national governments, civil society and international partners, municipalities and territories appeal to consider human mobility as a natural phenomenon that concerns people and not borders.

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 levels of government, in a meaningful way, with a renewed vision centered 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.

2.1 Driving principles of the Lampedusa Charter

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 neighbors around the values dignity, human rights, peace and collective memory, regardless of status. As a result of the ongoing pandemic crisis and climate emergency, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons is expected to increase. The driving principles of the Lampedusa Charter have been established through a co-creation process by UCLG's consultation mechanisms and key partners in order to consolidate a common vision that encompasses our shared values.

1. 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.

2. EQUITY : Universal access to basic services

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. Local and regional governments have been and still are critical actors to deliver basic services to neighbours, implementing 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.

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.

3. RECOGNITION : curbing administrative barriers and enhancing legal pathways

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 providing visibility to the challenges faced during transparent management and taking the responsibility to address the varied forms of discrimination and violence that have been normalised in our societies and to overcome them, through a notion of inclusive, supportive and transformative citizenship.

Local governments have a role to play in creating conditions that contribute to enhancing regular migration pathways for people to migrate safely and for local governments to protect our communities, making sure all realities are reflected by including the regional dimension. 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.

4. **PARTICIPATION** : access to rights, political participation and public space

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.

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.

5. **COMMUNITY** : Collective memory and recognition of diversity

Human mobility is a natural phenomenon that concerns all societies and places. Therefore, in accordance with the guiding principles of the **Global Compacts** for [Migration](#) and [Refugees](#), 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](#), as a forward-looking contribution of the international municipalist movement, 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 is the creative workshop with which citizens can imagine responses to our common challenges. 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.

6. SOLIDARITY : dialogue and action from the ground

No State can address the challenges of migration alone; it requires international cooperation and bolder coordination among all levels of government and all of society. As global issues strike, such as the pandemic or climate change, collective and coordinated responses must be in place, in order 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 local governments, from humanistic perspectives and based on solidarity. Local governments need both narrative support, to translate perceived migration challenges into opportunities, through effective diversity management, and with financial support by the international system and other funding channels. Inclusive approaches must be complemented by culturally sensitive, age-, gender- and diversity-based approaches.

It is essential to involve local governments in policy dialogues with central governments regarding pathways for regular and safe migration, as well as decentralized 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.

7. 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. Further understanding of migration as a human right needs to drive action in cities and territories to attain preparedness and resilience to eventual disasters, consequences of climate change and others.

2.2 Driving commitments of the Lampedusa Charter

Local and regional governments that adopt the Lampedusa Charter:

ACKNOWLEDGE

- Migration as a natural phenomenon that shapes our communities;
- 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-centered 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 legacy², built on innovative territorial approaches and rights based political agendas as valuable building blocks proving the commitment of LRGs to people-centered approaches to a fair and effective governance of migration and displacement;
- The 2030 Agenda, as 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.

² As per above, referring namely to the Charter Agenda on Human Rights in the City, the Charter of Sub National Governments of Africa on Migration, the Marrakech Mayoral Declaration, the Durban Manifesto on Migration and the Gaziantep Declaration.

COMMIT TO

- Enhancing local action and global advocacy to promote community-based approaches to human mobility;
- Consolidating 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;
- Providing universal access to services, public space and rights for all and promoting meaningful participation in shaping the decisions that concern all residents
- Recognizing the contributions of all people to building diverse, rich, innovative and resilient cities;
- Culture as a vehicle for the consolidation of a new notion of citizenship built on the contributions of all people across all territories and times;
- Ending 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;
- Promoting solidarity and cooperation among border territories with territories of origin and destination.

CALL FOR

- Meaningful dialogue and cooperation with all levels of government and all stakeholders;
- Meaningful inclusion of LRGs at all phases of international policy processes related to migration and displacement;
- Eradicating the criminalisation of migration, promoting alternatives to detention and enhancing care, particularly for children and youth;
- A change in legal frameworks entailing decentralization, policy coherence and flexibility to respond to realities on the ground;
- Increased resources through enhanced access to funds at national and international level;
- The effective implementation of universal access to vaccination and health coverage for all, regardless of migration status;
- 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.