



**VENICE UNIVERSITY/UNESCO EXPERTS MEETING ON:
*“Cosmopolitan urbanism: urban policies and the social
and spatial integration of migrants in urban settings”***

Venice University, 28-29 September 2007

WORKING DOCUMENT
19 September 2007 / prepared by Yu ABIKO

Preamble

Freedom of movement across borders for individuals has not increased as much as the free movement of goods, firms and money. Yet, due to the declining costs of transportation and the perspective of better living conditions upon moving to a different country, international migration is increasing, including among developing countries.

Migrants are an economic resource for the urban economies for which they represent an essential source of cheap labor, and for the countries of origin which receive tremendous economic benefits from remittances. But at the same time, they need social assistance with regard to access to education, housing, services and the formal labour market, as most of them are included among the low-income urban population.

International migrants mainly head towards cities in the hope of finding the social networks that will allow them to find a dwelling and a job when they first arrive. However, migration policies rarely seem to be sufficient or adequate to provide the assistance for migrants either on a local or a national level.

Since, with the tendency toward decentralisation, it is local authorities that are at the forefront of the social and spatial integration of migrants, they should have more and more responsibility in managing urban growth, responding to immigrants' needs and promoting their inclusion. In addition, if migration policies are mostly designed at national levels in order to control the influx of migrants, the city level is more pertinent in terms of migrant's integration, all the more because integration consists not only in ensuring migrants' rights to equality and universality (housing, employment and health), but also in guaranteeing their rights to liberty and diversity (education, language and religion).

1. Background

❖ Underlying Issue: Creating an Inclusive Society

The Copenhagen Declaration, adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, established the notion of social integration in the intergovernmental discourse and national policy making. It contains a specific commitment to advance social integration to create “a society for all” in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play. Such an inclusive society is promoted by social policies that seek to reduce inequality and to create flexible and tolerant societies, so that diversity of all people could be represented.

This fundamental issue for all societies under rapid socio-economic transitions brought on by globalisation has been also discussed intensively throughout the UN-DESA/UNESCO/UN-HABITAT Expert Group Meeting on “Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration” at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in September 2007. If socio-economic polarization and fragmentation often take form of urban crime, conflicts between ethno-cultural communities, or intergenerational confrontation, it is especially at the local level that the direct impact of these tensions is felt. Cities, arenas of accelerated social transformations, are facing urbanisation and diversification due to not only international migration flow but also intra-national rural exodus. Given that the question of how to ensure these (mega-) cities include their culturally diverse citizens is a major challenge for today’s world, one of the recommendations arising from the discussions is to further explore ways to measure the degree of social integration and to discuss what types of indicators be looked at.

In order to assist the policy makers at the national and local levels in strengthening their social integration policies, UNESCO’s Social and Human Sciences Sector is engaging in the fight against racism and discrimination at the municipal level as well as the fight against exclusion of children. In addition, the creation of a joint UNESCO/UN-HABITAT Working Group on Urban Policies and the Right to the City launched in March 2005, as well as the dialogue at the World Urban Forum III in 2006 under the theme of Social Inclusion and Cohesion have contributed to the current momentum towards assisting in a framework for social integration and cohesion.

❖ Previous Steps to the Creation of UNESCO Chair at Venice University

During the meetings held thus far within this framework of joint UNESCO/UN-HABITAT Working Group on “Urban Policies and the Right to the City”, the debates were focusing on issues related to the possibility of assuring all urban dwellers the opportunities offered by cities, and to the mutual responsibilities between Municipalities and urban dwellers in urban societies. Several entry points and level of interventions have been identified, such as urban law, participatory processes in urban planning, and empowerment of the urban poor and vulnerable populations. A specific point related to “Cosmopolitan urbanism” was raised by Professor Marcello Balbo¹.

This conceptual proposal, consisting of the elaboration of inclusive urban policies for the social and spatial integration of migrants, successfully led to the creation of a UNESCO Chair project: “Urban policies and social and spatial integration of migrants: toward cosmopolitan urbanism”. It should enter into its implementation phase in 2008/2009 at Venice University.

¹ Professor at Venice University, he is also the editor of *International Migrants and the City* (UN-Habitat, Università IUAV di Venezia, 2005) and the founder of MIUrb/AL (International Observatory on international migration in developing countries for Latin America).

2. Objectives

❖ General Objectives of the UNESCO Chair

By promoting public awareness on the importance of effective urban policies for the social integration of international migrants, the UNESCO Chair will help address urban poverty reduction, as well as enhance world wide urban cultural diversity and prevent urban conflicts, and will contribute to the UN activities (UN-DESA, UN-HABITAT, UNESCO) toward the building of more inclusive societies.

Through the network of the partner universities and research centres, the UNESCO Chair on “Urban Policies and Social Integration of Migrants” will contribute:

1. to identify policies and practices that promote the urban inclusion of migrants;
2. to support local governments in shaping effective actions to foster effective urban governance and the social/spatial integration of migrants; and
3. to disseminate the experiences that can provide ground for effective policy exchange (good practices).

In the short term the UNESCO Chair will contribute:

1. to produce new knowledge and a better understanding on how to improve good urban governance for the inclusion of international migrants;
2. to exchange information on policies and practices that best respond to the challenges of increasingly multicultural urban societies;
3. to foster the awareness of policy-makers, government officials and the civil society on the importance of international migrants social inclusion, in particular at the local level; and
4. to make sensitisation and capacity building activities to allow local authorities to use efficiently international research results and existing indicators to upgrade their own urban policies inclusiveness.

❖ Objectives and Content of the Venice University/UNESCO Experts Meeting

This first experts meeting aims:

1. to evaluate the scientific content and objectives proposed for the UNESCO Chair regarding the existing international research on this subject in various regional and socio-cultural contexts, taking into account the recommendations of UN-DESA/UNESCO/UN-HABITAT experts meeting on “Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration” held from 10th to 13th September 2007.
2. to propose specific directions for the research which should lead, within an appropriate time schedule, to results to be used by decision makers whether at a national or a municipal level;
3. to consult about the Chair title, and about partnerships with research institutes, local authorities and sponsors for the first experimental phase (2 years) and the global period (6 years);
4. to prepare a roundtable on “the social and spatial inclusion of migrants in urban settings” to be organized within Porto Alegre World conference on “Democratic Innovation and Social Transformations for Inclusive Cities in the 21st Century” (13-18 February 2008).

3. Conclusion

❖ Migration: a New Challenge for Urban Policy under Globalisation

International migration affects, and to various extents is affected by, the political, social and institutional setup of the host country; by the same token, it also represents an increasingly central element in the interaction between national policies and the socio-economic conditions at the urban level.

In an increasingly urban world, international urban migration appears to be an inevitable consequence of globalisation and involves all dimensions of urban policy – from local economic development, particularly the informal sector, to education, to health, to housing to public security. As governments come to recognize the potential benefits of migration for local and migrant communities alike, they must learn to deal with the issue through ad hoc programmes and policies. This is true in particular for local authorities, which are increasingly vested with the responsibility of designing and implementing urban policies, including those concerned with the consequences of international migration.

International urban migration is an area where the functions and interests of a range of different protagonists interact between them: institutions and individuals, public and private, legal and illegal. Therefore, if international urban migration is to be dealt with effectively, it will take prior understanding of the motivations these different stakeholders may have for encouraging and ‘selling’ migration.

❖ Towards Genuinely Cosmopolitan Cities

Although urban policies in many parts of the world tend to move away from this trend, multicultural cities are likely, inevitable as well as desirable outcomes of current economic and social changes around the globe. In future and more than ever, cities will need to evolve from multicultural to cosmopolitan – i.e., from a situation where multiple cultural forms are recognised and at times encouraged, to one in which residents of one cultural background are personally comfortable interacting with those of other cultures. The best ways of developing cosmopolitan cities and linking international migration and urban development in a more positive fashion evoke complex questions. For this reason, the issue of how best to address urban international migration and what policies and practices can and should be adopted requires further research, particularly in the cities of developing country where migration is more recent.²

² Extract from *International migrants and the city*, Marcello Balbo (ed), UN-HABITAT and Università Iuav di Venezia, Venice: 2005: 323-344

ANNEX I: Potential Participants and Networks

❖ Europe

1. N-AERUS (Network-Association of European Researchers on Urbanisation in the South)
Founded in 1996 in Brussels, N-AERUS aims at disseminating information, developing research and training capacities, consolidating institutional and individual capacities and backing urban development projects, through the co-operation between European and developing countries.

URL: <http://www.naerus.net/>

2. MCM-CEG (Migration, Cities and Minorities at the Centro de Estudos Geograficos of the University of Lisbon)

MCM undertakes research in the fields of migration, urban change, and urban governance in Europe, migration and regional development, and diasporic and transnational communities.

URL: <http://www.ceg.ul.pt/mcm/>

3. IRPPS (Institute of Research on Population and Social Policies)

Founded in 2002 IRPPS in Rome, Irpps is an institute of the National Research Council. The Institute identifies and studies the lines of development and transformation of population and contemporary society.

URL: <http://www.irpps.cnr.it/>

4. EFMS (European Forum for Migration Studies)

Founded in 1993 in Bamberg, Germany, EFMS aims at institutionalising research related to migration and integration in Germany and Europe by means of numerous projects, reports, publications, lectures and services of various types.

URL: <http://www.uni-bamberg.de/efms>

5. MRG (Migration Research Group)

Founded in 2003, MRG, based at the HWWI (Hamburg Institute of International Economics), is an interdisciplinary team of researchers.

URL: www.migration-research.org

6. ICMPD (International Centre for Migration Policy Development)

Founded in 1993 in Vienna at the initiative of Switzerland and Austria, ICMPD is an inter-governmental organisation with UN Observer status.

URL: <http://www.icmpd.org>

7. IMI (International Migration Institute)

IMI is part of the James Martin 21st Century School of University of Oxford. The initial focus of the IMI's work is on migration processes relating to the African continent.

URL: <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/>

8. COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society)

COMPAS research is core funded by the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council). A joint venture of IMI, COMPAS focuses on understanding conditions surrounding migration in areas of origin, transit and destination.

URL: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk>

9. MIGRINTER (Migrations Internationales, Espaces et Sociétés)

Founded in 1985 in Poitiers, France, MIGRINTER is a research team specialising in the study of international migrations and inter-ethnic relations. It is part of a research laboratory TIDE that links the CNRS to the universities of Poitiers and Bordeaux 3.

URL: <http://www.mshs.univ-poitiers.fr/migrinter/>

10. THP (The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration)

THP was established in 2000 as a global initiative to advance the refugee and migration agenda. It is a forum for the discussion bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders from the Northern and Southern hemispheres to develop concrete proposals for a sustainable refugee and migration policy.

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URL: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk>

❖ **Latin America**

1. Instituto Polis (Social Policies Studies, Training and Advisory Institute)

Founded in 1987 in São Paulo, Instituto Polis is a NGO which aims at enhancing the capacity of civil society for autonomous actions by presenting the problems and proposing public policies.

URL: www.polis.org.br

2. OIUC (International Observatory of the Right to the City)

OIUC has the Urban Axis which aims at promoting exchanges between the Brazilian and French civil societies at the prospect of facing the social and territorial exclusion.

URL: <http://www.oicr.org.br/oicr/index.php>

3. MIUrb/^{AL} (Experimental Observatory on International Migration in Urban Areas of Latin America)

A three-year research project on South-to-South international migration launched in 2006, Strategic objectives of MIUrb/^{AL} are both raising local and international awareness about the issue of international migration in the cities of developing countries.

URL: <http://www.miurbal.net/index.html>

❖ **North America**

1. International Metropolis

The International Metropolis, managed by a Secretariat jointly located in Ottawa and Amsterdam, is a forum for bridging research, policy and practice on migration and diversity. It aims to enhance academic research capacity, encourage policy-relevant research on migration and diversity issues, and to facilitate the use of that research by governments and non-governmental organizations from North America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region.

URL: <http://international.metropolis.net/> <http://canada.metropolis.net/>

2. ISIM (Institute for the Study of International Migration)

Founded in 1998, ISIM is part of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service and affiliated with the Law Centre at Georgetown University.

URL: <http://www.georgetown.edu/sfs/programs/isim/index.html>

3. Center for Comparative Immigration Studies NA

CCIS is an Organized Research Unit of the University of California-San Diego. It is an interdisciplinary, multinational research and training program devoted to comparative work on international migration and refugee movements.

URL: <http://www.ccis-ucsd.org>

❖ **Asia and the Pacific**

1. APMRN (The Asia Pacific Migration Research Network)

Established in 1995, APMRN is a research project of the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme of UNESCO. The Secretariat is located at the University of Wollongong in Australia. The Network seeks to produce reliable, empirical knowledge on migration in the Asia-Pacific region, and to disseminate this knowledge through various channels.

URL: <http://apmrn.anu.edu.au/index.html>

2. CAPSTRANS (The Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies)

CAPSTRANS is a multidisciplinary centre for teaching and research based at both the University of Wollongong and the University of Newcastle in Australia. It aims to deepen the understanding of the processes of social transformation in the Asia Pacific region. Migration is a central area of research, particularly in the 'Labour and Mobility' and 'Citizenship and Identity' programmes.

URL: <http://www.capstrans.edu.au/>

❖ **Arabic states**

1. EMHRN (The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network)

Founded in 1997 in response to the Barcelona Declaration and the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, EMHRN is a network of more than 80 human rights organisations, institutions and individuals based in 30 countries in the region. Its secretariat is based in Copenhagen with a branch office in Brussels and project officers based in Rabat and Amman.

URL: <http://www.euromedrights.net/>

2. ANND (The Arab NGOs Network for Development)

Founded in 1996, ANND is an advocacy group comprising 45 network and non-governmental organization from 12 Arab countries. Its activity aims to increase coordination within Arab civil societies, and between Arab civil society groups and international organizations and networks. It also organises meetings on an international and regional levels.

URL: <http://www.annd.org>

❖ **Africa**

1. NOMRA (The Network on Migration Research in Africa)

Launched in 1998 at a regional UNESCO meeting in Gaborone in Botswana, but currently defunct, NOMRA was expected to focus on the complex causes of population movements, especially those related to poverty, structural adjustment programmes and migration as a survival strategy in Africa. A policy think-tank on migration is needed in the region.

2. SAMP (South African Migration Project)

Founded in 1996, SAMP is an international network linking organizations in Canada and six South African states committed to collaborative research on migration issues in the South African Development Community (SADC) region.

URL: <http://www.queensu.ca/samp/>

Annex II: Some Illustrations of Good Practices

A selection of good practices can help us to point out the work that is already being carried out for the integration of migrants at a municipal level.

The important issues that could be addressed are:

❖ Consultation and Harmonisation among Local Actors and through Other Levels of Government

Berlin's Regional State Advisory Board for Integration and Migration Issues brings together government, civil society, business and migrants groups, so that it can provide an appropriate platform allowing these actors to participate in Berlin's integration and migration policies. As for Tijuana in Mexico, the three levels of government - federal, state and local - contribute to migrant integration in two ways. Their social programmes directly assist the underprivileged. They also provide financial support as well as other types of support to local NGOs assisting low-income families. Foreign migrants benefit from both types of public sector intervention in a variety of ways.

❖ Integration through Politics and Political Participation

Basel, a city in northern Switzerland, chose to integrate migrants through politics, since the election of five migrants from Turkey to the Basel City parliament. This case represents one of the possibilities for political participation, namely, access to the democratic process that, in turn, fosters social cohesion.

❖ The empowerment of unauthorized immigrants' rights

In Southern CA, many movements on behalf of unauthorized immigrants can be observed. Civic and religious institutions play an important role to integrate the immigrants in urban space by means of the day labourer centres in the cities like LA and Costa Mesa, or the "sanctuary cities" especially in the city of Maywood.

The former measure, intended to provide support and services to immigrants, is spreading in CA as the courts ruled that soliciting work on a public street is a constitutional right for day labourers regardless of their legal status. Actually, the labourers won a victory in LA, where the City Council took up a proposed ordinance in late 2005 that would require all large home improvement stores to build hiring sites for day labourers. As for Costa Mesa, the day labourer centre, which opened in 1988, was closed in March 2005, paradoxically because of the immigrants' visibility given by the centre.

The latter measure, sanctuary cities, was adopted for the first time by Maywood's City Council in March 2006. In Maywood city, 96% of the residents are Latinos, 70% are not citizens, and almost half are foreign-born. As a sanctuary city for undocumented immigrants, Maywood had already voted in January 2006 to oppose H.R.4437, a federal bill being debated at that time in Congress, which would have made it a crime to be in the U.S. without authorization, and for organizations, individuals or cities to provide services to undocumented persons: footsteps followed by other city councils (e.g. LA) even if the principal reason for this refusal to enforce H.R.4437 was financial.