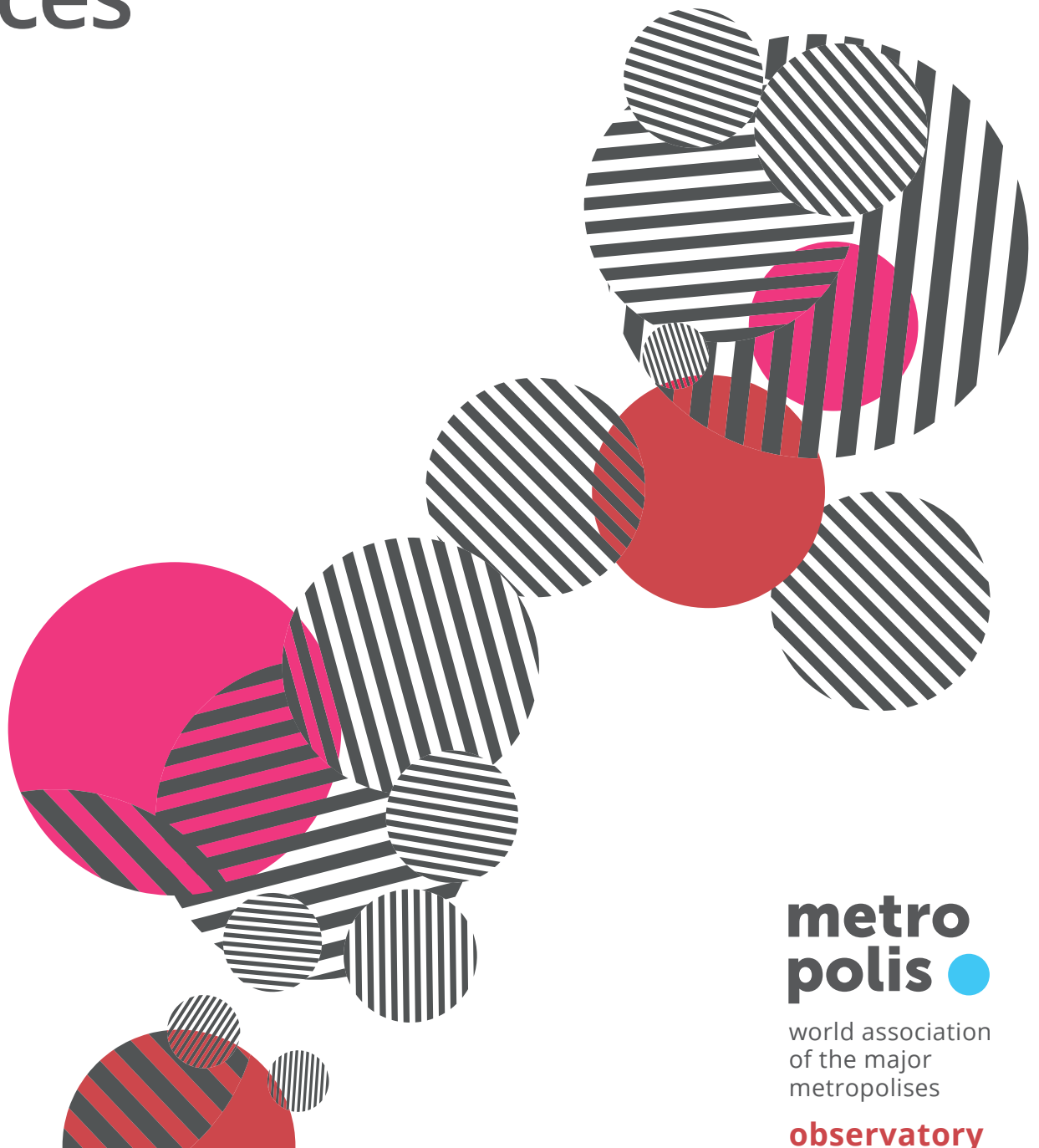


Metropolis Observatory
AL-LAs Alliance

09

ISSUE PAPER

The internationalisation of metropolitan spaces



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polis** ●
world association
of the major
metropolises
observatory

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Introduction

As it currently stands, local policy management and the exercise of the corresponding powers by local government entails the need to build connections with international stakeholders and incorporate them in this field. In conjunction with this, international agendas are settings for decision-making in which representation, visibility and influence must be put into practice, taking into account the repercussions and challenges that result from decisions taken in the local sphere.

However, in a context of scarce resources and pressing social and economic challenges, outside action cannot be seen as a "luxury" by local governments, and must instead be seen as a robust and effective mechanism to provide citizens with better living conditions. In a dynamic in which major cities and metropolitan areas stand to gain from their participation in the international arena, what can these cities and areas provide global citizens in return?

Recent changes to the international action of local governments are the result of several concurrent phenomena. Not only are we observing an exponential growth of international activism, but an evolution of how local governments relate to the rest of the world. The latter include the increasing professionalisation of local government offices of international relations, and a broadening of focus, no longer

restricting local government as beneficiaries or donors of international cooperation, but also as stakeholders involved in the global agenda. Internationalisation has gradually gained cross-cutting space within the institutional, political, and territorial objectives of local administrations, moving towards becoming strategic action and, eventually, public policy.

This document addresses the international action taken by major cities and metropolitan areas from the framework of their legal, political and administrative actions, their conception and design as strategy and public policy, and their implementation, measurement, evaluation and communication. This issue paper is based, in essence, on the reflections made by the Euro-Latin American Alliance for Cooperation between Cities (AL-LAs) in its collection of publications, as well as the conclusions of debates held by the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) as part of the previous two editions of the seminar "Metropolitan Area Internationalisation Strategies", held in 2016 and 2019.

This publication aims to contribute towards knowledge management about international action in metropolitan spaces, inviting reflection on the contributions that metropolises can make to the planet, and presenting new ideas to the debate on international action taken by local governments.



Octavi de la Varga
Secretary General of Metropolis



A public policy under construction

From a legal standpoint, local governments have yet to be recognised as stakeholders in international relations.

Their actions generally lie in a grey area within a framework that varies substantially from one country to the next—and sometimes even within the same country—depending on the legislation in force. Although local governments may be considered to have the capacity for external intervention, they face the limitations of the sphere of their legal standing and are unable to “coordinate” the powers traditionally held by nation-states in matters of international relations. Nevertheless, faced with their lack of recognition in the field of international law, subnational entities tend to rely on the

> **Seoul operates in the international sphere through its International Cooperation Bureau, an office with 40 employees and a budget of \$10 million that is divided into three different sections: International Relations, Global Urban Partnerships and External Cooperation (Photo by Jeonguk on Unsplash).**



principle of local autonomy, extending this scope of action to the international sphere, in search of a practical and theoretical legitimisation of their involvement.

The international action of local governments (IALG), which comes in response to factors that are both intrinsic and external to cities, tends to compensate for the effects of globalisation on their metropolitan areas, to take advantage of the benefits of interaction with the outside world and, most importantly to strengthen the development of the local area in a cross-cutting way. This action is usually marked by variable objectives and a multidimensional means of operation in a context that can be characterised by competition and/or cooperation between local governments.

In addition to improving legal provisions to provide the IALG with greater legal security, while also ensuring the sustainability of their actions, local governments are strengthening themselves on an institutional level to ensure they have suitable administrative structures in place such as international relations offices (IROs), which allow them to manage their international actions in a professional way while raising awareness among political leaders and citizens.

IROs establish institutional and operational relationships with other local government departments and agencies so that they can carry out cross-cutting actions. In other words, this means accomplishing the task of articulating international action strategy and sectoral policies, in order to provide them with added value from a fully-integrated perspective. On the other hand, IROs can work together across different levels of government acting in the same area (especially within the framework of metropolitan spaces), creating mechanisms and spaces for coordination between governments, as well as better connections with changing local stakeholders.



Source: Mexico City

The first Political Constitution of Mexico City. Article 20 of the constitution, titled “Global City”, places the task of strengthening and diversifying the city’s international relations on a constitutional level. The “Global CDMX Declaration” was signed in 2018 as a political statement in which the Mexican capital acknowledges its position as a stakeholder with global responsibility and leadership involved in proposing solutions and implementing actions to meet the challenges facing humanity, based on dialogue and international cooperation.

Another key element is explicit support from relevant political representatives or the highest authority in the ruling government. This should give the local area an international dimension and show it as one of the key aspects for the vision for development on its agenda. This support will guarantee the ability to take action on a local and international level, in addition to ensuring financial resources and the chance to support local public policies through the impact of international action and vice versa.

However, there are still relatively few local governments with strategic planning instruments who see international relations as a public policy. Many local governments carry out their external actions without real planning, without a strategic and integral vision, and without the necessary resources and participation of local stakeholders.

When the objectives and means of international action are not clearly and explicitly formulated, this means that the process, in many cases, is reduced to a series of punctual, reactive and uncoordinated interventions, which are generally the result of requests from different departments within local government or international actors. As a result, this produces dispersed and limited international actions, without a thematic or geographical focus, and without an understanding of local government as a whole.

Developing a public policy for international action requires a change in the vision and positioning of certain metropolitan spaces in terms of how they see themselves. From this starting point, a metropolitan public policy for international action should:

- 1.** Materialise the political will of local government to intervene as a global stakeholder, putting into practice an international relations strategy that has clear objectives, concrete actions and defined deadlines. It is important to ensure that the objectives and lines of action for public policy are aligned with the strategic plan for city development within a determined time frame, while being accepted by the entire institution in a cross-cutting way.
- 2.** Determine the framework for internationalisation, which should be the result of an analysis of the specific characteristics (cultural, economic, natural, geographical, etc.) of a particular region, as well as identifying its priorities. Strategic planning and the central concepts of internationalisation must be based on a coherent vision of the region. This involves a discussion on the role that local governments want to play on an international level, and an awareness of the opportunities and risks posed by each context. The framework should aim to convey and/or reinforce a “city model”.



> The international actions taken by the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB) are a cross-cutting tool to support its public policy agenda, framed within the institution's overall strategy through its International Relations and Cooperation Department, as specified in the city's Metropolitan Action Plan (PAM) for 2016-2019. (Source: Barcelona Metropolitan Area).

> In 2019, the Municipality of Cordoba put forward a project titled "Multisectoral Governance for the Sustainable Internalisation of the City of Cordoba". The project defined the objectives for the city's internationalisation process through a series of round tables with a range of public and private organisations and institutions on a local, national and/or international level, with the understanding that the city goes beyond local government. (Source: Municipality of Cordoba).

3.

Be structured around guidelines that have been consulted, discussed and agreed upon, and that are accepted by a range of different sectors in society. This will guarantee the legitimacy and continuity of the policy.

4.

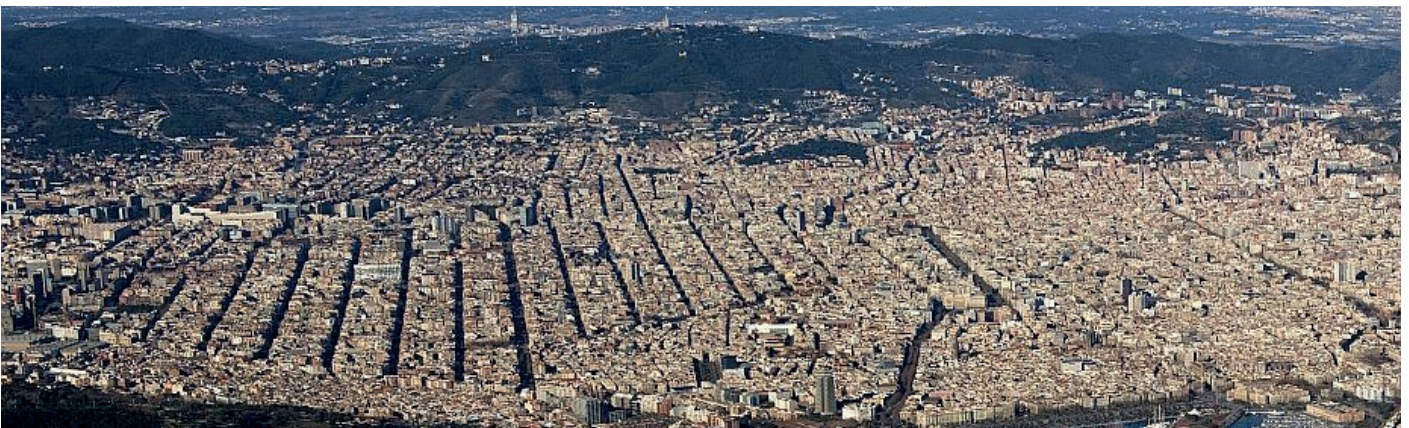
Be measurable and flexible, so that the objectives and framework of internationalisation can adapt and evolve according to their progress, surroundings and any events that have an impact on the area. If you can't measure it, you can't improve it.

5.

Aim to achieve cross-cutting actions at the heart of the local governments involved, and must be able to support the different strategies and sectoral programmes carried out by different departments on an international level, finding a way to strengthen these strategies through the added value provided by internationalisation. The objective is to remember that public policy for international action must be at the service of other public policies from local government.

6.

Be in synch with the global agenda, which requires a certain knowledge of global trends, how they impact the region and how they can be influenced and/or benefited from.



Collaboration, coordination and complementarity

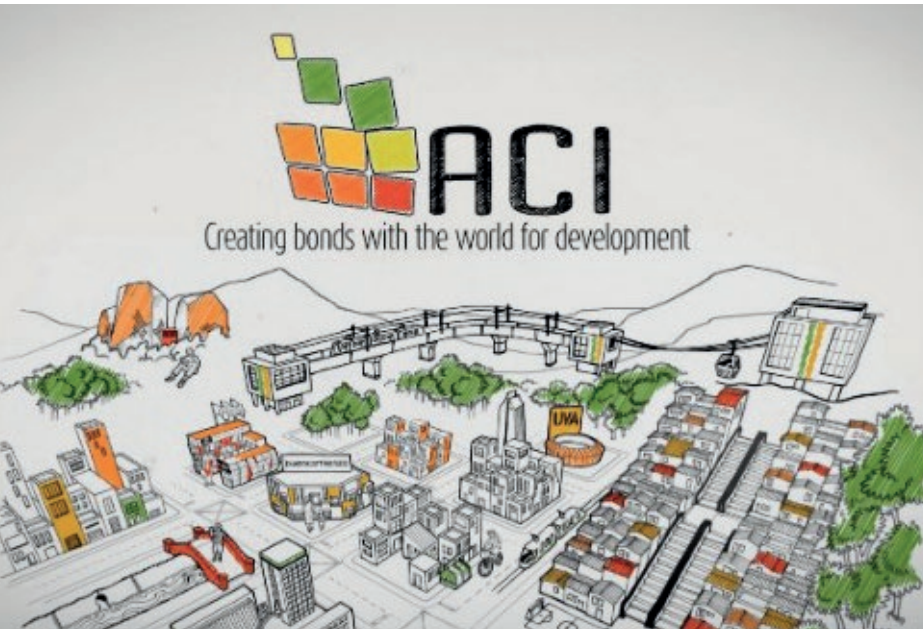
The interests of different levels of government operating in a metropolitan area (local, metropolitan, provincial, regional and national governments, etc.) are extremely important when developing the international strategies for each metropolis, while also creating challenges, as they require cross-cutting relationships and nodal connections both within the institutional framework itself, and with stakeholders within the region and elsewhere. Accordingly, a constant exercise of governance is needed on a multilevel and multi-stakeholder scale across the region, in which local governments take into account the broad scope of the stakeholders carrying out international activities within their own field of interest and competence. There are six groups of key stakeholders that metropolitan governments need to relate to as part of their institutional effort around the strategic process of internationalisation:

- 1.** Private companies: investors, business associations, trade unions, chambers of commerce, etc.
- 2.** Academia: universities, research centres, etc.
- 3.** Citizens
- 4.** Diplomatic missions/consulates
- 5.** International cooperation agencies, networks or other organisations based in the region
- 6.** The media

These stakeholders have their own agendas, which in some cases may be stronger than local government agendas, although they are usually independent initiatives. Metropolises are called on to act as connection points and to lead participatory activities with the goal of developing a strategy that articulates and complements the efforts made by local government alongside stakeholders in the region; in order to have a greater impact by taking advantage of opportunities in the surrounding area. It is important to know who is doing what, and to act in a coordinated manner. This allows cities to get closer to the diverse, differential and inclusive nature they need to take into account when building a strategy that provides a solid foundation for internationalisation. Internationalisation must be diverse and citizen-based.

This participation can be channelled through existing participatory mechanisms, or can open up the opportunity to build ad hoc structures, which make it possible for stakeholders to offer opinions, participate and collaborate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of internationalisation strategy.

It is important to note that the participation of local stakeholders provides added value, legitimacy and political interest to the international actions taken by metropolises, when compared to the traditional activity of national governments. In governance relations, stakeholders are identified, called to action, persuaded and brought together so that they collaborate with the process of internationalisation in the region, from the perspective of their own agendas, working towards harmo-



> The Agency for Cooperation and Investment (ACI) for the Medellín Metropolitan Area (Source: ACI).

nisation and complementarity that produces added value and a shared international narrative. Governance of this kind supports the sustainability of public policy.

Since 2002, the Agency for Cooperation and Investment for the **Medellín Metropolitan Area** (ACI) has brought together four public service bodies (Medellín Mayor's Office, Medellín Public Companies, and the Metropolitan Area of Valle de Aburrá and Emvarias), developing channels for dialogue between the business and production sectors of the city, as well as with universities and civil society organisations.

Finally, these governance frameworks can act as a suitable context for reflection on how to address and follow up on the negative effects or externalities that can result from international action. These negative effects may include issues related to mass tourism, pollution caused by the intensive use of airports and ports, gentrification, and so on. These externalities, which are barely addressed in internationalisation processes, require fundamental attention, as well as shared and coordinated responses to mitigate their negative effects.

Implementing international strategies

Implementing international strategies offers as many possibilities as the management capacity allows. In other words, it can be multidimensional and have various objectives. The first series of objectives focuses on extending the reach of the region abroad, while promoting and marketing it, and thus improving its image, visibility and "attractiveness". The aim is to provide the metropolitan area with international prestige, in order to attract external resources such as financial capital, companies, highly-qualified labour, investment, tourists, international events and more.

The second series of objectives relates to the goal of exchanging experiences and knowledge with other metropolitan areas. The reason behind this is that local governments are interested in establishing frequent exchanges with regions that face similar issues, in order to compare solutions and learn how to improve their public policies on a reciprocal basis. These knowledge exchanges may produce direct benefits on metropolitan areas, since they help optimise project implementation schedules by identifying high-risk processes and pinpointing the best opportunities from planning to implementation.

The third series of objectives relates to the goal of carrying out actions in solidarity fight against inequality through cooperation actions that may involve mobilising technical departments within local government. These interventions may aim at building up the institution, protecting the environment, gender policies, mobility, participatory democracy, and other

purposes. Throughout this field, there is a progressive evolution in terms of cooperation, from the typical transfer of financial aid to beneficiary entities, to a consolidation of the institutional, political and technical skills of the administrations involved.

Beyond these three types of objectives, international intervention may also be understood as a reciprocal action, one that seeks to generate openness and have an impact on citizens' awareness of other cultures and societies around the world. These are linked to the external reach of local cultural, educational and sports associations, while valuing international cultural diversity. By encouraging interactions between cultures, large metropolises can succeed in boosting the prosperity and quality of life of their citizens.

Furthermore, there are other objectives aimed both at defending local interests and encouraging global-impact actions. First and foremost, these objectives take the form of strategic networks and

alliances between local governments, in which the political leadership of the constituency of local and regional governments is strengthened across international scenarios. There are currently several multilateral agendas that have an impact on metropolises and their public policies. Therefore, metropolitan spaces can position themselves and take the lead in terms of mobilising and standing up for the priorities of their territories.

All of these objectives are the culmination of different perspectives, political goals and visions of the city that are not necessarily contradictory, but can be pursued concomitantly or consecutively. The wide-ranging objectives defined by the public policy on internationalisation determine the different means of action.

> U20 is an initiative that was launched in 2017 by the Head of Government of Buenos Aires and the Paris Mayor's Office, convened by C40 and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). U20 aims to develop a joint position between the leaders of global urban centres to inform and enrich the discussions between G20 nations. U20 takes the shape of an annual summit held in the G20 host country prior to the meeting between heads of state, and it receives support from Metropolis, which has acted as an Advisory Partner since its first edition. (Source: UCLG).



Means of implementation

> Dakar will host the 2022 Summer Youth Olympics. Through the "City Modernisation Programme", the city hopes to translate the tangible benefits of organising the games, such as the development of new infrastructure, into further intangible positives, such as social inclusion and better access to education and job opportunities. Dakar 2022 will showcase how cities can use sport as a driver for sustainable development and as an opportunity to present the very best of Africa on the world stage. (Source: olympic.org).

Depending on the different forms that the IALG can take and their respective objectives, there are some means that can be executed within the boundaries of the territory of the local government, while others require implementation abroad. Both arise in response to the centrality that is key to the IALG.

Locally implemented international actions include transformations in urban infrastructures to become more attractive or competitive and attain, conferences, tourism, investment and talent.

In addition, they encourage an appreciation of the pre-existing international cultural diversity of the territory. These are the most tangible and immediate actions

within the internationalisation of local governments, and fall in line with the objective of expanding reach abroad and encouraging economic development.

Towards this end, most metropolises seek to improve their international visibility and reputation through communication strategies that associate their "brand" with values such as solidarity, innovation, sustainable development, and quality of life, among others. They invest on multilingual informational websites and online platforms, newsletters, magazines, customer service and monitoring hotlines, for national and international media, aimed at strengthening the international recognition of the institution in charge of their government.

On the other hand, the means that require interactions abroad, known as "regional or city diplomacy", can be carried out in several different ways, as detailed below:



> Montevideo is a founding member of Mercociudades, the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities (UCCI) and the Coalition of Cities against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia. Today, Montevideo holds the positions of Co-President and Regional Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean in Metropolis, as well as acting as Vice-President of the UCLG.



Cooperation

Certain metropolises are reference points for different areas and have a vast cooperation network, engaging in South-South or triangular cooperation in which other local, national and international stakeholders can also become involved. In the current context, in which the challenges of sustainable development are increasingly urban in scope and require a regional approach, this form of cooperation is increasingly important.

Direct cooperation projects may take place between different types of local government and are an important aspect within the scope of IALG. In conceptual terms, they fall within the field of development cooperation.

Sister cities

Agreements between “sister cities” create two-way social relationships, which are supposed to be stable and long-lasting, and to go beyond short-term cooperation projects. For instance, the city of Guangzhou stands out in this regard, as it has been forging

this type of agreements with cities around the world since 1979 (currently, with 76 cities). Although this type of relationship may evolve into some concrete projects, it is being reconsidered as it may often be limited to symbolic exchanges.

Multilateral relations

Multilateral relations consist on participation in networks made up of members that share common institutional profiles and objectives. Such networks bring together administrations interested in exchanging experiences and knowledge to collaborate in a given field of local public policy (thematic networks) and/or in carrying out advocacy, negotiation and lobbying activities (political networks). Networks of local and regional governments have played a key role in consolidating constituencies from different countries, generating horizontal relationship dynamics, identifying good practices to improve public policies and boosting communities of knowledge.

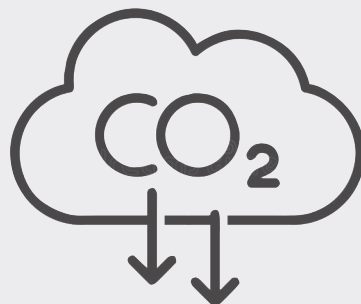
These networks have also managed to become spokespersons, opinion groups and lobbyists, when dealing with higher levels of government to face general problems, and have an impact on global agendas. The work of Metropolis, UCLG, ICLEI, C40, CLGF and AIMF, among other networks, has opened up new spaces and made it possible to express the concerns of local governments in global decision-making spheres.

On the other hand, “city alliances” represent a new form of multilateral work between a small number of cities, in which the objective may be more politically charged—not as a result of the exchange of experiences, but rather through organised lobbying. As forms of innovative advocacy, alliances define and defend a shared position, in order to act in a



30

**metropolises that are
members of C40**



reduced emissions by

22%

During the C40 summit held in Copenhagen in 2019, the leaders of thirty metropolises announced encouraging results in reducing CO² emissions.

coordinated way and increase the global reach of their proposals.

The emergence of an alliance may be political in nature at first, while seeking to influence international agendas. Alternatively, it could be the result of a rejection of an external event or measure that central governments, or international organisations, wish to impose.

Local and regional government alliances can also be formed through the awareness of a common risk caused by a given phenomenon with a direct impact on the local territory, which requires urgent and innovative measures to be tackled. In this case, the cohesive element is a factor that, although specific to the local reality, is shared across different locations, and, as such, can generate shared commitments.

In an independent and international context, acting within a multilevel governance



> Some cities in the USA and Europe, such as Barcelona (photo), have rejected national or subnational policies that are not in line with minimum numbers for accepting refugees, by offering to welcome them. (Source: Barcelona City Council).

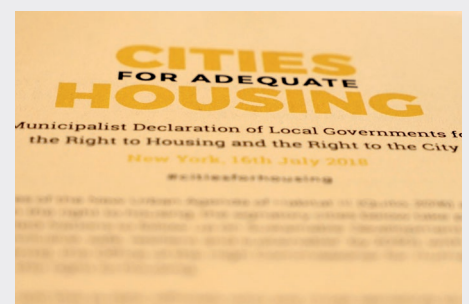


> Montréal has a strategic framework for international relations that reflects the diversity of its objectives and the multidimensionality of operating in the field of international action (Source: ville.montreal.qc.ca.).

framework becomes not an option for major cities and metropolitan areas, but a priority. Problems can neither be solved through centralism, nor through a localist vision. In order to advance towards the development of a regional perspective for policies, we need to ensure that the agendas designed have a local or metropolitan vision. In this regard, networks and alliances of local and regional governments are fundamentally important.

Evidently, the capacity of such networks or alliances to influence global agendas will be determined by how important the international community deems them to make real, material contributions to its objectives. Accordingly, metropolises and their networks must develop mechanisms that allow them to share their knowledge on the local context and their expertise in public policy management in major global discussions.

The "Cities for Adequate Housing" alliance, mobilised by a group of local governments and led by the city of Barcelona and the World Secretariat of the UCLG, aims to stop international financial speculation in the real estate sector on a local level. The alliance resulted in a political declaration made by the UCLG at the UN headquarters during the High-Level Political Forum held in 2018. As of today, 15 Metropolis members have already signed up to the declaration, which is still open to both institutions and individuals through the website citiesforhousing.org



Source: UCLG

The impact of metropolises on the world

An internationalisation strategy must lead to tangible, measurable and evaluable results. The measurement and evaluation of international action strategy are tools that allow us to assess the relevance and effectiveness of our policies, and to receive feedback in relation to implement and facilitate informed decision-making. They also allow us to identify opportunities for improvement and to make the necessary corrections on time; to have support from communication and public accountability; to follow up on proposed objectives; to have reliable information on the development of public policy and its impact on quality of life; and lastly, to share knowledge with other local governments. To achieve this, it is essential to identify physical and IT requirements, as well as the methods for gathering information storing, using and sharing available data.

The challenge in measuring the IALG lies on defining realistic key performance indicators (KPIs) aimed at learning and permanently improving public policies. From this perspective it is possible to identify three basic levels: a regional or strategic level (associated with developing plans, strategies and defining regional priorities); a political or agenda level (linked to institutional policies, programmes and the strategic objectives of local government's development plan); and an institutional or operational level (related to the sectoral execution of projects and to the management of the IRO).

Currently, most evaluation tools with technical standards tend to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Some of the most frequently-used tools by local governments are KPIs, impact assessments, process evaluations, good practice systematisation and scorecards.

The way the IAGL is evaluated should also move towards measuring any negative externalities, as well as including measures to mitigate their effects. These externalities may include gentrification resulting from the city being open to international real estate investment; labour market conditioning as a result of excessive specialisation (tourism or hosting fairs and conferences, for example); or pollution caused by heavy traffic to ports and airports.

This evaluation must be planned and incorporated from the outset when designing public policy and, as such, must be thought of as a cross-cutting issue. It should not be based only on IROs, and should instead be carried out across all areas involved through a solid battery of KPIs. This allows us not only to measure impact, but also to share and offer visibility to all the actions carried out. A meticulous process of monitoring and evaluation can lead to an internationalisation strategy that can be maintained, readjusted and modified over time, increasing its chances of sustainability.

Communication: a cross-cutting factor for legitimising public policy

Communication is a cross-cutting aspect that encourages the democratisation of public policy design and management. It has the potential to share policies and make them more visible, as well as to shape perceptions and opinions of citizens, the media and decision-makers. Similarly, it allows knowledge to be shared.

Sometimes the internationalisation of metropolises is not accompanied by a clear, cross-cutting and defined communication strategy based on long-term objectives. Communication tends to be seen as a factor that is external to public policy, linked only to sharing results and specific activities, and as such, it is usually taken into account at the very end of the process.

Building a communication and visibility strategy is a cross-cutting element for an IRO. The strategy must clearly define the objectives, messages, audiences, activities and actions over both the short- and long-term, as well as consider how they will be reviewed and evaluated. Similarly, communication must be carried out autonomously to be present in all the cycles of public.

Therefore, it would be conducive to the process of metropolitan internationalisation if cities were to develop alliances with media that has a global reach. This would enable cities to share messages to a greater number of people and a wider variety of audiences. Seeking relationships with “global media” can have a greater impact on public opinion, as the media is seen as a “validating actor” that moulds perspectives and opinion.

Impactful communication that raises awareness about the positive effects of public policy on international action is fundamental, so that these policies to be understood and legitimised by citizens, the private sector, the institution of local government itself and political representatives. Taking ownership of the achievements made by international action and making a connection between “outcomes and incomes” can be a guarantee of continuity and will ensure support from stakeholders. Accordingly, a systematic and technical effort towards communication and visibility will allow cities to put the necessary conditions in place for the implementation and durability of their international strategy within a favourable framework.



Recommendations

- **Develop public policies for international action, not using international action for politics.** International action should be interpreted not as an end in itself, but as a tool, aimed at achieving regional development objectives, while consolidating other public policies from the perspective of strategic planning.
- **Reduce “reactive internationalisation” and move towards “planned internationalisation”, understood as a general strategic aspect within the metropolitan space.** Carrying out a specific planning exercise to define the objectives, tools and strategies for internationalisation in the metropolitan area, while strengthening other local public policies in parallel, is recommended.
- **Build strategic action within suitable or favourable legal, administrative and political frameworks.** Before starting to review the legal framework in a given country, it would be advisable to carefully study the situation at hand and the internal balance of power to see if it can be guaranteed that the process will lead to the core objectives.
- **Finding the best way to unite efforts and improve coordination and representation models in the internationalisation process.** The aim is to mitigate any disparity that may exist between the systems of government in metropolitan contexts and the institutional fragmentation that characterises them, and which may have negative consequences on their internationalisation process.
- **Guaranteeing local governance throughout the process of the public policy on internationalisation.** International action must seek to ensure the cross-cutting nature of any initiatives taken within the structure of local government, by establishing institutional and operational relationships with other departments that allow it to promote and carry out increasingly holistic actions.
- **Take into consideration the variety of local stakeholders carrying out international activities within their own fields of interest and competence.** This shows the need to create a participatory dynamic of collaboration, coordination and complementarity

among the stakeholders operating in the international sphere from the metropolis, whether public or private. Creating ad hoc coordination structures, where necessary.

- **Continuing to build horizontal, bidirectional and nodal cooperation** frameworks that collectively position the challenges that metropolises have to face, as well as generating cooperation synergies that create more added value than competition.
- **Turning the IAGL into a tool that promotes local development, based on regional strategies and priorities;** while maintaining an awareness of the trends of global agendas and the tools to influence and take advantage of them. Large metropolises must develop the capacity to join forces and create a strong foundation for a critical mass that allows them to give their opinion and have an impact.
- **Measuring factors including the regional,** political and institutional scale of international action.
- **Making internationalisation visible by including communications on internationalisation policy as a cross-cutting framework.** Raising awareness of the positive impact of internationalisation can lead to stakeholders backing, legitimising and supporting the process.
- **Paying attention to the externalities and negative effects of the internationalisation process** and their cost for the region, as well as reflecting on and specifying who will be the beneficiaries of the internationalisation process. It is important to examine the full content and impacts of international action in metropolises in order to implement measures that respond to and mitigate any negative effects.



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AL-LAS (Euro-Latin American Alliance for Cooperation between Cities) has the mission of strengthening international relations between local governments in Latin America and Europe, their networks and associations, in order to improve the quality of their public policies and regional development. Over the course of the last 6 years, first as a cooperation project and then as an alliance, AL-LAS has consolidated itself as a network that encourages experiences and innovation, with an increasing number of active cities internationally and a reputation as a key hub for reflection, analysis, research, thought and impact on the phenomenon of internationalisation in the local arena.

This publication was written by Paola Arjona, Technical Director of AL-LAS, and Santiago Betancur, member of the community of experts at AL-LAS.

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