

## NEWS



### **METROPOLIS Youth kicks off in Mashhad**

Between last June 24 and 27, the city of **Mashhad** welcomed young citizens to debate the main structure and activities of METROPOLIS Youth, the new sphere of action of our association, which will be officially launched in the 11<sup>th</sup> METROPOLIS World Congress in Hyderabad.

Organized by Mashhad's Young Consultants Group, with the support of the city's International Scientific Cooperation Office, the METROPOLIS Youth Strategic Meeting served to establish an action plan for METROPOLIS Youth for the next three years, to be integrated with the METROPOLIS 2015-2017 Action Plan.

The young citizens of Mashhad, Berlin and São Paulo who joined the meeting worked intensely during four days to draft the common values, objectives and activities of METROPOLIS Youth, based on a light operational structure headed by the Mashhad municipality.

In 2013, Mashhad made a proposal to lead a new section for the activities of METROPOLIS, seeking to respond to the global trends of rapidly increasing urbanization and population growth, both taking place, mostly, in developing countries. And as METROPOLIS turns 30 years old, the question arises: who is going to live in and manage the biggest cities of the world in 30 years from now? METROPOLIS Youth, therefore, is going to be dedicated to the promotion of mutual and intergenerational learning and the improvement of urban well-being in the future.

The leadership from Mashhad is not casual: the second largest city of Iran, and one of METROPOLIS' most active members, has a growing young population, representing more than 60% of its citizens (the average age is of 29 years old). With the approval of the METROPOLIS Board of Directors to lead METROPOLIS Youth in the past METROPOLIS Annual Meeting in Johannesburg, the Municipality of Mashhad was able to establish, within its administration, an office with a dedicated team for METROPOLIS Youth, who is going to coordinate its activities along with the METROPOLIS Secretariat General, hopefully with the growing support of other METROPOLIS members and partners.

**Objectives of METROPOLIS Youth**  
in 30 years from now?  
mutual and Board of  
Directors in October):

Identify and study the  
different models of youth  
participation developed by  
the METROPOLIS members.  
Give visibility of good  
practices of youth  
participation among  
Metropolis member cities

Contribute to the global  
debate on youth  
participation in urban issues

Empower youth as future  
urban leaders of  
metropolises with an  
international outlook

Ensure that METROPOLIS  
Youth is represented in all  
the activities of the  
association and promote  
intergenerational learning.

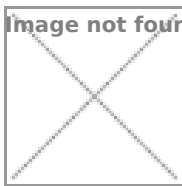
Through METROPOLIS Youth, Mashhad also wants to bring light to its model of cooperation with educated young people, who are periodically selected to take roles in the administration of the city through its Young Consultants Group (YCG). Mirroring the structure of the Municipality of Mashhad, the YCG offers mentoring programs to the young professionals and dialogues with every department of the administration, bringing new ideas to better manage the city. Eventually, the opportunity of working at the YCG opens paths for the young professionals to start successful careers not only in the municipality, but also in private companies or academic institutions. “This model works very well in a city with high levels of literacy and education, which is the case of Mashhad”, explained Mr. Saeed Ghasemi, professor of the University of Astan Quds Razavi and former head of the YCG, who presented Mashhad’s youth cooperation model to the meeting participants.

In addition to the close work with the YCG, the Municipality of Mashhad also invests in online participation tools to engage its citizens. Through the website “**Idea City**”, which was developed and is managed by the YCG staff, anyone can register to bring new ideas for the administration of Mashhad. Online since 2012, the website has more than 20 thousand registered ideas from more than three thousand citizens. Currently, 120 ideas are on track of implementation, from the design of public spaces to the provision of public utilities and more agile urban management.

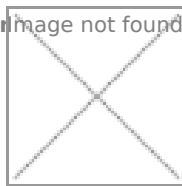
The meeting in Mashhad also served to brainstorm ideas on how to launch and promote METROPOLIS Youth during the 11<sup>th</sup> METROPOLIS World Congress in Hyderabad, with dynamic activities which can trigger the engagement of more METROPOLIS members and partners. “This meeting was core to establish a common understanding of the goals that the members of METROPOLIS will be able to accomplish through METROPOLIS Youth, which is already bringing new energy and ideas for our association as a whole”, said Alain Le Saux, the Secretary General of METROPOLIS in his letter of appreciation to the mayor of Mashhad, Mr. Solat Mortazavi.

From now on, METROPOLIS Youth wants to showcase not only the example of Mashhad, but also to bring to light the other METROPOLIS member cities that prioritize youth participation and empowerment in their management. The next step of METROPOLIS Youth is to identify in every member of our association successful initiatives with youth. Please check back the METROPOLIS website for future updates, because new activities are coming soon.

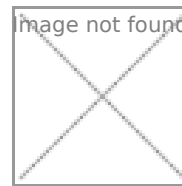
**If at this point if your city already has some good practices on youth participation and empowerment to share, please feel free to join the discussions on the METROPOLIS Youth LinkedIn group, or contact the team of METROPOLIS Youth in Mashhad:**



**Hossein Kashiri**  
Head of METROPOLIS Youth



**Salman Alehasan**  
Secretary of METROPOLIS Youth



**Samira Esmaeelzadeh**  
METROPOLIS Youth Expert

[Click here to check more pictures of the meeting in Mashhad](#)