



A look back on
World Metropolitan Day 2021

metropolis ●

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Urban
OCTOBER
31 DAYS OF PROMOTING
A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

WORLD METROPOLITAN DAY 2021

Metropolitan spaces are where a growing number of the world's people live, work and play – hubs of culture and innovation that generate 60% of the world's economic output. They're also where the world's biggest challenges, such as urban growth, social segregation and the climate emergency, are most deeply felt.

World Metropolitan Day is the leading global campaign led by Metropolis and UN-Habitat promoting collective action to build more equitable, resilient and prosperous metropolises.

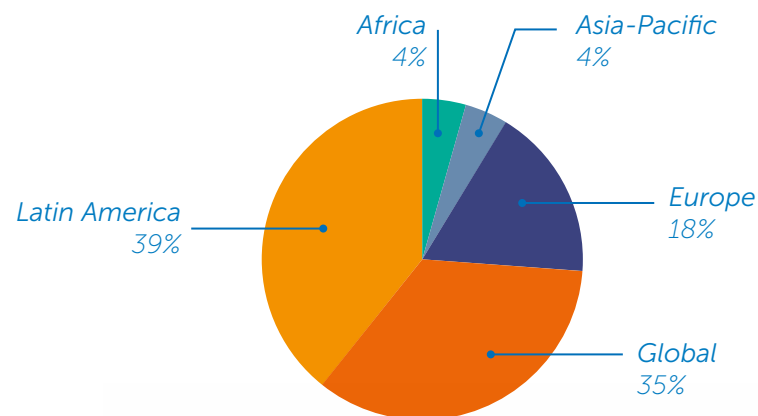
It commemorates, on October 7, the adoption of the Montreal Declaration on Metropolitan Areas. Since 2018, Metropolis and UN-Habitat promote a better urban future by advancing World Metropolitan Day in the framework of Urban October.

+25 events and activities were organised from 1 to 12 October all over the world to commemorate World Metropolitan Day

+30 cities, metropolitan areas, universities and international organisations organised activities to celebrate World Metropolitan Day

Most events had a [global perspective](#) and engaged organisations, local and metropolitan governments, civil society and urban thinkers from all over the globe

Activities per region



VOICES OF THE WORLD METROPOLITAN DAY



Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montreal

"Economic relaunch needs to be green and inclusive. We need cities designed for and by citizens, cities that leave no one behind and Montreal is fully committed to taking action in this direction".



Ricardo Nunes, Mayor of São Paulo

"The effects of the pandemic are the greatest obstacle to be overcome by cities & metropolitan regions across the planet. Events, such as World Metropolitan Day, are essential to face local & metropolitan challenges".



Mario Durán, Mayor of San Salvador

"It is time to restructure metropolitan territories, promote the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda to globally end poverty & face the climate emergency".



Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo

"Urban resilience implies transforming the challenges of our cities into opportunities that guarantee inhabitants' rights, based on tolerance, solidarity and respect for diversity".



Pablo Javkin, Mayor of Rosario

"To create more caring & resilient cities, we need a community that connects all levels of government and integrates diverse actors. We also need a holistic approach to care that includes all people".



Laura Pérez Castaño,
Deputy Mayor of Barcelona

"Metropolitan spaces are fundamental for guaranteeing social rights and care for all. Now more than ever, it is time to build caring and feminist metropolises".

WMD 2021 AROUND THE WORLD

1 OCTOBER

METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: MODELS OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE

A learning programme on **Metropolitan Governance in Africa** was launched in collaboration with UCLG-Africa and based on the training module *Metropolitan Governance with a Gender Perspective* designed by Metropolis. This first webinar analysed different models of metropolitan governments in Africa and globally, whilst providing insights on how to implement a gender perspective at the metropolitan level.

Did you know that voluntary cooperation among municipalities is the most common model of metropolitan governance in Africa?

African metropolises...

- have a slightly higher degree of coordination compared to other world regions and a lower level of fragmentation.
- have a lower share of elected women in local government than the world average (24% in African regions vs 28.7% in the world).
- Keeping up with the provision of basic services, infrastructure, health, social and transport services is a challenge for African urban governments due to rapid urban growth.

Recommendations

- Data shows that metropolisation leads to improvements in governance, economy, social development, gender disparities and the ability to address climate change and improve environmental sustainability.
- Women's decision-making within a metropolitan government is an important factor in ensuring responsiveness to the needs of women and children in the urban environment.

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CARING FOR EACH OTHER: TRENGTHENING SOLIDARITY IN TIMES WOF COVID-19

The second *Marmara Urban Forum* (MARUF), organised by Marmara Municipalities Union, was held online on 1-3 October 2021 on the theme **"Cities Developing Solutions: Re-Think, Co-Act"** generating the debate on how to make cities more liveable, sustainable, resilient, creative, inclusive, innovative and healthy.

What did we learn?

Local governments and international institutions have developed and implemented many strategies in logistics, transportation, sanitation and infrastructure renewal amongst others to ensure that people living in cities will be less exposed to the social, economical and cultural risks imposed by COVID-19.

It is key to reconsider established urban policies and planning processes in light of the pandemic and other crises.

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MASTERCLASS: THE METROPOLITAN REGION OF RIBEIRÃO PRETO AND SDG 11

To achieve SDG 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities”, the masterclass analysed the allocation of financial resources in “Civil Defence” and “Territorial Planning” between the years 2016 and 2020 in the 34 municipalities that make up the Metropolitan Region of Ribeirão Preto.

The mission of Civil Defence is to plan, promote, articulate and execute the permanent defence against natural, anthropogenic or mixed. On the other hand, Territorial Planning can be understood as actions and instruments for demarcating limits and borders that aim to organise the occupation and use of land and guide the management of the area on which they affect. Therefore, understanding financial commitment in Civil Defence and Territorial Planning is central for local and metropolitan governments to achieve adequate levels of resilience for all citizens.

Organised by



2 OCTOBER

YOUNG PLANNERS 4 CHANGE

This session explored the future of cities and the planning profession with young planners. Since 1991, ISOCARP offers various platforms to engage young planning professionals in activating knowledge for better cities. While celebrating the 30th Anniversary, young planning professionals of the ISOCARP legacy present passionate debate on the ways to re-think and co-act for more liveable, sustainable, resilient, creative, inclusive, innovative and healthy cities. The session concluded with a discussion about how global networks can serve better the new generation.

Organised by



4 OCTOBER

CLIMATE WEEK: BELO HORIZONTE TOWARDS COP26

The event brought together more than 520 participants from the public and private sectors, academia, civil society, international organisations and governments to build proposals for Belo Horizonte’s sustainable and low-carbon development in the context of the COP26 agenda.

What did we learn?

- Transversality, intersection and a multidisciplinary approach are key in discussions on climate agendas. Local and metropolitan governments have to involve vulnerable populations in climate solutions.
- Today, there is a need for investments in nature-based solutions. The public sector plays a key role in mobilising private initiatives.
- There must be a change in consumption habits based on environmental education. The energy transition should not only be thought of as an intensive investment in energy generation from renewable sources but also reflect on energy from the perspective of consumption and access.
- **Youth must continue to be included** in public policies and public policies related to the climate crisis.

Check out the session! [In Portuguese]

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4 OCTOBER

MAINSTREAMING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN URBAN LANDSCAPES & CITIES

Nature-based solutions are increasingly sought as measures to mitigate climate change impacts and address related societal challenges through actions of protecting, managing and restoring natural and modified ecosystems, especially for post-pandemic recovery.

This [webinar](#) showcased examples of how nature-based solutions are being implemented and their societal benefits and discuss implementation barriers and considerations for applying them in urban environments.

Organised by



5 OCTOBER

METHER (METROPOLITAN HERITAGE) CARING METROPOLISES

Cities heritage spaces could reveal spatial values of caring that are essential to bring about change and ensure prosperity and sustainability for all.

The [seminar](#) focused on how a better understanding of the role of care could contribute to the definition of new processes that explain the determinants of segregation and marginalisation, vulnerability and exposure to environmental and social risks in metropolitan spaces.

- The heritage of metropolitan cities and territories that must sustain the impact of metropolitan dynamics and the legacy left by the generations that preceded us is not only in the hands of conservation and protection experts.
- Maintaining the city to preserve it, perfect it, but also transforming it to preserve it from decay when it has outgrown the needs of society is everybody's business.

[Check out the conversation](#)

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SPORTS IN METROPOLITAN REGIONS AFTER COVID: SHAPING OPPORTUNITIES

This [webinar](#) revolved around how sports for all can improve resilience after COVID-19 and how sports developments until 2030 in Metropolitan RegionsSports offers health, well-being, social and sustainability.

Organised by



5 OCTOBER

BUENOS AIRES: WORLD METROPOLITAN DAY

Buenos Aires celebrated on 5 October World Metropolitan Day. This hybrid event focused on resilience for all and creating caring metropolises beyond COVID-19. Together with five other Argentinian cities, the Government of the City of Buenos Aires welcomed government officials from all the cities in the country to join the conversation.

How do we prepare cities to meet the challenges of the future?

- Six years ago Buenos Aires founded the Direction of Urban Anthropology in the Secretary of Urban Development **to put people at the centre because the city does not end in a place, in a physical limit, but is everything that behaves as a city.**
- **Diversity can be generated within the cities themselves.** Argentinian cities have often high-density centres and less dense places outside the city centre. Today, cities have to move towards creating polycentric cities (the fifteen-minute city). Where you work, study, live, go to the square, to buy elementary things, in a radius of fifteen minutes.
Moving towards the creation of a polycentric city in which everyone can satisfy their needs close to home is essential.

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6 OCTOBER

RETHINKING THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC METROPOLITAN SPACES

Based on the project 'rethinking public space for a sustainable metropolitan future' in partnership with Brussels-Capital Region, [this webinar](#) focused on reimagining the future of public spaces.

"Public space is for people, this has to be our starting point"

Albert Gassull, Director of Public Space Services,
Metropolitan Area of Barcelona

Public spaces can reflect and support the diversity of needs of their residents. Streets, parks and plazas can be symbols of collective well-being, but can also be spaces of struggle and discontent. When public spaces are successful they nurture the idea of community and support physical and mental health by creating a network of safe and well-connected spaces.



A city with good public space is a good city!

- **We need a change of paradigm.** From a city of cars to a city of people. This means creating spaces where people can meet and have a greater quality of life, but also demineralising parts of the city to allow for more public spaces for people.
- We need to think outside the box and use spaces from flat to office's roofs to create extra spaces for people.
- **We need to avoid privatisation as much as possible.** Make collective spaces and not individual ones to create a sense of community.
- Public spaces are important for all but are key to groups such as young people. During the pandemic, it was noted that there were few public spaces for young people to meet.
- Building alliances and making civil society a key partner in the development of public spaces is key to creating successful spaces.
- The connection between the built environment and open space is an opportunity to integrate nature into the city.

"Gentrification is not bad by definition but it can be bad. The only solution is to come up with a price control system, a rent control combined with social housing and entry prices"

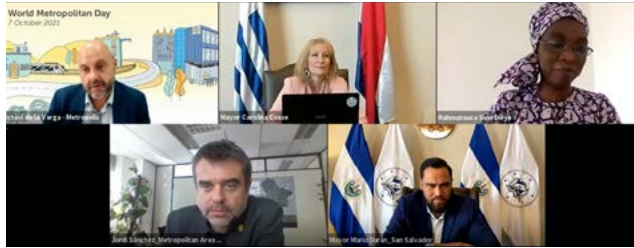
Pascal Smet, Secretary of State of the Brussels-Capital Region

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CARING METROPOLISES: FRAMING RECOVERY FOR ALL



On 7 October, Metropolis and UN-Habitat organised a culminating event focused on key lessons learned from the pandemic, as well as recovery strategies to build more caring and resilient metropolitan spaces.

Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo, explained how the municipality implemented a special strategy to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable groups. **Mario Durán**, Mayor of San Salvador, highlighted the importance of an early reaction to the pandemic. He also explained how the City Council collaborated with medical teams to bring assistance to vulnerable communities.

"The effects of the pandemic are not equal to all, it does not affect all areas of society equally."

Carolina Cosse

Rahmatouca Sow Dièye, Adviser on Political Affairs and International Relations to UCLG Africa, emphasised that the delay in the implementation of the SDGs is not only due to the pandemic but also to the lack of funding for building resilience in countries and territories. **Jordi Sánchez**, Vice-President of Urban Policies at the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, highlighted the need to face the challenges of climate change through efficient urban and territorial planning.

"I do not see the pandemic as a crisis that we must face, but as an opportunity that will help us to adapt and find solutions for future crises."

Jordi Sánchez

Finally, Remy Sietchiping, Chief of Policy, Legislation and Governance Section at UN-Habitat, concluded the session by pointing out that real change can not happen without new ways to understand the governance of major cities and metropolises.

What can be done to create more caring metropolitan spaces?

- The pandemic does not affect all areas of society equally, therefore targeted and tailored measures for vulnerable groups are essential.
- Public and social spaces and participatory processes are of vital importance to build a resilient and engage society.
- It is necessary to work on the governance of metropolitan areas and on innovative ways to manage metropolises.

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PRESENTATION OF THE WORKSHOP “URBAN IDEAS TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE METROPOLIS”

During this workshop, guests referred to the importance of proposing coordinated policies for the entire region, as one of the main challenges for metropolises.

There is a need to generate spaces that deepen regional cooperation and coordination, as a way to define a governance model. For instance, these spaces can help create shared views between different jurisdictions, together with civil society actors.

[Watch the full event](#)

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LEGISLATURA
Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires

CARING METROPOLIS: A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

Bilbao Metropoli-30 organised a roundtable entitled Metrópoli cuidadora: una mirada social to promote collective action to build more equitable, resilient and prosperous metropolises.

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CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND SOLIDARITY FOR RESILIENT METROPOLES

The event aimed to bring the issue of importance in civic participation and solidarity for more resilient city policies to the agenda of municipalities, civil society and citizens in Turkey and other stakeholders. It highlighted that participatory and direct civic actions will make metropolitan cities more socially resilient through integrated, data-driven and inclusive social policy measures.

What did we learn?

- Metropolitan governments and city-wide civic organisations should take social resilience as part of the overall city resilience agenda.
- The concept of risk governance should be given primacy in creating participatory resilience policies.

“Metropolitan risk governance is a society-wide priority area where civic participation and solidarity should be a must for more resilience.”

Dr Inan Izci

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METROPOLITAN APPROACHES ON SOLVING COMMON EUROPEAN CHALLENGES

An open event to discuss the **new Manifesto of METREX**, the Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas. This Manifesto is a call upon all European Metropolitan Regions and Areas to meet societal and ecological challenges.

"Our metropolitan cities represent the right dimension to face the challenges ahead. Small municipalities cannot face the challenges of mobility, climate change, energy, alone. We are coordinators of local authorities."

Dario Paravicini

Territories that face similar kinds of issues must work collaboratively in networks not only to find common responses to their challenges but also to shape the policy frameworks that affect them. The METREX Manifesto calls on sharing information, enabling integrated thinking, accelerating systemic change, shaping policy framework and contributing to effective policies across European metropolitan regions.

"The Netherlands could not exist without planning the water system, and with climate change, we need our neighbours. The river problems don't stop within national borders. We work on circularity, ecology, but water is the most important for us to exchange in METREX."

Erik Pasveer

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CITY AND METROPOLITAN FINANCING: EXCHANGING VIEWS BETWEEN AFRICA & FRANCE

This session discussed the major role of local governments in achieving the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement. Cities, whether they are metropolises or secondary cities, are powerful catalysts to meet global challenges, provided they have adequate funding. **It is estimated that USD 90 000 billion of investment in urban infrastructure is required to meet the needs of an urban transition aligned with global objectives. However, a large part of this funding is not yet being channelled to cities.**

Local government financing is characterised by a systemic market failure: they face insufficient access to resources because they have difficulties in fully meeting the requirements of financial actors. In emerging contexts, projects are sometimes not considered bankable and institutional frameworks may be inadequate. This observation is particularly true in Africa, where the needs are the greatest: the African urban population has doubled in the last 25 years and will double again in the next 25 years.

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— 8 OCTOBER —

TOWARDS EVIDENCE-BASED METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE: LAUNCHING THE METROPOLITAN OBSERVATORY PLATFORM

The event saw the launch of the Metropolitan Observatory open data platform. This event highlighted the importance of evidence-based governance and advances in sustainable planning and management in the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador. The analyses from the Metropolitan Observatory have served as a basis for the formulation and updating of metropolitan policies, including the territorial economic development policy, as well as the instruments for territorial planning.

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9 OCTOBER

FIRST INTERNATIONAL METROPOLITAN FELLOWSHIP WORLD CONGRESS

The International Metropolitan Fellowship, an international, multicultural and interdisciplinary community of Metropolitan Experts, organised its first World Congress. [Watch the event](#)

What did we learn?

- Institutions have to implement both carrots and sticks. The Sticks are Metropolitan Government competencies. They allow implementing decisions. If metro agents and stakeholders do not comply with them, you have the judiciary capacity to act. The Carrots are the budget. The capacity to incentivise partner action. Not just through competencies, but through investment.
- To evaluate a Metropolitan Law that creates a new metropolitan management institution look for three things: 1) attributed **competencies** attributed, 2) **budget** and source of the budget, and 3) **who appoints or elects representatives** and managers.

"The main takeaway from our First IMF Congress 2021 is systems change. With the coming waves of innovation (decentralisation, digitalisation and many more), it is inevitable."

Mark Roeland De Castro,

Architect and Urban Planner from the Philippines, IMF President

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INTERNATIONAL
METROPOLITAN
FELLOWSHIP

11 OCTOBER

THE ROLE AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF COHESION POLICY IN THE PLANNING OF METROPOLITAN AREAS AND CITIES

Using the findings of the METRO Espon project, [the session](#) discussed the role of cohesion policy in planning and implementing metropolitan policies at the EU level. The workshop addressed the need for better multilevel coordination and demonstrated how metropolitan areas, at the forefront of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, are called on to mitigate its impacts.

"For a better recovery process, we need to articulate metropolitan priorities and policies goals with the National Recovery Plans and EU cohesion policy."

Filipe Ferreira, Lisbon Metropolitan Area

What were the main takeaways?

- The European Union should acknowledge the role Metropolitan Areas (MA) can play in dealing with territorial challenges. The EU should design programmes and instruments managed at the metro level to enhance vertical and horizontal coordination.
- EUCP spatial approach rather than thematic could lead to another reading of territory, beyond administrative borders. Future EUCP tools and incentives dedicated to metropolitan areas' development allow tackling resiliency beyond administrative borders.
- There is a need to soften boundaries and use all available means to act through variable geographies.

As part of the national recovery plans, as a metropolitan administration, we have been asked to manage the funds allocated to COVID-19 recovery, but not yet involved in the planning phase of those funds."

Claudia Fassero

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LEARNING CAPSULE: STRATEGIC PLANNING AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE [IN SPANISH]

Metropolis and CIDEU made public this **learning capsule on existing models of metropolitan governance and planning**, as well as the main metropolitan challenges and how to face them. The capsule is online, free and self-paced.

- Cities and their metropolitan areas face several global challenges such as environmental, social and economic sustainability. To articulate an urban strategy, anticipate and react effectively to global crises, require instruments and tools. Metropolis highlights four global metropolitan challenges: urban growth, resilience, public legitimacy and digital disruption.
- Strategic planning on a metropolitan scale is an instrument that helps us to identify those challenges that are common to all the municipalities in the conurbation, as well as to design agreed projects and actions aimed at solving the challenges posed.
- Knowing both the advantages and disadvantages of the different existing metropolitan governance models, as well as the potential of strategic planning, will allow us to face the challenge of how to govern metropolitan areas with better guarantees.
- Several factors condition metropolitan governance and its implementation in a more or less institutionalised model. On a practical level, each metropolitan area has a model of governance according to the tradition of cooperation, political alliances, relations between spheres of government and the local configuration of public and private actors.

What you will learn about:

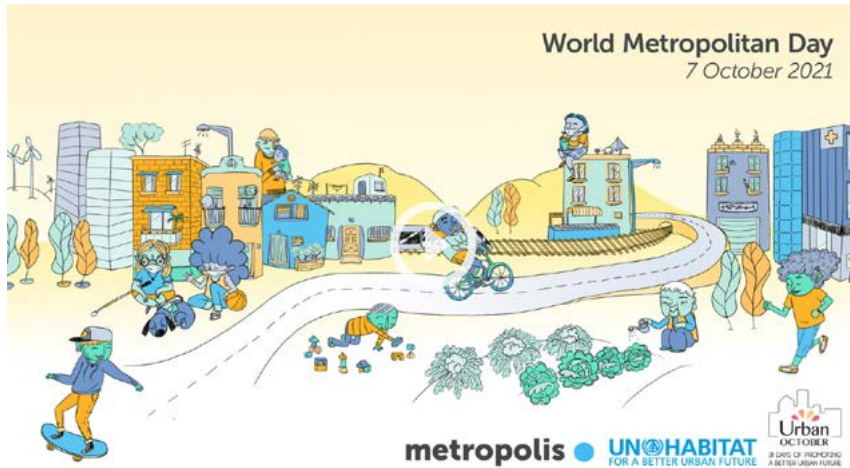
- The growth of metropolises and their future in the 21st century.
- Models of organisation and formalisation of metropolitan areas.
- Metropolitan challenges and how to face them.

Participate in the training!

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A screenshot of the website for the learning capsule. The header includes the 'cideu' logo and navigation links for 'La Red', 'Cooperación', 'Estrategia en Acción', 'Formación', and 'Actualidad'. The main title is 'CÁPSULA FORMATIVA Planificación estratégica y gobernanza metropolitana'. Below this, there is a descriptive paragraph in Spanish. A 'CONTENIDO' section lists three units: 'UNIDAD 1. EL CRECIMIENTO DE LAS METRÓPOLIS Y SU FUTURO EN EL SIGLO XXI', 'UNIDAD 2. MODELOS DE ORGANIZACIÓN Y FORMALIZACIÓN DE LAS ÁREAS METROPOLITANAS', and 'UNIDAD 3. RETOS METROPOLITANOS Y CÓMO AFRONTARLOS'. To the right, there is a video player with a thumbnail showing a woman speaking, with the text 'La planificación estratégica es útil para identificar desafíos'. Below the video player, there are details about the course: 'Disponible de forma permanente', 'DURACIÓN: 3,5 horas', 'MODALIDAD: Online / Autoadministrada', and 'MATRÍCULA: Gratuita'. At the bottom, there is a button that says 'Para solicitar más información escribe a: info@ciudad.org'.

What is World Metropolitan Day?

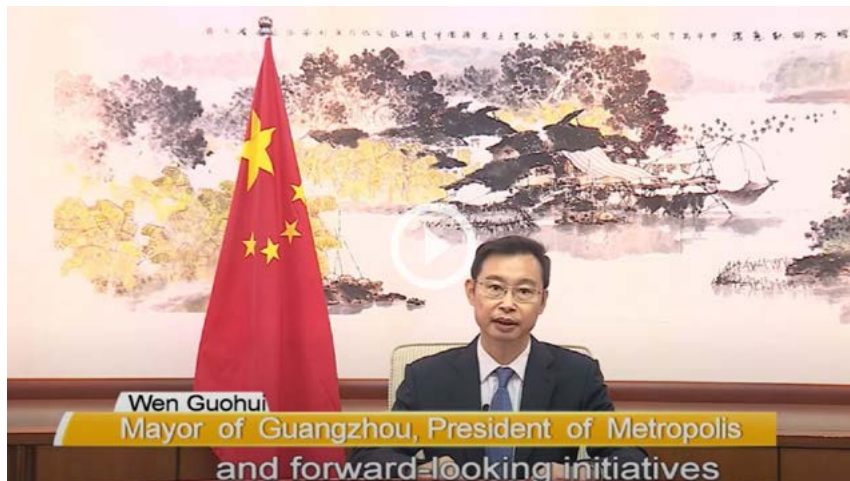


[English](#) [French](#) [Spanish](#)

How is Medellín moving towards a just, sustainable and resilient recovery? *[In Spanish]*



Mayor of Guangzhou explains how the city managed the COVID-19 crisis



How has Medellín responded to the health crisis? *[In Spanish]*



IN THE NEWS

El País: [Día Mundial Metropolitano: que la ciudad nos cuide](#)

Octavi de la Varga, Secretary-General of Metropolis and Laura Valdés, Research & Policy and Communications Officer of Metropolis



Paudal: [World Metropolitan Day: let the city take care of us](#)

Deia: [Día Mundial de las Metrópolis](#)

Idoia Postigo, Director Asociación Bilbao Metropol-30

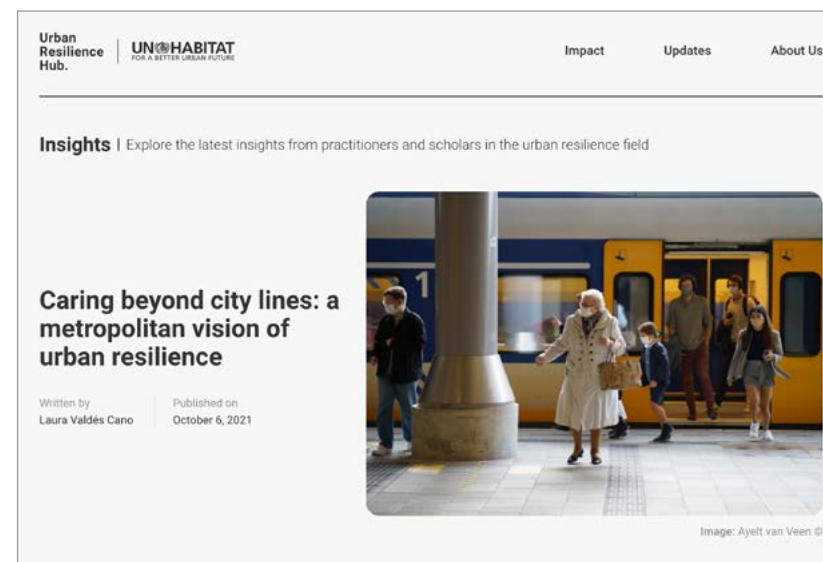
El Correo: [Metrópolis cuidadoras](#)

Idoia Postigo, Director Asociación Bilbao Metropol-30

Urban Resilience Hub:

[Caring Beyond City Lines: A Metropolitan Vision of Urban Resilience](#)

Laura Valdés, Research & Policy and Communications Officer of Metropolis



[Urban October: World Metropolitan Day](#)

[Decentralisation and Global Governance: World Metropolitan Day](#)

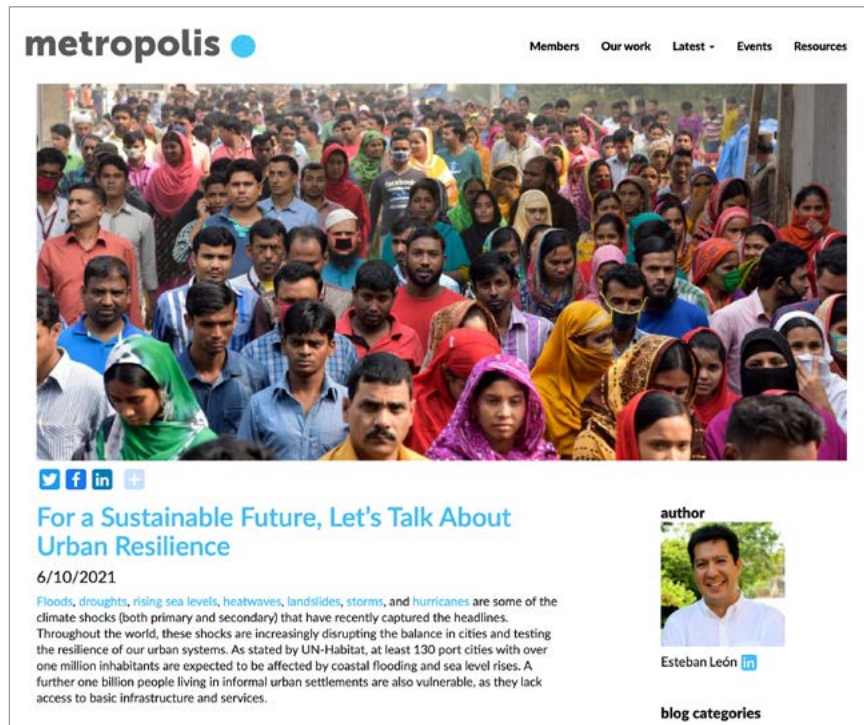
[Urban Policy Platform: Be part of World Metropolitan Day](#)

[City 2 City Network: World Metropolitan Day 2021](#)

[City 2 City Network: World Metropolitan Day](#)

Metropolis Blog: [For a Sustainable Future, Let's Talk About Urban Resilience](#)

Esteban León, Head of City Resilience Global Programme, UN-Habitat



The screenshot shows a blog post from the Metropolis website. At the top, the Metropolis logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'Members', 'Our work', 'Latest', 'Events', and 'Resources' are on the right. The main image is a large, diverse crowd of people. Below the image are social media sharing icons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and a plus sign. The title of the post is 'For a Sustainable Future, Let's Talk About Urban Resilience', dated 6/10/2021. The author's name, Esteban León, is displayed next to a small portrait photo. The text of the post begins with 'Floods, droughts, rising sea levels, heatwaves, landslides, storms, and hurricanes are some of the climate shocks (both primary and secondary) that have recently captured the headlines. Throughout the world, these shocks are increasingly disrupting the balance in cities and testing the resilience of our urban systems. As stated by UN-Habitat, at least 130 port cities with over one million inhabitants are expected to be affected by coastal flooding and sea level rises. A further one billion people living in informal urban settlements are also vulnerable, as they lack access to basic infrastructure and services.'

[Urban Agenda Platform: World Metropolitan Day](#)

Intendencia de Montevideo:

[Intendenta Cosse participó en actividad por el Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

Mendoza: [La Ciudad participó en la conmemoración del Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021](#)

Municipalidad de Corrientes: [Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021: Tassano, con Rodríguez Larreta y otros líderes locales del país](#)

San Salvador de Jujuy: [Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

República de Corrientes: [Corrientes, presente en el encuentro por el Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021](#)

Buenos Aires Ciudad: [La UCPE participó del Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

Cadena de radios: [Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021: Tassano, con Rodríguez Larreta y otros líderes locales del país](#)

For more information on World Metropolitan Day go to:

<https://www.metropolis.org/campaigns/world-metropolitan-day>

