

Metropolis Policy Debate

At Home in the Metropolis

Wednesday, 19 June | 11:00-12:30

Large cities offer a multitude of advantages, from opportunities for employment and education to cultural diversity. However, **cities also face the challenge of ensuring access to safe and affordable housing for their inhabitants.** Effectively addressing this issue is fundamental to creating a solid foundation for well-being and enhancing quality of life within our metropolises.

The Metropolis Board of Directors convenes in São Paulo on June 19-20, to foster knowledge exchange on innovative housing and land-use policies. This two-day event will be part of the São Paulo Urban Summit, which also includes the U20 preparatory meeting, the ICLEI World Congress and the 1st Urban Goods and Services Exhibition. **At the heart of the Metropolis Board's agenda lies the Policy debate, offering a distinctive platform for member cities to collaborate on this pressing global issue.** Discussions will revolve around achieving universal access to decent housing, with a particular focus on crafting policies that cater to the needs of the most vulnerable portions of society.

Rapid urbanization is a global phenomenon. By 2050, nearly 70% of the world's population will live in cities. This surge, particularly in cities in the Global South, presents distinct housing challenges. The affordability crisis, incorporating informal settlements into the broader fabric of the city, gentrification and growing homeless populations are issues faced by cities globally. **These challenges are compounded by increasing inequality and climate-related vulnerabilities, requiring a global dialogue on inclusive urban planning strategies.** Such strategies must encompass social, environmental, and economic considerations to promote equal opportunities and holistic housing solutions.

Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, which advocate for the right to adequate housing as a pivotal component in the fight against poverty, large cities must navigate urbanization while curbing carbon emissions, enhancing access to services and building resilience. With the 2030 deadline approaching, accelerating progress towards sustainable urban development is paramount. This calls for cities equipped with adequate infrastructure, reduced carbon footprints and an inclusive approach to cater to the diverse needs of every community member.

This Policy debate serves as a vital forum for collaboration, bringing together key stakeholders from major cities worldwide, alongside international organizations and financial institutions. This debate offers an invaluable opportunity to exchange insights on urban solutions and local challenges while learning from São Paulo's endeavors in ensuring decent and affordable housing for all.

Agenda: Metropolis Policy Debate

11:00 - 11:05 | Welcome address

11:05 - 11:20 | Keynote: Innovative housing solutions in São Paulo

11:20 - 11:50 | Mayoral roundtable: Addressing housing challenges

Each Mayor will have 5 minutes to respond to one of these questions:

- **Solving homelessness:** What strategies is your city implementing to address the issue of homelessness?
- **Affordability and access:** How is your city ensuring that low-income earners and young people have access to safe and affordable housing options?
- **Collaboration and innovation:** What collaborative efforts is your city pursuing with other cities and organisations to learn from best practices and develop innovative solutions for the housing crisis?

11:50 - 12:20 | Roundtable: Building sustainable and resilient cities

Each Mayor will have 5 minutes to respond to one of these questions:

- **Informal settlements:** Many cities struggle with integrating informal settlements into the city's fabric. What strategies will you implement to incorporate these communities into the formal housing market and improve their living conditions?
- **Sustainable urban planning:** How is your city balancing the need for increased housing with environmental considerations, promoting sustainable and resilient development?
- **Measuring success:** How is your city measuring the success of your housing policies, ensuring they achieve the goal of "decent and affordable housing for all"?

12:20 - 12:30 | Wrap-up by Jordi Vaquer, Metropolis Secretary General