

# Migration & the City

## Economic Potential - Spatial Embrace – Urban Citizenship

**Date:** Thursday, 29 Nov 2012 (9:30 – 17:00)

**Place:** Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung  
(Schumannstr. 8, 10117 Berlin-Mitte)

The movement of people to, from and within cities is constantly evolving. Over the centuries, flows of people have impacted the development of cities as centres of politics, economy and culture. This transformative process continues today: the United Nations Population Fund 2007 report found that for the first time in history, more than half of the world population lives in urban centres. For some, this urban living means thriving and succeeding, but for others it means barely surviving. This is equally so for the city; while migration brings enormous economic, social and cultural opportunities, it can also present significant challenges for some cities through the scale of associated socio-cultural, socio-economic and even physical transformation.

This expert discussion traces a narrative of the transformative and dynamic relationship between migration and the city. The economic opportunities offered by urban areas are often the pull factors bringing people to cities. The city's spaces — private and public, living spaces, schools, work and cultural places — modify the personal and collective experiences of a diverse population in the city. And finally, this in turn influences how migrants and newcomers are affected by and help to modify/advance the political, social, economic and physical infrastructures of the city.

### **Panel I: The Pull of the City**

Cities are centres of commercial, educational, and cultural industries. Indeed, the dynamic economies of cities are often the reason people move there. But what is the reality in the city? Are migrants concentrated in certain industries over others? How accessible is the job market to all inhabitants of the city?

The inclusiveness of the labour market is one of the determining factors of how positively migration impacts urban societies. When flexible enough, the labour market can benefit from the new economic opportunities created by migration. Cities' policies, too, have a deep impact in fostering entrepreneurial initiatives of migrants. This panel seeks to discover how migration can be used to its fullest potential and what role cities play in making that happen.

### **Panel II: The City's Spatial Embrace**

The configuration, availability and cultural accessibility of urban spaces significantly impacts the lives of city dwellers — where they live and work, who they interact with, to what extent they can avail of social and other services. And critically — because it is deeply tied up with spatial experience — urban spaces affect how the identity of the dweller evolves as an individual and as members of one or more cultural groups. In the worst case, the design of urban spaces (and private living spaces) can inadvertently discriminate against cultural practices or lead to segregation between urban communities, and consequently to less cohesive societies.

How can urban planning agendas, architectural and urban design concepts, housing policies, and neighbourhood level initiatives improve urban spaces, making them accessible to all?

### **Panel III: Urban Citizenship and Civic Engagement**

A wide variety of people live side by side in the city. Despite their diverse backgrounds, each calls the city “home”. The city (or even neighbourhoods) gives people a place with which they can identify, a place in which they can meaningfully engage. Indeed, cities are often successful in merging collective identity.

Also, despite the fact that most social conflicts are concentrated in city areas, cities are spaces where democracy, inclusion and participation can be practiced intensely. This panel will discuss cities and urban neighbourhoods as key players in the civic engagement of its residents and seek to answer the question: How can cities serve as platforms for more inclusive forms of citizenship and engagement?

## PROGRAMME

- 9:30**            **Registration and coffee**
- 10:00**            **Welcome**  
Mekonnen Mesghena - Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung  
Julia Rawlins - British Council  
Áine Ryan - ANCB The Metropolitan Laboratory
- 10:15**            **Keynote**  
Greg Clark, Chairman of the OECD Forum of Development Agencies and Investment Strategies
- 11:00**            **Panel I: The Pull of the City**  
  
Prof. Dr. Erol Yildiz - Institute for Educational Sciences and Research, Klagenfurt  
Anna Mee Allerslev - Mayor for Employment and Integration, Copenhagen  
Leigh Calder - Lloyds Banking Group, London  
  
Moderation: Daniela Patti - Central European Institute of Technology
- 12:30**            **Lunch**
- 13:30**            **Panel II: The City's Spatial Embrace**  
  
Dr. Phil. Andrej Holm - Humboldt University Berlin  
Clare Rishbeth - Sheffield University  
Michael Müller - Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment, Berlin  
  
Moderation: Dr. Christine Hentschel - Humboldt University Berlin
- 15:00**            **Coffee Break**
- 15:15**            **Panel III: Urban Citizenship and Civic Engagement**  
  
Dr. Hendrik Lebuhn - Humboldt University Berlin  
Gün Tank - Commissioner for Integration, Schöneberg-Tempelhof Berlin  
Raheel Mohammed - Founder and Director, Maslaha.org  
  
Moderation: Sabine Drewes - Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung
- 16:45**            **Closing remarks**