

FOURTH MEETING OF THE OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth

18 March 2019 | Athens, Greece

ATHENS ROAD MAP ON
INNOVATION



Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

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Local
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The OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities provides comparative statistics, analysis and capacity building for local and national actors to work together to unleash the potential of entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises, promote inclusive and sustainable regions and cities, boost local job creation, and support sound tourism policies.

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Athens Road Map on Innovation for Inclusive Growth in Cities

By joining the *OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative* set up on 29 March 2016, we, Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth from across the world, have committed to tackle rising inequalities within our city, region, country and worldwide. Today, we remain convinced of the relevance of the inclusive growth agenda as well as the urgent imperative to address the widening gap between rich and poor.

Rising inequality is at the root of growing discontent; it harms economic growth, erodes trust in government, and has the ability to undermine social cohesion. It also renders society less able to respond to major, systematic challenges such as climate change and threatens political stability. Fighting inequalities should not be limited to reducing disparities in income and wages, but also identifying existing policies that generate inequalities, as well as addressing gaps in education, health, access to environmental services and benefits, and jobs among all our citizens, regardless of their socio-economic status, gender, age, or the places in which they live.

Over the past three years, the *OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative* has demonstrated how greater mayoral leadership in fostering inclusive growth in cities calls for a major break with the policy making approaches of the past.

- At the First Meeting in New York City (29 March 2016), we defined in the [New York Proposal](#) the policy pillars of an inclusive growth agenda around education, skills and the labour market, housing and the urban environment, infrastructure and public services.
- At the Second Meeting in Paris (21 November 2016), we delivered the [Paris Action Plan](#) providing clear steps to advance the New York Proposal's pillars, such as capturing the multi-dimensional nature of urban inequalities, and supporting cities in implementing and evaluating their inclusive growth strategies.
- At the Third Meeting in Seoul (19 October 2017), we focussed on two strategic areas within the [Seoul Implementation Agenda](#), namely how to bridge local climate and inclusive growth strategies, and how cities can create a level playing field to harness the inclusive growth potential of SMEs and entrepreneurs.

Building on these commitments, we have been adopting a range of programmes amongst others initiatives to reshape our neighbourhoods, distribute the benefits and costs of urbanisation more equitably, advance inclusive local climate action, support small firms and local entrepreneurs, offer opportunities for low skilled workers, and address housing affordability and access to public services for underserved and marginalised communities. We will continue to strengthen the commitments on our efforts, ensure local institutions have the resources to act, assess our actions, and monitor impact.

Going forward collectively, we should better anticipate and respond to emerging challenges and new opportunities to pursue our inclusive growth agenda. Global megatrends such as globalisation, digitalisation and automation of work, climate change and depletion of natural resources, demographic change including urbanisation, as well as migration and ageing populations, raise unparalleled challenges, but also opportunities at global, national and local levels that require innovative and fiscally sustainable strategies, policies and tools. These trends will continue to transform how people live and work in our cities. While we cannot predict exactly where these trends will take us, we do know that their impact will be profound in our cities and that many people will be left behind if we do not put in place appropriate policies and institutional practices to mitigate them.

With the *Athens Road Map: Innovation for Inclusive Growth in Cities*, we, Mayors, will strive to leverage the full potential of innovation to promote policies and practices whereby cities can become places where prosperity is shared, access to opportunity is equitable, and well-being is expanded to all segments of society.

- We believe that innovation can support ambitious actions to address housing affordability, ensure fair allocation of development benefits across social groups, integrate migrants and refugees successfully, extend basic utility services to the energy poor while reaching emission reduction goals, and support small, minority-owned, or women-led businesses and local entrepreneurs.
- We also know that the people-centric and place-based adoption of technologies requires an enabling environment that includes innovative local policies about how to use resources, engage citizens, organise and plan, and set priorities that can secure the buy-in from all.
- We are convinced that technology is transforming how citizens interact with local and national leaders and their government. We also know that information flows easier, faster and at greater volume and with the appropriate tools and policies in place, can hold public and private institutions accountable and allows us to do better with less, and make a difference faster.

Taking into account our specific local and national contexts, **we, Champion Mayors, herein commit to work closely with communities, citizens, NGOs, businesses, academia, stakeholders and other levels of government in three main areas** to upscale our efforts to fight inequalities and foster inclusive growth in our cities: i) **social innovation**, ii) **technological innovation** and iii) **public sector innovation**.

First, we, will accelerate our efforts to design and implement ambitious **social innovation strategies to create a local fertile ecosystem in which social innovation can flourish**, in addition to our core policies to improve the welfare and well-being of individuals and communities. In particular, we endeavour to:

- Promote new ways to extend and deliver existing **local public services** and develop new relevant services that reach underserved areas of our cities.
- Respond to the needs of new local businesses by developing targeted local employment policies that connect low-skilled individuals and disadvantaged groups.
- Develop new and efficient ways to finance and provide **social and community services** for disadvantaged groups and elderly such as health care, nursing services, barrier-free housing and home care.
- Promote **social innovation** for instance through incubators and training, and work to establish a **fertile ecosystem for innovation** to flourish, that encourages flexibility, experimentation and up-scaling.
- Ensure that those left behind are targeted with customised **employment and activation programmes** that are adaptable, relevant and respond to the new needs of the local labour market.
- Provide the enabling legal, fiscal, and regulatory environment to support **social enterprises and social entrepreneurs** including for instance through social clauses in local public procurement procedures, and raise the awareness about their contribution to local economy and citizen well-being.
- Promote **financial models** forms that encourage social economy including those which engage citizens through cooperatives or other forms of social enterprises in areas such as affordable housing, decentralised renewable energy, food production and distribution.

Second, we, endeavour to leverage the full potential of **technological and digital innovation to build the smart cities of the future** and ensure their contribution to better well-being outcomes for all our residents as part of a collaborative, multi-stakeholder process across sectors. In particular, we will strive to:

- Explore how to effectively embrace and plan for **sustainable smart urban solutions** across different sectors such as energy, water, transport, solid waste, health, land use, but also to expand service delivery to underserved communities without overdepleting resources.
- Leverage digitalisation to deliver more efficient, sustainable, affordable and inclusive **local public services** and urban environments for instance real-time data, electronic congestion tolls, smart parking systems, IoT sensors, smart contracts, amongst others.
- Ensure that **new technology in public transport** (e.g. app-based ride services and shared mobility) is both inclusive and sustainable including to those with reduced mobility and those in underserved communities.
- Anticipate the future arrival of **automatic and driverless vehicles** and potential impacts when integrating them into the mobility profile of cities with safety as the highest priority. This would include anticipating and capitalising upon changes in land use, housing and transportation patterns triggered by smart urban solutions.
- **Take advantage of technologies** that help better manage and visualise city investments, housing development, and predict potential areas at risk of limited access to services and opportunity, and plan accordingly.
- Enhance efforts to collect and use **data** to improve accessibility of job opportunities, public services, green, cultural and leisure spaces in our cities and metropolitan areas.
- Encourage new approaches to **re-training and upskilling workers** and to prepare young people for jobs of the future, and mitigate the impact of automation and digitalisation on the local labour market.
- Leverage the potential of data innovation, including **smart, big, open and geospatial data**, to ground urban policy decisions in up-to-date and quality information and evidence, while safeguarding the privacy of individuals.
- Recognise that **tech-driven solutions** are as important to the poor as they are to the affluent, by exploring not only the potential benefits but also the **challenges**, linked with artificial intelligence, automation and disruptive technologies on marginalised and disadvantaged groups, and address them.
- Adopt appropriate local **regulation** for the sharing and gig economy to further employment security, protect the public interest and workers' social safety nets.
- Strengthen the **monitoring and evaluation** of local policies to demonstrate how smart cities can improve administrative and fiscal processes, engage citizens better, build trust in city leaders and shape better lives and outcomes for residents.

Third, we, endeavour to leverage the full potential of **public sector innovation to accelerate the uptake of new processes, practices and approaches in cities of all size**. In particular, we will endeavour to:

- Promote a culture of innovation within our administration that incentivises experimentation and risk taking; build the local capacity through dedicated **goals, strategies, staff, and budget**, to advance our social agendas in our policies. This includes attracting the human and fiscal resources to implement the range of policies, programs and projects designed to promote inclusion and growth with equity.
- Promote the uptake of **innovative financial mechanisms based on sound valuation practices**, which includes considering a range of land based finance tools, infrastructure funds and sustainability bonds to finance public spaces, urban infrastructure, neighbourhood development and affordable housing creation.
- Promote an agile and flexible model of **city governance** through innovative collaborative tools, partnerships or forms of contracts that put the interest of local residents at the centre, including through inter-municipal collaboration and public-private partnership.
- Reinforce strategic management and innovation capabilities of **local public officials** to design and implement integrated urban strategies that match the complexity of current and future challenges.
- Promote new and broader forms of **citizen engagement** to put local residents at the centre of policy planning, design and implementation by engaging community in decision-making regarding public spaces and infrastructure choice through citizen councils, use of technology, citizen monitoring and public innovation labs.
- Promote **open government** initiatives to expand and facilitate access to public information, increased transparency and accountability of decision-makers, as well as instances of co-creation of public policies.
- Explore innovative **participatory budgeting** for citizens to have a say on how public funds are spent, in particular concerning programmes and infrastructure projects pursuing inclusive objectives.
- Promote **sustainable public procurement** combining economic, social and environmental objectives, to create and shape local markets with an inclusive and green growth lens, change consumption and production patterns and transition from linear to circular economies in shared responsibility with business and citizens.

To support and accelerate **Mayors'** efforts to leverage the full potential of innovation for inclusive growth in cities, we call upon the OECD to pursue its efforts to:

- Continue to **raise the profile and role of cities** in the broader *OECD Inclusive Growth agenda*, and echo Mayors' **voices** in the OECD fora and platforms, to bridge the constituencies of local and national governments.
- Facilitate **peer-learning** across Champion Mayors, with upper and lower levels of government, and with urban stakeholders at large to learn from success stories and pitfalls to avoid.
- Build and expand the **evidence base** on how social, technological, digital and public-sector related innovation practices in cities can deliver better outcomes for residents, and disseminate the findings to local and national decision-makers to guide public action.
- Help **translate mayors' inclusive growth aspirations and commitments** laid out in the Athens Road Map, Seoul Implementation Plan, Paris Action Plan, and New York Proposal into concrete targets and outcomes, and provide tools and guidelines to help us better track **cities'** efforts
- Provide **targeted support to cities** at political and technical levels to advance their inclusive growth through policy dialogue recommendations and action plans, and customised guidance on how to better mainstream inclusion into local planning, strategies and investment priorities.
- Continue to develop the online Champion Mayors platform and disseminate **user-friendly tools** that can support and accelerate **cities' innovation** capacity such as cross-city surveys, city snapshots, checklists, best practice repositories or self-assessment frameworks.

We count on the OECD and the supporting institutions of the Champion Mayors Inclusive Growth Initiative [Bloomberg Philanthropies, Brookings Institute, Cities Alliance, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Ford Foundation, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, National League of Cities, UCLG and United Way Worldwide] to lead the way and facilitate the uptake of innovation to design better local policies for better lives.



**OECD Champion Mayors
for Inclusive Growth initiative**

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