



Call to
**Local Action
for Migrants
and Refugees**

PRESS RELEASE

Mayors deliver over 100 pledges to the 2023 UNHCR Global Refugee Forum through the Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees

The Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees is delivering over 100 pledges for refugee inclusion and protection to the 2023 UNHCR Global Refugee Forum. These 100 actions make a tangible difference to the lives of refugees and migrants and help the world rescue our global humanitarian and development goals.

Geneva, 12 December 2023 - Tomorrow, national governments, mayors, governors, and other stakeholders will meet in Geneva at the 2023 UNHCR [Global Refugee Forum](#) to discuss the implementation of the [Global Refugee Compact](#). 16 mayors and governors will participate in the official programme of the Forum and will deliver over 100 people-centred and bold pledges collected through the [Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees](#).

The Call to Local Action is the official pathway for local and regional governments (LRGs) to pledge to implement the GCR and the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in unison, as a concrete avenue to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Recognized by the **UN Secretary-General**, and acknowledged as a **leading example of complementarity**, the Call to Local Action captures the vast practical experience of LRGs and builds on the political commitment of the 2018 [Marrakesh Mayors Declaration for Migrants and Refugees](#). Since the first Refugee Forum in 2019, the Call to Local Action delivered over 120 pledges of which over 100 specifically serve refugees.

The pledges will be formally delivered to UNHCR by a mayoral speaker in the **GRF Plenary** on 13 December at 15 CET (livestreamed [here](#)) and they will be discussed in detail at a GRF High Level Event: **Solidarity in Cities: Learning from Mayors on Refugee Inclusion in Urban Areas**, 15 December from 11 - 12.30 CET (limited zoom livestream [here](#)). This event will mark the release of the [Second Edition of the Report on Local Action for Migrants and Refugees](#). The report seeks to inspire cities, national governments and partners by highlighting local governments' progress in implementing the Global Compacts to date and spotlighting the local pledges that have been collected so far.

For the first time ever, LRGs will also have their own political space within the agenda of the GRF through a '**Local and Regional Governments Day**', 14 December from 15 - 18 CET (livestreamed [here](#)). Co-organized by the [Global Task Force on Regional and Local Governments](#) and the [Mayors Mechanism](#), this event will be the first ever LRG-led space within the programme of a UN conference

in Geneva and will discuss the leading role of LRGs in advancing the protection and inclusion of refugees and others on the move.

The full overview of the local government delegation, as well as specific programming at the GRF is available [here](#).

In the face of growing global crises, local governments are central actors and visionary leaders in addressing refugee and migrant inclusion and protection. The concrete pledges local governments bring to the Refugee Forum represent an opportunity for the international community to deliver global impact by partnering directly with local governments, and investing in local action. Matching these local commitments with global resources will not only bring us back from the brink, but push us towards a more equitable, vibrant, and inclusive world.

QUOTES

- *“65% of SDG targets cannot be met without involving local and regional governments. The Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees is the pathway for cities and regions to localise the SDGs for migrants and refugees.”*
Emilia Saiz, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments
- *“To address the critical shortfall in funding for local action and model behaviour for others to follow, the Mayors Migration Council is pledging to bring the Global Cities Fund for Migrants and Refugees to US\$50 million – starting with US\$25 million by 2025. Only through direct funding of city-led projects can we meet the scale of need for urban migrants and refugees to thrive.”*
Vittoria Zanuso, Executive Director, Mayors Migration Council
- *“From implementing local housing projects to sheltering those displaced and ensuring their access to schools and other critical social services, cities are at the helm on creating open, inclusive, and supportive environments for refugees and IDPs.”*
Filippo Grandi, High Commissioner UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
- *“Local and regional governments play a critical role in meeting the challenges of the future. In my new role as Director General, I’m committed to building a UN Migration Agency that works hand-in-hand with local governments to serve migrants and displaced people. From addressing the impact of climate change on human mobility to building job opportunities and migration pathways, cities are critical partners.”*
Amy Pope Director General, UN Migration Agency (IOM) and Coordinator of the UN Network on Migration

About the Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees

Local and regional governments are at the heart of migration and forced displacement. It is at the local level where we see pragmatic, principled, and people-centred approaches that meet or exceed global goals, such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM), the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).

Recognized by the UN Secretary General, the [Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees](#) aims to capture this political commitment and vast practical experience. It is a collaborative effort between the [Mayors Mechanism](#) steering committee members – [United Cities and Local Governments](#), [Mayors Migration Council](#) and the [International Organization for Migration](#) – and is executed in partnership with the [UN Refugee Agency \(UNHCR\)](#).

A growing coalition of city networks and affiliated partners support the Call to Local Action, including ANVITA, Cities Alliance, C40 Cities, Eurocities, FAMSİ, Global Cities Hub, ICMPD, Migration Children and Youth Platform, Welcoming America, the 2022-2023 French Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), the Governments of Brazil, Germany and Switzerland.



The Call to Local Action is implemented in partnership with:



For general background and inquiries about this press release, visit www.mayorsmechanism.org or email info@mayorsmechanism.org