



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Mayors Migration Council Announces its first Executive Director, Vittoria Zanuso

NEW YORK, Dec. 11, 2019 – Vittoria Zanuso has been selected after a global search as the first Executive Director of the Mayors Migration Council (MMC). The MMC helps cities access and influence international and national deliberations on issues related to migration, refugee protection, and inclusion. It is led by the mayors of Amman, Bristol, Freetown, Kampala, Los Angeles, Milan, Montreal, Sao Paolo, and Zurich.

“Cities are rising in influence and power on the global stage, bringing change and innovation to the international political order,” said Georgios Kaminis, former Mayor of Athens and Special Envoy to the MMC and C40 Cities. “Who better to support this movement than Vittoria, an exceptional young leader who represents the new generation of change-makers stepping up to take on global challenges. I look forward to working with her and the mayors on the MMC Leadership Board to catalyze bolder, smarter global action on migration.”

Zanuso comes to the Mayors Migration Council from The Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities initiative (100RC), where she led its work on urban migration governance and practice. As a founding staff member of 100RC, Zanuso spearheaded successful advocacy campaigns and strategic partnerships with the New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the International Rescue Committee, and the Brookings Institution, among others. She was chosen from among an impressive pool of over 100 candidates that included former and current mayors from around the world.

“While national leaders talk borders and visa regimes, it is cities that are stepping up to welcome and care for newcomers,” Zanuso said. “I’m thrilled to work with a prestigious group of visionary mayors to secure the rightful role of cities in informing and advising states and securing the resources cities need to better serve their residents.” She added: “The Mayors Migration Council is a resource open to all cities everywhere—it’s not an exclusive membership club—and I look forward to learning from city leaders around the world.”

The MMC is supported by the Open Society Foundations and the Government of Switzerland, and has a strategic partnership with C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group. Having conceived the MMC, Open Society’s Colleen Thouez shared her enthusiasm: “Vittoria has the entrepreneurial vision, dynamism, and drive necessary to build the MMC into a powerful institution.” Added Simone Giger, Head of Global Program Migration and Development at the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation: “Vittoria’s deep relationships in cities makes her a perfect fit to help development and humanitarian agencies better understand and address the bottlenecks that exist to supporting cities directly.”

In addition to building up the staff and strategy of the MMC, Zanuso will oversee the implementation of global initiatives, including building coalitions around municipal financing and climate migration.

“Climate change could displace another 200 million people by 2050, the same year when 75% of the world’s population is expected to live in cities,” said David Miller, former Mayor of Toronto and C40’s Director for North America and Global Ambassador of Inclusive Climate Action. “Vittoria’s expertise in migration diplomacy and climate resilience will be a true asset in building momentum around the action that cities are taking to address climate displacement. We are excited that Vittoria will play a leading role in our sister organization.”

For more information, visit www.mayorsmigrationcouncil.org or contact James Blake at jmblake1personal@gmail.com or +1.917.652.9932.

About the Mayors Migration Council

The Mayors Migration Council (MMC) is a global initiative to provide cities with targeted advisory and support services to step up their advocacy and diplomacy in the field of migration and refugees and connect them with information, knowledge, networks and resources. The MMC’s priorities and strategy are guided by its Leadership Board of 10 city leaders who stem from diverse geographies and migration contexts.

- Yousef Shawarbeh, Mayor of Amman
- Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol
- Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Mayor of Freetown
- Erias Lukwago, Mayor of Kampala
- Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles
- Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milan
- Valerie Plante, Mayor of Montreal
- Bruno Covas, Mayor of Sao Paulo
- Corine Mauch, Mayor of Zürich
- Georgios Kaminis, former Mayor of Athens and Special Envoy to the MMC and C40 Cities

MMC is financially supported by the Government of Switzerland and the Open Society Foundations and managed as a sponsored project by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA), an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides governance and operational infrastructure to its sponsored projects.

About Vittoria Zanuso

Ms. Zanuso comes to the Mayors Migration Council from The Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities (100RC) initiative. At 100RC, she developed and managed relationships with 100 cities around the world, connecting them with partners and resources to support the successful implementation of their resilience plans. Prior to 100RC, Ms. Zanuso worked with Richard Branson’s Carbon War Room and the Clinton Global Initiative. Originally from Milan, Italy, Ms. Zanuso holds an MPA in International Policy and Management from New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and a BA in Politics from Queen Mary University of London.