

## Preface

On 30 November, 2008, during its World Council held in Istanbul, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) approved a policy paper entitled “Let’s build the inclusive cities of the 21st-century”. This document, previously drawn up by UCLG’s Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy Commission, is a manifesto in favour of social inclusion policies, considered as a safeguard of citizens’ rights, necessary to achieve a vibrant and effective local democracy, respectful toward the growing diversity of urban societies. Ultimately, it’s all about global social policy, both pertinent and necessary in the context of globalized cities.

In order to delve further into the theoretical knowledge which underlies the relationship between social inclusion and participatory democracy, the UCLG’s Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy Commission called upon the Autonomous University of Barcelona’s Institute of Government and Public Policy to research the subject, a move which was supported by the Department of Citizen Participation of the regional government of Catalonia.

The document you are now reading is the result of this research. We hope that its contents will be intellectually stimulating and help to open new paths both in research and in implementing social inclusion and citizen participation policies.