



Latin Elephant's Feedback to *A city for all Londoners*

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About Latin Elephant, CIO

Latin Elephant is a charity that promotes participation, engagement and inclusion of migrant and ethnic groups, and in particular Latin Americans, in processes of urban change in London. This is achieved by:

1. Responding to urban policy frameworks supporting migrant and ethnic economies in London.
2. Supporting existing migrant and ethnic businesses in the context of broader processes of regeneration.
3. Increasing inclusion, engagement and participation of migrant and ethnic groups in processes of urban change in the areas where they live and work.

We promote the contribution that migrant and ethnic communities make to London's diverse economies and cultures.

Latin Elephant is currently working to support retention and growth of existing small migrant and ethnic businesses in Elephant and Castle, taking into account conditions for relocation, affordability and future sustainability.

Our engagement with London Plan:

We successfully presented our argument about the disconnect between urban policy and migrant and ethnic economies in the Further Alteration for London Plan (FALP 2014) and to this effect we secured a change in London Plan 2015. We argued that large proportion of regeneration programmes in London are triggered by existing and proposed opportunity areas in the London Plan. This in turn is happening in London's most deprived boroughs where the proportion of migrant and ethnic businesses is high. This *gap between urban policy and migrant and ethnic economies* trickles down to borough level where the mechanisms to manage change are not robust enough to ensure that existing small migrant and ethnic economies remain viable and vital.

A city for all Londoners

On Global City and Migrant and Ethnic Economies:

We welcome the inclusion of opportunities and economic fairness for all Londoners as a way of addressing inequalities in London's economy and labour market. However, we feel that the opening section of the part dedicated to London's economy privileges a particular type of global city model for London; one that privileges efficiency of resources at the expense of socio-economic and distributional impact of globalisation for particular economic sectors. This part does not acknowledge diversity and scales of economy and the relevance and contribution that these other economies make to London as a global city. Inequality is not addressed at the level of business planning and talent.



The global city discourse for London should celebrate diversity in terms of scales and sectors of the economy and most importantly its multi-ethnic and migrant economic activity. The role of small, local and migrant and ethnic businesses to London's economy and global city status cannot be ignored. London is simultaneously placed amongst global and local discourses and as such it raises questions about scales of local economies and the pressures it places on inner London boroughs to compete for their place in the global economy.

Little attention has been given to the specific role of migrant ethnic businesses (MEBs) and their positive contribution to the UK economy and community cohesion. This is significantly important for London given that the current context of urban regeneration is driven by a vision of a global city that privileges London's competitiveness as a global centre for financial, creative, technological and service economies.

This global city vision is driving regeneration schemes across the capital. In London regeneration is taking place in deprived boroughs where there is a high proportion of diverse ethnic populations. Thus minority groups and MEBS are disproportionately affected by regenerations schemes in London. We invite you to read our report '[The case for London's Latin Quarter: Retention, growth, sustainability](#)' (Roman-Velazquez & Hill, 2016) which identifies three priority areas and makes 10 recommendations for migrant and ethnic economies in London.

It is our position that if local business and economies are to remain at the heart of government initiatives for economic development, then incorporation, recognition and acknowledgement of the role that migrant and ethnic economies play in aiding London's vision for a leading global city cannot be ignored.

On Evidence and Policy:

On a more general comment and relevant for policy documents and strategies that will emerge as a result of this consultation we would like to raise questions about the type of evidence that is produced to validate policy. We are not querying the principle of evidence based policy, but the type of evidence that is privilege and emerging policy proposals.

Privileging mega data sets will not only result on a particular type of global city vision for London, but on particular policy initiatives. Most importantly the lack of data on some sectors of the economy (e.g. migrant and ethnic economies) could result in lack of policy initiatives to support particular sectors of the economy.

We promote equality of value in the use of evidence and experience from voluntary sector and community groups. It is ultimately these groups which have first-hand experience with how policy impacts upon the communities and groups they serve and represent. This wealth of knowledge and experience is often dismissed as 'anecdotal'. We therefore advocate for the need to support grassroots organisations to produce, present and generate data that could be valued on equal terms to that generated by regional data sets. Ultimately, this evidence will contribute to a fairer vision for London as a global city.