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## ***Press release***

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### **Successful cities of the future need to ride the global megatrends and boost their capabilities and organizing capacities to design, and execute, innovative strategies for sustainable competitiveness**

*New report analyses 24 urban projects around the world*

Cities worldwide face the challenge of growing economically while balancing the social and environmental side of the city to remain sustainable in the future. To succeed, they need urban projects that have a clear vision and goals, are well managed and involve a broad range of parties working together effectively.

This is one of the findings of a new report produced by the European Institute for Comparative Urban Research (Euricur), PwC and the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies.

The report analyses 24 urban projects in Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, the UK, United Arab Emirates and the US.

It looks at how cities can achieve good growth while nurturing sustainable competitiveness; how they can keep growing and developing over time while fostering social cohesion and environmental quality.

Hazem Galal, PwC's Global Cities and Local Government Sector Leader, says:

“Cities have always been engines of growth and development. But the playing field for cities is changing dramatically with budgetary restrictions increasing the importance of executing and implementing strategy effectively and making things happen on the ground.

“Urban competitiveness is driven by a city's ability to innovate and diversify towards new economic activities. But there are other dimensions that are critical to a city's future success and attractiveness, including social welfare, security and environmental quality. Balancing all this to achieve sustainable competitiveness is a key urban challenge for the next decade.”

The report argues that while there is not one single path to sustainable competitiveness that every city can follow, there are certain key ingredients to success. These include:

- **Collaborative power:** this is the glue that brings sustainable competitiveness projects together. In the most successful projects, leadership is distributed across multiple organisations, working closely together to make the project happen. These include the private sector, universities, citizens and the non-for-profit sector. Good partnerships bring in additional knowledge and expertise, financial resources and legitimacy. But they do take time and effort to mature.
- **Capabilities:** successful urban projects require good design and vision but also sound implementation capabilities. Beyond the role of partnerships and leadership mentioned above, the report identifies several other key ‘enablers’ including good communication; smart financial solutions; prioritisation and piloting; and agile city administrations capable of adapting to change.
- **Choices:** depending on the aim of the urban development project, the report identifies key choices and dilemmas that urban managers should consider when planning for sustainable competitiveness in cities.
- **A new type of urban manager:** successful urban projects require a new kind of urban manager with multiple skills, who can connect and distribute power to other stakeholders within and outside the public organisation and who involves unusual parties beyond the business and policy elite, such as citizens and universities.

Peter Teunisse, PwC Senior Director, Cities and Local Government, The Netherlands, adds:

“There are growing opportunities for cooperation between cities and the private sector. Companies are increasingly ready and willing to invest in the urban environments in which they operate. But the successful involvement of companies in urban development strategies requires more, not less competence, skill and proactivity from city managers.”

Here are just a few urban projects highlighted in the report that tick the above boxes:

**Regenerating and greening the city: Phoenix project –Dortmund, Germany**

A large brownfield redevelopment project that transformed two large connected industrial sites that were previously isolated from the rest of the city. Success factors include a clear vision and concrete goals; good leadership at the top and on the ground; and the right timing.

**Managing urban mobility: Bus Rapid Transit System – Curitiba, Brazil**

This bus system was the first of its kind to combine service quality of rail services with the cost savings and flexibility of bus transit. Success factors include a visionary, creative leader; Curitiba’s participatory approach to urban planning; consistent dialogue among key stakeholders; and the city’s recognition that urban, environmental and economic development are intrinsically linked.

**Promoting cluster development: Water management, Singapore**

Initiatives aimed at integrating water bodies with the surrounding environment in a holistic way. Success factors include a water strategy focused on creating economic value for the city-state while being pragmatic; long-sighted integration planning and strong coordination between government agencies; and significant investment in R&D and technology showing a strong political will to ‘make it happen.’

Take look at the further findings from all case studies here – ‘iUrban - Innovative city strategies for delivering sustainable competitiveness - Summary report’ [www.iurbanconference2014.nl](http://www.iurbanconference2014.nl)

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## Notes

1. The full report – iUrban – Innovative city strategies for delivering sustainable competitiveness’ can be downloaded at <http://www.iurbanconference2014.nl>
2. Euricur boilerplate
3. PwC helps organisations and individuals create the value they’re looking for. We’re a network of firms in 157 countries with over 184,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, tax and advisory services. Tell us what matters to you and find out more by visiting us at [www.pwc.com](http://www.pwc.com).

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