



## ***Building Better Cities: Competitive, sustainable and livable metropolises in APEC (and how to become one)***

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### **Singapore comes out third in PwC's Building Better Cities survey**

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**Singapore, 17 November 2015** –Singapore emerged third best city in APEC in which to live and do business, according to a new study launched today at the APEC 2015 CEO Summit. The PwC study gives city leaders a view of where they are now, and it hopes to inspire cities within APEC to collaborate

and seek advice to solve tenacious problems.

The study – *Building Better Cities* – focuses on the role urban centres play in the context of APEC’s economic and social growth, and also looks at the cities’ growing influence outside their borders through three lenses: how they fare in basic city development, what differentiates them and the hindrances they face to growth.

<b>City</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Culture &amp; Social Health</b>	<b>Connectivity</b>	<b>Health &amp; Welfare</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	<b>Economics</b>
Toronto	1	1	8	3	2	8
Vancouver	2	4	9	4	1	9
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>
Tokyo	4	5	3	1	12	3
Seattle	5	6	12	8	3	6
Auckland	6	3	15	7	4	11
Seoul	7	7	6	10	5	17
Melbourne	8	2	13	6	6	14
Los Angeles	9	7	16	9	7	5
Osaka	10	9	4	2	19	9

**Fig. 1: Top 10 city rankings**

Yeoh Oon Jin, Executive Chairman, PwC Singapore said:

“It is commendable that Singapore is the third most competitive, sustainable and livable APEC city. This achievement is reinforced by CEOs who have expressed confidence in their outlook for revenue growth in Singapore. Singapore is well positioned as a leader in technology-adoption and a recognised global financial hub. Singapore must continue to create value, strengthen partnerships and adopt best practices to advance along its growth

journey.”

The study also looks at the rates of middle-class population growth, gross domestic product growth and the status of mobile broadband access to give fast growing cities an opportunity to accurately describe their progress and future growth potential.

Cities are now competing to attract an increasingly mobile, global workforce. Talent collects where the right live-work mix is found. And establishing a unique identity is crucial. Even a top ranking city might lose out on expertise and investment capital if it is not known for a specific asset. It is becoming increasingly important for cities to build up their ‘brand’ to stay competitive.

Guillermo M Luz, COO of APEC 2015 CEO Summit and Co-Chairman of National Competitiveness Council, Philippines emphasises the need for city-to-city collaboration as well. “This study provides a set of metrics and a diagnostic tool for Mayors and urban planners to see how they can improve their communities to build better cities. We hope Mayors use this information to see how they can evolve their cities into more liveable, sustainable, and competitive places.”

The study grouped the 39 indicators according to five categories of urban excellence.

## **Connectivity**

Part of any great city’s allure is its interconnectedness. As expected, the highest ranking cities in our Connectivity category – notably Singapore, Hong Kong, and Tokyo – are making impressive strides across all our Connectivity indicators. Moving people around a city seamlessly isn’t just about convenient commutes, nor is sharing knowledge only about city travel apps – connectivity has far-reaching implications in a city’s social and economic well-being. The top cities in this category have benefitted from decades of hard and soft infrastructure advancements and planning; they have been smart and digital well before the terms ‘smart cities’ or ‘e-gov’ were even coined.

Singapore emerged top in connectivity coming in first in broadband quality, tied for first in public transport systems with Hong Kong, Osaka, Tokyo,

Seoul, Toronto and Vancouver and first in traffic congestion.

Keith Martin, Cities Infrastructure Centre Leader, PwC Singapore comments:

“Clearly, Singapore has benefited greatly from an excellent strength and depth of components that deliver effective connectivity, which benefits all city functions and end-users. This has been achieved by putting in place long term planning, funding and regulatory platforms to enable effective connectivity; throughout both the hardware and software components. We would like to expand the definition of connectivity to relate more to cross-border collaboration between cities, and knowledge sharing across the whole of APEC. The positive appetite and energy amongst city and urbanisation stakeholders to collaborate and share their ideas and systems for developing effective and affordable urban spaces is essential to meet the needs of our diverse and rapidly growing populations.”

## **Economics**

Collectively, urban centres already generate some 70% of APEC’s total GDP. With increasingly rapid urbanisation, this is only set to increase.

Unsurprisingly, financial powerhouses Hong Kong, Singapore and Tokyo fared best in this category, with Bandar Seri Begawan, Novosibirsk, and Port Moresby coming in last.

Singapore’s economic strength sees it come second in economics, behind Hong Kong. In the report, Singapore comes first in three variables – ease of doing business, attracting FDI and openness to trade. Echoed in PwC’s APEC CEO survey, 83% of respondents in Singapore (67% in APEC) indicated that they were confident about the prospect of revenue growth over the next year. When asked about the prospects for revenue growth in the next three to five years, 92% of respondents in Singapore (91% in APEC) indicated that they were confident.

The study proposes that managing cities like businesses could prove beneficial – especially when it comes to infrastructure – where longer-term

sustainability and feasibility should be considered from the onset of projects. Typical problems faced by cities include whether infrastructure plans can survive multiple mayoral administrations and whether the projects possess the highest levels of engineering integrity in an era of more frequent and severe climate change-related weather events.

The study also found a strong correlation between how cities performed in the openness to trade indicator with how they performed in the Economics category and in the overall rankings. For example, both Shanghai and Beijing suffered in their overall ranking in Economics due to relatively poor scores in openness to trade.

## **Health & Welfare**

APEC cities are struggling to keep pace with their population's health care demands, and it's not a new or exclusive problem. Topping the list for excellence in this category were Tokyo, Osaka and Toronto, while Cebu, Manila and Port Moresby are still working hard to resolve these issues. Mature cities have had to struggle through legacy issues (of health care being moved from private to charitable to public to private), while newer cities are struggling to keep pace with fast-paced medical innovation, expensive specialisation, and ageing populations. The sharing economy may offer solutions, though it may take a while for cities to step up the necessary technology.

Within the Health & Welfare category, crime is the most basic marker of well-being in a city. Interestingly, the study did not find an ironclad link between crime and the GINI Index, nor crime and literacy rates, although it is usually expected that income equality and education are large

factors that aid in the creation of a less crime-ridden society. Only when the data was parsed for population and the subsets of indicators could one see a correlation between lower crime and stronger education: the biggest cities that showed the lowest incidents of crime also had the highest literacy rates for their population group (Tokyo and Seoul).

## **Culture & Social Health**

A liveable city should fulfil people and enable them to contribute in return to

the city's growth and development. It should do this by providing proper access to education, economic opportunity, arts and cultural venues, vibrant nightlife scenes, safe and clean neighbourhoods while at the same time having a transparent government and inclusive and tolerant society. Toronto topped this category, followed by Melbourne and Auckland, with Surabaya, Bandar Seri Begawan and Port Moresby as the cities with the most scope for improvement. The study found a strong link between an educated population and open government and a more tolerant society. Encouragingly, it was also found that many cities in this study are making efforts to promote economic mobility through education.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

Vancouver, Toronto and Seattle led the way in this category, while Manila, Ho Chi Minh City, and Lima showed most room for improvement. APEC economies are particularly vulnerable to the ill effects of badly-managed waste. While the amount of waste produced is staggering and is set to increase, the good news is that cities, by nature of population densities, are often powerful laboratories for solving waste issues. A noteworthy example is Seoul which recycles 89% of its municipal waste through its series of laws, programmes, and regulations that span the full cycle of waste. Most significantly, the city charges for anything its citizens don't recycle.

Disaster management is becoming an ever critical imperative for the sustainability of many of the cities studied. Monsoons, earthquakes, typhoons, tsunamis, and hurricanes all rake the region. Factors accelerating the Asian economy, including rapid urbanisation, may make the region even more vulnerable to disasters' negative impact. As such, APEC CEOs cite potential disruptions from natural disasters as a key reason they would hold back on investments in the region.

**ends**

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **1. About APEC**

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-

Pacific region. [APEC's 21 members](#) aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

The APEC CEO Summit is the Asia-Pacific's premier business event, drawing thousands of economic and business leaders from around the region and beyond. This year's Summit will be held from November 16-18 in Manila, Philippines. To view the notional program, click [here](#).

## **2. About Building Better Cities**

*Building Better Cities* draws on the methodology devised for PwC's *Cities of Opportunity* study, and aims to shine a light on urban success in APEC cities by measuring their livability, sustainability, and competitiveness. The study is based on publicly available information supported by extensive research. Data was collected during the second and third quarters of 2015 using three main sources: global multilateral development organisations (such as the World Bank and the United Nations), national statistics organisations and municipal administrations, and commercial data providers. These rankings aim to facilitate observations on APEC cities in a clear and simple manner, and are not an expression of opinion or criticism.

For more information on the methodology, please read the full report at [www.pwc.com/apec](http://www.pwc.com/apec).

## **3. About the APEC CEO Survey**

Carried out by PwC International Survey Unit, the APEC CEO Survey 2015 was conducted between June 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 covering 800 CEOs and industry leaders across 52 nations with operations in all 21 APEC economies.

The full survey report can be found here [www.pwc.com/apec](http://www.pwc.com/apec)

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