

Short Project Description

OPENCities – openness as a factor for city success

Openness is a success factor for cities due to the increasing international interdependence resulting from globalisation. Only open cities can profit from their cultural diverse populations and internationalisation.

The OPENCities Monitor is a useful monitoring tool mainly for cities that have already reached a certain degree of internationalisation and for cities that would like to increase and optimise the returns of their intentional role.

Collaboration between cities and enterprises can spur the advantages of diverse populations.

Only cities that provide an open and attractive living environment can keep and attract qualified and highly qualified people. Firms profit from such an environment, because international populations contribute to their needed labour force.

Mainly multinational firms can gain from a high location quality for international populations in various ways:

- Access to a larger labour force pool (qualified people and talents)
- Facilitating the exchange of employees between their locations
- Gains in productivity through intercultural exchange (diversity advantage)
- Strengthening of the international linkages
- Better positioning of firms within the city

Cities can improve their positioning in international competition particularly in their specialised niches.

OPENCities Monitor – Project description

Openness is «the capacity of a city to attract international populations and to enable them to contribute to the future success of the city» (www.opencities.eu). For that, cities need to fulfil the criteria which incite international populations to move to these cities and to remain there. The openness of cities can also be described as the provision of low barriers of entry and good opportunities for intercultural exchange and participation. In addition, an open city needs to be attractive for international populations.

Cities can influence their degree of openness. Openness is measurable, cities can compare themselves with their competitors and they can monitor their progress towards openness. The **OPENCities Monitor** can help cities to improve their openness through benchmarking, good practise examples and policy recommendations.

The OPENCities Monitor is a new city benchmark tool developed by BAK Basel Economics AG. It is a unique collaboration and learning tool to measure city openness. It allows cities to benchmark their openness and assess how open they are towards international populations. Openness is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon which has to be measured by a large number of individual indicators which assess different aspects of openness. Overall, it can be stated that openness can be measured using a multitude of indicators taking the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon of openness into account. The OPENCities Monitor thus measures openness with 53 internationally comparable indicators. These indicators are subdivided in 11 areas: migration, quality of life, international flows, standard of living, freedom, international presence, infrastructure, barriers of entry, education, international events and diversity actions. The OPENCities Monitor comprises the aggregated and transformed results of the indicators into an index family (summary index and sub-indices of each area).

The Monitor offers the following applications for cities:

- Strengths-weaknesses-analyses about the openness of the city in a comparable manner
- Possibility to personally choose the sample of comparative cities and/or similar cities (e.g. in accordance to size)
- Access to city case studies and key policy recommendations
- Discussions about the importance of migration and cultural diversity for economic success

The Monitor has been published for the first time in 2011 and is now available for 26 cities worldwide.

OPENCities – Joining the project

Joining the OPENCities Monitor costs € 10,000 per year. If cities cannot afford this fee, they can be sponsored by firms (Public-Private-Partnership). A multinational firm whose HQ is located in the city can pay the participation fee. The sponsoring enterprise will be mentioned together with the city on www.opencities.eu and in various releases within the project.

The city can measure and optimize its openness using the OPENCities Monitor. The firm can profit from the resulting higher location quality of foreign talents.

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