

PRESS RELEASE

Civic Exchange Releases Report on Wellbeing in Singapore

Latest findings part of a larger project that includes Hong Kong and Shanghai

SINGAPORE, 5 December 2016 -- Civic Exchange, a Hong Kong-based public policy think-tank, will release a report today on Wellbeing in Singapore. Carine Lai, a Civic Exchange Project Manager, together with Penny Low, Founder of Social Innovation Park Ltd, will present the findings at the NTU Symposium on Social Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Public Policy: Asia and Europe in Comparative Perspective, held at the Fullerton Hotel.

This launch focuses specifically on Singapore as a city, and reveals in-depth perceptions about quality of life in areas such as medical care, education, housing, transport, government and crime. The study aims to identify issues and policy gaps that will engage the government and other stakeholders to shape public policy.

The Singapore report is part of a larger Asian Urban Wellbeing project, whose first comparative report was launched in June. A Hong Kong report was published in October, followed by a Singapore report in December. A final report, on Shanghai, will be released afterwards, giving a broader look at three major Asian cities.

Key Singapore Findings

- Overall, people are satisfied with life in Singapore. Respondents gave themselves an average life satisfaction score of 7.1, compared to 7.4 in Shanghai and 5.8 in Hong Kong .
- 67% think Singapore has become "better" or "much better" as a place to live since they started living there.
- 74% would prefer to stay in Singapore, even if they had the freedom to live anywhere in the world.
- Singapore is perceived as very child friendly, with 87% saying Singapore is a "good" or "very good" place for children to grow up.
- Medical care was the top priority, with 20% of respondents wanting the government to make it their no. 1 concern. The polling was conducted in autumn 2015, which coincided with reforms to Medishield Life, Singapore's national health insurance scheme.
- The 2nd priority was "work and business opportunities" (16%), followed by housing (15%)

Additional Singapore Findings

- Singaporeans are ambivalent about retirement, with 4 in 10 saying Singapore was "not so good" or "not good at all" as a place for retirees to live. Current retirees, however, are more satisfied with retirement than those currently in the workforce.
- The desire to leave rises steeply with education. 38% of those with postgraduate degrees would prefer to leave, compared to 17% of those with secondary school education, and 3% of those with primary school education. Singapore may have some concerns about "brain drain."

- Citizens are less satisfied than non-citizens across a broad range of measures. 65% of citizens gave themselves a life satisfaction score of 7 or higher (scale of 0-10), vs. 76% of non-citizens. This may reflect the optimism of immigrants who have chosen to come to Singapore for better opportunities.

About Asian Urban-Wellbeing Indicators

A major change has taken place in the last decade: For the first time in human existence, more human beings now dwell in urban than rural areas. The governance of cities will affect the wellbeing of billions more people in the coming decades, and policy experts have become increasingly interested in measuring wellbeing and societal progress beyond figures like Gross Domestic Product. However, most available comparative data — especially subjective data — are between countries, not cities.

For these reasons, Civic Exchange in 2012 started work on a public opinion survey that would become the Asian Urban-Wellbeing Indicators. It measures how much people care about and are satisfied with 10 policy domains: housing; medical care; education; work and business opportunities; transportation and utilities; environmental protection; community and belonging; public safety and crime control; recreation and personal time; and quality of government.

The survey was developed over three years in collaboration with local partners across Asia. The Singapore report has been assisted by Ms Penny Low and Social Innovation Park Ltd. The first survey wave was conducted from August 2015 to January 2016 in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore, all major Asian commercial ports and financial centres.

For a copy of the Singapore report, and explanations of methodology and sample sizes, please click here: <http://civic-exchange.org/en/publications/8290328>.

For a copy of the comparative three-city report, and explanations of methodology and sample sizes, please click here: <http://civic-exchange.org/en/publications/8290304>.

Civic Exchange welcomes academics to utilise its database of research studies which covers diverse topics to trigger discussions and facilitate policy planning.

About Social Innovation Park Ltd

Social Innovation Park Ltd (SIP) is a home-grown, impartial, non-profit organisation founded in 2006 to Educate, Empower and Enhance social entrepreneurs and innovators from the Private, Public, and People (3'P') sectors. SIP's vision is to build a more sustainable, inclusive and better world, through high-impact, sustainable and cross-sector solutions to social needs. SIP won the meritorious Most Prestigious Brand Award (Singapore) in 2009, making us the youngest ever organisation to receive such an award.

Find out more about Social Innovation Park at <http://socialinnovationpark.org/>

About Civic Exchange

Civic Exchange (CEX) is a Hong Kong-based non-profit public policy think tank that was established in 2000. It is an independent organisation that has access to policy makers, officials, businesses, media and NGOs—reaching across sectors and borders. Civic Exchange has solid research experience in areas such as air quality, energy, urban planning, climate change, conservation, water, governance, political development, equal opportunities, poverty and gender.

Find out more about Civic Exchange at <http://www.civic-exchange.org/>

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