

PRESS RELEASE

Civic Exchange announces findings of Asian Urban Wellbeing Indicators

Survey uncovers significant differences between Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai

Hong Kong, 12 June 2016 – Independent public policy think tank Civic Exchange today revealed the results of its proprietary survey on wellbeing – the Asian Urban Wellbeing Indicators. The study measures wellbeing in terms of how quality of life is perceived in three major Asian cities: Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai. The survey interviewed over 1,500 people in each city. The report includes respondents’ reactions to issues such as the environment, housing, education, government and transportation. The study aims to gauge and compare wellbeing across Asian cities with a goal of identifying issues and policy gaps that will generate engagement with governments, academics, NGOs and the broader public in the quest to shape public policy.

For the first time in history, more people live in urban than rural areas. This means that the time is ripe to understand how individuals feel about the quality of life in the cities in which they live. The Asian Urban Wellbeing Indicators investigate the distribution of wellbeing within cities, using subjective perception as a complement to objective data. Highlights of the findings include:

- In general, Hong Kong respondents are significantly more dissatisfied than their counterparts in Shanghai and Singapore.
- In terms of life-satisfaction level, Shanghai ranks first (score: 7.4 out of 10), Singapore ranks second (7.1) and Hong Kong is a distant third (5.8)
- 70% of Hong Kong respondents think Hong Kong has become worse since they started living there. This percentage gets higher with younger respondents.
- 66% of Hong Kong respondents think Hong Kong is not a good place for children to grow up in, vs. 16% and 13% in Shanghai and Singapore, respectively.
- A lot more people worry about poverty in Hong Kong than they do in Singapore or Shanghai.
- 42% of Hong Kong respondents would move away from Hong Kong if they were free to choose, vs. 17% in Shanghai and 20% in Singapore.

Professor Michael E. DeGolyer, Fellow of Civic Exchange commented: “The Asian Urban Wellbeing Indicators are designed to identify priorities of public concern and gauge the public’s satisfaction level across a number of urban issues. In addition the survey aims to monitor changes in satisfaction-concern gaps over time and over cities as new policies take effect.” DeGolyer added: “A more detailed report will be released in Hong Kong in August or September. This survey, and others of its kind, are a step forward in understanding how organisations such as Civic Exchange can have an impact on important societal issues.”

“Civic Exchange will make this report and the underlying database available to the public to encourage additional analyses,” said Maura Wong, CEO of Civic Exchange. “We welcome

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other parties to delve further into the results to examine the causes that give rise to the high dissatisfaction levels among Hong Kong respondents.” Wong continued, “We also encourage other relevant bodies, including governments, to adopt the Asian Urban Wellbeing Indicators as an ongoing tool to gauge public sentiment and sense of wellbeing in their cities.”

Please click the following hyperlink to download the summary report:

http://www.civic-exchange.org/materials/event/files/20160612_wellbeing_summary_en.pdf

In addition to research, Civic Exchange teams with issue-related partners to sponsor initiatives that promote Wellbeing in cities. Civic Exchange will sponsor Asia’s first ever Walk21 Conference, dedicated to supporting walking and the walkability of various cities. The conference will take place in Hong Kong on 3-7 October 2016 and will be attended by over 500 delegates from the fields of government, transport, urban planners, property developers, tourism, business leaders and academics. For more information, click here: www.walk21hk.com.

About Civic Exchange

Civic Exchange is an independent, non-partisan, Hong Kong-based public policy think tank established in 2000. With a vision to shape a liveable and sustainable Hong Kong, Civic Exchange’s mission is to advance civic education and engage society to influence public policy through research, dialogue and development of practical and sustainable solutions.

Civic Exchange undertakes research in three major areas: Air Quality, Nature Conservation and Urban Environment, with an overarching framework of promoting Wellbeing. For more information about Civic Exchange, visit our website: <http://www.civic-exchange.org>.

Civic Exchange was ranked 46th among the world’s Top Environment Policy Think Tanks in 2015 according to the Global Go To Think Tank Index. In that year, for the first time, Civic Exchange was the only organization in Hong Kong listed in Best Independent Think Tanks. The Index, produced by the University of Pennsylvania’s Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program, is based on an assessment of 6,846 think tanks globally and is the result of a survey of about 7,500 international journalists, public and private donors and policy makers.

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