Comparing social cohesion by using Dashboard, Urban Audit data and the European Perception Survey

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The social and cultural components of competitiveness of cities and regions

Abstract

Competitiveness of cities is often reduced to an examination of economic performance and figures. It is quite rare that social indicators get the same attention although social cohesion is an important part of competitiveness of cities as well.

This idea is one of the key statements of a concept paper which was published in spring 2007 by the German Urban Audit community. The paper give an idea of the preliminary work which the German Urban Audit Group started in 2004, incorporating also the publication of DG REGIO "State of Cities Report" (2007) and Eurostat’s idea to use the "Dashboard".

The presentation contains some of the main issues of the concept paper. First it shows which indicators of the Urban Audit database could be used to describe social cohesion, i.e. poverty, unemployment and health indicators. Then these indicators will be combined with the Dashboard, a free, non-commercial software package. This is a „ready-to-work“-tool that allows comparisons between cities. Finally the lack of social indicators in the Urban Audit database and alternative strategies, i.e. the use of the “European Perception Survey” will be discussed.

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