

Claire Provost - UN Stresses Positives of Urban Growth with New Tool to Track City Prosperity

guardian.co.uk. September, 5, 2012. Cities should be seen as drivers of economic growth and human development, says report published at World Urban Forum. A new index to measure and track the prosperity of cities has been unveiled by UN-Habitat, the UN human settlements programme, in a bid to encourage a more upbeat view of the world's rapid urbanisation.

Cities should be seen as drivers of economic growth and human development, according to the agency's flagship State of the World's Cities report, published on Wednesday at the sixth [World Urban Forum \(WUF\) in Naples](#), Italy.

"A fresh future is taking shape, with urban areas around the world becoming not just the dominant form of habitat for humankind, but also the engine-rooms of human development as a whole," said the report, which called on city planners, particularly in developing countries, to see urbanisation in a positive light. In 2010 the agency announced that, for the first time, more people live in cities than in rural areas.

"Cities have been perceived as the 'engines' of national economies and there is no reason to depart from that view," said the report, pointing to numerous examples, from the US to Kenya, where urban areas contribute disproportionately to national wealth.

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