

A focus on quality

The final indicator example does just this, and is from the *Brookings Institution* in Washington, D.C. A report written for the *Brookings Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy* (Florida and Gates, 2001), examined what attracted knowledge industry businesses to particular urban centres in the US. The most important factor to emerge was *people*, or more specifically, a high level of talent in the particular location (referred to by the companies concerned as 'high human capital'). The key factors in locational choice for industry have traditionally been access to raw materials, markets and labour, with labour ranked always third. What the report demonstrated was that in the knowledge economy, labour has become the significant variable in locational choice. Industries are now following labour, rather than the other way around. What is now of particular interest to cities, is: What will make them attractive to the knowledge economy labour pool?

Florida and Gates developed a theory which states that a city's diversity, or level of tolerance towards a wide range of people, is the key to its success in attracting talented people. To measure this they established a series of diversity indices, with three top-level indicators: the *gay index* which measures the representation of *gay male couples*; the *bobemian index* which records numbers of artists, musicians, writers, actors, directors and designers; and the *foreign born index* which measures the representation of immigrants. A fourth index consolidates the three to provide a *composite diversity index*.

The indices were based on the 1990 census numbers for the US's 50 largest cities (by population), and compared to the *Milken Institute's Tech Pole*, which measures the concentration of high technology and growth, based on 1998 figures. The measure of high-tech growth is taken as a leading indication of future city success. The comparison demonstrated that the leading indicator for an area's potential to attract high-tech growth is the presence of a large gay population, although all three indicators showed a high correlation with future high-tech growth. The composite indicator showed the most consistent correlation. The authors found that *diversity of human capital is a key component of the ability to attract and retain high-tech industry* (Florida and Gates, 2001, p. 6).

It is the conclusion that the authors were able to draw from their results that is the most important aspect of these indicators. They

Figure 2.11
 Successful (and intelligent)
 cities will embrace diversity,
 both culturally and ethnically.
 (Source: Guy Briggs.)



did not suppose that high-tech jobs were chasing gay males or bohemian musicians, but rather that people in high-tech jobs are drawn to places that are inclusive, open minded and culturally creative. A cosmopolitan and diverse local population indicates these urban attributes. The significant message here is that what attracts people to live in cities is becoming the most important factor in determining economic success. The huge advantage of this particular set of indicators is that they focus on people and demand, they are essentially qualitative, and they link quality of place with urban success (Figure 2.11).

Conclusion

This chapter sets out to examine the concept of the intelligent city, seeking to broaden the common understanding of the intelligent city as a digitally networked environment. Changing this notion requires the posing of critical questions about the fundamental role of the city, and to examine its structure as both fabric and process. Through these the city is defined as a holistic system, in which adaptability is the key to its long-term success.

The questions that have been posed indicate that the intelligent city is not a new concept, but that as a measure of success, the intelligent city has been around for a lengthy period of time, although not defined as such. Although the vital ingredient of an intelligent city remains its ability to match aspirations and resources, the factors that gave a traditional city its intelligence are not necessarily those that are of relevance today. The context of urban success has changed. Globalization and the arrival of the knowledge economy have ushered in a series of revolutions in the relationship of cities to one another, and of people to cities.