



Understanding/Context

Competitive economies have in place factors, policies and institutions that ensure higher levels of productivity which, in turn, ensure rising prosperity. The importance of competitiveness is widely recognized, but achieving improvement is a complex process. Leaders often find it difficult to identify measures that will have the most impact and to gather the necessary political support and momentum for reforms that enhance competitiveness. This is particularly true at the regional and municipal levels, where factors that drive competitiveness and interaction with the national level are not fully understood.

Shaping the Agenda

The Global Agenda Council on Competitiveness seeks to raise awareness of the importance of competitiveness for economic growth and to identify ways countries can systematically transform their economies. It monitors key trends, identifies global risks, charts relationships, addresses gaps in knowledge and recommends ways to address global challenges. To this end, the Council cooperated with the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils in 2012 to create private sector-led National Competitiveness Councils in countries lacking such organizations.

While the discussion of competitiveness is often focused at the national level, the Council recognizes the value of extending analysis to sub-national and sometimes subregional levels in many countries to encourage effective action on competitiveness. Currently, the Council is focusing on city-level competitiveness, given that more than half of the global gross domestic product is produced in cities. The Council is conducting a survey to identify the main sources of information on cities and the factors that drive city competitiveness. It is also compiling case studies of cities that have implemented

measures that significantly improved their competitiveness. Council Members will use the studies to draw lessons for the political economy process.

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Looking ahead, the Council will focus on developing a set of tools to help leaders in city competitiveness from around the world communicate and focus on the key challenges and emerging solutions, and examples of where they are taking place. The tools include the identification of the key drivers of city competitiveness, awareness of the emerging trends and initiatives, and city-level case studies that combine “what to reform” with “how to reform” agendas to provide best-practice lessons for other cities seeking to raise their competitiveness. The Council’s work will come together in an integrated report on city competitiveness to be published in early 2014.

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