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XXQ Factors for Sustainable Urban Development: A Systems Economics View

“Large cities have been and will continue to be an important source of economic growth” (Quigley, 1998, p. 137)

Modern cities turn increasingly into functional areas seeking for a balance between agglomeration forces and urban quality of life. This paper will address the issue of sustainable urban development from a quality (performance) perspective. It aims to identify the critical access factors for the highest possible quality (XXQ) of the urban economy. A plea is made for a coherent methodological approach based on a systems economic view. In addition to a sketch of recent dynamic trends in urban systems in OECD countries, it pays attention to theories on urban growth and performance. Next, five critical success conditions for a high performance of cities will be presented in a coherent urban systems economics framework. The policy lessons of the analysis will form the last part of the paper.