

Dubai: In ascendance

Dubai has made major strides since announcing its smart-city strategy in 2014, which included plans for smart metering and live traffic monitoring.¹ In an analysis of smart cities, the Barcelona-based IESE Business School ranks the city in 99th out of 174 cities worldwide and second out of nine cities in the Middle East, noting that the city shows high potential and is evolving rapidly.²

In a survey on smart-city expectations, conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit and sponsored by Nutanix, 89% of Dubai residents are optimistic that smart initiatives will enhance their city's appeal, well above the global average of 71%.³ Public awareness efforts may contribute to this enthusiasm, with 77% of residents saying that the government provides sufficient information about smart-city initiatives, compared with a global average of just 47%. In terms of their priorities for smart-city development, citizens value expanding employment opportunities, whereas businesses opt for increasing the efficiency and reliability of services.



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¹ See [Smart Dubai website](#)

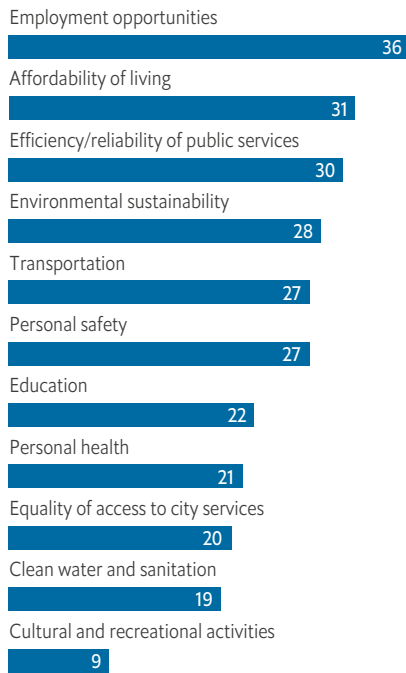
² [IESE Cities in Motion Index](#), IESE Business School, 2019.

³ In summer and autumn 2019, The Economist Intelligence Unit surveyed 373 citizens and 51 business executives in Dubai as part of a larger survey of 6,746 citizens and 969 executives in 19 cities around the world; the full research is available at <http://bit.ly/urbanintelligence>

Dynamic Dubai

Chief benefits sought by smart-city initiatives, Dubai citizens and businesses
(% of respondents)

Citizens



Businesses



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit

Citizen priorities: Jobs, affordability and efficiency

Dubai residents believe that **creating jobs** should be the top outcome of smart-city initiatives.

36%

Over one in three citizens (36%)—the highest share of any other city besides Johannesburg—say that expanding employment opportunities should be the chief focus.



Along with Stockholm, residents of Dubai are the most likely of any city to point to supporting the growth of technology start-ups as the top strategy for creating jobs, cited by one in three respondents.



Citizens also cite more **affordable living** and **efficient public services**, such as transportation, as key objectives for smart-city development.

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Approximately one in three citizens (31% and 30%, respectively) say each of these factors are important.

40%

Two in five (40%) look to smart energy and water tariffing that enables variable pricing as the primary way to improve the city's affordability.



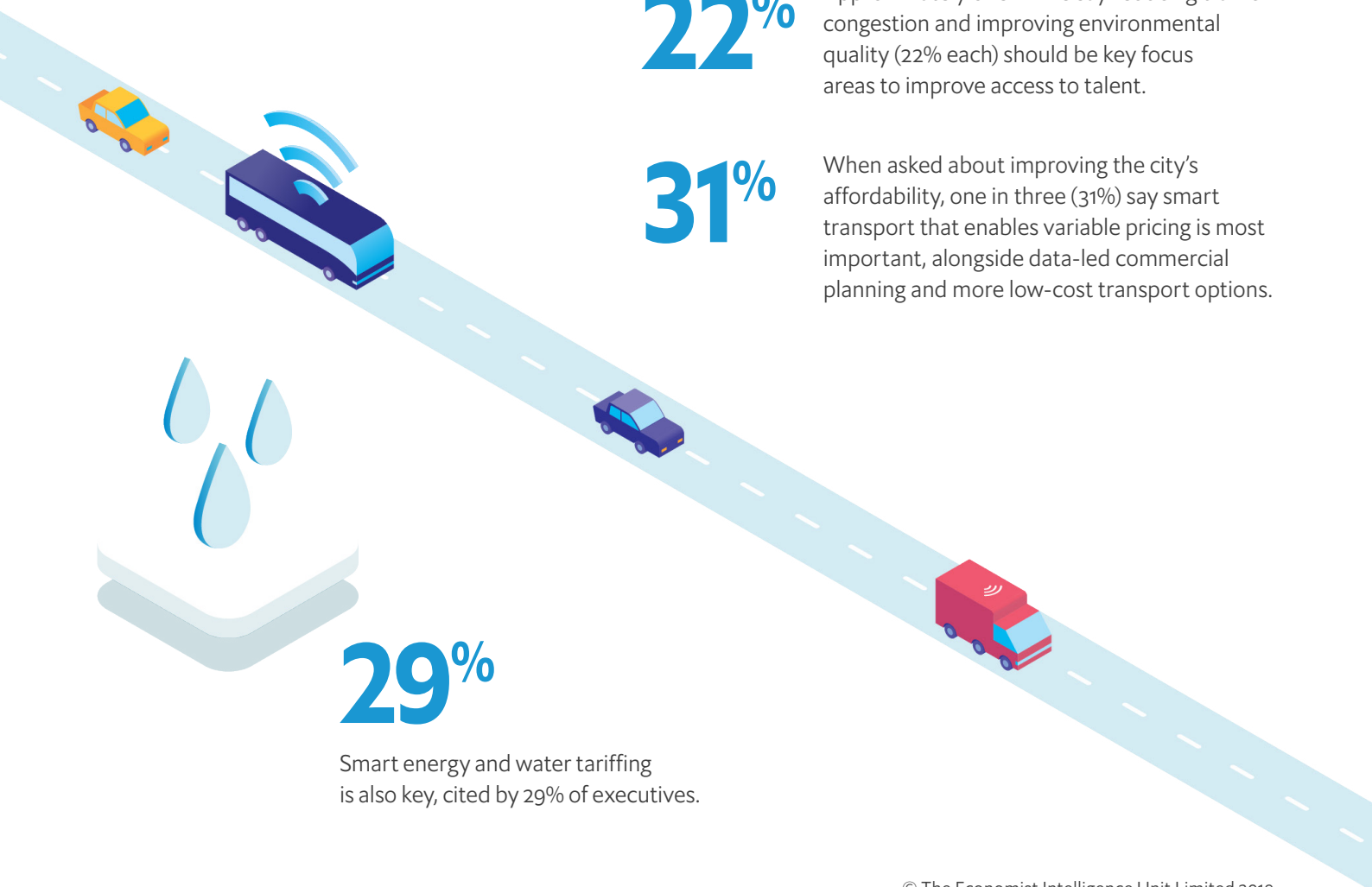


35%

Smart traffic management that reduces road congestion is a top consideration for improving Dubai's environmental sustainability, cited by 35% of residents, after expanding the availability of renewable energy sources and improving the efficiency of waste recovery.

Business priorities: Efficiency and sustainability

Dubai business executives mostly look to smart-city development to prioritise **improving the efficiency of services** and **environmental sustainability**.



22%

Approximately one in five say reducing traffic congestion and improving environmental quality (22% each) should be key focus areas to improve access to talent.

31%

When asked about improving the city's affordability, one in three (31%) say smart transport that enables variable pricing is most important, alongside data-led commercial planning and more low-cost transport options.

29%

Smart energy and water tariffing is also key, cited by 29% of executives.



Dubai's vision to become a **world-class hub for innovation** also figures into executives' objectives for smart-city development.

30%

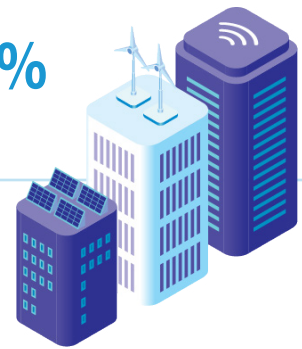
Nearly 30% say enhancing the city's innovation environment should be a key focus of smart initiatives.

47%

35%

Priorities of executives mirror those of citizens for increasing employment: supporting the growth of technology startups and attracting large technology companies (cited by 47% and 35%, respectively).

Nearly 90%



Nearly 90% of executives in Dubai—the third-highest share of any city studied, after Mumbai and Sydney—say innovations spearheaded by the private sector are essential to the success of smart-city development.

Trade-offs: Businesses and citizens somewhat accepting

Despite enthusiasm for smart-city development and the many benefits it can reap, executives in Dubai are less favourable towards some of the **concessions** it may involve.



47%

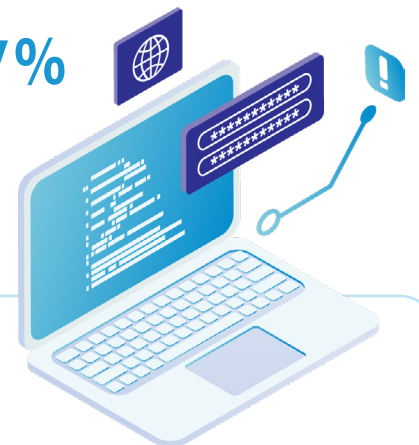
Already accustomed to an advantageous corporate tax regime, less than half of Dubai executives are willing to pay higher tax (47%) for smart-city benefits, lower than the global average of 52%.

4 in 5



Four in five (80%) are willing to share more of their organisation's data—higher than the global average (70%).

77%



However, over three in four (77%)—the third-highest share of all cities studied, after Mumbai and Sydney—affirm that sharing too much data would be risky.

Citizens are even more wary about increased taxes, but are willing to compromise on the **use of personal data towards specific aims**.

80%

About two in five Dubai residents are willing to pay higher taxes (39%) or service fees (45%).



52%

Just over half (52%) of residents are willing to share their personal data in exchange for smart-city benefits.



85%

84%

81%

However, far higher shares of residents are comfortable with the government using their personal data to reduce transport congestion (85%), prevent or solve crimes (84%), and reduce energy costs (81%).