
PRESS RELEASE

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Planning for increasing density and climate hazards - how do we create resilient societies?

A new report from Sweco reveals how cities can increase the number of inhabitants by 100%, the number of workplaces by 100% and green space by 100% – all while improving liveability and climate resilience.

In a time of social distancing, talking about densification is challenging. While any correlation between urban density and the spread of Covid-19 still is unsure, cities and towns must nonetheless address the current and future threats of pandemics just as urgently as the threats from extreme weather events such as heatwaves, droughts and heavy rainfall.

Today, half of the world's population lives in cities. And by 2050, the UN predicts that two-thirds of the world's population will do so. This rapid urbanisation is presenting us with new challenges – as well as opportunities.

A new study by Sweco, which combines industry-leading global research and experiences, shows that sustainable, smart development supported by targeted climate actions could solve a seemingly insoluble equation with a 100% increase in number of inhabitants, a 100% increase in number of workplaces and a 100% increase in green space – all in a climate-resilient, liveable way.

“Done the right way, densification could improve climate resilience and liveability while supporting diverse, enriching human experiences,” says Sara Tärk, landscape architect at Sweco. Tärk has a special interest in ensuring the quality and quantity of green structures in urban areas.

According to the study, the need for private space per neighbour and overall space per employee can be reduced by 20% thanks to improved access to shared spaces, more flexible fitouts, better technology, teleworking and shared mobility. Public spaces, such as city parks, are more appreciated now during Covid-19 than ever before. They can be expanded through redesign that minimises room for space-inefficient cars and parking space.

With well-designed use of space, overall liveability would increase, as measured by the effective accessible space per resident. Towns and cities with flexible design and strong communities also rebound much more successfully from extreme events than those with more traditionally built social environments.

[Neighbourhoods of Tomorrow: Designing for climate resilience in dense urban areas](#) is the second in a series of [Urban Insight](#) reports from Sweco on the topic **climate action**. In the report, our experts highlight specific data, facts and science that are needed to plan and design safe, resilient future urban environments.

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