

**Learn@Lunch: May 14, 2008 - Ceci n'est pas Bruxelles: 'Facts and Perceptions of Brussels' - assessing the emotional capital and desirability of Brussels.**

The focus of the Gallup Learn@Lunch event was Brussels – the capital of the European Union! An impressive audience was comprised of officials from the EU Institutions, representatives from EU regional and local offices, European Foundations, trade associations, chambers of commerce, major multinationals and consultancies. Using examples from Gallup's state-of-the-art measurement-based policy tools and its *Soul of the City* programme, Gallup CEO Robert Manchin started the proceedings by assessing the emotional capital and desirability of Brussels.

After outlining the various levels of emotional capital in Europe's major cities (from “*fully engaged*” to “*disengaged*”) Manchin placed Brussels firmly in the “*good but disintegrating*” category, along with many other cities in the north/east of the EU. Typically, cities in such a category have a satisfactory infrastructure and housing, but their citizens are unhappy with the city's administration and the integration of immigrants can be problematic.

That is the Brussels paradox: the city attracts many immigrants, survey data shows that Brussels citizens have more intercultural-interaction and are more cosmopolitan than the average EU urban dwellers ... but integration is still seen to be an issue, together with citizens' fears about crime and safety.

As for how Brussels ranks: the general public think it's good for healthcare and sports facilities, but they are indeed concerned about their safety and they are not impressed by the “beauty of Brussels”. Young professionals tend to agree to an extent: they think it's a good place for EU-related activity (no surprise there) and they also like the sports facilities; but they are also concerned about their safety as well as the level of pollution.

Overall, out of 75 cities in Europe, Brussels ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the *Gallup Soul of the City* rankings for young professionals, which makes it a pretty good place to live for the young creative classes. It only ranks 54<sup>th</sup> out of 75 for the general population, which perhaps shows the level of importance of the EU for Brussels' upwardly mobile young professionals.

Manchin also looked at how the *Gallup Soul of the City* programme can help local authorities, regional actors and stakeholders to foster economic development and multiculturalism and bring greater satisfaction to a city's residents. The programme measures the political, economic and social well-being of a city based upon residents' opinions about its performance in providing positive living and working environments.

*If you want to know more about the Gallup Soul of the city programme, access our demo or view the presentation, go on: <http://www.gallup-europe.be/projects/soul.htm>*

*If you want to order a study for one or several cities or if you want to partner with us, just send an email to [contact@gallup-europe.be](mailto:contact@gallup-europe.be) or call +32 2 734 54 18*