

Assessing Urban Diplomacy Approach on Foreign Investors in Tehran Using Network Analysis Process - SWOT Analysis

Mohammad Reza Daroudi and Nastaran Peimani

Department of Art and Architecture, Science and Research Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract: If it has been accepted that the continuity and sustainability of metropolises' growth is an important and sensitive issue, the investment absorption essence for investments' promotion and also using opportunities and new potentials will be felt more. In this regard, metropolises try to increase international cooperation and participation in terms of global issues, using appropriate application of urban diplomacy to achieve superior position in global policy-making. Studying global investment procedure and economic growth in Tehran and also considering city's actual and potential position in investment absorption in comparison with other metropolises indicate Tehran's relative poor operation that its main reason could be referred to urban diplomacy weaknesses and disregarding this problem. This paper aims to assess opportunities and strengths of Tehran in the international framework by using Network Analysis Process and SWOT tables.

Key words: Urban diplomacy • Foreign investors • Network analysis process technique

INTRODUCTION

Urban globalization and global urbanization are been considered as the two exclusive features of third millennium that have led to cities changing role in global system. This phenomenon is due to the compression of a position (spatial-time) that has created new data systems and governance system technology in global process and simultaneously has changed the free movement of goods, human, data and investment to a smoother, faster and more widespread one. As Rosecrance mentioned, globalization is a reality and a process of current world. He believes the changing nature of the state in the era of globalization and he calls this age "the age of Virtual State" [1].

Now the significant factor that increases cities' role in globalization, refers to desirable performance of "urban diplomacy".

In fact, urban diplomacy is considered as urban policy making tools, processes, organizations and economic, political, social and cultural sequences that cities and urban governance use it to strengthen city-to-

city international cooperation and attaining city and citizen's common interests considering challenges control. The purpose in using these tools comprises sustainable urban space developing and safe-democratic space creation and freedom of human rights for global citizens [2]. In the economic context of urban policy, personal interest has increasingly changed to an actuating force behind the cities' diplomatic activities. It seems that in some cities personal profit is the single steering motivation. The reason that this personal profit is frequently returned to the economic profit indicates that why the economic aspect of urban diplomacy is an important element of cities international activities. Cities diplomats can be confident of making economic profit for their cities via two ways: 1. Tourists, foreign corporations, international organizations can be attracted into cities; 2. They can export their service and knowledge to enter into an agreement with other cities [3].

In general, three main factors have been involved in the affected cities by global decisions and events: the increase of transnational organizations and their empowerment; the formation of market forces against

governments, the challenge of immigration on governance and nationality [4]. These factors have led to the transformation of global city management and therefore the opening of new policy role in urban management.

This paper seeks to answer this question that how Tehran Megapolis plays diplomatic role in urban and international areas due to its features.

The research assumes that in present time, Tehran has been converted to an active player among international forums in the contexts of security, economic development and cultural exchanges. Accordingly, this paper aims to explore opportunities and strengths of Tehran Megapolis in the international framework by using Network Analysis Process and SWOT tables. Initially, a brief overview of theoretical issues has been discussed and as the next step, SWOT table has included by analyzing the case study regarding Tehran city features. In this regard, the significance of each parameter is been determined along with the best strategy applying network analysis process. At the end, optimal priority is determined using expert choice software.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the process of choosing a method to cope with the research's demands, a synthetic method was selected. In this regard in first step, a brief description of theoretical issues has been examined and as the next step, SWOT analysis has included by analyzing Tehran city features as the case study. Due to the most important weaknesses of SWOT analysis which lacks means of analytically determining the importance of the factors or of assessing the decision alternatives with respect to the factors [5]. Analytical hierarchy process overcomes the mentioned problem and each criteria's weight importance is measurable and calculable [6]. Regarding the criticisms of classical hierarchical analysis, in this paper the combination of ANP and fuzzy logic model has been proposed as a way to overcome the model insufficiency.

Investigation on Theoretical Issues

Urban Diplomacy: Diplomacy continues to be "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states, extending sometimes also to their relations with dependent territories and between governments and international institutions" [7].

Urban diplomacy is defined as local governments' tools and dependant associations, that in the cases in which local governments have tension and conflict, or they tend to interact internationally in terms of mutual

challenges and existing opportunities, helps to provide city-to-city international cooperation ways and peaceful environmental context for their citizens via negotiations [8].

Diplomacy, as a political tool for the international balanced and coordinated action based on national interests, is considered as one of the most important activities that shows the role of states' foreign policy [9].

Urban Diplomacy and Concerning Reasons: The necessity of urban diplomacy is affected by globalization because this matter caused change and evolution in the international system essence and governance concept. Considering the recent evolutions of international system, nongovernmental performers have been grown impressively [10].

In this regard, NGOs are considered as international new order products and indicators. In this new order that is introduced as the "global community", there have been several components that can be termed as global norms of today and tomorrow. These norms reveal the role and significance of urban diplomacy more than ever. In this context, the following have been noted:

- The international community of states that took shape on the basis of state-based system gives way gradually to human society of nations. In this new situation the main area of speaking is human community, despite all the different geographical, cultural, economic and political characteristics.
- The concept and function of governance is been modified and the concept of allegiance which oversees the people's obligations against states, replaced by the concept of "citizenship" which governs the rights of people toward states. Following the concept of citizenship, which oversees the state's obligations, replaced by the concept of "citizenship" which governs the rights of government. In continuation of this process in a more perfect stage the mentality of "global citizenship" is being realized and formed.
- In the new international order, multiple and diverse actors alongside governments play roles, including the intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and even individuals as the relevance of the international community have been noted. These new actors can also appear on the face of states' supplement and have the ability to act in cases as the states' rivals specially for those states that do not observe the norms of this new order, have become problematic.

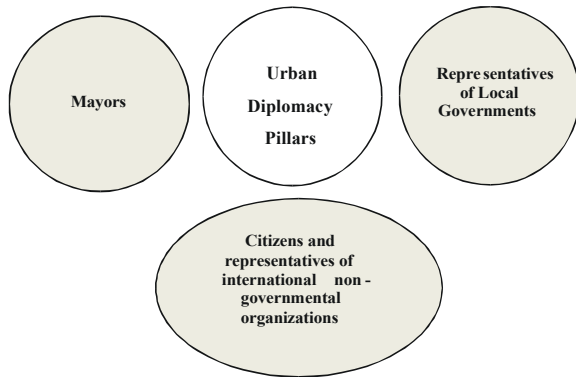


Fig. 1: Pillars and key players of urban diplomacy [12]

The spread of information has caused the broad masses of people's awareness in the remotest parts of the world to the possibilities of a better life somewhere else in the world they are about. This awareness has led to a wave of immigrations that would be problematic for both the sender and recipient countries. Due to this fact, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations have entered international interactions realm more sensitive and intensive than before [11].

Foreign Investment: Foreign investment is said to the transfer of funds or materials from one country to another country for use in establishing an economic corporation in latter country in return for direct or indirect participation of its proceeds [13].

In theory, investment accumulation is considered one of the basic prerequisites of the economic growth process that can be financed from internal and external financial resources. Not only the External financial resources are the supplements for the internal savings and fill the savings-investment³ gap, but the solution to address the gap between current resources⁴.

Foreign Investment Species: The classifications of investment species are possible in different ways. Investment in the framework of capital movement theory and multinational companies in terms of time, motivation and its form is segregated in two investment species of foreign direct investment (FDI) and foreign indirect investment (Portfolio) and in the international statistics relating to the capital movement, the mentioned classification is being used [14].

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): In the definitions of the World Bank⁵ and the International Monetary Fund⁶, foreign direct investment is a type of private investment with the purpose of maintaining capital controls to obtain

at least 10 percent of the voting stock in a foreign corporation [15]. Foreign direct investment refers to all capital transfers in order to gain profit in a corporation deployed in a country (independent of the investment) and the purpose is the acquisition of effective voting right in the company's management [16].

Foreign Indirect Investment (Portfolio): Foreign indirect investment or portfolio investment⁷ refers to those investments that foreign natural and legal persons purchased the securities of a company or financial institution without being directly involved in the investment affair [17].

Urban Diplomacy and Economy: In general, the self-interest of citizens and the role of cities as main centers of economic activities are increasingly the main driver of urban economy. Urban diplomats can attract foreign companies, tourists and other international organizations to their cities with active diplomacy in international organizations for investment or they can swap their services and knowledge through the establishment of transnational corporations and development of central offices of foreign companies. Today, most of commercial and economic activities are carried in cities, for example if global cities like Tokyo, New York, London have been allocated high scores in terms of financial, political and cultural capital, they all reveal urban diplomacy role and activities in urban economy realm. Also spending only ten percent of public resources for urban diplomacy development and cities cooperation have led to the broader resources mobility at local level that operates as a catalyst for the new investments and multiplies its effects. Since the economic issues are considered as the most important development aspects, urban diplomacy deals with cities economic growth and their ranking rise among world cities [18]. As an example of the city's urban diplomacy role in the urban economy, Davos Annual Meetings can be pointed that is held every year with the presence of cities' representatives and other participants that participating mayors in 2009 meetings were: Tehran, London, Dalian, Milan, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Quebec, San Francisco, Hesse. The subjects of the meeting were: the Middle East in 2009 (oil flow impact on commerce and community programs), Asia security especially Afghanistan and Pakistan, innovation in Asia, urbanization in global process, shortcomings of government plans (the governance structure of twentieth century to cope with the various and complex challenges of this century is not sufficient), a structure for development [19].

Iran Restrictions on Attraction of Foreign Investment Negative Mentality Towards Foreign Investment:

Negative mentality towards foreign countries investment in our country, more than everything is caused by historically unsuccessful experience in this field and in the formation of this mentality and belief, incorrect policies and measures of monarchy had significant share [20].

High Risk of Investment in Country: The first and most important factor that investors consider while investing relates to the country's risk or capital environment, because in a process of investment, at least three things should be checked:

Capital conservation, return of capital and security of a business environment. The potential of a country in the capital flight or violation of the contracts and concluded agreements with foreign companies or governments is called the country's venture⁸.

Inappropriate Development of Financial Market: Iran financial structure after the revolution and interest free banking act has moved to the bank-based financial systems. Authorizing law resulted in banks presence in the cycle of real economy activity and extensive financial services presentation. On the other hand, the inability of capital markets to attract investors, Lack of adequate legislation, lack of discipline and financial stability and also government support for the economy public sector caused Iran capital market not to achieve actual capabilities of a financial market and the country were not able to use usual financial instruments to mobilize resources and investment attraction.

Financial Security and Investor Insurance: Even if economic, financial and technical incentives are quite favorable for investment, but the investor faces risks such as expropriation, lack of human and financial security, transfer risk, breach of contract and ..., he will not invest. Investor, especially foreign investor that outside of his native land does business, is sensitive to the mentioned risks. So, capital and profit security is considered the most important thing for the investors.

Complicated Administrative Regulations: One of the cases that causes investor's frustration relates to complicated administrative regulations and administrative procedures while capital entering and while performing. In most countries of the world, with the reduction of complex administrative procedures and situations simplification to prevent the investor frustration, it's been

prevented from investor frustration occurrence. In our country because of reasons caused by state's economy, bureaucratic processes of capital absorption and utilization are high. The reasons of our state's economy, a bureaucratic process of absorption and utilization of capital is high.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case Study: Tehran, as the capital of the country, despite the benefits and potential advantages in terms of foreign investment attraction, has failed to have a strong role in this area and apparently, in spite of necessary advantages, has been unsuccessful due to the weakness in urban diplomacy in this instance.

According to current statistics, the amount of foreign investment in Tehran in 1390, was \$ 135,087 thousand that the rate has increased compared to last year, also Regarding Table 1, Tehran ranking among country provinces is ranked number 3 located after Khuzestan and Bushehr provinces.

Considering the rate of foreign investment in Tehran and also urban diplomacy strategies for investment attraction, SWOT matrix of Tehran city has been listed below.

After general assessment of Tehran city along with diplomacy and investment attraction in SWOT matrix, developed strategies in terms of factors identification (as it can be seen in Table 3.) have been extracted.

Implementing Steps According to Practical Sample

First Step: As it can be seen from the chart, the goal "best strategy selection" is placed in the first level of ANP model whereas SWOT groups (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) and factors are sequentially located in the second and third level and four strategic options are placed in the fourth level of model as well.

Second Step: Assuming that there is no dependency between the SWOT groups, paired comparisons are done between the groups based on the criteria of goal (Best strategy selection) with a scale of 1-9. Then with the use of Expert Choice software (hierarchical analysis software), the degree of importance of each group is achieved. The chart of SWOT groups' paired comparisons is presented below as Table 4. The last row of this chart is consistency ratio (CR), which is used for comparison validation and if it was more than 0.1, the

Table 2: Foreign investment statistics based on province project location¹

Rank	Province	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1	Bushehr	1,153,898	654,281	957,701	1,414,990	463,728	1,955,005
2	Khuzestan	155,261	187,476	362,342	589,022	1,412,419	942,806
3	Tehran	143,811	127,970	131,957	29,982	111,616	135,087
4	Mazandaran	15,502	9,024	17,488	7,218	33,413	124,842
5	Eastern Azerbaijan	822	590	2,963	26,451	15,526	121,237

Table 3: SWOT analysis matrix for case study

Internal Factors	External Factors
Strengths (S) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possessing attractive markets (S1) • Appropriate geographical location (S2) • Sufficient manpower in the field of urban diplomacy and international economic relations (S3) • General desire to promote Tehran city to a superior city in the regional and global level (S4) 	Opportunities (O) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing adequate provisions to support foreign investors and emphasis on Tehran globalization in the approved master plan of Tehran city (O1) • Successful implemented projects that can provide Tehran international cooperation and participation context with foreign investors as engineering-technical capabilities (O2) • Existing great potentials of Iranians residing abroad in the international contexts particularly investment (O3)
Weaknesses (W) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low amount of advertisement to attract foreign investors (W1) • Lack of urban policy administrative strategies and solutions in the field of economic prosperity (W2) • Lack of diplomacy expertise and international relations specialists in Tehran Municipality (W3) • Lack of national cohesion and agreement on joining Tehran city to international organizations especially urban diplomacy (W4) 	Threats (T) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International sanctions (T1) • lack of attention by Tehran municipality senior managers to the urban diplomacy importance in international affairs (T2) • Tehran poor relationship with specialized international organizations of united nations (T3) • Lack of significant organizational structure, urban diplomacy and international relations in Tehran municipality (T4)

Table 4: Developed strategies in terms of factors identification

Strategy	Explanation
SO	Use of outside the country Iranians' potentials in the field of investment regarding Tehran location and appropriate markets
ST	Increase the confidence level of foreign investors and economic activists by increasing the city relations with international organizations
WO	Increase advertising and legislation efficiency improvement along with economic prosperity
WT	Training manpower in the field of urban diplomacy for the future development of municipality senior managers

Table 5: Paired comparison matrix of SWOT groups

SWOT groups	S	W	O	T	Groups degree of importance
S	1	2	3	4	0.64
W	1/2	1	2	3	0.72
O	1/3	1/2	1	2	0.16
T	1/4	1/3	1/2	1	0.95
CR					0.01

Table 6: Factors' priority calculation

Groups SWOT	Group priority	Factors SWOT	Factor relative priority	Factor final priority
S	0.845	S1	0.449	0.3825
		S2	0.318	0.2814
		S3	0.077	0.0923
		S4	0.155	0.2712

Table 7: Policies Prioritization

Priority	Strategy	Explanation
1	SO	Use of outside the country Iranians' potentials in the field of investment regarding Tehran location and appropriate markets
2	WO	Increase advertising and legislation efficiency improvement along with economic prosperity
3	ST	Increase the confidence level of foreign investors and economic activists by increasing the city relations with international organizations
4	WT	Training manpower in the field of urban diplomacy for the future development of municipality senior managers

¹Source: Organization for Investment, Economic & Technical Assistance of Iran

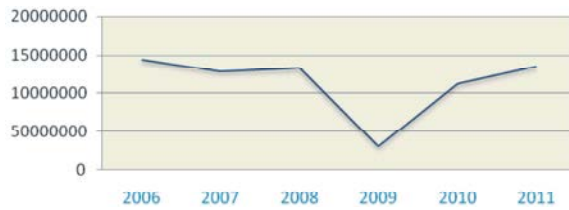


Fig. 1: The volatility of the foreign investors in Tehran

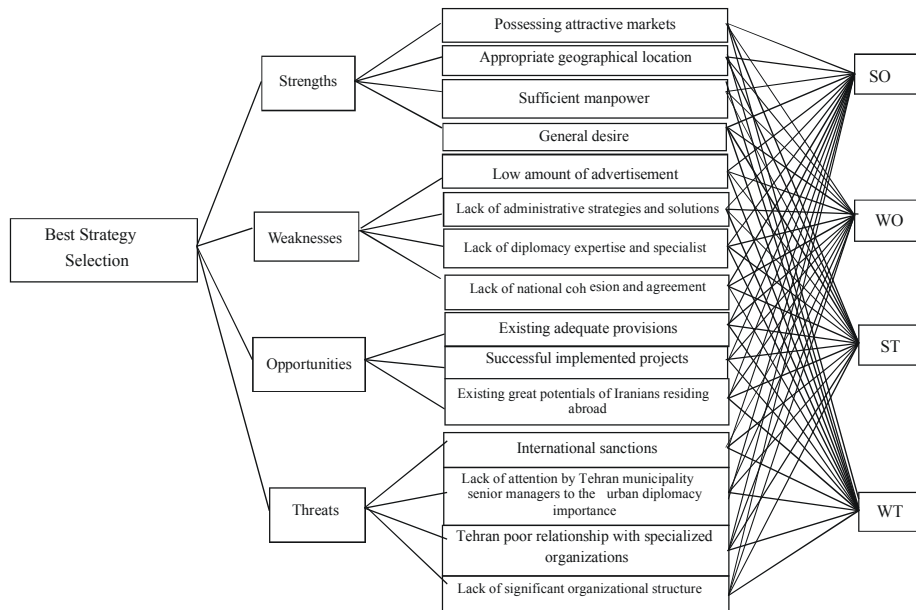


Fig. 2: ANP model of SWOT analysis for urban diplomacy role in foreign investment

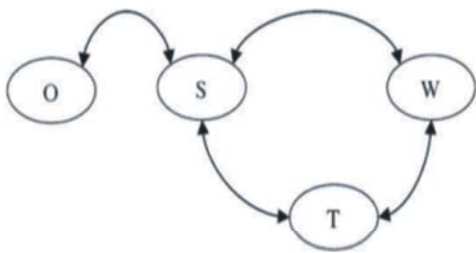


Fig. 3: Internal dependencies between SWOT groups

comparisons should be conducted again because it is inconsistent. It is also the point that the software calculates the degree of importance via Eigenvalue vector. Our goal of each paired comparison matrices is to obtain W_i vector.

As it is clear in the chart, SWOT groups' importance vector is summarized as below:

$$W = \begin{bmatrix} S \\ W \\ O \\ T \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0/64 \\ 0/72 \\ 0/16 \\ 0/95 \end{bmatrix}$$

Third Step: Considering internal dependencies between SWOT groups, after analyzing it can be concluded that some relations between these groups are set as in the Figure 3:

Based on these internal dependencies, paired comparison matrix is formed. The interdependence matrix of SWOT groups on the basis of these tables can be derived as follows:

$$W_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0.88 & 1 & 0.87 \\ 0.07 & 1 & 0 & 0.12 \\ 0.60 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0.24 & 0.11 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

It should be mentioned that since the opportunities (O) just are affected by strengths (S), so a separate paired comparison was not conducted (Fig. 3).

Fourth Step: In this phase, the priorities of SWOT groups are calculated by considering their internal dependencies (by multiplying W_1 and W_2).

$$W_{(SWOT\ group)} = W_2 \times W_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 0.95 \\ 0.32 \\ 0.44 \\ 0.24 \end{bmatrix}$$

Comparing these priorities with the obtained priorities in second stage (which were without regarding dependencies) significant differences are observed.

Fifth Step: At this stage the relative priorities of SWOT factors are obtained using the paired comparison and their weight vectors by analyzing paired comparison matrices utilizing Expert choice software is calculated (these are considered as W3).

$$W_{S' Factor} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.38 \\ 0.28 \\ 0.09 \\ 0.27 \end{bmatrix} \quad W_{W' Factor} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.68 \\ 0.20 \\ 0.19 \\ 0.12 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$W_{O' Factor} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.23 \\ 0.25 \\ 0.51 \\ 0.07 \end{bmatrix} \quad W_{T' Factor} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.11 \\ 0.07 \\ 0.82 \end{bmatrix}$$

Sixth Step: At this stage, the final priorities (general) of SWOT factors are obtained by multiplying the dependent priorities of SWOT groups (which were calculated in stage four) by the relative priorities of SWOT factors (which were calculated in step five). Here just for instance, the relevant calculation to final priorities of strengths factors is brought.

The special vector of SWOT factors' final priorities is derived from the tables as follows:

$$W\ f.\ global = \begin{bmatrix} 0.38 \\ 0.28 \\ 0.09 \\ 0.27 \\ 0.19 \\ 0.07 \\ 0.05 \\ 0.07 \\ 0.03 \\ 0.05 \\ 0.36 \\ 0.12 \\ 0.01 \\ 0.24 \\ 0.16 \end{bmatrix}$$

Seventh Step: At this stage, selected strategies' degree of importance regarding each SWOT factor is calculated.

$$W_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 0.60 & 0.59 & 0.10 & 0.48 & 0.30 & 0.07 & 0.08 & 0.12 & 0.08 & 0.15 & 0.57 & 0.54 & 0.08 & 0.54 \\ 0.22 & 0.10 & 0.55 & 0.13 & 0.13 & 0.13 & 0.22 & 0.64 & 0.32 & 0.51 & 0.23 & 0.13 & 0.23 & 0.13 \\ 0.11 & 0.24 & 0.04 & 0.29 & 0.46 & 0.46 & 0.52 & 0.16 & 0.53 & 0.22 & 0.13 & 0.23 & 0.53 & 0.24 \\ 0.06 & 0.05 & 0.29 & 0.09 & 0.32 & 0.32 & 0.17 & 0.06 & 0.04 & 0.10 & 0.05 & 0.08 & 0.04 & 0.06 \end{bmatrix}$$

Eighth Step: Eventually, final priorities of strategy options are obtained by multiplying the special vector of SWOT factors' final priorities and the importance-degree matrix of alternative strategies (W4).

$$W_{alternative} = \begin{bmatrix} S & O \\ W & O \\ S & T \\ W & T \end{bmatrix} = W_4 \times W_{fglobal} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.72 \\ 0.52 \\ 0.51 \\ 0.18 \end{bmatrix}$$

As above, ultimately and with the achieved assessments, SO strategy acquires the highest priority and then other strategies were respectively WO, ST, WT.

As it can be seen SO strategy has achieved the first priority. So this strategy is considered as the first priority of municipality for foreign investment attraction.

The presence of more than 3 to 5 million Iranians in different countries, the diversity of their problems and scientific, financial, cultural capitals and their abilities in the countries' international and domestic areas in the political, economic and social contexts have given enormous potentials that could be used in international organizations by adopting appropriate strategy from those potentials for promotion of Iran's position (Especially international specialized organizations related to urban issues).

The second priority (WO) is the amount of advertising as well. Today advertising plays an important role in the world. In order to encourage foreign investors to invest in Iran (and Tehran), direct and indirect advertisements should be used.

It could provide a suitable platform for conducting indirect advertisements, foreign political relations and favorable relations with other nations and the political and economic authorities' presence.

CONCLUSION

As noted, one way to accelerate economic development and prosperity and job creation is foreign investment attraction. Foreign investment attraction could lead to reform of management system, exchange of economic experiences and transmission of modern knowledge and technology. If barriers existed for the presence of foreign investors in urban projects, they should be first recognized and then those obstacles could

be overcome. By removing the barriers of foreign investment attraction, the economic prosperity has been created in urban projects and the causes of social welfare and employment and overall economic development in urban projects are provided. In this paper four strategies were identified as the most important investment policies in Tehran and then the prioritization was analyzed by SWOT table and ANP technique. Among the results, regarding outside the country Iranians' potentials in the field of investment is the first priority and advertisement increasing and legislation efficiency improvement is considered as the next priority. Increasing the confidence level of foreign investors and training manpower in the field of urban diplomacy were the administrative priorities. We hope mentioned items in this article could be applied by using appropriate urban diplomacy to attract foreign investment in the context of urban projects in order to have a sustainable city.

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