



# **Global Urban Competitiveness Report**

**(2019-2020)**

**The World: 300 years of  
transformation into city**

## Introduction of GUCR

The Global Urban Competitiveness Report (GUCR) is a cooperative research conducted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and UN-Habitat focusing on sustainable urban competitiveness, urban land and urban finance. Led by Mr. Marco Kamiya and Prof. Ni Pengfei, the project is participated by experts from CASS, UN-Habitat and well-known scholars in relevant fields. Through theoretical research and empirical investigation, the report establishes an indicator system to measure the economic competitiveness and sustainable competitiveness of more than 1,000 cities in the world. Meanwhile, it selects important issues of global urban development as the theme report for in-depth study, aiming to promote the implementation of the UN 2030 agenda through the assessment of urban competitiveness. At present, «GUCR (2015-2016)»GUCR (2017-2018)»GUCR (2018-2019)» have been published successively, from which, «GUCR (2018-2019)» was launched at the UN headquarters in New York city during the 74th UN general assembly.

## About the Authors



---

### Marco Kamiya

---

Mr. Marco is the head of the Urban Economy and Finance Branch of UN-HABITAT, and his research interests include development economics and public economics. Mr. Marco leads global operational work on urban economy and finance and conducts research on municipal finance, the economics of urban expansion and local infrastructure-investment policy.

---



---

### Ni Pengfei

---

Director of Center for City and Competitiveness, CASS; Assistant to the Director of National Academy of Economic Strategy, CASS; PhD in economics, doctoral supervisor. Leader and Chief Urban Economist of the CASS-UN-Habitat joint research group. Specialized in theoretical and applied studies in urban economics, urban competitiveness and real estate economics.

---

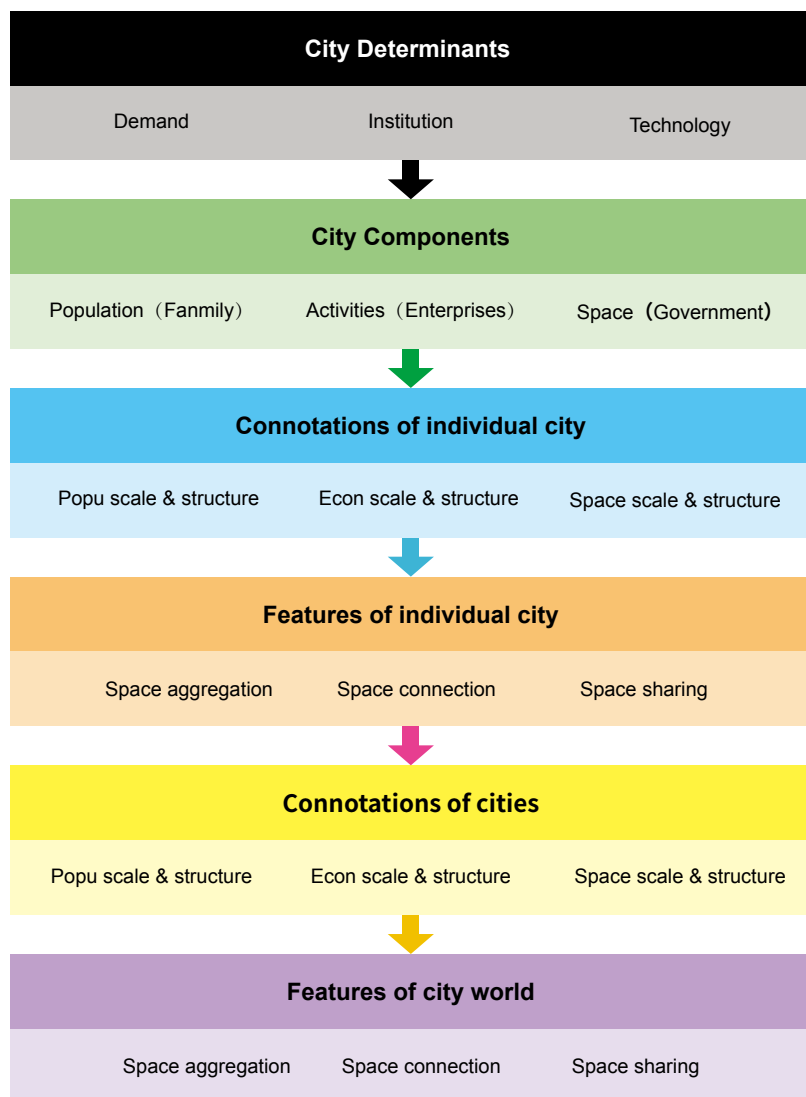
# 1.The Annual General Report- The World: 300 years of transformation into city

**The annual general report examines the global 300-year change from the perspective of cities and found that from the micro level, the change of leading cities causes the basic "cell" change of the world.**

There are three notable changes in this process: First is the evolution of global urban economic system: from global duality to global integration, from commodity trade system to factor trade system, and then from industrial chain system to innovation chain system. The second is the change in the population size of leading cities from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands, millions and tens of millions. Third is the space of leading cities spread from single central cities to multi-center metropolitan areas, megalopolis and metropolitan coordination regions. Leading cities not only bring the world into the city, but also change the city world.

**Secondly, from the perspective of macro structure, the evolution of the global urban system determines the transformation of the world**

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of General Report: Agglomeration, Connection and Sharing: The History and Future of the City**



Source: Global urban competitiveness database of CASS

**structure and system.** First is the evolution of urban economic system: from global duality to global integration, from commodity trading system to factor trading

system, and then from industrial chain system to innovation chain system. Second is the evolution of urban scale system: from the system dominated by small cities

in Europe and America to the system dominated by big cities all over the world. Third is the evolution of urban space system: from isolated cities to urban agglomerations and then to the world of metropolitan coordination regions. The transformation of the global urban system has led to the content upgrading and spatial remodeling of world system.

**Moreover, from the perspective of macro gross, the general report found that global urban development has completed the epoch-making transformation of human civilization.** Urban economy in the overall economy plays roles from insignificant subsidiary, to pivotal support, and then to all-inclusive main body. Second, the proportion of urban population is about to increase from 5.5%

(1750) to 70% (2050). Thirdly, The functional space of the city on earth ranges from scattered points to all human footprints.

**In addition, from the perspective of space, the general report found that changes in global urban characteristics determine the evolution of world characteristics.** First, cities

lead the world: from dispersed-concentration to concentrated-concentration and then to concentrated-dispersion.

Secondly, cities dominate the world: from regional connections to global connections, from “hard connections” of commodity elements to “soft connections” of information and service elements, from individual connections to the internet of everything. The contents of urban sharing range from basic infrastructure to public

services, from hardware products to software products, from public goods to private goods. The three important characteristics of human society: aggregation, connection and sharing are accelerated by the development of cities.

**Last but not least, from the dynamic mechanism, the general report found that the human development momentum bred by cities determines the appearance and change of the urban world.** Mankind's insatiable and ever-escalating demand for a better life is the driving force behind the urbanization of the world in 300 years. The four technological revolutions have been the core driving force behind 300 years of urban world formation. The establishment and expansion of market economy system is the key driving force of urban world.



## 2. The Annual Theme Report of GUCR(2019-2020): Experience and Methods of Global Municipal Finance



**According to the theme report, the serious challenges of municipal financing and solutions need to be given high attention globally.** Municipalities are the government entities that most closely manage cities, and are well situated to respond to the specific needs of their resident populations and businesses in terms of public services, education, an enabling business environment and governance impacting the local quality of life. However, lack of resources, capacity and authority often constrains the ability of

municipalities to meet the needs of their cities. Therefore, improving the state of municipal finance will be critical for development, and is a global priority according to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (United Nations, 2015B).

**The theme report found that SDGs cannot be achieved without determined and far-reaching financial efforts in terms of capital investment.**

Thus, cities must concentrate a significant part of these efforts. However the expenditure and funding raising ability of local

governments shown significant differences between high-income and low-income cities. Therefore, innovation in resource access mechanisms is essential.

**The case study part of the theme report,** centering on the experience and methods of municipal finance, deeply analyzes the cases of Sao Paulo, Botswana, and Latin America and the Caribbean, summarizes the experience and practices of these cities and regions in municipal finance so as to provide references for global urban.

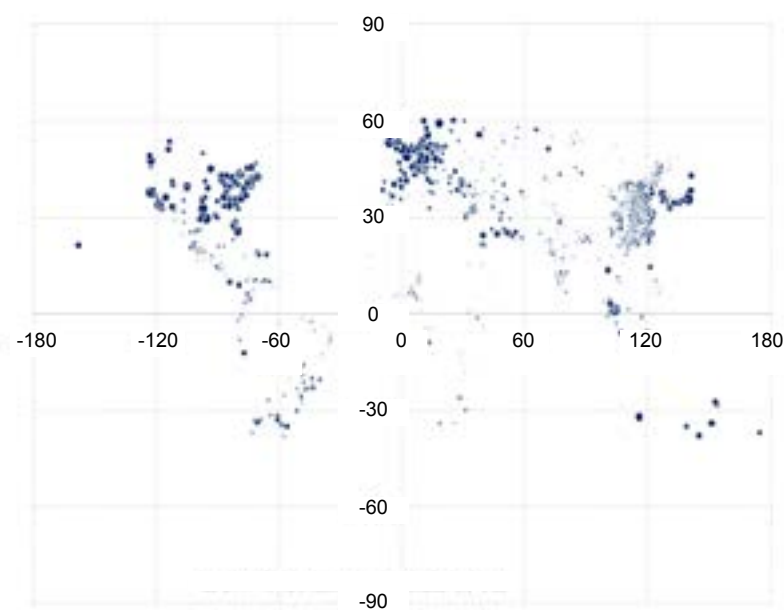
### 3. Economic Competitiveness of GUCR(2019-2020): Influenced by the decline in the average urban competitiveness of China, the United States and Europe, the average global urban competitiveness declined slightly. This also indicates that if the trade war between major countries continues, it will not only weaken the urban competitiveness of each country, but also weaken the global urban competitiveness and welfare.

Global urban economic competitiveness of a city can be understood as the ability of a city, in the process of cooperation, competition and development relying on the

internal organization efficiency and the external economic advantage which are formed by its factor endowments and space foundation, to create more values in a rapid and extensive

way by means of attracting, controlling and transforming resources and dominating the market, so as to continuously provide and maximize the benefits for its residents.

Figure 2: The spatial distribution of economic competitiveness output of 1,006 cities



Source: CCC of CASS

**According to the global urban economic competitiveness research, the top 20 cities in the 2019 Global Urban Economic Competitiveness ranking are: New York, London, Singapore, Shenzhen, San Jose, Tokyo, San Francisco, Munich, Los Angeles, Shanghai, Dallas, Houston, Hong Kong, Dublin, Seoul, Boston, Beijing, Guangzhou, Miami and Chicago.** Nine of them were from North America, eight from Asia and three from Western Europe. Overall, the top 20 cities



face fierce competition with significant changes in rankings. 14 cities has changed position with the largest change of 4 places. Global comprehensive centers and technology centers have generally improved, while specialized cities and manufacturing centers declined overall.

**The study found that comparing the top200 cities in economic competitiveness, Europe has more cities declined in the ranking while Asia has more cities improved.**

Compared with 2018, among the top200 cities, 54.2% of European cities declined in terms of ranking of economic

competitiveness while this ratio in Asia is only 31% which indicates that the majority of cities in Asia are improved in the ranking. Regarding North America, the number of risen is as much as fallen.

**The study found that among the top ten urban agglomerations, Northern California has the highest average and Rhein-Ruhr has the smallest internal difference.**

The study found that the economic competitiveness of the top ten urban agglomerations showed a trend of increasing differentiation. The ranks of the Northern California urban agglomerations have risen significantly and the Seoul

metropolitan area, the Yangtze River Delta and the Pearl River Delta have also improved in but with smaller extent. The Northeastern US urban agglomeration, the Midwestern urban agglomeration, the London-Liverpool urban agglomeration, the Netherlands The Belgian urban agglomeration and the Rhine-Ruhr urban agglomerations have declined slightly. The overall ranking of the Mumbai urban agglomeration is relatively low but stable.

**Comparing the three major economies of China, the United States and the European Union, China have more cities declined**



**in the ranking, while European cities has a deeper descent degree**

As the three engines of world economic development, China, the United States and the European Union have attracted worldwide attention for the change of urban economic power. From the perspective of urban economic competitiveness, the overall level of the three major economies has declined. The United States has the smallest number of cities declined and China has the biggest number but with slight overall descent degree. However, severity declines have appear in some European cities.

**Comparing the overall pattern of global economic competitiveness, the report found that the average level has declined, but the divergence has converged.** Comparing all 1006 samples, it is found that compared with 2018, the average level of global urban economic competitiveness in

east Asia is smaller. From the aspect of urban competitiveness upgrading, European and African cities present more growth than decrease, while Asian and north American cities present more decrease than growth.

**Comparing changes of global sub-regional pattern, the report found that Northern China and Eastern Europe declined while Southern China and India rose in ranking.**

From the perspective of spatial distribution, the cities with rising global competitiveness are mainly distributed in the west coast of the United States (100 degrees west longitude), Western Europe (20 degrees east longitude) and China, Japan and South Korea (110-140 degrees east longitude), and the latitude is concentrated between north 25 to north 55 degrees. Cities in Northern China and Eastern Europe generally declined while those in southern China and India generally rose in ranking.

has narrowed. In terms of regions, there are more cities increased in Eastern China and Central China while the rest parts have the opposite situation.

According to the Global Urban Competitiveness Report 2019, five cities in China rank among the top 20, namely Shenzhen No. 4, Shanghai No. 10, Hong Kong No. 13, Beijing No. 17, and Guangzhou No. 18. Compared with 2018, Shanghai has increased by 3, Beijing has increased by 2, Hong Kong has decreased by 2, and Guangzhou has decreased by 4. Shanghai surpasses Hong Kong.

Nine cities in China have entered the top 50, including Suzhou (25), Nanjing (42), Wuhan (43), and Taipei (44). Compared with the ranking in 2018, Nanjing has increased by 3, Suzhou and Taipei have increased by 2.

Twenty cities in China have entered the top 100, including Chenddu (54). Hanazhou (64).

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_17962](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_17962)

