



Report on Sustainable Competitiveness of Cities Worldwide

(2017-2018)

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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 Prof. Ni Pengfei and Mr. Marco Kamiya, 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 themes for in-depth studies, aiming to promote the implementation of the UN 2030 agenda through the assessment of urban competitiveness. Currently, five annual reports have been published successively, among which GUCR (2018-2019) was launched at the UN headquarters in New York City during the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, and the GUCR (2019-2020) was released in Abu Dhabi during the 10th World Urban Forum.

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Introduction

In 2015, the global economy grew slightly by 2.806%, around the same as in 2014. Specifically, the growth rate of high-income countries was 2.2%, that of middle-income countries was 4.3%, and that of low-income countries was 5%. In 2015, global commodity trade accounted for 44.595% of the world's GDP, declining for the fourth year in a row. Exports registered USD16,636 trillion, down by 12.92% year on year, and imports amounted to USD16,783 trillion, down by 12.21% year on year. In 2015, global urbanization process continued and the overall

urbanization rate was 53.91%, an increase of 0.456 percentage point over 2014. Specifically, the urbanization rate of North America was 81.63%, that of Latin America and the Caribbean was 79.85%, that of Europe and Central Asia was 71.62%, that of East Asia and the Pacific was 56.44%, that of South Asia was 32.74%, that of Sub-Saharan Africa was 38.59%, and that of the Middle East and North Africa was 60.43%. Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific are still in the middle of their urbanization processes.



1 Sustainable competitiveness of the world declined slightly and trend in the growth of high-income population was divergent

1.1 The pattern of sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide tended to stabilize

Tokyo, Singapore, New York, London and Paris are the Top 5 in the world rankings by sustainable competitiveness. All of them but Paris remained in their previous positions. Among the Top 20, Europe had the most entries with nine of its cities on the list, followed by Asia and North America, each having six. This pattern is consistent with that of the previous year. Eleven countries are involved. They are Germany, Russia, France, the Republic of

Korea, the United States, Japan, Sweden, Spain, Singapore, the United Kingdom and China. As for the Tier-2 indicators, the world's Top 20 for 2017–2018 generally rank high by high-income population increment. All of them but Frankfurt and Munich are in the forefront of the world. The rankings by high-income population density of the Top 20 cities remained stable as Singapore, Munich and Hong Kong are still the Top 3 in the world.

Table 1 Top 20 cities of the world by sustainable competitiveness and changes in their rankings, 2017–2018

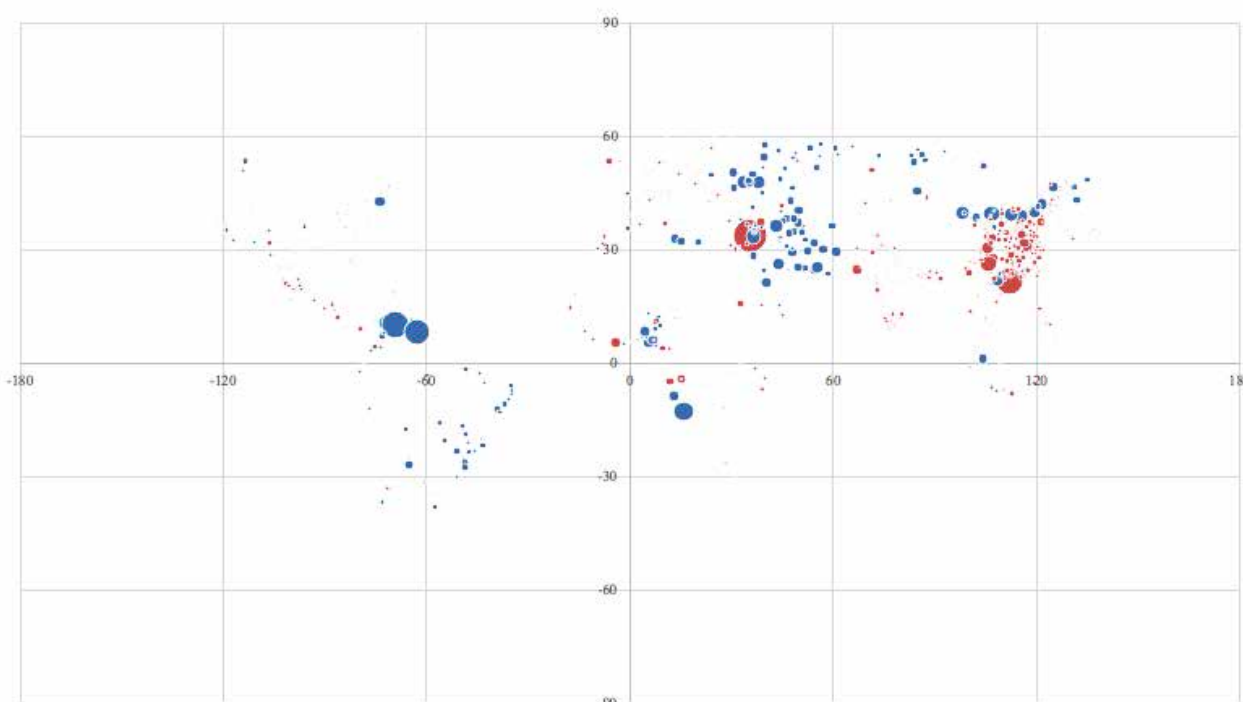
City	Country	Continent	Sustainable competitiveness		High-income population density		High-income population increment	
			Ranking	Change	Ranking	Change	Ranking	Change
Tokyo	Japan	Asia	1	0	11	-1	1	1
Singapore	Singapore	Asia	2	0	1	0	10	1
New York-Newark	U.S.A.	N. America	3	0	41	0	2	-1
London	U.K.	Europe	4	0	21	2	6	0
Paris	France	Europe	5	1	39	0	4	-1
Hong Kong	China	Asia	6	-1	3	0	21	1
San Francisco-Oakland	U.S.A.	N. America	7	0	34	2	8	1
Osaka	Japan	Asia	8	1	85	-1	5	0
Barcelona	Spain	Europe	9	-1	9	2	24	1
Chicago	U.S.A.	N. America	10	2	88	0	7	0
Munich	Germany	Europe	11	-1	2	0	53	-2
Stuttgart	Germany	Europe	12	-1	4	0	43	0
Stockholm	Sweden	Europe	13	4	19	2	25	3
Madrid	Spain	Europe	14	1	43	2	17	0
Boston	U.S.A.	N. America	15	-1	65	-2	12	1
Frankfurt am Main	Germany	Europe	16	0	7	0	49	1
Shenzhen	China	Asia	17	2	10	2	38	6
Moscow	Russia	Europe	17	-4	22	-2	26	0
Philadelphia	U.S.A.	N. America	18	0	67	1	13	1
Seoul	Republic of Korea	Asia	19	1	68	3	14	2

1.2 Asian cities rose rapidly and South American cities dropped in general

By continent, North America had 64 cities among the Top 200 of the world, accounting for 32% of the total, the highest number of all continents. It was followed by Asia with 60 cities, then Europe, South America, Oceania and Africa. In terms of changes in

their rankings, Asian cities rose sharply by 4.03 places on average, showing remarkably higher sustainable competitiveness. The rankings of North American and Oceanian cities basically remained unchanged while South American cities plummeted on the world list.

Figure 1. Changes in global rankings by sustainable competitiveness, 2017-2018



Note: Red indicates positive change in ranking while blue indicates negative change, and the bigger the dot the greater the change of ranking

Table 2 Number of cities in the global Top 200 by continent 2017–2018 vs. 2016–2017

Continent	Number of cities in the global Top 200 2017–2018	Number of cities in the global Top 200 2016–2017	Statistics of the changes in the rankings		
			Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation
N. America	64	64	0.2813	5.1961	18.4749
Europe	60	57	1.2667	5.5628	4.3917
Asia	58	59	4.0345	15.3428	3.8029
S. America	10	12	-14.9000	32.6478	2.1911
Oceania	7	7	0.5714	3.9940	6.9896
Africa	1	1	10.0000	N/A	N/A

1.3 Sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide slightly declined on the whole, and high-income population increment showed divergent trends

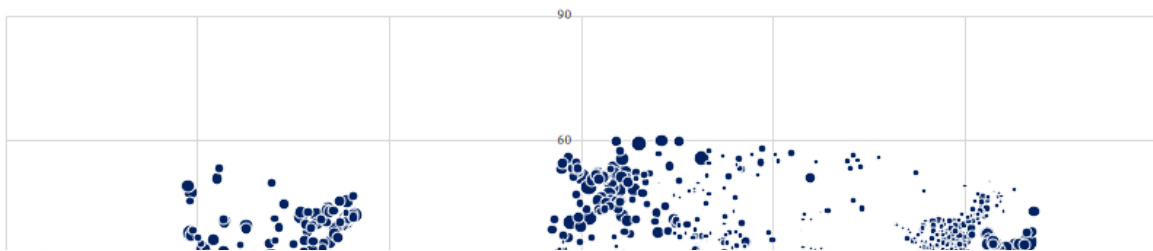
For 2017–2018, the average sustainable competitiveness score of cities worldwide is 0.3584, lower than that of 2016–2017. A total of 433 cities score higher than the average, accounting for 43.03% of the total. The overall coefficient of variation is

0.4972, basically the same as that of the previous year. It was worth noting that the coefficient of variation of high-income population increment was close to 0.6, indicating divergence in the trends of high-income population increment.

Table 3 Statistics of sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, 2017–2018

	Indicator	Sample size	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation
Sustainable competitiveness 2017–2018	Sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.3584	0.1782	0.4972
	High-income population density	1,006	0.3823	0.1798	0.4703
	High-income population increment	1,006	0.2792	0.1667	0.5971
Sustainable competitiveness 2016–2017	Sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.3676	0.1806	0.4913
	High-income population density	1,006	0.3871	0.1805	0.4663
	High-income population increment	1,006	0.2924	0.1709	0.5845

Figure 2 Distribution of sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, 2017–2018



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