Report on Sustainable Competitiveness of Cities Worldwide

(2014–2015)

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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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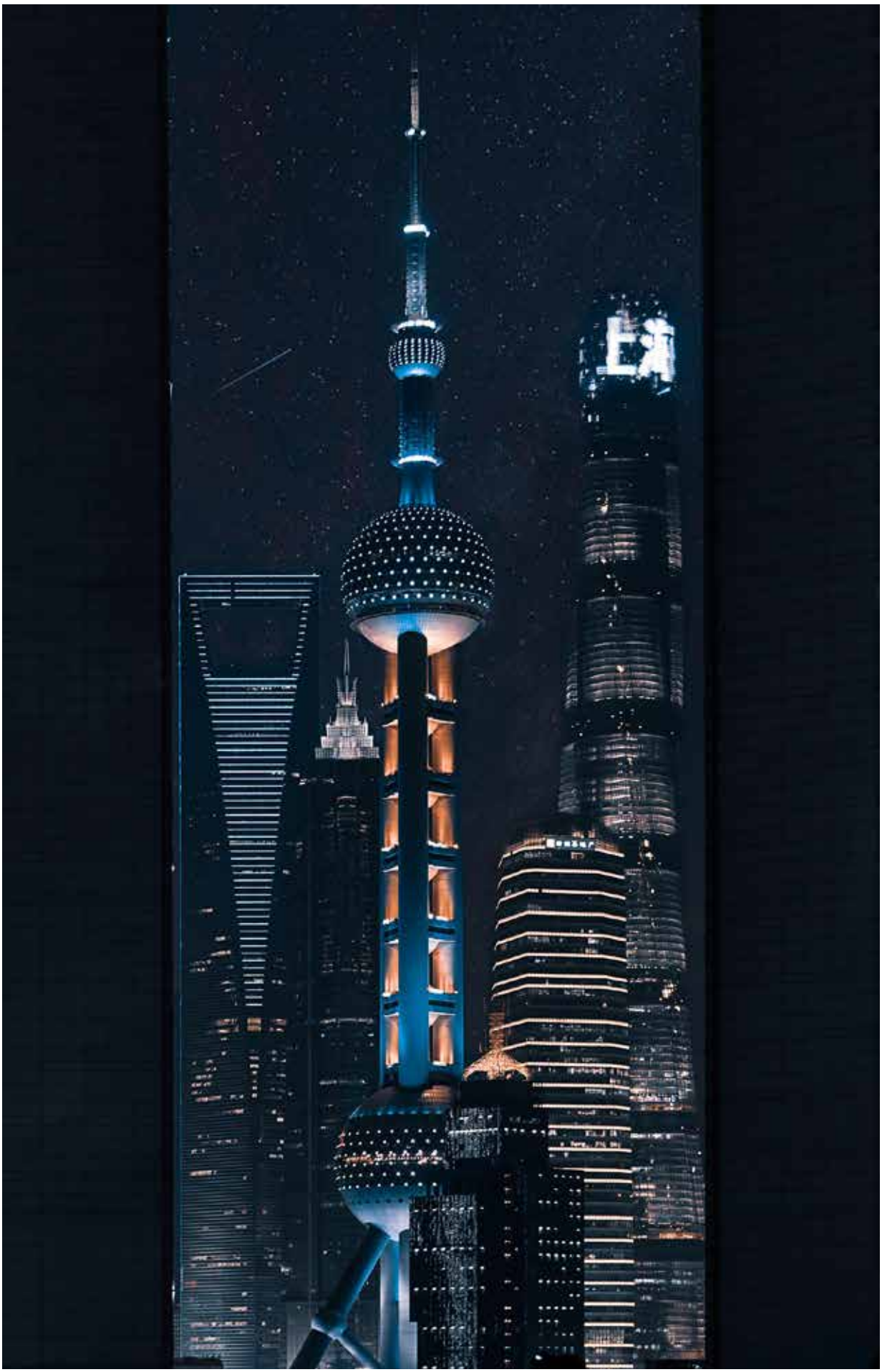

Introduction

In 2012, global economic growth continued to decline. The growth rate was only 2.508%, down 0.625 percentage point from the 3.133% of 2013. This is the second year in a row that we see the global growth rate go down. However, different categories of economies actually saw different growth trends: The growth rate of high-income countries was only 1.282%, lower than the global average. In comparison, the growth rate of middle-income and lower-middle-income countries was about 5.1%, and that of low-income countries was 3.481% , significantly higher than the global average. In 2012, global commodity trade accounted for 49.635% of the world’ s GDP, lower than its share in 2011. In 2012, urbanization accelerated worldwide, pushing the global urbanization rate up to 52.554%, 0.451 percentage point higher than that of 2011. In 2012, the number of non-resident patent applications worldwide reached 745,334, an increase of 31,858 from the previous year, indicating steady technological progress.

1 Rapid rise of Asian cities led by growth of high-income population density

1.1 A stable pattern gradually took shape concerning the sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide.

Tokyo, Singapore, New York-Newark, Paris and London are the Top 5 in the world in terms of sustainable competitiveness.Both Singapore and London moved up one position on the list, while New York-Newark was down by one place, Tokyo and Paris remained where they were. Among the Top 20, there are six N. American cities , nine European cities and five Asian cities , involving 12 countries, including Japan, Singapore, U.S.A., France, U.K., China, Spain and Germany. A stable pattern is taking shape.As for Tier-2 indicators, the Top 20 cities of 2014–2015 generally rank high by high-income population increment, Singapore, Munich and Hong Kong are the Top 3 of the world by high-income population density, and all of the other cities have maintained their leading positions as well.

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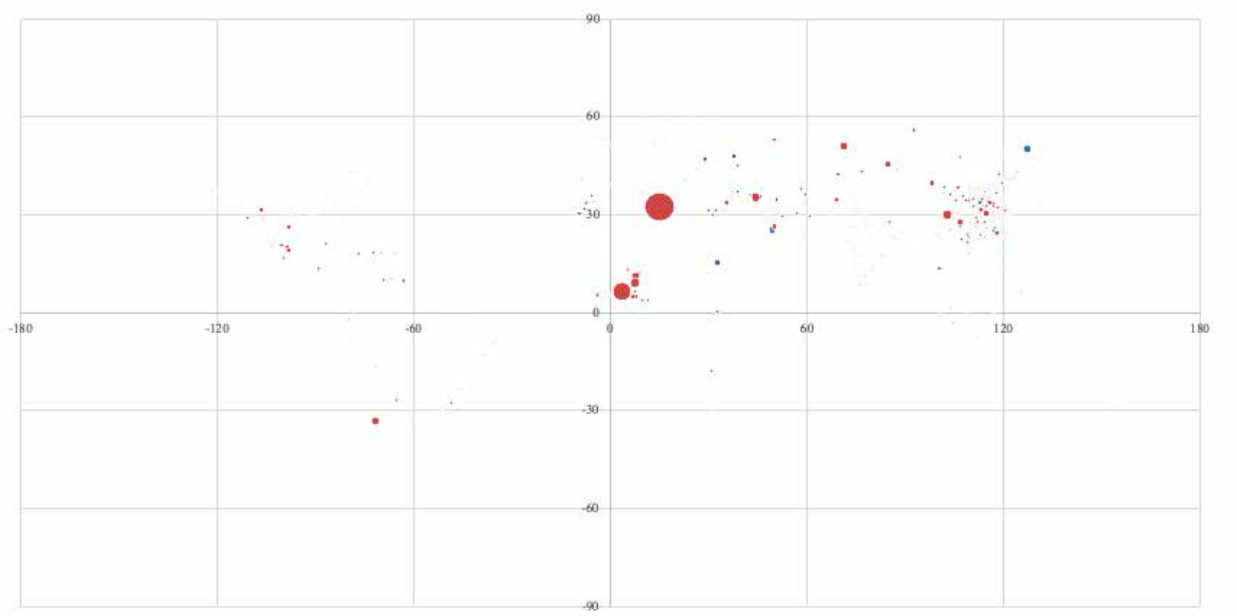
Top 20 cities by sustainable competitiveness, 2014–2015

City	Country	Continent	Sustainable competitiveness		High-income population density		High-income population increment	
			Ranking	Change	Ranking	Change	Ranking	Change
Tokyo	Japan	Asia	1	0	10	0	1	0
Singapore	Singapore	Asia	2	1	1	0	15	0
New York-Newark	U.S.A.	N. America	3	-1	44	2	2	0
Paris	France	Europe	4	0	39	0	3	1
London	U. K.	Europe	5	1	23	3	7	0
Hong Kong	China	Asia	6	-1	3	0	22	-2
Osaka	Japan	Asia	7	0	84	-1	4	-1
Barcelona	Spain	Europe	8	0	9	0	27	0
Chicago	U.S.A.	N. America	9	0	90	0	6	0
San Francisco-Oakland	U.S.A.	N. America	10	1	40	2	11	1
Stuttgart	Germany	Europe	11	-1	4	0	44	-2
Moscow	Russian	Europe	12	1	19	-1	25	3
Munich	Germany	Europe	13	1	2	0	61	5
Boston	U.S.A.	N. America	14	2	63	-2	14	-1
Madrid	Spain	Europe	15	3	43	0	19	0
Seoul	Korea	Asia	16	-4	72	-3	12	-3
Frankfurt am Main	Germany	Europe	17	-2	7	0	49	-2
Philadelphia	U.S.A.	N. America	18	-1	71	0	13	-2
Toronto	Canada	N. America	19	2	57	2	21	1
Stockholm	Sweden	Europe	20	3	21	2	36	5

1.2 Sustainable competitiveness of Asian cities is rising rapidly and that of N. America cities is improving slowly

By continent, N. America has the largest number of cities (64) in the global Top 200 for 2014–2015, followed by Asia who has 60, and Europe, S. America, Oceania and Africa. In terms of the changes in the rankings, Asian cities within the Top 200 have leapt 2.75 places on average as their sustainable competitiveness improve rapidly, S. America, European and African cities have moved down the list, and N. America cities is slightly up.

Figure 1 Changes in global rankings by sustainable competitiveness, 2014-2015



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

Number of cities in the global Top 200 by continent, 2014–2015

Continent	Number of cities in the Top 200 2014–2015	Number of cities in the Top 200 2013–2014	Statistics of change		
			Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation
Asia	60	58	2.75	10.7477	3.9082
N. America	64	64	0.5156	5.1300	9.9492
S. America	9	11	-3.4444	5.3645	-1.5574
Oceania	7	7	1.2857	4.9570	3.8554
Europe	58	58	-1.0517	6.5999	-6.2753
Africa	2	2	-19	32.5269	-1.7119

1.3 Sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide has improved on the whole and the gaps between cities have narrowed

For 2014–2015, the overall average sustainable competitiveness score of cities worldwide is 0.3604, up 0.0086 point over the previous year; and the coefficient of variation is 0.4781, down 0.0101. At the same time, the coefficients of variation for high-income population density and high-income population increment have both decreased, showing reduced gaps between cities.

Statistics of sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, 2014–2015

Year	Indicator	Sample size	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation
2014–2015	sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.3604	0.1723	0.4781
	high-income population density	1,006	0.3942	0.1782	0.4520
	high-income population increment	1,006	0.2756	0.1607	0.5829
2013–2014	sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.3518	0.1717	0.4882
	high-income population density	1,006	0.3916	0.1801	0.4600
	high-income population increment	1,006	0.2635	0.1579	0.5993

Figure 2 Sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, 2014–2015