

# Competitiveness of Cities Worldwide

(2013-2014)

■ Ni Pengfei, Marco Kamiya, Guo Jing, Xu Haidong, Zhang Yi, etc



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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.

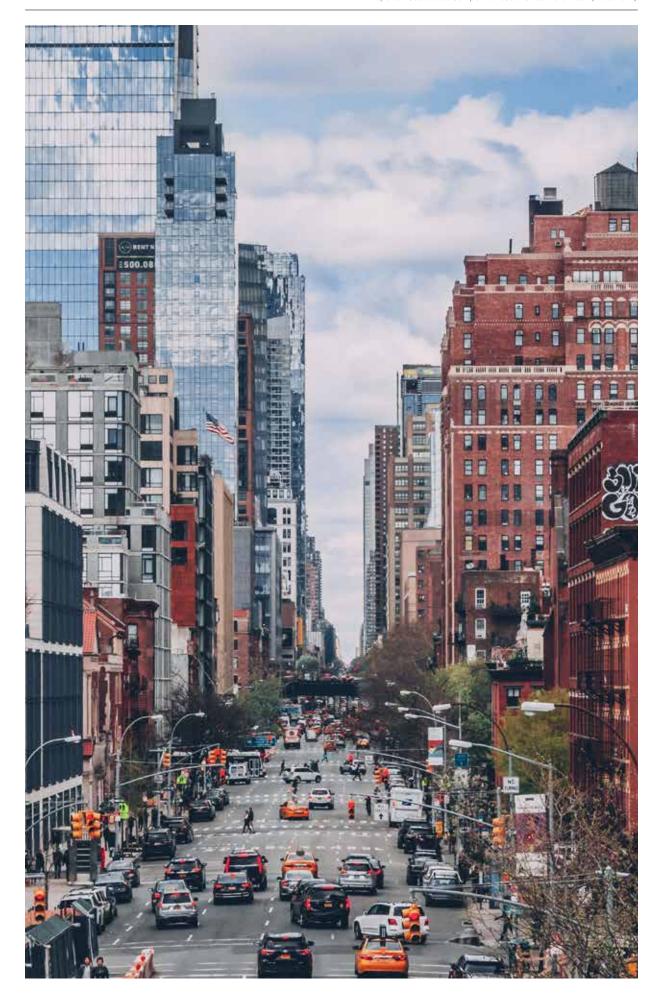
#### **About the Authors**



**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.



Marco Kamiya is a Senior Economist of Knowledge & Innovation 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.



#### Introduction

The global economy generally remains on the track of recovery, but the pace has slowed down significantly and support for the recovery is weak. Economic growth is fast in the South and slow in the North. In the West, economic growth has slowed down and risk factors accumulated significantly. In particular, growth in developed economies has decreased sharply as the growth rate of the United States is significantly lower and the European debt crisis has intensified, adding to the uncertainties for the overall economic recovery of the world. On the contrary, emerging economies are experiencing fast development, and their status in the global economic pattern has further improved. However, situations different among

different emerging economies. As economic and social development accelerates, concerns have been rising about how to promote the competitiveness of cities in these countries with less resource consumption and environmental impact, and how to turn constraints in environmental and societal aspects into new driving forces for economic growth. This is exactly what sustainable competitiveness of cities is about. Facing uncertainties such as the lack of momentum for global economic recovery and the European debt crisis, a central issues we now face is how to find new growth drivers for cities around the world. This is also key to determining the sustainable development ability of cities.



## 1.1 The sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide improved steadily and cities in North America, Europe and Asia are in leading positions

Table 1 shows changes in the sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, high-income population increment and high-income population density from 2010 to 2011. Figure 1 shows changes in the rankings. It is clear that the sustainable competitiveness of the world's top cities is relatively stable and the Top 20 are the same as in the previous years, with only changes in the rankings within the group. In addition to Barcelona and Chicago swapped positions and Stuttgart entered the Top 10. Other than these, the Top 10 list largely

remained unchanged, indicating that it is difficult for any other city to take the places of these front runners in the short term. In comparison, cities in the 10th to 20th places saw more changes. The sustainable competitiveness of North American cities declined to some extent, while that of European and Asian cities increased. In terms of high-income population increment and high-income population density, the situation in the world's top cities are relatively stable, and the global rankings did not change much. This means that the top cities in

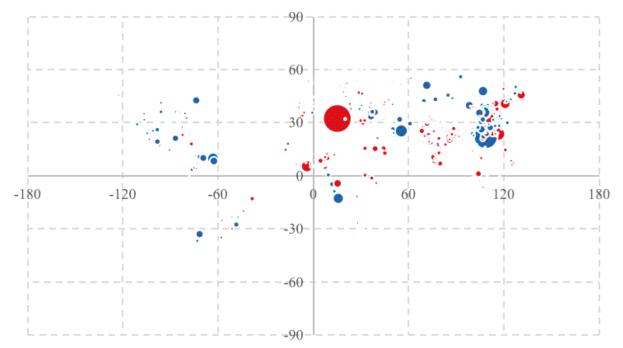
the world are still highly attractive to high-caliber talents in the world, and this played an important

role in the keeping their positions in the global rankings of sustainable competitiveness.

Table 1 Sustainable competitiveness of Top 20 cities and changes in their rankings

City	Country	Continent	Sustainable competitiveness		High-income population increment		High-income population density	
			2011 ranking	2010 ranking	2011 ranking	2010 ranking	2011 ranking	2010 ranking
Tokyo	Japan	Asia	1	1	1	1	10	10
New York	U.S.A.	N. America	2	2	2	2	46	45
Singapore	Singapore	Asia	3	3	15	16	1	1
Paris	France	Europe	4	4	4	4	39	37
Hong Kong	China	Asia	5	5	20	17	3	4
London	U.K.	Europe	6	6	7	7	26	23
Osaka	Japan	Asia	7	7	3	3	83	83
Barcelona	Spain	Europe	8	9	27	25	9	9
Chicago	U.S.A.	N. America	9	8	6	6	90	90
Stuttgart	Germany	Europe	10	11	42	39	4	5
San Francisco	U.S.A.	N. America	11	10	12	12	42	42
Seoul	Republic of Korea	Asia	12	12	9	8	69	67
Moscow	Russia	Europe	13	16	28	26	18	26
Munich	Germany	Europe	14	18	66	73	2	2
Frankfurt	Germany	Europe	15	15	47	44	7	7
Boston	U.S.A.	N. America	16	14	13	13	61	60
Philadelphia	U.S.A.	N. America	17	13	11	10	71	66
Madrid	Spain	Europe	18	17	19	19	43	44
Berlin	Germany	Europe	19	20	43	38	15	15
Taipei	China	Asia	20	19	39	34	16	16

Figure 1 Changes in global rankings by sustainable competitiveness, 2011-2012



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

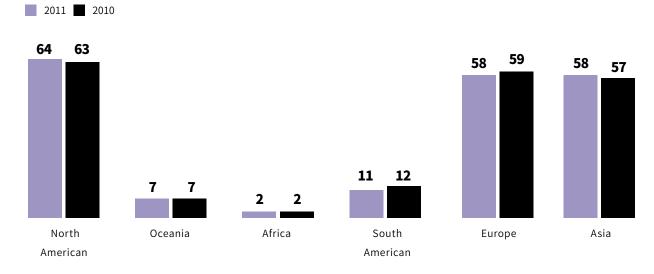
### 1.2 Cites in North America, Europe and Asia are in the lead and cities in Asia and South America are moving up rapidly

Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the distribution of global sustainable competitiveness in 2010 and 2011, respectively, and the distribution of the Top 200 cities by continent. It can be seen that European, North American and Asian cities are relatively more competitive. North American cities have particularly strong sustainable competitiveness, while European and Asian cities see their sustainable competitiveness remain stable. For the year 2011, Europe and Asia each has 58 cities in the global Top 200. To some extent, uncertainties such as the financial crisis and the European debt crisis have slowed down the improvement of the sustainable competitiveness of European cities. Therefore, in the wake of the crises, the rankings of cities in Asia and South America improved, with each continent having one more city in the Top 200 mainly due to increases in the high-income population increment.

-180 -120 60 60 120 1

Figure 2 Sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide, 2011

Figure 3 Number of cities among the Top 200 by continent



## 1.3 Sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide is rising and gaps between cities are narrowing

Table 2 shows statistics of sustainable competitiveness, high-income population increment and high-income population density of cities worldwide for the years 2010 and 2011. It can be seen that the average sustainable competitiveness score of cities worldwide increased by about 6.7%, indicating that world cities, on the whole, have become more competitive for sustainable development. At the same time, the coefficient of variation has declined slightly, indicating a narrow gap between different cities in terms of their sustainable competitiveness. This comes from the 7.3% and 4% decreases respectively in the variation coefficient of high-income population increment and high-income population density of cities worldwide, which indicates narrower gaps for both of the two Tier-2 indicators. From this, we know that more high-income people have gathered in cities of emerging economies, perhaps even more than those who concentrate in cities of developed countries.

Table 2 Statistics of sustainable competitiveness of cities worldwide

Year	Indicator	Sample size Mean		Standard deviation	Coefficient of Variation
	Sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.352	0.172	0.488
2011	High-income population increment	1,006	0.264	0.158	0.599
	High-income population density	1,006	0.392	0.180	0.460
2010	Sustainable competitiveness	1,006	0.330	0.169	0.512
	High-income population increment	1,006	0.233	0.150	0.646
	High-income population density	1,006	0.383	0.184	0.479

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