

New York, London and Paris Firmly Established as the Smartest Cities

Although New York leads the IESE Cities in Motion Index for 2018, Europe is the geographical area with the highest concentration of smart cities, with 12 representatives among the top 25. Where does your city stand in the ranking?



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New York, London and Paris once again grace the winners' podium as the world's smartest cities. This according to the fifth edition of the IESE Cities in Motion Index (CIMI), prepared by the [Center for Globalization and Strategy](#), under the directions of professors [Pascual Berrone](#)

and [Joan Enric Ricart](#).

The top-10 list of the smartest cities has largely remained stable since last year — the lone movement being Amsterdam inching up one spot to push Berlin to 11th place.

In fact, the changes to the top 10 since 2015 have also been limited, with London and New York vying for first place, Hong Kong and Toronto battling for eighth, and Berlin and Amsterdam jostling for 10th overall.

Highlights and Lowlights

If we look further to examine the top 50 positions in the ranking, we see some significant upward movements over the last two years — including Milan (45), which jumps up 13 spots, thanks to its strength in the environment and international outreach; Helsinki (22), which is up nine, due to its improved performance in the areas of economy, social cohesion and human capital; and Barcelona (26), which gains eight positions, thanks to its improvements in social cohesion and economy.

We can also see notable drop-offs — such as Oslo (23), which falls 11 spots, largely because of lower scores for its economy and mobility and transportation; Tallinn (50), which is down 10, due to its economy and international outreach; and Munich (37), which falls nine spots as a result of its poor management in the environment, international outreach and technology.

Europe, with 12 cities ranking among the top 25, is once again the top-performing geographical area. It is followed by North America, with six; Asia, with four (all in the top 10); and Oceania, with three.

Tokyo (4) is the highest-ranked Asian city and Melbourne (12) leads the pack in Oceania. The highest-ranking Middle Eastern city is Dubai (60), while Buenos Aires (76), leads in Latin America. African cities lag behind, with Tunisia, the first among them, far down the list at number 134.

In Search of the Perfect City

Although this new edition of the index seems to confirm the predominance of mega-cities (New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul) among the list of smartest, the authors point to the examples of midsized cities (Amsterdam, Melbourne, Copenhagen) and even small cities (Reykjavik, Wellington) to emphasize that size matters, but is not an essential condition to achieve good results.

The report also highlights that striking a balance in the various areas where success is measured is a complex, ongoing process that requires an overall vision. It is not enough to excel in one area — as is the case with Montevideo, Bangkok, Kiev and Doha, all located in the bottom half of the ranking -- since this produces "unbalanced" cities.

Indeed, only a select group of cities — such as Amsterdam, Seoul and Melbourne — do moderately well in all dimensions. And it is difficult to combine certain dimensions — for example, mobility/transportation with the environment, as well as economic power with social cohesion. That is a challenge faced by the likes of New York, London and Paris — three metropolises with poor showings for social cohesion.

The authors also stress the need to adopt a long-term perspective to transform our cities, as change tends to come slowly.

Methodology, Very Briefly

The IESE Cities in Motion Index (CIMI) analyzes the level of development of 165 cities from 80 countries in nine dimensions considered keys to progress: human capital, social cohesion, economy, environment, governance, urban planning, international outreach, technology, and mobility and transportation.

The fifth edition presents some important updates with respect to the previous years: the number of indicators used has been significantly increased and the analysis has been enriched with new data — such as the number of terrorist attacks, the number of Apple Store stores and the compliance levels of ISO 37120 (known as the smart city standard), and even prospective variables, such as GDP per capita projections and rising temperatures.

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