

Competitive Index | 2020

International Convention Destination

The Third Edition



ADVISING THE WORLD'S CONVENTION AND MEETINGS INDUSTRY

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Executive Summary

GainingEdge launched the Destination Competitive Index in 2018, an innovative benchmarking tool that ranks cities based on their competitive strength to attract international conferences. Our Index starts with ICCA's list of top 100 destinations (based on results of the last three years) and then we take into consideration the key factors meeting organizers look for when selecting a host destination and evaluates these factors in relation to their relative significance. A total of 101 destinations were selected for inclusion in the Competitive Index this year. There are destinations not included in our Index that have a strong meeting product, but have few international meetings. In contrast, certain destinations may have a relatively weaker meeting product but are very active in the international meetings market and so are included.

Our intention is to publish reports every year on top 100 most competitive cities in the world, always with additional research and analysis, aimed to help destinations to understand and improve their competitive position at the international association meetings market. In this year's report we focus on different regions and some specific cities which are highlighted as *cities to watch*.

Lisbon achieved a historical best in 2019 with ICCA ranking it 2nd in the world while our Index has Lisbon's convention product ranked in 43rd position – showing Lisbon secures far more international meetings than should be expected by its convention products. Lisbon is very effective at leveraging its competitive advantages!

Prague, a stable top 10 in the ICCA ranking, improved its position from 52nd to 47th position in our Index. Having a less competitive convention destination product than many global and European cities, Prague's meeting performance is indicative of a strong convention bureau very effective at harnessing the city's intellectual capital.

Athens is showing strong signs of recovery after the long-term economic crisis in Greece, with a gain 4 positions from last year (to 58th globally & 26th in Europe) in our Index. Being 17th on the ICCA list, Athens is performing very well but needs to secure new avenues for growth to maintain this positive trend.

Bangkok has experienced the strongest growth in our Index, among the top 20 destinations (jumping 10 places to 8th place) while ICCA ranks it the 2nd in Asia-Pacific region and 13th globally. Clearly Bangkok has improved its product as well as its meeting results and now it is a top global convention destination – engaging its intellectual capital could help it navigate the current global crisis, the impacts of which will likely be greater for cities with strong appeal (and so could be an issue for Bangkok) than for intellectual and scientific hubs.

Hangzhou has emerged as a new destination in the international convention business with a 74th place in the ICCA top 100, while ranked 37th globally (13th in Asia) in our Index – our ranking indicative of the strong infrastructure and new development projects in the city. With a strong creative and digital economy, it could be a great example to other Chinese and Asian cities on how to leverage competitive advantages to improve their competitive position.

Buenos Aires, though ranked 69th globally in our Index, is the absolute leader among Latin American cities in terms of international association meetings hosted (as evidenced with its 11th place ICCA ranking). Latin American cities generally compete among each other for international conventions but Buenos Aires shows it has strong local leaders able to bring events to the city and solid destination capabilities to support them.

The Competitive Index

What it's about

The *GainingEdge* Destination Competitive Index provides an assessment of how destinations generally compare in terms of the strength of their offer, as well as other factors that influence the choice of destination by meeting planners and conference organisers. The Index assesses the characteristics of the destination product, including infrastructure factors (meeting venues, hotel stock and facility package, international accessibility and logistics), competitive factors (scientific community strengths, destination appeal and costs), as well as macro indicators (market size, economic strength, business environment, and social conditions). The Index reveals some destinations can reasonably be expected to host more or less meetings, based on their relative strengths.

It's important to note the local industry can use its destination product differently, thus achieving better or worse results in terms of the number of international association meetings or number of delegates. Further, destinations may have different strategies (or may not have a strategic approach at all) and so may be more or less focused to attract international association meetings. Therefore, the Index does not indicate which destination is better or worse, but indicates that based on the destination product what result should reasonably be expected.

Through the Destination Competitive Index, we have developed quantitative tools to evaluate convention destinations, establish their competitive relativity

and equate that to potential business levels, providing foundation for quantitative analysis and data for facts-based decision making. So, the main purpose of the Destination Competitive Index is to develop a methodology and establish relevant quantitative tools in the global meeting industry which will help destinations to understand their competitive position, relation between different competitive factors and to identify areas for improvements in relatively short time. Finally, the Index provides quantitative indicators that enable the meetings industry to be understandable to decision makers (governmental bodies or city authorities) and make their proposals on fact-based data.

GainingEdge have recently created our GE Analysis & Research (GEAR) internal division, responsible for providing quantitative analysis on destinations' competitiveness, opportunities and resources for destination success and publishing reports for clients as well as for the global meetings industry. Through GEAR, GE provides consolidated analyses based on the Competitive Index, a **Destination Index Study (Report)**, intended for individual destinations to support their strategic planning. Any destination that approaches strategic planning can use the Competitive Index to obtain initial data and directions that will support further strategic efforts.

The Competitive Index 2020

The Competitive Index 2020

The Destination Competitive Index 2020 presents the Top 100 destinations (exactly 101), their rank and number of competitive points (competitive scores), based on our research of the key competitive factors.

For 2020, some new destinations appear which were below 100th place in ICCA rankings in previous years. These are Hangzhou (highest ranked among these cities), as well as Sofia, Antwerp and Dubrovnik. Some destinations are not listed among the top 100 this year, although they have been in previous years. Among them are very competitive cities, such as San Francisco, Frankfurt or Abu Dhabi. These destinations have strong product attributes (convention & exhibition venues, international accessibility, large markets and/or strong economies) but for some reason are not focused on international meetings. Some are mostly focused on a national market (for example, US destinations), while others are more focused on exhibition business or are not open enough to the international association meetings market.

The relatively high competitiveness of the US cities listed shows that other cities from US (such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, etc.) would be also very competitive if they were listed among the ICCA top 100 and were more focused

on the international association meetings market. A similar conclusion can be made for Chinese cities, especially given the relatively high competitiveness of Hangzhou as a new destination among the ICCA top 100.

On the other hand, we have several smaller European towns with strong Universities, such as Aarhus, Oxford, Gent Leuven (specifically analysed last year) which are likely less competitive due their size and weak air accessibility. However, they are always among ICCA top 100 and hence why they are considered – their ranking shows a strong academic and scientific community is a key success factor for convention destinations, as indicated in our analysis last year.

Similarly, many Latin American cities (Buenos Aires, Lima, Santiago), as well as Eastern Europe (Belgrade, Bucharest, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sofia) or Baltic destinations (Riga, Tallinn, Vilnius) with less developed infrastructure and from regions where market size or strength of their economy is weaker, perform better than would be expected as they focus strongly on the international meetings market. However, when comparing rankings within their regions there are no significant changes, indicating they mostly compete with each other.

Impacts of COVID-19

COVID-19

As of 2020, COVID-19 has affected the whole world, but it still has not had such a huge influence on destination products considered in this mid-term period (3-years series). However, it is expected the influence will be much more visible next year, so we expect the total competitive score will decline for almost all destinations.

The most affected competitive factors will be air accessibility due to the huge decline in international flights, as well as utilization of the largest meeting venues (bearing in mind most large international association meetings have been postponed or even canceled).

However, the Competitive Index model focuses on relative positions among destinations and the level of competitiveness of each factor. So although the total competitive score will decline for most destinations, it is expected the relative positions among them will not change dramatically – at least in the relatively short term.

ICCA has recently published research on COVID-19 affected meetings and it shows in 2020 around 15% of meetings have been canceled, while 61% have been postponed, 22% have been re-organized as virtual and 1% as hybrid meetings. For 2021 and beyond, it is expected less meetings will be canceled, just 4%, while more meetings will be postponed, 79%. It is estimated 12% of meetings will go virtual and 4% in hybrid form.

This will certainly change the dynamics of international association meetings and will affect relative relations among convention destinations and their level of competitiveness, especially in the mid to long term. It is expected destinations with a strong focus on air accessibility, large purpose-built meeting venues, number of international arrivals, and destination appeal will be relatively more affected. On the other hand, destinations with more flexible infrastructure and a strong association community will likely fare better coming out of this crisis.

The real effects of COVID-19 will be visible in two to three years and the Competitive Index model will give us the means to measure it, based on changes in relative contribution of different competitive factors. From this we will be able to understand which competitive factors have been most affected and what destinations have declined in terms of their relative competitiveness.

For now, we would advise destinations to undertake a deep analysis of their competitiveness, to understand their current advantages and disadvantages and based on these develop strategies for after COVID-19 (often referred to as the 'new normal'). These strategies could be to engage with their local leaders and help their local business and scientific community be more internationally integrated; to make their product offering more flexible; to be well-prepared for the use of new technologies and implementation of virtual components in events business; and to be more focused on national and regional markets.

Global Rankings

Global performances

Most of the destinations included this year have achieved a slightly higher competitive (numerical) score than in 2019. The reason is that we consider their destination product performances across a 3-years series, with annual data for each competitive factor. Most of these competitive factors have had better performances in the period 2017-2019 than in 2016-2018, ie. more active international associations, more international flights, more international arrivals, better economic performances, etc.

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Paris | 764.1 | 1 | 1 | 741.4 | = |
| Singapore | 744.9 | 2 | 3 | 706.8 | +1 ↑ |
| New York | 715.8 | 3 | 5 | 691.2 | +2 ↑ |
| Barcelona | 704.2 | 4 | 2 | 708.8 | -2 ↓ |
| Tokyo | 701.7 | 5 | 4 | 694.1 | -1 ↓ |
| Hong Kong | 691.1 | 6 | 11 | 653.4 | +5 ↑ |
| Beijing | 681.5 | 7 | 6 | 672.2 | -1 ↓ |
| Bangkok | 680.7 | 8 | 18 | 627.3 | +10 ↑ |
| Kuala Lumpur | 679.8 | 9 | 12 | 647.7 | +3 ↑ |
| London | 673.4 | 10 | 16 | 635.4 | +6 ↑ |
| Boston | 665.3 | 11 | 9 | 661.3 | -2 ↓ |
| Berlin | 659.7 | 12 | 13 | 646.6 | +1 ↑ |
| Chicago | 659.6 | 13 | 10 | 660.9 | -3 ↓ |
| Washington | 658.8 | 14 | 7 | 668.2 | -7 ↓ |
| Istanbul | 656.8 | 15 | 17 | 635 | +2 ↑ |

It should be noted there are destinations not included that have a strong meeting product, but may be predominantly focused on the national market (or for other reasons are not among the top 100 ICCA destinations). In contrast, certain destinations may have a relatively weaker meeting product but are very active in the international market and so are regularly among the ICCA top 100 destinations. This difference can be clearly seen when comparing last year and this year's Index in terms of their competitiveness.

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Toronto | 653.4 | 16 | 14 | 642.8 | -2 ↓ |
| Amsterdam | 649.8 | 17 | 15 | 641.4 | -2 ↓ |
| Seoul | 633.5 | 18 | 20 | 604.3 | +2 ↑ |
| Milan | 616 | 19 | 19 | 615.2 | = |
| Shanghai | 613.8 | 20 | 23 | 600.2 | +3 ↑ |
| Taipei | 608.8 | 21 | 25 | 596.1 | +4 ↑ |
| Vienna | 608.7 | 22 | 24 | 599.6 | +2 ↑ |
| Madrid | 603.2 | 23 | 21 | 601.5 | -2 ↓ |
| Rome | 602.2 | 24 | 26 | 595.9 | +2 ↑ |
| Macao | 599.8 | 25 | 30 | 584.5 | +5 ↑ |
| Bali | 597.9 | 26 | 28 | 592.1 | +2 ↑ |
| Melbourne | 597.7 | 27 | 29 | 586.6 | +2 ↑ |
| Vancouver | 590.7 | 28 | 27 | 593.9 | -1 ↓ |
| Montreal | 582.3 | 29 | 31 | 584.4 | +2 ↑ |
| Munich | 582.2 | 30 | 32 | 583.8 | +2 ↑ |

Global Rankings

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Sydney | 581.6 | 31 | 34 | 575.5 | +3 ↑ |
| Mexico City | 572.8 | 32 | 33 | 580.8 | +1 ↑ |
| Brussels | 568.8 | 33 | 35 | 569.8 | +2 ↑ |
| Copenhagen | 566.3 | 34 | 38 | 552.5 | +4 ↑ |
| Dubai | 564 | 35 | 39 | 532.5 | +4 ↑ |
| Delhi | 563.3 | 36 | 41 | 531.1 | +5 ↑ |
| Hangzhou | 561.3 | 37 | NA | NA | NA |
| Moscow | 556.5 | 38 | 37 | 556.8 | -1 ↓ |
| Stockholm | 554.9 | 39 | 36 | 562.6 | -3 ↓ |
| Kyoto | 553.1 | 40 | 44 | 512.1 | +4 ↑ |
| Manila | 546 | 41 | 42 | 525 | +1 ↑ |
| Dublin | 535.8 | 42 | 40 | 531.7 | -2 ↓ |
| Lisbon | 530.1 | 43 | 48 | 492.3 | +5 ↑ |
| Hamburg | 522 | 44 | 43 | 522.9 | -1 ↓ |
| Helsinki | 512 | 45 | 45 | 497.5 | = |
| Sao Paulo | 511.7 | 46 | 46 | 494.5 | = |
| Prague | 510.4 | 47 | 52 | 481.9 | +5 ↑ |
| Glasgow | 508.4 | 48 | 50 | 487.4 | +2 ↑ |
| Lyon | 500.9 | 49 | 55 | 478.7 | +6 ↑ |
| Busan | 490.1 | 50 | 49 | 492.1 | -1 ↓ |
| Florence | 489.2 | 51 | 54 | 479.4 | +3 ↑ |
| Gothenburg | 489 | 52 | 59 | 472.2 | +7 ↑ |

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|----------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Jeju | 486.7 | 53 | 65 | 463.6 | +12 ↑ |
| Bogota | 485.2 | 54 | 53 | 480 | -1 ↓ |
| Rio de Janeiro | 483.4 | 55 | 51 | 484 | -1 ↓ |
| Brisbane | 481.8 | 56 | 47 | 493.6 | -9 ↓ |
| Geneva | 479.8 | 57 | 58 | 472.7 | -1 ↓ |
| Athens | 479.2 | 58 | 62 | 470 | +4 ↑ |
| Oslo | 478 | 59 | 56 | 475.4 | -3 ↓ |
| Manchester | 471.3 | 60 | 57 | 475.2 | -3 ↓ |
| Budapest | 471.2 | 61 | 68 | 446.9 | +7 ↑ |
| St Petersburg | 469.3 | 62 | 69 | 443.4 | +7 ↑ |
| Valencia | 469.2 | 63 | 60 | 470.6 | -3 ↓ |
| Edinburgh | 466.3 | 64 | 63 | 466 | -1 ↓ |
| Warsaw | 455.6 | 65 | 70 | 442.5 | +5 ↑ |
| Zurich | 455 | 66 | 66 | 451.8 | = |
| Marseille | 444.1 | 67 | 64 | 465.2 | -3 ↓ |
| Cracow | 437.9 | 68 | 72 | 427.5 | +4 ↑ |
| Buenos Aires | 432.7 | 69 | 71 | 428.9 | +2 ↑ |
| Rotterdam | 431.7 | 70 | 77 | 408.4 | +7 ↑ |
| Cape Town | 425.3 | 71 | 75 | 416.4 | +4 ↑ |
| Venice | 412.5 | 72 | 74 | 416.5 | +2 ↑ |
| Torino | 409 | 73 | 73 | 427.1 | = |
| Toulouse | 406.4 | 74 | 76 | 412.5 | +2 ↑ |

Global Rankings

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Thessaloniki | 403.9 | 75 | 79 | 400.5 | +4 ↑ |
| Porto | 402.8 | 76 | 90 | 378.4 | +14 ↑ |
| Bologna | 400.8 | 77 | 78 | 404 | +1 ↑ |
| Riga | 399.3 | 78 | 84 | 388.8 | +6 ↑ |
| Belgrade | 399.2 | 79 | 83 | 390.6 | +4 ↑ |
| Bucharest | 398.1 | 80 | 88 | 381.4 | +8 ↑ |
| Auckland | 395.8 | 81 | 82 | 392.3 | +1 ↑ |
| Lima | 393.1 | 82 | 80 | 395.9 | -2 ↓ |
| Ljubljana | 390.8 | 83 | 86 | 382.6 | +3 ↑ |
| Tallinn | 390.6 | 84 | 89 | 378.7 | +5 ↑ |
| Aarhus | 386.1 | 85 | 85 | 384.4 | = |
| Sofia | 382.5 | 86 | NA | NA | NA |
| Panama | 377.4 | 87 | 94 | 364.2 | +7 ↑ |
| Hague | 377.1 | 88 | 91 | 373 | +3 ↑ |

Gap analysis

Analysing the top 100 most competitive destinations from the ICCA top 100 provides an opportunity to explore differences between these two ranking lists. Based on this we can determine which destinations are under-performing and achieving results below their objective potential, as well as which destinations are operating above expectations. This comparison is even more useful when we take into consideration destinations from the same region or within some usual rotation.

| City | Score 2020 | Rank 2020 | Rank 2019 | Score 2019 | Change |
|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Lausanne | 373.7 | 89 | 87 | 381.6 | -2 ↓ |
| Cartagena | 373 | 90 | 97 | 357.5 | +7 ↑ |
| Santiago | 371.6 | 91 | 92 | 367.5 | +1 ↑ |
| Antwerp | 367.5 | 92 | NA | NA | NA |
| Reykjavik | 366.6 | 93 | 98 | 351.2 | +5 ↑ |
| Zagreb | 362.9 | 94 | 95 | 361.5 | +1 ↑ |
| Oxford | 360.3 | 95 | 93 | 365.6 | -2 ↓ |
| Vilnius | 354 | 96 | 100 | 331.5 | +4 ↑ |
| Dubrovnik | 346.7 | 97 | NA | NA | NA |
| San Jose | 340 | 98 | 102 | 303.7 | +4 ↑ |
| Gent | 328.7 | 99 | 99 | 335.7 | = |
| Leuven | 328.2 | 100 | 101 | 327.9 | +1 ↑ |
| Montevideo | 313.8 | 101 | 103 | 300.9 | +2 ↑ |

Generally, most Latin American and Eastern European cities, as well as some South European cities, operate above above their expected level of competitiveness. On the other hand, we see that US cities, some Asian destinations, and Russian cities are underperforming - this is generally related to their openness to the international meetings market.

Regional Rankings

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

| City | Rank | Score |
|------------|------|-------|
| Paris | 1 | 764.1 |
| Barcelona | 2 | 704.2 |
| London | 3 | 673.4 |
| Berlin | 4 | 659.7 |
| Istanbul | 5 | 656.8 |
| Amsterdam | 6 | 649.8 |
| Milan | 7 | 616 |
| Vienna | 8 | 608.7 |
| Madrid | 9 | 603.2 |
| Rome | 10 | 602.2 |
| Munich | 11 | 582.2 |
| Brussels | 12 | 568.8 |
| Copenhagen | 13 | 566.3 |
| Moscow | 14 | 556.5 |
| Stockholm | 15 | 554.9 |
| Dublin | 16 | 535.8 |

Europe

| City | Rank | Score |
|---------------|------|-------|
| Lisbon | 17 | 530.1 |
| Hamburg | 18 | 522 |
| Helsinki | 19 | 512 |
| Prague | 20 | 510.4 |
| Glasgow | 21 | 508.4 |
| Lyon | 22 | 500.9 |
| Florence | 23 | 489.2 |
| Göteborg | 24 | 489 |
| Geneva | 25 | 479.8 |
| Athens | 26 | 479.2 |
| Oslo | 27 | 478 |
| Manchester | 28 | 471.3 |
| Budapest | 29 | 471.2 |
| St Petersburg | 30 | 469.3 |
| Valencia | 31 | 469.2 |
| Edinburgh | 32 | 466.3 |

| City | Rank | Score |
|--------------|------|-------|
| Warsaw | 33 | 455.6 |
| Zurich | 34 | 455 |
| Marseille | 35 | 444.1 |
| Cracow | 36 | 437.9 |
| Rotterdam | 37 | 431.7 |
| Venice | 38 | 412.5 |
| Torino | 39 | 409 |
| Toulouse | 40 | 406.4 |
| Thessaloniki | 41 | 403.9 |
| Porto | 42 | 402.8 |
| Bologna | 43 | 400.8 |
| Riga | 44 | 399.3 |
| Belgrade | 45 | 399.2 |
| Bucharest | 46 | 398.1 |
| Ljubljana | 47 | 390.8 |
| Tallinn | 48 | 390.6 |

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

| | City | Rank | Score |
|--------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Europe | Aarhus | 49 | 386.1 |
| | Sofia | 50 | 382.5 |
| | Hague | 51 | 377.1 |
| | Lausanne | 52 | 373.7 |
| | Antwerp | 53 | 367.5 |
| | Reykjavik | 54 | 366.6 |
| | Zagreb | 55 | 362.9 |
| | Oxford | 56 | 360.3 |
| | Vilnius | 57 | 354 |
| | Dubrovnik | 58 | 346.7 |
| Gent | 59 | 328.7 | |
| Leuven | 60 | 328.2 | |

Analysis

Similar to last year, almost 60% of listed destinations are from Europe. So, there are 60 European cities among the top 101, while 45 of them are from Western Europe and 15 from Eastern Europe.

This shows that Europe still dominates at the international association meetings market, with the number of destinations active in this business and attractive for conference organizers. Again, the number 1 city in Europe is Paris, a global leader (as it was last year), followed by Barcelona, London and Berlin. There are no major changes among the top 10 European destinations, except London jumping from 16th to 10th in the world, which is a jump from 5th to 3rd place in Europe.

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

Rankings within European sub-regions

| City | Rank | Score |
|------------|------|-------|
| Paris | 1 | 764.1 |
| Barcelona | 2 | 704.2 |
| London | 3 | 673.4 |
| Berlin | 4 | 659.7 |
| Istanbul | 5 | 656.8 |
| Amsterdam | 6 | 649.8 |
| Milan | 7 | 616 |
| Vienna | 8 | 608.7 |
| Madrid | 9 | 603.2 |
| Rome | 10 | 602.2 |
| Munich | 11 | 582.2 |
| Brussels | 12 | 568.8 |
| Copenhagen | 13 | 566.3 |
| Stockholm | 14 | 554.9 |
| Dublin | 15 | 535.8 |
| Lisbon | 16 | 530.1 |

Western Europe

| City | Rank | Score |
|------------|------|-------|
| Hamburg | 17 | 522 |
| Helsinki | 18 | 512 |
| Glasgow | 19 | 508.4 |
| Lyon | 20 | 500.9 |
| Florence | 21 | 489.2 |
| Gothenburg | 22 | 489 |
| Geneva | 23 | 479.8 |
| Athens | 24 | 479.2 |
| Oslo | 25 | 478 |
| Manchester | 26 | 471.3 |
| Valencia | 27 | 469.2 |
| Edinburgh | 28 | 466.3 |
| Zurich | 29 | 455 |
| Marseille | 30 | 444.1 |
| Rotterdam | 31 | 431.7 |
| Venice | 32 | 412.5 |

| City | Rank | Score |
|--------------|------|-------|
| Torino | 33 | 409 |
| Toulouse | 34 | 406.4 |
| Thessaloniki | 35 | 403.9 |
| Porto | 36 | 402.8 |
| Bologna | 37 | 400.8 |
| Aarhus | 38 | 386.1 |
| Hague | 39 | 377.1 |
| Lausanne | 40 | 373.7 |
| Antwerp | 41 | 367.5 |
| Reykjavik | 42 | 366.6 |
| Oxford | 43 | 360.3 |
| Gent | 44 | 328.7 |
| Leuven | 45 | 328.2 |

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

Rankings within European sub-regions

| City | Rank | Score | |
|----------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Eastern Europe | Moscow | 1 | 556.5 |
| | Prague | 2 | 510.4 |
| | Budapest | 3 | 471.2 |
| | St Petersburg | 4 | 469.3 |
| | Warsaw | 5 | 455.6 |
| | Cracow | 6 | 437.9 |
| | Riga | 7 | 399.3 |
| | Belgrade | 8 | 399.2 |
| | Bucharest | 9 | 398.1 |
| | Ljubljana | 10 | 390.8 |
| | Tallinn | 11 | 390.6 |
| | Sofia | 12 | 382.5 |
| | Zagreb | 13 | 362.9 |
| | Vilnius | 14 | 354 |
| | Dubrovnik | 15 | 346.7 |

Analysis

At the subregional level, most cities in Western Europe occupy a similar position as 2019 (+/- 2 places). However, within Western Europe there are several destinations which have achieved solid growth, such as Lisbon (+3), Gothenburg (+4), Athens (+5), Rotterdam (+5) and Porto (+5). These cities also achieved strong growth at the global level, greatest among them Porto (for 14 places), followed by Gothenburg (+7) and Rotterdam (+7).

Within Eastern Europe, all cities occupy nearly the same positions as in 2019 (+/- 1 places), but with Sofia and Dubrovnik being two additions to the ICCA top 100 from this subregion. At the global level some of these cities experienced solid growth, such as Bucharest (for 8 places), Saint Petersburg and Budapest (+7) and Prague (+ 5 places).

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

| City | Rank | Score |
|--------------|------|-------|
| Singapore | 1 | 744.9 |
| Tokyo | 2 | 701.7 |
| Hong Kong | 3 | 691.1 |
| Beijing | 4 | 681.5 |
| Bangkok | 5 | 680.7 |
| Kuala Lumpur | 6 | 679.8 |
| Seoul | 7 | 633.5 |
| Shanghai | 8 | 613.8 |
| Taipei | 9 | 608.8 |
| Macao | 10 | 599.8 |
| Bali | 11 | 597.9 |
| Delhi | 12 | 563.3 |
| Hangzhou | 13 | 561.3 |
| Kyoto | 14 | 553.1 |
| Manila | 15 | 546 |
| Busan | 16 | 490.1 |
| Jeju | 17 | 486.7 |

Asia

| City | Rank | Score |
|------------|------|-------|
| New York | 1 | 715.8 |
| Boston | 2 | 665.3 |
| Chicago | 3 | 659.6 |
| Washington | 4 | 658.8 |
| Toronto | 5 | 653.4 |
| Vancouver | 6 | 590.7 |
| Montreal | 7 | 582.3 |

US & Canada

| City | Rank | Score |
|-----------|------|-------|
| Melbourne | 1 | 597.7 |
| Sydney | 2 | 581.6 |
| Brisbane | 3 | 481.8 |
| Auckland | 4 | 395.8 |

Australia/Oceania

| City | Rank | Score |
|----------------|------|-------|
| Mexico City | 1 | 572.8 |
| Sao Paulo | 2 | 511.7 |
| Bogota | 3 | 485.2 |
| Rio de Janeiro | 4 | 483.4 |
| Buenos Aires | 5 | 432.7 |
| Lima | 6 | 393.1 |
| Panama | 7 | 377.4 |
| Cartagena | 8 | 373 |
| Santiago | 9 | 371.6 |
| San Jose | 10 | 340 |
| Montevideo | 11 | 313.8 |

Latin America

| City | Rank | Score |
|-----------|------|-------|
| Dubai | 1 | 564 |
| Cape Town | 3 | 425.3 |

Africa / Middle East

Regional Rankings for Most Competitive Cities

Analysis

Asia

This year Asia has 17 destinations among the Top 100 (one more than last year) and 10 among the top 30 globally. Same as last year, Singapore is the leading destination in this region, both in number of international association meetings and overall competitiveness, while globally it takes second place (after Paris). There were no significant changes among the top 10 destinations in competitiveness compared to last year (+/- 1 place). However, on a global level Bangkok experienced strong growth (up 10 places), as did Hong Kong (up 5 places). This year there are six Asian destinations among the top 10 globally - all of them, with the exception of Jeju, are ranked within our top 50 globally. It should be noted Hangzhou appears as a new, highly competitive destination. These high showings are indicative of their investment in infrastructure (venues, hotels and airports), making them very competitive globally. We expect even second tier cities, or well-known tourism destinations (with strong accessibility and hotel offer), from this region would have a relatively high level of competitiveness.

Americas

There are 18 destinations in this region among the ICCA top 100 in this year's Index - 8 from North America and 10 from South America. The top destinations in this region are from US, with New York followed by Boston, Chicago and Washington DC. All are within the top 15 globally, indicating other US cities could also be competitive if they were more focused on the international market.

All Canadian destinations - Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal are within our top 30 globally. All these cities occupy similar positions within the region as per last year, while at the global level Washington DC fell 7 places.

South America has 10 destinations in the Index, all ranked relatively low in the last 50 places. The highest placed city is Sao Paulo (ranked 33rd globally), followed by Bogota (54th) and Rio de Janeiro (55th). At the regional level there are minor changes (+/- 2 places), with Medellin dropping out of the ICCA top 100. However, half of these cities - Panama, Cartagena, Santiago, San Jose and Montevideo are new and ranked below 80th position globally.

Rest of the world

Europe, Asia and the Americas include 95 of 101 destination in this research, showing global business is focused in these regions. Australia/Oceania is usually considered part of the Asia-Pacific region, with Middle East-Africa as part of the larger EMEA region. Australia/Oceania and Middle East/Africa have a limited number of destinations in the top 101 and can be considered as two separate competitive sets.

Australia/Oceania have the same destinations as last year and similar results, Brisbane the exception falling 9 places at the global level. Middle East/Africa is the poorest region with just two destinations included in the research, Dubai (at 35th position) and Cape Town (71st), while Abu Dhabi dropped out of the ICCA top 100. Both Dubai and Cape Town increased their competitiveness by 4 places compared to last year.

Competitive Sets

Rankings within different competitive sets

Top Asian Metropolises

| City | Global Rank | Score |
|--------------|-------------|-------|
| Singapore | 2 | 744.9 |
| Tokyo | 5 | 701.7 |
| Hong Kong | 6 | 691.1 |
| Beijing | 7 | 681.5 |
| Bangkok | 8 | 680.7 |
| Kuala Lumpur | 9 | 679.8 |
| Seoul | 18 | 633.5 |
| Shanghai | 20 | 613.8 |
| Taipei | 21 | 608.8 |

Top Eastern European Cities

| City | Global Rank | Score |
|---------------|-------------|-------|
| Moscow | 38 | 556.5 |
| Prague | 47 | 510.4 |
| Budapest | 61 | 471.2 |
| St Petersburg | 65 | 469.3 |
| Warsaw | 65 | 455.6 |
| Cracow | 68 | 437.9 |

Top European Cities

| City | Global Rank | Score |
|-----------|-------------|-------|
| Paris | 1 | 764.1 |
| Barcelona | 4 | 704.2 |
| London | 10 | 673.4 |
| Berlin | 12 | 659.7 |
| Istanbul | 15 | 656.8 |
| Amsterdam | 17 | 649.8 |
| Milan | 19 | 616 |
| Vienna | 22 | 608.7 |
| Madrid | 23 | 603.2 |
| Rome | 24 | 602.2 |

Major Cities in South America

| City | Global Rank | Score |
|--------------|-------------|-------|
| Sao Paulo | 46 | 511.7 |
| Bogota | 54 | 485.2 |
| Buenos Aires | 69 | 432.7 |
| Lima | 82 | 393.1 |
| Santiago | 91 | 371.6 |
| Montevideo | 101 | 313.8 |

South East Europe Capitals

| City | Global Rank | Score |
|-----------|-------------|-------|
| Belgrade | 79 | 399.2 |
| Bucharest | 80 | 398.1 |
| Ljubljana | 83 | 390.8 |
| Sofia | 86 | 382.5 |
| Zagreb | 94 | 362.9 |

Rankings within different competitive sets

Analysis

The Destination Competitive Index provides an overview of the competitiveness of the Top 100 convention destinations both globally and regionally. Given this, each city can identify the strengths of its destination product and relative competitive position globally, as well as in its region (continent).

However, each destination can also obtain valuable strategic insights via examining its competitive index relative to destinations within its actual competition set. It is extremely important for any destination to identify its real competitive set, which will help to find out key gaps (competitive advantages and disadvantages).

There are various criteria by which to define a competitive set, such as region (rotation), destination size, profile, infrastructure, etc. A common way to define a set is to select destinations from one sub-region, which typically comprise one rotation for international meetings. Additionally, the set should be related to the destination profile (capital cities, regional centers, tourist destinations, academic towns, etc.).

This year we highlight several competitive sets which could be considered to give us deeper insights to the relative positions of the cities in these sets, for example:

1. Top Asian metropolis cities – Metropolis cities from East and South-East Asia and top meeting destinations.
2. Top European meeting destinations – leading European cities of the most developed large Western European countries.
3. Major Cities in South America – largest cities in South American countries from the list of top 100.
4. Eastern European Major Cities – top meeting destinations and capital cities of Eastern European countries
5. South-East Europe Capital cities.

Each destination can belong to different competitive sets. If that set is well-defined, the city can obtain high quality strategic analysis. The Destination Index indicates if the competitive set is well defined, showing gaps in product offer, as well as in their results.

Fair Share Concept

Fair Share analysis

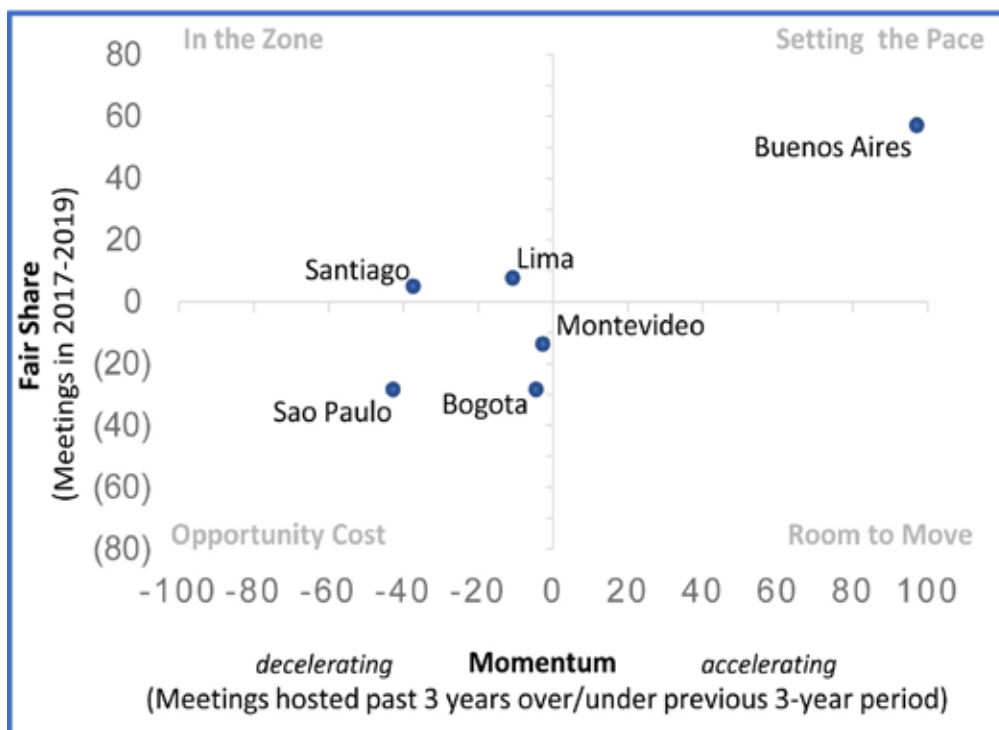
Fair Share analysis is a valuable tool in strategic planning for convention destinations. This concept states that destination's competitive score (as a % of the overall competitive scores in a given competitive set), which represents that destination's "fair share" of the total business within that set. By comparing destinations' competitive position and actual share achieved, destinations can determine if they are performing above or below their expected fair share, and by how far. The net sum of fair share variances within a competitive set is necessarily zero. To illustrate this, we use Major Cities in South America as an example:

| Destination | Comp Score | Meetings 2017-19 | Product Share | Destination Fair Share | 3 Years Variance | Annual Variance |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Sao Paulo | 511.7 | 174 | 20.40% | 261 | -87 | -29 |
| Bogota | 485.2 | 162 | 19.35% | 248 | -86 | -29 |
| Buenos Aires | 432.7 | 391 | 17.25% | 221 | 170 | 57 |
| Lima | 393.1 | 225 | 15.67% | 201 | 24 | 8 |
| Santiago | 371.6 | 205 | 14.82% | 190 | 15 | 5 |
| Montevideo | 313.8 | 124 | 12.51% | 160 | -36 | -12 |
| TOTAL | 2508.1 | 1281 | 100.00% | 1281 | 0 | 0 |

Momentum analysis

Momentum Analysis shows if the destination is accelerating or decelerating in terms of number of international association meetings hosted in a three-year series (as per ICCA data), by comparing total number of meetings held in the last three years (2017-19), with the number in the three years prior (2014-16):

| Destination | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2014-16 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017-19 | Change |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| Sao Paulo | 65 | 84 | 67 | 216 | 59 | 59 | 56 | 174 | -42 |
| Bogota | 52 | 58 | 58 | 168 | 59 | 50 | 53 | 162 | -6 |
| Buenos Aires | 95 | 88 | 110 | 293 | 128 | 136 | 127 | 391 | 98 |
| Lima | 68 | 85 | 83 | 236 | 77 | 70 | 78 | 225 | -11 |
| Santiago | 84 | 85 | 75 | 244 | 75 | 64 | 66 | 205 | -39 |
| Montevideo | 30 | 49 | 49 | 128 | 43 | 42 | 39 | 124 | -4 |
| TOTAL | 394 | 449 | 442 | 1285 | 441 | 421 | 419 | 1281 | -4 |



Fair Share scenario model

The Fair Share scenario model illustrates how cities compare in terms of fair share and momentum:

- On Fair Share, destinations plot either above or below the midline to the extent that their actual meetings (2017-2019) hosted vary from their fair share.
- On Momentum, destinations plot to the left or right of the midline based on their growth or decline in meetings hosted in period 2017 – 2019 compared to period 2014-2016.

There are 4 quadrants based on this scenario model and a destination can locate in any of them:

- 1) Setting the Pace – destination is above the fair share and is accelerating
- 2) In the Zone – destination is above the fair share and is decelerating
- 3) Opportunity Cost – destination is below the fair share and is decelerating
- 4) Room to Move – destination is below the fair share and is accelerating.

Within a defined competitive set Buenos Aires has achieved a result well above its fair share - the number of international association meetings has grown significantly in the last 3 years. Buenos Aires has a leading position and should put efforts into maintaining its position in the *Setting the Pace* quadrant. All other destinations are in the decelerating zone, with Santiago and Lima above fair share while Sao Paulo and Bogota are below fair share, indicating they should analyze their position more deeply.

Based on this analysis we can calculate and set business goals for any destination in order to get (or keep) its position in the *Setting the Pace* quadrant in near future.

Anatomy of the Most Competitive Convention Destinations

| Competitive Factors | Max Points | Paris | Singapore | New York | Melbourne | Mexico City | Dubai |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Convention Facilities | 200 | 166.04 | 180.00 | 137.30 | 136.20 | 134.00 | 138.48 |
| Hotel Offer | 150 | 150.00 | 150.00 | 150.00 | 142.09 | 94.50 | 86.00 |
| Air Access | 100 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 74.12 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Destination Appeal | 100 | 74.11 | 45.33 | 69.13 | 19.64 | 25.06 | 49.86 |
| Association Community | 100 | 78.42 | 39.08 | 58.50 | 24.49 | 39.92 | 9.83 |
| Costs (higher costs = lower rank) | 100 | 31.46 | 38.87 | 26.64 | 42.91 | 73.82 | 44.77 |
| Logistics | 50 | 23.64 | 24.84 | 23.15 | 21.06 | 16.11 | 21.82 |
| Market (population) | 50 | 36.71 | 36.51 | 28.32 | 17.50 | 30.00 | 18.86 |
| Economy (size) | 50 | 25.77 | 37.93 | 39.81 | 37.18 | 5.05 | 7.53 |
| Business Environment | 50 | 44.40 | 48.43 | 48.26 | 44.59 | 37.07 | 42.65 |
| Social Factors (safety & stability) | 50 | 33.56 | 43.95 | 34.73 | 37.96 | 17.23 | 44.16 |
| OVERALL | 1000 | 764.1 | 744.9 | 715.0 | 597.7 | 572.8 | 564.0 |

Analysis

The table shows the total number of competitive points available, as well as the score for each of the competitive factors, for the 6 leading regional destinations. Based on this, we can determine the relative relationship between these destinations for each of the competitive factors and thus determine

their individual competitive advantages and disadvantages (within a given set) - valuable information especially when it comes to establishing a realistic competitive set for an individual destination.

Cities to Watch

Lisbon

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 530.1 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 43rd |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 17th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 3rd |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 503 |

Lisbon achieved a historical best in 2019, with 190 international association meetings hosted making it the 2nd most successful destination in the world.



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With a total of 503 meetings hosted in the last three years (2017-2019), Lisbon is also among top 10 destinations in the world. However, Lisbon's convention product ranks below major cities in the most developed countries (especially in Western Europe), taking 43rd position in the *GainingEdge* Competitive Index ranking (17th in Europe), a gain of five positions (globally) compared to last year. This score shows Lisbon is operating far above expectations, indicating the city is very effective at leveraging its main competitive advantages.

Congratulations to Lisbon!

Prague

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 510.4 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 47th |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 20th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 9th |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 451 |

Eastern European destinations usually have a relatively less competitive convention destinations product among European cities.



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However, their capital cities have solid results in terms of number of international associations meetings hosted. The strongest among them is Prague, a stable top 10 on the ICCA ranking list with 451 international association meetings hosted in the last three years (2017-19). Prague has improved its position from 52nd to 47th position globally on the list of the most competitive destinations. Although a very attractive destination, continually good results show Prague has a strong convention bureau and is very effective at harnessing its intellectual capital – a concept that will be further explored in future *GainingEdge* analysis and research.

Cities to Watch

Athens

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 479.2 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 58th |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 26th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 17th |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 293 |

Athens hosted 107 international association meetings last year (its best ever result), 293 in the last three years, showing strong signs of recovery after the long-term economic crisis in Greece. Due to these economic issues, as well as having relatively less competitive infrastructure among the main European capital cities, Athens is listed as the 58th most competitive city globally (26th in Europe) in the *GainingEdge* Competitive Index – showing a solid gain of 4 positions compared to last year. These rankings show Athens is a European city that performs very well, bearing in mind the impacts of the crisis. However, it also shows Athens should try to secure new avenues for growth if the city wants to maintain this positive trend.



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Bangkok

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 680.7 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 8th |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 5th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 13th |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 391 |

Among the top 10 the most competitive cities in the world, with 680.7 Index points, Bangkok has experienced the strongest growth compared to previous year (jumping 10 places - from 18th to 8th place). The city hosted 124 international association meetings in 2019 (391 over the last three years), making it the 2nd most successful in the Asia-Pacific region (according to ICCA) and 13th globally. This analysis show Bangkok has improved its product as well as its results and now it is one of top global convention destinations. The city has great potential to maintain, and even improve its position, if it can engage its intellectual capital to help navigate it through the current global crisis. We believe the impacts of COVID will likely be greater for those cities with strong appeal than for intellectual and scientific hubs (which could be an issue for Bangkok).



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Cities to Watch

Hangzhou

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 561.3 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 37th |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 13th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 74th |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 96 |

Hangzhou is a new destination among the ICCA top 100, hosting 96 international association meetings over the last three years. With 38 meetings in 2019 the city ranks 74th in the latest ICCA ranking. Based on strong infrastructure and new development projects the city has emerged as a new destination in the international convention business. A newcomer, Hangzhou takes 37th place globally in the *GainingEdge* Competitive Index and 13th place in Asia. Hangzhou is well known as the HQ of Alibaba and a city with a strong creative and digital economy, which can also be a force developing powerful strategies for future growth. This could also be a great example for other Chinese and Asian cities for how to leverage their competitive advantages and improve their competitive position, both in the region and globally.



Unsplash

Buenos Aires

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| GE Competitive Index Score: | 432.7 |
| GE Competitive Index Rank (Global) | 69th |
| Competitive Index Rank (Continent) | 5th |
| Latest ICCA Rank – 2019 (Global) | 11th |
| ICCA no of Meetings (2017-2019) | 391 |

Latin American cities are relatively less competitive compared with North American destinations due to weaker infrastructure and a lower level of economic development.

However, they compete among each other for international conventions and some achieve very good results on a global level. Buenos Aires is clearly the strongest (discussed in detail in our Fair Share analysis earlier in this document). Although ranking 69th globally with 479.2 competitive index points, Buenos Aires is the absolute leader among Latin American cities in terms of number of international association meetings hosted. With 391 international conventions over the last 3 years, and 127 in 2019, it takes 11th place in the latest ICCA rankings. This shows Buenos Aires has strong local leaders who are able to bring events to the city and solid destination capabilities to support this process.



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Our Methodology

The Destination Competitive Index 2020 examines the relative competitiveness of destinations that are the top 100 performers in the ICCA annual ranking of cities based on their number of hosted international conventions. The cities included in this year's index are those listed by ICCA as having hosted 87 or more international conventions over the three-years period 2017 – 2019 (exactly 101 destinations in total).

We kept methodology as it was in the previous editions and established the same 11 competitive factors of destination selection by international meeting planners. These are:

- **Convention facility capacities** (top 3 most utilised by international conventions)
- **Hotel offer** (capacity and proximity to the primary facility)
- **Air access** (levels of international direct service and convenience of connections)
- **Destination appeal** (for business and tourism)
- **Association market audience** (strength of association community)
- **Cost** (staging and delegate costs)
- **Logistics** (ease of movement)
- **Market size** (population of the city, country and region)
- **Size of economy** (GDP and GDP per capita)
- **Business environment** (competitiveness, innovation, ease of doing business)
- **Safety & stability** (crime rates and corruption levels)

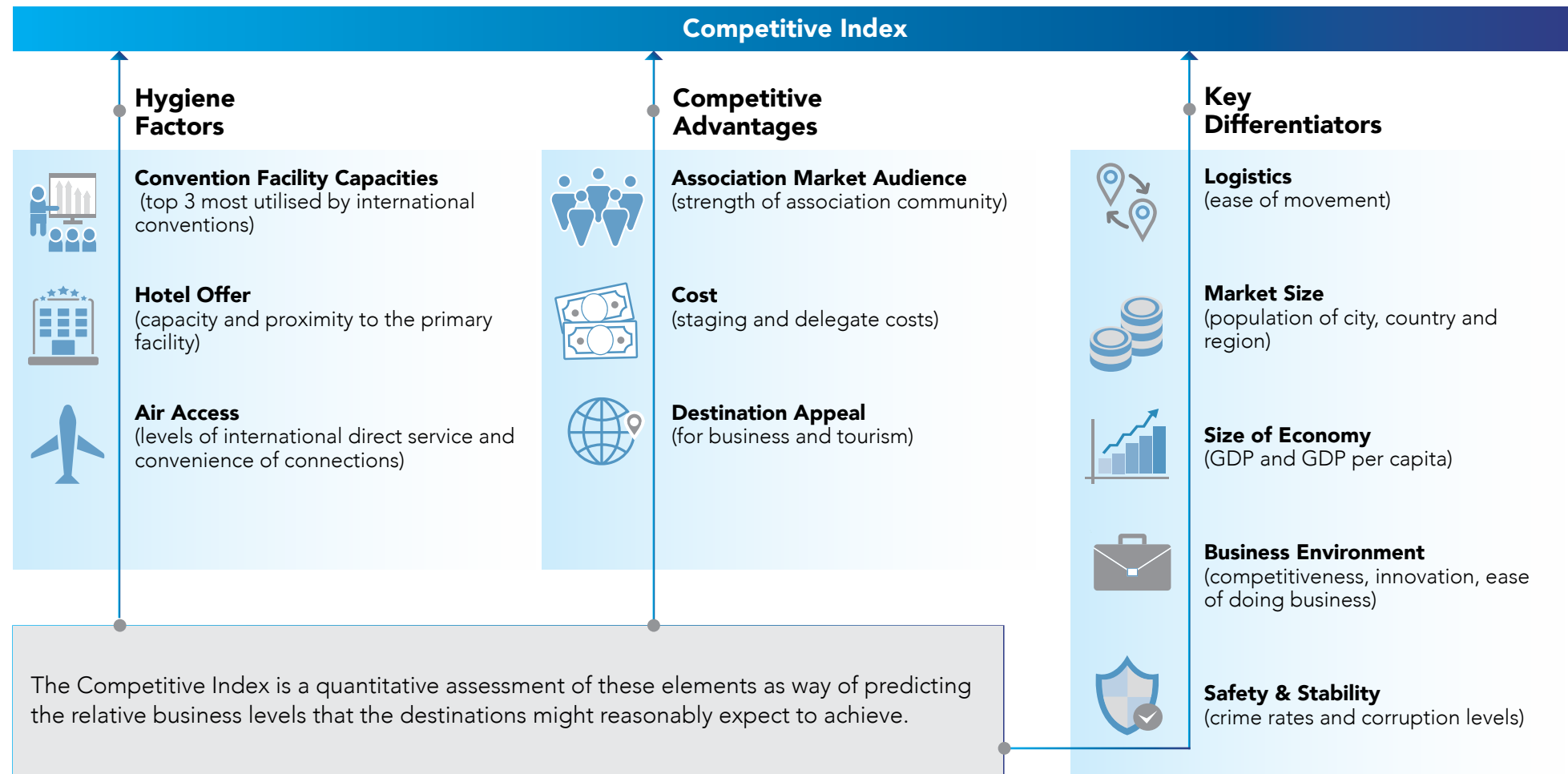
A destination's strength in each of these factors is assessed based on 30 indicative data points, including 3rd party indices, other information sources and primary research. The external data points include those provided by ICCA as well as other respected reports by organizations such as the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, United Nations, etc.

Each factor has been assigned a weighting and we have developed a model to calculate a point score in each category for each city. Over all of the factors, a maximum 1,000 points scoring system has been applied.

The weighting system applies 45% of the possible points to what are commonly referred to as destination "hygiene" or meetings infrastructure factors relating to capacity – convention facilities, hotel offer and air access. The remaining 55% of the weighting is spread over the remaining 8 factors based on independent studies of meeting planner perceptions of the relative importance of the factor in their decision-making processes.

Our Methodology

The Competitive Index is focused on the destination's meeting & conventions product issues, evaluating destinations in terms of:



Destination Index Report

Destination Index Report - How it can help

The Competitive Index provides valuable information for destinations, as comparing the Competitive Index with the actual destination results highlights gaps that indicate the opportunities and directions the destination should consider when developing its strategic plan.

However, further development of the model identified numerous opportunities for deeper quantitative analysis of the competitive position of convention destinations. So, in addition to measuring performance and listing of destinations in relation to their competitiveness, a whole range of possible applications have emerged. These applications and analysis can significantly support the work of convention bureaus and destination marketing organizations. They provide quantitative indicators to identify an appropriate competitive set and define the competitive position of their destinations. The Index clearly indicates the destinations that make up a real competitive set, which significantly facilitates strategic planning because the most common strategic failures are caused by mis-definition of the primary competitors, which many destinations are prone to.

Our Destination Competitive Index Report is a focussed study we can provide to destinations, based on their relative competitiveness within a well-defined competitive set, with the aim to ensure accuracy of the comparison and resulting strategic directions and points of improvements. Through this Report, we can evaluate destinations, establish their relative competitiveness and compare that to potential business levels.

There are various ways for destinations to use results from the Competitive Index Report which range from goal setting to performance measurement, and from strategic visioning to communications and branding. A key part of the Report is the Ratio analysis which provides the opportunity to clearly identify competitive advantages and disadvantages (strong and weak points) for the targeted destination. Following this, the Fair Share analysis then helps destinations to set reasonable business goals and project their future growth.

Destination Index Report - How it can help

- 1 Competition Analysis**

The Destination Competitiveness Index is a useful source of information for such analysis and a helpful tool for establishing competitive sets.
- 2 Goal Setting**

The Index offers a tool for comparing the relative competitive strengths of destinations which in turn provides insights into how those relative strengths relate to business outcomes.
- 3 Performance Measurement**

The Index will allow bureaus and destinations to strengthen these assessments based on a more sophisticated model, which sheds lights on the issue of “comparability”.
- 4 Strategic Visioning**

Sometimes we find that destination stakeholders (public and private) embark on visioning processes without any robust assessment of how visionary the goals actually are. The Index will provide a useful benchmark for visioning processes.
- 5 Strategic Planning**

Once destinations have established meaningful vision and goals, the next step is putting in place strategies that will drive success. The Index will provide useful insights into focus issues that will underpin those strategies.
- 6 Strategic Resourcing**

As destinations set goals and develop a more rational focus on competitive sets and relative performance levels, they will be more capable of evaluating the resource needs that will be required to achieve their strategic goals.
- 7 Strategic Product Development**

The Index will help destinations compare themselves to others in relation to key product issues. If they want to increase their competitiveness they will have an easier time identifying the factors that required the most attention and validating to policy makers and industry what needs to be done.
- 8 Communication & Branding**

The Index will help identify key issues that need to be addressed in a destination’s communications processes.

Destination Index Report - How it can help

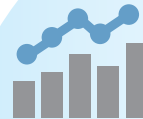
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Competition Analysis

The Index examines the relative competitiveness of destinations that are included in a competitive set.

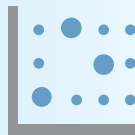
The selection criteria for such a set are:

1. Rotation
2. Size
3. Business profile
4. Infrastructure
5. Perspective



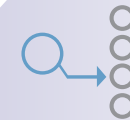
Fair Share Analysis

For the purpose of the index, fair share calculations for a destination use its competitive scores as the substitute for inventory factor. More facilities, more hotel rooms, better air service, etc. drive its score higher and therefore it captures a higher proportion of the business occurring within its competitive set. A destination's competitive score as percentage (%) of the combined score in a given set represents its proportional fair share of the total business procured by that set. So, if a destination's proportion of "competitive points" within a set is 10%, then it could reasonably seek to secure 10% of the total business secured by the set.



Ratio Analysis

The Index provides the ability to determine the level of competitiveness for each of the 11 factors considered by international meeting planners. This analysis provides fact-based information about challenges which should be strategically addressed, as well as strong points which can be leveraged on when developing the destination's business events strategies.



Fair Share Scenario Model

The Fair Share scenario model illustrates how cities compare in terms of their "fair share" and in terms of their "momentum". The momentum shows if the destination is accelerating or decelerating in terms of number of international association meetings (ICCA statistics) which it has hosted, in a three-year series.

About Us

About *GainingEdge*

GainingEdge is a specialist consulting firm advising primarily to the convention and meetings market since 2004. We specialize in issues related to establishing and managing convention bureaus, advice on the development and expansion of convention centers as well as the broader aspects of the international meetings industry.

Our expertise:

- Convention & Exhibition Centre Advisory
- Destination Marketing Strategy
- CVB/DMO Establishment & Support
- Association Consulting
- Talent Acquisition

GainingEdge Analysis & Research (GEAR)

GainingEdge has formed a new internal division, *GainingEdge* Analysis & Research (GEAR), to provide quantitative analysis on destinations competitiveness, their resources for success, as well as reporting on the global meetings industry. GEAR is currently on projects related to the analysis of destination competitiveness and development of Destination Competitive Index reports for specific clients.

Coming soon

GEAR is currently finishing leading edge research into the intellectual capital of convention destinations around the world with a deep analysis of international associations leadership. This report will help destinations to understand the business demand side. Combining this with the Competitive Index analysis will give destinations even better tools to develop a focused recovery strategy and prepare themselves for future growth.

About the Author

Milos Milovanovic

Head, *GainingEdge* Analysis & Research (GEAR)



Milos Milovanovic is a *GainingEdge* consultant, with deep expertise in the activation and development of convention bureaus as well as destination marketing in Europe and Middle East regions. He has over 12 years of experience in the meeting & conventions industry and has consulted to many destinations around the world. Milos is responsible for development of research & analysis activities within *GainingEdge* as the new Head of the *GainingEdge* Analysis & Research Department.

Milos is co-author of the Destination Competitive Index, a benchmarking tool for international convention destinations, published annually.

How can we help?

The Destination Competitive Index is a tool which enables us to do complete screening of the destination in a relatively short time by identifying its competitiveness as well as available avenues for growth. Using the Destination Competitiveness Index we can help destinations to:

- Identify their real competitive set
- Understand their competitive position
- Define their competitive advantages & disadvantages
- Analyze their momentum and fair share
- Set their optimal business goals
- Define their high level strategic directions

- Destination Advisory
- Convention & Exhibition Centre Advisory
- Association Advisory
- In-Market Sales Representation



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