

Leveraging Intellectual Capital

**Destinations and their
International Association Leaders**

THE THIRD EDITION



ADVISING THE WORLD'S CONVENTION AND MEETINGS INDUSTRY

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Executive Summary

Overview

In an era defined by rapid technological transformation, intensifying global competition for talent, and the increasing importance of knowledge-driven industries, intellectual capital has become the foundation of long-term destination competitiveness. It represents the collective expertise, creativity, and influence of individuals and institutions – universities, research centres, industry clusters, and professional communities – that determine how effectively a destination generates, shares, and applies knowledge.

For cities and countries competing in the global meetings and events market, intellectual capital is far more than an abstract concept – it is a core strategic resource. Destinations that identify and mobilise their thought leaders are better positioned to attract international events, foster collaboration, and strengthen their global visibility. Knowledge and leadership are not merely by-products of development; they are engines of sustainable growth.

The Leveraging Intellectual Capital 2025 Global Report is the third edition of *GainingEdge's* ongoing research initiative into how destinations utilise intellectual capital to enhance their competitive strength in the international meetings market. Building on the 2021 report, this edition incorporates methodological refinements reflecting the evolving landscape of global governance, meetings, and knowledge exchange.

The 2025 study analysed more than 7,500 international associations and their governing bodies, focusing on the participation of local leaders – scientists, academics, professionals, and innovators – on association boards and committees. These individuals act as connectors between local expertise and global opportunities, influencing the agendas of associations that organise recurring international meetings.

This edition introduces a refined methodology that broadens the analysis beyond associations hosting large congresses (over 500 participants) to also include mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). This approach offers a more comprehensive understanding of how destinations of different scales leverage their intellectual capital across various meeting segments and sectors.

At the core of the analysis is the Harnessing Ratio, a proprietary metric measuring how effectively a destination converts intellectual capital into tangible outcomes – specifically, international association meetings hosted or secured. The ratio compares the number of associations with local leaders on governing bodies to the number of meetings hosted or confirmed over the past four years (since January 2021). This metric enables destinations to benchmark their performance against defined competitive sets, evaluate how effectively they utilize intellectual assets, and identify strategies for improvement.

Beyond rankings, the 2025 research reinforces a key principle: intellectual capital is the ultimate renewable resource. Unlike financial or natural resources, which fluctuate with external pressures, knowledge and collaboration continuously regenerate through education, innovation, and global engagement. Destinations that strategically nurture academic institutions, research hubs, and professional networks establish resilient foundations for economic growth and international relevance.

Ultimately, this report demonstrates that leveraging intellectual capital is not simply about hosting more meetings. It is about cultivating a knowledge ecosystem that positions destinations as global leaders, accelerates innovation, and ensures long-term resilience in an increasingly competitive and interconnected world.

Key Findings

The 2025 edition of Leveraging Intellectual Capital reaffirms that intellectual capital remains a stable yet strategically dynamic asset, central to destination competitiveness and global engagement. While the world's leading knowledge hubs have largely retained their positions, the results reveal important shifts in regional influence, new growth trends, and significant variations in how effectively destinations are converting intellectual potential into tangible results.

Global Landscape and Trends

Globally, London, Paris, and Tokyo remain the leading centers of intellectual capital, followed by Beijing and Madrid, which joins the top five for the first time. These five cities collectively account for over 7,000 active board positions in international associations, underlining their deep integration into global professional and scientific networks. While Europe and North America continue to lead, the global distribution of intellectual capital is becoming increasingly multipolar, driven by Asia-Pacific and reinforced by emerging centers in other regions.

Across regions, the research identifies several trends. Southern Europe shows strong momentum, led by Madrid, Rome, Barcelona, and Milan, together with Lisbon, Istanbul, and Athens, reflecting renewed competitiveness driven by greater affordability and wider international appeal. Scandinavian cities such as Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Helsinki show continued growth, driven by investment in research, innovation, and digital transformation. In the Asia-Pacific, cities including Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore record strong performances, reinforcing the region's rise as a global meetings powerhouse. Conversely, several major U.S. destinations, including New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, experienced declines, reflecting a more inward domestic focus.

Harnessing Ratio Insights

The Harnessing Ratio provides a critical measure of how effectively destinations convert intellectual capital into tangible meeting outcomes. The 2025 analysis confirms Prague as the global leader, achieving a remarkable 80% ratio for large congresses and nearly 70% across all meetings, demonstrating exceptional coordination between its academic community and the meetings industry. Lisbon, Bangkok, Istanbul, and Barcelona also record outstanding performances, while Montreal and Cape Town showcase an impressive balance between knowledge engagement and event success.

At the national level, the United Arab Emirates, along with Portugal, Thailand, and the Czech Republic, emerge as top performers, each around 60% – with the UAE surpassing 90%, reflecting its ability to leverage both regional and expatriate expertise. Southern Europe continues to surge, with Greece, Spain, and Italy benefiting from the region's affordability as Western Europe faces rising costs.

Strategic Implications

Findings show a strong link between intellectual capital and destination competitiveness: 45 of the top 50 destinations in the latest *GainingEdge* Competitive Index also rank in the top 50 for intellectual capital, with high Harnessing Ratios reflecting well-organized knowledge ecosystems and lower ratios highlighting untapped potential for strategic programs. Destinations can enhance their performance by systematically mapping local intellectual capital, building ambassador networks, investing in bid intelligence, and fostering partnerships between academia, industry, and destinations.

A prime example is the **Italian Knowledge Leaders** program, launched in 2021, which has strategically transformed Italy into a leading *knowledge destination*, leveraging academic excellence to drive unprecedented growth in the global meetings industry, propelling Italy to No. 1 in Europe and No. 2 globally in ICCA rankings.

Intellectual Capital

Intellectual Capital

Intellectual capital – the collective knowledge, creativity, and collaborative capacity of people and institutions – remains the defining driver of progress in the 21st century. In an era marked by shifting geopolitical power, resource constraints, and digital transformation, the ability to generate, share, and apply knowledge determines not only competitiveness but also resilience and social cohesion. While global competition for natural resources, financial flows, and strategic influence defines today's multipolar landscape, sustainable prosperity ultimately depends on how effectively societies cultivate and leverage their intellectual capital. Investing in human potential, innovation, and collaboration is the most enduring strategy for long-term growth and stability.

The digital and creative economies have made intellectual capital inseparable from productivity and competitiveness. Businesses and societies increasingly rely on data, expertise, and innovation, giving rise to what can be described as intellectual capitalism – an ecosystem where economic value is driven by ideas, talent, and collaboration. In this context, universities, research institutions, creative industries, and innovation hubs form the connective tissue of modern development.

The meetings and events industry plays a pivotal role in this ecosystem by connecting minds across disciplines, transforming knowledge into solutions, and fostering networks that drive innovation and global collaboration. In a world where access to tangible resources is shaped by geopolitical pressures, intellectual capital remains the ultimate renewable resource for building sustainable, adaptive, and prosperous societies.

Destination Intellectual Capital

In a world defined by rapid technological change, shifting power dynamics, and global competition for talent, intellectual capital has become the decisive asset for destinations seeking not only to compete, but to remain relevant and resilient. Economies built on innovation, creativity, science, and digital expertise define a destination's capacity to generate lasting social, cultural, and economic value. The strength of a destination lies in its ability to cultivate local talent, foster creative and scientific networks, and connect with global knowledge communities. World-class education, advanced technologies, vibrant innovation ecosystems, and collaboration between academia and industry amplify a destination's intellectual capital. Beyond economic performance, this capital serves as a key instrument of soft power – enhancing international visibility, cultural influence, and the ability to attract talent, investment, and strategic events.

Leading cities increasingly position themselves as knowledge destinations, emphasizing research excellence, innovation ecosystems, and intellectual assets rather than relying solely on infrastructure or destination appeal. They nurture local innovators and thought leaders, and leverage their achievements to attract high-impact international conferences, research partnerships, and investment in knowledge-intensive sectors.

In an era of geopolitical and technological disruption, destinations that systematically identify, empower, and connect their intellectual leaders will shape the next wave of global competitiveness. Thus, intellectual capital is no longer an abstract asset – it is the foundation of destination resilience, reputation, and long-term relevance in the global economy.

Intellectual Capital Research

Intellectual Capital Research

Since 2020, *GainingEdge* has conducted ongoing research into the intellectual capital of destinations worldwide, examining how cities and regions are represented within the governing bodies of international associations. This long-term initiative aims to better understand how intellectual leadership contributes to a destination's global visibility, influence, and competitiveness within the meetings and events industry.

For the 2025 edition, the research methodology has been further refined to reflect evolving governance structures, the growing diversity of international associations, and the wider spectrum of meetings shaping global knowledge exchange. The study evaluates destinations based on the presence and engagement of local leaders serving in the governing bodies of international associations that organize meetings and conventions.

The underlying assumption is that globally competitive destinations nurture active local thought leaders – professionals, academics, and innovators – who participate across multiple international boards and committees. While the most cited researchers may not always hold formal association roles, those who drive collaboration, influence global agendas, and foster sectoral dialogue are central to a destination's intellectual capital and its positioning in the international arena.

For 2025, the research scope has been broadened beyond associations hosting large congresses (over 500 participants) to also include mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). This expanded approach provides a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of how destinations leverage intellectual capital – capturing both leadership presence and the capacity to attract events across diverse scales, disciplines, and strategic sectors.

Key Insights

By analyzing the participation of local leaders in the governing bodies of international associations, our research provides a comprehensive view of each destination's intellectual capital and global influence within the meetings and events ecosystem.

The analysis focuses on:

- **Identification of leaders and expertise** – Mapping local leaders represented on association boards and committees in their respective areas of specialization.
- **Leadership representation** – Measuring the number of local leaders serving as board members, presidents, or chairpersons from each destination.
- **Global influence** – Highlighting destinations – cities and countries – with the strongest representation and impact within association governance.
- **Comparative benchmarking** – Assessing destinations based on the presence, engagement, and reach of their intellectual leaders across international associations.
- **Strategic leverage** – Evaluating how destinations utilize these leadership networks to attract international events, strengthen global partnerships, and enhance business outcomes.
- **Sectoral mapping** – Identifying key industry sectors and scientific fields linked to each destination's intellectual leadership.

Global Rankings

For the 2025 edition, our Intellectual Capital Research expands its analytical framework to include two segments of international associations – those organizing large congresses (over 500 participants) and those hosting mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). This enhancement provides a more comprehensive picture of how different destinations engage their local intellectual leaders across different scales of international meetings.

Top 50 Cities

Rank	CITY	# boards with local members in associations		
		200-499	500+	Total
1	London	500+	809	1979
2	Paris	Total	644	1660
3	Tokyo	844	576	1420
4	Beijing	756	484	1240
5	Madrid	648	447	1095
6	Seoul	604	443	1047
7	Singapore	566	440	1006
8	New York	546	438	984
9	Berlin	594	335	929
10	Vienna	531	354	885
11	Hong Kong	490	361	851
12	Sydney	417	403	820
13	Rome	474	337	811
14	Washington	506	300	806
15	Buenos Aires	400	377	777
16	Mexico City	399	364	763
17	Melbourne	445	298	743
18	Amsterdam	448	283	731
19	Milan	413	314	727
20	Barcelona	396	328	724
21	Zurich	414	286	700
22	Sao Paulo	330	367	697
23	Brussels	393	290	683
24	Stockholm	450	214	664
25	Lisbon	392	248	640

Rank	CITY	# boards with local members in associations		
		200-499	500+	Total
26	Copenhagen	385	254	639
27	Oslo	404	233	637
28	Taipei	363	267	630
29	Toronto	309	289	598
30	Helsinki	386	184	570
31	Athens	344	225	569
32	Santiago	289	266	555
33	Boston	320	233	553
34	Dublin	301	251	552
35	Munich	320	231	551
36	Bangkok	284	225	509
37	Kuala Lumpur	245	241	486
38	Prague	270	191	461
39	Bogota	223	229	452
40	Chicago	243	201	444
41	Warsaw	292	147	439
42	Shanghai	268	163	431
43	Istanbul	214	198	412
44	Moscow	276	136	412
45	Montreal	224	186	410
46	Los Angeles	230	178	408
47	Ottawa	255	140	395
48	New Delhi	199	195	394
49	Cape Town	196	191	387
50	Budapest	235	148	383

This table highlights the Top 50 cities based on the presence of their local leaders in the governing bodies of international associations that organize recurring and rotating meetings. These individuals represent the city's intellectual capital – professionals, researchers, and experts who strengthen global networks and can play a key role in attracting conferences and events to their destinations. The list is segmented according to the size of the conferences organized by these associations, where local representatives hold board or committee positions:

- The second column reports governing bodies of associations organizing mid-size conferences (200–499 participants) with local leaders from the city.
- The third column shows the number of governing bodies for large, city-wide congresses (over 500 participants) with local representation.
- The fourth column shows the total number of governing bodies of associations hosting meetings with over 200 participants in which city leaders are represented.

This segmentation provides a clear picture of both the scale and breadth of each city's influence within the international association network. It demonstrates which cities have the largest available pool of intellectual capital to attract conferences, highlighting the strength of their local scientific and professional communities as well as their international engagement.

While similar patterns likely exist for associations organizing smaller meetings (under 200 participants), these events are rarely part of formal bidding processes and are therefore less influenced by local meetings industries or destination management organizations (DMOs), so we don't take them into consideration within this research.

Interpreting the rankings – Cities

The 2025 analysis confirms that the world's leading knowledge hubs continue to maintain strong representation within the governing bodies of international associations.

London again tops the global ranking, with local leaders serving on 1,979 association boards, including 809 in large congresses (over 500 participants) and 1,170 in mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). **Paris** follows with 1,660 board memberships, then **Tokyo** (1,420), **Beijing** (1,240), and **Madrid** (1,095).

Compared with previous editions, **New York** has dropped out of the top five, while Beijing has advanced by one position and Madrid has entered the group for the first time, reflecting subtle shifts in global intellectual capital engagement.

Together, these top five cities account for more than 7,000 active board positions, underscoring their role as the most globally connected centers of intellectual capital. Their thought leaders are deeply integrated into international scientific and professional networks, enhancing each city's ability to attract major conferences, foster collaboration, and strengthen global influence.

The 2025 ranking also reveals a geographical distribution, with strong representation from Europe, Asia-Pacific, and the Americas. This reflects the maturity of established knowledge centers but also the rise of new players and a gradual redistribution of influence within regions. Overall, the results confirm that destinations with a critical mass of active local leaders – those engaged internationally across associations and disciplines – are better positioned to leverage their intellectual capital, driving competitiveness, innovation, and visibility in the global meetings landscape.

Interpreting the Rankings – 2025 vs 2021

The 2025 edition of *GainingEdge's* Intellectual Capital Report has been released four years after the previous edition in 2021, aligning with the typical governance cycle of international associations. This period provides a meaningful timeframe to observe and benchmark structural shifts in association leadership and the global distribution of intellectual capital.

Over these four years, the world has experienced significant transformation – from the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted meetings and international mobility, to new geopolitical and economic challenges that have reshaped global engagement and collaboration. In this context, tracking the evolution of destinations' intellectual capital offers valuable insight into how the global meetings landscape is adapting to a rapidly changing world.

However, despite global turbulence, the top tier of destinations has remained remarkably stable. **London, Paris, and Tokyo** have retained their top three positions, while Seoul, Singapore, Vienna, and Buenos Aires have also maintained their rankings, confirming their long-standing status as leading knowledge hubs with well-established academic and professional ecosystems within their respective regions.

Further down the ranking, notable movements have emerged. Warsaw, Shanghai, Istanbul, Ottawa, Cape Town, and Budapest entered the Top 50, reflecting a broader geographical diversification of global intellectual capital. Conversely, San Francisco, Geneva, Brisbane, Vancouver, Lima, and Philadelphia have dropped out – partly a consequence of post-pandemic restructuring and shifting leadership representation within international associations. These changes indicate an ongoing rebalancing of intellectual engagement across regions.

Several established destinations experienced ranking declines, particularly across the United States, where especially Los Angeles, Boston and Chicago, but also New York and Washington, D.C. all moved downward, while San Francisco and Philadelphia dropped out top 50. Similar downward trends are seen in Latin America, as Bogotá, São Paulo, Santiago and Mexico City all experienced a decline and Lima dropped out top 50. At the smaller scale it can be also seen in Australia, as both Sydney and Melbourne experienced decline, while Brisbane dropped out top 50. Moscow, despite a five-place decline, has managed to retain its position among the Top 50 – a solid outcome considering the country's limited international engagement and partial isolation in recent years.

In contrast, several regions have shown notable progress. Southern Europe continues to build strong momentum, led by Athens, Lisbon, Rome, as well as Milan and Madrid – a sign of renewed competitiveness and increasing attractiveness of Mediterranean destinations. Likewise, Scandinavian cities – notably Oslo, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Helsinki – record clear gains, likely driven by active investment in research networks and digital innovation. Growth is also evident in Germany and China as their destinations have improved their rankings, while some reputable meeting destinations such as Prague, Dublin, Amsterdam also show steady progress.

Collectively, these trends point toward an increasingly multipolar distribution of intellectual capital, with influence expanding beyond traditional Western centers toward dynamic regions in Europe and Asia. The evolving geography of global association leadership underscores a more diverse and resilient international knowledge ecosystem – one that mirrors the wider incremental transformation of the world economy and society.

Global rankings

Following the same analytical framework applied to cities, the table below presents the Top 50 countries and territories ranked by the presence of their local leaders in the governing bodies of international associations that organize meetings with over 200 participants, segmented into large congresses (over 500 participants) and mid-size conferences (200–499 participants).

Top 50 Countries / Territories

Rank	COUNTRY / Territory	# boards with local members in associations		
		200-499	500+	Total
1	USA	2743	1814	4557
2	United Kingdom	2268	1464	3732
3	Germany	1994	1248	3242
4	France	1699	1062	2761
5	Italy	1586	1110	2696
6	Spain	1380	981	2361
7	Australia	1348	990	2338
8	Japan	1300	931	2231
9	Canada	1241	911	2152
10	Netherlands	1285	823	2108
11	China	1182	764	1946
12	Switzerland	1016	758	1774
13	Belgium	921	635	1556
14	Brazil	821	729	1550
15	India	770	699	1469
16	Sweden	915	503	1418
17	South Korea	773	568	1341
18	Austria	752	484	1236
19	Portugal	688	431	1119
20	Denmark	653	391	1044
21	Singapore	566	440	1006
22	Norway	614	367	981
23	Argentina	488	486	974
24	Mexico	520	450	970
25	Finland	614	331	945

Rank	COUNTRY / Territory	# boards with local members in associations		
		200-499	500+	Total
26	South Africa	489	439	928
27	Poland	561	341	902
28	Hong Kong	490	361	851
29	Chinese Taipei	490	341	831
30	Greece	487	320	807
31	Turkey	408	358	766
32	Ireland	417	344	761
33	Malaysia	376	344	720
34	Czech Republic	391	251	642
35	New Zealand	347	284	631
36	Israel	378	249	627
37	Chile	310	314	624
38	Thailand	342	282	624
39	Colombia	290	291	581
40	Russia	371	176	547
41	Indonesia	278	233	511
42	Hungary	316	188	504
43	Philippines	254	241	495
44	Romania	239	181	420
45	Slovenia	204	165	369
46	Peru	188	179	367
47	Croatia	218	139	357
48	UAE	166	170	336
49	Uruguay	155	179	334
50	Nigeria	151	164	315

Interpreting the Rankings – Countries

The 2025 analysis confirms the continued dominance of the world's leading knowledge economies, while also revealing gradual diversification in the global distribution of intellectual capital. The **United States** remains firmly in first place, with local leaders serving on 4,557 association boards, including 1,814 with large congresses (over 500 participants) and 2,743 with mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). It is followed by the **United Kingdom** (3,732), **Germany** (3,242), **France** (2,761), and **Italy** (2,696). These top five countries together account for a significant share of all board positions, underscoring their longstanding influence within international association leadership.

At the same time, a broader regional balance is emerging. Spain, Australia, Japan, and Canada remain strong contenders within the top ten, while China and South Korea continue to climb, reflecting Asia's growing engagement in global professional and scientific networks. The presence of Portugal (in addition to Italy and Spain), as well as Denmark, Sweden, and Finland among the leading 25 further highlights the consolidation of Northern and Southern Europe as vibrant centres of intellectual activity.

Representation from Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East – notably Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, and the UAE – demonstrates the widening participation of these regions in international association governance.

Overall, the 2025 country rankings portray an increasingly interconnected, multipolar landscape of intellectual capital, where established powers and rising knowledge economies are both shaping the future of global collaboration.

Interpreting the Rankings – 2025 vs 2021

Intellectual capital has once again demonstrated its stability as one of the most enduring assets of any society. Unlike natural or financial resources, which can fluctuate with political or economic cycles, knowledge, expertise, and professional networks evolve gradually and cannot easily be lost. This long-term resilience confirms why investment in education, research, and innovation remains the most reliable foundation for sustainable growth.

The 2025 rankings reaffirm this continuity. Sixteen destinations retained the exact same positions as in 2021, including all of the top five – the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Italy – highlighting the consistency of the world's leading knowledge economies. Notably, Italy has surpassed France in the number of local leaders involved in associations organizing large international congresses, demonstrating the impact of sustained investment and collaboration within the meetings industry, although France remains slightly ahead in overall totals.

Growth is evident across Scandinavia and Southern Europe, where cooperation, innovation, and strong institutional networks continue to drive competitiveness. In contrast, Latin America experienced moderate declines, reflecting slower recovery in international engagement. Russia remained within the Top 50 despite ongoing challenges, underscoring the durability of its intellectual base.

Two African destinations – Egypt and Kenya – dropped out of the Top 50, replaced by Slovenia and the United Arab Emirates, which benefited from the expanded methodology that now includes associations organizing smaller conferences, where they hold proportionally stronger representation.

Harnessing Ratio – Cities

Intellectual capital represents a critical asset for every destination, particularly for those aiming to leverage local thought leaders to attract international meetings and conventions and strengthen their reputation as knowledge-based societies. To evaluate how effectively destinations harness this potential, the **Harnessing Ratio** has been developed as a metric for measuring the conversion of intellectual capital into tangible outcomes.

Top 50 cities

Rank	CITY	# boards		# meetings		Harnessing Ratio	
		500+	Total	500+	Total	500+	Total
1	Prague	191	461	153	321	80.10%	69.63%
2	Lisbon	248	640	176	386	70.97%	60.31%
3	Bangkok	225	509	134	290	59.56%	56.97%
4	Istanbul	198	412	95	216	47.98%	52.43%
5	Barcelona	328	724	163	346	49.70%	47.79%
6	Montreal	186	410	105	194	56.45%	47.32%
7	Cape Town	191	387	100	183	52.36%	47.29%
8	Athens	225	569	110	268	48.89%	47.10%
9	Dublin	251	552	124	252	49.40%	45.65%
10	Budapest	148	383	61	170	41.22%	44.39%
11	Kuala Lumpur	241	486	105	213	43.57%	43.83%
12	Vienna	354	885	167	368	47.18%	41.58%
13	Singapore	440	1006	196	392	44.55%	38.97%
14	Copenhagen	254	639	123	246	48.43%	38.50%
15	Taipei	267	630	106	220	39.70%	34.92%
16	Brussels	290	683	86	217	29.66%	31.77%
17	Amsterdam	283	731	92	224	32.51%	30.64%
18	Warsaw	147	439	41	133	27.89%	30.30%
19	Rome	337	811	112	243	33.23%	29.96%
20	New Delhi	195	394	69	117	35.38%	29.70%
21	Milan	314	727	105	213	33.44%	29.30%
22	Berlin	335	929	126	268	37.61%	28.85%
23	Seoul	443	1047	137	296	30.93%	28.27%
24	Helsinki	184	570	63	156	34.24%	27.37%
25	Santiago	266	555	60	143	22.56%	25.77%

Rank	CITY	# boards		# meetings		Harnessing Ratio	
		500+	Total	500+	Total	500+	Total
26	Bogota	229	452	48	116	20.96%	25.66%
27	Chicago	201	444	57	111	28.36%	25.00%
28	Shanghai	163	431	42	104	25.77%	24.13%
29	Toronto	289	598	75	144	25.95%	24.08%
30	Madrid	447	1095	103	261	23.04%	23.84%
31	Buenos Aires	377	777	90	184	23.87%	23.68%
32	Melbourne	298	743	95	172	31.88%	23.15%
33	Stockholm	214	664	54	148	25.23%	22.29%
34	Hong Kong	361	851	82	185	22.71%	21.74%
35	Oslo	233	637	36	129	13.48%	20.25%
36	Sydney	403	820	92	166	22.83%	20.24%
37	Paris	644	1660	142	321	22.05%	19.34%
38	Munich	231	551	39	106	16.88%	19.24%
39	Sao Paulo	367	697	50	128	13.62%	18.36%
40	Mexico City	364	763	51	137	14.01%	17.96%
41	Boston	233	553	39	91	16.74%	16.46%
42	Tokyo	576	1420	87	207	15.10%	14.58%
43	London	809	1979	110	260	13.60%	13.14%
44	Ottawa	140	395	25	50	17.86%	12.66%
45	Los Angeles	178	408	15	43	8.43%	10.54%
46	Zurich	286	700	22	73	7.69%	10.43%
47	Beijing	484	1240	55	121	11.36%	9.76%
48	Washington	300	806	41	72	13.67%	8.93%
49	New York	438	984	26	62	5.94%	6.30%
50	Moscow	136	412	5	11	3.68%	2.67%

Harnessing Ratio

Following the ranking analysis, the **Harnessing Ratio** provides a deeper perspective on how effectively destinations convert their intellectual capital into tangible outcomes through international meetings and conventions. It measures the relationship between the number of international association meetings hosted or booked over the last four years (since January 2021) within a defined business segment, and the number of local leaders represented on the governing bodies of those associations that organize such events. In essence, it indicates how successfully a destination leverages its intellectual capital to attract international meetings.

For 2025, the analysis distinguishes between two business segments: associations organizing large congresses (over 500 participants) and those organizing mid-size conferences (200–499 participants). This segmentation provides a clearer understanding of each destination's capability to host events of different scales, depending on its meeting infrastructure and organizational capacity. It also enables destinations to benchmark their performance against competitors and assess how effectively they engage local intellectual capital in strategically important sectors and business segments.

Successful destinations typically enhance their Harnessing Ratio through deliberate and strategic actions, such as:

- identifying and engaging local leaders to champion bids;
- supporting them through ambassador programs, subvention schemes, and meeting legacy programmes; and
- developing partnership programs that create mutual value for both associations and host destinations.

Ultimately, the Harnessing Ratio serves as a key performance indicator of how effectively destinations transform intellectual capital into measurable results.

Interpreting the city rankings

The 2025 results reaffirm key trends from previous editions while reflecting the evolving dynamics of the global meetings landscape. **Prague** once again records the highest Harnessing Ratio – 80.10% in the segment of large congresses and 69.63% across both segments – confirming its exceptional ability to convert intellectual capital into tangible outcomes. This performance underscores Prague's strong meetings industry, solid infrastructure, and effective engagement of local thought leaders. **Lisbon** follows closely, with 70.97% in large congresses and 60.31% overall, reinforcing its reputation as one of the world's most dynamic and rapidly growing meeting destinations.

Among European cities, **Istanbul** shows a strong rebound after several challenging years, **Athens** and **Dublin** maintain consistently high ratios, mirroring their 2021 performance, while **Vienna** and **Barcelona** continue to demonstrate long-standing excellence and international competitiveness and **Budapest** appear as new on the list.

In the Asia-Pacific region, **Bangkok** continues to perform impressively (nearly 60% in both segments), followed by **Kuala Lumpur** and **Singapore**, confirming the region's expanding influence. **Cape Town** emerges as the leading African city, with a notably high ratio highlighting its regional strength, while **Montreal** retains its position as the leading North American city, particularly due to its strong results in the business segment of large congresses.

At the lower end, Moscow shows the weakest results, reflecting ongoing political challenges and limited international engagement. Several U.S. cities display relatively low ratios due to their focus on a large domestic market, while Beijing remains affected by prolonged lockdowns. Overall, these findings illustrate how destinations are leveraging intellectual capital to stay competitive in a globalized meetings economy.

Competitive Benchmarking Analysis

The ranking of intellectual capital utilization offers destinations valuable insight into their potential and capacity to engage local leaders active in international associations to attract congresses. However, destinations with larger pools of intellectual capital often find it more challenging to achieve a high Harnessing Ratio. For meaningful analysis, the Ratio should be evaluated across business segments within clearly defined competitive sets.

CITY	Bangkok	Kuala Lumpur	Singapore	Taipei	Seoul
No. of boards (200-499)	284	245	566	363	604
No. of meetings (200-499)	156	108	196	114	159
Harnessing Ratio (200-499)	54.93%	44.08%	34.63%	31.40%	26.32%
No. of boards (500+)	225	241	440	267	443
No. of meetings (500+)	134	105	196	106	137
Harnessing Ratio (500+)	59.56%	43.57%	44.55%	39.70%	30.93%
No. of boards (Total)	509	486	1006	630	1047
No. of meetings (Total)	290	213	392	220	296
Harnessing Ratio (Total)	56.97%	43.83%	38.97%	34.92%	28.27%

■ Highest performing city

■ Lowest performing city

Defining a relevant competitive set is essential, ideally comprising cities within the same global region (rotation) and of comparable size, profile, and market positioning. The availability of intellectual capital is a key indicator for identifying suitable peer destinations.

In this report, the selected example focuses on major metropolitan capitals in the Asia-Pacific region (excluding China, Japan, and Australia), with the competitive set including Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Taipei, and Seoul.

A comparison of these cities based on available intellectual capital and achieved Harnessing Ratios across business segments reveals clear performance patterns.

- **Mid-size conferences** (200–499 participants): Seoul holds the largest intellectual capital, with local leaders in 604 international associations, followed by Singapore (566) and Taipei (363), while Bangkok (284) and Kuala Lumpur (245) have smaller pools. However, Bangkok achieves the highest Harnessing Ratio (54.93%), nearly double that of Seoul (26.32%), resulting in a comparable number of hosted or confirmed conferences despite its smaller leader base. This highlights strategic opportunities for both cities to optimize performance.
- **Large congresses** (500+ participants): The trend continues, with Seoul again leading in intellectual capital (443 associations) but recording the lowest Harnessing Ratio in the set. Conversely, Bangkok achieves the highest ratio and comparable results. Singapore consistently stands out, hosting the largest number of congresses, supported by a strong intellectual base and balanced performance.
- Overall, aggregated data reflect similar trends across segments, emphasizing the importance of benchmarking by meeting size, sector, or region to identify growth opportunities aligned with each destination's strategic priorities.

Harnessing Ratio – Countries

The Harnessing Ratio can also be applied at the country level, offering a wider view of how effectively nations leverage their intellectual capital to attract international association meetings. By comparing the number of international association boards with local leaders to the number of meetings hosted or booked over the past four years (since January 2021), countries can assess how well they convert intellectual potential into measurable outcomes.

Top 50 Countries / Territories

Rank	COUNTRY / Territory	# boards		# meetings		Harnessing Ratio	
		500+	Total	500+	Total	500+	Total
1	UAE	170	336	166	319	97.65%	94.94%
2	Portugal	431	1119	285	730	66.13%	65.24%
3	Thailand	282	624	175	395	62.06%	63.30%
4	Czech Republic	251	642	171	373	68.13%	58.10%
5	Greece	320	807	160	451	50.00%	55.89%
6	Colombia	291	581	151	322	51.89%	55.42%
7	Indonesia	233	511	116	270	49.79%	52.84%
8	Spain	981	2361	488	1217	49.75%	51.55%
9	Malaysia	344	720	187	369	54.36%	51.25%
10	South Korea	568	1341	314	654	55.28%	48.77%
11	Peru	179	367	79	172	44.13%	46.87%
12	Mexico	450	970	194	448	43.11%	46.19%
13	Italy	1110	2696	464	1225	41.80%	45.44%
14	Poland	341	902	141	399	41.35%	44.24%
15	Ireland	344	761	148	333	43.02%	43.76%
16	Austria	484	1236	209	522	43.18%	42.23%
17	Croatia	139	357	47	148	33.81%	41.46%
18	Turkey	358	766	133	310	37.15%	40.47%
19	Singapore	440	1006	196	392	44.55%	38.97%
20	Japan	931	2231	335	848	35.98%	38.01%
21	Hungary	188	504	66	191	35.11%	37.90%
22	Chile	314	624	86	232	27.39%	37.18%
23	France	1062	2761	418	1016	39.36%	36.80%
24	Chinese Taipei	341	831	133	303	39.00%	36.46%
25	Denmark	391	1044	151	367	38.62%	35.15%

Rank	COUNTRY / Territory	# boards		# meetings		Harnessing Ratio	
		500+	Total	500+	Total	500+	Total
26	South Africa	439	928	152	325	34.62%	35.02%
27	Canada	911	2152	363	748	39.85%	34.76%
28	Netherlands	823	2108	282	714	34.26%	33.87%
29	China	764	1946	245	654	32.07%	33.61%
30	Slovenia	165	369	46	123	27.88%	33.33%
31	Uruguay	179	334	49	109	27.37%	32.63%
32	USA	1814	4557	582	1479	32.08%	32.46%
33	Brazil	729	1550	217	499	29.77%	32.19%
34	Finland	331	945	103	303	31.12%	32.06%
35	Belgium	635	1556	170	496	26.77%	31.88%
36	Germany	1248	3242	362	993	29.01%	30.63%
37	Philippines	241	495	70	148	29.05%	29.90%
38	Romania	181	420	38	125	20.99%	29.76%
39	Sweden	503	1418	141	405	28.03%	28.56%
40	Argentina	486	974	131	277	26.95%	28.44%
41	India	699	1469	192	417	27.47%	28.39%
42	Australia	990	2338	339	660	34.24%	28.23%
43	New Zealand	284	631	84	176	29.58%	27.89%
44	United Kingdom	1464	3732	373	999	25.48%	26.77%
45	Norway	367	981	79	262	21.53%	26.71%
46	Switzerland	758	1774	155	408	20.45%	23.00%
47	Hong Kong	361	851	82	185	22.71%	21.74%
48	Nigeria	164	315	14	35	8.54%	11.11%
49	Israel	249	627	12	45	4.82%	7.18%
50	Russia	176	547	13	28	7.39%	5.12%

Interpreting the Rankings – Countries

The 2025 results reaffirm that intellectual capital is a stable, long-term asset for nations, as overall rankings remain broadly consistent with previous reports. Stronger countries typically have more active meeting destinations, meaning that national results reflect the combined contributions of multiple cities.

The **United Arab Emirates** achieves the highest Harnessing Ratio – over 90% in both segments – reflecting the strength of Dubai and Abu Dhabi and their ability to leverage both regional expertise and expatriate intellectual capital. At the same time, it highlights the need to expand local intellectual capital through targeted strategies in key UAE cities, as a very high ratio can also indicate a relatively limited pool of available intellectual leaders and pose a potential risk.

In Europe, **Portugal** (over 60%), followed by the **Czech Republic** and **Greece**, lead the way, supported by dynamic capitals and growing second-tier destinations. **Spain** and **Italy** achieve high ratios, considering their large pools of intellectual capital, confirming Southern Europe's strong momentum, while **Poland**, **Ireland** and **Austria** also demonstrate solid and consistent performance.

In the Asia-Pacific, **Thailand** (over 60%) records the highest ratio, followed by **Indonesia**, **Malaysia**, and **South Korea**, illustrating the region's growing global influence. In Latin America, **Colombia**, **Peru**, and **Mexico** stand out with good results. The lowest ratios are seen in Russia, Israel, and Nigeria, reflecting ongoing political and market constraints.

Whether applied at the city or national level, this approach helps convention bureaus and DMOs identify gaps between available intellectual capital and meeting performance, benchmark results, and design evidence-based strategies to strengthen international competitiveness.

Strategic Approach

The Harnessing Ratio provides not only a benchmarking tool but also strategic guidance for destinations seeking to strengthen their competitiveness in the global meetings market. It points to two key strategic approaches based on performance outcomes:

- **Relatively low Harnessing Ratio** indicates a gap between a destination's intellectual capital and its success in converting that potential into hosted events. To close this gap, destinations should invest in bidding capabilities, expand and professionalize ambassador programs, strengthen bidding teams, and enhance subvention schemes and event support initiatives. These efforts help local leaders become more active advocates in attracting international meetings.
- **Relatively high Harnessing Ratio** suggests that a destination is effectively leveraging its local intellectual capital. However, maintaining this momentum requires ongoing investment to renew and expand leadership networks. Recommended actions include establishing association development and legacy programs, supporting scientific collaboration and international research engagement, and fostering opportunities for local leaders to assume or retain positions within international association governance.

In both scenarios, the essential first step is for destinations to map and understand their full scope of intellectual capital. Tracking local leaders engaged in international associations must be a continuous process, as governing roles evolve regularly and represent an ever-changing, yet critical, strategic asset.

If the convention bureau and the local industry have a strong and creative collaboration, they can develop advanced marketing programs which will be significantly improved through active engagement of their local knowledge leaders.

Destination Intellectual Capital

GainingEdge Analysis & Research (GEAR) has developed a proven methodology to help destinations enhance both the number and quality of international association meetings they host. Combining data-driven insights with strategic engagement, GEAR equips destinations with the intelligence, guidance, and tools needed to engage key local leaders and institutions, building a sustainable ecosystem for bidding, hosting, and attracting high-value international events. The methodology is delivered in two integrated stages:

Destination Intellectual Capital

I. Intellectual Capital Analysis & Research

The first stage, Intellectual Capital Analysis & Research, provides destinations with a clear understanding of their knowledge resources and how effectively these are being leveraged. This stage consists of two key phases:

- **The assessment phase** maps the available intellectual capital, including the total number of local leaders active in boards of international associations, their profiles, areas of expertise, and contact information. It also evaluates the “Harnessing Ratio,” showing how well a destination mobilizes its thought leaders and how it compares to key competitors.
- **The strategic advice phase** translates these insights into targeted action: destinations with a low harnessing ratio are guided to improve bidding capabilities through research, bid intelligence, and smart bidding strategies to increase conversion rates. Conversely, destinations with high harnessing ratios focus on expanding the presence of their leaders in international associations and networks, reinforcing global influence.

By linking intellectual capital to business and scientific sectors, this study identifies the destination's real strengths, providing a foundation for advanced marketing programs, long-term collaboration with associations, and effective destination branding.

II. Priority Business Leads and Intellectual Capital Engagement

The second stage focuses on transforming insight into action by identifying priority business leads and strategically engaging local intellectual capital. Through detailed research, GEAR identifies local leaders who hold influential positions within targeted international associations. This process reveals both their influence within global networks and the institutions they represent, including universities, research centers, hospitals, and professional organizations.

Each identified lead is supported by a comprehensive business profile, which includes: the leader's association membership, professional or scientific field, position and title, and verified contact information. In addition, GEAR provides an event summary detailing: the name of the event, its industry sector, and the average size and scale of delegate participation. These insights equip destinations with the intelligence needed to design smart bid strategies, targeting opportunities with the highest potential for success.

The methodology also supports the improvement of Ambassador Programs, enabling destinations to activate new ambassadors and strengthen collaboration between local leaders and convention bureaus. By integrating these insights into advanced marketing and engagement initiatives, destinations can establish long-term partnerships with associations and position themselves as premier global hubs for meetings, knowledge exchange, and innovation.

Intellectual Capital: A Key Competitive Factor

Intellectual capital is emerging as one of the most decisive sources of competitiveness for meeting destinations worldwide. Evidence from the latest *GainingEdge* Destination Competitive Index 2023 confirms a strong correlation between intellectual capital and overall destination performance: 45 of the world's 50 most competitive meeting destinations are also ranked among the top 50 cities by available intellectual capital in this study.

This clearly demonstrates that intellectual capital is not only a measure of knowledge strength but also a critical driver of destination success. While traditional competitive factors – such as air access, infrastructure, logistics, and accommodation – represent the “product side” of competitiveness, they are relatively fixed and often beyond the direct control of convention bureaus or DMOs.

In contrast, leveraging intellectual capital depends on how effectively a destination mobilizes its local leaders, academic networks, and professional communities to attract international meetings, reflecting how well the local meetings industry is organized and supported. Cities such as Prague, Lisbon, Singapore, Vienna and Barcelona demonstrate that destinations continuously harnessing their intellectual capital sustain high performance, reflected in both ICCA rankings and Harnessing Ratios.

Together, the Competitive Index and Intellectual Capital analysis form a holistic framework – evaluating both the supply side (destination offer) and the demand side (knowledge engagement) – to guide long-term, evidence-based strategies for success in the global meetings economy.



Case Study: Italian Knowledge Leaders

Launched in 2021 by Convention Bureau Italia, in collaboration with the Ministry for Tourism, ENIT – the Italian National Tourism Agency – and CRUI – the Conference of Rectors of Italian Universities, the Italian Knowledge Leaders (IKL) initiative has become a cornerstone of Italy's success in the global meetings industry. The programme was created to position Italy as a true *knowledge destination* by connecting the country's academic and scientific excellence with international association opportunities.

Through a structured process of mapping academics, researchers, and professionals who hold leadership roles in international associations, IKL enabled Italian destinations to identify and engage influential local figures capable of supporting international bids. This data-driven approach opened new pathways for collaboration between universities, research centers, and convention bureaus, transforming intellectual capital into tangible business leads.

By increasing both the availability and harnessing of its knowledge resources, Italy has achieved outstanding cumulative results, **advancing from fifth to first place in Europe** and reaching second globally in the ICCA rankings for the past two years. This success clearly demonstrates how a structured approach to leveraging intellectual capital can drive measurable progress and sustained growth in the international congress market. Beyond these measurable achievements, the initiative also fostered a strong culture of partnership and innovation, empowering Italian cities to align their scientific strengths with global meeting opportunities and reinforce their long-term competitiveness.

Cities to Watch

Vienna

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	10 th
No. of boards with local members (Total):	885
No. of boards with local members (500+):	354
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	41.58%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	47.18%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	1 st
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	19 th (604.2)



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Vienna continues to lead the global meetings landscape, combining a rich academic heritage and strong institutional networks with world-class infrastructure.

Its high Harnessing Ratios reflect the city's efficiency in mobilizing local intellectual capital. Vienna's consistent top ICCA ranking confirms its global competitiveness, positioning it as a benchmark for strategic collaboration between academia, industry, and city leadership.

Lisbon

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	25 th
No. of boards with local members (Total):	640
No. of boards with local members (500+):	248
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	60.31%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	70.97%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	2 nd
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	32 nd (529.6)



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Lisbon's impressive Harnessing Ratios confirm its position as one of the world's top meeting destinations. The city's ability to convert intellectual capital into tangible results demonstrates effective stakeholder collaboration and strategic destination management.

Lisbon's strong international positioning and sustained rise in ICCA rankings underscore its expanding influence within Europe's competitive meetings market.

Athens

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	31 st
No. of boards with local members (Total):	569
No. of boards with local members (500+):	225
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	47.10%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	48.89%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	10 th
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	31 st (531.4)



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Athens continues to strengthen its global presence, achieving a remarkably high Harnessing Ratio that allows it to punch above its weight – ranking 10th in the ICCA list despite its 31st position in both competitiveness and intellectual capital.

This success reflects the strong momentum of Southern European cities, supported by increased affordability and renewed international appeal.

* Download the *GainingEdge* International Destination Competitive Index 2022-2023 report [here](#).



Cities to Watch

Kuala Lumpur

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	37 th
No. of boards with local members (Total):	486
No. of boards with local members (500+):	241
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	43.83%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	43.57%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	26 th
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	17 th (609.8)



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Kuala Lumpur demonstrates impressive progress in transforming intellectual capital into meeting success. With balanced Harnessing Ratios across both segments, the city stands out as one of Asia's leading convention hubs.

The strong results of Kuala Lumpur, along with other regional cities, confirm the rising significance of the ASEAN region in the global meetings landscape.

Beijing

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	4 th
No. of boards with local members (Total):	1240
No. of boards with local members (500+):	484
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	9.76%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	11.36%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	76 th
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	11 th (637.0)



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Beijing possesses one of the world's largest concentrations of intellectual capital but continues to face challenges in converting it into international meeting activity.

Its relatively low Harnessing Ratios reflect the impact of pandemic-related restrictions and limited engagement with international associations. Nevertheless, Beijing's strong research ecosystem provides a foundation for future recovery and expansion.

Istanbul

Intellectual Capital global ranking:	25 th
No. of boards with local members (Total):	412
No. of boards with local members (500+):	198
Harnessing Ratio (Total):	52.43%
Harnessing Ratio (500+):	47.98%
ICCA Ranking 2024:	20 th
Competitive Index 2023 rank (score):	12 th (628.5)



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Istanbul demonstrates strong recovery and renewed competitiveness, with strong Harnessing Ratios reflecting effective use of its intellectual capital. The city's strategic location, improving infrastructure, and growing academic networks are driving its reemergence as a leading global meetings destination.

Sustained engagement of local leaders and continued investment in international collaboration will further enhance Istanbul's influence in the global meetings economy.

Methodology

Since 2020, the *GainingEdge* Analysis & Research has continuously researched the intellectual capital of convention destinations through the analysis of international association leadership. The primary objective of this research is to identify and compare the relative strengths of destinations based on the number of local thought leaders who are active members of governing bodies within international associations.

Scope of Research

Subject: International associations that organize meetings with more than 200 participants (according to ICCA criteria).

Volume: Analysis of more than 7,500 international associations and their governing bodies (boards and committees).

Sources: ICCA database and the official websites of identified international associations.

Key Insights and Outputs

The research tracks:

- The total number of governing bodies that include local leaders from each destination.
- The total number of international association meetings organized or confirmed at the destinations over the last four years
- The Harnessing Ratio: meetings hosted or booked over four years divided by the number of associations with local leaders on the destination's boards

This comprehensive dataset allows GEAR to generate comparative analyses, ratio indicators, and rankings of leading cities and countries based on their available intellectual capital across various business segments. The most recent data review, conducted in the first half of 2025, confirms stable trends in destination performance and in the engagement of local leaders. As these data continue to evolve, some ratios may have shifted slightly since the latest review; however, the overall patterns and trends remain consistent, reinforcing the report's long-term reliability.

GEAR continuously monitors and updates its global intellectual capital database, giving destinations access to detailed leader profiles, business segmentation insights, and priority lead identification. The Leveraging Intellectual Capital report serves both as a benchmarking tool and a strategic resource, helping destinations strengthen their position in the competitive global meetings market.

In addition, GEAR can tailor its research to the specific needs of individual destinations. This may include **snapshot analyses** or **specialized reports** that highlight a city's gaps, identify growth opportunities, and provide actionable recommendations to enhance business results and capitalize on untapped intellectual capital.

About Us

About GainingEdge

GainingEdge is a specialist consulting firm dedicated exclusively to the tourism and business events sectors. Since 2004, it has supported hundreds of clients across five continents – helping destinations, convention and visitor bureaus, convention and exhibition centres, and associations achieve strategic clarity, operational excellence, and sustainable growth.

Our clients include convention and visitor bureaus/destination marketing organizations, national tourism agencies and convention and exhibition centre developers and operators.

Our expertise:

- Destination Advisory
- Convention & Exhibition Centre Advisory
- Association Advisory
- Business Development, Sales & Marketing
- GainingEdge Analysis & Research - GEAR

GainingEdge Analysis & Research (GEAR)

GainingEdge Analysis & Research (GEAR) is the research division of GainingEdge, specializing in quantitative analysis of destination competitiveness and the global meetings industry. Its work centers on identifying the key resources that drive destination success, with a strong focus on intellectual capital – the knowledge, expertise, and influence of local leaders active in international associations.

GEAR produces two flagship benchmarking studies, the Destination Competitive Index and Leveraging Intellectual Capital, providing data-driven insights and strategic guidance to help destinations enhance their global standing. Through its pioneering research, GEAR enables cities to assess their business potential by identifying local leaders involved in international associations and analyzing their profiles and areas of expertise.

By combining findings from intellectual capital mapping with competitiveness data, GEAR equips destinations with powerful tools to design focused growth strategies, strengthen bid performance, and foster long-term competitiveness in the global meetings market.

About the Author

Miloš Milovanović

Head of GainingEdge Analysis & Research



Miloš Milovanović is GainingEdge consultant with extensive expertise in developing business event destinations, convention venues, and destination marketing. With 20 years of experience, he has advised a wide range of destinations, city convention bureaus, and convention centers.

As a Partner at GainingEdge, Miloš leads research and analysis projects as Head of GainingEdge Analysis & Research (GEAR). He is the author of the Destination Competitive Index and the Leveraging Intellectual Capital report. He is also a certified ICCA instructor and former CEO of the Serbia Convention Bureau. Miloš holds a degree in Economics from the University of Belgrade and a Master's from École Centrale Paris.

GEAR Support for Destinations

The Destination Intellectual Capital research is designed to help destinations leverage their intellectual capital to generate business and strengthen their positioning as knowledge-driven cities. Based on these insights, we support destinations to:

- Identify key leaders active on boards of international associations
- Implement smart, targeted bidding strategies
- Map and prioritize key business sectors and scientific areas
- Develop or enhance effective Meetings Ambassador Programs
- Initiate advanced marketing and business development initiatives

This approach provides destinations with actionable guidance to turn local expertise into measurable results, increase engagement with international associations, and reinforce their reputation as leading hubs for knowledge and international meetings.

- Destination Advisory
- Convention & Exhibition Centre Advisory
- Association Advisory
- Business Development, Sales & Marketing
- *GainingEdge* Analysis & Research - GEAR



CONTACT US

GainingEdge Head Office
MELBOURNE, Australia

T: +61 3 9502 0655
@: info@gainingedge.com

470 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
AUSTRALIA

VISIT www.gainingedge.com