

Competitiveness Report 2025

Economic strength, societal investment, education and sustainability:
keys to global competitiveness

October 2025

Eight Competitiveness Lab

This report is the result of a work undertaken by the Eight Competitiveness Lab, with an aim to provide international investors with the essential data they require to make informed business decisions. It tracks and shares the most relevant and up-to-date information on the progress and development of the global economy. In our view, the crucial formula required to achieve success is a sustained focus on a thriving business environment, social stability, determination to provide robust, high-quality education, and constant endeavour toward environmental sustainability. The Lab has been established by Eight International, an organisation consisting of 8 business advisory founding firms and associate members present in more than 30 countries globally. It is a global organisation with strong European roots focusing on transactions, restructuring, transformation, and financial engineering. With offices in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Italy, Spain, India, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Australia and New Zealand, Eight International is a fast-growing advisory firm of a new type, serving multinational corporations, private equity firms, investors, and family offices.

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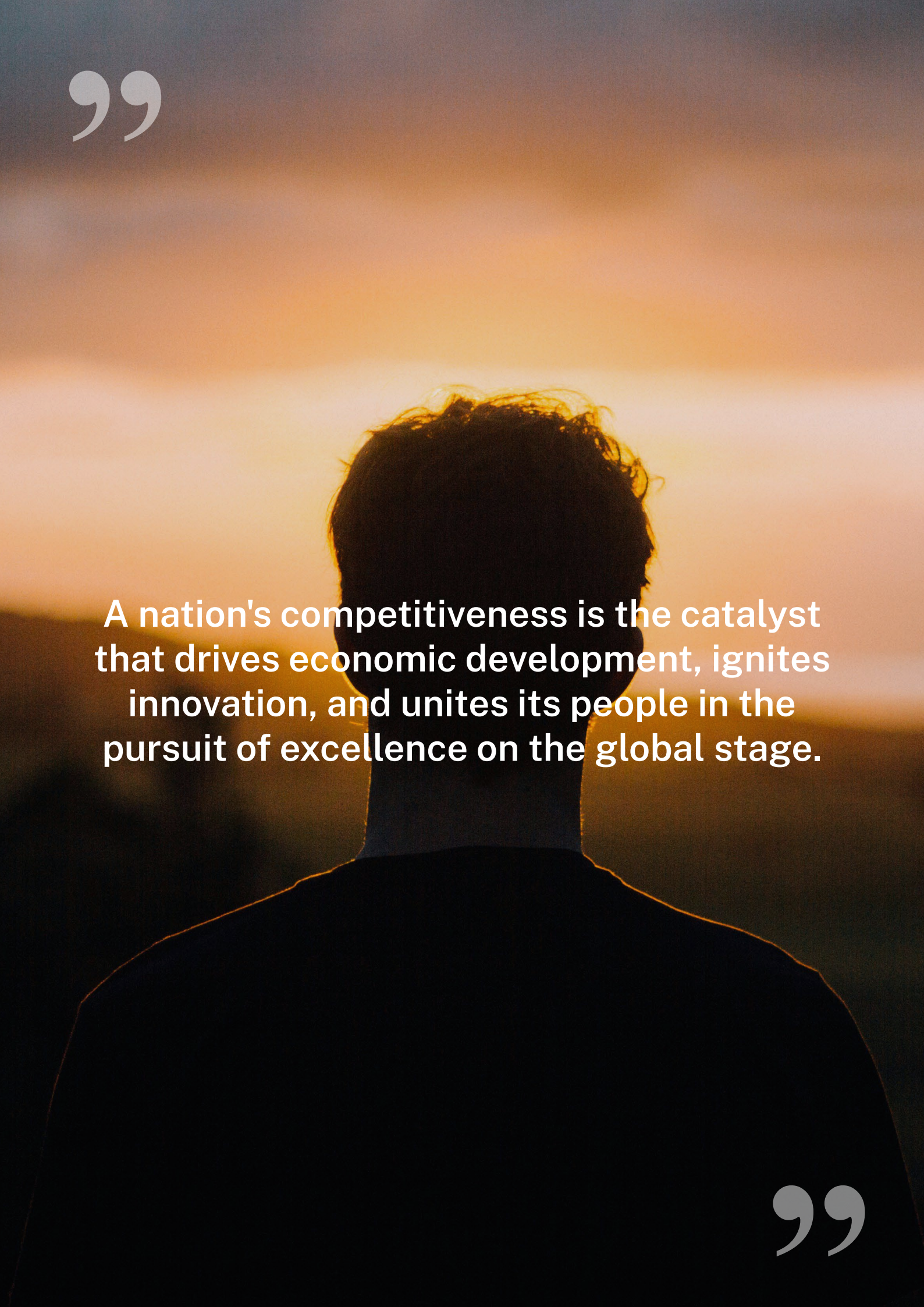
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Acknowledgements

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A silhouette of a person's head and shoulders is centered in the frame, looking out over a bright, hazy sunset or sunrise. The person's hair is dark and curly. The background is a warm, orange-gold gradient, suggesting a low sun on the horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

A nation's competitiveness is the catalyst that drives economic development, ignites innovation, and unites its people in the pursuit of excellence on the global stage.

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Foreword

Welcome to the 7th edition of the Eight Competitiveness Report (Year 2025), a comprehensive exploration of true global competitiveness. In this edition, the Eight Competitiveness Report offers an even deeper and more holistic picture, expanding its evaluation to cover 58 countries, structured around our four essential Pillars – Economics, Society, Education and Sustainability.

Building on our journey so far, we continue to embrace change, question established paradigms and adapt to the shifting global context to refine the insights this report offers. A notable advancement in the 2025 edition is the introduction of country rankings, offering a clearer view of relative performance for the first time. We have also adopted a continent based grouping approach, enabling a more nuanced understanding of competitiveness within regional contexts. By grouping countries not just by overall scores but also by their continental ecosystems, we highlight relative dynamics, strengths, and disparities that traditional linear rankings often overlook.

Through this report, we aspire to demonstrate that no country or continent can be defined by a single parameter. Rather, true competitiveness is shaped by the combined strength across multiple dimensions, reflecting a nation's ability to balance progress, equity, and resilience. We believe this perspective will inspire us all to lead with purpose, act with vision, and build a future rooted in balance, strength, and hope.

Pascal Raidron
Chairman - Eight International

Alexis Karklins Marchay
General Secretary - Eight International

Key Takeaways

01 Global Economic Shift

Over the past 40 years, the world economy has increased ninefold, with Asia's share of global GDP rising from under 25% to nearly 40%. On the other end, Europe's and North America's relative influence have declined.

02 What Competitiveness is About

Competitiveness reflects a country's ability to grow economically, improve citizens' lives, and remain resilient, requiring investment attraction, innovation, and equitable opportunities.

03 Our Multidimensional Framework on Competitiveness

We define competitiveness based on four Pillars; Economics, Society, Education, and Sustainability, with the societal Pillar (e.g., income equality, life satisfaction) proving critical for overall ranking.

04 Contextual Nature

Competitiveness is relative, varying by region, country, or city, and shaped by stakeholders' priorities, such as innovation for governments or quality of life for citizens.

05 Europe's Complex Reality

The European Union is highly competitive as a bloc, but disparities between Western and Central/Eastern Europe, and between large and small economies create a "multi-speed Europe."

06 Balanced Development

Top-ranked countries excel across all Pillars, unlike the United States, which ranks high economically (5th) but lower overall (19th) due to relative weaknesses in Education, Society, and Sustainability.

07 Small Country Advantage

Nordic countries, Switzerland, and Ireland, all with populations under 25 million, dominate the top rankings, suggesting that smaller scale aids balanced development and effective resource management.

08 Scale Challenges

Larger countries like the U.S., China, and India face complexity in achieving high competitiveness, with only 1% of the analysed population in top-ranked "A" countries versus 51% in the lowest "E" rank.

09 Regional Disparities

Sub-Saharan Africa faces persistent economic challenges, while Europe struggles with stagnation and demographic decline, both impacting long-term competitiveness.

10 Methodological Robustness

The study's rankings are based on carefully selected indicators and robustness tests to ensure reliability, avoiding bias from over-reliance on single indices.

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A full-page background image featuring a silhouette of a person standing on a hill, looking out over a vast landscape under a sunset sky. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and pink near the horizon. The person is positioned in the center-left of the frame, facing right. The horizon line is visible in the lower third of the image, with rolling hills and some vegetation in the foreground and background.

Competitiveness is more than just
an economic scoreboard.

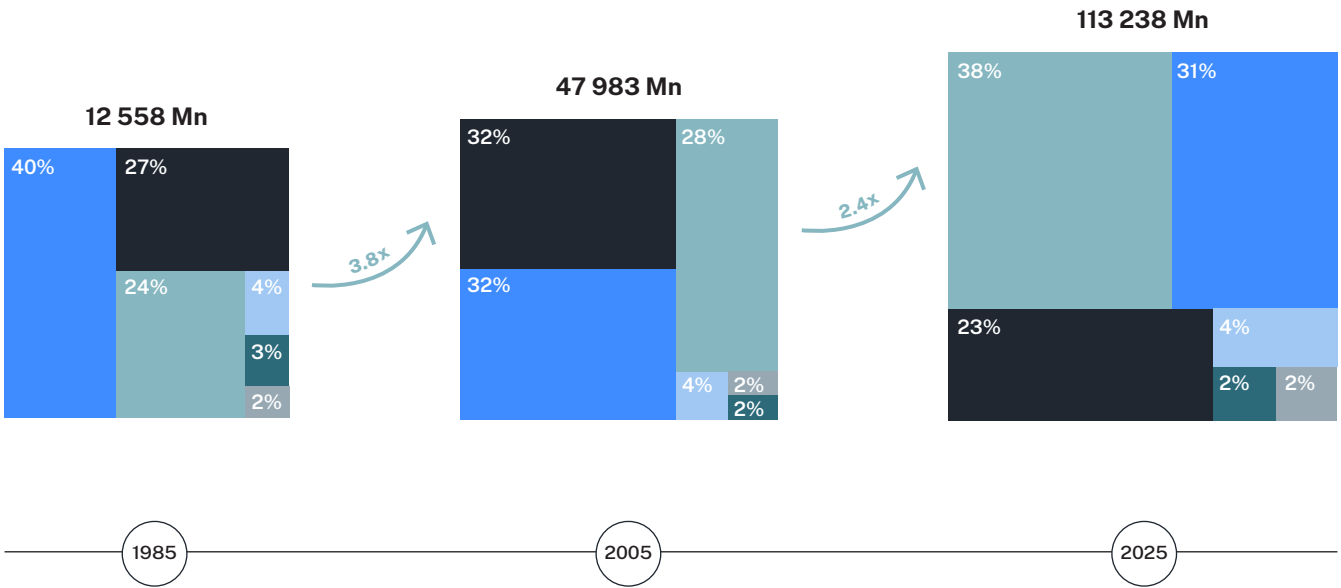
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It reflects how effectively countries convert their people, resources, and institutions into progress that benefits both individuals and societies. It shapes where businesses invest, where ideas flourish into enterprises,

and where people can build secure, fulfilling lives. Simply put, it defines who thrives and who risks being left behind.

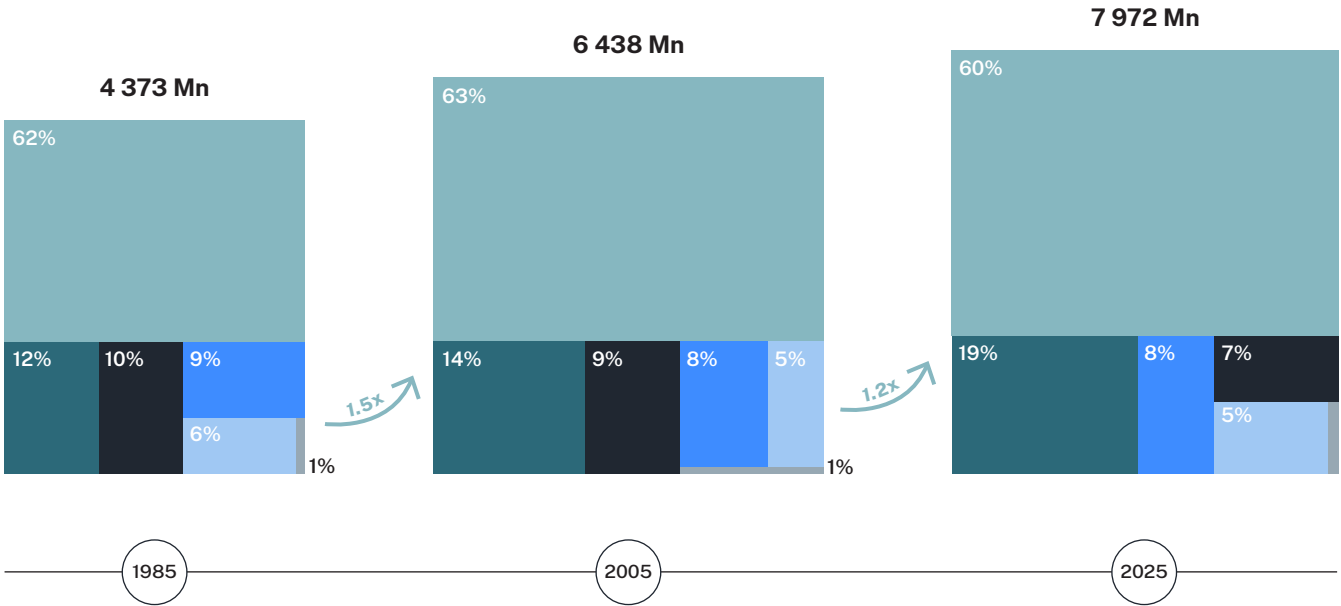
World GDP by Continents, 1985 – 2025
At Current Price (USD)

(Source: International Monetary Fund¹)



World Population by Continents, 1985 – 2025
(Million)

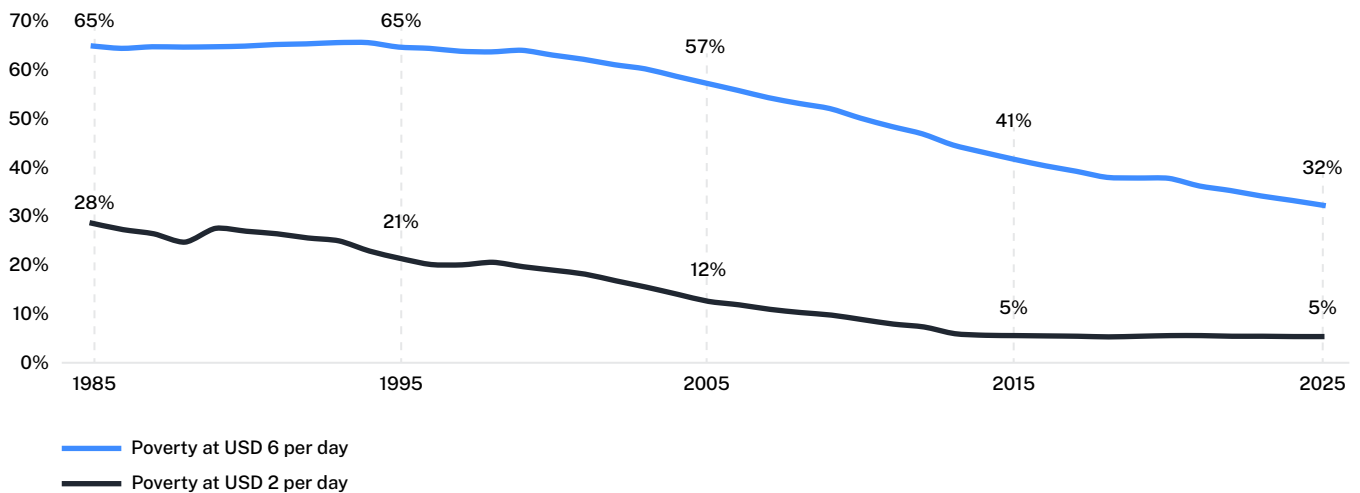
(Source: International Monetary Fund²)



Europe North & Central America Asia South America Africa Oceania

World Poverty Rate Evolution, 1985 – 2025 (% of population)

(Source: The World Bank³⁾)



Over the past four decades, the world has transformed profoundly. Global GDP has increased nearly nine times, driven by technological advancement and economic integration, while poverty rates have fallen by more than half, lifting millions into better living standards. The global population has nearly doubled, with Asia and Africa leading this growth and reshaping the world's labour and consumer landscape.

These shifts remind us that competitiveness is not fixed. Asia's share of global production has surged, challenging the historical dominance of Europe and North America and triggering a reallocation of investment flows, manufacturing capabilities, and innovation hubs.

But even within these continental trends, disparities emerge. Not all countries in Asia have capitalised on the shift equally, just as not all European economies have experienced decline. Competitiveness is fluid, varying between regions, within regions, and even within countries, depending on policy choices and institutional effectiveness.

Ultimately, competitiveness is about ensuring that progress is shared. It enables countries to build economies that are not only prosperous, but also resilient and inclusive for the future.



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Competitiveness is stronger
when the Pillars stand together.

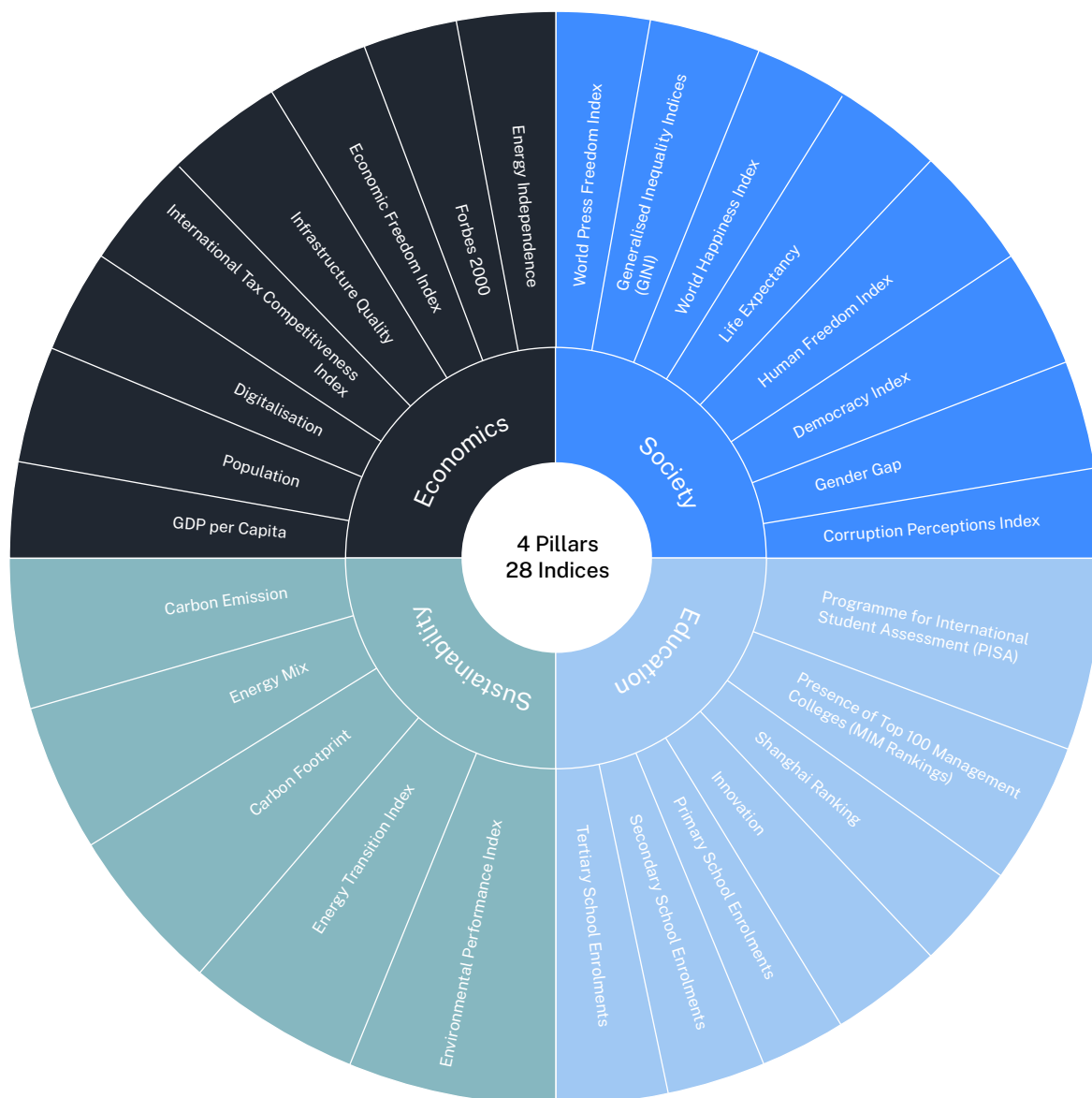
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A country with a thriving economy and a flourishing business environment, attracting global attention and development opportunities, might be seen as highly competitive. But what if its education system fails to prepare people for the future, if its society struggles with inequality, or if its environmental practices endanger long-term stability? Can it still be called truly competitive? The answer is, without a doubt, 'NO'. True competitiveness goes beyond economic strength alone. It is about balanced progress across multiple dimensions that shape how a country grows, adapts, and secures its future.

In this 7th edition of the Eight Competitiveness Report (Year 2025), we evaluate 58 countries through four essential Pillars: Economics, Society, Education and Sustainability.

The selection of these countries is based on the availability of reliable data across all four Pillars and was designed to ensure a representative mix of regions, country sizes, and development levels.

The focus is clear: no country can be defined by a single parameter. It is the combined strength across these multiple dimensions that shapes true competitiveness. In this edition of the Eight Competitiveness Report, we bring a continent-wise lens to highlight regional strengths and disparities, showcasing the performance gap within each continent. While we continue the population-based grouping, and group ranking system from previous editions, mapping each country's performance within its continental context provides better insights in relative outcomes and encourages meaningful cross-country learning.



1 Economics

A strong economy creates opportunities for job creation and improvement of living standards, attracts investments, and drives innovation. For our competitiveness analysis, economic strength reflects a nation's ability to mobilise resources, enable business growth, and provide the structural foundation upon which all other progress depends.

2 Society

A cohesive and fair society builds trust and stability. From a competitiveness perspective, it shows whether economic gains translate into social well-being, inclusiveness, and security, which are vital for long-term economic and political resilience.

3 Education

Education is at the heart of national competitiveness. In our analysis, it signifies a country's capacity to build human capital, create a skilled workforce, and foster innovation readiness, all essential for sustaining growth in a rapidly changing world.

4 Sustainability

No country can remain competitive without caring for the environment. Our analysis includes sustainability because environmental stewardship underpins future security, global credibility, and the capacity to thrive without exhausting natural or social capital.



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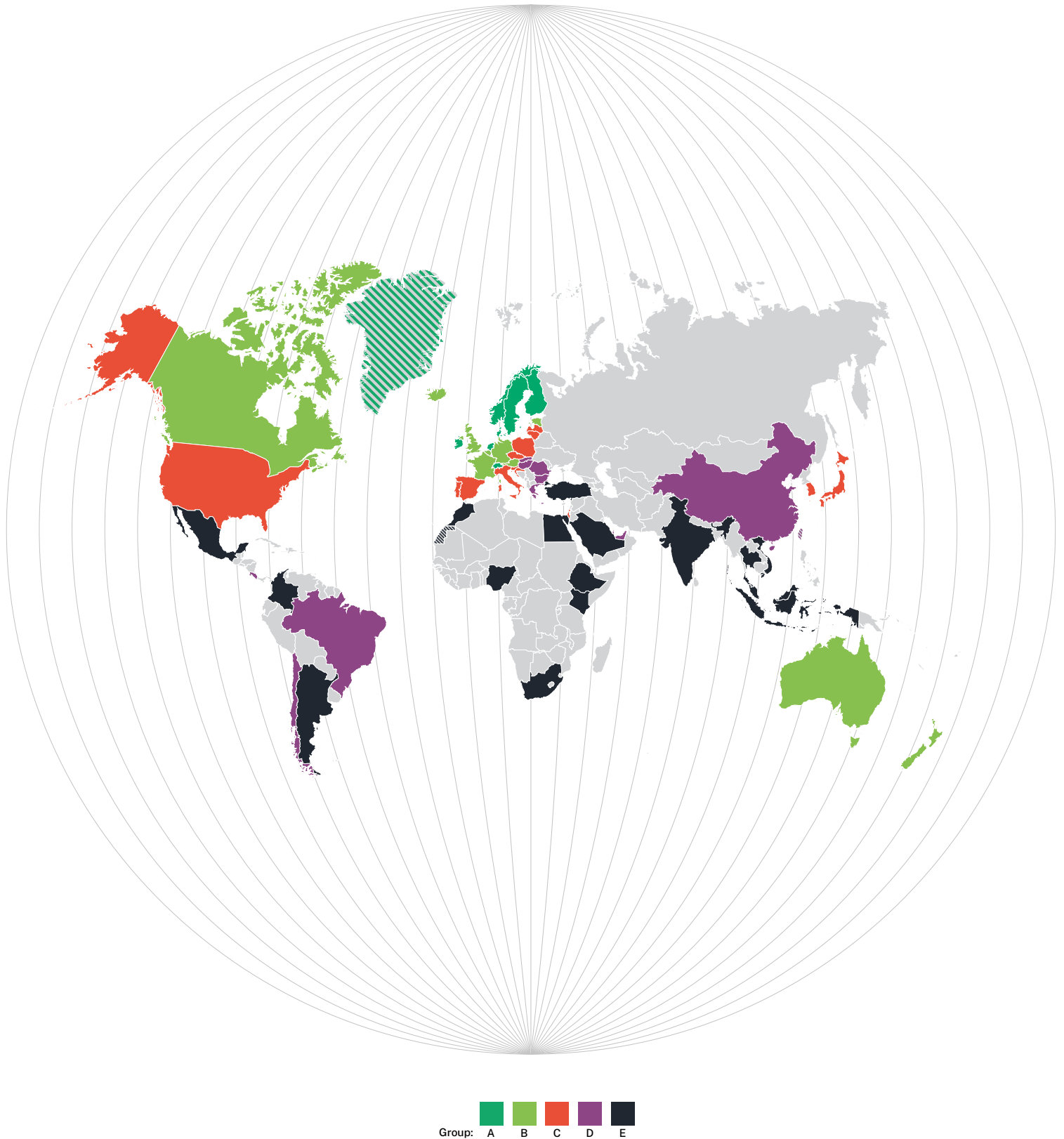
Our aim is to provide insights that
inspire purposeful action toward
building balanced, resilient,
and sustainable futures.

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Competitiveness at a glance: full country rankings

Pillar Rankings							
Group title	Country	Rank	Score	Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
“A” Most Competitive	Switzerland	1	0.784	1	8	1	4
	Sweden	2	0.738	6	5	5	1
	Norway	3	0.730	2	3	21	2
	Finland	4	0.720	13	1	2	5
	Denmark	5	0.700	11	4	14	3
	Ireland	6	0.672	7	9	3	23
	Netherlands	7	0.665	12	7	8	13
“B” Highly Competitive	Australia	8	0.645	4	13	13	32
	Iceland	9	0.630	23	2	31	6
	Germany	10	0.630	17	11	18	8
	United Kingdom	11	0.629	24	15	7	10
	Canada	12	0.623	9	14	17	27
	Austria	13	0.618	19	18	20	7
	Belgium	14	0.617	22	12	4	26
	Luxembourg	15	0.617	3	10	35	18
	New Zealand	16	0.616	18	6	26	14
	France	17	0.615	30	17	6	9
“C” Competitive	Estonia	18	0.611	15	16	19	16
	United States	19	0.599	5	26	15	38
	Portugal	20	0.585	36	21	9	11
	Slovenia	21	0.580	33	19	12	21
	Japan	22	0.573	21	28	10	29
	South Korea	23	0.561	16	30	11	40
	Spain	24	0.560	34	20	24	15
	Lithuania	25	0.556	26	22	28	24
	Israel	26	0.544	14	33	25	39
	Czechia	27	0.539	31	23	22	36
	Latvia	28	0.529	27	24	33	20
	Poland	29	0.512	39	31	23	33
	Italy	30	0.511	41	32	27	25
“D” Relatively Competitive	Croatia	31	0.507	37	34	29	19
	Slovak Republic	32	0.485	38	29	36	35
	Greece	33	0.483	40	36	34	22
	Chile	34	0.470	46	27	38	28
	Hungary	35	0.467	42	37	30	31
	UAE	36	0.462	10	40	37	50
	Costa Rica	37	0.456	48	25	51	17
	China	38	0.443	25	54	16	43
	Romania	39	0.433	43	35	48	30
	Bulgaria	40	0.419	47	39	40	37
	Brazil	41	0.417	51	44	44	12
“E” Less Competitive	Qatar	42	0.403	8	43	46	57
	Malaysia	43	0.397	28	41	50	48
	Thailand	44	0.396	35	42	47	47
	Argentina	45	0.378	54	38	43	45
	Mexico	46	0.376	50	45	42	41
	Colombia	47	0.375	53	47	49	34
	Turkey	48	0.369	44	55	32	46
	Saudi Arabia	49	0.363	20	51	41	54
	Indonesia	50	0.349	32	46	54	51
	South Africa	51	0.340	49	48	45	56
	Vietnam	52	0.339	45	50	39	53
	India	53	0.316	29	52	52	55
	Morocco	54	0.275	57	53	53	49
	Kenya	55	0.274	52	49	57	42
	Egypt	56	0.247	55	58	55	52
	Ethiopia	57	0.217	58	56	58	44
	Nigeria	58	0.192	56	57	56	58

The Competitiveness Report 2025 covers
72% of World Population
84% of World GDP



Understanding the dimensions and drivers of competitiveness

In this section, we deep dive into the critical parameters of our study.

We begin by **grouping countries by continent** to highlight regional strengths and disparities. We then analyse their overall competitiveness by creating score-based groups (criteria added in the below table).

Recognising that countries with very large or very small populations cannot be directly compared, we also examine them based on **population size**.

Finally, we explore the contribution of key Indices through **correlation analysis** to understand what truly drives competitiveness.

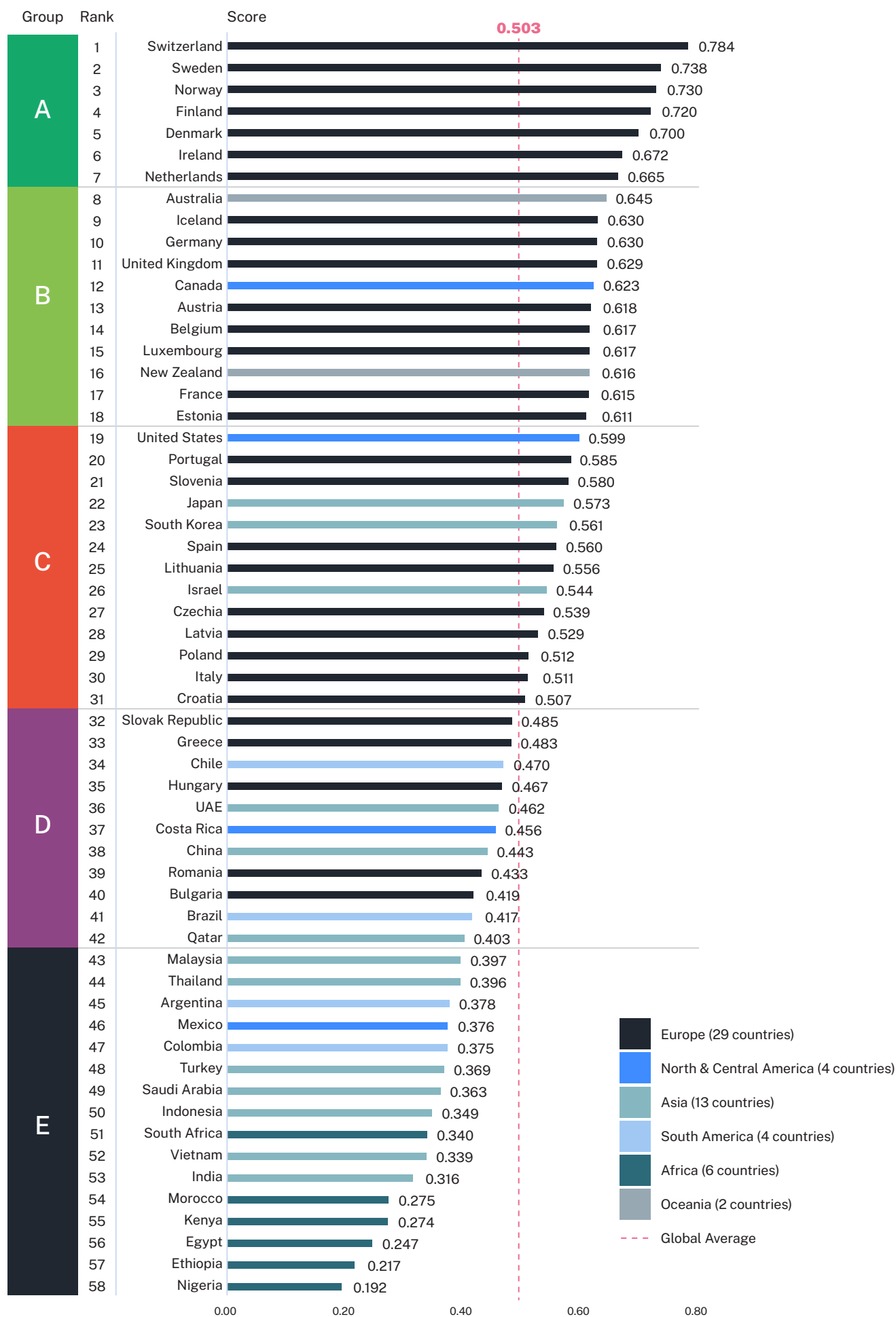
This ensures our assessment goes beyond individual countries, offering a comprehensive view that captures continental trends, group dynamics, population influences, and the key Indices shaping global competitiveness.

Beyond Rankings: Grouping Countries for Deeper Insights

Group	Score Range	Label	Interpretation
A	0.66 and above	Most Competitive	Global frontrunners with robust competitiveness across Pillars.
B	from 0.60 to 0.66	Highly Competitive	Strong performers with some areas for enhancement.
C	from 0.50 to 0.60	Competitive	Solid mid-tier countries with mixed Pillar performance.
D	from 0.40 to 0.50	Relatively Competitive	Developing competitive capabilities, often with structural gaps.
E	below 0.40	Less Competitive	Countries facing significant competitiveness challenges.

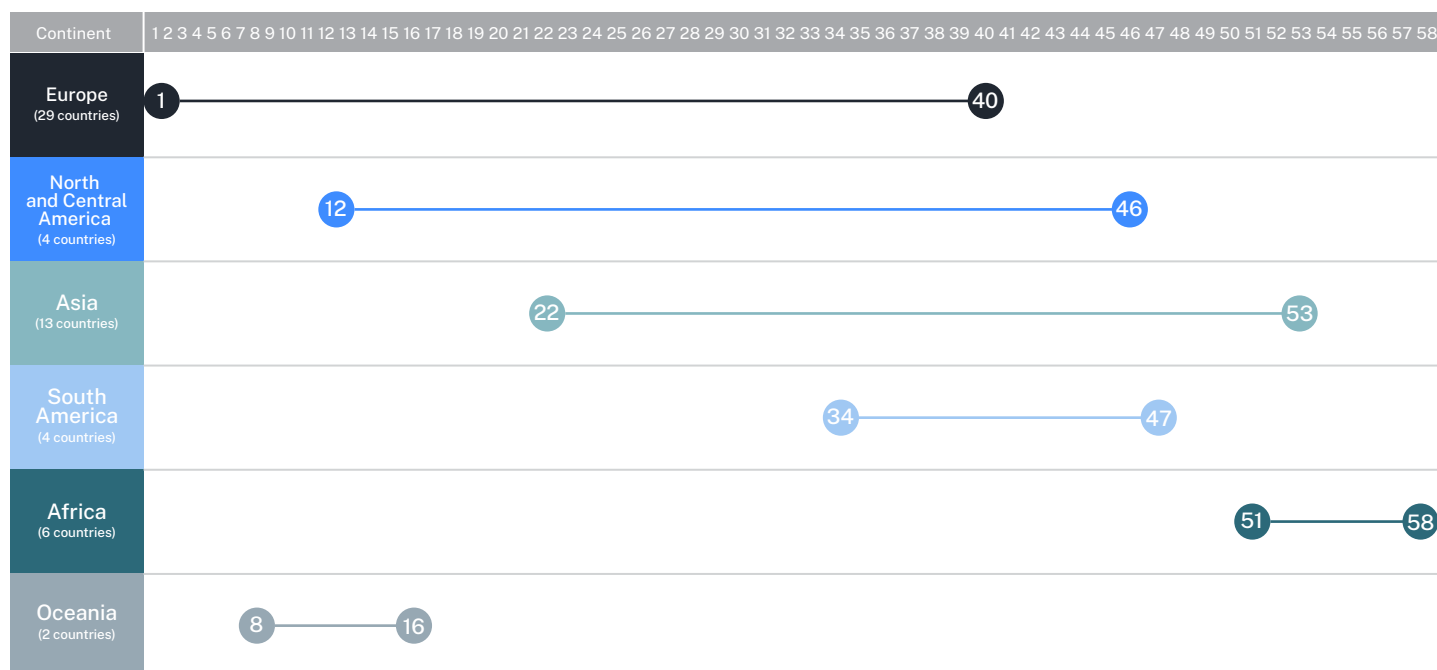
a. The ranking system with continents and groups

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Disparity of Competitiveness across Continents

Highest and lowest rank within the continent



These patterns reiterate that continental averages alone do not tell the full story.

While some continents house globally strong economies, internal inequality remains stark, affecting their overall resilience and growth prospects.

Hence, in the next section, we deep dive into each group to examine their overall positions and Pillar-specific rankings.

The above table shows the number of countries within each continent and the spread between their highest and lowest-ranked countries. While Europe appears dominant in terms of the number of competitive nations, a closer look reveals substantial internal disparities. For instance, Europe ranges from Switzerland at Rank 1 to Bulgaria at Rank 40, reflecting a wide performance gap. Asia presents a similar picture, with top performers like Japan (Rank 22) and South Korea (Rank 23), contrasted by lower-ranked countries such as Vietnam (Rank 52) and India (Rank 53) within the sample of 58 countries included in our analysis.

Group A: Most Competitive Countries						
Score: 0.66 and above Countries: 7						

Rank	Country	Score	Pillar Rankings			
			Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
1	Switzerland	0.784	1	8	1	4
2	Sweden	0.738	6	5	5	1
3	Norway	0.730	2	3	21	2
4	Finland	0.720	13	1	2	5
5	Denmark	0.700	11	4	14	3
6	Ireland	0.672	7	9	3	23
7	Netherlands	0.665	12	7	8	13

The Elite All-Rounders:

Group A countries set themselves apart not merely through economic might, but through a thoughtful balance that defines their leadership. All seven are small-population European nations that have leveraged their size into agility. They outperform the global average across all the Pillars, with Society scores nearly 40% above the global average, and Education and Sustainability also significantly stronger.

In a world obsessed with GDP rankings, Group A quietly demonstrates that true competitiveness is about being consistent.

It is built not on a single Pillar but on the powerful alignment of all Pillars working together.

Group B: Highly Competitive Countries						
Score: from 0.60 to 0.66 Countries: 11						

Rank	Country	Score	Pillar Rankings			
			Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
8	Australia	0.645	4	13	13	32
9	Iceland	0.630	23	2	31	6
10	Germany	0.630	17	11	18	8
11	United Kingdom	0.629	24	15	7	10
12	Canada	0.623	9	14	17	27
13	Austria	0.618	19	18	20	7
14	Belgium	0.617	22	12	4	26
15	Luxembourg	0.617	3	10	35	18
16	New Zealand	0.616	18	6	26	14
17	France	0.615	30	17	6	9
18	Estonia	0.611	15	16	19	16

The Quiet Powerhouses:

Group B blends strong mid-tier European nations with Oceania’s agile economies and North & Central America’s balanced performer, Canada. While they maintain respectable rankings across Pillars, there is greater variability; some excel in society and education, while others excel in sustainability or economics. France, however, stands out as a relative laggard in economy within this group, pulling down its otherwise balanced profile.

This highlights how Group B’s competitiveness is not about perfection but about binding diverse strengths together to remain relevant, respected, and resilient in moving upwards.

Group C: Competitive Countries						
Score: from 0.50 to 0.60 Countries: 13						
Rank	Country	Score	Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
19	United States	0.599	5	26	15	38
20	Portugal	0.585	36	21	9	11
21	Slovenia	0.580	33	19	12	21
22	Japan	0.573	21	28	10	29
23	South Korea	0.561	16	30	11	40
24	Spain	0.560	34	20	24	15
25	Lithuania	0.556	26	22	28	24
26	Israel	0.544	14	33	25	39
27	Czechia	0.539	31	23	22	36
28	Latvia	0.529	27	24	33	20
29	Poland	0.512	39	31	23	33
30	Italy	0.511	41	32	27	25
31	Croatia	0.507	37	34	29	19

The Global Middle Ground:

Group C showcases mid-tier performers across Europe, North America, and Asia, with strengths in social and educational systems but room to grow in economic scale and sustainability.

The United States, while standing out as an economic and innovation giant, is positioned in Group C due to societal inequalities and weaker sustainability performance. Japan remains a technological leader but is constrained by demographic challenges and sustainability gaps. Spain and Italy, the Mediterranean powerhouses, have strong sustainability foundations but continue to face challenges in unemployment, bureaucratic hurdles, and other economic issues.

In Central Europe, Poland, and Czechia are emerging players with solid economic growth but need to enhance innovation and sustainability to climb higher in competitiveness.

This reinforces the idea that being "competitive" is a complex, multi dimensional challenge and countries must strengthen weaker Pillars to move closer to global frontrunner status.

Group D: Relatively Competitive Countries

Score: from 0.40 to 0.50 | Countries: 11

Rank	Country	Score	Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
32	Slovak Republic	0.485	38	29	36	35
33	Greece	0.483	40	36	34	22
34	Chile	0.470	46	27	38	28
35	Hungary	0.467	42	37	30	31
36	UAE	0.462	10	40	37	50
37	Costa Rica	0.456	48	25	51	17
38	China	0.443	25	54	16	43
39	Romania	0.433	43	35	48	30
40	Bulgaria	0.419	47	39	40	37
41	Brazil	0.417	51	44	44	12
42	Qatar	0.403	8	43	46	57

The Emerging Challengers:

Group D brings together emerging Europe, parts of Asia, and Latin America. While these countries show pockets of societal and sustainability strengths, their overall competitiveness is held back by weaker economic, institutional, or educational outcomes.

China and Brazil, despite their economic scale and global influence, rank here due to gaps in societal well-being and sustainability. Greece reflects a recovery story, showing gradual improvement post-crisis but remains held back by economic fragilities. Costa Rica stands out with its strong sustainability model and social progress, offering an inspiring development approach despite limited economic scale.

This group reflects nations in structural transition with clear potential, but the challenge remains in converting isolated strengths into balanced, durable competitiveness across all four Pillars.

Group E: Less Competitive Countries

Score: Below 0.40 | Countries: 16

Rank	Country	Score	Economics	Society	Education	Sustainability
43	Malaysia	0.397	28	41	50	48
44	Thailand	0.396	35	42	47	47
45	Argentina	0.378	54	38	43	45
46	Mexico	0.376	50	45	42	41
47	Colombia	0.375	53	47	49	34
48	Turkey	0.369	44	55	32	46
49	Saudi Arabia	0.363	20	51	41	54
50	Indonesia	0.349	32	46	54	51
51	South Africa	0.340	49	48	45	56
52	Vietnam	0.339	45	50	39	53
53	India	0.316	29	52	52	55
54	Morocco	0.275	57	53	53	49
55	Kenya	0.274	52	49	57	42
56	Egypt	0.247	55	58	55	52
57	Ethiopia	0.217	58	56	58	44
58	Nigeria	0.192	56	57	56	58

The Transformation Frontier:

Group E mainly includes countries from Africa, and Asia, facing deep structural challenges across all Pillars. Their scores lag notably behind global averages, reflecting struggles in education, economy, and societal systems.

India and Vietnam show strong digital and service-sector momentum but need deeper investments in education and infrastructure. Saudi Arabia and Turkey benefit from strategic geography and reform agendas but face institutional and sustainability gaps. Mexico and Argentina continue to wrestle with inequality and governance issues that constrain long-term competitiveness.

Yet, these nations represent the world’s transformation frontier where even incremental reforms can unlock significant leaps in competitiveness, growth, and human development.

Population size is a key lens in this Competitiveness Report, distinguishing countries above and below 25 million people. This is not just a statistical split – it reveals how size shapes a nation’s ability to convert resources into balanced competitiveness. Smaller countries dominate the top ranks, leveraging their agility to build strong governance, education, societies, and sustainability. In contrast, most larger countries cluster lower despite their economic scale, struggling to convert size into balanced strength. Yet exceptions like Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, or Canada prove that with robust institutions, innovation, and investment in people, size can become an advantage.

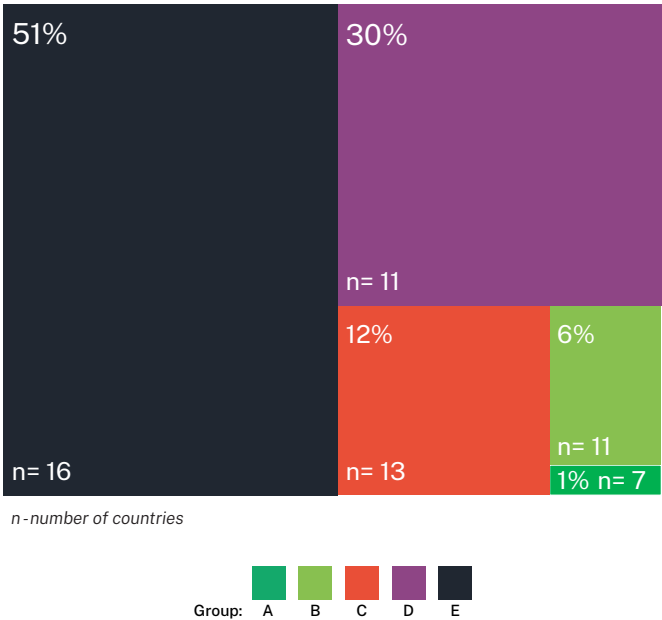
The key takeaway? Competitiveness isn’t just about size. It’s about translating your unique strengths into inclusive growth and resilience. Grouping countries this way enables fairer, more meaningful comparisons and helps policymakers benchmark realistically for truly sustainable progress.

While Group A leads the world in competitiveness, it represents just 1% of the global population, showing how a tiny share of humanity drives global best practices. Groups B and C together account for 18%, reflecting mid-performing nations with meaningful but limited global population coverage.

The striking reality is that Groups D and E make up over 80% of the world’s population, yet remain at the bottom of competitiveness rankings. This highlights a profound challenge: the majority of humanity lives in countries that are still striving for balanced, durable competitiveness.

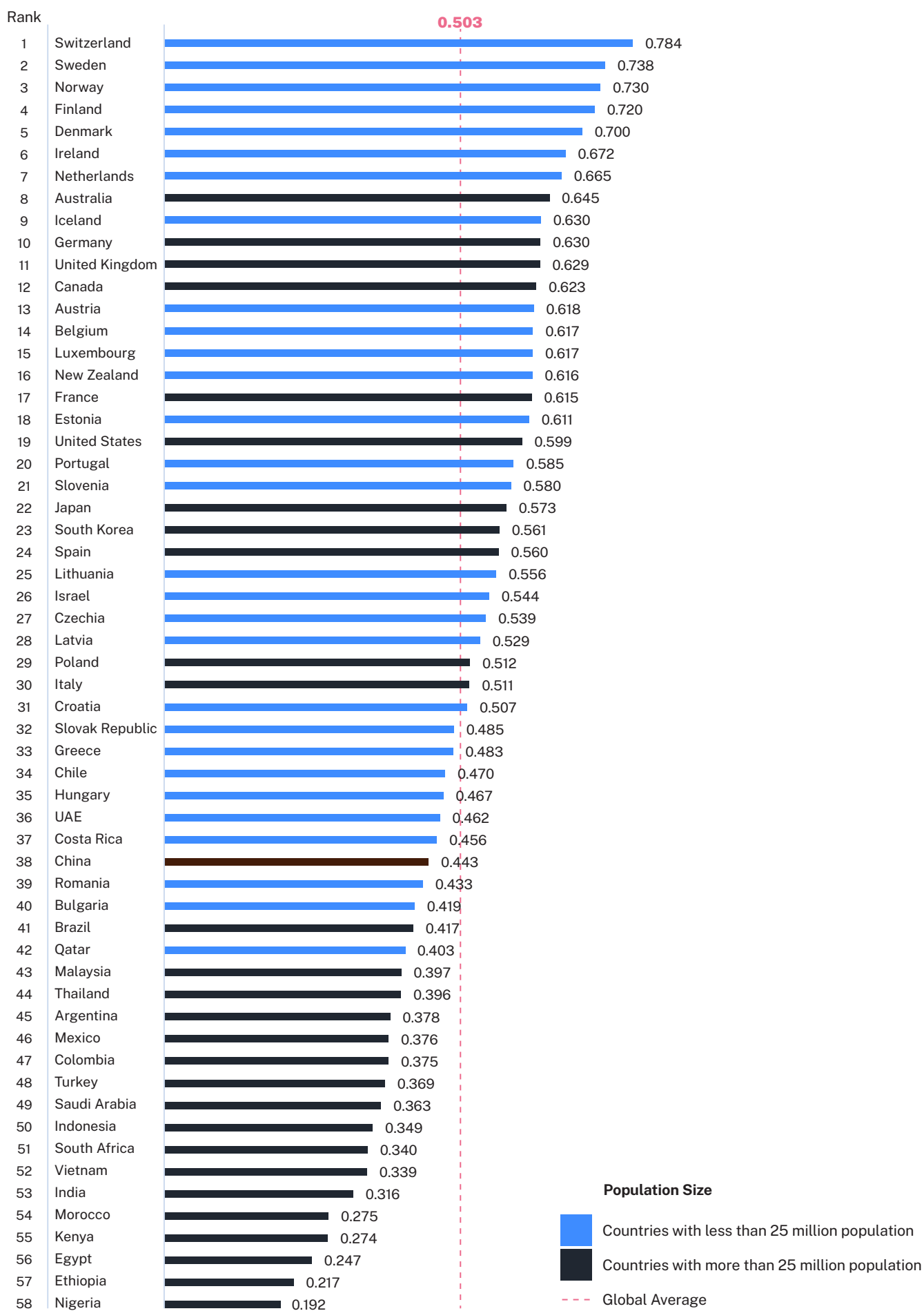
It is a reminder that global progress depends not just on the leaders but on lifting the billions in Groups D and E, where even small improvements can transform lives at scale.

Share in the Eight Competitiveness Report
total population within each Group



b. The ranking system with population size

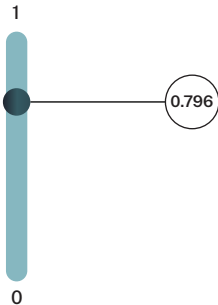
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Correlation of the four Pillars with overall global competitiveness score

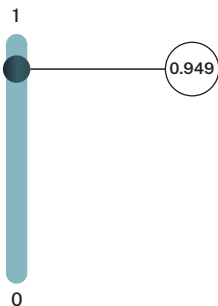
Economics

Economic strength remains essential, but the correlation suggests it is not sufficient by itself. GDP per capita, infrastructure, and digitalisation drive momentum, but without strong social and institutional systems, economic power alone struggles to deliver lasting competitiveness.



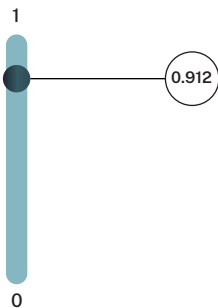
Society

Social factors show the strongest correlation with overall competitiveness. High levels of trust, freedom, and well-being create stability that underpins both economic performance and civic resilience. Societal integrity is not just an outcome of development; it is a powerful engine that propels it.



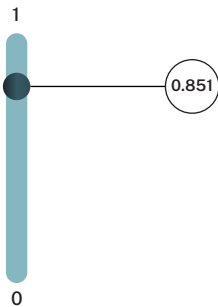
Education

Education also shows a strong correlation with competitiveness, highlighting its role as a true multiplier. Quality education fuels innovation, adaptability, and upward mobility. Countries investing in strong education systems sustain long-term growth and social progress.



Sustainability

Sustainability is no longer a peripheral concern. Clean energy, low carbon footprints, and environmental resilience are now integral to a nation’s competitiveness, attracting responsible investment and ensuring future security in a climate-constrained world.

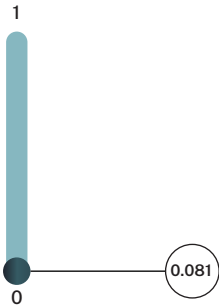


Correlation coefficients are shown in absolute terms.

Other Key Correlations

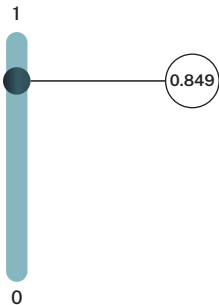
Competitiveness vs
Tax Competitiveness Index

High taxes do not necessarily reduce competitiveness. **What matters more is how tax revenue is used.** Countries that channel taxes into quality infrastructure, social security, and strong governance remain highly competitive, proving that effective public spending outweighs the mere promise of low taxes.



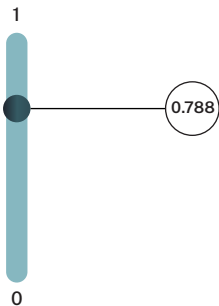
Competitiveness vs
Environment Performance Index

High environmental performance is a clear competitive advantage. It reflects smart governance, strong social trust, and resilience. **Countries with strong EPI scores prove that sustainability is not a cost; it is a strategic investment that builds lasting economic strength and quality of life.**



Competitiveness vs
World Press Freedom Index

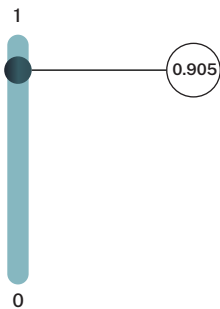
Press freedom shows a strong correlation with competitiveness. **A free and independent media strengthens accountability, builds public trust, and fosters an informed society;** all of which create the stability and resilience that underpin true national competitiveness.



Other Key Correlations

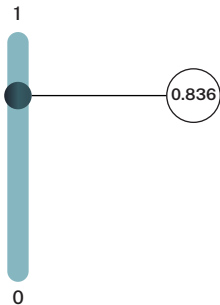
Competitiveness vs
Corruption Perceptions Index

Low corruption has one of the strongest correlations with overall competitiveness. Clean governance builds trust, ensures efficient public spending, and attracts investment. **Countries perceived as less corrupt consistently outperform peers**, proving that reducing corruption is not just beneficial but decisive for economic strength, social stability, and long-term national performance crucial in building investor trust.



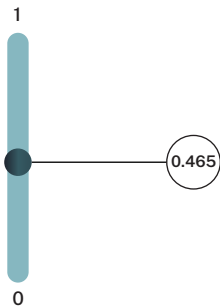
Competitiveness vs Globalisation Index

Globalisation index shows a strong relationship with overall competitiveness. **Countries that are more globally integrated tend to perform better overall.** This highlights the importance of openness to trade, investment, and international collaboration in making a nation more competitive.



Sustainability vs Economics

Sustainability strongly reinforces a country’s overall competitiveness, highlighting its importance as a reputational and societal asset. However, its direct impact on economic output alone is moderate, showing that **while green leadership builds societal and global strength, it does not instantly boost GDP or economy. Sustainability is an investment in long-term security, not just short-term growth.**





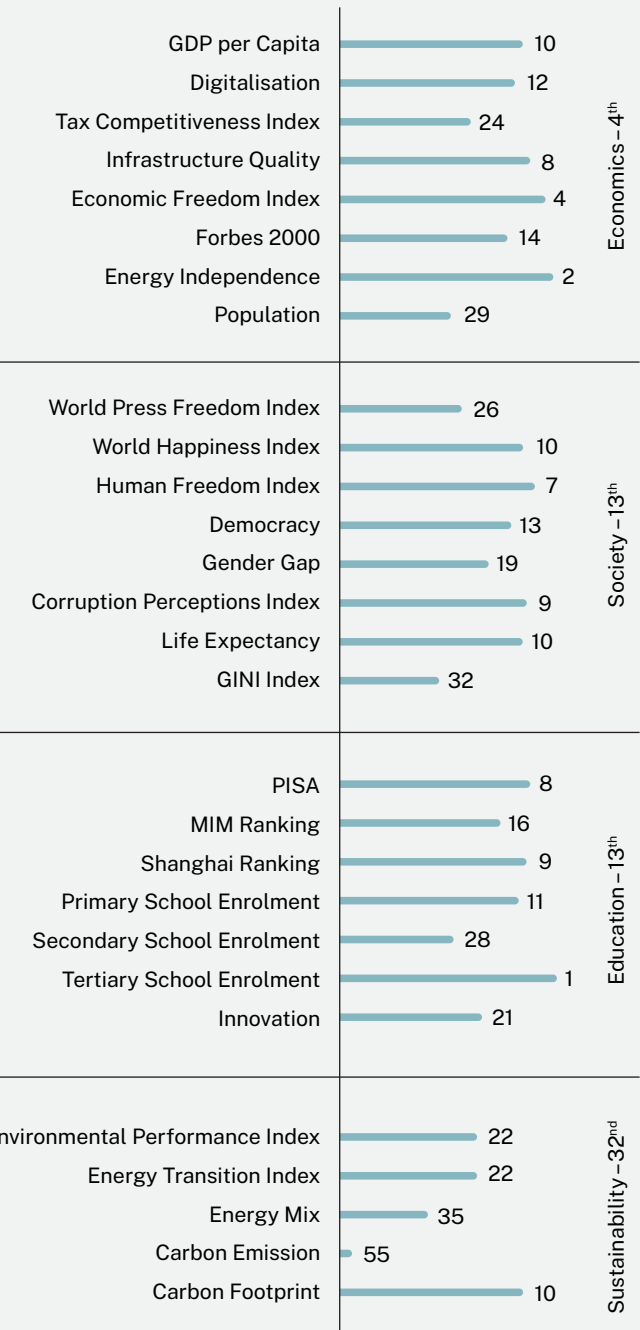
Competitiveness is not
just about size. It's
about translating your
unique strengths into
inclusive growth
and resilience.

Australia

Rank 8 | Group B
GDP USD 1,724 Bn | Population 26.5 Mn

Australia demonstrates strong economic foundations and a respected education system, though its sustainability performance lags, signaling an area for future strategic focus.

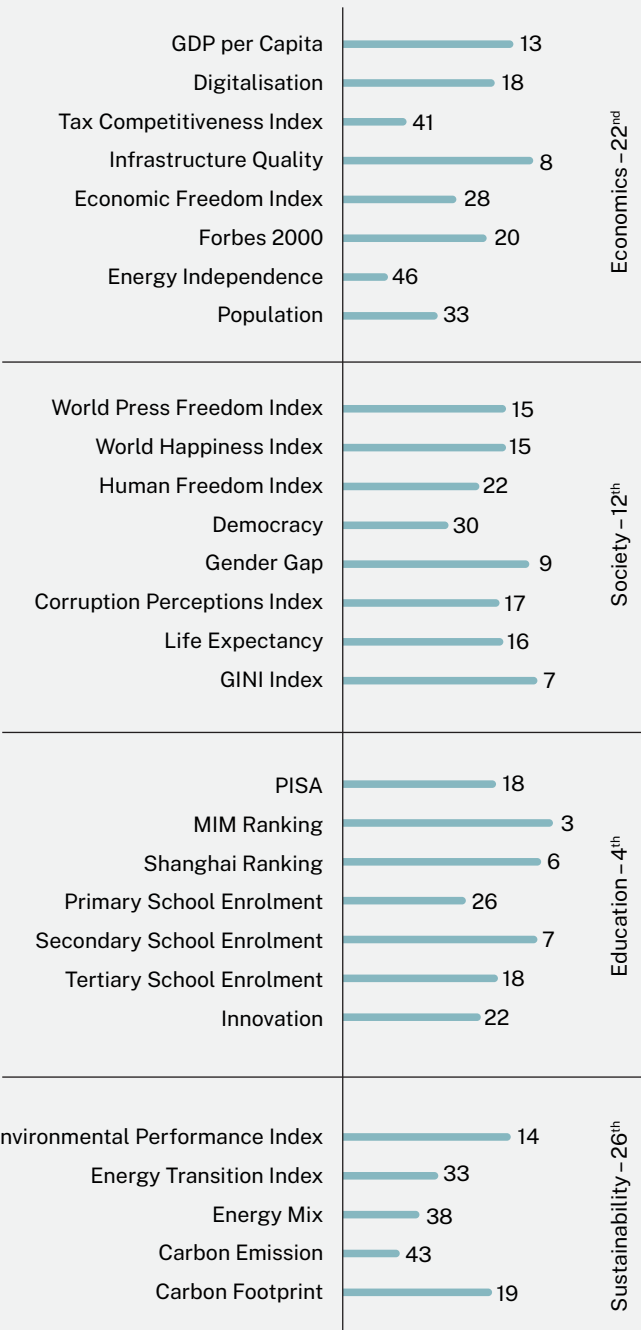
Ranking per indicator



Belgium

Rank 14 | Group B
GDP USD 632 Bn | POPULATION 11.7 Mn

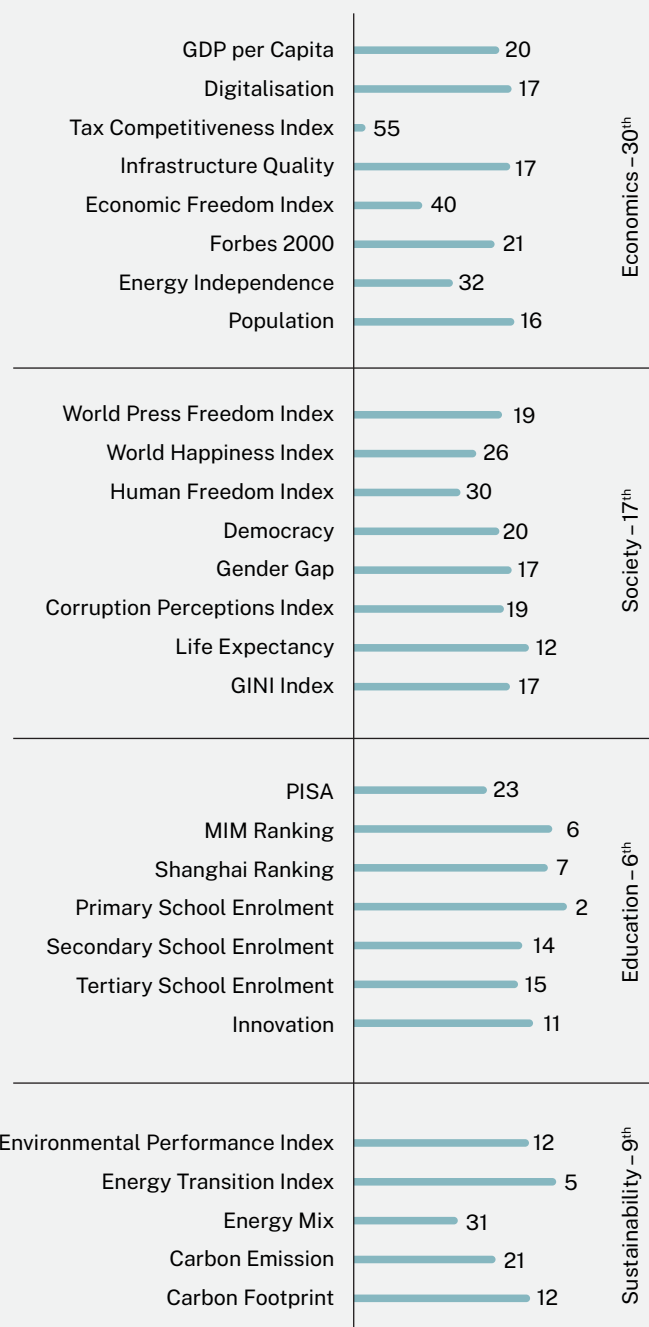
Belgium balances the complexity of its governance structures with knowledge-based strengths, quality infrastructure, and a strategic position within the European Union, enhancing its competitive standing.



France

Rank 17 | Group B
GDP USD 3,031 Bn | POPULATION 66.4 Mn

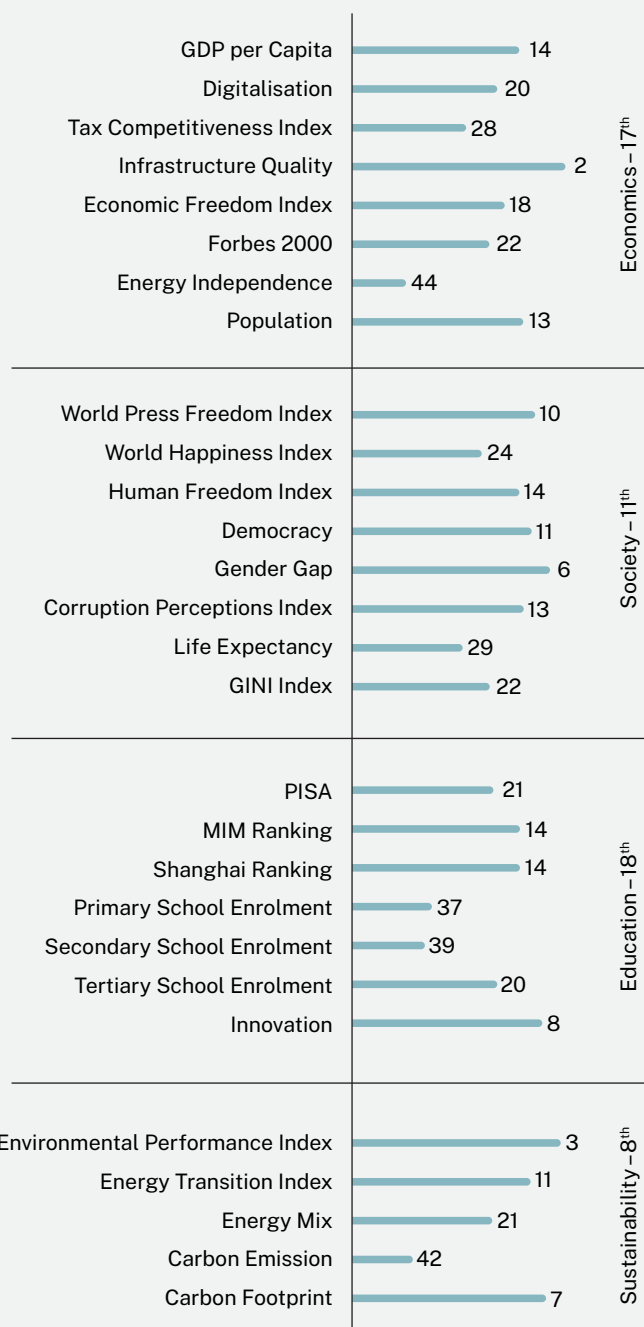
France combines solid social protections and advanced infrastructure with quality of its business and engineer schools, though deeper economic reforms could unlock its full competitiveness potential.



Germany

Rank 10 | Group B
GDP USD 4,456 Bn | POPULATION 84.5 Mn

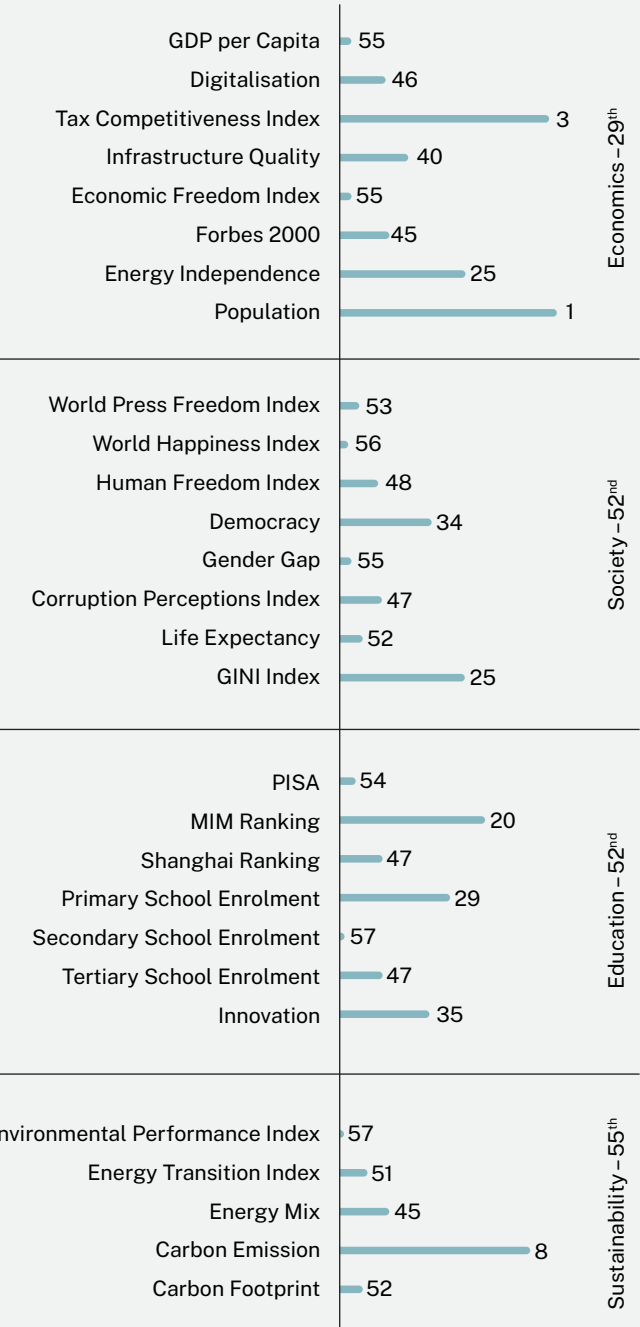
Germany remains a competitive industrial powerhouse with robust institutions and human capital, though it faces challenges in adapting swiftly to emerging technological and sustainability transitions.



India

Rank 53 | Group E
GDP USD 3,550 Bn | POPULATION 1,438 Bn

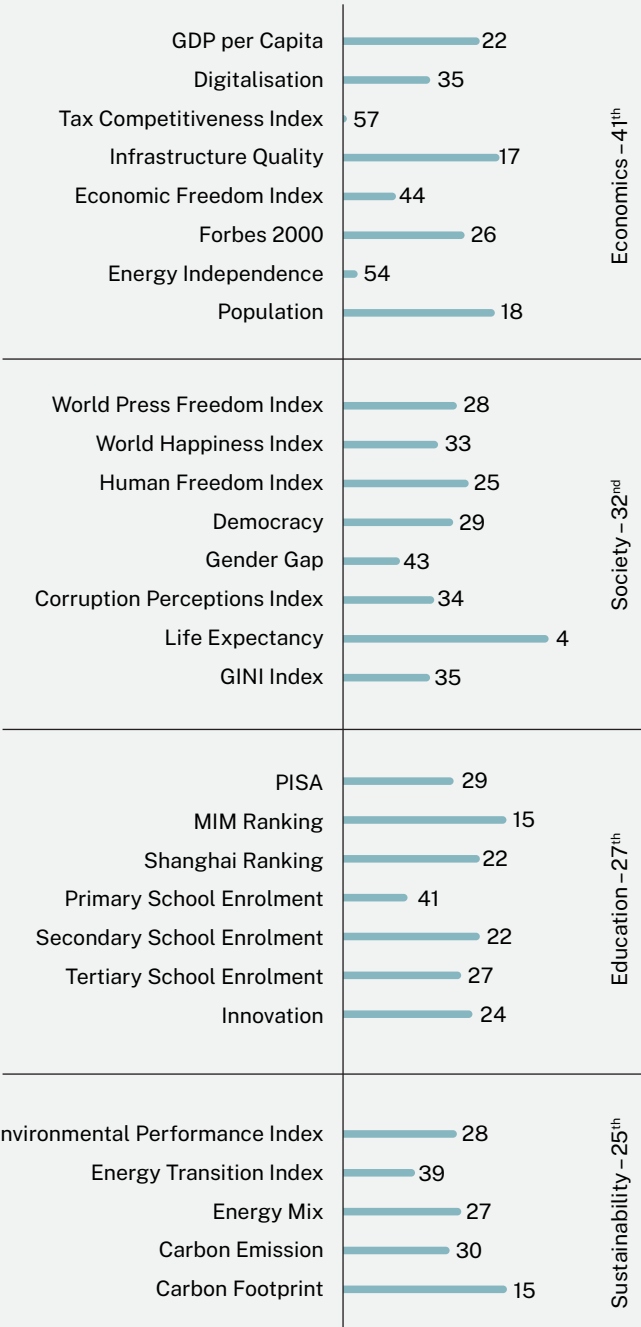
India's competitiveness reflects its scale as a rapidly growing economy with strong market potential, yet structural, institutional, and human development constraints hinder holistic advancement.



Italy

Rank 30 | Group C
GDP USD 2,255 Bn | POPULATION 59.5 Mn

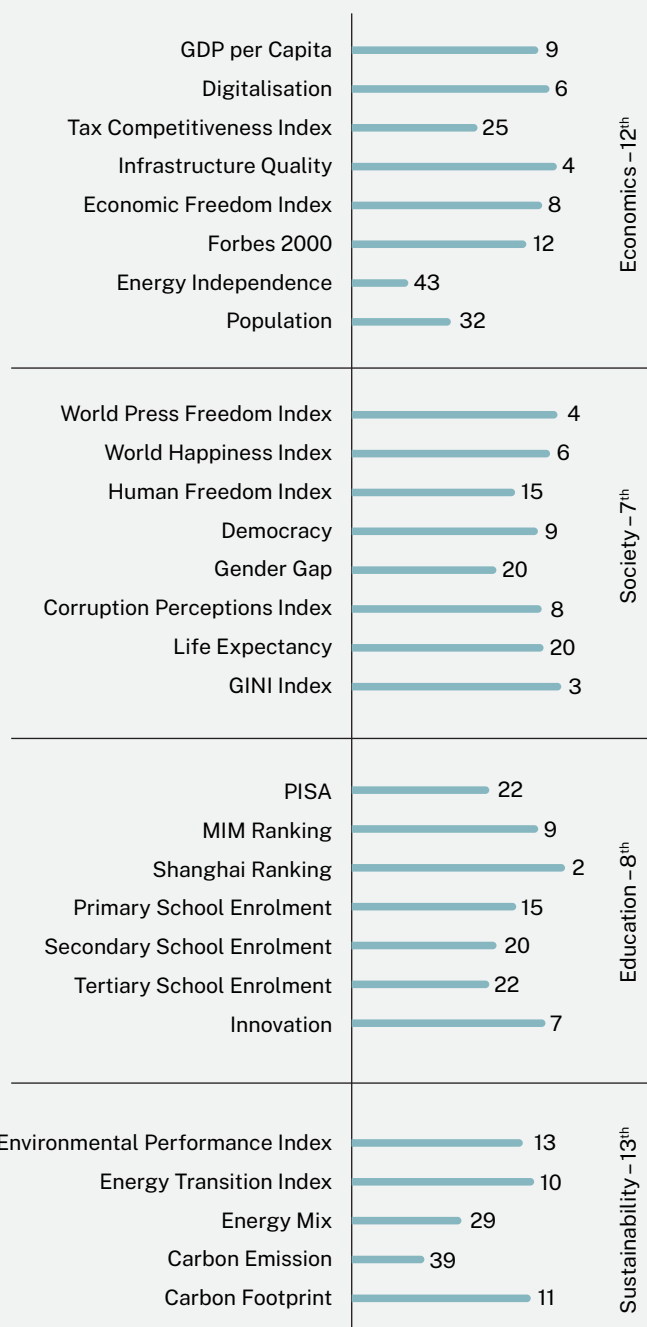
Italy draws competitiveness from its cultural assets, economic scale, and strategic location, yet structural inefficiencies and regional divides limit its ability to maximise these advantages.



Netherlands

Rank 7 | Group A
GDP USD 1,118 Bn | POPULATION 18.1 Mn

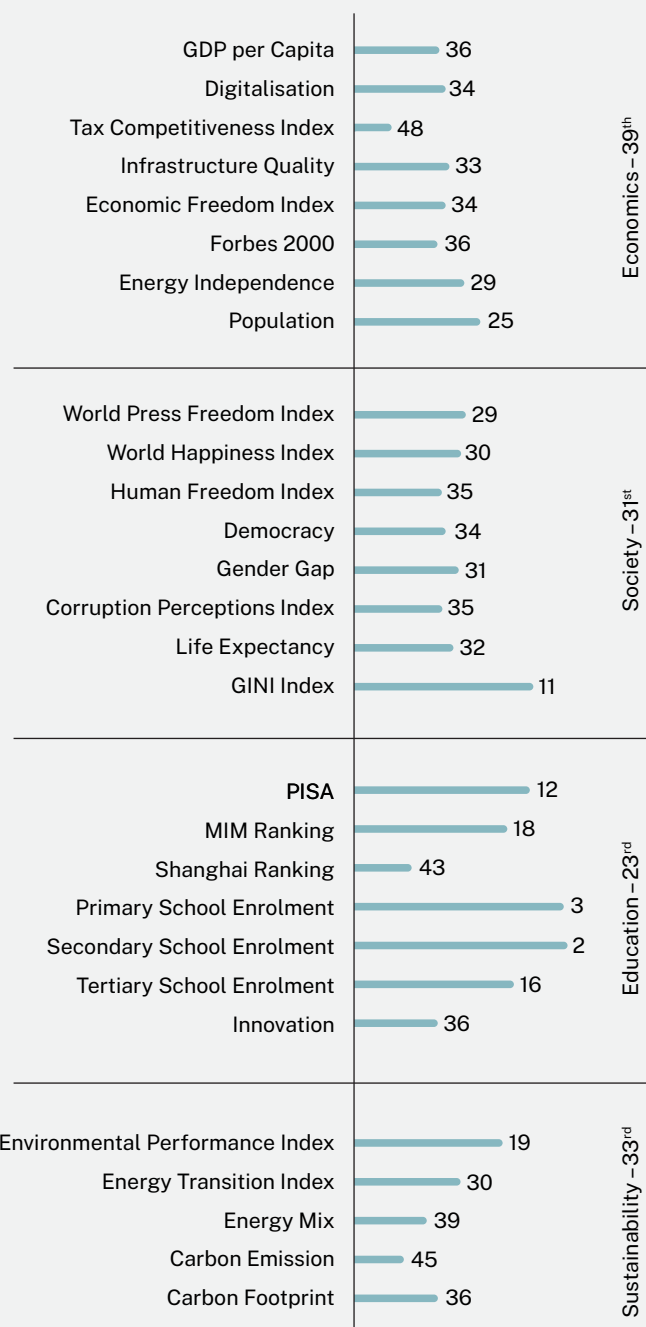
The Netherlands stands out for combining economic openness and human capital with solid societal and educational systems, though there remains scope to further elevate sustainability to match its other strengths.



Poland

Rank 29 | Group C
GDP USD 811 Bn | POPULATION 38.8 Mn

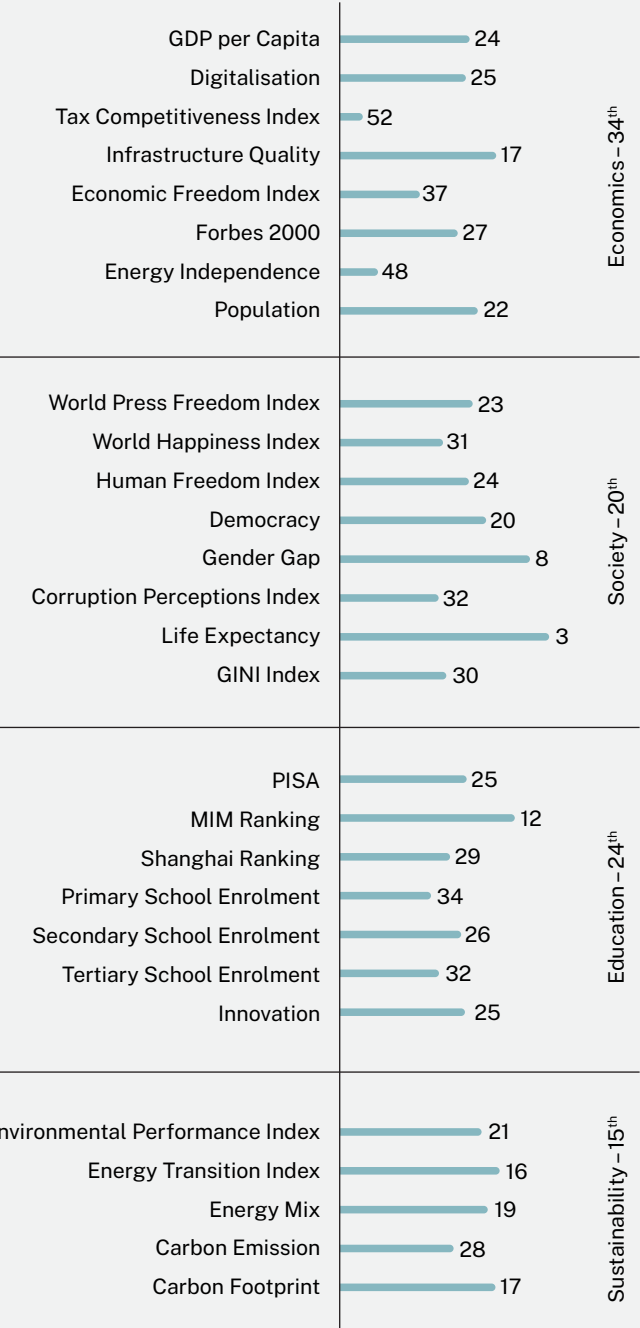
Poland exemplifies rapid development as a post-communist economy, with strengths in manufacturing and economic growth, while innovation and sustainability remain areas for improvement.



Spain

Rank 24 | Group C
GDP USD 1,581 Bn | POPULATION 47.9 Mn

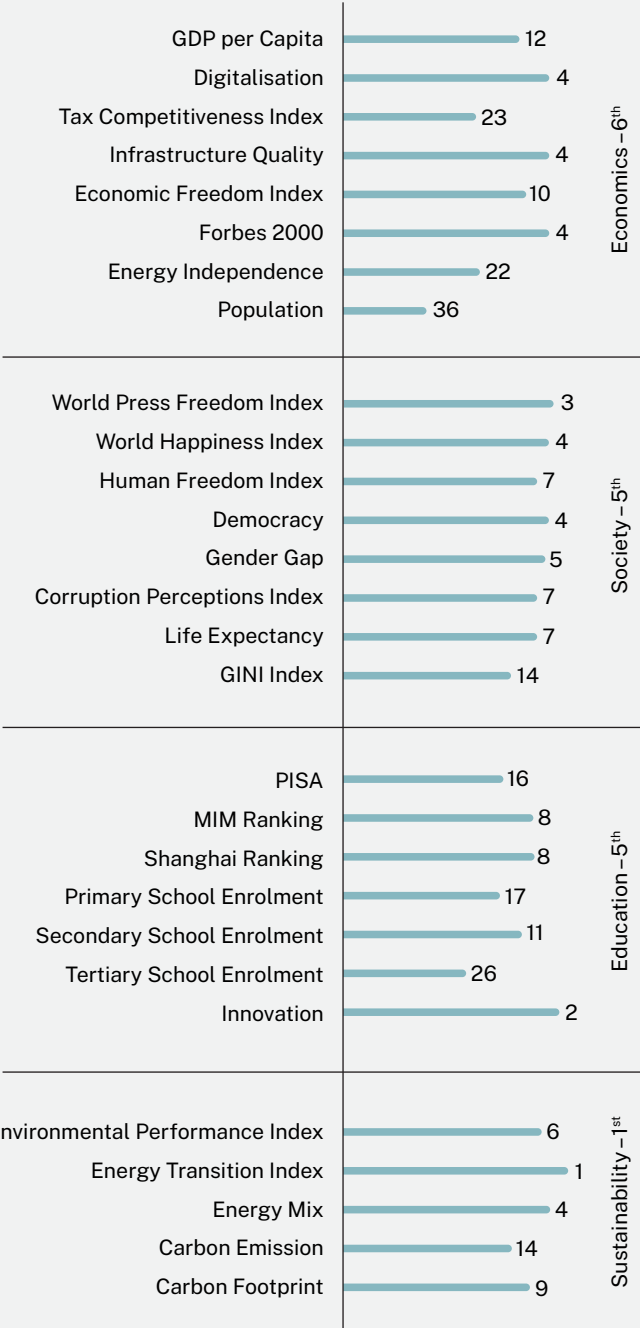
Spain benefits from European Union market integration and social cohesion, but despite strong GDP growth, structural economic challenges and lower innovation performance constrain its competitiveness gains.



Sweden

Rank 2 | Group A
GDP USD 593 Bn | POPULATION 10.6 Mn

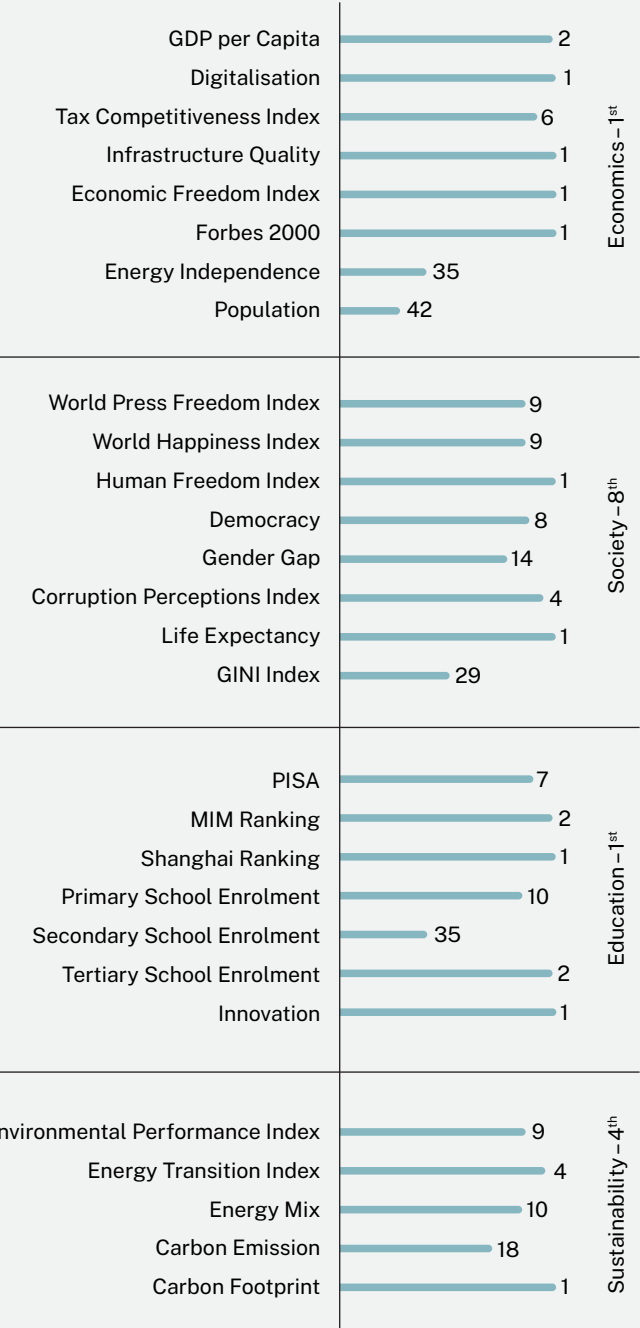
Sweden's holistic competitiveness reflects strong performance across economics, society, education, and sustainability leadership, showcasing how balanced investment in people, planet, and productivity delivers enduring national strength.



Switzerland

Rank 1 | Group A
GDP USD 885 Bn | POPULATION 8.9 Mn

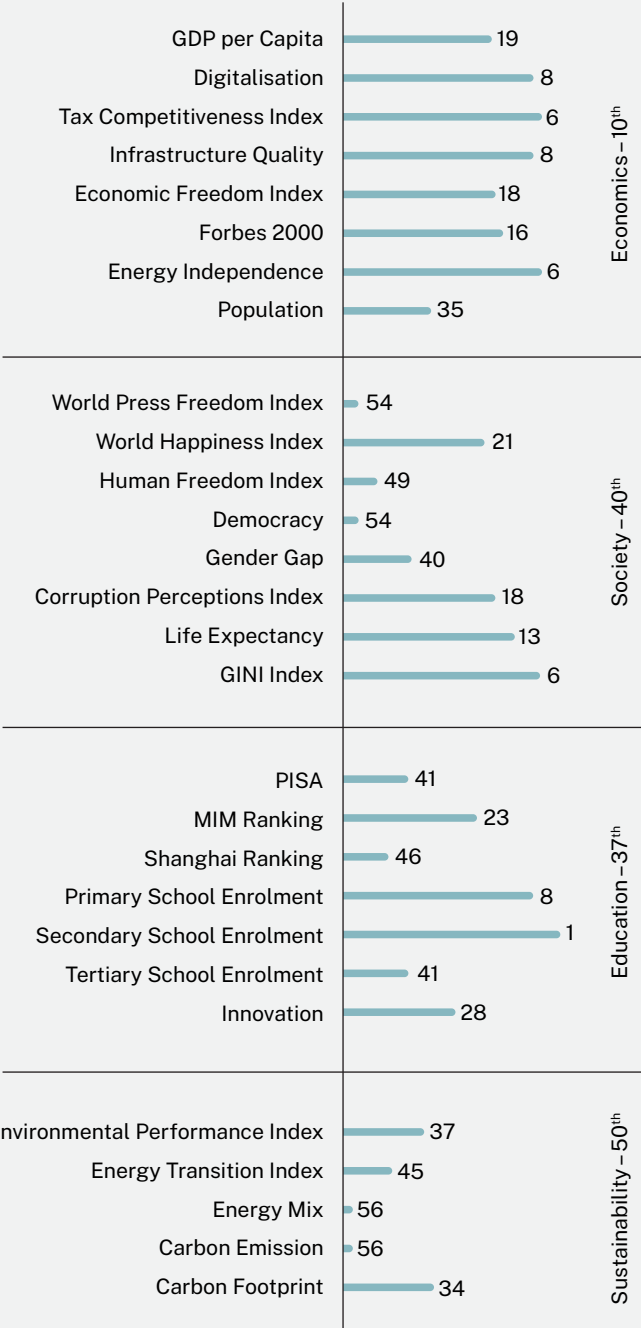
Switzerland ranks at the top globally, driven by its strong education system and societal foundations, while also maintaining impressive economic resilience and high sustainability performance.



UAE

Rank 36 | Group D
GDP USD 504 Bn | POPULATION 10.6 Mn

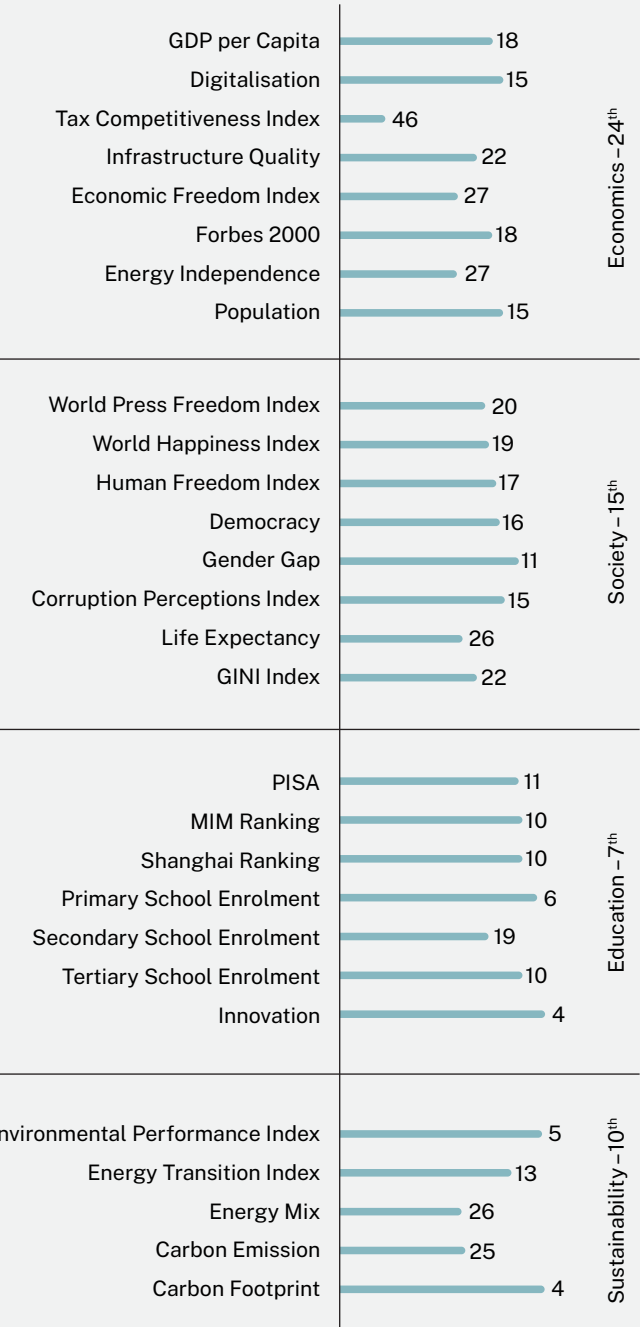
The UAE showcases impressive economic ambition and state-led transformation, achieving high economic rankings, though society, education and sustainability remain areas to strengthen for balanced competitiveness.



United Kingdom

Rank 11 | Group B
GDP USD 3,340 Bn | POPULATION 68.7 Mn

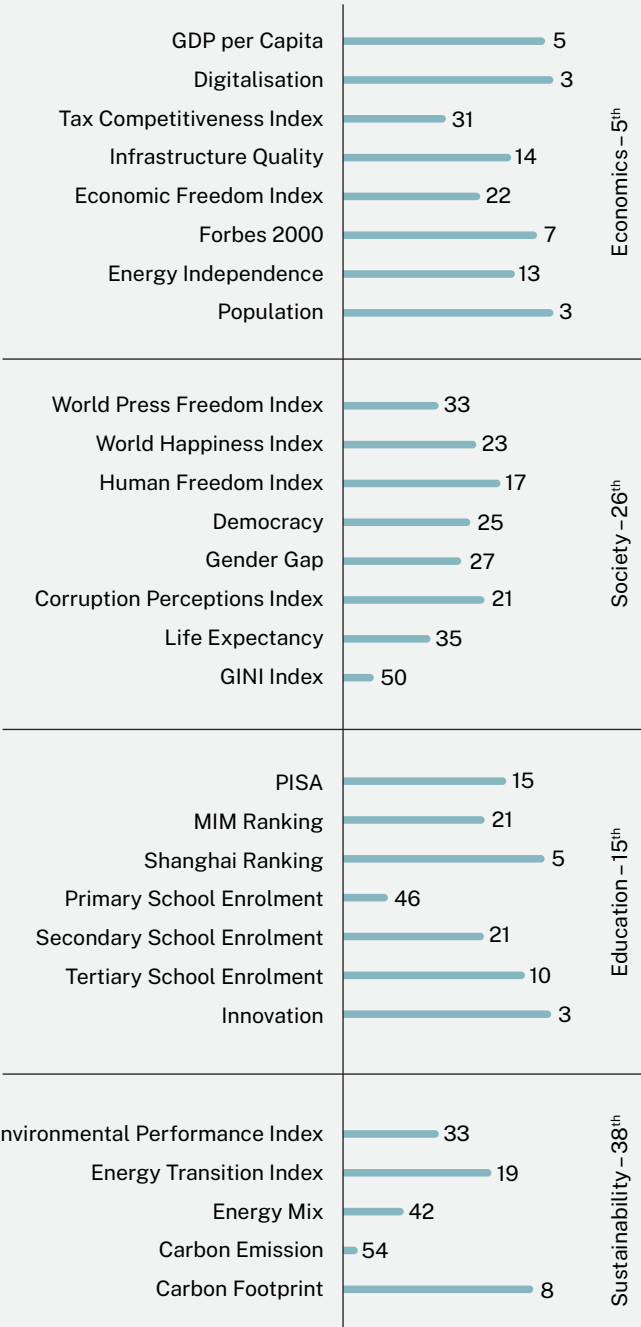
The UK's competitiveness is anchored in its institutional resilience, global influence, and strong education system, even as it navigates structural and geopolitical shifts post-Brexit.



Unites States of America

Rank 19 | Group C
GDP USD 27,361 Bn | POPULATION 343.5 Mn

The US remains a global innovation and economic leader, but its overall competitiveness is tempered by societal disparities and weaker sustainability performance compared to other advanced economies.



This report is made up of data, information, and rankings published by different national or international institutions and organisations. Eight International has obtained written permission to use its data in this report. All this information is publicly available, and the sources are covered in Appendix III of the report. Eight Competitiveness Lab shall not be responsible for methodological choices made by the publishers nor for possible omissions or errors in their datasets.

The country rankings may be partial, as indicators used to rank nations are necessarily synthetic and cannot be exhaustively objective on every topic covered.

Eight Competitiveness Lab has selected information based on its objectivity as well as the reputation, public trust, and prominence of its sources. However, readers should be aware that the choice of certain parameters and the qualitative nature of some ratings can introduce ideological biases, making some rankings inherently subjective.

To deliver the most relevant analysis for the selected 58 countries, we crafted the following methodology, which includes the following six key steps.

Data Selection and Extraction:

We reviewed and evaluated multiple Indices covering a wide range of dimensions relevant to each Pillar. The final selection of Indices was based on four key criteria:

- Relevance to the Pillar's conceptual objective.
- Multi-dimensional coverage, capturing economic, social, educational, and sustainability nuances.
- Non-collinearity between Indices to avoid duplication or overlap of insights.
- Understandability, ensuring each index is widely accepted and methodologically robust, such as standard Indices or global reference Indices.

We extracted the most recent publicly available data for each index from numerous reputable international institutions, including the World Bank, OECD, UNDP, World Economic Forum, and IMF, among others. While the latest year of publication may vary across Indices, this approach ensures the most accurate and up-to-date snapshot of global competitiveness.

Data Treatment:

- **Missing Data:** Missing values were attributed using the closest comparable country in the sample, selected on a case-by-case basis considering geographic proximity, cultural similarity, and economic structure to ensure the best peer match for each index.
- **Data Standardisation:** All indices were standardised from 0 to 1 for comparability. Higher values indicate better performance, except for three indices - Carbon Footprint, Carbon Emission, Gini Index, where lower values reflect better outcomes.

Scoring Computation:

- **Pillar Scoring:** Each country's Pillar score is the geometric mean of its index scores, ranging from 0 (worst) to 1 (best). In the education Pillar, the PISA index is weighted 3 times more due to its critical role in assessing educational strength.
- **Global Score:** The global score was computed as the geometric mean of the four equally weighted Pillar scores. This reflects our core principle that competitiveness balances Economics, Society, Education, and Sustainability.
- The geometric mean is considered as it penalises unbalanced performance across Pillars, ensuring that strong outcomes in one area do not overshadow weaknesses in others.

Clustering:

To enable meaningful and fair comparisons, countries were grouped based on three dimensions:

- **By Continent:** Countries were bucketed according to their geographical continent to analyse regional trends, disparities, and strengths in competitiveness.
- **By Competitiveness Group:** Based on their overall scores, countries were classified into five competitiveness groups ranging from 'Most Competitive' to 'Less Competitive'. This highlights relative positioning and allows for nuanced insights beyond absolute rankings.
- **By Population Size:** To account for differences in scale, we segmented countries into two groups: above and below 25 million people, i.e. the sample median. This ensures balanced comparison as directly comparing Australia and Luxembourg without adjusting for scale would be misleading.

Robustness Testing:

To ensure the reliability of our results, we conducted a robustness test to check for overreliance on any single index. We removed any index one by one and recalculated the rankings. On average, it changed a country's global rank by no more than one place, except for PISA in the Education Pillar, which had a slightly higher impact due to its greater weight. Overall, the robustness test confirms the rankings are highly robust.

Correlation Coefficient Computation:

To deepen the insights from our analysis, we calculated correlation coefficients to understand how strongly each Index or Pillar relates to overall competitiveness. A coefficient of zero indicates no link, while values closer to one reflect a stronger relationship. In general, coefficients below 0.35 suggest a weak correlation, between 0.36 and 0.67 indicate a moderate correlation, and values between 0.68 and 1 imply a strong correlation. This helps identify key competitiveness drivers and guide policy priorities for intervention.

By following this structured methodology, the Competitiveness Report delivers a comprehensive and consistent analysis of 28 Indices across four Pillars for 58 countries, enabling meaningful comparisons and deeper evaluations of global competitiveness.

Economics

Index	Explanation
GDP per capita 196 countries	GDP per capita measures a country's economic output per person. It serves as an indicator of the average economic prosperity and general standard of living of the country. (Source: International Monetary Fund¹)
Population 196 countries	The total number of people residing in a country or region at a given time, including all ages and both sexes. (Source: International Monetary Fund²)
Digitalisation 67 countries	IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking measures the capacity and readiness of economies to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation in business, government, and wider society. (Source: IMD World Digital Competitiveness Center³)
International Tax Competitiveness Index 38 countries	The International Tax Competitiveness Index (ITCI) seeks to measure the extent to which a country's tax system adheres to two important aspects of tax policy: competitiveness and neutrality. (Source: International Tax Competitiveness Index 2024, The Tax Foundation⁴)
Infrastructure Quality 196 countries	Infrastructure Quality denotes the ability of countries to identify the challenges and opportunities they face in their performance on trade logistics and transport related infrastructure. (Scoring 1=low to 5=high). (Source: The World Bank, WDI⁵)
Economic Freedom Index 184 countries	The Index of Economic Freedom tracks the advancement of economic freedom, prosperity, and opportunity in 184 countries. It evaluates 12 freedoms related to property rights, financial freedom, government size, and other economic factors. (Source: Index of Economic Freedom, The Heritage Foundation⁶)
Forbes 2000 61 countries	Forbes is one of the most respected sources for financial information and global rankings. Their Global 2000 list includes the world's largest public companies at 2024, providing invaluable insights into global markets and leading economic players. (Source: Kaggle - Forbes The Global 2000 Largest Companies 2024⁷)
Energy Independence 156 countries	Energy independence, as derived from World Energy Balances data for 156 countries, refers to a country's ability to meet its energy needs (including electricity, oil, gas or coal) without relying on imported sources. (Source: International Energy Agency⁸)

Country	Rank	Score
Switzerland	1	0.637
Norway	2	0.566
Luxembourg	3	0.532
Australia	4	0.510
United States	5	0.491
Sweden	6	0.490
Ireland	7	0.474
Qatar	8	0.463
Canada	9	0.460
UAE	10	0.457
Denmark	11	0.455
Netherlands	12	0.444
Finland	13	0.426
Israel	14	0.402
Estonia	15	0.394
South Korea	16	0.384
Germany	17	0.382
New Zealand	18	0.376
Austria	19	0.364
Saudi Arabia	20	0.356
Japan	21	0.350
Belgium	22	0.350
Iceland	23	0.350
United Kingdom	24	0.347
China	25	0.328
Lithuania	26	0.328
Latvia	27	0.313
Malaysia	28	0.308
India	29	0.307
France	30	0.300
Czechia	31	0.299
Indonesia	32	0.298
Slovenia	33	0.287
Spain	34	0.286
Thailand	35	0.282
Portugal	36	0.263
Croatia	37	0.258
Slovak Republic	38	0.256
Poland	39	0.250
Greece	40	0.238
Italy	41	0.236
Hungary	42	0.233
Romania	43	0.231
Turkey	44	0.229
Vietnam	45	0.228
Chile	46	0.227
Bulgaria	47	0.218
Costa Rica	48	0.217
South Africa	49	0.209
Mexico	50	0.195
Brazil	51	0.187
Kenya	52	0.184
Colombia	53	0.165
Argentina	54	0.164
Egypt	55	0.153
Nigeria	56	0.140
Morocco	57	0.114
Ethiopia	58	0.067

Society

Index	Explanation
World Press Freedom Index 180 countries	The World Press Freedom Index compares the level of freedom enjoyed by journalists and media in 180 countries and territories. It assesses the ability of journalists to select, produce, and disseminate news in the public interest independently and free from external interference or threats to their safety. (Source: RSF Reporters Without Borders⁽¹⁰⁾)
Generalised Inequality Indices (GINI) 176 countries	The GINI Index measures the extent of income or consumption inequality within an economy. It provides an understanding of the distribution of wealth or resources among individuals or households and identifies deviations from perfect equality. For our report the lower the GINI scores, more competitive is the country. (Source: The World Bank, WDI⁽¹¹⁾)
World Happiness Index 143 countries	The World Happiness Report reviews the state of happiness in the world today and shows how the science of happiness explains personal and national variations in happiness. (Source: World Happiness Report 2025. University of Oxford: Wellbeing Research Centre⁽¹²⁾)
Life Expectancy 196 countries	The average number of years a newborn infant would live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth were to stay the same throughout its life. (Source: The World Bank, WDI⁽¹³⁾)
Human Freedom Index 82 countries	The Human Freedom Index assesses the state of human freedom globally by considering personal, civil, and economic freedom. It measures the absence of coercive constraints and recognises the dignity of individuals. This annual index uses 82 distinct indicators of personal and economic freedom. (Source: CATO Institute⁽¹⁴⁾)
Democracy Index 165 countries	The Democracy Index presents an overview of the state of democracy in 165 independent states and two territories. It evaluates the electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation, and political culture. (Source: Economist Intelligence Unit⁽¹⁵⁾)
Gender Gap 146 countries	Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks gender parity across economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. It evaluates progress in achieving gender equality across 146 countries. (Source: World Economic Forum⁽¹⁶⁾)
Corruption Perceptions Index 180 countries	The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks 180 countries and territories around the world by their perceived levels of public sector corruption. (Source: World Economic Forum 14. Corruption Perceptions Index 2024, Transparency International⁽¹⁷⁾)

Country	Rank	Score
Finland	1	0.926
Iceland	2	0.920
Norway	3	0.917
Denmark	4	0.893
Sweden	5	0.874
New Zealand	6	0.865
Netherlands	7	0.847
Switzerland	8	0.839
Ireland	9	0.838
Luxembourg	10	0.812
Germany	11	0.803
Belgium	12	0.791
Australia	13	0.790
Canada	14	0.789
United Kingdom	15	0.771
Estonia	16	0.769
France	17	0.753
Austria	18	0.743
Slovenia	19	0.739
Spain	20	0.725
Portugal	21	0.719
Lithuania	22	0.717
Czechia	23	0.701
Latvia	24	0.687
Costa Rica	25	0.685
United States	26	0.672
Chile	27	0.671
Japan	28	0.665
Slovak Republic	29	0.662
South Korea	30	0.658
Poland	31	0.650
Italy	32	0.650
Israel	33	0.641
Croatia	34	0.608
Romania	35	0.598
Greece	36	0.595
Hungary	37	0.549
Argentina	38	0.536
Bulgaria	39	0.530
UAE	40	0.514
Malaysia	41	0.503
Thailand	42	0.498
Qatar	43	0.486
Brazil	44	0.466
Mexico	45	0.457
Indonesia	46	0.447
Colombia	47	0.446
South Africa	48	0.428
Kenya	49	0.353
Vietnam	50	0.350
Saudi Arabia	51	0.339
India	52	0.337
Morocco	53	0.337
China	54	0.334
Turkey	55	0.296
Ethiopia	56	0.286
Nigeria	57	0.253
Egypt	58	0.197

Education

Index	Explanation
Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 87 countries	PISA is the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment. It assesses the abilities of 15-year-old students in reading, mathematics, and science to meet real-life challenges. PISA provides a measure of a country's educational outcomes and the effectiveness of its education system in preparing students for future success. (Source: PISA, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), PISA¹⁸)
Presence of Top 100 Management Colleges (MIM Rankings) 29 countries	The Financial Times rankings list of best 100 management programs available worldwide. Presence of these top-ranked 100 management colleges within a country relative to its populations is assessed. (Source: Masters of Management, The Financial Times¹⁹)
Shanghai Ranking 63 countries	The Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), also known as the Shanghai Ranking, is one of the annual publications of world university rankings. It presents the world's top 1000 research universities annually based on transparent methodology and objective third-party data. (Source: Shanghai 2024 Academic Ranking of World Universities²⁰)
Innovation 196 countries	Innovation encompasses the creation, diffusion, and application of knowledge to improve products, services, processes, or policies. It is central to boosting productivity, fostering economic growth, and solving development challenges. (Source: The World Bank²¹)
Primary School Enrolments 196 countries	Primary School Gross Enrolment Ratio is the ratio of total enrolment to the population of the age group corresponding to primary education. The primary school enrolment ratio indicates the level of access and participation in primary education within a country. (Source: The World Bank²²)
Secondary School Enrolments 196 countries	Secondary School Gross Enrolment Ratio is the ratio of total enrolment to the population of the age group corresponding to secondary education, indicating the level of access and participation in secondary education within a country. (Source: The World Bank²³)
Tertiary School Enrolments 196 countries	Tertiary School Gross Enrolment Ratio is the ratio of total enrolment to the population of the age group corresponding to tertiary education. Tertiary education includes higher education institutions and programs that prepare individuals for advanced research or professional careers. (Source: The World Bank²⁴)

Country	Rank	Score
Switzerland	1	0.891
Finland	2	0.792
Ireland	3	0.785
Belgium	4	0.778
Sweden	5	0.767
France	6	0.765
United Kingdom	7	0.748
Netherlands	8	0.741
Portugal	9	0.727
Japan	10	0.723
South Korea	11	0.723
Slovenia	12	0.720
Australia	13	0.718
Denmark	14	0.699
United States	15	0.693
China	16	0.672
Canada	17	0.669
Germany	18	0.668
Estonia	19	0.659
Austria	20	0.642
Norway	21	0.638
Czechia	22	0.636
Poland	23	0.615
Spain	24	0.614
Israel	25	0.608
New Zealand	26	0.608
Italy	27	0.606
Lithuania	28	0.602
Croatia	29	0.569
Hungary	30	0.538
Iceland	31	0.533
Turkey	32	0.525
Latvia	33	0.517
Greece	34	0.516
Luxembourg	35	0.510
Slovak Republic	36	0.493
UAE	37	0.474
Chile	38	0.436
Vietnam	39	0.413
Bulgaria	40	0.404
Saudi Arabia	41	0.402
Mexico	42	0.399
Argentina	43	0.393
Brazil	44	0.392
South Africa	45	0.387
Qatar	46	0.382
Thailand	47	0.372
Romania	48	0.359
Colombia	49	0.355
Malaysia	50	0.352
Costa Rica	51	0.339
India	52	0.267
Morocco	53	0.259
Indonesia	54	0.257
Egypt	55	0.256
Nigeria	56	0.162
Kenya	57	0.122
Ethiopia	58	0.099

Sustainability

Index	Explanation
Environmental Performance Index 180 countries	The EPI provides a data-driven assessment of sustainability by evaluating 180 countries on climate change performance, environmental health, and ecosystem vitality. It uses 40 performance indicators across 11 issue categories to rank countries based on their environmental performance. (Source: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy²⁵)
Energy Transition Index 120 countries	The Energy Transition Index (ETI), which benchmarks 120 countries on their current energy system performance and on the readiness of their enabling environment, finds that while there has been notable progress in energy efficiency and a marked increase in the adoption of clean energy sources, energy transition momentum has been held back by setbacks in energy equity, driven by rising energy prices in recent years. (Source: World Economic Forum²⁶)
Carbon Footprint 211 countries	The amount of biologically productive land and sea area required to absorb the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions generated by human activity, after accounting for the CO₂ absorbed by the oceans. For our report lower the Carbon Footprint more competitive is the country. (Source: Global footprint Network, York University, Footprint Data Foundation²⁷)
Energy Mix 79 countries	Renewable energy will play a key role in decarbonising our energy systems in the coming decades. But how rapidly is our production of renewable energy changing? What technologies look most promising in transforming our energy mix? This index looks at the data on renewable energy technologies across the world; what share of energy they account for today, and how quickly this is changing. (Source: Our World in Data by Oxford Martin School, Oxford University²⁸)
Carbon Emission 196 countries	Carbon dioxide emissions, largely by-products of energy production and use, account for the largest share of greenhouse gases, which are associated with global warming. The data point captures metric tons per capita of CO₂ emissions. For our report lower the Carbon Emission more competitive is the country. (Source: The World Bank²⁹)

Country	Rank	Score
Sweden	1	0.849
Norway	2	0.823
Denmark	3	0.783
Switzerland	4	0.780
Finland	5	0.780
Iceland	6	0.779
Austria	7	0.758
Germany	8	0.697
France	9	0.691
United Kingdom	10	0.689
Portugal	11	0.683
Brazil	12	0.663
Netherlands	13	0.655
New Zealand	14	0.654
Spain	15	0.653
Estonia	16	0.647
Costa Rica	17	0.640
Luxembourg	18	0.631
Croatia	19	0.625
Latvia	20	0.624
Slovenia	21	0.621
Greece	22	0.617
Ireland	23	0.616
Lithuania	24	0.604
Italy	25	0.592
Belgium	26	0.591
Canada	27	0.591
Chile	28	0.586
Japan	29	0.579
Romania	30	0.577
Hungary	31	0.577
Australia	32	0.576
Poland	33	0.568
Colombia	34	0.566
Slovak Republic	35	0.559
Czechia	36	0.551
Bulgaria	37	0.550
United States	38	0.549
Israel	39	0.536
South Korea	40	0.502
Mexico	41	0.470
Kenya	42	0.465
China	43	0.461
Ethiopia	44	0.453
Argentina	45	0.450
Turkey	46	0.447
Thailand	47	0.443
Malaysia	48	0.432
Morocco	49	0.408
UAE	50	0.403
Indonesia	51	0.403
Egypt	52	0.395
Vietnam	53	0.374
Saudi Arabia	54	0.355
India	55	0.355
South Africa	56	0.347
Qatar	57	0.288
Nigeria	58	0.219

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A satellite view of Earth at night, showing the glowing outlines of continents and the dense clusters of city lights. The image is dark, with the bright yellow and white lights of the cities providing the primary illumination. The curvature of the Earth is visible at the top right.

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