City Cultural Index

Benchmarking the cultural attractiveness of European cities

A comparative framework for understanding the cultural strengths and profiles of European cities.

Cultural Density

Cultural Iconicity

Events

Affordability

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What makes a city culturally attractive?

A broader way to assess cultural attractiveness

The City Cultural Index looks beyond the number of attractions a city offers. It considers several aspects of cultural appeal to provide a more balanced basis for comparing cities.

- **Cultural offer:** The attractions, landmarks and cultural experiences available to visitors.
- **Cultural profile:** How these elements combine to shape a city's distinctive strengths.
- **Visitor perspective:** The accessibility and affordability of cultural experiences.

Together, these aspects provide a more complete picture of a city's cultural attractiveness.

Four dimensions. One broader perspective.



1 Cultural density

The concentration of cultural places and attractions across the urban landscape.



2 Cultural iconicity

The presence of distinctive cultural landmarks and icons.



3 Cultural events

The cultural experiences offered through events.



4 Cultural affordability

How accessible cultural experiences are in economic terms.

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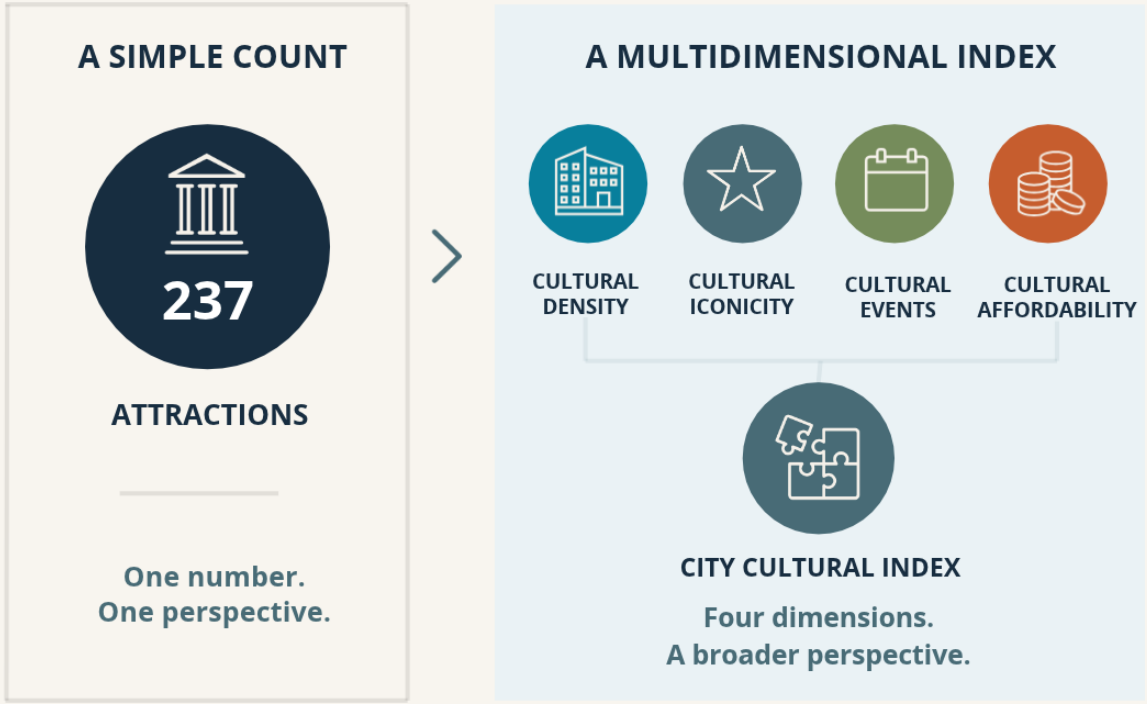
Why counting attractions is not enough



Beyond the number of attractions

Cultural attractiveness involves more than the number of attractions. Their **concentration, significance, accessibility and wider cultural context** also shape a city's cultural appeal.

The City Cultural Index therefore assesses more than attraction numbers to provide a more comprehensive basis for comparing cities.

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How does city benchmarking work?

A consistent framework for comparing cities

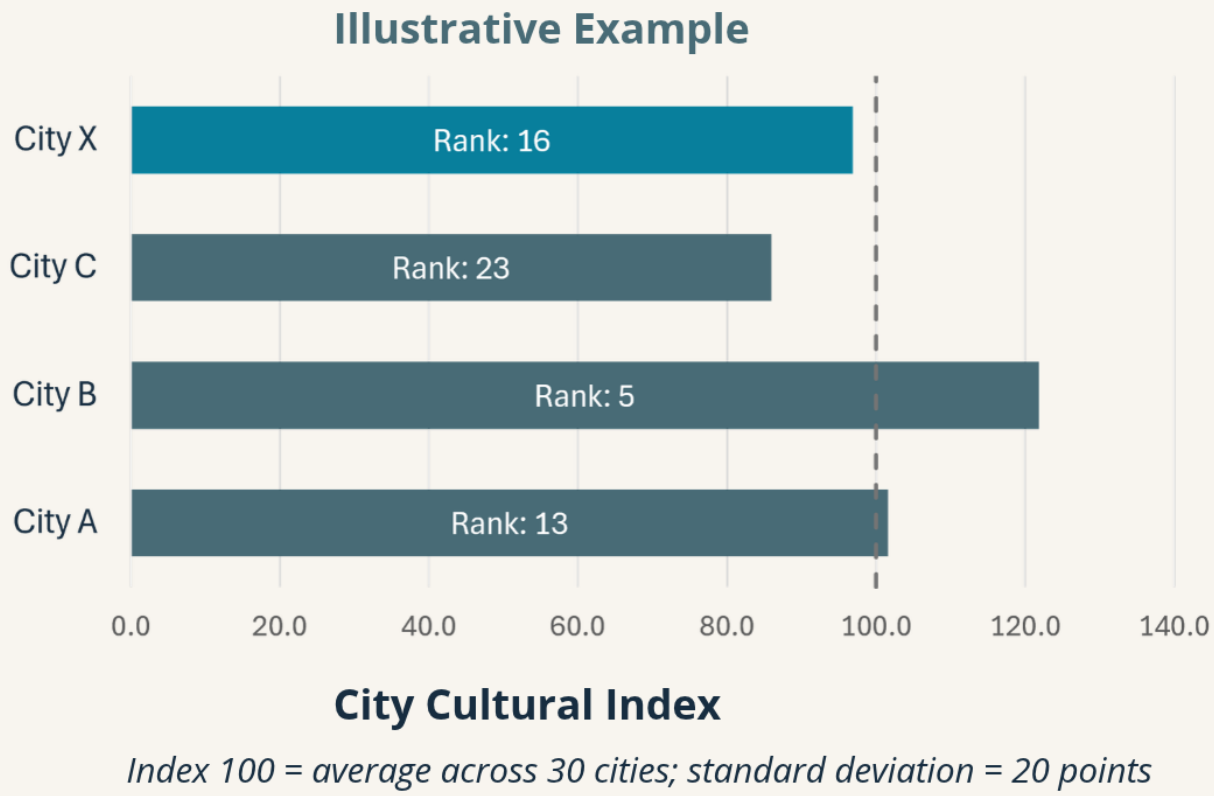
Each city is assessed using the same framework and dimensions, making it possible to compare overall cultural attractiveness as well as the factors that shape each city's profile.

1 | **Consistent indicators**
All cities are assessed using the same data and methodology.

2 | **Comparable scores**
Scores are calculated on the same scale, making direct comparisons possible.

3 | **Distinct city profiles**
Results show each city's overall score and the factors that shape its profile.

★ | Benchmarking reveals where a city stands and how its cultural profile compares with others.



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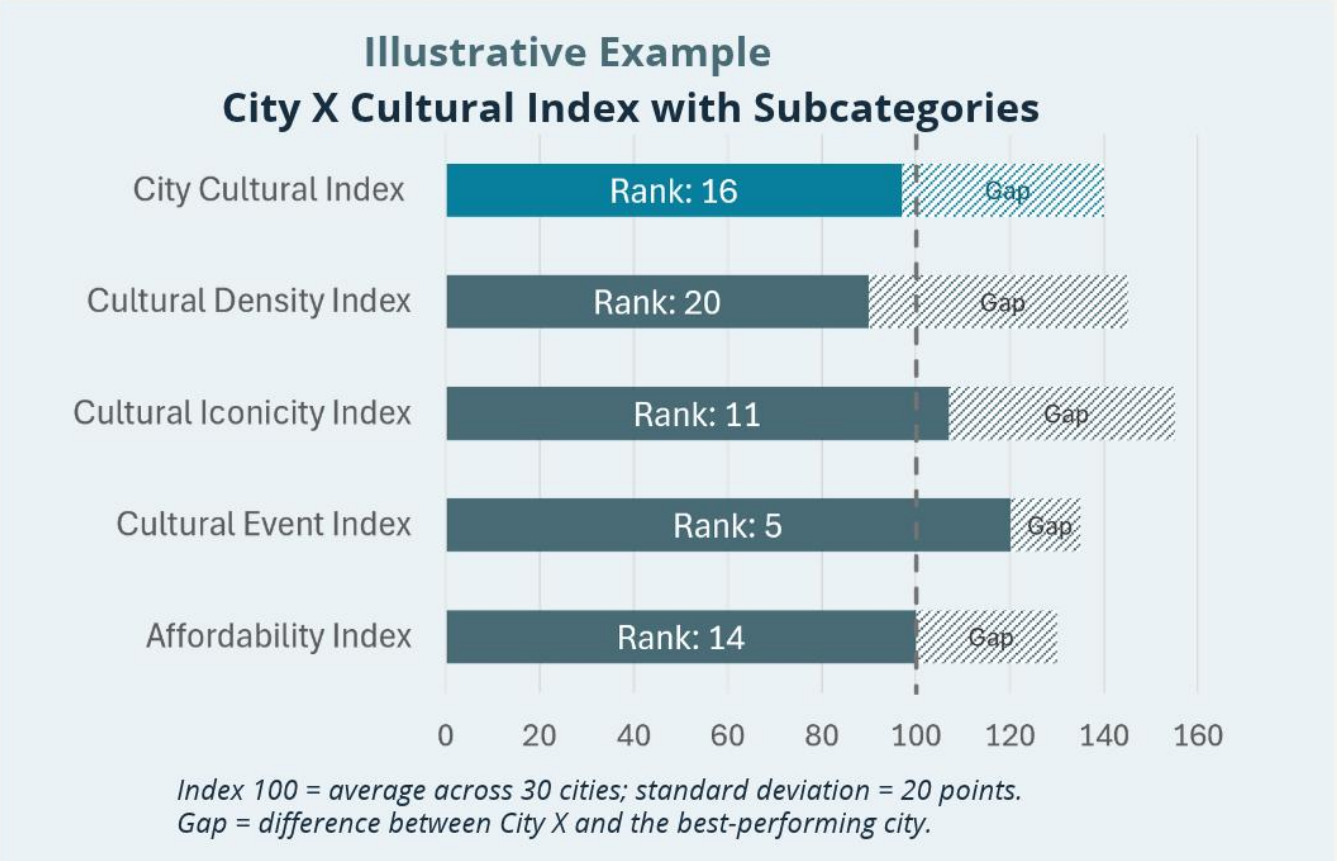
Why a city's cultural profile matters beyond its overall ranking

An overall score is only part of the picture

- Two cities can achieve similar overall scores while having very different cultural strengths. One may stand out for cultural density, while another performs particularly well in iconic landmarks or events.
- Looking beyond the overall ranking reveals what makes each city distinctive and where its cultural strengths lie.

Key takeaway

A ranking shows where a city stands. Its cultural profile explains why.



1 Identify strengths
Discover distinctive cultural assets.

2 Spot opportunities
Identify areas for development.

3 Inform strategy
Inform evidence-based tourism decisions.

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From overall scores to deeper cultural insights

Each dimension comprises more detailed indicators and subcategories, enabling analysis to go beyond a single overall ranking.

City Cultural Index

Cultural Density

Subcategories and indicators

Cultural Iconicity

Subcategories and indicators

Cultural Events

Subcategories and indicators

Cultural Affordability

Subcategories and indicators

Beyond the ranking

Understand what drives a city’s cultural attractiveness.

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What can destination organisations learn?

Turning comparative cultural insights into practical perspectives for destination planning.

1

Understand relative strengths

Identify where a city performs particularly well across the four dimensions.

2

Identify areas for further investigation

See where cultural attractions or events may deserve closer attention.

3

Support strategic decisions

Use comparative cultural insights as an additional perspective in destination planning and development.

From comparison to action

A structured cultural perspective to support informed decisions about destinations.

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Explore the City Cultural Index

Discover how European cities compare in cultural attractiveness.

Explore city-specific reports.

Contact culturexplor to discuss city-specific reports.

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Exploring cities and cultures through data and stories

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