

# China cracks top 20 in Global Innovation Index

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China broke into the world's top 20 most-innovative economies as Switzerland retained its No. 1 spot in the [Global Innovation Index](#) (GII) ranking published annually by Cornell University, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Rounding out the GII 2018 top 10, from highest ranking to lowest: the Netherlands, Sweden,

the United Kingdom, Singapore, United States, Finland, Denmark, Germany and Ireland.

Now in its 11th edition, the GII is a detailed quantitative tool that helps global decision-makers better understand how to stimulate the innovative activity that drives economic and human development. The GII ranks 126 economies based on 80 indicators, ranging from [intellectual property](#) filing rates to mobile-application creation, education spending, and scientific and technical publications.

China's No. 17 ranking this year represents a breakthrough for an [economy](#) witnessing rapid transformation guided by government policy prioritizing research and development-intensive ingenuity. While the United States fell back to No. 6 in the GII 2018, it is an innovation powerhouse that has produced many of the world's leading high-tech firms and life-changing innovations.

"China's rapid rise reflects a strategic direction set by top leadership to develop world-class capacity in innovation and move the structural basis of the economy to more knowledge-intensive industries that rely on innovation to maintain competitive advantage," says WIPO Director General Francis Gurry. "It heralds the arrival of multipolar innovation."

A group of middle- and lower-income economies perform significantly better on innovation than their level of development would predict. Twenty economies comprise these "innovation achievers" in 2018, three more than in 2017. Sub-Saharan Africa boasts six innovation achievers, including Kenya, Rwanda and South Africa, while five economies hail from Eastern Europe.

"Over time, a number of emerging economies stand out for being real movers and shakers in the innovation landscape," says Soumitra Dutta, co-editor of the report and a professor of management at the Cornell SC

Johnson College of Business. "Aside from China, which is already in the top 25, the middle-income economy closest to this top group is Malaysia. Other interesting cases are India, Iran, Mexico, Thailand and Vietnam, which consistently climb in the rankings."

The GII 2018 also includes an updated survey of top science and technology clusters, a new "IPC Green Inventory" showing waning growth in environmentally friendly energy-related patenting and a new indicator for mobile-application creation.

Among other notable GII inclusions this year:

- An updated survey of "top science and technology clusters" around the world, adding scientific publishing to international patent applications to highlight areas of particularly intensive innovative activity. The areas around Tokyo-Yokohama and Shenzhen-Hong Kong lead the list, while the U.S. boasts the greatest number of hotspots, with 26;
- A new "IPC Green Inventory" that shows a worrying waning growth rate in environmentally friendly energy-related patenting, with green patent publishing rates peaking in 2012;
- An expanded look at economies that innovate efficiently, translating investments in education, research and research and development expenditures into high-quality [innovation](#) outputs. Leaders are Switzerland, Luxembourg, China, the Netherlands, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Malta, Hungary, Germany and Sweden;
- A new indicator, mobile-app creation, with Cyprus, Finland and Lithuania as the global leaders in the development of mobile apps relative to gross domestic product.

Provided by Cornell University

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