

《福布斯最具影响力城市排名出炉：伦敦位居榜首》

London the most influential city in the world according to Forbes

Britain is a "second-rate power" which has been in decline for a century – yet London remains the most influential city in the world.

Those are the startling findings of a list of the globe's most "necessary" cities, compiled by the business magazine Forbes.

London and New York topped the global list of the world's most influential cities, although largely thanks to history, tradition and "inertia" – they are the most dominant principally because they always have been.

The British capital clinched top spot in part thanks to its position as a global transport hub with a high number of company headquarters, loose regulatory environment and judicial and political systems which have proved a model for the rest of the world.

But Forbes was somewhat damning in its praise, adding that London's status as the world's most influential city was largely a hangover from its past glories.

"Inertia and smart use of it is a key theme that emerged in our evaluation of the top global cities," it said.

"No city better exemplifies this than London, which after more than a century of imperial decline still ranks No. 1 in our survey.

"The United Kingdom may now be a second-rate power, but the City's unparalleled legacy as a global financial capital still underpins its pre-eminence." Forbes based its city rankings on eight factors, including the level of foreign direct investment, the number of corporate headquarters, the amount of business types it dominates, ease of air travel to other global cities, the strength of financial services, technology and media power, and racial diversity.

Using those factors, Forbes found London and New York held a "hegemony" over the rest of the world, standing far ahead of their nearest rivals, Paris and Tokyo.

Rising stars were named as Singapore, currently in fifth place, Dubai in seventh and San Francisco, which is in equal 10th.

Cities which could leap into the top 10 in future include Seoul, currently number 16, Abu Dhabi, now in 20th, and Sao Paulo in 23rd.

Despite being among the world's most populous cities, in countries which are seen as being on the cusp of an economic breakthrough, cities elsewhere in the developing world are considered lacking in influence.

Forbes said: "The Indian megacities Delhi and Mumbai rank in the low 30s along with Johannesburg in South Africa.

"Until these areas can develop adequate infrastructure - from roads, transit and bridges to relatively non-corrupt judicial systems - none can be expected to crack the top 10, or even 20, for at least a decade.

"For the time being, the future of the global city belongs not to the biggest or fastest growing but the most efficient and savvy, and those with a strong historical pedigree. This raises the bar for all cities that wish to break into this elite club."

The world's top 10 most influential cities:

1. London

A history and tradition which cannot be rivalled have left London with all the economic benefits of the City of London, and a language, judiciary and legal system which are models for the rest of the world.

The super-rich have long been comfortable there, and its cultural, media and advertising sectors are dominant.

Spared the regulation and red tape which ties up business in the US and Europe, London's time zones are manageable for business travellers commuting east or west and it has the second best global air connections in the world after Dubai.

London has the most start-up Internet firms in Europe and is host to 68 of the world's top 2,000 companies.

2. New York

Hard on the heels of London, New York only narrowly missed out to its British rival in the Forbes list. The Big Apple is home to most of the world's top investment banks and hedge funds. Its stock market trade levels are 10 times that of London and four times that of Tokyo. It is a global leader in media, advertising and the music industry and dominates in the realms of fashion and luxury. Visitors spend more money in New York than any city in the world thanks, Forbes suggests, to its iconic landmarks.

3. Paris

A distant third, Paris claims its place only thanks to its domination of the still-important French market with virtually all of the country's home-grown companies basing their headquarters there.

4. Singapore

The most influential city in Asia, Singapore has a population of just five million but an infrastructure which is the envy of the world. With a colonial legacy of British governance and law, it has been named as the best place in the world to do business. As a result, it has the highest level of foreign direct investment and is the top location for European companies with an Asia-Pacific HQ.

5. Tokyo

Despite being the world's largest city in terms of gross domestic product, Tokyo has fallen behind Singapore as Asia's most influential, according to Forbes. Like Paris, the magazine said, it gains most of its ranking due to its domination of its own domestic markets. But it will continue to suffer thanks to an ageing population and declining birth rate, a lack of ethnic diversity and stiff competition from regional rivals.