THE ‘NEW URBAN WORLD’
Economic-Geographical Studies on the Performance of Urban Systems

The ‘New Urban World’ is a recent phenomenon in the rich history of cities. Nowadays does not only more than 50 per cent of the world population live in cities, but also urbanization is still persistently and rapidly increasing. Urban agglomerations will most likely become the socio-economic powerhouses of the future. The collection of analytical and quantitative studies in this dissertation contributes to a deeper understanding of the forces at work. It does so by designing and employing the metaphor of the ‘urban piazza’ as a frame of reference for analyzing the economic-geographical performance of urban systems. Within this analytical framework four domains of urban activity — ranging from global to local — are systematically addressed, viz. dynamic cities, innovative sectors, creative districts and new entrepreneurs. Thereby, this study aims to identify the critical success factors for the competitive performance of urban actors and/or cities in the ‘New Urban World’, through the application of quantitative evaluation tools. A wealth of empirical applications — ranging from migration to entrepreneurship and from cultural heritage to global cities — is provided to illustrate the relevance of a solid research methodology for determining the position of modern cities and its actors.