



THE EURASIA REGIONAL SECTION OF
THE WORLD ORGANIZATION
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**RESEARCH ON
MUNICIPALITIES’ INTERNATIONAL
ACTIVITY**

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**The Eurasia Regional Section of the World Organization
“United Cities and Local Governments”**

“Research on Municipalities’ International Activity – 2020”

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* This research does not reflect any definite national, religious, municipal or political interests.

Partners of the project:



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RESEARCH ON MUNICIPALITIES' INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

The Research on Municipalities' International Activity is a project of UCLG-Eurasia, which is an analysis of the activities of local governments towards the development of international relations.

Its main goal is to encourage local governments to develop international relations.

The research allows us to identify the best experience in the development of international relations and elaborate recommendations on how to enhance the work in the direction of the development of international relations.

The study evaluates indicators that depend on the work and participation of local governments. Based on the research, cities are ranked according to the degree of international orientation, and a rating of municipalities' international activity is compiled.

The rating of municipalities' international activity is held for the third time. Previously, it was held based on the results of 2014 and 2016. Below are the outcomes of the research conducted on data for 2018. It is worth mentioning that the analysis of the data obtained through the research is carried out for the first time.

It is noteworthy that in 2019, cities of UCLG-MEWA joined the study for the first time. a total of 78 cities from Russia, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Moldova and Palestine participated in the research. Among them are:

- 2 capital cities – Ankara and Bishkek;
- 21 million-plus cities;
- 12 largest cities;
- 28 large cities;
- 13 medium-sized cities;
- 4 small cities.

The results were announced at the award ceremony on February 28, 2020, as part of the UCLG annual Retreat in Tangier, Morocco, where UCLG President Mohamed Boudra presented the winners with diplomas in a solemn ceremony.

The city of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, became the absolute winner of the rating, gaining the highest number of points. Also, Bishkek, as the absolute leader of the Rating, was awarded the UCLG-Eurasia Prize of 10,000\$. These funds will be spent on developing and strengthening international activities.

With a minimal gap, the second in the ranking was the Turkish city of Izmir. The Russian city of Khabarovsk closes the top three in the overall rating.

It is noteworthy that all the cities from the top ten of the rating and 28 cities from the top thirty are members of the UCLG World Organization.

Overall results

Place	City	Population	Total score
1.	Bishkek	1 012 500	2,573488
2.	Izmir	4 320 519	2,428447
3.	Khabarovsk	617 473	2,30656
4.	Kazan	1 251 969	2,299212
5.	Bursa	2 994 521	2,083762
6.	Rostov-on-Don	1 133 315	1,970804
7.	Perm	1 053 938	1,725622
8.	Gaziantep	2 028 563	1,563521
9.	Ufa	1 135 480	1,562278
10.	Ankara	5 503 985	1,53302
11.	Mytishchi	248 671	1,457066
12.	Mogilev	383 300	1,395212
13.	Şanlıurfa	2 035809	1,379655

14.	Stavropol	437 335	1,350972
15.	Comrat	23 300	1,31244
16.	Krasnoyarsk	1 096 086	1,285519
17.	Nizhny Novgorod	1 259 000	1,27105
18.	Kaliningrad	482443	1,266607
19.	Yakutsk	311 760	1,187334
20.	Tiraspol	127 654	1,153242
21.	Novosibirsk	1 618 039	1,118353
22.	Yekaterinburg	1 515 800	1,111312
23.	Mezitli	194 019	1,073858
24.	Krasnodar	1 000 000	1,044381
25.	Mersin	1 814 468	1,039273
26.	Shymkent	1 009 086	1,033457
27.	Magas	10 976	1,030276
28.	Jalal-Abad	119 076	0,950872
29.	Kocaeli	1 906371	0,90777
30.	Ulyanovsk	617 473	0,89445
31.	Tomsk	626 540	0,885755
32.	Pendik	596 446	0,852759
33.	Belgorod	392 426	0,852603
34.	Tolyatti	702 831	0,834693

35.	Osh	270 400	0,830889
36.	Murmansk	292 465	0,820815
37.	Tver	420 850	0,817885
38.	Magadan	99 671	0,792532
39.	Vladimir	359 960	0,786668
40.	Bugulma	83 741	0,776176
41.	Samara	1 156 644	0,776088
42.	Komsomolsk- on-Amur	246 607	0,771181
43.	Kobryn	53 411	0,760335
44.	Bobruisk	217 000	0,731454
45.	Astrakhan	534 251	0,721741
46.	Gebze	371 000	0,696279
47.	Balikesir	1 226 575	0,688862
48.	Orenburg	580 051	0,676165
49.	Veliky Novgorod	218 724	0,671667
50.	Cheboksary	506 267	0,628343
51.	Izhevsk	648 213	0,627427
52.	Naberezhnye Chelny	533 907	0,621312
53.	Vologda	319 074	0,618634
54.	Yelabuga	73 913	0,599502

55.	Kurgan	318 045	0,59676
56.	Sevastopol	439 941	0,539277
57.	Bryansk	422 796	0,519826
58.	Bolgar	8 381	0,500314
59.	Ryazan	539 800	0,465794
60.	Uglich	32 027	0,447864
61.	Çanakkale	95 762	0,382546
62.	Almetyevsk	157 310	0,375538
63.	Voronezh	1 054111	0,312104
64.	Soligorsk	106 458	0,305948
65.	Beit Jala	15 670	0,271822
66.	Sancaktepe	414 143	0,268108
67.	Kirov	538 724	0,259085
68.	Syzran	169 444	0,249662
69.	Naryan-Mar	24 775	0,233146
70.	Talas	37 740	0,225644
71.	Yoshkar-Ola	282 109	0,200432
72.	Sulukta	23 513	0,155985
73.	Rechytsa	65 873	0,125364
74.	Zelenodolsk	99 743	0,120624
75.	Kara-Kul	25 890	0,086739
76.	Aydarken	11 900	0,037688

77.	Kyzylorda	303 109	0,030633
78.	City (<i>name hidden for ethical reasons</i>)	205 000	0,026101

Index of Municipalities' International Activity – 2019

The research on municipalities' international activity is a multi-stage project that includes:

1. A preparatory work on setting the goals and objectives of the research, the development of criteria and indicators for calculating the rating, the choice of such methods that will preserve objectivity in the formation of the rating on the one hand, and on the other – will make it possible to analyze the position of subjects relative to other participants in this study;

2. The development of the author's methodology based on a systematic analysis of factors of international activity of a city, as well as indicators that serve as markers of such activity. The first methodology was developed in 2015 by a group of specialists. The first pilot rating allowed us to test the methodology and highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the entire project.

The methodology used for the research on cities' international activity in 2019 was updated and significantly different from the first version. It takes into account many of the weaknesses of the first and second ratings, and also focuses on the work of a municipality and its activities in the field of international relations.

The content of the methodology will be discussed separately below.

3. Preparing the layout and collecting data from cities. Based on past experience, starting from 2017, a layout has been developed for each new research to be filled in, which allows to unify the method and type of data collection from cities. The layout is a file in the Excel format with a table for entering data on

indicators; separate cells for comments that can be made by participants if necessary, as well as sheets to format applications.

The data is provided by participating cities in the form of completed tables, which are then combined into a single one, and all calculations are carried out in it.

All layouts are pre-checked, after which the layout is accepted or sent back for correction and additions. Such verification is necessary to verify the received data, check their authenticity and compliance of the submitted data with the decryption in the applications. Also, layouts are sent for revision, in which less than half of the indicators are filled in. If a city does not send updated data, its layout is accepted, if more than 25% of the layout is filled in, in other cases, the city cannot participate in the research.

4. Calculation of the city's position in the rating and preparation of analytical materials based on the results of the study. At this stage, the city's data is calculated for each indicator, as well as its position in relation to others, first disaggregated by indicators, then by groups of criteria, and finally for the entire rating. After the formation of the index of municipalities' international activity, an analytical note is prepared with a description of the results of the work done and explanations of the situation of the subjects.

Let us focus in more detail on the research methodology. It includes the selection of indicators that will be used to calculate the international activity of cities, it provides a list of data that should be requested from cities and what methods will be used to calculate the index.

The research, conducted in 2019, involves the analysis of the city on 31 indicators, combined in 6 groups of criteria ("blocks") – "Business activity", "Human capital", "Institutional activity", "Activities", "Infrastructure", and "Administrative Information".

These groups of criteria and the indicators included in them make it possible to consider such a complex system as a city in a complex way, taking into account various aspects of life.

The study used the following methods for calculating indicators – this is the method of normalization, weighted indicators and simple ranking. When calculating an indicator using the normalization method, the formula determines the city that has the maximum value, this city is assigned the value "1", and the values of indicators of other cities are standardized for it.

$x_i \text{ norm} = x_i / x_{\text{max}}$, where

$x_i \text{ norm}$ is the normalized estimate of the indicator;

x_i – actual value of the indicator;

x_{max} – the maximum actual value of the indicator in the sample.

The weighted indicators are calculated as follows:

Each parameter is given a weight of "0.5", then the weighted parameters are summed up, and their relation to the value of the first parameter is revealed.

$(0,5x_1 + 0,5x_2) / x_1$, where

x_1 is the value of the first parameter

x_2 – value of the second parameter

Indicator boundaries: $\in [0;1]$:

For example:

At the end of the researched period, a city is a member of 13 international organizations, with 9 of which events were held, then: $(13*0,5+9*0,5)/13=0,846$

When ranking cities, they are distributed from the maximum value of the indicator to the minimum.

After calculating the information for all indicators and forming the sum of the city's points for each group of criteria, the index of municipalities' international activity is calculated:

$I=A*0.2+B*0.3+C*0.1+D*0.2+E*0.1+F*0.1$;

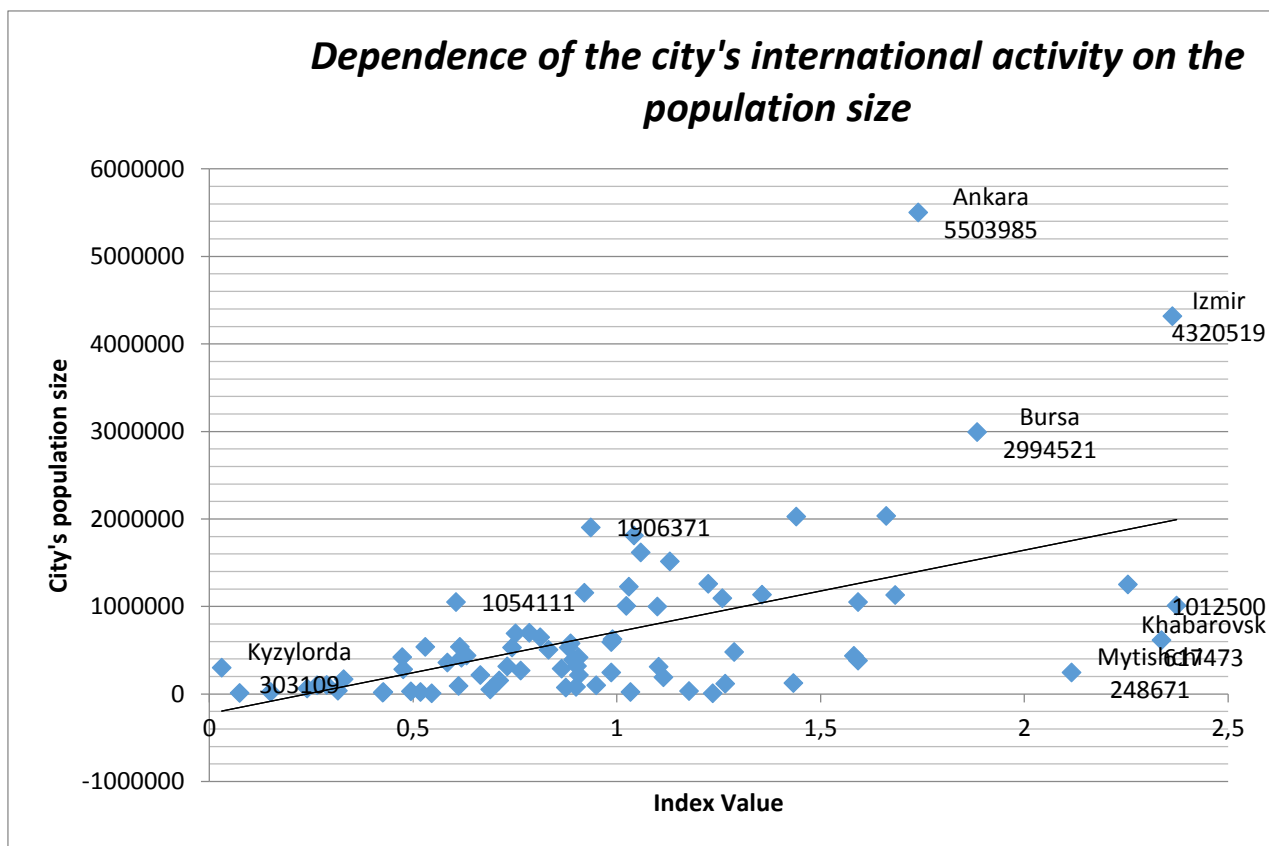
Where A is a Block 1, B - Block 2, C - Block 3, D - Block 4, E – Block 5, F – Block 6.

By ranking the result of the total amount, the leader of the rating is determined.

Summing up, it can be noted that the research is a complex work that ensures the representativeness of the information received, data verification and objectivity of the results obtained in accordance with the goals and objectives set.

Dependence of the city's international activity on the population size

In terms of international activity there are 9 cities with a population of more than one million people in the top ten. At the same time, the highest third position is Khabarovsk with a population of 617,473. Among the large cities, the highest position – 11th - is the city of Mytishchi, on the 12th place - Mogilev, on the 14th - Stavropol. Among the medium-sized cities, taking the 15th place in the overall ranking, only the city of Comrat is included in the top twenty. The small city in the general rating for the first time is met only in the top thirty - the city of Magas ranks 27th. Other small cities were only able to get into the second half of the ranking. However, in the second half of the rating, there are also million-plus cities.



Picture 1

The ranking results and examples presented above show that million-plus cities and the largest cities occupy higher positions in majority, probably due to the developed infrastructure and the status of regional centers. However, there is no clear correlation between the size of the population and the quality of the development of international relations, as evidenced by examples when cities with a small population occupy higher positions.

For example, Comrat (15th place) with a population of 23,000 people occupies a higher position compared to the million-plus Krasnoyarsk (16th place) and Nizhny Novgorod (17th place). This is due to the fact that Comrat shows a high share of foreign tourists – 66%, actively works with international organizations, has 26 twin cities and 11 agreements with cities located outside the country. In addition, Comrat managed to fulfill 11 grant-based projects.

Also, for example, large cities of Kaliningrad (18th place), Yakutsk (19th place) and Tiraspol (20th place) occupy higher positions than the million-plus cities of Novosibirsk (20th place) and Yekaterinburg (21st place), etc.

Tiraspol wins on the share of foreign students, as well as on the third and fourth blocks of issues, which include membership in international organizations and participation in international events, participation in international competitions and grants, international agreements and twin cities, etc. For instance, Tiraspol has 23 twin cities, while Yekaterinburg has only 2. Also, citizens of Tiraspol have access to a larger number of international destinations – 41, while, for example, in Yekaterinburg there are 29.

Yakutsk is one of the few participants in the rating, which occupies a leading position in international organizations. So, acting in 2018, mayor of Yakutsk, Aisen Nikolaev, is vice-president of the World Organization "United Cities and Local Governments" and vice-president of its Eurasian section.

Kaliningrad wins in terms of the active work with partner cities - the city has 49 of them. Moreover, the city managed to organize joint programs and events with half of them in 2018. Also, the Kaliningrad delegation actively participated in foreign events, while representatives of Novosibirsk went abroad 5 times. Also, in

Kaliningrad and Tiraspol, the level of foreign language proficiency of city hall employees is higher than in Novosibirsk.

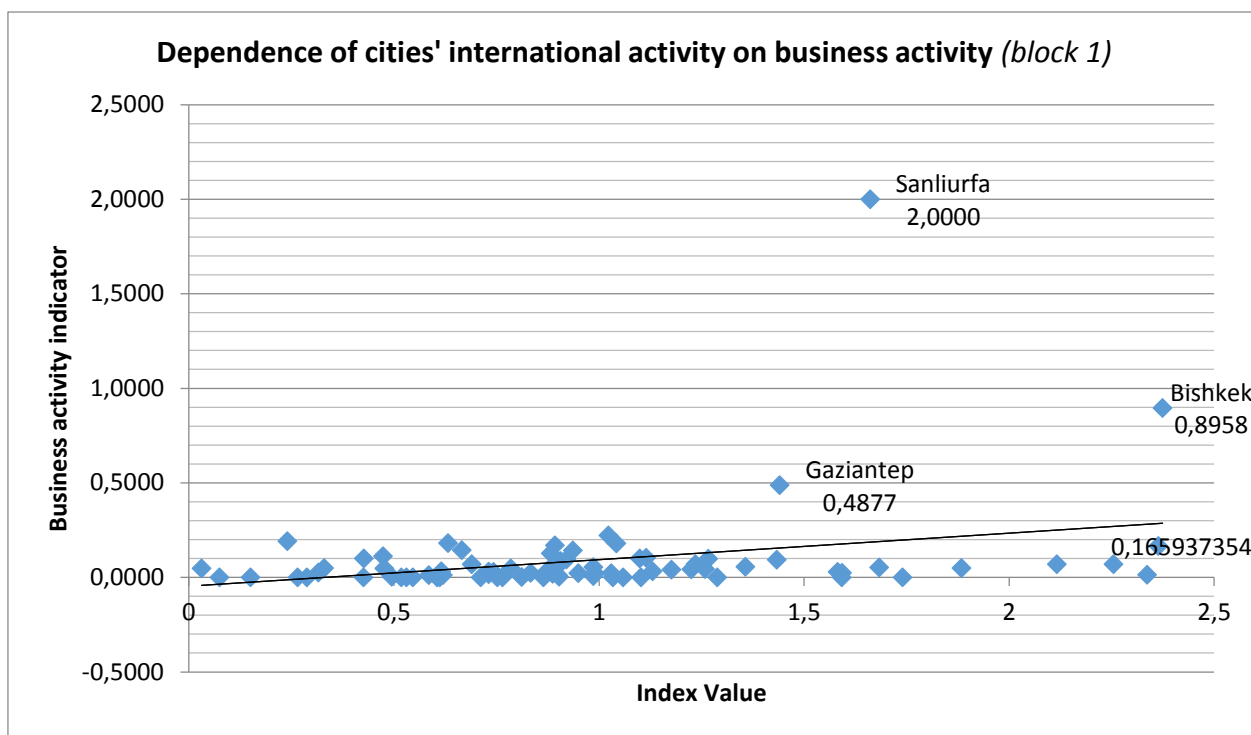
In Novosibirsk, there are 2 universities in the Top-600 world rankings, and 4 universities with double degree programs. Novosibirsk is a member of 5 international organizations. Novosibirsk Airport provides 35 international flights.

The strong point of Yekaterinburg is the presence of a large number of consulates. Here are located consulates and visa centers, the total number of which is 38.

All cities have their own strong and weak points. Some actively engage with international organizations, others develop tourism, and others work with twin cities. But it is significant that even cities with a small population, and therefore a budget, can become noticeable in the international arena, having made some efforts to do so.

It is appropriate to start the analysis of the results of the Research on Municipalities' International Activity by considering individual "blocks".

Block 1 - Business activity - includes the following indicators: the total number of enterprises in the city, the number of enterprises with foreign capital in the city and the number of branches and representative offices of foreign companies. What matters here is the ratio between the number of enterprises with foreign capital participation and the total number of enterprises in the city and the ratio of the number of branches and representative offices of foreign companies with the total number of enterprises, which determines the weight of the "Business activity" block in the aggregated Index of Cities' International Activity.



Picture 2

Bishkek is the best in terms of the number of enterprises with foreign capital participation. There are 16,224 of them here. Bursa has ranked second with 2,792 enterprises, and Mersin is in third place with 2,654 enterprises with foreign capital. Among the cities of Russia in this direction, Samara is the leader – 1554 enterprises with foreign capital are located here.

The share of foreign enterprises in the total number of enterprises is significant. The leader in this indicator is the city of Sanliurfa, where 27.58% of all enterprises in the city are foreign. Bishkek occupies the second position with a share of 23.87%. In third place - Gaziantep with an indicator of 10%. The rest of the study participants have a share of enterprises with foreign capital participation of less than 10%.

In terms of the absolute number of branches and representative offices of foreign companies, Izmir is the leader with a huge gap, where their number is 2,633. Among the Eurasian cities, the first place in this direction is occupied by the city of Shymkent (Kazakhstan) with an indicator of 852. Krasnodar and Krasnoyarsk, where 485 and 451 branches and representative offices of foreign companies are located, respectively, have the best indicators among Russian cities

** Shymkent is a city in the south of Kazakhstan, one of the leading industrial and economic centers. With a population of just over a million, it is the third most populous. In order to attract investors, a new industrial zone "Zhuldyz" with an area of 306 hectares (2020-2022) is being created in the city. The city is also working on the creation of a special economic zone of the city-planning type "Shymkent City". The project is expected to attract foreign companies from South Korea, Singapore, Turkey, etc. It is interesting that Shymkent was declared the cultural capital of the CIS in 2020.*

However, if we consider the share of branches of representative offices of foreign companies in the total number of enterprises, the picture changes somewhat, and the city of Sanliurfa becomes the leader with an indicator of 27.58%, although in absolute number it is only 270 enterprises. In other cities of the research, this number is lower than 4%.

According to the sum of all indicators of the "Business Activity" block, the Turkish city of Sanliurfa is the leader, where 27.58% of all enterprises in the city - 270 out of 979 – are enterprises with foreign capital and 270 branches and representative offices of foreign companies, which is also a high indicator. For reference, 2 035 thousand people live in Sanliurfa.

In terms of the sum of indicators of the block, the city of Bishkek ranks second. In the city out of 67,963 enterprises, 16,224 are enterprises with foreign capital (23.87% of the total number of enterprises in the city) and 567 branches and representative offices of foreign companies. The third position in the business activity block is occupied by Gaziantep, in which the share of enterprises with foreign capital is more than 10%, and the share of branches and representative offices of foreign companies is 3%.

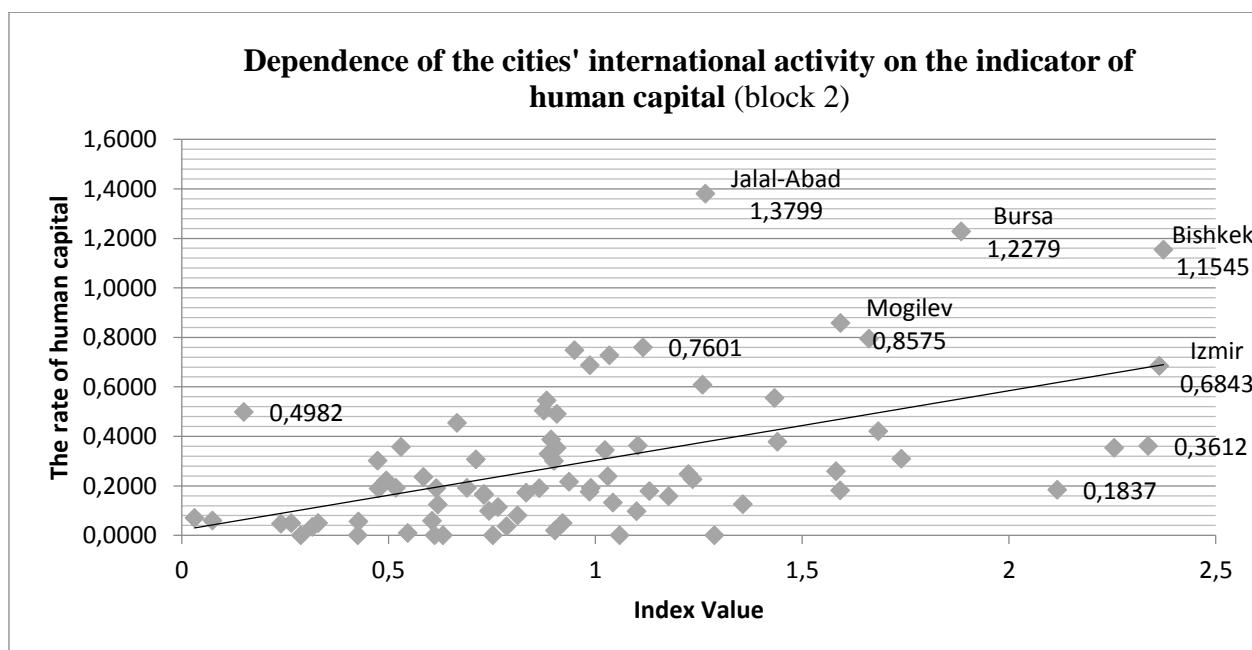
Therefore, the leaders of the "business activity" block are cities with a population of more than a million, which could be an indication that foreign companies are more willing to invest in million-plus cities. But cities with smaller population also successfully attract foreign companies. For example, on the territory of Belgorod with a population of 392 thousand people, there are 872

enterprises with foreign capital. This is more than in the million-plus cities of Kocaeli, Sanliurfa, Yekaterinburg, Nizhny Novgorod, Ufa and Shymkent.

An interesting case is in the cities of Belarus. Thus, in Rechytsa with a population of 65 thousand people, the share of enterprises with foreign capital is 5%, while in the large city of Mogilev (383 thousand people) – 0.5 %.

The second conditional block – the Human capital – consists of the ratio of the number of foreign tourists that visited the city to the total number of tourists that visited the city, and the ratio of the number of foreign students to the total number of students of the city.

The leaders in absolute numbers of tourism volume are Kazan with a tourist flow of 3.2 million, Ankara (3 million), Balikesir (2.6 million), Mersin (2.2 million).



Picture 3

Among the largest cities, the leader in terms of tourists is Astrakhan, which was visited by 1 million 600 thousand tourists. According to the regional Ministry of Tourism, this data is expected to increase to 2 million tourists due to the

development of tourist infrastructure. There are plans to build a water park, a green parking lot for cruise ships and a spa resort.

Tomsk has also showed high rates, attracting 710 thousand tourists. The main share of domestic tourist traffic is citizens of neighboring regions of the Siberian Federal District, as well as cities in Central Russia, including Moscow and St. Petersburg. If we talk about foreign tourists, their share in the total tourist flow does not exceed 2%. A few years ago, the Tomsk region decided to focus on the development of cultural, educational and event tourism, which led to positive dynamics in the tourist flow. The third place in terms of the number of tourists among the largest cities is Ryazan, which in 2018 was visited by 634 thousand tourists.

In absolute numbers, more than a million foreign tourists visited Izmir. However, it is the share of foreigners in the total flow of tourists that is important for the rating. In this regard, the city of Jalal-Abad draws attention to itself – according to data for 2018, out of 15376 tourists, 100 percent of tourists are foreign. However, such a high indicator has a downside, which indicates a poorly developed system of domestic tourism.

** Jalal-Abad, with a population of 119 thousand people, is the third largest city in Kyrgyzstan. The Great Silk Road passed through the city. In the Soviet period, the city was considered an all-Union health resort. The healing mud and mineral waters of Jalal-Abad still attract foreign tourists. According to data for 2018, 15,376 tourists visited Jalal-Abad, all of them foreign.*

Magadan shows a high share of foreign tourists, where 70% of tourists are foreign. However, we note that in absolute numbers this is only 1260 people. In third place in this indicator is Bishkek (63.2%), where out of 152,186 tourists who visited the city, more than half (96,257) is the number of foreign tourists.

** Magadan is a port city in the north-east of Russia. It is visited by tourists from the United States, Germany, France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Japan, China, Korea, etc. The main interest for tourists is natural resources: trophy hunting, fishing, ethnic and ecological tours. the city hall works in the direction of*

event tourism, regularly organizing the Golden Festival. The simplified visa regime for foreigners entering the Far East on an electronic visa, introduced in 2017, also contributes to the tourist flow. According to data for 2018, 1,800 tourists visited Magadan, of which 1,260 were foreign.

The top five in terms of the share of foreign tourists in the total tourist flow with almost the same indicators include Turkish Izmir (60.6%) and Belarusian Mogilev (60.5%).

** Mogilev is an ancient Belarusian city on the shores of the mighty Dnieper. The city is located in the east of Belarus, 180 kilometers from Minsk. With a population of 383 thousand people, Mogilev is the third city in Belarus after Minsk and Vitebsk. The chronicle history of the Mogilev Region is about 900 years old. Historical sights, festivals, unique nature and incredibly delicious food are attractive for tourists. According to data for 2018, the city was visited by 2,763 tourists, of which 1,674 were foreign.*

** The city of Izmir (Turkey) with a population of 4,320,000 people is the 3rd largest city in Turkey, an important business center, and the second major port. The city is located in the west of Turkey, on the Aegean coast. Foreign tourists are attracted by the beautiful beaches and rich history dating back over 5,000 years. According to data for 2018, 1,683 thousand tourists visited Izmir, of which 1,021 thousand were foreigners.*

Izmir also shows the best indicator for **the absolute number of foreign tourists** - 1,021,576 tourists. Among the largest cities, the largest number of foreign tourists (50 653) visited Khabarovsk. Slightly fewer foreigners visited Kirov - 47,500. Other cities are visited way more often. Therefore, Tomsk is in third place with an indicator of 14,240.

** Kirov is the administrative center of the Kirov region, Russia. Its population is 538,000. Located on the banks of the Vyatka River, Kirov attracts with its nature. A unique natural feature is Lake Shaitan with drifting islands, some of which can support the weight of a person, and columns of water are*

periodically thrown out of the water. The hard work of the Kirov region is noticeable, there are regional portals dedicated to tourism. Since 2013, the Kirov Region Tourism Development Center has been established. However, there are no tourism departments in the structure of the city administration. The creation of a tourism committee, participation in international exhibitions and conferences, as well as the establishment of a tourism portal in the English language would help the city to attract more tourists.

The city of the Golden Ring Veliky Novgorod (55 310 tourists) is leading in the number of foreign tourists among large cities. It is followed by the city of Vladimir, which was visited by 49,538 foreign tourists. The third place is taken by Murmansk with 28 987 foreign tourists.

** Vladimir is the administrative center of the Vladimir region, the ancient capital of North-Eastern Rus'. Vladimir is one of the largest tourist destinations in the European part of Russia and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city of Vladimir has convenient travel portals where you can get all the necessary information. In 2018, 210,000 tourists visited Vladimir, of which 49,000 were foreigners.*

With a huge margin from other cities in the absolute number of foreigners who visited the city, Uglich is in the lead among medium-sized cities. The city with a population of 32,000 people in 2018 received 431,000 tourists, of which 95,000 were foreigners. This can be explained by the fact that

** Uglich is a historical town in Russia and a tourist center of the famous Golden Ring of Russia. Uglich lies on the banks of a sharp bend of the Volga, where the mighty river seems to make a quick turn "around the corner". The town's name derived from the Russian word "ugol"(a corner, a nook). The city administration has a department for tourism and international relations. There is a tourist information portal and it is recommended to make an English version of the portal, as a matter of foreign tourists' convenience.*

Among small cities, the city of Bolgar merits special attention. Its population is only 8,000 people, but the town still successfully succeeded in attracting 521,000

tourists, of which 5,000 are foreigners. Such popularity is promoted by the historical significance of the town, the heritage listed by UNESCO, as well as the close location to Kazan.

** Bolgar is a religious shrine and the historical homeland of the Volga Tatars. In the Muslim world it is known as "Northern Mecca", is located 3 hours from Kazan. The ancient town of Bolgar was once the capital of the medieval Volga Bulgaria and the Golden Horde. Besides ancient historical buildings, the tourists are also attracted by the ostrich farm, fishing on the banks of the Volga, the bread museum and the stunning White Mosque. Newlyweds specially come here to hold the Nikah ceremony (Islamic wedding ceremony). The municipality is actively working on event tourism as well. The International Festival of Medieval Battle "Great Bolgar" and the Muslim gathering "Izge Bolgar Zhyeny" are held here annually. In 2018, the five-star resort SPA-hotel Kol Gali Resort & Spa was opened in Bolgar.*

Moreover, it houses the only Islamic Academy in Russia, which provides higher education. People come here to study from abroad.

It is remarkable that non-resort cities are the leaders in terms of the absolute number of tourists. As for Ankara this phenomenon can be explained by the status of the capital. But in the Kazan's case it is an exceptionally well-coordinated work of the municipality and the region. Kazan was visited by 850 thousand tourists in 2008, but in 2018 the number of tourists was 3 200 000. For the last 10 years, the tourist flow has grown 3, 76 times! The secret of such rapid dynamics is the work within the framework of international organizations and the holding of large-scale international events in the city. It is also worth noting the participation in the largest international tourism exhibitions and the inclusion of Kazan in the booklets of foreign tour operators.

The greatest share **in number of foreign students**, 27%, is demonstrated by the city of Bursa, where almost one third are foreign students (30,549 out of 113,030). Sanliurfa has ranked second (21%), and Tomsk takes the third place

(18%). The city of Tomsk also ranks first among the cities of the Eurasian region. 14.1% of students from abroad study in Bishkek.

Tomsk is a regional center in the east of the West Siberian region of Russia, a large cluster of advanced technological developments, industrial innovations. The city is a concentration of science and culture. The Tomsk administration is deliberately working to attract foreign tourists and sets itself the task of becoming an international educational center. Therefore, the needs and expectations of foreign students are being studied here. There are plans to build a new campus as well.

The total calculations for this block are as follows: 1) Jalal-Abad, 2) Bursa, 3) Bishkek. It should also be noted here that two cities that did not provide information about tourists in general, noted the number of foreign citizens who visited the city. This applies to the cities of Russia - Orenburg and Novosibirsk. This is probably due to the peculiarity of collecting statistical data in the region.

The data presented above indicates that there is no relationship between such indicators as population, tourist flow and the number of students. The aforementioned examples show that there are small towns with a population of less than 10,000 that successfully attract both tourists and students. And at the same time, there are large cities in which this direction is not developed. Thus, we can conclude that the tourist flow and the number of foreign students have a relationship with the work of local and regional governments in this direction.

Block 3 - Institutional activity - includes eight indicators (the number of world-class universities included in the TOP-600 world rankings, the number of universities in the city with double degree programs, the number of international organizations the city is a member of, the number of organizations with which 1 and more joint events has been held, the number of sister cities and the number of sister cities with which 1 or more joint events has been held, the number of treaties and agreements with cities outside the country, and the number of international organizations in which the city occupies a leading position).

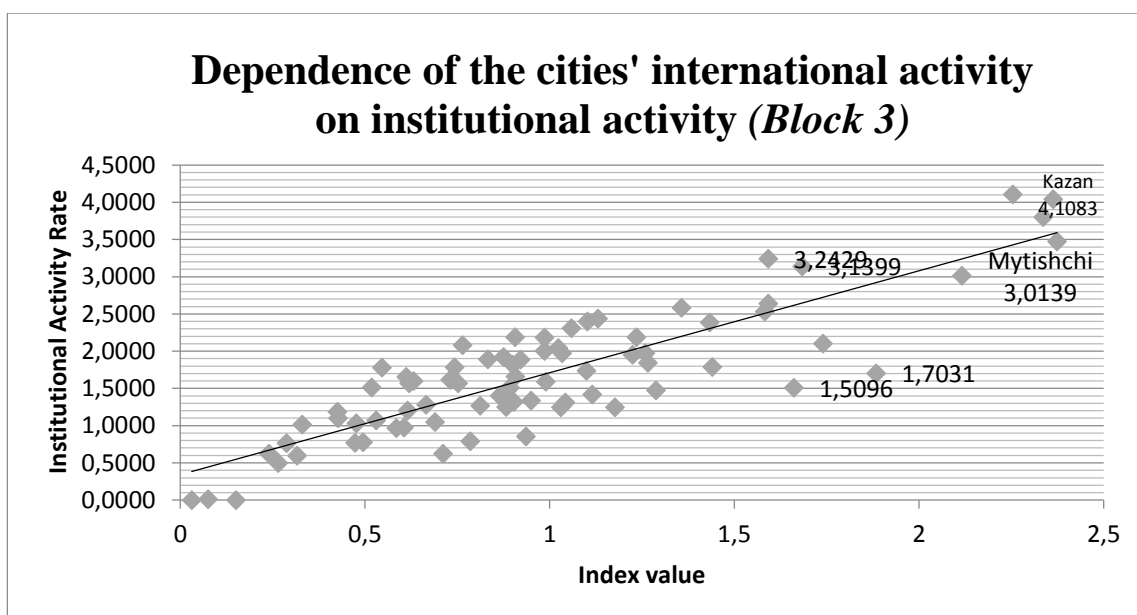


Illustration 4

The first indicators in this group of criteria demonstrate the popularity of the city at the expense of educational institutions located on their territory. Thus, universities that are included in the Top 600 in at least one of the world university rankings are located in 23 cities, which is 29.48%. Most of these universities are located in Kazan and Perm, there are 4 of them. But it should be noted that among these there are 2 branches of universities in Perm, the head office of which is located in Moscow.

Furthermore, in 6 cities (7.69%) of the total list of cities, there are 2 universities, each taking places in international university rankings. Double degree programs can be found in universities of the surveyed cities more often. For instance, 31 cities indicated at least one university with such training programs, this is being 39.74%. Most of the universities with double degree programs are located in Kazan (there are 8 of them) and the 2nd place take the cities of Bishkek, Nizhny Novgorod and Izmir (5 universities each).

Among all the participants, information on membership in international organizations is indicated by 59 municipalities out of 78, which is 75.64%. Among these, 16 municipalities, which is 20.5% of the total number of participants - mark membership in only 1 organization. The most active in this regard is the city of Gaziantep, which confirms its membership in 24 international organizations, Bursa

takes the second place in terms of quantity (19) and the city of Izmir is in third place (16).

This suggests that Turkish municipalities are more actively joining the activities of international organizations compared to Eurasian ones. Thus, among the cities of Eurasia, Kazan is a member of the largest number of international organizations. Bishkek, Comrat and Rostov-on-Don are taking part in the work of seven international organizations and sharing the 2nd position on this indicator among the cities of Eurasia. The 3rd position is taken by the city of Ulyanovsk. Ulyanovsk has its membership in such organizations as UCLG-Eurasia, the International Association "Twin Cities", the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities, the World Health Organization, the Association for Improving the Health and Quality of Life of the Population "Healthy Cities, Districts and Villages ", International Association "Ring of European Blacksmith Cities ".

* Membership in the World Organization "United Cities and Local Governments" was indicated by 52 cities, which are precisely two-thirds of the total number of the survey participants.

However, participation in joint events with the organization matters more from the point of view of the international activity of cities. The membership itself reflects the potential of the city in the international stage, but it is a passive factor influencing the recognition in the world whereas joint activities show the city's active position. Therefore, we separately analyze joint activities carried out to assess this indicator. Of the 59 municipalities that are members of at least one organization, 19 have become co-organizers in at least one event held, which is 32.2%. In absolute terms, the Turkish cities of Bursa and Pendik were more active than others. These cities held 3 joint events each with various international organizations. So, to give an example, Bursa, together with the World Health Organization, hosted the International Congress of Cities and Health. In October 2018, Bursa hosted a conference of the International Public Transport Association. Moreover, the city hosted the 16th Conference of the League of Historic Cities. In 2018, Ufa became the venue for the International Forum of the BRICS Countries

“Involving Citizens in the Development of Public Infrastructure”, as well as hosted the International Forum of the IAG “City Safety, a complex approach”.

Let us consider the share of joint events in the total number of international organizations in which the municipality takes its part. The city of Cheboksary, being a member of one organization - the World Organization "United Cities and Local Governments", hosted the Congress of Eurasia Local Governments in October 2018. The congress was organized jointly with UCLG-Eurasia and with the support of the UCLG World Secretariat, UN-Habitat and the Association of Volga Cities. Thus, the city demonstrates a 100% indicator of the quality of work with the organization. It is important to note that the congress was dedicated to the topic "SDGs and Culture", which is relevant in the international arena. It included not only plenary, but also training sessions. This certainly significant contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals was highly appreciated by the international community.

As outlined above, the Turkish city of Pendik held the largest number of joint events, as well as showed a high indicator of the quality of work with international organizations - which is 75%. Gaziantep - the city leading in terms of quantity - loses in quality, and its share of joint events is only 4%.

The same goes with sister cities. The signing of the treaty between the two municipalities does not yet guarantee the active development of relations between cities. It is important to ensure the maintenance of relations, cultural exchange, and tourism on special conditions. And, of course, to support it through real events is crucial. Most of the research participants noted in the questionnaire that they have at least one sister city and these are 74 cities or 94.87%. In absolute numbers, Ankara has more than other sister cities - which is 51. Of these 74 cities, at least one joint event was held by 60 cities, which is 81.08% of this part. The best quality of work with partner cities was shown by the city of Kaliningrad, which held joint events with 51% of them.

Perm is a city in the Russian Federation with a population of 1 053 000 people. Perm is an important industrial and cultural center of the Urals and one of

the largest transport hubs in Russia. Perm has some experience in the field of international cooperation, in creating an Internet platform for sister cities to be specific. Their website permcitybro.com, is available in both Russian and English. One can find up-to-date news from twinning there, as well as information about joint projects.

In addition to private contracts with organizations and sister cities, we have also analyzed a more general indicator. These are treaties and agreements concluded with cities outside the country. On this indicator, information was provided by 61 cities, which is 78.2%. In absolute numbers, Khabarovsk has the largest number of such treaties and agreements (there are 64 of them), and 10 cities confirm at least one.

An important indicator of the international activity is the election of the mayor of the city to leading positions in international organizations. Generally, the most active members of the organization are elected to the leadership. Therefore, of all the participants, 16 cities occupy a leading position in at least one of the organizations, this is being 20.5%. For instance, the incumbent Mayor of Yakutsk Aisen Nikolaev, Mayor of Astrakhan Alena Gubanova and Mayor of Rostov-on-Don Zinaida Neyarokhina held the positions of vice-president of UCLG-Eurasia. Former Mayor of Ufa Irek Yalalov held a position of president of the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities. Head of the Tiraspol Administration holds the post of vice-president in the same organization. Mayor of Veliky Novgorod is a member of the presidium of the International Hanseatic Union. Kazan has taken the largest number of leadership positions, namely Mayor of Kazan Ilsur Metshin, who is:

- President of UCLG-Eurasia;
- Vice-President of the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities;
- a member of the Board of the Asian Forum of Mayors;
- Vice-Chair of the Current Affairs Committee of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

Kazan, Rostov-on-Don and Bishkek became the leaders in terms of the sum of indicators of the third block “Institutional Activity”. Izmir, Khabarovsk and Perm are very close to them according to the results.

Block 4 - Events - consists of five indicators - the number of abroad events in which the city administration took part; the number of receptions of delegations of foreign states by the city administration; the number of international competitions, grants, in which the city administration took part; prizes awarded for winning in those; and municipality's visits to international events abroad.

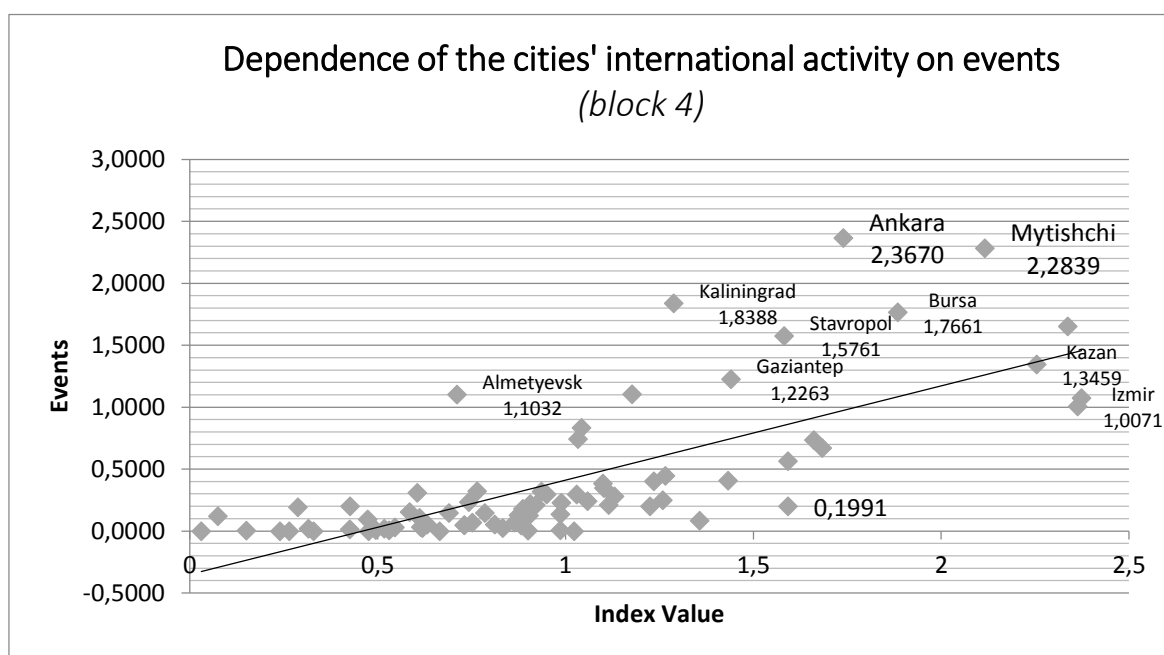


Illustration 5

Thus, representatives of the administration of 62 municipalities participating in the rating (79.48%) went abroad to participate in the events. The administrations of the cities of Bursa, Bishkek and Khabarovsk took part more often than others, these are 52, 41 and 38 events, respectively, and 11 – this is 14.1% of the total number of participants, traveled at least once in 2018.

Let us consider, what was the objective of the visits of the municipality’s representatives? The city of Bursa demonstrates a variety of meetings in such sectors as culture, study of innovative experience, experience sharing in the agriculture sphere, animal farming, transport, and so on. Representatives of Bishkek participated in international events and training seminars as well as visited

capital cities for experience sharing. Most of the visits of the Khabarovsk delegation took place in Chinese cities. Those were made in order to establish economic cooperation and exchange experience in various areas of urban activity.

The second indicator evaluates the number of receptions of foreign delegations in the city. There are slightly more of such participants - these are 66 cities or 84.61%. According to this indicator, Bishkek, Ankara and Tolyatti became the leaders - 46, 41 and 38 events, respectively. Khabarovsk follows immediately after, receiving 37 visits of foreign delegations.

While the leadership of Ankara and Bishkek could be explained by the status of the capital, let us analyze who visited the city of Tolyatti? The city was visited by delegations from Australia, Switzerland, France, Uzbekistan, Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany, Slovenia, China, etc. Basically, these are representatives of sister cities, along with investment companies. The most common purpose of the visit is to get acquainted with the investment and production potential.

Tolyatti is a city in the Samara region, Russia, with a population of 700,000 people. It is surrounded by the Zhiguli mountains and the Volga plains, lakes and the great Russian Volga river. The Samarskaya Luka National Park and Zhiguli Nature Reserve are located nearby. The city is famous for its AVTOVAZ plant, which produces LADA cars of various models.

An interesting event as regards the international agenda was held in Astrakhan - a seminar entitled "Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 at the National and Local Levels: Theory and Practice". It is gratifying to note that cities are gradually being included in the implementation of global programs.

Comrat proved to be the leader in attracting grants, thanks to which it was possible to build projects in the field of infrastructure, improvement and tourism. The city's partners include such organizations as the European Union, USAID, UNDP and others.

** Comrat is a city and a municipality in the south of Moldova, the capital of the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia. The Gagauz are a Turkic people of the*

Christian faith. The food industry is the backbone of the city's economy. In Comrat and its surroundings there are several large wineries that produce wines with high international ratings.

The leader in terms of the sum of points in the block of indicators "Events" is Khabarovsk, whose representatives participated in 38 foreign events. Besides Khabarovsk's mayor's office received 37 visits of foreign delegations.

The city of Bursa ranked second, and Bishkek is in third place. Comrat follows a little behind the top three. However, the high rating is achieved not through participation in events and the reception of foreign delegations, but through the receipt of grants. Among the medium-sized cities, Kobryn and Yelabuga are most active in terms of participation in events. Representatives of Kobryn went abroad 6 times to participate in the City Days in 2018 as well as received 9 foreign delegations. Yelabuga also traveled abroad 6 times and received 4 foreign delegations.

** **Kobryn** is a city in the Brest region of Belarus. Its population is around 53,000 people. Kobryn is an important junction of road transport. Major international highways pass through the city. Kobryn is associated with the life of the commander A.V. Suvorov. Here Catherine II gave Suvorov an estate for the defeat of the Kościuszko Uprising.*

** **Yelabuga** is a city in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia. It is one of the oldest settlements in Tatarstan with a 1000-year history. A special economic zone "Alabuga" of industrial and production type has been opened on the territory of the Yelabuga region since December 2005. Serial production of the FIAT Ducato was launched at the SOLLERS-Elabuga enterprise.*

Among large cities, the most active in the "Events" block are Mogilev, Mytishchi and Yakutsk.

In general, one can note a relationship between the population size and activity in terms of participation in international events and the reception of foreign delegations.

Block 5 - Infrastructure - consists of the number of visa application centers and their representative offices, embassies and consulates of foreign states, as well as the headquarters of international organizations in the city, the presence of an international airport within 100 km and the number of direct international air routes at the airport(s) within reach of 100 km.

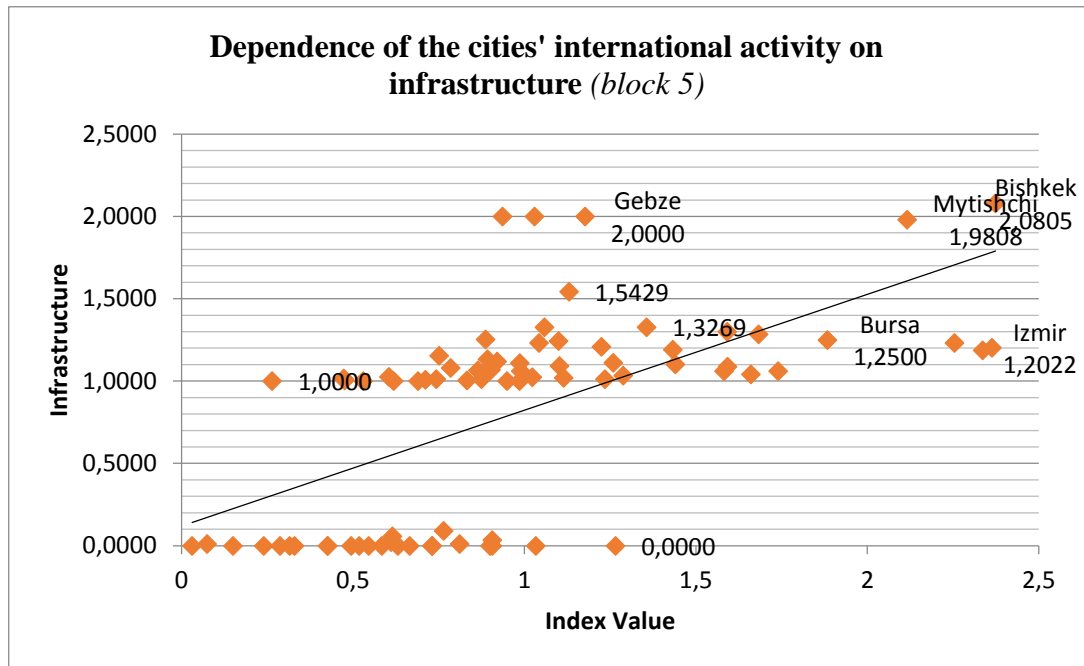


Illustration 6

Of all the participants, only 34 cities provided data on the number of embassies and consulates, headquarters of international organizations and visa application centers located on their territory and this is 46.15%. The largest number of such facilities is located in the city of Bishkek and it is 88 institutions. The city of Yekaterinburg is ranked second in terms of the number of visa centers and their representations, embassies and consulates of foreign states - there are 38 of them. The city of Perm is in third place (23).

In Bishkek there are embassies of such countries as Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Belarus, Germany, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Qatar, China, Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Ireland, USA, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, France, Switzerland and Japan. Here are the offices of the European Union, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, UN Women, the International Monetary Fund and many other organizations.

The city of Yekaterinburg ranked second among cities with a population of over 1 million. Likewise, it is in first place among the cities of Russia. 38 international institutions are located here, namely 16 consulates general, honorary consuls of 11 countries and 11 visa centers.

In 44 out of 78 cities participating in the research, and this is slightly more than a half, there are no visa application centers and their representative offices, embassies and consulates of foreign states. None of the small cities have visa application centers. Among the medium-sized cities, only the city of Çanakkale has a corresponding institution - the Consulate of Australia. The fact is that during the World War I, the Battle of Dardanelles took place in Çanakkale, which became the baptism of fire, the first and largest battle in the history of Australia and New Zealand. The day of its beginning (April 25) is celebrated in these countries as a national Day of Remembrance. The famous Australian film "Gallipoli" (1981) is dedicated to this.

** Çanakkale is a Turkish port city. It is located off the coast of the Dardanelles, which connects the Marmara and Aegean Seas. The oldest settlement near Çanakkale was founded around 4800 BC., later its descendants founded Troy. During the World War I, the main events of the Dardanelles operation took place in the Çanakkale region. Nowadays, the city is a port, tourist and university center. A large production of canned fish is located here.*

Among large cities, the presence of visa application centers, consulates and headquarters is indicated by 11 municipalities out of 27, which is 40.7%. The leader among them is the city of Belgorod, where 10 visa application centers are located. Yakutsk ranks second with its 7 visa application centers. In Murmansk and Osh there are not only visa centers, but also consulates. Thus, the Consulate General of the Kingdom of Norway in Murmansk and the Honorary Consulate of the Kingdom of Sweden, the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Belarus, the Honorary Consulate of Iceland and the Murmansk Branch of the Consulate General of Finland in St. Petersburg are located in Murmansk.

The Consulate General of the Russian Federation, the Consulate General of the PRC, the Consulate of Kazakhstan and the representative office of the German Embassy are based in the city of Osh. None of the large cities have the headquarters of international organizations.

The largest cities also do not indicate themselves as the headquarters of international organizations. Khabarovsk and Orenburg are leading in terms of the number of visa application centers and consulates. There are 11 of them here.

** **Orenburg** is a city in Russia located in the southern Urals on the banks of the Ural River, close to the border with Kazakhstan. Orenburg's geographical position determines the strong trade, industrial, economic and investment ties as well as the presence of a common engineering network with Kazakhstan. Its population is near 580,000 people.*

The presence of **an airport of international importance** is indicated by 53 cities, which is 67.95%. The Turkish city of Gebze is the leader in the number of international air destinations. Due to the proximity to Istanbul (about 30 km), citizens have access to 261 international destinations. However, the city does not have its own airport. The situation is the same in Mytishchi - due to its proximity to Moscow, city residents have access to 256 international destinations. If we consider the cities' own airports, then Bishkek is the leader in terms of the number of regular flights.

By the sum of indicators in the “Infrastructure” block, the city of Bishkek is in the lead. It is followed by the city of Gebze, which benefits from its convenient proximity to Istanbul. Among large cities, Tiraspol stands out, whose residents have access to 41 international destinations. The airports of Odessa and Chişinău are located nearby Tiraspol.

** Tiraspol is the capital of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic. Its population is 127,000 people. The city was founded in 1792 by special order of Alexander Suvorov. A wine festival is held here annually.*

Block 6 - Administrative information - includes such aspects of the international activity of cities as: the presence in the city administration of a department in charge of international activities, the level of English proficiency of the department's specialists, the presence of a full-time translator, a constantly updated English version of the city administration website, as well as the website version in other languages.

Dependence of the international activity of cities on the presence of an international activity department, the level of English proficiency, the presence of a full-time translator and a constantly updated English version of the site, as well as version in other languages

(block 6)

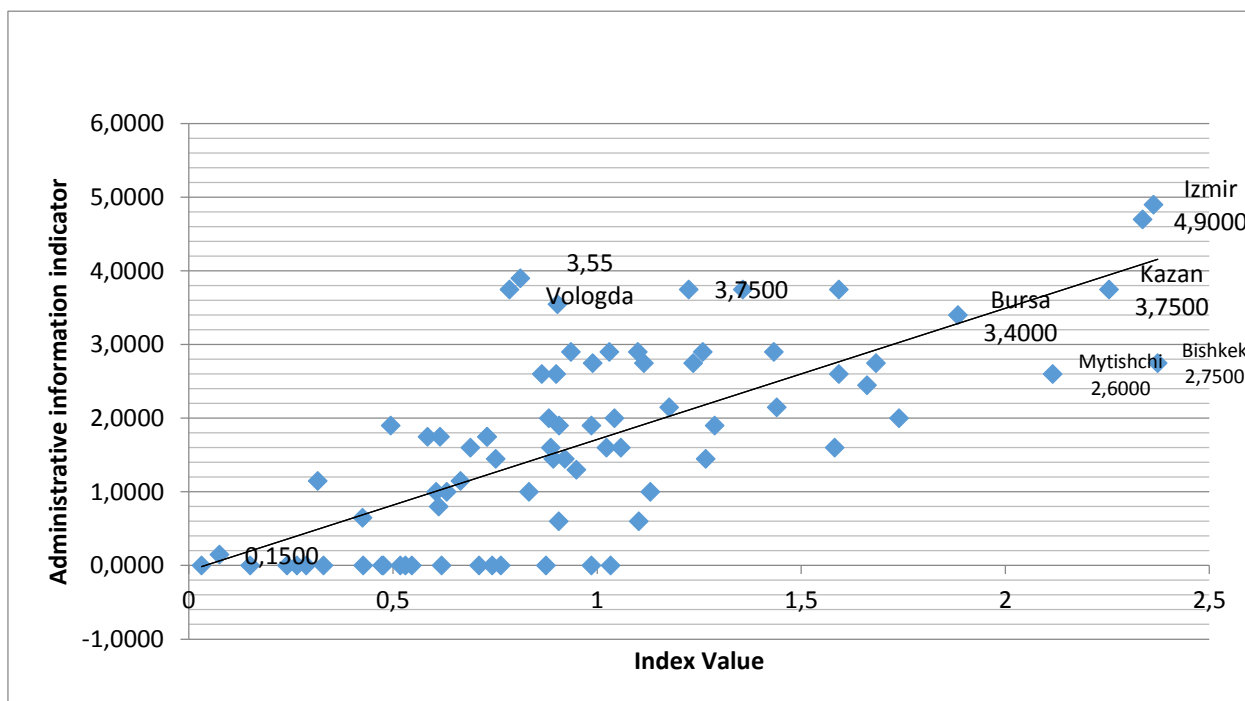


Illustration 7

Among the respondents, 53 cities (68%) confirm the presence of a department dealing with issues of international cooperation in their administration. Almost half of them (47%) show a high level of English proficiency - these are the C1-C2 levels of the international classification. Although only 30 cities (38.46%) have a department or at least a staff unit in the administration structure responsible

for work with translations. This figure fully coincides with the number of cities that have a constantly updated English version of the city website. Thus, more than half of the cities participating in the ranking are not properly provided with specialists with knowledge of the international language. However, just the presence of the city page in English does not really matter if there is no maintenance of the website, that is: making updates about the life of the city, news, the ability to find information about the head of the city, contacts by which it is possible to contact the international department to establish cooperation and communication. Therefore, the websites of cities were additionally analyzed for these three parameters. Out of 30 cities, only 18 (60%) received points for the website, which is only 23% of the total number of survey participants. 10 cities (12%) - Izmir, Astrakhan, Izhevsk, Kazan, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Mogilev, Nizhny Novgorod, Togliatti, Ufa received the maximum rating for this indicator. Among the small cities, only Beit Jala (Palestine) has an English version of the website.

City websites were also reviewed for language versions that are not native to any of the country's territories. Only 4 cities (5, 19%) had such pages:

- Nizhny Novgorod - the website <https://нижнийновгород.рф/Municipalitet/management/Contacts> is available in the English, French, German, Spanish languages. All versions of the site are being regularly updated. It is easy to find information about the city, its administration and contact information.
- Izmir - official city website - <https://www.izmir.bel.tr/> - Besides Turkish, it is available in the Russian, English, German, French, Chinese and Spanish languages.
- Astrakhan - the site <http://astrgorod.ru/> uses a Google translation tool that allows you to translate the site into all major languages of the world. The site is regularly updated. The contact details of the City Hall staff are available here.

- Ulyanovsk - the main sections of the city site <http://ulmeria.ru/de>, including contacts, are presented in the English, German, French languages. However, the news is published only in Russian.
- Khabarovsk - the website <https://int.khabarovskadm.ru/> is available in the English, Chinese, Japanese and Korean languages. The main page of the English version contains contacts of the international department and current news. The drop-down menu provides information about the city's administration, tourism, investment potential, etc.

The analysis of the city administration's activity management allows us to single out Izmir, Khabarovsk and Izhevsk among the leaders. Just like in Izmir and Khabarovsk, there is an international affairs department in the Izhevsk municipality, whose members are at B2-C2 levels in English. In addition, the website of Izhevsk has an updated English version; here you can find the information about the city administration, investment potential, international activities, sightseeing attractions, etc.

It is gratifying to know that 55 cities (70.5%) indicate that there is an international affairs department in the city mayor's office. Mainly cities with small population does not have this department. However, administrative centers such as Tver, Yoshkar-Ola, Astrakhan, Kirov, and Tomsk can be an exception.

It should be noted that in cities such as Bishkek, Izmir, Khabarovsk, Kazan, Bursa – the top five rating leaders – there are international affairs departments in the city administration. The members of such departments in Izmir, Khabarovsk and Bishkek cities are fluent in English (Proficiency English (C2) or Advanced English (C1). High levels of English proficiency also have staffers of departments in the city administrations of Rostov-on-Don (A1/C1/C2, 8th place), Perm (A2–C2, 11th place), Tiraspol (C2, 14th place), Ufa (B2/C1, 15th place), Nizhny Novgorod (B2/C1, 20th place), etc.

The conclusion is that a high position in the rating of international activity correlates with such indicators as the presence of the international affairs

department, the level of English proficiency and the maintenance of English version of the city administration website, as well as versions with other languages.

The city's position in the rating of municipalities' international activity depends on an overall score received from six conditional blocks - Business activity, Human capital, Institutional activity, Events, Infrastructure, Administrative information. These aspects are presented in the aggregated Index of cities international activity. As a rule, the leading positions in the rating are occupied by cities with a million-plus population, or the largest or large cities with high values according to the score described above. There is a situation when one of the highest scores in a block can compensate the score for one or two other blocks.

The Research on Municipalities' International Activity 2019 is based on data for 2018, some of which are given for the year at the end of the year, others - for the cumulative total for all the previous time (for example, the number of twin cities). The geographical diversity of project participants was the feature of this year's research: 7 countries took part, including Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Turkey and Palestine. The increase in participating countries indicates an awareness growth of the rating, the interest in participating in similar projects held by cities and municipalities, as well as, importantly, the questionnaire accuracy and its availability for other countries in the international arena, in which the methods of collecting and analyzing statistical data may differ significantly.

In the final version of the research, 78 cities took part and, as we noted above, some of the cities were eliminated at the stage of the initial check of the layouts for the fullness of the data. For comparison, in a 2017 study, only 54 participants remained after a similar check.

The table presented below shows us the ranking position of the city and its score, which was calculated according to the corresponding formula, which was mentioned in the first part. Therefore, the maximum possible score that a city can

get is 5.29. However, to make it possible the ideal framework is needed, in which one city is the first according to all indicators, in all categories and as a result in the final ranking consequently.

Taking into account the calculation methodology, as well as the rating system of the research, we obtain results in which the city, which often takes the leading positions, will occupy a leading position in the final ranking.

Analysis of the leaders of the Rating of Municipalities' International Activity

According to the ranking results, we can see that Bishkek became the winner of the 2019 rating, taking the lead with a slim margin over the second place. Moreover, it should be noted that all three first places differ by tenths of a point, which tells us about the undoubted leadership of these municipalities in comparison with others and that each of them is a leader in a particular area, we will have a closer look at it hereinafter.

1. Bishkek

Bishkek is the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic; a modern city with wide streets, beautiful buildings and an abundance of greenery. It is a home for 1 million 12 thousand people.

Bishkek took the first place in the "Rating of Municipalities' International Activity– 2019". It indicates that the city governments pay great attention to the development of international relations.

Bishkek is leading in the group of indicators in the Infrastructure block. As for the competitive advantages – there are 88 institutions from the number of embassies and consulates, headquarters of international organizations and visa centers. In addition to the embassies and consulates of various countries, there are the Delegation of the European Union, the UNDP Resident Mission, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Women Office, the Eurasian Development Bank, the Office of the World Health Organization, the International

Organization for Migration, the UN Regional Center for preventive diplomacy for Central Asia and many representative offices of other international organizations.

The international airport "Manas" operates direct regular flights to Almaty, Nur-Sultan, Voronezh, Grozny, Yekaterinburg, Irkutsk, Kazan, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Rostov-on-Don, St. Petersburg, Surgut, Dubai, Dushanbe, Tashkent, Istanbul, Urumqi, Ulaanbaatar, etc.

In the Business Activity block, Bishkek is the best in terms of the number of enterprises with foreign capital, there are 16,224 of them here. Moreover, the share of foreign enterprises in the total number of enterprises is also high (23.87%). In terms of the sum of the block's indicators, Bishkek took second place.

In the "Institutional Activity" block, Bishkek also takes the second position. Bishkek is a member of such international organizations as the "United Cities and Local Governments", the Alliance of Silk Road Cities, the International Assembly of CIS Capitals and Large Cities (MAG), the Union of Turkic World Municipalities, the Forum for Cooperation and Development of Cities in the Silk Road Economic Belt, the Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities, and the Forum of Asian Mayors. The mayor of Bishkek is vice-president of the Eurasia regional section of the World organization "United Cities and Local Governments" and vice-president of the International Association of Capitals and Large Cities (MAG).

Bishkek has a high proportion of foreign tourists (63.25%) and a relatively high proportion of foreign students (14%). Among them, there are newcomers from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Egypt, South Korea, China, Brazil, Philippines, Nepal, Afghanistan. Students are attracted by the relatively low tuition costs. In addition, five Bishkek universities implement double degree programs.

Bishkek also took the third place in the "Events" block. Representatives of the Bishkek administration have traveled abroad 41 times to participate in the events. Mainly these are large international events and investment sites. The Bishkek municipality received 46 foreign delegations from all over the world.

It should be noted that in the structure of the city administration there is a department in charge of international activities, whose members are fluent in English (C2 - fluently, C1 – professionally, according to the criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)). The department is actively working with foreign cities and international organizations; participates in international projects and programs.

Thus, the main criteria for the international activity of the city of Bishkek are the capital position and the active participation of the city administration in the field of establishing and maintaining international relations with the involvement of modern approaches in the field of business operations, the development of the social environment of the municipality.

2. Izmir

Izmir is the third most populous city and the second largest port in Turkey. It is located in the west of Turkey on the Aegean coast. Izmir is an ancient city founded more than three thousand years ago. In ancient times it was called Smyrna. It is a vibrant city of olives, figs and grapes with a rich cultural and historical heritage, whose history is related to the ancient Greeks and Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans. Izmir today is a dynamic, fast-growing metropolis with rich history and a large number of universities and young people. It is a city with a European Mediterranean atmosphere, where modern glass facades and wide boulevards coexist with traditional red-tiled roofs and old mosques. It is a very unique place for Turkey.

The city of Izmir with a population of 4 million 320 thousand people took the second place in the "Rating of Municipalities' International Activity - 2019", which corresponds to the high degree of attention of the city leadership to attracting international resources for the development of the municipality.

It should be noted that the gap from the first place is insignificant, which justifies the high potential for further development in the field of international communications.

A significant number of branches and representative offices of foreign companies operate on the territory of Izmir, but their share of the total number of economic entities is lower than in Bishkek.

The share of foreign tourists in the total tourist flow is 60 percent. However, in comparison with other cities in the ranking, Izmir takes only 10th place in this score. This may indicate the important role of Izmir for domestic tourism. In absolute terms, the annual flow of foreign tourists to the city of Izmir is a record for this rating.

Together with Khabarovsk, Izmir shares the third place in the block of indicators "Institutional Activity". The city is a member of 16 international organizations, such as UCLG, the Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities, the Network of European Cities (Eurocities) and others.

Izmir is in 17th place in terms of infrastructure, with an international airport within 18 kilometers from the city, which is an indicator of the small number of visa centers and their representative offices, embassies and consulates of foreign states, as well as the headquarters of international organizations in the city.

Izmir is the leader of the "Administrative Information" block. Within the structure of the city administration, there is a department in charge of international affairs, whose members are fluent in English (C2 - fluently, C1 – professionally, according to the criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)). The city's official website <https://www.izmir.bel.tr/> is available in Turkish, Russian, English, German, French, Chinese and Spanish.

3. Khabarovsk

The city of Khabarovsk (the population is 617.4 thousand people) took part in the "Rating of Municipalities' International Activity - 2019" and took the 3rd place according to the calculated indicators. It is significant that Khabarovsk is the only city with a population of less than a million that is in the top ten leaders of the rating.

Khabarovsk is a city in Russia, the center of the Khabarovsk Region, the largest city in terms of population in the Far East, the administrative center of the Far Eastern Federal District. It is located on the Amur River, near the borders with China. On the Russian 5,000-ruble banknote, you can see the local sights - a bridge, a cliff and a monument to Nikolai Muravyov.

During the research, Khabarovsk turned out to be the strongest according to several indicators. Thus, the city became the leader of the "Events" block. This was due to the fact that the delegation of Khabarovsk took part in 38 foreign events. These are mainly cultural events and investment and economic forums in China and Korea. Among others, the participation in the World Council of UCLG, held in Madrid, stands out. In addition, the Khabarovsk mayor's office received 37 visits of official delegations from Japan, China, Korea, Belarus, Mongolia and the United States.

At the same time, Khabarovsk demonstrates a high degree of participation in the field of concluding contracts and agreements with foreign cities. Khabarovsk signed 64 agreements in 2018, which is a record for this rating. Khabarovsk showed the best results among the largest cities in terms of the number of foreign tourists. In 2018, 50,000 foreigners visited the city.

Khabarovsk ranks first in the "Administrative Information" block. Within the structure of the city administration, there is a department in charge of international affairs, whose members are fluent in English (C2 - fluently, C1 – professionally, according to the criteria of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)).

The official website of Khabarovsk is available in English, Chinese, Japanese and Korean (as of 2018). The main page of the English version contains contacts of the international department and current news. The drop-down menu provides information about the city's leadership, tourism, investment potential, etc.

It should be noted that the city needs to work more towards opening enterprises with the participation of foreign capital and representative offices of foreign companies. In addition, Khabarovsk has significant potential to attract

more than 50,000 foreign tourists a year. This may be facilitated by the creation of a tourism department in the city administration. The advantages of Khabarovsk in terms of tourist attractiveness include its proximity to the countries of Northeast Asia, the extended border with the People's Republic of China and major transport corridors, as well as the peculiarities of the cultural, historical and natural tourist potential.

In general, we can conclude that Khabarovsk is an important center of cooperation with the countries of North-East Asia. This orientation is due to the geographical proximity and complementarity of economies. China continues to be the leader in international relations of the region and the largest foreign trade partner. Currently, the city of Khabarovsk has 6 twin cities – Niigata (Japan), Portland (USA), Victoria (Canada), Harbin (PRC), Buchon (South Korea), Sanya (PRC).

Khabarovsk also participated in previous ratings in 2015 and 2017, and took 2nd and 1st places, respectively. This once again confirms the effective work of the city governments towards the international relations development.

4. Kazan

Kazan is a city in Russia, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan, a large port on the left bank of the Volga River at the confluence of the Kazanka River. The largest city in terms of population in the Volga Federal District and on the Volga River. One of the largest economic, scientific, educational, religious, cultural and sports centers in Russia. The Kazan Kremlin is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The millennium of Kazan was celebrated in 2005. Historically, it was the capital of the Kazan Khanate, the Kazan province and the Tatar ASSR. Kazan has repeatedly hosted high-level international competitions in various sports, including the XXVII World Summer Universiade in 2013, as well as a number of matches of the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Kazan took the 4th place in the "Rating of Municipalities' International Activity - 2019". Possessing significant competitive advantages in the field of

international cooperation, the city of Kazan is systematically moving along this development trajectory, using the opportunities of the cultural, historical and socio-economic potential, as well as the status of the capital of the republic within the Russian Federation.

Among the strengths of Kazan the successful attraction of tourists can be noted. In 2018, 3,200,000 tourists visited the city. This is a record number among the cities participating in the study. Kazan distinguishes tourism as a separate cluster of socio-economic development of the territory. In the structure of the city administration, there is a subdivision of the Kazan Committee for Tourism, which also oversaw the issues of international activities (until 2020, when a separate department of international relations was created).

Kazan is first in the “Institutional Activity” block. Membership in 12 international organizations and leadership in four of them promote the leading positions; namely Mayor of Kazan Ilсур Metshin has been holding the following positions:

- President of the Eurasia regional section of the World organization UCLG;
- Vice-President of the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities;
- A member of the Board of the Asian Forum of Mayors;
- Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Current Affairs of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

Kazan is also one of the leaders in this rating in terms of the number of universities included in the world rankings of universities, as well as universities that implement double degree programs.

Kazan has extensive and active cross-border cooperation. The experience of Kazan is of interest to other cities in the world. It is no coincidence that the headquarters of the Eurasia regional section of the World organization "United Cities and Local Governments" is located in Kazan.

The priorities of forming Kazan's image of a world city are fixed as a development goal in the Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of the Municipal Formation of Kazan until 2030.

5. Bursa

Bursa is the fourth largest city in Turkey after Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir; it is located 20 km from the Sea of Marmara. Bursa attracts tourists with its rich history, mineral, hot thermal springs, ski resorts and beaches of the Marmara Sea. The city is also famous for being the first capital of the Ottoman Empire in 1326-1365.

The city of Bursa took the fifth position in the Rating of Municipalities' International Activity. Among the strengths of the city a large number of enterprises with foreign capital can be noted (2 792), which is two times more than in the million-plus cities, such as Izmir and Kazan, which took higher positions. However, Bursa is significantly inferior in the number of branches and representative offices of foreign companies, of which there are only 31.

Bursa ranks second in the "Human Capital" block. The city became the best in terms of the share of foreign students, which was 27%. Out of the 113 thousand students, 30,549 are foreigners. The share of foreign tourists is also quite high. Out of 1,625,000 tourists, 370,000 came from abroad, which is 22.78%.

Bursa became the leader in the number of foreign events in which the municipality took part (50). These are all kinds of meetings and forums on culture, innovation, transport, agriculture, etc. Most of the visits took place in European countries. Visits to Georgia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and China are of main importance also.

In addition, Bursa has 25 twin cities and is a member of 19 international organizations; however, it holds leadership positions in none of them, as of 2018.

Thus, it can be concluded that Bursa is effectively working in such areas as foreign tourists and students' attraction and active participation in international

events and organizations. All this allows the city to enter the TOP-5 rating confidently.

Small rating

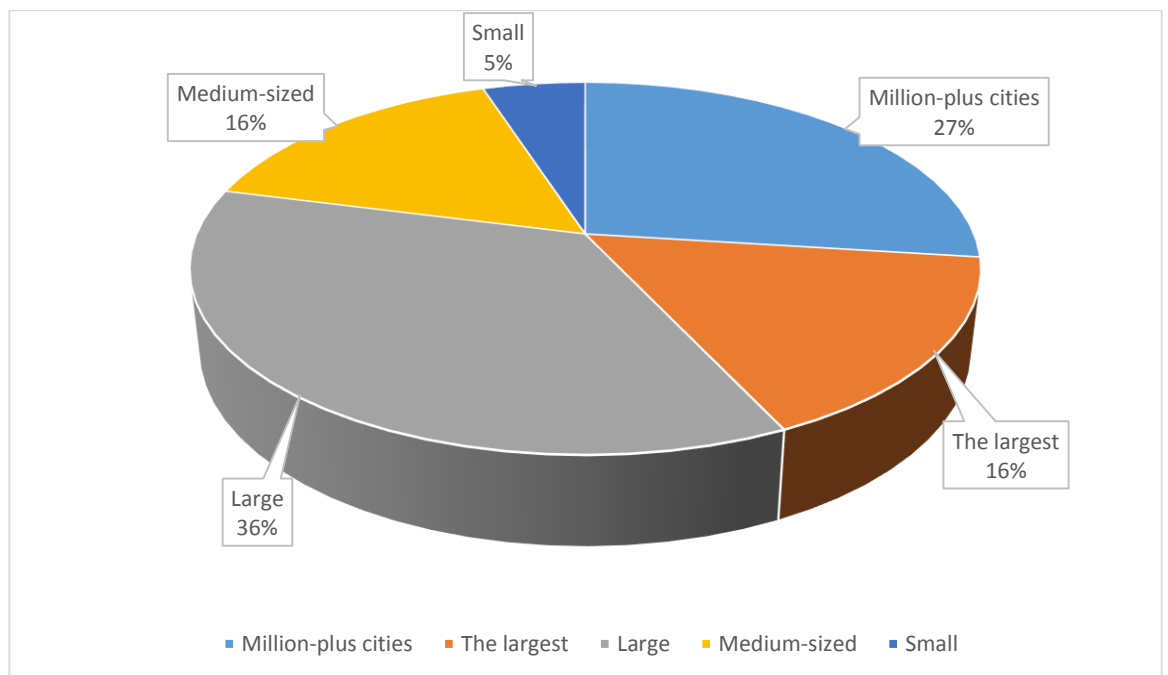
In addition to the formation of a general rating of the cities' international activity, it is important to rank participants based on their number, which will allow us to compare cities with similar ones in terms of the size.

In the small rating, we have abided the following classification of cities by the population:

- Million-plus cities - with a population of over 1 million people.
- The largest - from 500,000 to 1,000,000 people.
- Large - from 100,000 to 499,999 people.
- Medium-sized - from 20,000 to 99,999 people.
- Small - up to 19,900 people.

The following graph will clearly show the distribution of cities participating in the study by number:

Table 2



The list of places the cities took in the small rating is hereinafter.

Million-plus cities (with a population of over 1 million people)

Table 3

Small rating position	Overall rating position	City	Population	Score
1	1	Bishkek	1 012 500	2,573488
2	2	Izmir	4 320 519	2,428447
3	4	Kazan	1 251 969	2,299212
4	5	Bursa	2 994 521	2,083762
5	6	Rostov-on-Don	1 133 315	1,970804
6	7	Perm	1 053 938	1,725622
7	8	Gaziantep	2 028 563	1,563521
8	9	Ufa	1 135 480	1,562278
9	10	Ankara	5 503 985	1,53302
10	13	Sanliurfa	2 035809	1,379655
11	16	Krasnoyarsk	1 096 086	1,285519
12	17	Nizhny Novgorod	1 259 000	1,27105
13	21	Novosibirsk	1 618 039	1,118353
14	22	Yekaterinburg	1 515 800	1,111312
15	24	Krasnodar	1 000 000	1,044381
16	25	Mersin	1 814 468	1,039273
17	26	Shymkent	1 009 086	1,033457
18	29	Kocaeli	1 906371	0,90777
19	41	Samara	1 156 644	0,776088
20	47	Balikesir	1 226 575	0,688862
21	63	Voronezh	1 054111	0,312104

Million-plus cities took 9 places in the TOP-10 of the rating, which indicates their high competitiveness.

The five leaders of the small rating included Bishkek, Izmir, Kazan, Bursa, Rostov-on-Don. We have already described the first four cities above. Let us consider Rostov-on-Don. Among the competitive advantages of Rostov-on-Don, one can note a good share of foreign tourists (16%), Southern Federal University and Rostov State Economic University (RINH) are in the TOP-600 world rankings, and together with Rostov State Transport University provide students with double degree programs.

Rostov-on-Don demonstrates 100% activity in working with its twin cities. In 2018, joint programs and events were held with each of the 14 sister cities. The result of active cooperation with international organizations can be considered the election of mayor of the city Zinaida Neyarokhina as vice-president of the Eurasia regional section of UCLG and a member of the board of the International Association "Twin Cities". These and other advantages allowed Rostov-on-Don to take a second position in the "Institutional Activity" block and sixth in the overall rating.

The largest cities (with a population from 500,000 to 999,999 people)

Table 4

Small rating position	Overall rating position	City	Population	Score
1	3	Khabarovsk	617 473	2,30656
2	30	Ulyanovsk	626 540	0,89445
3	31	Tomsk	596 446	0,885755
4	32	Pendik	693 000	0,852759
5	34	Tolyatti	702 831	0,834693
6	45	Astrakhan	534 251	0,721741
7	48	Orenburg	580 051	0,676165
8	50	Cheboksary	506 267	0,628343

9	51	Izhevsk	648 213	0,627427
10	52	Naberezhnye Chelny	533907	0,621312
11	59	Ryazan	539800	0,465794
12	67	Kirov	538 724	0,259085

Twelve largest cities were involved in the study. As can be seen from the table, the largest cities, with the exception of Khabarovsk, occupy positions in the overall ranking starting from the 30th. Each city has its own strengths and weaknesses. For example, Ulyanovsk is more active in participation in international organizations than Khabarovsk. Tomsk is purposefully working to attract tourists and foreign students. Tolyatti hosted 37 foreign delegations in 2018, becoming one of the leaders in this area. Astrakhan distinguished itself as the best indicator among the largest cities in attracting tourists – 1,600,000 tourists visited the city in 2018.

Large cities (with a population from 100,000 to 499,999 people)

Table 5

Small rating position	Overall rating position	City	Population	Score
1	11	Mytishchi	248 671	1,457066
2	12	Mogilev	383 300	1,395212
3	14	Stavropol	437 335	1,350972
4	18	Kaliningrad	482443	1,266607
5	19	Yakutsk	311 760	1,187334
6	20	Tiraspol	127 654	1,153242
7	23	Mezitli	194 019	1,073858
8	28	Jalal-Abad	119 076	0,950872
9	33	Belgorod	392 426	0,852603

10	35	Osh	270 400	0,830889
11	36	Murmansk	292 465	0,820815
12	37	Tver	420 850	0,817885
13	39	Vladimir	359 960	0,786668
14	42	Komsomolsk-on-Amur	246 607	0,771181
15	44	Bobruisk	217 000	0,731454
16	46	Gebze	371 000	0,696279
17	49	Velikiy Novgorod	218 724	0,671667
18	53	Vologda	319 074	0,618634
19	55	Kurgan	318 045	0,59676
20	56	Sevastopol	439 941	0,539277
21	57	Bryansk	422 796	0,519826
22	62	Almetyevsk	157 310	0,375538
23	64	Soligorsk	106 458	0,305948
24	66	Sanjaktepe	414 143	0,268108
25	68	Syzran	169 444	0,249662
26	71	Yoshkar-Ola	282 803	0,200432
27	77	Kyzylorda	303 109	0,030633
28	78	Untitled city	205 000	0,026101

Large cities accounted for more than a third of the research participants (36%). The leaders among large cities were Mytishchi, Mogilev and Stavropol, Kaliningrad and Yakutsk also entered the TOP-5.

The Mayor's Office of the city of Mytishchi took part in 25 foreign events, organized a meeting with 21 foreign delegations on its territory, and took part in 13 international competitions and grants.

The proximity to one of the Moscow airports with 256 direct international flights raises the rating in the “Infrastructure” block to the leading scores. The international activity of the city of Mytishchi can increase primarily due to the

improvement of the development of the urban environment and the education system, which in the future may become a driver for the development of the city's human capital in its international dimension.

Mogilev distinguished itself by a high amount of foreign tourists - according to data for 2018, the city was visited by 2,763 tourists, of which 1,674 were foreigners. The city also demonstrates a 100% indicator of the quality of work with the organization. Mogilev, as a member of the organization called the International Assembly of Capitals and Large Cities, hosted the V Forum of the Regions of Belarus and Russia in October 2018. Stavropol did not take any leadership position in any area, but showed good results in all areas of work, which together allowed the city to take the third position among large cities. It is worth noting the absence of an English-language version of the site for all three leaders in this category, which, of course, is recommended to be added as soon as possible.

Medium-sized cities (with a population from 20,000 to 99,999 people)

Table 6

Small rating position	Overall rating position	City	Population	Score
1	15	Comrat	23 300	1,31244
2	38	Magadan	99 671	0,792532
3	40	Bugulma	83 741	0,776176
4	43	Kobryn	53 411	0,760335
5	54	Yelabuga	73 913	0,599502
6	60	Uglich	32 027	0,447864
7	61	Canakkale	94 762	0,382546
8	69	Naryan-Mar	24 775	0,233146
9	70	Talas	37 740	0,225644
10	72	Sulukta	23 513	0,155985

11	73	Rechytsa	65 873	0,125364
12	74	Zelenodolsk	99 743	0,120624
13	75	Kara- Kul	25 890	0,086739

The research involved 13 medium-sized cities, which is 16% of the total number of participants. Comrat, Bugulma and Kobryn became the leaders among them. Moreover, Comrat is leading by a significant margin due to the high amount of foreign tourists (66%), active cooperation with international organizations and twin cities, as well as participation in grants.

Small cities (with a population up to 19,999 people)

Table 7

Small rating position	Overall rating position	City	Population	Score
1	27	Magas	10976	1,235218
2	58	Bolgar	8381	0,546033
3	65	Beit Jala	15670	0,425653
4	76	Aydarken	11900	0,074647

Four small cities took part in the research. For cities with such a small population, the participation in the study itself is already an indicator of an active position.

Magas showed a good result in terms of the share of foreign tourists (12%), and active work in the framework of international organizations. Bolgar has a noteworthy indicator of attracting tourists – the city was visited by 521,000 tourists. Beit Jala is the only small city that has an English version of the site. It is also the only city in Palestine to participate in the study.

Based on the presented data, we can conclude that the international image of the city and its recognition directly depend on the participation of local

governments. In conclusion, here are some recommendations that will increase the attractiveness of the city in the international arena.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUNICIPALITIES' INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Following the consideration of the data obtained, it is advisable to formulate some recommendations that can be useful in planning and implementing municipal policy in this area.

International activity is a complex, multifactorial concept that needs to be assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The experience in researching this phenomenon is not considerable, and it is impossible to say unequivocally which exact factors affect efficiency to a greater extent, and which forms and methods of activity do not directly guarantee success.

Any research, any rating, to a certain extent, limits the consideration of an object - a city in this context - both in terms of the selected indicators and in terms of the information that is available for obtaining in the form of statistical data.

The conducted research allows developing a list of recommendations nonetheless. By implementing them, the city will not only be able to increase its rating in the practice of international activity, but also increase its recognition and attractiveness in the eyes of international partners, as well as strengthen its position in terms of competitiveness.

1. The initial measure, which significantly increases the potential of any entity of external relations, is to develop a high-quality and up-to-date **website targeted at international cooperation**. Doing this requires paying attention to the following issues:

- The official website of the city must have an English-language version, since English is the leading language in the international business communication. It is recommended to create website versions in the languages of those countries the city is oriented to cooperate with or has already established relationships.

– It is important to provide up-to-date information in all the website languages. If the city's budget cannot provide the regular translation of all the city news, then at least all the significant ones should be translated. A page with contact details and information about mayor the city should be translated as well.

– Contact information should be displayed in a conspicuous place, preferably in the upper right corner of the website page. It is important that an English-speaking employee answers the calls which are received by the number indicated in the English version of the website.

– It is recommended to post a photo gallery with attractive photos on the website. You can run a city photo contest to create a collection of the best photos. This is a key point to pay attention to. It is important to post not only photos of the main city attractions, but also pictures from the places of events. For example, photos taken during international conferences, performances of local and worldwide "celebrities" or mass events; on the other hand, there are historical spots and the newest districts of mass building. Such "lively" photos perfectly convey city's mood, its living in the moment. Photos form the first impression of a city, and viewing a photo gallery should make a site visitor want to visit your city.

– It is advised to post a presentation of the investment potential on the website.

– It will be useful to create a page or web-portal with noteworthy information for tourists: opening hours of museums and transport, bus schedules in the city and out-of-town routes, events poster, city services phone numbers, 24-hour pharmacies addresses. An interactive map of the city center is recommended as well.

– It is recommended to post information about international organizations membership on the website. Information about sister cities would likewise be useful.

Following these recommendations will expand the incoming requests for the city. It will allow more people, if they wish, to get acquainted with the city and contact the municipality with questions.

2. The establishment of an international department in the municipality with specialists whose knowledge of English is at least B2 level. The knowledge of other languages is also needed. The need for those is determined by the city individually, depending on the needs of the city and the region.

The goal of the international department is to coordinate work towards the development of international cooperation, the work with sister cities, joint activities with international organizations, organization of participation in international events, and establishment of relations with foreign partners. In addition, the staff of the international department can be assigned the function of translation and preparation of letters in foreign languages.

Such steps will allow the city to feel freer in global interaction, since the problems of language barriers will be solved.

3. Documenting international activities in most cities is based on a process approach. However, at present, the development of local self-government requires the municipal government to master management technologies that are more adapted to the conditions of modern development. The use of elements of program-oriented and project-based approaches is required. More detailed information on documentation is provided in the Appendix "Documenting International Activities".

The experience of typical modeling of the international activities of local governments at the level of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation at a higher level of documentation - with elements of predictive and analytical approaches and strategic goal-setting - **is illustrated by the example of the Ulyanovsk region**. In the region a document is adopted - "Standard requirements for the development of external relations of municipalities of the Ulyanovsk region" (approved by the order of the Governor of the Ulyanovsk region dated April 18, 1917 No. 315-r).

The terms “process approach” and “project approach” are borrowed from the theory of organizational management structures. They should not be opposed, but rather be applied in parallel mode. The first one is focused mainly on maintaining one direction or another in an operating condition, on a constant and repetitive basis. The second one is associated with entering not yet mastered segments of the practice of international relations. It is aimed at creating specialized teams for a specific purpose, as well as at finding new techniques and tools that are flexibly adapted to changing circumstances.

4. Cooperation with regional governments plays an important role in the development of international relations. As evidenced in practice, the greatest results are achieved by cities that have elaborated a program for the development of various areas collectively with the regional government. Support from regional governments and cooperative actions will form the basis for creating a successful international image.

5. **Events** make the most significant contribution to the development of international awareness. Several types of events can be distinguished in our study: these are events held by an organization of which the city is a member, whether it is jointly organized or the city is just a participant; events with twin cities; events held abroad, in which the city administration took part; foreign delegations’ reception in the city administration. It is communication during official events and informal meetings that promote networking, cooperation development and, as a result, they increase the city recognition. Therefore, the following recommendation would be taking part in partnership activities, be they twin-cities or international organizations.

Participation in international events. Active engagement is crucial to reach maximum efficiency, e.g. this can include delivering a speech at sessions, participation in exhibitions or souvenirs distribution. It is worth noting here that the speech should be prepared as simple as possible for perception. When participating in international events, one should take into account the fact that

during simultaneous interpretation eloquent expressions will not be translated, as they are challenging for an interpreter. As a result, it will affect the perception of the topic by the audience. In addition, it is recommended to prepare a short and expressive speech in order to attract the audience's attention from the very first words and maintain it. A presentation accompanying your speech will help to improve comprehension. It often happens when the city does not perform due to the fact that it does not have projects that it could boast of. But in reality, it is not obligatory to present successful projects. Presentation about different issues or exchange of experience in resolved and unresolved situations can be very effective. Wherein, it is important to indicate a willingness to move towards solving these problems. This way it will help to attract the attention of various organizations, donors and cities willing to help you.

The exhibition is an important element of many events as this is a great opportunity to present the city. Experience has shown that the most popular are the exhibition stands held by friendly-looking staff members telling about the city, showing projects and treating guests with tea and national food.

It would make sense to consider handouts and souvenirs. It is necessary to think about the size of items so the guests could take the gifts with them instead of leaving them at the hotel. Sweets, the packaging of which depicts the city and provides information about it, have successfully proven themselves. Suitcases with city symbols are popular too, and drawings on them increase the city's recognition. Small elements of traditional clothing or jewelry may be distributed to draw attention to your culture. Furthermore, beautiful cups and thermo mugs with symbols, flash drives with a logo, smartphone holders, etc. are popular as well.

Holding international events is significant for drawing attention to the city and increasing its recognition in the international arena. Some large cities already have a high potential for hosting large forums, but most cities lack budget funds, there are no hotels and airports. In this case, it is reasonable to start small:

- Holding online events. This method is least expensive. As for the participants, they can be found among the partners from international

organizations. The topic should be interesting not only for our region, but also for foreign participants whom you plan to attract. You can present a video to show participants the sights of your city.

- If we consider live events, then you can start with small seminars. They will help to seek the support of international organizations and conduct a small training event or expert discussion.

- Sponsors who can help financially or provide free services may help to reduce the costs of the event.

- It is necessary to declare the desire to hold events in various international organizations.

-

6. **Participation of a municipality in various competitions and grants** also increases the international attractiveness. Participation will allow the city to declare itself as a self-starter and the victory will be a pride for the municipality. The information about the city will be wide spread thanks to media. Herein it is important publish news on the city website and in the regional media about participation in the competition.

Often noteworthy projects fail because they were misrepresented. Therefore, it is recommended to align the project with the objectives of the competition. You should not wait for a deadline. Thus, there will be time to ask the hosts what can be done to improve and finalize the application.

7. **International organizations** play an important role in the development of international relations of the city, but only in the case of an active position of the municipality itself.

Joining many different organizations and active participation is the most effective. In case, it is not possible due to financial and personnel reasons, you can choose one to start with. When choosing, you need to make sure whether the organization is international or not. Whether it is large or unites only a few countries. It is necessary to check the partners of the organization and whether they

are world famous or not. An important indicator is the composition of the organization's management and the support the organization receives.

The mere fact of joining an international organization is not enough. You have to participate in projects, speak at events, publish on the website, apply for election to the governing bodies of the organization, learn which cities are members of the organization and establish contacts with them.

The fact that all cities from the top ten leaders of the rating are members of the World Organization of UCLG confirm that being a part of international organizations directly affects the development of international relations of the city. In addition, 28 cities from the top thirty declared their membership in UCLG.

8. **Twin cities.** The twinning movement, which began in 1944, is still relevant to this day. Twin cities exchange experience and help each other in solving various kinds of problems. The establishment of twinning relations allows cities to consolidate their positions and become recognizable in another country. Twin cities can be of good help when the city finds itself in a difficult situation. Therefore, the establishing of twinning agreements and active cooperation within their framework is definitely recommended.

The most obvious result of twinning cooperation are mutual visits of schoolchildren and students, mutual participation of city leaders in celebrating the city day and other memorable dates, as well as economic cooperation and cultural exchange.

The twinning relationship can be used for the tourism development. For example, the exchange of banner advertisements and the inclusion of each other in the directories of tour operators. The establishment of direct flights between twin cities is also a great example.

9. **Creating a city brand,** that is, a set of characteristics that are peculiar to this city on the one hand, and on the other – cause a clear association with this city in international relations. It is not enough just to design a logo and set up ads in search engines or social networks. First, you need to analyze the concept of the city: consider its infrastructure, living standards of residents, tourist sights,

interesting places, the development of industry and trade. Identify promising areas of development — for example, if the city has healing springs, you can develop the direction of medical tourism.

You should specify the target audience for branding based on analysis and development goals. For example, the target audience for developing the extraction of valuable resources (if available) will be investors. You can create any city — eco-friendly, tourist, creative, political, extreme — and find a target audience for any positioning.

It is important to define the main idea and concept and highlight how the municipality differs from similar localities, and how this difference can attract the target audience. This may be the idea of a holiday on a big lake or the concept of a city of the future with various innovations. It is recommended to involve the citizens in the creation of the brand, so that they feel participating in the project and, along with the city authorities, contribute to its realization.

10. **Tourism development** is one of the most important directions of international relations development. Based on the analysis of the presented experience, cities are recommended to:

- create a tourism department (management, committee) in the city hall
- along with the regional governments, develop a plan to promote the city in this area, which should include such elements as a tourist portal available in various languages; participation in major international tourism exhibitions, inclusion of the city in the booklets of foreign tour operators, development of tourist routes, creation of new tourist sites, development of event tourism and creation of tourist infrastructure.

It is reasonable to pay attention to the creation of new tourist sites. These can be art objects, entertainment centers, buildings of unusual architecture, ethnic villages, etc. Today, such a direction as eco-art or eco-friendly art is gaining popularity. In cities, houses and hotels are built from bottles, sculptures are made of recycled materials. It is important to come up with interesting events, festivals and holidays. You can involve citizens in the brainstorming so that they come up

with an idea. By creating something new, you will not only attract attention today, but also create a legacy for future generations.

11. **The infrastructure** of an internationally oriented city should be comfortable for a foreigner. In this regard, it is recommended that signs with the names of streets and bus stops contain an English inscription, and in transport ads should also be made in English. It will likewise be useful to hand out a map of the city in English at the airport and train stations.

To host major international events and attract tourists, the city must have an international airport and hotels of various levels.

12. **Higher education institutions.** Higher education and educational institutions located in the city have a great influence on how prominent the city is in the international arena. Innovation, investment appeal, and the influx of foreigners are also due to research activities that are historically associated with higher education institutions and research institutions. Applicants all over the world are looking for the most interesting and accessible training programs, including focusing on where exactly the university is located, where they plan to study, how much the city will fulfill their needs and meet their expectations. The city environment is an important component of student life: the opportunity to study at a leading university of the country or the world, live in modern dormitories, have the opportunity to attend scientific and cultural events – all this will ultimately influence the choice of a young person who is looking for a university.

Nowadays, rating systems that collect information about scientific, educational, research, innovation, financial and other activities of an educational institution are used to assess the quality of an educational institution. The most famous and popular in the world are Times Higher Education, Quacquarelli Symonds, Academic Ranking of World Universities.

Being represented in these rankings is not only prestigious for universities, but also attracts attention to the territory where it is located.

In the context of research on the international activity of cities, it must be noted that Quacquarelli Symonds annually prepares a rating of the best cities in the world for students. The analysis considers student reviews, the university's rating, financial accessibility, standard of living, the activities of employers and the attractiveness of the city for students, as well as the diversity of the students. To be included in the QS Best Student Cities Ranking, a city must have at least 250,000 residents and at least two universities that are included in the overall QS ranking.

13. **Information support and media** play a very important role in creating an international image. Participation in events, exhibitions, competitions, reception of foreign delegations, or the launch of a project can serve as an information occasion. It is important to show the useful aspect of these meetings, both from the side of benefits for citizens and from the side of contribution to world development. One can demonstrate how this work relates to one of the sustainable development goals.

Cooperation with various media is essential. Press services are advised to send interesting news for publication on various websites, newspapers and magazines. It is necessary to get the mayor's interview published in various international magazines. Of course, it is also required to develop pages in social networks, taking into account that other social networks may be popular abroad rather than in your region.

Starting with these steps, it will be easier for the city to interact with other entities in international relations, whether it is a city, country, or organization. The selected recommendations may be called the basis on which the further promotion of the city is based, aimed at recognition on the world stage. It is on these basic actions that the development of each individual city becomes possible, which ultimately through many other actions will create a unique image of the city.