

# Cities and crisis

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Josef W. Konvitz



Cities have been missing from analyses of the global economic crisis and debates about how to generate a sustainable recovery. Cities and crisis provides a fresh assessment of what has changed since 1990 and what has not, of policy assumptions about urban economies, and of lessons of experience.

A city-centred strategy to lift urban productivity must reduce deficits of urban innovation and of infrastructure investment: the new limits to growth. The outlook of more frequent and more costly crises to come – environmental, health, and even economic – makes these deficits more alarming. Yet governments seem incapable of setting out a vision for the future of cities. Things may get worse before they get better.

We may need radical reforms to get practical solutions to improve urban economic performance and to reduce the impact of urban disasters and crises: our major challenges. Putting cities at the centre of policy will challenge how governments, structured by sectors and levels, work. Paradigm shifts in economic governance have been undertaken successfully in the past; we are just out of practice.

Drawing on dozens of reports from the OECD to illuminate recent trends, emerging risks and initiatives to improve decision-making, Cities and crisis is about the future, starting where we are. This book is essential for anyone interested in the lessons of the 2008 crisis for the future of cities in the twenty-first century, and is suitable for classroom use in politics, urban studies, development and business.

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*Josef W. Konvitz is Honorary Professor at the University of Glasgow and was Head of Urban Affairs and Regulatory Policy Divisions at the OECD*

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