


Petty crime costs Melbourne its top rank on Global Liveability Index

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Melbourne has been overtaken by Vienna as the world's most liveable city, with law-and-order issues and petty crime identified as a drag on the Victorian capital's ranking.

After seven consecutive years at the top of *The Economist* Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index, Melbourne fell from top spot after an improved security situation in Western Europe boosted the Austrian capital's "stability" score.

Analysts within the Intelligence Unit said while Melbourne had performed well on an international basis, crime levels stood out as a metric the city and state authorities had the power to change.

"Reducing petty crime is the only thing that Melbourne could do to improve its score," chief economist Simon Baptist said.

"Some of the other factors where it doesn't get the top score such as the number of uncomfortably hot days are really outside of its control; you can't do much to change that, and so out of the things that the city and state authorities could control, it could bring the crime rate from low, to very low," he said.

Victoria's Liberal opposition used the shift to attack the state government, with planning spokesman David Davis saying crime and congestion hurt the ranking.

"We know there are challenges that we face, challenges with crime and that is a direct impact on our liveability", Mr Davis told the Seven Network.

"Under Daniel Andrews, crime is up, congestion is worse than ever and we are facing record power prices," Mr Davis said. "Melbourne is a great city burdened by a Labor

government that is too focused on desperate political stunts and not making our state safer.”

Melbourne’s “stability” score remained stable on 2017. The two top cities were separated by just 0.7 of a percentage point in the rankings, which measure 140 cities globally across five key metrics including stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure.

While Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp praised the result, which represented the city’s highest score out of 100 to date, Committee for Melbourne chief executive Martine Letts called the results a “wake-up call”. “We must avoid complacency,” she said. “The perception global audiences have of Melbourne is very important as it drives the decisions of visitors, investors and entrepreneurs — this accolade is a key component in our city’s ability to attract and retain top global and local talent.

“Our drop in the liveability rankings is proof that progressing with ‘business as usual’ will not ensure a bright future for our city.”

Sydney and Adelaide both ranked within the top 10, with Sydney in fifth place and Adelaide ranked 10th. It is the first time that Vienna topped the list.

The Syrian capital of Damascus ranked in last position as the least liveable city in the world, followed by Dhaka in Bangladesh and Lagos in Nigeria.

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