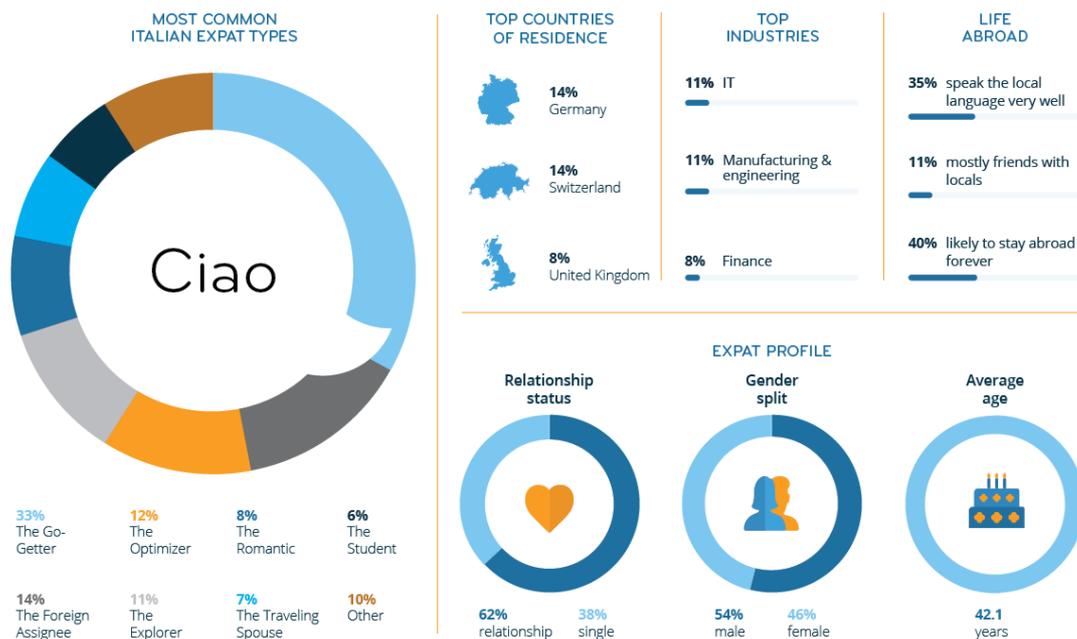


The 7 Most Common Italian Expat Types and Why They Move Abroad

- Based on the latest *Expat Insider 2018* research, InterNations presents the first comprehensive Italian expat typology.
- The typology is based on expats' primary motivation for moving abroad and identifies job opportunities and the search for a better life as the most important reasons for expatriation.
- The 7 most common Italian expats types are the Go-Getter (33%), the Foreign Assignee (14%), the Optimizer (12%), the Explorer (11%), the Romantic (8%), the Traveling Spouse (7%), and the Student (6%).

Munich, 10 July 2018 — Although every expat journey is unique, there are similarities when it comes to the motivation for moving and the lifestyle abroad. Based on the insights of more than 18,000 expats living in 187 countries and territories in the annual *Expat Insider* survey, [InterNations](#), the world's largest community for people who live and work abroad, [presents the first comprehensive expat typology](#) including the 7 most common Italian expat types.

I Italians Abroad



The research shows that expats from Italy are different from their international counterparts in many ways: Italian Go-Getters, for example, move abroad for work-related reasons and prove to be much better educated. While on a global scale, just ten percent of Go-Getters hold a PhD, this is the case for 19 percent of Italian Go-Getters. Foreign Assignees from Italy, on the other hand, who were sent abroad by their employers, do stand out by their desire to stay abroad: only 49 percent of the Italian Foreign Assignees find it likely that they will return home at some point, compared to 58 percent of Foreign Assignees worldwide. However, the situation looks different for Italian Traveling Spouses, who moved abroad for their partner's job or career: two in five (40%) do not feel at home in the local culture, which is seven percentage points more than the global average of Traveling Spouses (33%).

1. The Italian Go-Getter (33%)

Reasons for moving abroad

- recruited by a local company: 46%
- found a job abroad on their own: 45%
- start a business abroad: 8%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 32%
- mostly friends with locals: 10%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 40%

Italian Go-Getters are highly educated expats who move abroad to boost their career: 19 percent hold a PhD, compared to just ten percent of Go-Getters globally. Additionally, 46 percent of Italian Go-Getters graduated with a master's degree and 19 percent have a bachelor's degree. Before moving to their new country of residence, three-quarters of Italian Go-Getters (75%) considered the economy and labor market of their future host country to be a potential benefit, which is 19 percentage points more than Go-Getters globally (56%).

With an average full-time work week of 42.9 hours, Italian Go-Getters spend 1.8 hours less at the office than the global average of Go-Getters (44.7 h). Therefore, it comes as no surprise that close to seven in ten Italian Go-Getters (68%) are satisfied with their working hours (vs. 64% Go-Getters globally). Additionally, two-thirds of Italian Go-Getters (67%) are satisfied with their career prospects, compared to 59 percent of Go-Getters globally. *"My career opportunities are much greater,"* says an Italian Go-Getter living in the US, *"I make more money than I would for the same job in Italy."* In fact, 76 percent of Italian Go-Getters believe that they make more abroad than they would in a similar job back home — and 41 percent even consider it a lot more.

Putting work first might negatively impact their personal life, though: more than one-quarter of Italian Go-Getters in a relationship (27%) is currently not living in the same country as their partner, which is slightly above the global average of Go-Getters (24%). However, while globally Go-Getters are the most likely to live separated from their partner, among Italians abroad, Foreign Assignees are even more likely to be in an international long-distance relationship (35%). Moreover, more than half of Italian Go-Getters (55%) find it hard to make local friends abroad, compared to 41 percent of Go-Getters globally. *"It is difficult to find friends and meet new people,"* an Italian Go-Getter living in Germany shares. Maybe this is the reason why 31 percent do not feel at home abroad yet, and another 22 percent even believe that they never will (vs. 25% and 18% of Go-Getters globally).

2. The Italian Foreign Assignee (14%)

Reason for moving abroad

- sent abroad by their employer: 100%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 36%
- mostly friends with locals: 6%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 29%

Nearly every Italian Foreign Assignee (95%) works full time and, with an average of 46.3 hours per week, they are slightly busier than Foreign Assignees globally (46.1 h). However, they do not seem to mind, as close to three-quarters (73%) are satisfied with their working hours, which is ten percentage points more than the global average of Foreign Assignees (63%). One Italian Foreign Assignee reports that *"the opportunities in the job and the ease of living in the USA are great"*. In fact, 65 percent of Italian Foreign Assignees are happy with their career prospects, which is just above the global average (61%).

Close to four in five Italian Foreign Assignees (78%) believe that their income abroad is higher than what they would make in a similar job back home, compared to just 61 percent globally. More than one third of Italian Foreign Assignees (35%) even think that it is a lot higher. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that 85 percent of Italian Foreign Assignees are satisfied with their financial situation (vs. 76% of all Foreign Assignees).

Maybe it is thanks to their financial security that just 49 percent of Italian Foreign Assignees say it is likely that they will return home at some point, while 58 percent of Foreign Assignees worldwide plan to do so. However, this is still the second-highest share among all Italian expat types, just slightly beaten by the Italian Student (50%). *"I miss the beautiful Italian culture,"* says an Italian Foreign Assignee living in the US. In fact, 29 percent of Italian Foreign Assignees do not yet feel at home abroad, and another 15 percent do not think they ever will. Maybe their struggles with settling in are partly because 37 percent of Italian Foreign Assignees find it hard to make friends abroad (vs. 29% Foreign Assignees worldwide). *"I hoped to create a richer network of people, but it is hard to find new friends while working,"* says an Italian expat living in France.

3. The Italian Optimizer (12%)

Reasons for moving abroad

- better quality of life: 65%
- financial reasons: 33%
- political, religious, or safety reasons: 2%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 24%
- mostly friends with locals: 15%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 57%

Out of all Italian expat types, Optimizers saw the most potential benefits in moving abroad and it seems like they were right: an above-average share of Italian Optimizers is satisfied with the quality of environment (82% vs. 79% Optimizers globally) and the state of the economy (71% vs. 67% Optimizers globally) in their country of residence. Additionally, 74 percent are also satisfied with their financial situation. *"Life is cheap and the climate suits me,"* an Italian Optimizer summarizes life in Morocco.

When it comes to their working life, 87 percent of Italian Optimizers work full time, which is six percentage points more than the global average (81%). Despite working slightly longer hours (43.6 h/week full-time) than Optimizers globally (43.4. h/week), the share of Italian Optimizers who are satisfied with their working hours is three percentage points higher than Optimizers worldwide (69% vs. 66%). Additionally, 65 percent of Italian Optimizers are happy with their career prospects (vs. 60% Optimizers globally), and 63 percent believe that their current income is higher than what they would get in a similar job back home (vs. 58% Optimizers globally). An Italian Optimizer points out the *"good salary, social welfare, and job opportunities"* as positive factors of life in the UK.

Lastly, Italian Optimizers do not seem to struggle much with settling in abroad, as six in ten (60%) feel at home in the local culture. While this is the second-highest share among all Italian expat types — only the Italian Explorer feels more at home (73%) — it is still twelve percentage points less than the global average of Optimizers (72%), though. Maybe this is due to the fact that not even close to half the Italian Optimizers (46%) find it easy to make local friends, compared to 56 percent of Optimizers worldwide.

4. The Italian Explorer (11%)

Reasons for moving abroad

- looking for an adventure: 51%
- want to live in this particular city/country: 38%
- simply enjoy living abroad: 11%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 45%
- mostly friends with locals: 12%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 39%

Italian Explorers seem to find it easy to settle down in their new country of residence, with almost three-quarters (73%) feeling at home in the local culture (vs. 71% Explorers globally). Maybe this is due to the fact that 76 percent of Italian Explorers finds it easy to make new friends abroad: this is not only eight percentage points more than the global average of Explorers (68%), but also the highest share among all Italian expat types.

Generally, the majority of Italian Explorers (83%) is satisfied with their life abroad and seems to make the most out of it: more than nine in ten (91%) are happy with the available leisure activities, which is the highest share among all Italian expat types and higher than the global average of Explorers (83%). *"People are extremely friendly and there are a lot of things to do,"* says an Italian Explorer living in Brazil.

Aside from making friends, it seems like a good work-life balance is important to the Italian Explorer. Italian Explorers with a full-time job spend just about 40.8 hours per week at work, which is less than the global average of Explorers (42.4 h). Therefore, it is not surprising that more than seven in ten (72%) are happy with their working hours and another 79 percent with their work-life balance. Additionally, the share of Italian Explorers being satisfied with their career prospects is a lot higher than Explorers globally (73% vs. 59%).

5. The Italian Romantic (8%)

Reason for moving abroad

- for love / to live in their partner's home country: 100%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 39%
- mostly friends with locals: 30%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 41%

Although the Italian Romantic moved abroad for love, their romantic relationship did not necessarily last: 14 percent of them are currently single, which is slightly more than the global average of Romantics (12%). For those Romantics who are (still or again) in a relationship, things are going well, though: close to nine in ten (88%) are satisfied with their relationship, and for 58 percent things could not get any better.

The Italian Romantics appear to really make an effort to adapt to their partner's home country: two thirds (66%) state to speak the local language fairly or even very well, which is nine percentage points more than the global average of Romantics (57%). An Italian Romantic living in Switzerland even enjoys *"having the opportunity to speak different foreign languages at a time"*. Yet, Italian Romantics struggle to make local friends: while globally only 39 percent of Romantics find this hard, close to half the Italian Romantic (46%) have difficulties.

Not a single Italian Romantic is currently looking for work, compare to twelve percent of Romantics globally. In fact, 56 percent of Italian Romantics are happy with their career prospects, compared to

just 46 percent of Romantics globally. Additionally, close to half the Italian Romantics (47%) believe that their income is higher than what they would make in a similar job back home, which is ten percentage points more than the global average of Romantics (37%).

6. The Italian Traveling Spouse (7%)

Reason for moving abroad

- for their partner's job or education: 100%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 32%
- mostly friends with locals: 8%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 38%

A staggering 91 percent of Italian Traveling Spouses are female. Due to them moving for their partner's sake, Italian Traveling Spouses are more likely than other expat types to take care of their home and/or children rather than work (20%). Employees still make up the largest share (26%) when it comes to Italian Traveling Spouse's employment status, though, while globally, Traveling Spouses are most likely to stay at home (27%). Maybe that is the reason why 47 percent of Italian Traveling Spouses are satisfied with their career prospects, compared to just 39 percent of Traveling Spouses globally. An Italian Traveling Spouse points out the *"stability of the job and the career opportunities"* as positive factors of life in the UK.

Together with the Italian Romantic, the Italian Traveling Spouse is the most unsatisfied with life abroad in general out of all Italian expat types: one-fifth (20%) rate this factor negatively, compared to 17 percent of Traveling Spouses globally. Maybe this is due to them struggling to settle down abroad: two in five Italian Traveling Spouses (40%) do not feel at home in the local culture, compared to just one third of Traveling Spouses globally (33%). Moreover, 32 percent of Italian Traveling Spouses believe that they will never feel at home, which is by far the highest share out of all Italian expat types. *"I feel like a foreigner all the time,"* an Italian Traveling Spouse living in the UK shares. In fact, almost two in five (38%) find it hard to make new friends abroad, and an even higher share has difficulty making *local* friends in particular (56%). Both results are above the global average of Traveling Spouses (32% and 48%, respectively).

7. The Italian Student (6%)

Reasons for moving abroad

- go to school or university: 80%
- improve their language skills: 20%

Life abroad

- speak the local language very well: 54%
- mostly friends with locals: 7%
- likely to stay abroad forever: 28%

Despite being able to communicate easily — the share of Students speaking the local language of their host country very well is the highest among all Italian expat types — they struggle to make local friends abroad. Almost half of them (49%) find this hard, compared to 41 percent of Students globally. *"It is difficult to meet people because the social life options are poor,"* an Italian Student living in Switzerland says. Interestingly, the share of Italian Students feeling at home in the local culture is nevertheless the same as Students globally (54%).

Just 41 percent of Italian Students are currently single, which is far below the global average of

Students not being in a committed relationship (54%). While globally, Students are the type most likely to be single, this is not the case for the Italian expat types: an even higher share of Italian Explorers and Go-Getters (46% both) have not found their significant other yet.

Italian Students are highly educated — 22 percent of Students already hold a PhD, the highest share among the various Italian expat types — which seems to be helpful for their career. Close to three quarters (73%) rate their career prospects positively, compared to 58 percent of Students globally. *“You can achieve a lot when working hard,”* says an Italian Student living in the US. And working hard seems to pay off as well: close to four in five Italian Students (78%) are satisfied with their financial situation, compared to 56 percent of Students globally.

Read More about Expat Types



The Go-Getter

Go-Getters are highly educated expats who move abroad for job-related reasons. While they are happy with their career prospects, their personal life often suffers a bit.



The Optimizer

Optimizers see many potential benefits in their move abroad, and usually they are not disappointed. They value a good work-life balance and do not have trouble settling in abroad.



The Romantic

Romantics move abroad to be with their partner and do their best to fit in (e.g. by learning the local language). While they find it easy to make local friends, their job situation is often unfavorable.



The Explorer

Explorers move abroad for a personal challenge and seem to master it very well. While they find it easy to make friends and appreciate the options for socializing abroad, they are not always happy with their career prospects.



The Foreign Assignee

Being sent abroad by their employers, most Foreign Assignees are extremely satisfied with their job and career. However, they struggle to feel at home abroad, and most of them already have plans to return home.



The Traveling Spouse

Moving abroad for their partner's job, Traveling Spouses often face an unsatisfying life abroad. They struggle with low career prospects, find it hard to make friends, and many want to return home at some point.



The Student

Students move abroad for their education and are very eager to learn the local language. While they are highly educated and satisfied with their career prospects, their financial situation does not seem too bright.

About the Expat Typology 2018

For the Expat Typology 2018, InterNations identified the 7 most common expat types across the world as well as among British, French, Germans, Italians, and US Americans abroad. The typology is based on the expats' primary motivation for moving abroad. More than 18,000 survey respondents representing 178 nationalities and living in 187 countries or territories revealed their reasons by choosing one out of 19 possible answer options, including one open-text field.

The data was obtained from the *Expat Insider 2018* survey. The complete results will be published in detail in September 2018. For a nationality to be featured in the Expat Typology, a sample size of at least 31 survey participants per type and nationality was necessary. However, for most of the featured nationalities, the sample size per type exceeded 100 participants.

About InterNations

With 3.1 million members in 420 cities around the world, InterNations (www.internations.org) is the largest global community and information site for people who live and work abroad. InterNations offers global and local networking both online and face-to-face. At around 6,000 official events and activities per month, expatriates have the opportunity to meet other global minds. Online services include country and city guides created by a team of professional writers, guest contributions about life abroad, and discussion forums to help members with topics such as the local job or housing search. InterNations membership is by approval only to ensure we remain a community of trust.

The InterNations app is available for Android and iOS and can be downloaded for free on [Google Play](#) and the [App Store](#).

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