

Expats Enjoy Life in Barcelona and Madrid

The annual Expat City Ranking reveals how expats rate life in 82 cities around the world, including Barcelona and Madrid.

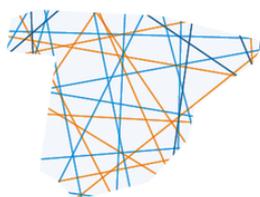
- *Barcelona (7th) ranks among the top 10 cities for expats, followed by Madrid (17th). Both cities rank well in the Getting Settled and Quality of Urban Living Indices.*
- *Based on the ranking, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City, Singapore, Montréal, Lisbon, Barcelona, Zug, The Hague, and Basel are the best cities to move to in 2020.*
- *Kuwait City (82nd), Rome, Milan, Lagos (Nigeria), Paris, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Lima, New York City, and Yangon (73rd) are the world's worst cities.*

Munich, 3 December 2019 — Two Spanish cities are featured in the Expat City Ranking 2019 by [InterNations](#), the world's largest expat community with more than 3.5 million members. While Barcelona makes it into the top 10 worldwide (7th), Madrid follows not that far behind on rank 17. Expats find it easy to get settled in both cities and enjoy the high quality of life. However, the cities do not rank so well in the Urban Work Life and the Finance & Housing Indices, with Barcelona outperforming Madrid in both. On the other hand, Madrid ranks ahead for the local cost of living.

The [Expat City Ranking](#) is based on the annual *Expat Insider* survey by InterNations, which is with more than 20,000 respondents in 2019 one of the most extensive surveys about living and working abroad. In 2019, 82 cities around the globe are analyzed in the survey, offering in-depth information about five areas of expat life: Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, Finance & Housing, and Local Cost of Living. Taken together, the first four areas make up the Expat City Ranking, which reveals the best and worst cities to move to in 2020.

Expat City Ranking 2019

Expat Life in Barcelona and Madrid



Quality of Urban Living Index

12th 8th

| | | |
|------|------|----------------------|
| 1st | 6th | Leisure & Climate |
| 12th | 13th | Transportation |
| 57th | 51st | Safety & Politics |
| 9th | 5th | Health & Environment |



Urban Work Life Index

42nd 63rd

| | | |
|------|------|-------------------|
| 39th | 70th | Job & Career |
| 57th | 62nd | Job Security |
| 23rd | 43rd | Work-Life Balance |

Happiness Level



89%
Barcelona



87%
Madrid



74%
Global



Barcelona
7th
out of 82



Getting Settled Index

13th 12th

| | | |
|------|------|-----------------------|
| 42nd | 13th | Local Friendliness |
| 6th | 1st | Feeling Welcome |
| 8th | 15th | Friends & Socializing |
| 8th | 38th | Local Language |



Finance & Housing Index

42nd 50th

| | | |
|------|------|---------|
| 28th | 57th | Finance |
| 46th | 41st | Housing |



Madrid
17th
out of 82



Local Cost of Living Index

23rd 16th

What Expats Think about Life in Barcelona and Madrid

7. Barcelona

Ranking 7th out of 82 in the overall Expat City Ranking, Barcelona is even voted the world's best city in the Leisure & Climate subcategory: Nearly every expat is happy with the local climate (98% vs. 59% globally) and the local leisure options in the city (95% vs. 74% globally). There are *"lots of social activities, cultural activities, and art,"* a US American expat sums it up. Barcelona also ranks among the top 10 in the Health & Environment subcategory (9th), as, for example, 88% of expats are satisfied with the availability of healthcare in the city (vs. 73% globally). What is more, Barcelona ranks 13th in the Getting Settled Index. Over three in four expats (77%) feel at home in the city (vs. 64% globally), and 73% are happy with their social life (vs. 55% globally). Not only do expats find it easy to get used to the local culture (77% vs. 62% globally), but three in five (60%) also find it easy to make friends in Barcelona (vs. 45% globally).

However, expats are less happy with the work life (42nd) and with finance and housing (42nd) in Barcelona: more than half (55%) find housing unaffordable (vs. 44% globally), and one in three (33%) says that it is hard for expats to find housing, which is just around the global average (32%).

17. Madrid

Madrid is the world's most welcoming city for expats, placing first in the Feeling Welcome subcategory. In fact, 81% of expats find it easy to get used to the local culture (vs. 62% globally), and nearly four in five (78%) feel at home in Madrid (vs. 64% globally). It may be helpful that expats consider the local population in Madrid friendly, both in general (79% vs. 64% globally) and towards foreign residents in particular (75% vs. 64% globally). Similar to Barcelona, expats are happy with the local leisure activities available (93% vs. 74% globally), ranking Madrid second worldwide for this factor. *"There are a lot of things to do and many places you can visit,"* shares a Mexican expat. Additionally, expats are happy with the availability of healthcare (88% vs. 73% globally), as well as Madrid's local transportation (92% vs. 70% globally).

Although not among the worst destinations in the world, Madrid performs rather poorly in the Urban Work Life Index (63rd). Expats are particularly unhappy with their local career opportunities (36% unhappy vs. 27% globally) and their job security (33% unhappy vs. 21% globally). What is more, Madrid ranks in 50th in the Finance & Housing Index. In fact, 29% of expats feel they do not have enough disposable income to cover their daily expenses (vs. 23% globally), and almost a third (32%) are unhappy with their financial situation (vs. 26% globally).

About the Expat City Ranking 2019

The [Expat City Ranking](#) is based on the annual [Expat Insider survey](#) by InterNations. For the survey, more than 20,000 expatriates representing 178 nationalities and living in 187 countries or territories provided information on various aspects of expat life. In addition to their satisfaction with life in their host country, respondents were also invited to share their opinions on the city they are currently living in.

Participants were asked to rate more than 25 different aspects of urban life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized the respondents' personal satisfaction with these aspects and considered both emotional topics as well as more factual aspects with equal weight. The respondents' ratings of the individual factors were then bundled in various combinations for a total

of 13 subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up four topical indices: Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, and Finance & Housing. These were further averaged in order to rank 82 cities worldwide. In 2019, the top 10 cities for expats are Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City, Singapore, Montréal, Lisbon, Barcelona, Zug, The Hague, and Basel. The survey also includes a Local Cost of Living Index, which does, however, not factor into the overall ranking to avoid overrepresenting financial aspects.

For a city to be featured in the Expat City Ranking 2019, a sample size of at least 50 survey participants per city was required.

About InterNations

With more than 3.5 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.

Find more information about InterNations on our [press page](#), in our [company blog](#), or in our [magazine](#).

Press Contact

Caroline Harsch
Media Spokesperson

InterNations GmbH
Schwanthalerstrasse 39
80336 Munich, Germany

Tel: +49 (0)89 461 3324 87
Fax: +49 (0)89 461 3324 99
Email: press@internations.org
Homepage: <https://www.internations.org/press>