

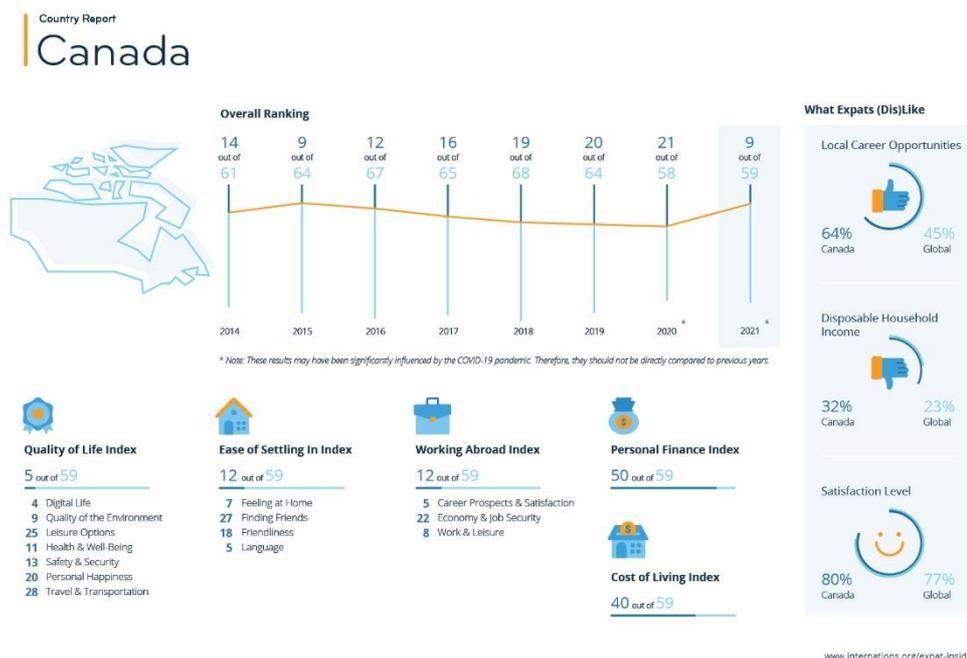
# Expat Insider 2021 Survey Reveals: The Best and Worst Destinations for Living and Working Abroad

Expats in Canada feel at home and enjoy the high quality of life.

- Taiwan, Mexico, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Portugal, New Zealand, Australia, Ecuador, Canada, and Vietnam are the best destinations for expats in 2021.
- The worst countries for expats are Kuwait (59th), Italy, South Africa, Russia, Egypt, Japan, Cyprus, Turkey, India, and Malta (50th).
- Canada comes 9th out of 59 destinations in the Expat Insider 2021 survey. It ranks among the top 20 countries in all indices except for personal finance (50th) and cost of living (40th).

Munich, 18 May 2021 — For the seventh time, [InterNations](https://www.internations.org), the world's largest expat community with around 4 million members, has published its *Expat Insider* survey. With more than 12,000 respondents, it is one of the most extensive surveys about living and working abroad, sharing insights into expat life in 59 destinations. The survey offers in-depth information on expats' satisfaction with the quality of life, ease of settling in, working life, personal finance, and the cost of living in their respective country of residence. Additionally, the respondents share **how they have been experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic** and how it has impacted their life.

Canada comes 9th out of 59 destinations in the *Expat Insider 2021* survey. The country performs particularly well in the Quality of Life (5th), Working Abroad (12th), and Ease of Settling In (12th) Indices. However, Canada lands in the bottom 10 of the Cost of Living Index (50th) and comes in 40th place for personal finance. Overall, Taiwan, Mexico, and Costa Rica are the best expat destinations worldwide: all of them attract expats with their ease of settling in and good personal finances. On the other hand, the bottom three countries, Kuwait, Italy, and South Africa, all perform poorly in the Working Abroad Index. Additionally, Kuwait is the hardest country for expats to feel at home in, Italy is the worst for personal finances, and expats in South Africa do not feel safe.



## Canada in the *Expat Insider 2021* Survey

### **Canada Is One of the Best Countries for the Quality of Life**

Making it into the top 10 out of 59 destinations, Canada (9th overall) performs well in most indices of the *Expat Insider 2021* survey. The country ranks best in the Quality of Life Index (5th), with the majority of expats finding it easy to get high speed internet in their homes (92% vs. 79% globally) and to pay without cash (96% vs. 83% globally). Additionally, 86% of expats are happy with the availability of administrative and government services online, which is 23 percentage points higher than the global average (63%). Most expats are also satisfied with the affordability of healthcare in Canada (85% vs. 61% globally) and the country's political stability (90% vs. 64% globally). *"Healthcare is a basic right, and the quality of life is very good in Canada,"* says a US American expat.

### **Easy to Feel at Home in Canada**

Canada also performs well in the Working Abroad and Ease of Settling In Indices (12th for both). It even lands in the top 10 of the Feeling at Home subcategory (7th) as 73% of survey respondents feel at home in the local culture (vs. 63% globally). An expat from South Africa shares: *"Canada is a great country to both live and work in."* Expats also rate their working hours in Canada highly, with nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) being happy with this factor, compared to only two-thirds globally (66%). Additionally, close to two out of three expats (64%) say the career opportunities in Canada are good (vs. 45% globally). Out of all respondents working full time or part time, 13% work in Canada's IT sector and 9% in Finance, followed by 7% in Manufacturing and Engineering.

### **Astronomical Housing Costs**

On the other hand, Canada ends up in the bottom 10 of the Personal Finance Index (50th). Nearly a third of expats (32%) say their disposable income is not enough to cover all their living expenses (vs. 23% globally). An expat from the US says: *"Housing costs are astronomical"* and an expat from Mexico shares that *"the best cities are really expensive. It's hard to become a homeowner with an average income."* Additionally, nearly a quarter of expats (24%) are dissatisfied with their financial situation (vs. 19% globally). Ranking 40th in the Cost of Living Index, Canada also lands in the bottom half in this regard: 41% of expats rate the country poorly for its cost of living (vs. 34% globally).

### **The Impact of COVID-19 on Expat Life in Canada**

More than four in five expats in Canada (81%) are satisfied with the official information on the pandemic, a much higher proportion than the global average (66%). Over half the expats in Canada (56%) get their COVID-19 related news from official government channels, over two-thirds (67%) from local news channels, and 39% from social media. The majority of expats (72%) consider the official communication on COVID-19 clear and easy to understand. Additionally, two-thirds of expats in Canada (66%) say the pandemic has not affected the time they are planning to stay in Canada, while 22% have decided *not* to move home in the near future due to COVID-19.

## The Best and Worst Destinations for Living and Working Abroad in 2021

According to the *Expat Insider 2021* survey, the top 10 destinations for expats are Taiwan (1st), Mexico, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Portugal, New Zealand, Australia, Ecuador, Canada, and Vietnam (10th). All these countries stand out with above-average results in the Ease of Settling In Index, with Mexico ranking first, followed by Malaysia (2nd) and Costa Rica (3rd). Moreover, half of these countries also rank among the top 10 in the Personal Finance Index. Taiwan (11th) and Portugal (14th) narrowly miss out on a top 10 spot in this index, while New Zealand (28th), Australia (39th), and Canada (50th) have a weaker performance in this regard.

The worst countries for expats are Kuwait (59th), Italy, South Africa, Russia, Egypt, Japan, Cyprus, Turkey, India, and Malta (50th). Besides Japan (21st), all these countries rank far below the global average in the Quality of Life Index. What is more, eight out of the ten worst-rated destinations are also among the bottom 10 in the Working Abroad Index — the only two exceptions being India (46th) and Malta (31st), which, however, also receive mediocre results at best. Lastly, India is the only country in the overall bottom 10 that performs very well in the Personal Finance Index (4th), while the others — such as Italy (59th), Kuwait (58th), and Cyprus (57th) — rank below the global average or even land among the bottom 10.

## Expat Life during the COVID-19 Pandemic

On a global scale, 45% of survey respondents say that COVID-19 had an impact on their current stay abroad or their relocation plans: the **share of expats** who say so (**37%**) either decided to *not* move back home in the near future (18%), planned to move to another country but had to change these plans (8%), will move to another country due to the pandemic (6%), or will move back home sooner than originally planned (5%).

The **share of local respondents whose relocation plans were affected by COVID-19 (61%)** is a lot higher: some of them were living abroad but moved home sooner than planned (18%), others were planning to move abroad but had to change their plans (35%), and about one in ten have now decided to move abroad because of the pandemic (9%).

### The Pandemic's Impact on Everyday Life

Of course, COVID-19 has not only disrupted the relocation plans of expats worldwide. When asked where they see the biggest impact of the pandemic on their personal life *right now*, the survey respondents point out its effects on personal travel (25%), social life (23%), and their work or business (16%) in particular. In the *long run*, respondents are still concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on their social life (17% of all respondents), and there are also considerable worries regarding personal travel (22%).

### How Expats Stay Informed on COVID-19

Expats across the world mostly rely on official government channels (48%), local news (47%), and social media (40%) for news on the COVID-19 situation and the related regulations in their country of residence. Considering the importance of government channels, just **how satisfied are expats with the official communication regarding COVID-19 and related regulations?** Worldwide, not quite two-thirds (66%) rate this factor positively, with close to a quarter (24%) saying they are completely

satisfied. The main complaint among expats who are *not* satisfied with the official communication on the pandemic is that the information is unclear, confusing, and/or contradictory (67%).

**For further information on the global impact of COVID-19 on expat life, please take a look at the full press release in the download center of our e-mail.**

#### **About the InterNations *Expat Insider 2021* Survey**

For its annual [Expats Insider survey](#), InterNations asked 12,420 expats representing 174 nationalities and living in 186 countries or territories to provide information on various aspects of expat life, as well as their gender, age, and nationality. Participants were asked to rate up to 37 different aspects of life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized the respondents' personal satisfaction with these aspects, considering both emotional topics and 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 five topical indices: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Personal Finance, and Cost of Living. The first four of these indices were further averaged together with expats' general satisfaction with their life in order to rank 59 expat destinations around the world. In 2021, the top 10 are Taiwan, Mexico, Costa Rica, Malaysia, Portugal, New Zealand, Australia, Ecuador, Canada, and Vietnam. Moreover, expats were asked about how COVID-19 has impacted their life abroad; however, these responses did not influence the overall ranking.

For a country to be featured in the indices and consequently in the overall ranking, a sample size of at least 50 survey participants per destination was necessary.

#### **About InterNations**

With around 4 million members in 420 cities around the world, [InterNations](#) is the largest global community and a source of information for people who live and work abroad. InterNations offers global and local networking and socializing, both online and face to face. At around 6,000 events and activities per month, expatriates have the opportunity to meet other global minds. Online services include discussion forums and helpful articles with personal expat experiences, tips, and information about life abroad. Membership is by approval only to ensure we remain a community of trust. InterNations is part of the New Work SE, a group of brands that offer products and services for a better working life.

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

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