

## Expatriate Insider 2021 Survey: The Future of Working Abroad

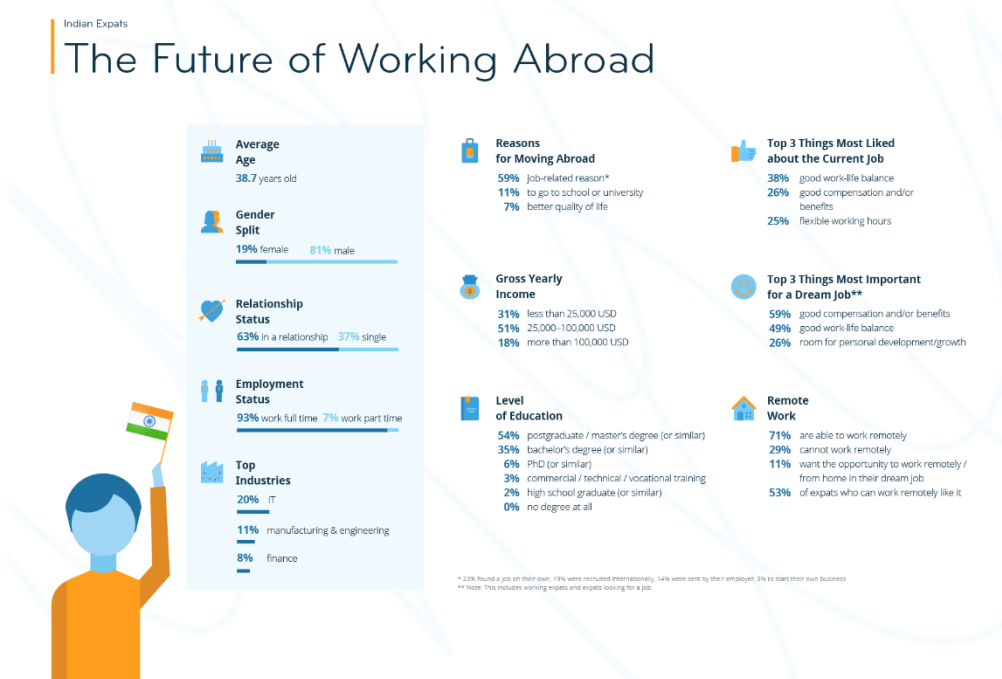
Indian expats talk about their career abroad and how they envision their future working life

- *Indians working abroad are younger than average, more likely to be men, highly educated, and often work in IT.*
- *Indians abroad are happier with their working hours and live in countries where new working arrangements play a more important role than back home.*
- *The opportunity to work remotely / from home is not an important aspect for Indian expats when they imagine their dream job — though it is for expats worldwide.*

Munich, 14 September 2021 — Why do Indians move abroad? According to the *Expatriate Insider 2021* survey by InterNations, 59% of Indians working abroad relocated for their career — a much higher share than the global average (47%). Close to one-quarter (23%) found a job on their own, 19% were recruited internationally, and 14% were sent by their employer. Just 3% moved abroad to start their own business, which is still a slightly higher share than the global average (2%).

Aside from work-related reasons, an above-average share of Indians working abroad (11%) originally relocated to go to school or university in their current country of residence (vs. 8% globally). On the other hand, it is rather uncommon among Indian expats to move for love / in order to live in their partner's home country (3% vs. 10% globally).

The key focus of this year's *Expatriate Insider* survey, conducted by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org), the world's largest expat community with more than 4 million members, is the future of working abroad. Expats all around the world shared what it is really like to work abroad and described their working conditions. They also provided insights into how new working arrangements (e.g., remote work) are changing their working life and what they would like to see in the future.



## The Typical Indian Expat Is a Well-Educated Young Man

Indian expats working abroad are on average 38.7 years old, which is about four years younger than the global average of 43.1 years. The gender split among them is very uneven: 81% are men (vs. 53% globally), while just 19% are women (vs. 46% globally). What is more, they are also more likely to work full time (93%) than the global average (82%).

Indians working abroad are well educated: close to nine in ten either have a bachelor's degree (35% vs. 33% globally) or a postgraduate / master's degree (54% vs. 47% globally). Another 6% hold a PhD as their highest level of education, which is, however, a slightly smaller share than the global average (8%).

## They Work in IT and Are Unlikely to Be Business Owners

More than three in ten Indian expats (31%) work in a senior and/or specialist position (vs. 30% globally), and 21% are top managers / executives (vs. 13% globally). However, about one-quarter (26%) work in lower or middle management (vs. 17% globally). While the share of Indians who moved abroad to *start* their own business is slightly above the global average, they are unlikely to *have* their own business now. Just 4% say so (vs. 7% globally), and only another 4% are self-employed / freelancers, compared to 11% worldwide.

The top field of work among Indian expats is IT (20% vs. 11% globally). They are also overrepresented in their second-most common field, which is manufacturing & engineering (11% vs. 7% globally). Another 8% work in finance (vs. 8% globally). On the other hand, Indian expats are underrepresented in the field of education (6%), which is the most frequently mentioned field of work among expats worldwide (12%).

## Indians Enjoy Better Working Hours and a Better Work-Life Balance Abroad

Three-quarters of Indians working abroad (75%) are satisfied with their job in general, which is a slightly higher share than the global average (73%). They are particularly happy with their working hours (75% vs. 70% globally) and their work-life balance (71% vs. 68% globally).

Interestingly, though, the average working hours per week among all Indian expats (43.8 hours) are actually longer than the global average (39.9 hours). Maybe the comparison with their home country plays a role here: in fact, just 51% of expats working *in* India are happy with their working hours — while 34% rate them negatively (vs. 15% globally).

## Good Career Opportunities in India but a Better State of the Economy Abroad

However, only 63% of Indians working abroad are satisfied with their job security, compared to 67% globally. And while they rate the state of the local economy in their current country of residence slightly better than average (68% happy vs. 65% globally), just 47% are happy with their local career opportunities (vs. 49% globally). Meanwhile, only 54% of working expats *in* India rate the state of the local economy positively, but an above-average share (51%) is happy with the local career opportunities there.

This might all be related to the interesting mix of countries Indian expats move to. The top 5 most common destinations are the UAE, Germany, Oman, Singapore, and Qatar, which all rank very differently in the Working Abroad Index of the *Expats Insider 2021* survey. Germany, for example, comes 6th out of 59 destinations, and expats living in Germany value their career opportunities, the job

security, and the state of the local economy; Oman, however, lands in 49th place. Expats living there are particularly unhappy with the local career opportunities, the job security, and their job in general.

### **Remote Work Is Not Important to Indians Working Abroad**

The top 5 things that Indian expats like best about their current job are the work-life balance (38%), a good compensation and/or good benefits (26%), flexible working hours (25%), the opportunity to work remotely / from home (23%), and their general career development (20%). The most significant difference between Indians working abroad and the global average is that remote work does not seem to be that important to them — globally, 32% of working expats appreciate this factor.

Close to three in ten Indians working abroad (29%) are currently unable to work remotely, compared to 22% globally. What is more, out of those who *can* work remotely, just 53% enjoy doing so. This is twelve percentage points below the global average (65%). When asked about the most important aspects of their ideal work environment, just 11% of Indians working abroad consider the opportunity to work remotely / from home important, which is only half the global average (22%).

### **What Indian Expats Wish for in Their Dream Job**

So, what *do* Indian expats consider important when imagining their dream job? The top 5 aspects they mention most frequently are a good compensation and/or good benefits (59%), a good work-life balance (49%), room for personal development/growth (26%), general career development (24%), and flexible working hours (22%).

Among the other aspects mentioned, their employer's corporate culture/values (21% vs. 15% globally) and an attractive work space (14% vs. 9% globally) are more important to Indian expats than to expats worldwide. *"It makes sense that an attractive work space is important to Indian expats since they do not seem to enjoy working remotely as much as the average expat,"* says Malte Zeeck, InterNations Founder and Co-CEO. *"Even though they do not enjoy this particular aspect of a modern work environment, they still move to destinations where modern approaches to work tend to play a more important role than in their home country."*

In fact, 60% of Indian expats say that factors like autonomy, freedom, creativity, personal development, and self-fulfillment are more important in the business culture of their host country than back home in India. These values are closely related to the concept of New Work, which describes the new way of working in the global and digital age. On a global scale, just 49% of expats say the same about their host country.

### **New Work Is Not Important in India Yet**

When it comes to expats comparing the importance of New Work in the local business culture, India lands indeed among the bottom 5 destinations worldwide (51st out of 55). All common destinations where Indian expats work perform better in this regard: The UAE (2nd) is even one of the leading countries worldwide, followed by Singapore (14th), Oman (17th), and Qatar (18th) in the top 20. Even Germany, which only lands in 35th place, still ranks far ahead of India.

It is hardly a surprise then that nearly seven in ten Indian expats (69%) find that New Work plays an important role in the business culture of their current country of residence (vs. 58% globally). For example, 71% of all expats working in the UAE say that New Work is an important part of their destination's business culture, while just 39% of expats in India agree.

## Country Ranking: The Importance of New Work in the Local Business Culture

1	USA	20	Greece	39	Brazil
2	UAE	21	Czechia	40	Philippines
3	Finland	22	Poland	41	Indonesia
4	Estonia	23	Switzerland	42	Chile
5	Netherlands	24	Luxembourg	43	Romania
6	Bahrain	25	Malta	44	Thailand
7	Australia	26	Kenya	45	Cyprus
8	Canada	27	Taiwan	46	China
9	New Zealand	28	Portugal	47	France
10	Sweden	29	Hungary	48	Spain
11	Ireland	30	Colombia	49	Italy
12	Norway	31	Russia	50	Kuwait
13	Denmark	32	South Africa	51	India
14	Singapore	33	Mexico	52	Turkey
15	United Kingdom	34	Austria	53	South Korea
16	Malaysia	35	Germany	54	Egypt
17	Oman	36	Vietnam	55	Japan
18	Qatar	37	Hong Kong		
19	Saudi Arabia	38	Belgium		

### About the Future of Working Abroad Report

This report is based on data from the *Expat Insider 2021* survey by InterNations. In total, 12,420 expats participated; the general *Expat Insider* report and an overall country ranking were published in May 2021. However, the report “The Future of Working Abroad” uses mainly data sets from expats currently doing any kind of paid work: 8,313 survey respondents — living in 175 destinations and representing 166 nationalities — match this definition of working expats.

In the *Expat Insider 2021* questionnaire, all respondents, regardless of employment status, were asked to provide information about themselves and to rate various aspects of life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized their personal satisfaction with these factors; the average ratings of six such factors were bundled into three subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up a topical index for working abroad. The Working Abroad Index is not only part of the overall country ranking, but it also gets referenced in this report. In 2021, the top 5 destinations for working abroad — out of 59 countries in this index — are Taiwan, New Zealand, Czechia, China, and Denmark.

Moreover, working expats answered some additional questions to describe their working life. Some of these questions explore how COVID-19 has been transforming the workplace and how expats envision their ideal work environment. Lastly, the survey included two more rating questions for working expats. They cover the topic of New Work, the new way of working in the global and digital age. Participants were asked to rate how important this concept is in the business culture of their host country and how the latter compares to their home country. The country averages from the first question were used to compare the importance of New Work in various expat destinations.

For a country to be featured in the New Work ranking, a sample size of at least 50 respondents was necessary. This requirement was met by 55 destinations. New Work is extremely important in the business culture of the USA, the UAE, Finland, Estonia, and the Netherlands.

### **About InterNations**

With around 4.2 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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