

# Denmark Offers the Best Working Life for Expats but Also Some Unfriendly Residents

The *Expats Insider 2022* survey by InterNations reveals the best and worst destinations for living and working abroad.

- *Mexico, Indonesia, Taiwan, Portugal, Spain, the UAE, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, and Singapore are the best destinations for expats in 2022.*
- *The worst destinations for expats are Kuwait (52nd), New Zealand, Hong Kong, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Japan, South Africa, Turkey, Italy, and Malta (43rd).*
- *Denmark ranks 30th out of 52: its great results for working abroad and the quality of life are canceled out by the high living expenses and the difficulties with settling in.*

Munich, 12 July 2022 — For the ninth time, [InterNations](https://www.internations.org), the world's largest expat community with more than 4 million members, has published the results of its *Expats Insider* survey. With nearly 12,000 respondents, it is one of the most extensive surveys about living and working abroad, providing insights into expat life in 52 destinations. The survey offers in-depth information on expats' satisfaction with the **Quality of Life**, **Ease of Settling In**, **Working Abroad**, and **Personal Finance** in their respective country of residence. For the first time, the ranking also includes the new **Expats Essentials Index**, which covers digital life, admin topics, housing, and language.

Destination Report

## Denmark



Denmark ranks 30th out of 52 destinations in the *Expat Insider 2022* survey. The country makes it into the global top 10 in both the Working Abroad (1st) and Quality of Life (8th) Indices, but its performance in other indices is not nearly as strong. While it lands in an average 29th place in the Expat Essentials Index, it only ranks 41st in the Personal Finance Index and even ends up among the bottom 10 destinations in the Ease of Settling In Index (47th). Overall, only 64% of expats are happy with their life in Denmark, compared to 71% globally.

**Mexico** (1st), **Indonesia** (2nd), and **Taiwan** (3rd) make up the top 3 destinations, and they all rank very well in the Ease of Settling In and Personal Finance Indices. On the other hand, the bottom 3 destinations, **Kuwait** (52nd), **New Zealand**, and **Hong Kong**, all perform poorly in terms of personal finances for expats. While Kuwait ranks among the worst destinations worldwide for all factors, expats in New Zealand struggle with their career and those in Hong Kong are unhappy with the local environment.

## Denmark in the *Expat Insider 2022* Survey

Denmark performs best among the Nordic countries. Placing 30th out of 52, it ranks slightly ahead of Finland (32nd), Norway (34th), and Sweden (39th). Despite its mediocre overall ranking, Denmark is number one in the Working Abroad Index, which is mainly due to the Work & Leisure (1st) and Work Culture & Satisfaction (2nd) Subcategories.

Expats in Denmark are very happy with their working hours (76% vs. 63% globally) and their work-life balance (77% vs. 62% globally). *"The work-life balance is one of the best things about Denmark,"* a French respondent even says. Moreover, they rate the local business culture positively when it comes to flat hierarchies (81% happy vs. 45% globally), creativity (69% happy vs. 51% globally), and flexibility (85% happy vs. 60% globally).

However, expats see their own working life in slightly less positive terms. On the one hand, 69% state they get paid fairly (vs. 62% globally), and an impressive 95% rate the local economy favorably (vs. 64% globally). On the other hand, only 54% are satisfied with their career prospects (vs. 58% globally).

### A Stable Country with a Green Lifestyle

Denmark also makes it into the top 10 in the Quality of Life Index (8th) and even places first in the Safety & Security Subcategory. Expats appreciate the political stability (90% happy vs. 64% globally), feel safe (94% vs. 81% globally), and 77% believe they can freely express themselves and their opinions (vs. 64% globally).

There is just one reason why Denmark misses out on another top 10 rank in the Environment & Climate Subcategory (12th): 52% of expats are unhappy with the climate and weather (vs. 19% globally). Aside from that, it earns another first place for the availability of green goods and services (85% happy vs. 64% globally). More than four in five (84%) rate the urban environment positively (vs. 67% globally), and 88% agree that the government supports environmentally friendly policies (vs. 61% globally). *"Denmark is a political trendsetter in environmental politics,"* a German expat comments.

### Affordable Healthcare vs. Expensive Transportation

In the Health & Well-Being Subcategory, Denmark ranks twelfth. This is mostly due to the affordable healthcare (83% happy vs. 61% globally). For other factors, such as the quality of healthcare, the results are about average (73% happy vs. 72% globally).

In the Travel & Transit Subcategory (17th), it seems to be the other way round. Expats are happy with the infrastructure for cars (92% happy vs. 75% globally) and even happier with how easy it is to get around on foot or by bicycle (98% happy vs. 77% globally). However, the affordability of public transportation is an issue (54% happy vs. 70% globally).

### Mixed Opinions on Expat Essentials

In the Expat Essentials Index, Denmark ranks slightly below average (29th). The country places third in the Digital Life Subcategory, with expats particularly satisfied with the cashless payment options (94% happy vs. 84% globally) and the availability of digital government services (87% happy vs. 61% globally). They also find the local bureaucracy generally easy to deal with (63% happy vs. 40% globally).

But Denmark performs badly in the Language Subcategory (33rd). While 66% find it easy to live in Denmark without speaking the local language (vs. 51% globally), expats find Danish very hard to learn (70% unhappy vs. 38% globally). *"I love learning it, but it is hard to grasp even the basics,"* a British expat explains. In fact, close to one-quarter of expats (24%) do not speak Danish at all, compared to 10% of expats worldwide who do not speak the local language of their host country.

### Life in Denmark Is Expensive

Expats are really unhappy with the housing market in Denmark: 42% consider housing hard to find (vs. 27% globally), and 59% say it is hard to afford (vs. 43% happy). But housing is not the only thing expats in Denmark find unaffordable: 59% rate the general cost of living negatively (vs. 35% globally).

Despite that, 72% feel that their disposable household income is enough or more than enough to lead a comfortable life, and 60% are satisfied with their financial situation — both shares are the exact same as the global average.

### Danish Friends Are Priceless

In the Ease of Settling In Index, Denmark does even worse. Ranking 47th out of 52, it ends up among the bottom 10. About one in four expats (23%) describe the local population as generally unfriendly (vs. 17% globally), and 28% perceive it as unfriendly towards foreign residents (vs. 18%).

This might be why 63% find it hard to make local friends, compared to a global average of 37%. About one in three do not have a personal support network (32% vs. 24% globally) and are unhappy with their social life (34% vs. 26% globally). *"It is difficult to make local friends and feel integrated,"* a French respondent points out.

## The Best and Worst Destinations for Living and Working Abroad in 2022

According to the *Expat Insider 2022* survey results, Mexico (1st), Indonesia, Taiwan, Portugal, Spain, the UAE, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, and Singapore (10th) are the best destinations for expats. The top 5 destinations stand out with regard to the Ease of Settling In and Personal Finance. They also tend to perform well in the Expat Essentials Index. While they all land just midfield in the Working Abroad Index, their results in the Quality of Life Index are somewhat mixed. Spain (1st), Taiwan, and Portugal make up the top 3 worldwide, but expats in Mexico (24th) and Indonesia (41st) are not satisfied with the local quality of life.

The worst destinations for expats are Kuwait (52nd), New Zealand, Hong Kong, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Japan, South Africa, Turkey, Italy, and Malta (43rd). Kuwait is among the world's worst destinations in each individual index as well as in the overall ranking. Moreover, all bottom 5 destinations have an average to poor performance in the Working Abroad and Personal Finance Indices. While Italy is an exception regarding Personal Finance (33rd), it only ranks 48th in the Expat Essentials Index.

**You can find out more about the best and worst destinations for expats in 2022 in the respective press release (available under "Downloads" in the email).**

#### **About the InterNations *Expat Insider 2022* Survey**

For its annual [Expat Insider survey](#), InterNations asked 11,970 expats representing 177 nationalities and living in 181 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 56 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 16 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 Expat Essentials. These indices were further averaged together with expats' general happiness with their life abroad in order to rank 52 expat destinations around the world. In 2022, the top 10 are Mexico, Indonesia, Taiwan, Portugal, Spain, the UAE, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, and Singapore.

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 more than 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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