

## Expats Enjoy a Modern Working Life & High Level of Digitization in Estonia

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).
- Estonia ranks 11th out of 52 countries: expats love the business culture and transportation options in Estonia, but struggle to connect with the local residents.

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.

Estonia comes 11th out of 52 destinations in the *Expats Insider 2022* survey. The country lands in a top 10 spot in both the Expat Essentials (4th) and Working Abroad (6th) Indices, but it falls behind in the Ease of Settling In Index (40th). Estonia also gets a fairly average midfield result for Personal Finance (25th), while it narrowly misses out on a top 10 spot for the Quality of Life (12th). Overall, 79% of expats are happy with their life in Estonia, 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.

## Estonia in the *Expatriate Insider 2022 Survey*

### Easy Administration

Expats enjoy a modern lifestyle in Estonia: the country ranks first in both the Digital Life and the Admin Topics Subcategories of the Expat Essentials Index (4th). Over nine in ten expats (92%) are satisfied with the availability of administrative/government services online, compared to only 61% globally. Estonia ranks first for this factor, as well as for the unrestricted access to online services. Expats also find it easy to get high-speed internet access at home (6th) and pay without cash (5th).

Dealing with administrative issues is not difficult at all for expats in Estonia. They rank it first for the ease of dealing with local bureaucracy and the authorities: 81% describe it as easy (vs. 40% globally), and 36% even find it *very easy* (vs. 13% globally). "*Services are usually free of bureaucratic difficulties and demand less paperwork,*" says an expat from the UK. What is more, it is also easy to start a life as an expat in Estonia: 80% found it easy to get a visa (vs. 56% globally), ranking the country second for this factor. Only the UAE (1st) makes it easier for expats to move there.

### A Great Business Culture

Their working life is another major highlight for expats in Estonia, who rank the country sixth in the Working Abroad Index. Over three in four expats (76%) are satisfied with their working hours, 13 percentage points more than the global average (63%). And they do indeed work fewer hours per week than the average expat (37.6 hours vs. 40.2 hours globally).

Expats love their work environment and rank Estonia first in the Work Culture & Satisfaction Subcategory. The business culture in Estonia is highly regarded by expats, as they report that it encourages creative thinking (84% vs. 51% globally), promotes independent work (82% vs. 45% globally), and supports flexibility (91% vs. 60% globally). Interestingly, however, 12% of expats do not see a purpose in their work, which is slightly above the global average (9%) and causes Estonia to rank among the bottom 10 (44th).

### Safe & Easy to Get Around

When it comes to the Quality of Life Index (12th), Estonia performs particularly well in the Safety & Security Subcategory (6th). Close to all expats (95%) feel safe in Estonia (vs. 81% globally), and 64% even feel *completely safe* (vs. 47% globally). Apart from that, expats are happy with the country's transportation system, ranking it ninth in the Travel & Transit Subcategory. A Chinese expat notes that there is "*free public transportation in the capital area*". And indeed, Estonia does rank second overall for the affordability of public transportation: 97% find public transportation affordable (vs. 70% globally), and 78% find it *completely affordable* (vs. 39% globally).

Nearly nine in ten expats (88%) are also happy with the availability of public transportation, compared to 73% globally. Additionally, the vast majority of expats (90%) considers it easy and safe to get around on foot and/or by bicycle (vs. 77% globally).

### Great Environment, but the Weather Is Lacking

Ranking ninth in the Environment & Climate Subcategory, Estonia performs well for all aspects related to the environment — but not that well for the actual climate and weather: nearly one in four expats (24%) are unhappy with this factor, compared to 19% globally. An expat from Mexico says that the “*long and dark winter*” is something she struggles with.

However, Estonia makes it into the top 5 for both the urban environment (4th) and the air quality (5th): over nine in ten expats (92%) are happy with the latter, compared to only 65% globally. “*There is so much space for everyone. It is not crowded at all,*” says an expat from Brazil, and an expat from Kenya points out the “*fresh air and nature*” as one of her highlights. She is not alone with her opinion: 90% of expats rate the natural environment positively, compared to 83% globally. Expats are also happy with the availability of green goods and services (71% vs. 64% globally), and 70% believe that the government supports policies to protect the environment (vs. 61% globally).

### Mixed Views on Leisure Options

Expats are not overly happy with the food offering in Estonia, ranking the culinary variety and dining options 44th out of 52. A Belarusian expat mentions the “*the limited choice of food products*” as something she dislikes about living in Estonia. On the plus side, most expats (77%) are happy with the opportunities for recreational sports (vs. 75% globally), and over two in three (69%) are satisfied with the culture and nightlife (vs. 67% globally). These factors balance each other out to leave Estonia in an average 32nd place in the Leisure Options Subcategory.

### Struggles with the Local Residents

Connecting with the locals is one of the biggest difficulties for expats in Estonia. The country ranks in the bottom 10 in the Local Friendliness Subcategory (46th), as well as for both of its rating factors. Overall, 30% of expats are unhappy with the general friendliness of the local residents, which is about double the global average (17%). Additionally, about one in four (23%) perceive the people as unfriendly towards foreign residents (vs. 18% globally). “*People are quite hard to approach,*” says an expat from the Philippines, while a British expat explains that “*Estonia’s people are introverted, but not hostile*”.

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

According to the *Expats 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](#).

#### **Press Contact**

Jane Masumy  
Media Spokesperson

InterNations GmbH  
Schwanthalerstrasse 39  
80336 Munich, Germany

Email: [press@internations.org](mailto:press@internations.org)  
Home page: <https://www.internations.org/press>