

Spain Offers the Best Quality of Life for Expats

The *Expatriate 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).
- Spain ranks 5th out of 52: expats are extremely happy with the quality of life and find it easy to get settled 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 *Expatriate 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 **Expatriate Essentials Index**, which covers digital life, admin topics, housing, and language.

Spain comes 5th out of 52 destinations in the *Expatriate Insider 2022* survey. Expats are particularly happy with the Quality of Life (1st) and the Ease of Settling In (10th). The country narrowly misses out on a top 10 spot in the Personal Finance Index (11th) and performs quite well in the Expatriate Essentials Index (14th). It gets its worst results in the Working Abroad Index (37th). Overall, 83% of expats are happy with their life in Spain, 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.

Spain in the *Expats Insider 2022* Survey

A Great Country to Relax in the Sun

Ranking 5th out of 52 destinations in the *Expats Insider 2022* survey, expats vote Spain the best in the Quality of Life Index (1st). The country lands among the top 10 for four out of the five subcategories featured in this index, even coming first worldwide in the Leisure Options Subcategory. Expats love the variety of culinary and dining options on offer (91% vs. 77% globally), the opportunities for recreational sports (90% vs. 75% globally), and the culture and nightlife (85% vs. 67% globally). *"I enjoy the social freedom and culture in Spain. There is a great nightlife,"* explains an expat from Australia.

These leisure options are easy to enjoy in a great climate, another factor for which Spain does very well (2nd). More than nine in ten (94%) are happy with the climate and weather (vs. 62% globally), and Spain is only beaten by its neighbor Portugal (1st).

Healthcare Highlights

Spain also finishes in the top 10 of the Health & Well-Being Subcategory (7th). The affordability of its healthcare system (6th) is a highlight for expats, and almost four in five (79%) rate this factor positively (vs. 61% globally). The majority of expats (82%) also describes healthcare as generally available (vs. 73% globally). What is more, 84% rate the quality of medical care positively (vs. 72% globally), and 77% say that they can access all the kinds of healthcare services they need (vs. 67% globally).

A Place to Call Home

Spain excels in the Ease of Settling In Index (10th), ranking in the top 10 of both the Culture & Welcome (7th) and Finding Friends (9th) Subcategories. Over two in three expats (67%) are happy with their social life (vs. 56% globally), and 68% have a personal support network (vs. 59% globally). Maybe this is why expats find it easy to get used to the local culture in Spain (78% vs. 62% globally), feel at home there (76% vs. 62% globally), and feel welcome too (78% vs. 66% globally). *"Once you get used to the local people and culture, it is a great and easy place to live in,"* shares a Colombian expat.

A Very Reasonable Cost of Living

Spain narrowly misses out on a top 10 spot in the Personal Finance Index (11th). Expats regard it as one of the destinations with the best cost of living (9th). Seven in ten expats (70%) are happy with this factor, compared to a global average of only 45%. An expat from New Zealand says he greatly enjoys the *"quality of life for a very reasonable cost of living"*.

The affordable costs are also reflected in the Housing Subcategory (16th): more than half the expats (54%) describe housing as affordable (vs. 39% globally), and 63% say that it is easy for expats to find housing (vs. 54% globally).

Getting Online Is No Problem

Housing is actually Spain's best subcategory in the Expat Essentials Index (14th), but the country also does not do too badly for Digital Life (21st). Expats are happy with the unrestricted access to online services (92% vs. 82% globally), the opportunities to pay without cash (92% vs. 84% globally), and the ease of acquiring high-speed internet access at home (86% vs. 79% globally). Only the availability of administrative/government services online is a lowlight here: 26% rate this factor negatively, compared to 21% globally.

Just over half (52%) find it hard to deal with the local bureaucracy/authorities, 13 percentage points more than the global average (39%). Since expats' satisfaction with the ease of opening a local bank account (66% vs. 64% globally) and getting a visa before moving to Spain (59% happy vs. 56% globally) is just about average, Spain ranks 33rd in the Admin Topics Subcategory.

Less-Than-Satisfactory Career Options

Spain performs worst in the Working Abroad Index (37th), which is largely due to the Career Prospects Subcategory (41st). Expats are unhappy with their personal career opportunities (27% vs. 22% globally) and the local job market in general (37% vs. 27% globally). In the end, 30% believe that their career prospects have worsened after moving to Spain, compared to 18% globally. It does not make the situation any better that 24% feel that they are not paid fairly for their work (vs. 20% globally). An Irish expat puts it simply: *"You will not get rich living here, but the cost of living is low, and the culture, lifestyle, and weather are spectacular."*

However, at least they seem to have enough leisure time to enjoy themselves, ranking the country 13th for work-life balance. Over two in three expats in Spain (69%) are pleased with their work-life balance (vs. 62% globally). This might be related to their working hours: expats in Spain work an average of 36.2 hours per week, four hours less than the global average (40.2 hours per week). Moreover, an above-average share of expats in Spain are retirees (24% vs. 10% globally), and among those who do work, 27% work part time (vs. 17% globally).

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.

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