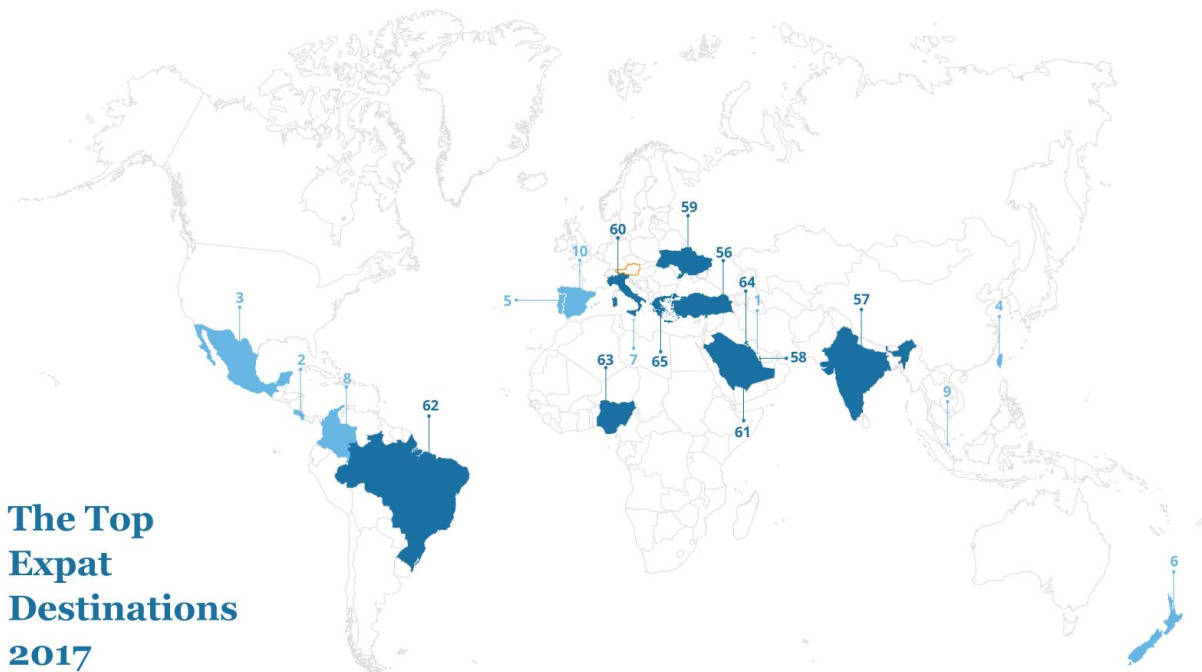


## Expatriate Insider 2017 Survey Reveals: Austria Is One of the Unfriendliest Countries for Expats

Foreign residents in Austria receive a cool welcome, but safety and political stability still appeal.

- Austria is seen as the second-unfriendliest country in the world by foreign residents, only beaten by Kuwait.
- Despite changes in the political landscape, expats still see Austria as politically stable (78%) and peaceful (88%).
- Austria dropped from 4th to 11th rank in terms of family life within one year: one of the reasons for this change might be a marked tendency to rate the availability of childcare more negatively.

Munich, 06 September 2017 — Austria is a difficult country for expats to settle in, as they struggle with the language and the lack of friendliness among the local population. Despite these drawbacks, many expats persevere in learning German and are tempted to stay in Austria, partly due to its excellent healthcare services and education system. Austrians themselves tend to be well-educated expats and are not afraid to explore various countries, as the [Expatriate Insider 2017](#) survey reveals. With nearly 13,000 respondents living and working abroad, it is one of the most extensive expat studies, conducted yearly by [InterNations](#), the largest expat community worldwide. Apart from offering an in-depth analysis of life abroad, the survey ranks 65 countries by a variety of factors such as quality of life, working abroad, and settling in. While Austria lands on a slightly above-average 28th place, this year's top 10 destinations for expats are Bahrain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Taiwan, Portugal, New Zealand, Malta, Colombia, Singapore, and Spain.



### The Top Expat Destinations 2017

#### Top 10

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1 Bahrain    | 6 New Zealand |
| 2 Costa Rica | 7 Malta       |
| 3 Mexico     | 8 Colombia    |
| 4 Taiwan     | 9 Singapore   |
| 5 Portugal   | 10 Spain      |

#### Bottom 10

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| 56 Turkey  | 61 Saudi Arabia |
| 57 India   | 62 Brazil       |
| 58 Qatar   | 63 Nigeria      |
| 59 Ukraine | 64 Kuwait       |
| 60 Italy   | 65 Greece       |

- |                   |             |                   |               |                 |                   |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 11 Czech Republic | 18 Thailand | 26 UAE            | 34 Australia  | 42 South Africa | 50 Russia         |
| 12 Vietnam        | 19 Romania  | 27 Switzerland    | 35 Kazakhstan | 43 USA          | 51 Chile          |
| 13 Netherlands    | 20 Norway   | <b>28 Austria</b> | 36 Panama     | 44 Israel       | 52 Argentina      |
| 14 Luxembourg     | 21 Finland  | 29 Philippines    | 37 Kenya      | 45 Ireland      | 53 Indonesia      |
| 15 Malaysia       | 22 Sweden   | 30 Denmark        | 38 France     | 46 Uganda       | 54 United Kingdom |
| 16 Canada         | 23 Germany  | 31 South Korea    | 39 Hong Kong  | 47 Peru         | 55 China          |
| 17 Oman           | 24 Cambodia | 32 Belgium        | 40 Japan      | 48 Myanmar      |                   |
|                   | 25 Ecuador  | 33 Cyprus         | 41 Hungary    | 49 Poland       |                   |

### A Less than Warm Welcome in Austria

Beaten only by Denmark, Austria has been revealed as the second-worst country for expats trying to settle in and get accustomed to their new surroundings. Moreover, the small Central European country only ranks 64th out of 65 destinations in terms of friendliness, with only Kuwait offering a cooler welcome. A minority of foreign residents in Austria (25%) find it easy to make local friends, whereas 42 percent of expats worldwide think the same about their respective host country. Language seems to be a major challenge as nearly seven in ten respondents in Austria (68%) feel that learning German is difficult. This is not much of a surprise, considering it takes around 750 hours of teaching to reach a good level. Nevertheless, despite a high proportion of language students struggling with case logic and complicated word order, nearly nine in ten expats in Austria (87%) speak German at least to some extent. This seems to be a necessity: over half the respondents (51%) think it would be difficult to live there with no German skills at all — ten percentage points more than the global average of expats who feel the same about their respective destination. Although expats in Austria try to adapt linguistically, they still find it difficult to fit in: as many as six in ten have felt unwelcome in Austria at some point due to their language or accent. One Czech expat commented that people in Austria “sometimes presume I am a cleaner because of my ‘eastern’ accent”.

### Still a Safe and Secure Destination for Families

Western Europe may have seen a rise in terrorist attacks and turbulent politics, yet expats still see Austria as a safe destination: nearly nine in ten expats (88%) think it is a peaceful country. With the survey being conducted in the wake of the divisive 2016 Austrian presidential election, it could be expected that expats now perceive the country as more politically volatile than before. However, expats living in Austria are still pretty impressed with the political situation: nearly eight in ten (78%) see it as politically stable. Apart from safety, high standards in healthcare and education make the country an attractive destination for expats with kids. More than eight in ten among all expats (84%) are impressed with the quality of medical care, and 89 percent of parents appreciate the quality of education. One Italian described their adoptive country as “the right place if you want the best for your child: safety, education in general, organization of free time”. While Austria does well among parents, ranking 11th in terms of family life abroad, its results have dropped considerably since the last year’s survey, where it came in 4th. One of the reasons for this loss in rankings could be the significant deterioration in regard to the availability of childcare options: while in 2016, seven in ten expat parents in Austria were satisfied with this factor, only 53 percent still agree in 2017.

#### Life in Austria

	2017*		2016**
<b>Overall Rank</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>▼ 20</b>	<b>8</b>
Quality of Life	7	▼ 5	2
Ease of Settling In	64	▼ 10	54
Working Abroad	19	▼ 12	7
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	11	▼ 7	4
Personal Finance	44	▼ 14	30
Cost of Living	32		32

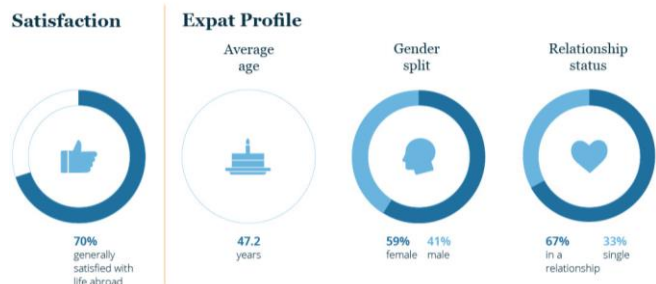
\*out of 65 countries

\*\*out of 67 countries



### Austrians Abroad: Highly Educated and Experienced Abroad

Austrians abroad are usually slightly older than the average expat, and one in ten has even retired. With 16 percent of respondents from Austria holding a PhD, compared to just 6 percent of all expats worldwide, they are a well-educated group. Their knowledge clearly stretches beyond the classroom, as they tend to have considerable international experience. More than two-fifths (41%) have lived in three or more other countries. These international types seem to have a good grasp of foreign languages, too, as over half (52%) speak the local language of their new country fairly or very well. With the USA and UK being among the top destinations for Austrians moving abroad, English does not pose any problems. However, Austrians seem to encounter a few more difficulties when moving out of the English-speaking world. As one respondent in Italy remarked, “I am very



*surprised and shocked that the Italians here do not speak English — even the young and educated ones!*" Linguistic challenges do not hold Austrian expats back in the job market, though, as 15 percent work in a management position: more than eight in ten (86%) of these managers from Austria even operate in middle or higher management. This could be partly due to the fact that 17 percent of all Austrians abroad were sent by their employers and therefore may have already held more senior positions back home.

### **A Heartwarming Welcome Leads Bahrain, Costa Rica, and Mexico to the Top**

For the first time since the *Expat Insider* survey was introduced, none of the previous year's top 3 destinations lead the ranking: Surprise winner Bahrain even leaps from 19th position to 1st place, winning the overall ranking. The Gulf State makes it easy for expats to feel at home due to its friendly local residents — nearly nine out of ten expats (86%) rate the friendly attitude of Bahrainis towards expats positively. In addition, about three-quarters of expats in Bahrain (73%) are satisfied with their jobs, compared to a global average of 64 percent. Runner-up Costa Rica and Mexico on third place also rank among the top 20 in terms of working abroad, but are even more valued for their extremely friendly local population. In fact, nearly nine in ten expats (87%) rate the friendly attitude of locals towards foreign residents positively in both countries, compared to a global average of only 67 percent of expats feeling this way about their destination.

### **Greece, Kuwait, and Nigeria Are the Worst Destinations for Expats Again**

The countries featured in the bottom 3, on the other hand, have remained the same for the third year in a row: Greece has now hit rock bottom, ranking last overall, as well as in terms of working abroad, personal finance, and family life. Half of the respondents in Greece say that their household income is not enough to cover their daily expenses, which is more than twice the global average (23%). The main issue in Nigeria and Kuwait, 63rd and 64th out of 65 countries, remains the constant struggle with the quality of life: more than two in ten expats in Kuwait (23%) are unhappy with their life in general, compared to only 10 percent of expats worldwide. In Nigeria, safety and security cause additional problems, with nearly seven out of ten (68%) rating their personal safety negatively.

### **About the InterNations *Expat Insider* 2017 Survey**

For its annual [Expat Insider survey](#), InterNations asked about 13,000 expatriates representing 166 nationalities and living in 188 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 43 different aspects of life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized the respondents' personal satisfaction with these aspects and considered both emotional topics as well as 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 six topical indices: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Family Life, Personal Finance, and Cost of Living Index. Except for the latter, all indices were further averaged in order to rank 65 expatriate destinations around the world. In 2017 the top 10 were Bahrain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Taiwan, Portugal, New Zealand, Malta, Colombia, Singapore, and Spain.

For a country to be featured in the indices and consequently in the overall ranking, a sample size of at least 75 survey participants per country was necessary. The only exception to this is the Family Life Index, where a sample size of more than 40 respondents raising children abroad was required. In 2017, 65 and 45 countries respectively met these requirements. However, in most countries the sample size exceeded 100 participants.



### About InterNations

With 2.8 million members in 390 cities around the world, InterNations (<http://www.internations.org>) is the largest global network and information site for people who live and work abroad. InterNations offers global and local networking both online and face-to-face. At around 6,000 monthly events and activities, expatriates have the opportunity to meet with other global minds. Online services include country and city guides created by a team of professional writers, guest contributions about life abroad, and discussion forums to help members with topics such as local housing and job searching. InterNations membership is by approval only to ensure we remain a community of trust.

The InterNations app is available for Android and iOS and can be downloaded for free on [Google Play](#) and the [App Store](#).

Find more information about InterNations on our [press pages](#), [company website](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), or in our [Expat Magazine](#).

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