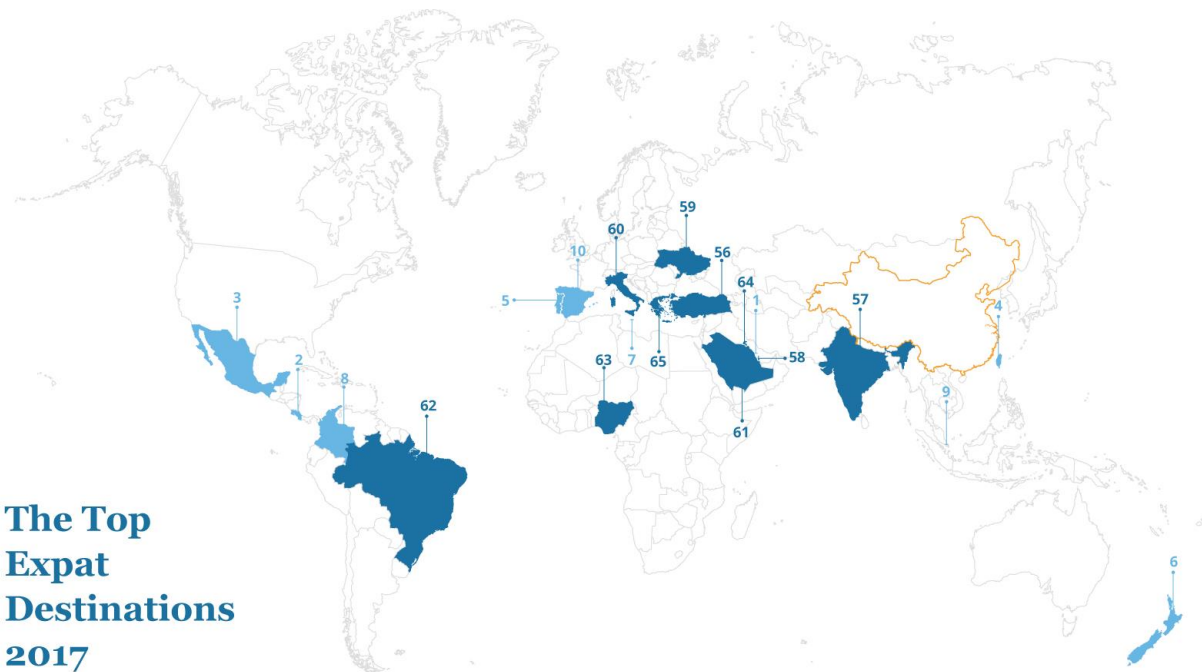


***Expats Insider 2017* Survey Reveals: Environmental Issues Overshadow China’s Impressive Job Market**

Expats in China are pleased with their careers and financial situation, while health concerns remain a major source of discontent.

- Around two-thirds (64%) of expats in China feel positively about their career prospects, and an above-average 69 percent are satisfied with their job.
- Severe air and water pollution have a negative impact on expat satisfaction with the quality of life in China, with 85 percent deeming the environmental quality unsatisfactory.
- Only five percent of expats in China plan to stay forever, compared to 29 percent of expats worldwide seeing themselves settling down infinitely in their destination.

Munich, 06 September 2017 — While China does extremely well among expats when it comes to job satisfaction and job security, it suffers from poor results in terms of settling in: the language barrier in particular causes difficulties for foreign residents. Additionally, the environmental quality, healthcare, and education are rated negatively, as the [Expats 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 China lands on a poor 55th 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 Expats 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 | 28 Austria | 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 | |

Promising Career Prospects Attract Expats

Working conditions in China are, all in all, held in high regard among expats. The country ranks 21st out of 65 countries in terms of working abroad: an above-average percentage of expats (19%) found a job there on their own, demonstrating the various career options in the Asian superpower. In fact, more than six in ten expats surveyed feel positively about their career prospects (64%) and are satisfied with their job (69%). In addition, China has maintained its impressive position for personal finance, ranking among the top 10 for this factor ever since the survey was first conducted in 2014. About two-thirds of expats (65%) state that their disposable income is more than enough to cover their daily expenses, compared to only 48 percent of expats worldwide. One of the reasons for this result might be that over half of the expats (53%) believe they earn more from employment or business in China than they would in a similar position back home. However, this financial security comes at a price: with a slightly longer than average working week for full-time jobs (45.5 vs. 44.3 hours), 27 percent of expats are unsatisfied with their working hours, as well as their work-life balance, compared to about one in five of expats worldwide (21% and 20% respectively).

Life in China

	2017*		2016**
Overall Rank	55	▼ 7	48
Quality of Life	52	▼ 3	49
Ease of Settling In	62	▼ 2	60
Working Abroad	21		21
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	40	▼ 9	31
Personal Finance	6	▲ 1	7
Cost of Living	30	▲ 4	34

*out of 65 countries

**out of 67 countries

74% generally satisfied

Expats Dissatisfied with China's Environment and Healthcare

While China's ongoing economic success is appealing to expats, it has, at the same time, impacted public health. A massive 85 percent of expats are unsatisfied with the environmental quality in China, with 42 percent giving it the worst possible rating — this is more than eight times the global average (5%). One German expat explains that the "air quality is the worst thing about living in Beijing". In fact, 41 percent name their personal health as a potential disadvantage they considered before moving. China performs badly with regard to health and well-being in general (62nd out of 65). Only 41 percent of expats find the quality of medical care satisfactory, and an even lower 35 percent deem it to be affordable. Moreover, only a mere four percent of expat parents consider their children's health to be *very good*, compared to a global average of 34 percent. Not only health is a major source of discontent for expat parents in China, but education too: a large majority (72%) believe that education is not affordable, with China ranking second to last for this factor, only beaten by Hong Kong. This may be connected to the fact, that close to three-fifths of expat parents (57%) in China send their kids to an international school while less than one in ten (8%) opt for a local state school.

Complex Language Poses Obstacles to Intercultural Friendships

Getting used to expat life in China appears to be a difficult process, with the country ranking 62nd out of 65 countries for ease of settling in. Coping with the language barrier is a particularly troublesome hurdle that expats have to overcome: Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese, and other varieties) is one of the most difficult languages in the world. More than eight in ten expats (85%) find learning the local language difficult, compared to only 50 percent of expats worldwide. Consequently, among the 54 percent of respondents who are mainly friends with other expats, two-thirds (66%) blame the language barrier for their difficulties in making local friends. As a Czech expat points out, "there is a big group of expats", which makes it possible to easily socialize "with like-minded people". These difficulties may contribute China's poor ranking in terms of settling in, and they may also help to explain why more than three in ten expats (32%) claim not to feel at home in the local culture. Only five percent plan to stay in China forever, compared with a worldwide average of 29 percent of expats planning to settle down in their destination.

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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