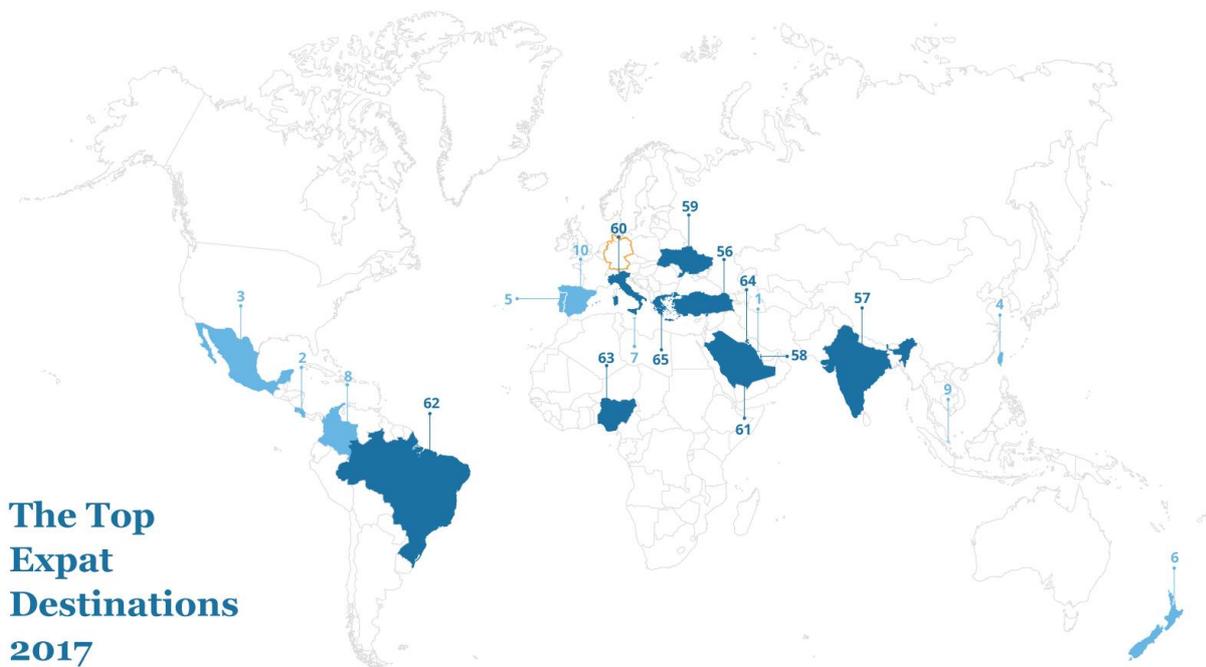


## ***Expats Insider 2017* Survey Reveals: Germany's Economy Is Appealing — Germans Less So**

Germany offers a stable economic and political environment, but unfriendly locals and the difficult language make it hard to settle in.

- *Germany is among the least welcoming countries in the world, with nearly seven out of ten expats (68%) describing the Germans as reserved.*
- *Expats mainly move to Germany for work. They especially value job security (67%), higher employment incomes (54%), and a great work-life-balance (65%).*
- *Germans mainly move abroad for their job, especially foreign assignments, and are often rewarded with higher incomes.*

Munich, 06 September 2017 — A cool welcome from many Germans makes it hard for foreign residents to settle in and find local friends. On the other hand, expats value the country's economic and political stability, as well as their personal safety. Interestingly, not only do expats move to Germany for their job, but this is also a major reason why many Germans decide to leave their home country, 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 Germany achieves a slightly above-average 23rd 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 <b>Germany</b> | 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       |                   |

## Reserved Germans Make It Hard for Expats to Feel at Home

Ranking 56th out of 65 countries in terms of settling in, Germany is perceived as one of the least welcoming destinations in the world. In fact, nearly seven in ten expats (68%) describe the Germans as reserved, and more than half (58%) find it hard to make local friends. *“Germans in general can come across as rude and obnoxious,”* a British expat said in the survey. With the Germans being so unapproachable, it comes as no surprise that expats often live a separate life, with 37 percent being mainly friends with other expats. Most of the latter (56%) blame the language barrier for their difficulty in finding local friends, compared to only 36 percent of expats facing that issue worldwide. The German language is even seen as one of the top three disadvantages of moving to Germany. This is particularly interesting, as nearly seven in ten (69%) find it hard to learn German, but six in ten also claim to speak German fairly or even very well. The difficulties in making friends are probably among the reasons for expats not feeling at home in German culture, with about three in ten foreign residents struggling with it.

## Living Safe and Sound in Germany

Germany’s economy keeps attracting workers from around the world: Two out of five expats living in Germany mention their own or their partner’s career as their most important reason for moving there. In fact, Germany achieves its best ranking (7th out of 65 countries) in terms of working abroad. Expats especially value their job security: two out of three (67 %) rate it positively, ten percentage points more than the global average (57 %). In addition, over half of all expats working in Germany (54%) think they are paid more than they would get for a similar job back home. But it is not all work hard and no play, as Germany also does well with regard to work-life balance. Employees can enjoy their free time to the full, as the country is still considered a safe place, despite increasing tensions across Europe. A mere two percent rate their personal safety negatively, while eleven percent worldwide are unhappy with this factor in their respective country. The strong economy and positive ratings for safety, combined with a high ranking for the quality of life in general (10th out of 65), lead to more than eight in ten expats (83%) expressing their satisfaction with life in Germany.

### Life in Germany

	2017*	2016**
<b>Overall Rank</b>	<b>23</b> ▼ 6	<b>17</b>
Quality of Life	10 ▼ 1	9
Ease of Settling In	56 ▲ 1	57
Working Abroad	7 ▼ 4	3
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	22 ▼ 12	10
Personal Finance	33	33
Cost of Living	27 ▼ 4	23

83% generally satisfied

## Germans Abroad: Managers Sent by Their Employers

Whereas attractive jobs and career options are among the most important reasons for many expats moving to Germany, even more Germans leave the very same country for that reason (51%). Apart from moving for their partner’s job or education (13%) or finding a new job on their own (10%), 18 percent of Germans abroad give being sent by their employer as their most important reason for relocating. As nearly one of five Germans (19%) are in a management position, it comes as no surprise that their earnings are high: close to three in ten (28%) have access to an annual household income of over 100,000 USD. Although 66 percent rate their job satisfaction positively, over one-fifth (22%) are unhappy with their work-life balance. This might be connected to their countries of residence: Germans prefer the USA (11%), Switzerland (7%), and the UK (6%), all of which are have average to poor ratings in terms of work-life balance. A German expat in the USA finds that *“work takes over one’s life and time off is hard to schedule”*, while another in the UK misses the *“lack of flexible working options”*.

### Satisfaction



### Expat Profile

Average age



Gender split



Relationship status



### **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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