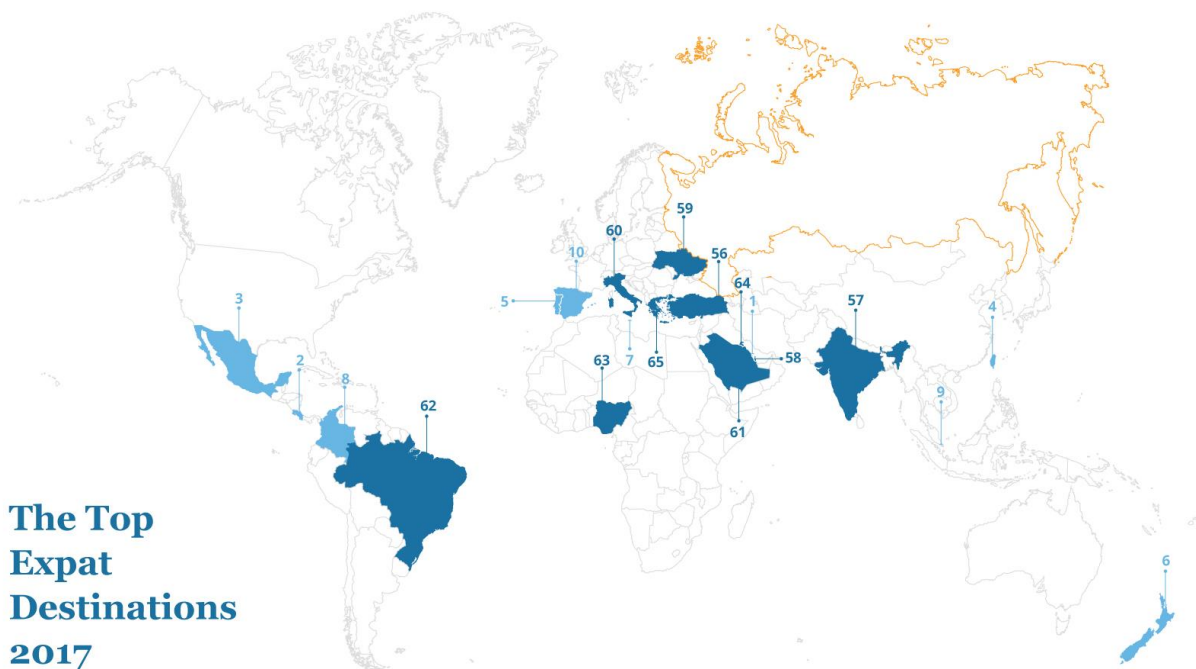


Expatriate Insider 2017 Reveals: A Welcome as Cold as the Weather for Expats Moving to Russia

While expats are pleased with their personal finances and the country's politics, they struggle with harsh winters and unfriendly locals.

- Over four-fifths of expats living in Russia (84%) earn enough or more than enough to cover all expenses, with 20 percent having an annual household income of more than 150,000 USD.
- More than 48 hours of work per week (global average: 44.3) lead to an unimpressive 50th rank out of 65 countries for work-life balance.
- Russians abroad are very young and well educated: outside of Russia they earn more money (80%) and women seem to fall in love easily (69%).

Munich, 06 September 2017 — Expats moving to Russia may be in for a shock with tough working hours and unfriendly local residents. Financially, however, they seem to gain, as even lower paid expats feel they have plenty to live on. Russians who move abroad are less than satisfied with the economy back home, seeking out higher work satisfaction and higher pay, 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 Russia achieves a poor 50th place, this year's top destinations for expats are Bahrain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Taiwan, and Portugal.



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 | 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 | |

Popular for Personal Finances — and Politics

For expats who are concerned about their cashflow, Russia might be a suitable destination: the country performs best with regard to personal finance, ranking 22nd out of 65 countries. Just 15 percent of expats in Russia rate their personal financial situation negatively, fewer than the worldwide average (19%). More than four-fifths of expats living in Russia (84%) earn enough — or more than enough — to cover all their living expenses. While 21 percent fall in the lowest income bracket (less than 12,000 USD), another 30 percent have a household income of more than 100,000 USD per year, compared to a global average of 21 percent. When it comes to Russian politics, the international press can be somewhat critical, but expats living in the country are far less bothered. Half of all respondents living in Russia are satisfied with the country's political stability, and 77 percent are happy with their personal safety, both percentages only slightly below to the global average (56% and 79%). However, it is worth noting that the *Expats Insider 2017* survey was conducted prior to the St. Petersburg bombing, the large-scale persecution of gay men in Chechnya, and the ongoing issues concerning diplomatic ties between Russia and the US. However, one factor expats are really impressed with is Russia's public transportation. As many as 77 percent of expats in Russia (62% worldwide) rate the transportation infrastructure positively: one expat from the US raved about *"the extensive and well-run systems — they totally negate the need for a car!"*

Cold Welcome, Cold Weather

While personal finances are not bad, Russian employers make expats work for their income: with 48.7 hours per week, expats working full time in Russia spend a lot more time in the office than the global average (44.3 hours). *"The work hours are inhumane,"* a US American teacher complains. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Russia ranks an unimpressive 50th out of 65 countries in terms of work-life balance. Expats looking to spend their limited spare time outdoors may also be disappointed as the Russian environment is less than desirable: more than four in ten expats (44%) rate the quality of the local environment negatively, compared to only 23 percent of expats worldwide. In addition to that, half the respondents saw the Russian weather as a drawback before relocating, and only about one in six (17%) are actually satisfied with the climate after moving there.

It is not just that temperatures are cool — expats are often greeted with an equally frosty welcome from local residents. Just 19 percent feel that Russians are very friendly in general, ten percentage points less than the global average. This might be one of the reasons why 46 percent do not find it easy to settle down in Russia, compared to just 25 percent of expats worldwide feeling this way about their destination. Language seems to be a major obstacle as less than a fifth (19%) speak Russian very well. To make matters worse, it can be a real challenge to get by without some grasp of Russian, as three-quarters of respondents say life in Russia would be a struggle without some knowledge of the local language. All these factors have contributed to Russia's ranking as the worst country to move to when it comes to language. One South African expat agrees with this sentiment: *"It is taking me a long time to grasp Russian, so communication here is difficult."*

Life in Russia

	2017*		2016**
Overall Rank	50	▼ 3	47
Quality of Life	45	▲ 2	47
Ease of Settling In	54	▲ 2	56
Working Abroad	57	▼ 14	43
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	25	▲ 2	27
Personal Finance	22	▼ 2	20
Cost of Living	33	▼ 5	28

*out of 65 countries

**out of 67 countries

78% generally satisfied

Young Russians Moving Abroad for Jobs and Love

Even though expats living in Russia are satisfied with their personal finances, young Russians seem to be keen to escape the country's poor economy. Russian expats tend to be lot younger than the global average of expats (36 vs. 43.5 years), and most of them are women (86%). They are financially better off than if they had stayed at home: eight in ten (80%) believe they earn at least as much as or even more than they would get in a similar job or position in

Satisfaction



84% generally satisfied with life abroad

Expat Profile

Average age



36.0 years

Gender split



86% female
14% male

Relationship status



60% in a relationship
40% single

Russia. Russian expatriates may be young, but they are also well educated. Nearly seven in ten (68%) have some kind of postgraduate degree, and 10 percent even hold a PhD. Among the 15 percent listing their employment status as manager, over a third (34%) are in senior positions. However, another 16 percent of Russian expats are currently looking for work, making this answer option the second-most frequent response among Russians abroad. Those who do have a job seem to be satisfied with work abroad. One Russian living in Germany, for example, commented that *"it is easy to adapt here. People are reliable, the work culture is good, and there are short office hours."*

For many Russians, employment was a secondary consideration when they decided to relocate. One in ten (11%) moved for love so they could live with their partner. Moreover, nearly seven in ten Russian expat women in this predominantly female group (69%) met their significant other outside of Russia, with 46 percent finding love in their host country. Although 15 percent are currently in a long-distance relationship, Russian women in general tend to be happy with their relationship as only five percent rate this factor negatively.

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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