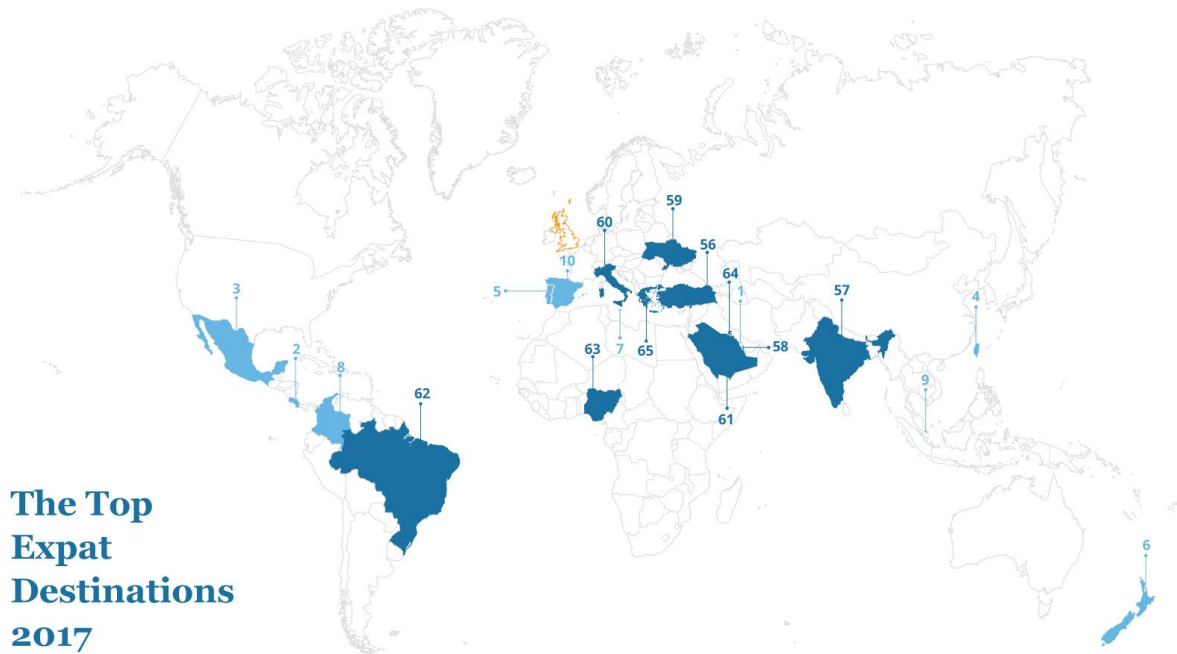


Expats Insider 2017 Survey Reveals: Brexit and High-Cost Living Put Expats Off the UK

Dropping 21 places in the ranking, the UK is one of the biggest losers as turbulent politics take their toll.

- The UK has dropped 30 percentage points for political stability since last year's survey (77% vs. 47%).
- The British education system is highly valued: More expats parents in the UK send their children to a local state school (65%) than the global average of parents abroad (33%).
- Spain is the top destination for Brits abroad, as many seek warmer weather in their later years.

Munich, 06 September 2017 — Dramatic changes in British politics were undoubtedly going to have an impact on expats views of the UK. This year's *Expats Insider* survey shows just that as the UK sinks down the ranks rapidly. Politics and financial concerns prove to be particularly problematic for expats, although family life in the UK still scores well. As for the Brits who move abroad, the stereotype still rings true: sun-seeking and often living off their pension, Spain is the top destination for British expats, 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 the UK achieves a poor 54th 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 | 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 | |

Brexit and Being Broke

In the wake of the UK's vote to leave the European Union the country's political ranking amongst expats has fallen considerably. This year's *Expat Insider* survey, which was carried out before the 2017 General Election and the recent spate of terrorist attacks, already sees a 30 percentage point drop in expats' satisfaction with political stability. In 2016 more than three-quarters of respondents (77%) regarded the UK as politically stable, yet just 47 percent share that opinion one year later. Furthermore, with just fourteen percent of residents completely satisfied with this factor, the UK is rated only about half as well as the average expat destination (26%) in 2017. With such huge shifts in the political landscape, expats are nervous, as one Danish expat describes, "We are very uncertain about our future. Brexit has made life very difficult." Foreign residents do not always feel at home in Britain as over half (54%) report they have felt unwelcome at times due to their nationality. Politics has also had an effect on expats finances, as a fluctuating pound has made the UK even more unaffordable. Ranking 59th out of 65 countries, the UK is in the bottom 10 for personal finances, doing only slightly better than the economically shaken countries Italy (63rd) and Greece (65th). Nearly a third (31%) of expats living in the UK say their income is not enough to cover their daily expenses. However, this may be because more than two-fifths of expats (42%) live in London, which was rated one of the 30 most expensive places to live according to Mercer's 2017 rankings.

Family Life Flourishes in the UK

For families moving abroad, the UK can still be a good choice. Nearly eight in ten expat parents (78%) are impressed with the leisure activities available for kids, and the British education is also seen as a plus. In fact, more than half of foreigners with children (55%) describe education in the UK as easy to afford. This might be because expat parents living in the UK are almost twice as likely to send their children to a local state school (65%) than expats across the globe (33%). Bucking the trend, just two percent have kids at an international school — usually a popular option for expats as 32 percent worldwide pick this English-language alternative for their children. With local schools also teaching in English, expat parents do not feel the need to pay for pricier international institutions. In general, expats tend to have little difficulty communicating in the UK. Nearly four-fifths (79%) find English easy to learn and seven in ten saw language as a potential benefit prior to their move. However, it can be a very different story for those who are not already fluent. Foreigners in the UK state that it is nearly twice as difficult to get by without the local language (80%) as in expat destinations worldwide (41%). This surely works against expats as one Portuguese respondent complained that it is hard to get by in the UK "when your mother tongue is not English."

Life in the United Kingdom

	2017*	2016**
Overall Rank	54	33
Quality of Life	41	34
Ease of Settling In	44	35
Working Abroad	29	14
Family Life (out of 45 countries)	34	24
Personal Finance	59	47
Cost of Living	58	53

*out of 65 countries

**out of 67 countries

75% generally satisfied

The Brits Abroad: Seeking Out the Sun in Their Later Years

Escaping the gray weather seems to be a major priority for those emigrating from the UK as sunny Spain tops the list of favorite British expat destinations. With some areas basking in as many as 300 sun-soaked days a year, almost one in ten vitamin D-deficient expats from the UK (8%) flock to the country. Nearly seven in ten (67%) saw the weather as an advantage in leaving home. One British expat in Australia was typically impressed by the climate, commenting "the weather is my favorite thing about this country. It has a big impact on my mood — I wake up happy when the sun is shining!" Many make

Satisfaction



81% generally satisfied with life abroad

Expat Profile

Average age



51.2 years

Gender split



53% female 47% male

Relationship status



71% in a relationship 29% single

the move to sunnier shores later in life, which explains why the average British expat is almost eight years older than their average international counterpart (51.2 years old vs. 43.5). Pensioners are the biggest group from the UK living abroad and with their school days long behind, they struggle somewhat learning the local language. Six in ten find it a challenge, but with English being widely spoken across the globe, the British can frequently survive with their mother tongue alone. As many as 56 percent living abroad find it easy to get by without speaking the language of their country of residence and more than half (52%) admit to only speaking the language a little or not at all. *"The thing that bothers me most is the inability to speak the language but I am having lessons to remedy this,"* explains a Brit living in Spain. However, this language barrier does not mean the British keep to themselves. Over a quarter of British expats (26%) describe their friendship group as mainly comprising local residents — a bigger proportion than of expats worldwide, where just 19% have mixed in with the locals.

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

For the first time since the *Expatriate 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 *Expatriate Insider* 2017 Survey

For its annual [Expatriate 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](#).

Press Contact

Vera Grossmann
Media Spokesperson

InterNations GmbH
Schwanthalerstrasse 39
80336 Munich, Germany

Tel: +49 (0)89 461 3324 79
Fax: +49 (0)89 461 3324 99
Email: press@internations.org
Homepage: www.internations.org/press