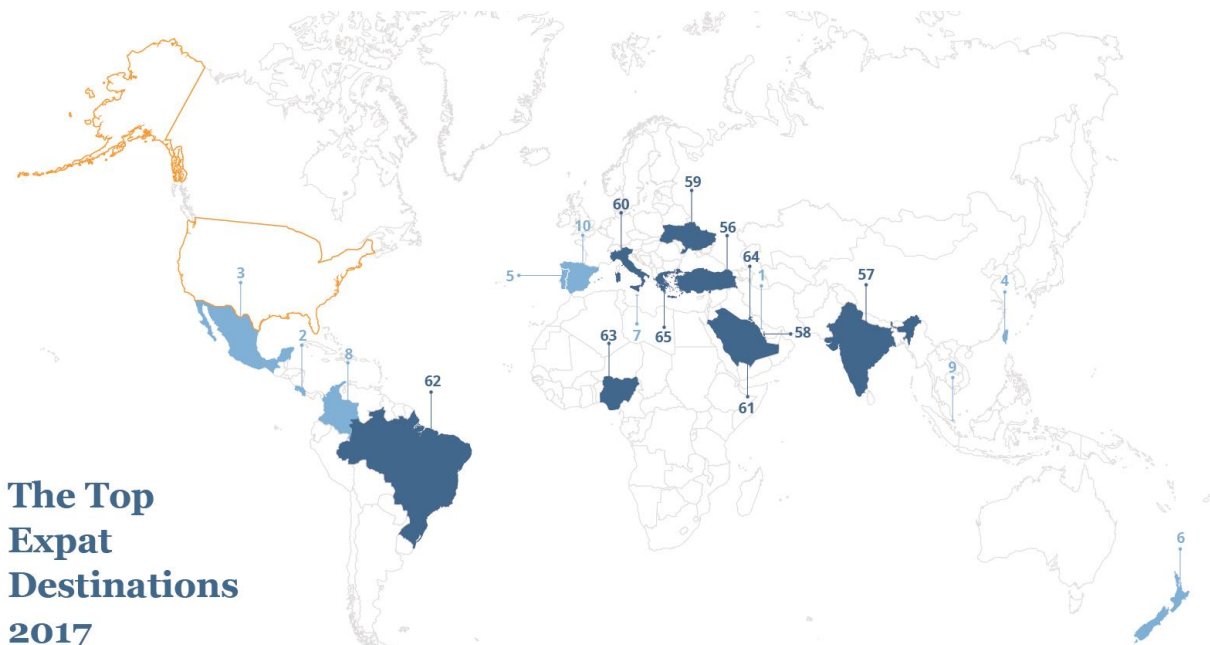


## ***Expats Insider 2017 Survey Reveals: The American Dream Crumbles in the Face of Uncertain Politics and Safety Concerns***

Dropping 17 places in the ranking, the USA is one of the biggest losers as friendly locals fail to keep expats happy in turbulent times.

- *Expats' satisfaction with political stability has fallen by 32 percent points since 2016 (36% vs. 68%) and the USA comes 51st out of 65 countries worldwide for the safety and security.*
- *Three-quarters of expats find US Americans friendly and they are almost ten percentage points more likely to have friends that are not all expats themselves than respondents worldwide (76% vs. 67%).*
- *Close to four in ten US Americans living abroad (39%) doubt they will ever return to the States.*

Munich, 06 September 2017 — Living the “American Dream” has its price nowadays: alongside shifting politics, expensive healthcare, and unimpressive personal safety, many expats are finding the hard-work lifestyle increasingly difficult. However, friendly local residents make living in the USA more bearable. Americans themselves want to get out of the USA’s high-paced lifestyle and move to Mexico, among other countries, 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 United States of America drops 17 ranks to a less than mediocre 43rd place, this year’s top 10 destinations for expats are Bahrain, Costa Rica, Mexico, Taiwan, Portugal, New Zealand, Malta, Colombia, Singapore, and Spain.



### 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       |                   |

## Huge Drop in Political Stability and Personal Safety

Expats may still be satisfied with their jobs, ranking the USA as one of the top 10 countries for career opportunities, but foreign residents' perception of the United States has notably changed for the worse in the last year. Political issues, alongside a lack of security, seem to bother them a lot, with political stability taking a considerable hit after the divisive presidential election. Down 32 percentage points from last year, just 36 percent feel that the USA is politically stable. Furthermore, the USA comes in 51st out of 65 countries for safety and security and ranks even behind destinations like Kuwait and Russia (38th and 39th). Similarly, with healthcare policy being heavily debated this year, expats are less confident in this area: almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) find it unaffordable and nearly three in ten (29%) say they saw healthcare standards as a potential disadvantage prior to their move. One British expat living in the USA described healthcare costs as "crippling", complaining "they take more income than any other aspect of our living costs". Expats also have little faith in their personal safety in the USA. Only a quarter of expats feel that the USA is a very safe place to live in, an opinion shared by a much higher 43 percent of expats worldwide about their respective countries of residence. This all contributes to the country's low ranking, coming in at a poor 47th place in terms of quality of life.

## Living with the Locals: Expats Quickly Find Friends in the USA

While the political situation makes expats feel insecure, they are impressed by the warmth of the American welcome: three-quarters of respondents based in the USA describe their host nation as friendly. Expats living in the USA are almost ten percentage points more likely to have friends that are not all expats themselves than respondents worldwide (76% vs. 67%). One German expat praised that US Americans "have a generally friendly attitude and are willing to help others out in times of need". There are no issues for those with families either, as more than nine in ten expat parents (91%) say people in the USA are welcoming towards those with kids. There is plenty to keep the little ones occupied, as 87 percent of parents are pleased with the leisure activities available for children — 47 percent even describe them as very good. The USA generally manages to score a top-20 position for leisure options, meaning expats are rarely at a loss for things to do in their downtime.

### Life in the United States

|                                   | 2017*     |             | 2016**    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>Overall Rank</b>               | <b>43</b> | <b>▼ 17</b> | <b>26</b> |
| Quality of Life                   | 47        | ▼ 12        | 35        |
| Ease of Settling In               | 28        | ▼ 7         | 21        |
| Working Abroad                    | 28        | ▼ 2         | 26        |
| Family Life (out of 45 countries) | 36        | ▼ 4         | 32        |
| Personal Finance                  | 37        | ▲ 2         | 39        |
| Cost of Living                    | 41        | ▼ 5         | 36        |

\*out of 65 countries

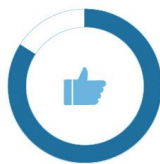
\*\*out of 67 countries

79% generally satisfied

## Americans Searching for a Quiet Life Nearby

With good weather and a relatively short journey back to the USA, destinations like Mexico and Costa Rica are attractive among US American expats, and many are thinking of staying forever. In fact, close to four in ten (39%) doubt they will ever return to the States. "The weather, beautiful parks and museums, great food," one American praised when asked what the best things

### Satisfaction



84% generally satisfied with life abroad

### Expat Profile

Average age



49.1 years

Gender split



58% female  
42% male

Relationship status



68% in a relationship  
32% single

about living in Mexico were, "and the people are friendly, even though I do not speak Spanish." Language can pose a problem for American respondents though: over a quarter (26%) saw it as a disadvantage in moving abroad and less than half (49%) speak the local language(s) of their host country at least fairly well. A lack of language skills can be a barrier when it comes to making friends: US Americans with mostly expat friends are ten percentage points more likely to give this as a reason for their lack of local friends (46% vs. 36%). US Americans at least seem to be fluent when it comes to the language of love: moving abroad to

be with their partner was cited as the main reason for their move by 16 percent of respondents and is as such the most common motivation among US Americans.

### **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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