

Expat City Ranking 2018: The Hague Is the Best Dutch City for Expats Followed by Amsterdam and Rotterdam

The three Dutch cities perform well in the Expat City Ranking 2018, all gaining a spot in the top 20.

- *The Hague (11th) narrowly beats Amsterdam (13th) and Rotterdam (17th) in the Expat City Ranking 2018 by InterNations. The top 10 cities for expats are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.*
- *Work-life balance is voted best in The Hague (3rd), but Amsterdam (5th) and Rotterdam (8th) still make it into the top 10 cities worldwide.*
- *The Hague, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam receive quite similar ratings for most of the main categories surveyed, however, Amsterdam ranks far behind when it comes to housing.*
- *All Dutch cities featured in the survey rank below average for the local climate and weather.*

Munich, 20 November 2018 — The Dutch cities featured in the Expat City Ranking 2018 perform well, making it in the top 20 out of 72 cities worldwide. The Hague, coming in 11th place worldwide, is rated the best Dutch city for expats, closely followed by Amsterdam (13th) and Rotterdam (17th). While they all do well in terms of urban work life, the cities fall short when it comes to the local climate, as the so far unpublished Expat City Ranking 2018 reveals. It is based on this year's [Expat Insider survey](#), conducted by [InterNations](#), the largest expat community worldwide. With more than 18,000 respondents living and working abroad, it is one of the most extensive expat studies in the world. Apart from offering an in-depth analysis of expat life in 72 cities, the survey ranks them by a variety of factors such as quality of urban living, getting settled, urban work life, as well as finance & housing. The top 10 cities for expats in 2018 are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.



Despite Friendly Locals It Is Hard to Make Friends in The Hague (11th)

Coming in 11th place out of 72 cities worldwide, The Hague is rated the best Dutch city for expats, receiving its best ratings in terms of urban work life (11th). Expats who have a job in The Hague are very satisfied with their work-life balance: more than four in five (84%) rate this factor positively (vs. 61% globally), and 36 percent could not be any happier with it (vs. 20% globally). *"The work-life balance is very good,"* confirms an expat from the UK. What is more, The Hague performs best of the three Dutch cities for overall job satisfaction, with 73 percent being satisfied with their jobs (vs. 65% globally). However, they seem to struggle with a lack of local career options: more than one in three expats (35%) rate those negatively, which is a far higher share than in Amsterdam (15%) and Rotterdam (24%).

Expats find it easy to get settled in The Hague (29th worldwide), slightly beaten by Amsterdam (26th) across the Netherlands but marginally better than Rotterdam (31st). They are particularly happy with the friendliness of the local residents: in fact, 70 percent find them friendly towards foreign residents, compared to 62 percent globally. *"There is no discrimination towards race or religion,"* states an expat from India. Despite the friendly atmosphere, expats are unhappy when it comes to making friends & socializing: ranking 52nd worldwide, The Hague performs worse than Rotterdam (38th) and Amsterdam (24th) for this topic. Over two in five expats (42%) find it hard to make new friends in The Hague (vs. 34% globally). *"Locals are friendly but only willing to be superficial friends,"* reports an expat from New Zealand, *"they have no motivation to be anything other than casual acquaintances."*

Expats in Amsterdam (13th) Live a Happy and Balanced Life

Expat life in Amsterdam is mostly perceived positively, with the city ranking 13th out of 72 cities worldwide. Finding a place to live and the weather are the exceptions to this rule, though. The local climate in Amsterdam is ranked in the bottom 10 worldwide (65th), with one respondent from Mexico commenting: *"The weather is gray, and it rains a lot!"* Close to three in five expats (56%) agree with that statement (vs. 27% globally), and 15 percent even give the weather the worst possible rating (vs. 6% globally). Likewise, the housing market — although not ranked as badly as the local climate — does not seem to be great either: Landing on 58th place for housing, Amsterdam ranks far worse than Rotterdam (35th) and the Hague (34th). In fact, almost half of the respondents (48%) say it is hard for expats to find housing (vs. 30% globally), and nearly three-quarters (74%) say it is expensive (vs. 44% globally).

That being said, Amsterdam ranks positively for many other topics and does particularly well for urban work life (4th). Expats in the Dutch capital are happy with the local career opportunities (8th), which seem to be far better than in Rotterdam (30th) and The Hague (54th). Close to three-quarters (73%) rate the career opportunities in Amsterdam positively (vs. 51% globally), and one-quarter (25%) even finds them excellent. One expat from South Korea linked this to Amsterdam's good economy: *"With the economy being one of the best in few years, the number of job opportunities is higher."* Expats in Amsterdam are also happy with their work-life balance, coming in 5th worldwide, just after Copenhagen (1st), Manama, The Hague, and Aachen (4th). More than one-quarter of expats (28%) are completely satisfied with their work-life balance (vs. 20% globally). One expat from Ireland particularly likes that there is a *"focus on life outside of work"* in Amsterdam.

While not performing the best in terms of quality of urban living (32nd), the Dutch capital did come out on top for some individual factors, such as the political stability (14th) and the quality of the urban environment (15th). Nine in ten expats (90%) are satisfied with the city's air and water quality, as well

as the green spaces, and 50 percent could not be happier. *"Coming from a big city, I have found a more peaceful life in Amsterdam,"* says an expat from Mexico, *"the city is greener, and everything is within walking or biking distance."* Amsterdam is also rated better for local leisure options than the other Dutch cities in the survey: while 85 percent are happy with this factor in the capital, only 80 percent in Rotterdam and 70 percent in The Hague agree. More than half of the expats in Amsterdam (54%) even could not be any happier, which is about twice the shares in Rotterdam (29%) and The Hague (28%).

Rotterdam (17th) Offers a Low Cost of Living but Is Harder to Get Settled

Coming last out of the three Dutch cities, Rotterdam still lands on a respectable 17th place out of 72 cities worldwide. Unlike The Hague and Amsterdam, Rotterdam does not come in the bottom 10 for any subcategory surveyed, however, expats find the city the least comforting in terms of getting settled. Ranking 39th worldwide, Rotterdam does much worse than Amsterdam (12th) and The Hague (21st) for feeling at home: more than one in five expats (21%) do not feel at home in Rotterdam. Maybe this is due to the fact that just over half of the expats (56%) find it easy to get used to the local culture, which is slightly worse than the global average (61%). Also, the city performs worst across the Netherlands for local friendliness, with close to a quarter of respondents (23%) finding the people of Rotterdam unfriendly towards foreign residents (vs. 21% globally). One expat from Ghana commented that they feel *"it is very difficult to socialize"*.

Rotterdam does outshine Amsterdam (40th) and The Hague (32th) in terms of local cost of living, placing 24th worldwide. Close to half the expats in Rotterdam (48%) are satisfied with this factor, compared to just 42 percent in Amsterdam and 32 percent in The Hague. Interestingly though, the city is rated worst when expats were asked whether their disposable household income is enough to cover their daily costs (37th), behind Amsterdam (26th) and The Hague (15th). In fact, 17 percent state that their household income is not enough, compared to 22 percent globally.

The Best and Worst Cities for Expats

Taipei (1st), Singapore (2nd), and Manama (3rd) top the list of the Expat City Ranking 2018. This is largely due to how easy expats find it to settle in to life in these cities. This might be related to the friendliness of the local population and the personal safety in the cities. In fact, Taipei is rated the world's friendliest city by expats, with 94 percent finding the local residents friendly. *"People here are so friendly and always want to help,"* shares an expat from the Netherlands. The majority of expats in Manama (87%) also agrees that there is a friendly attitude toward foreign residents in the city, compared to 62 percent globally. Personal safety is one of the biggest perks of expat life in Singapore: 88 percent state to feel completely safe in the city (vs. 48% globally). *"It is easy for everyone to enjoy life here without worrying about safety,"* shares an expat from India.

On the other hand, Riyadh (72nd), Jeddah (71st), and Rome (70th) rank at the bottom of the list. While all three cities receive low ratings across the board, they seem to be particularly disappointing in terms of urban work life: close to three in five expats in Rome (58%) are dissatisfied with the local career opportunities (vs. 27% globally). An Albanian expat states that *"career opportunities are non-existent"*. Meanwhile, Jeddah and Riyadh are rated the two worst cities in the world for work-life balance: 34 and 38 percent, respectively, are unsatisfied with this factor (vs. 20% globally).

Read More about the Best and Worst Cities for Expats



Best & Worst
Cities for Expats



Quality of Urban
Living Index



Getting Settled
Index



Urban Work Life
Index



Finance &
Housing Index

About the Expat City Ranking 2018

For its annual [Expat Insider survey](#), InterNations asked more than 18,000 expatriates representing 178 nationalities and living in 187 countries or territories to provide information on various aspects of expat life, as well as their gender, age, and nationality. In 2018, the fifth year the survey was conducted, respondents were also invited to share their opinions on the city they are currently living in.

Participants were asked to rate more than 25 different aspects of urban 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 13 subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up four topical indices: Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, and Finance & Housing. These were further averaged in order to rank 72 cities worldwide. In 2018, the top 10 cities for expats are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.

In total, the responses used for the city ranking represent 11,966 expats living in 55 countries. For a city to be featured in the Expat City Ranking 2018, a sample size of at least 45 survey participants per city was required; 72 cities in 47 different countries made this threshold in 2018.

About InterNations

With 3.3 million members in 420 cities around the world, InterNations (www.internations.org) is the largest global community 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 official events and activities per month, expatriates have the opportunity to meet 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 the local job or housing search. 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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