

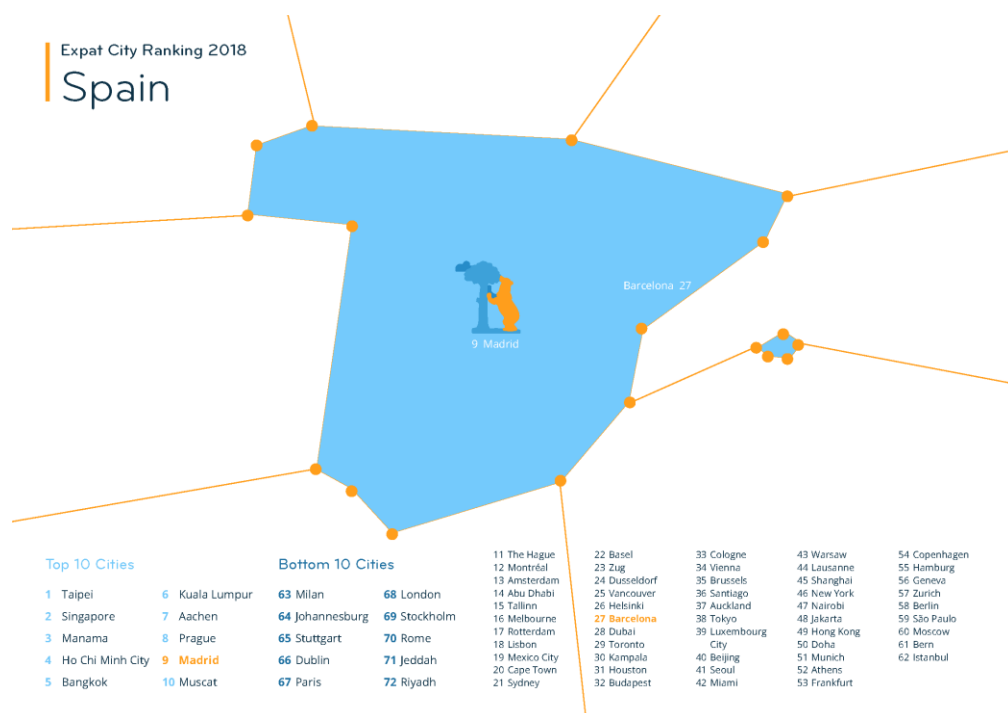
Expat City Ranking 2018 Reveals: Madrid Is the Best Spanish City for Expats, Ranking Far Ahead of Barcelona

While both Spanish cities offer a great quality of urban living, the work life leaves something to be desired.

- *Madrid (9th) ranks far ahead of Barcelona (27th) 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.*
- *Madrid (50th out of 72 cities) and Barcelona (62nd) rank low for expats' satisfaction with their finances.*
- *Expats in Barcelona are a lot less satisfied with the political stability (29% satisfied) than in Madrid (63%).*
- *Both Barcelona and Madrid rank in the top 10 for local leisure options and feeling at home in the city.*

Munich, 20 November 2018 — Coming in 9th and 27th place out of 72 cities worldwide in the Expat City Ranking 2018, Barcelona and Madrid both achieve above-average ranks. Both cities have a favorable quality of urban living and are easy to get settled in, but expats are dissatisfied with their urban work life.

The so-far unpublished Expat City Ranking 2018 is based on this year's [Expat Insider survey](#), conducted by [InterNations](#), the largest expat community worldwide.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.



Madrid (9th) Offers Great Leisure Options but Expats' Income Is Not Enough

Madrid is one of the few European cities to make it into the top 10 of the Expat City Ranking 2018 (9th) — only beaten by Aachen (7th) and Prague (8th) across Europe. Madrid's ranking is mainly due to the city's high quality of urban living (3rd). Almost nine out of ten expats (87%) rate both the quality and affordability of medical care positively (vs. 67% and 59% globally, respectively), and an even higher percentage (92%) is satisfied with its availability (vs. 75% globally). One US American confirms that *"healthcare is easily accessible and affordable"*.

The Spanish capital also excels in terms of local climate and weather, as close to nine in ten (89%) say they are happy with it (vs. 55% globally). When it comes to local transportation, 97 percent of expats say they are satisfied, which is 27 percentage points more than the global average (70%). It is only the poor performance in terms of political stability that decreases Madrid's rank for quality of urban living: coming in 48th out of 72 cities for this factor, one Australian expat mentions the *"corruption in business and politics"* as one of the negative aspects about life in the city.

The majority of expats in Madrid (78%) feels at home in the city, compared to 62 percent globally. This might be due to the friendly locals: almost four in five expats (78%) rate the general friendliness of local residents in Madrid positively (vs. 62% globally). *"People are kind and helpful,"* says a Hungarian expat, *"they make you feel really comfortable."* Maybe it is due to the friendly attitude that 72 percent are happy with their social life in Madrid (vs. 57% globally). In addition to that, expats in Madrid enjoy great leisure options (91% satisfied vs. 74% globally).

In combination with below-average working hours (37.4 h per week vs. 40.8 h globally), this might explain why 65 percent of expats are happy with their work-life balance in Madrid. However, overall, urban work life in Madrid is not satisfying (52nd), as an expat from the UK also points out: *"The economy and the career prospects are not the best."* In fact, 22 percent rate the state of the local economy negatively (vs. 14% globally), and another 33 percent are unhappy with their job security in Madrid (v. 21% globally).

Expats in Barcelona (27th) Lack Career Opportunities and Job Security

Though placing below Madrid (9th), Barcelona still performs fairly well in the Expat City Ranking 2018, coming in 27th out of 72 cities overall. However, the city ranks in the bottom 10 for job & career (62nd), job security (62nd), and finance (62nd). Almost half of the expats in Barcelona (49%) think they earn less than they would in a similar position at home (vs. 27% globally), and only 66 percent say their disposable household income is enough to cover their daily needs (vs. 78% worldwide). *"Salaries are low compared to the cost of housing,"* an expat from Hungary says. In fact, almost three in five (57%) find housing unaffordable, compared to 44 percent globally.

When it comes to urban work life, just around two in five (41%) rate their local career opportunities in Barcelona positively, compared to over half of expats worldwide (51%). One Venezuelan expat highlights that *"it is really hard to find a good job"*. It also seems to be hard to keep it, as just half of respondents in Barcelona (50%) are satisfied with their job security (vs. 59% globally). On the bright side, the average working hours per week in Barcelona (37.9 h) fall below the global average (40.8 h), which might be one of the reasons why more than seven in ten (72%) rate their work-life balance well, which is even more than in Madrid (65%).

What is more, 72 percent of expats are happy with their social life in Barcelona (vs. 57% globally), and

another 92 percent rate the leisure options positively (vs. 74% globally). Lastly, welcoming locals seem to be another benefit of life in Barcelona, as almost seven in ten expats (69%) find them generally friendly, compared to 62 percent globally. Maybe this is the reason why 81 percent of expats feel at home in Barcelona, compared to 62 percent globally. This is despite the fact that less than three in ten (29%) rate the political stability of Barcelona positively, compared to over three in five expats in Madrid as well as globally (63%). One Bulgarian expat mentions that *"at the moment, what bothers me most is the political conflict and economic situation"*.

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](#).

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: <http://www.internations.org/press>