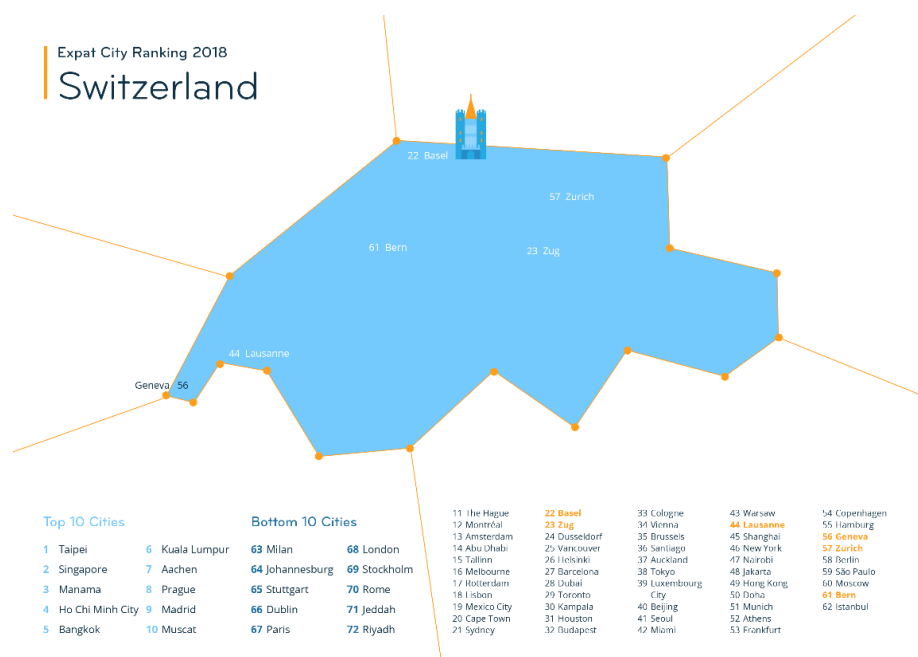


## Expats City Ranking 2018 Reveals: Basel and Zug Rank Far Ahead of Other Swiss Cities for Expats

Expats enjoy an extremely high quality of urban life in Zug, Lausanne, and Basel, find it hard to get settled in Zurich and Bern, and struggle to find housing in Geneva.

- *Basel (22nd) and Zug (23rd) rank far ahead of Lausanne (44th), Geneva (56th), Zurich (57th), and Bern (61st) 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.*
- *All Swiss cities featured in the survey receive excellent ratings for their quality of urban living, with Zug (8th), Lausanne (9th), and Basel (10th) even ranking in the top 10 worldwide.*
- *Expats in all Swiss cities find it hard to get settled: Zurich (67th) and Bern (71th) rank in the bottom 10, with the latter beating only Stuttgart.*
- *Bern (45th) is the only Swiss city that does not fall into the bottom 25 for local cost of living.*

Munich, 20 November 2018 — Thanks to their positive results in terms of quality of urban living and urban work life, Basel (22nd) and Zug (23rd) rank in the upper half of the Expat City Ranking 2018, far ahead of other Swiss cities in the survey. While Lausanne (44th) still achieves a mediocre ranking, Geneva (56th), Zurich (57th), and Bern (61st) rank substantially worse due to the high local cost of living and the difficulty for expats to get settled in. The so-far unpublished Expat City Ranking 2018 is based on this year's [Expats Insider survey](#), conducted by [InterNations](#), the largest expat community worldwide.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.



### **Good Financial Situation and Economy for Expats in Basel (22nd)**

For the second year in a row, Basel is the best Swiss city according to expats, ranking 22nd out of 72 cities worldwide in 2018. It receives its best ratings for the quality of urban living (10th): almost all respondents (96%) are happy with the local transportation (vs. 70% globally), with more than three-quarters (77%) even giving it the best rating possible. *"It is central and easy to travel locally and abroad,"* a Canadian expat shares and adds that they like *"the high quality of life and good salary"*. In fact, 62 percent say their disposable household income is more than enough to cover their daily needs (vs. 55% across Switzerland). Moreover, Basel ranks best across Switzerland when it comes to finance & housing (28th), far ahead of follow-up Zug (40th). Two-thirds of the expats in Basel (67%) are satisfied with their financial situation (vs. 58% globally). This might be partly due to respondents' very favorable view of the state of the local economy (5th) — Basel is only beaten by Singapore (4th), Munich, Luxembourg City, and Zug (1st) here.

On the other hand, Basel underperforms when it comes to getting settled (60th): nearly one-third of expats (32%) do not feel at home in the city (vs. 23% globally), and more than half (54%) find it hard to make new friends (vs. 34% globally). *"Local people are not mixing with expats,"* comments an Italian expat living there.

### **Expats in Zug (23rd) Rate the State of the Local Economy as the Best in the World**

Coming in 23rd place out of 72 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2018, Zug offers the best quality of urban living across Switzerland (8th worldwide). The city even ranks first in the world for safety & politics as well as the quality of its urban environment. Close to every respondent (98%) is satisfied with the latter (vs. 70% globally), and 70 percent even give it the best rating possible.

Zug is the best-performing city in Switzerland in terms of urban work life, ranking 15th globally. *"Zug has a solid economy, with excellent connections for travel and business,"* comments an Italian expat. In fact, 98 percent of expats rate the state of the local economy positively (vs. 66% worldwide), placing Zug first in the world for this factor.

Zug obtains its worst ranking in terms of local cost of living (62nd) but is still ahead of Zurich (66th) and Lausanne (69th). Seven in ten expats (70%) rate the local cost of living in Zug negatively (vs. 37% worldwide), and another 70 percent find it hard to afford housing (vs. 44% globally). Despite this, seven in ten expats (70%) are generally satisfied with their financial situation (vs. 58% globally), and over nine in ten expats (93%) find their disposable household income enough or more than enough to cover the daily costs (vs. 78% globally).

### **Local Career Opportunities Not as Promising as the Quality of Urban Living in Lausanne (44th)**

Only coming in 44th place out of 72 cities worldwide, Lausanne still manages to rank in the top 10 for quality of urban living (9th). More than seven in ten expats (72%) are satisfied with the local climate, compared to 63 percent of expats across Switzerland, and almost all of them (94%) are happy with the quality of the urban environment (vs. 70% worldwide). Lausanne also ranks second best within Switzerland for getting settled — however, globally, it only places 56th. In fact, expats find it very difficult to find friends (56% negative ratings vs. 34% globally) and are unhappy with their social life (37% vs. 26% globally).

Just one rank ahead of Bern (50th) in 49th place, Lausanne is the second-worst city for urban work life in Switzerland. *"I don't like the labor laws and the fact that job hunting is not an easy task,"* states a

German expat. More than one-third (34%) rate the local career opportunities in Lausanne negatively, compared to just 26 percent of respondents across Switzerland who are unsatisfied with their career prospects in general.

### **Geneva (56th) Is the Worst Swiss City for Costs and Housing**

Geneva (56th out of 72 worldwide) ranks in the bottom 10 cities for both local cost of living (69th) as well as finance & housing (64th). For both topics, this is the worst result across all Swiss cities featured in the survey. More than five in seven expats in Geneva (72%) rate the local cost of living negatively (vs. 37% globally), and only expats in London (70th), Vancouver (71st), and New York City (72nd) are less satisfied with this aspect. *"Property and rents are expensive,"* finds an US American expat. In fact, not only do 72 percent of respondents find it difficult for expats to find housing (vs. 30%), but three-quarters (75%) also find it hard to afford (vs. 44% globally). What is more, expats in Geneva are not particularly satisfied with their urban work life (44th). Job security seems to be an issue (64th), with 26 percent dissatisfied with that factor (vs. 21%, respectively, worldwide and across Switzerland).

Geneva receives its best results for the quality of urban living (18th), though this is the worst result among the Swiss cities. Expats in Geneva enjoy one of the best qualities of the urban environment in the world (9th): more than nine in ten respondents (93%) rate this positively (vs. 70% worldwide). What is more, almost all expats in Geneva (96%) are satisfied with the political stability (vs. 63% worldwide).

### **Disappointing Social Life and High Cost of Living for Expats in Zurich (57th)**

Just behind Geneva (56th), Zurich ranks 57th out of 72 cities in this year's Expat City Ranking. The city disappoints expats when it comes to getting settled (67th), ranking in the bottom 10 for almost every aspect in this category. More than half of the respondents (54%) find it difficult to make new friends in Zurich (vs. 34% globally), which might also explain expats' low satisfaction with their social life (41% dissatisfied vs. 26% globally). *"It is very difficult to make friends here if you do not know anyone, even if you are a social person,"* comments an expat from the US. What is more, over one-third (35%) do not feel at home in Zurich (vs. 23% worldwide), and 36 percent find the attitude of the local residents generally unfriendly (vs. 21% globally). Expats in Zurich also have to face the high local cost of living: more than seven in ten expats (71%) rate this negatively (vs. 37% worldwide), ranking Zurich 66th worldwide for this factor.

Similar to the other Swiss cities, Zurich performs best when it comes to the quality of urban living (16th). The city offers a great transportation system (93% satisfied vs. 70% globally) and a safe environment: more than three in nine (93%) are satisfied with their personal safety, compared to 80 percent globally.

### **Expats Find It Hard to Get Settled and Have a Career in Bern (61st)**

Bern narrowly escapes the bottom 10 cities of the Expat City Ranking 2018 (61st worldwide) and is the worst-rated city for expats within Switzerland. The city ranks second to last in the world for getting settled (71st), only ahead of Stuttgart. Around four in nine expats (44%) find the local residents in Bern generally unfriendly, which is more than twice the global average (21%). *"It is difficult to integrate,"* reports a British, *"Swiss German is so different from high German."* Maybe it is in fact the language barrier that makes expat life in Bern difficult, as 45 percent find it hard to live there without speaking the local language (vs. 38% globally). Consequently, 63 percent find it hard to make new friends (vs. 34% globally), and more than half of the respondents (52%) struggle to get used to the local culture (vs. 22%).

Urban work life (50th) seems to pose another issue for expats in Bern. More than four in nine (45%) rate their local career opportunities negatively (vs. 27% globally) — only expats in Jeddah, Rome, and Athens are less satisfied with this factor. Over two-fifths of expats in Bern (42%) are also unhappy with their financial situation (vs. 25% globally), ranking the city 71st worldwide, only ahead of Vancouver. Interestingly though, Bern ranks 45th for the local cost of living, which is even the best result within Switzerland. About half the respondents (51%) are dissatisfied with the local cost of living, which is 14 percentage points less than the average across Switzerland (65%), but 14 percentage points more than the global average (37%).

### 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](http://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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