

Expat Insider 2021 Survey: The Future of Working Abroad

Romanian expats talk about their career abroad and how they envision their future working life.

- *The typical Romanian expat working abroad is younger than average, more likely to be female, and tends to work in IT.*
- *The three most common destinations for Romanians working abroad are Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.*
- *Romanians working abroad enjoy the opportunity to work from home and a good compensation the most about their current job.*

Munich, 14 September 2021 — Why do Romanians move abroad? According to the *Expat Insider 2021* survey by InterNations, 43% of Romanians working abroad name their career as the most important reason for relocating to another country. This is a slightly lower share than the global average among working expats, 47% of whom moved abroad for job-related reasons. Most Romanians working abroad were recruited internationally (20%), followed by 16% who found a job on their own, and 8% being sent abroad by their employer. Not a single survey respondent from Romania moved abroad to start their own business.

Aside from work-related reasons, an above-average share of Romanian expats working abroad mainly moved to another country because they wanted to live in their partner's home country / for love (12% vs. 10% globally) or because they were looking for a better quality of life (10% vs. 6% globally).

The key focus of this year's *Expat Insider* survey, conducted by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org), the world's largest expat community with more than 4 million members, is the future of working abroad. Expats all around the world shared what it is really like to work abroad and described their working conditions. They also provided insights into how new working arrangements (e.g., remote work) are changing their working life and what they would like to see in the future.

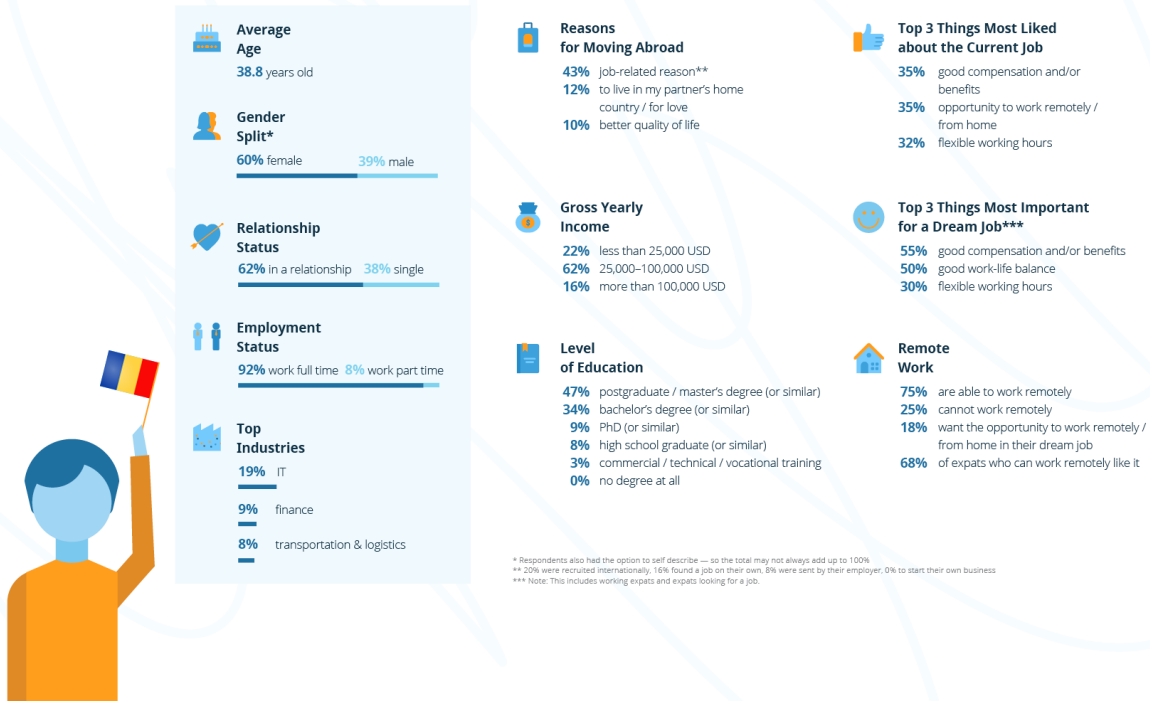
The Typical Romanian Expat Working Abroad Is Young, Female, and Works in IT

The typical Romanian expat working abroad differs quite a bit from the average working expat. First, they are only 38.8 years old, which is much younger than the average expat (43.1 years). In addition, three out of five Romanian expats working abroad (60%) are female, compared to just 46% globally. Close to two in five (39%) are male (vs. 53% globally), while up to 1% prefer to self-describe their gender identity. More than nine in ten Romanian expats (92%) work full time, ten percentage points more than the global average (82%).

The most common field that Romanian expats work in is IT (19% vs. 11% globally). Other common fields of work include finance (9%) and transportation & logistics (8%), as well as healthcare, manufacturing & engineering, and education (7% each). While the share of Romanian expats working in transportation & logistics is twice the global average (8% vs. 4% globally), they are underrepresented in the field of education, though (7% vs. 12% globally).

Romanian Expats

The Future of Working Abroad



Romanian Expats Excel in Senior / Specialist Positions

While the demographics are quite unique, the level of education among Romanians working abroad is similar to the global average. In fact, the share of Romanians holding a postgraduate degree / master's degree (or similar) is the same as the global average (47%). The shares are also similar for those who cite a bachelor's as their highest academic degree (34% vs. 33% globally) and for those with a PhD (9% vs. 8% globally). A share of 8% only graduated high school, compared to 5% globally.

Despite education levels similar to the global average, Romanian expats excel in senior positions. Over two in five (44%) work in a senior or specialist position, which is 14 percentage points above the global average (30%). However, just 8% are top managers / executives (vs. 13% globally). Another 20% work in lower or middle management (vs. 17% globally).

Entrepreneurship seems to be uncommon for working Romanians abroad: only 2% have their own business (vs. 7% globally), while 8% are self-employed / freelancers (vs. 11% globally).

Low Job Satisfaction, High Levels of Happiness with Local Economy

Overall, Romanian expats are not so happy with their working life: just 66% are satisfied with their job in general (vs. 73% globally), while 17% rate this factor negatively (vs. 13% globally). Actually, 7% even say that they are *not satisfied with their job at all*, compared to just 3% globally.

A closer look at the individual factors shows that Romanians working abroad are mainly unhappy with their work-life balance. Just 62% are happy with this factor (vs. 68% globally), while 20% are unhappy (vs. 16% globally). What is more, they only report average or *slightly* higher-than-average satisfaction

with their career opportunities (50% vs. 49% globally), their working hours (71% vs. 70% globally), and their job security (70% vs. 67% globally).

However, close to three-quarters (74%) rate the state of the local economy in their host country positively — globally just 65% say this about their current country of residence. This is hardly a surprise, considering that the two most common destinations Romanian expats work in are Germany and the Netherlands. Both countries are voted among the top 10 worldwide for the state of their local economy in the Working Abroad Index of the *Expatriate Insider 2021* survey.

The third most common destination, the UK, does not perform so well in this regard. However, landing in 35th place out of 59 countries, it still ranks far ahead of Romania, which ends up among the bottom 10 worldwide (52nd).

Romanian Expats Enjoy Working Remotely and Good Salaries

When describing what they like best about their current jobs, over one in three (35.2%) cite the opportunity to work remotely / from home (vs. 32% globally). In fact, three in four (75%) are currently able to work from home, and 68% report that they enjoy it. Only 11% say that they are able to work remotely but usually prefer *not to*, compared to 16% globally. However, when asked about their dream job, the opportunity to work remotely / from home is not that important to Romanian expats: just 18% cite it among the most relevant factors for an ideal work environment (vs. 22% globally).

The gap between the most and the second-most frequently mentioned aspect is less than a percentage point: 34.6% of Romanian expats cite a good compensation and / or good benefits as a highlight of their current job. In fact, 71% have a gross yearly income of up to 75,000 USD (vs. 62% globally), and 16% make more than 100,000 USD per year (vs. 23% globally).

The Dream Job Wish List for Romanian Expats

When envisioning their future dream job, a good compensation and/or benefits is most important to Romanian expats (55%). This is followed by a good work-life balance (50%), flexible working hours and general career development (30% each), as well as room for personal development / growth (28%) and creative/interesting tasks (25%).

“Currently, Romanian expats might not be able to find these kinds of jobs in their most common destinations”, says InterNations Founder and Co-CEO Malte Zeeck. *“However, they are currently also unlikely to find them back home.”*

In fact, just 56% of Romanians working abroad say that factors like autonomy, freedom, creativity, personal development, and self-fulfillment are important in the business culture of their current country of residence. These values are closely related to the concept of New Work, which describes the new way of working in the global and digital age. On a global scale, 58% say that this concept and associated values play an important role in their host country.

However, 53% of Romanian expats also say that these aspects are at least more important than in Romania. In fact, the three most common destinations where Romanian expats work do rank ahead of Romania when it comes to expats comparing the importance of New Work in the local business culture. The Netherlands ranks best (5th out of 55 countries), followed by the UK (15th) and Germany (35th), while Romania lands in 43rd place.

Country Ranking: The Importance of New Work in the Local Business Culture

1	USA	20	Greece	39	Brazil
2	UAE	21	Czechia	40	Philippines
3	Finland	22	Poland	41	Indonesia
4	Estonia	23	Switzerland	42	Chile
5	Netherlands	24	Luxembourg	43	Romania
6	Bahrain	25	Malta	44	Thailand
7	Australia	26	Kenya	45	Cyprus
8	Canada	27	Taiwan	46	China
9	New Zealand	28	Portugal	47	France
10	Sweden	29	Hungary	48	Spain
11	Ireland	30	Colombia	49	Italy
12	Norway	31	Russia	50	Kuwait
13	Denmark	32	South Africa	51	India
14	Singapore	33	Mexico	52	Turkey
15	United Kingdom	34	Austria	53	South Korea
16	Malaysia	35	Germany	54	Egypt
17	Oman	36	Vietnam	55	Japan
18	Qatar	37	Hong Kong		
19	Saudi Arabia	38	Belgium		

About the Future of Working Abroad Report

This report is based on data from the *Expats Insider 2021* survey by InterNations. In total, 12,420 expats participated; the general *Expats Insider* report and an overall country ranking were published in May 2021. However, the report “The Future of Working Abroad” uses mainly data sets from expats currently doing any kind of paid work: 8,313 survey respondents — living in 175 destinations and representing 166 nationalities — match this definition of working expats.

In the *Expats Insider 2021* questionnaire, all respondents, regardless of employment status, were asked to provide information about themselves and to rate various aspects of life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized their personal satisfaction with these factors; the average ratings of six such factors were bundled into three subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up a topical index for working abroad. The Working Abroad Index is not only part of the overall country ranking, but it also gets referenced in this report. In 2021, the top 5 destinations for working abroad — out of 59 countries in this index — are Taiwan, New Zealand, Czechia, China, and Denmark.

Moreover, working expats answered some additional questions to describe their working life. Some of these questions explore how COVID-19 has been transforming the workplace and how expats envision their ideal work environment. Lastly, the survey included two more rating questions for working expats. They cover the topic of New Work, the new way of working in the global and digital age. Participants were asked to rate how important this concept is in the business culture of their host country and how the latter compares to their home country. The country averages from the first question were used to compare the importance of New Work in various expat destinations.

For a country to be featured in the New Work ranking, a sample size of at least 50 respondents was necessary. This requirement was met by 55 destinations. New Work is extremely important in the business culture of the USA, the UAE, Finland, Estonia, and the Netherlands.

About InterNations

With around 4.2 million members in 420 cities around the world, [InterNations](#) is the largest global community and a source of information for people who live and work abroad. InterNations offers global and local networking and socializing, both online and face to face. At around 6,000 events and activities per month, expatriates have the opportunity to meet other global minds. Online services include discussion forums and helpful articles with personal expat experiences, tips, and information about life abroad. Membership is by approval only to ensure we remain a community of trust. InterNations is part of the NEW WORK SE, a group of brands that offer products and services for a better working life.

Find more information about InterNations on our [press page, in our company blog](#), or in our [magazine](#).

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