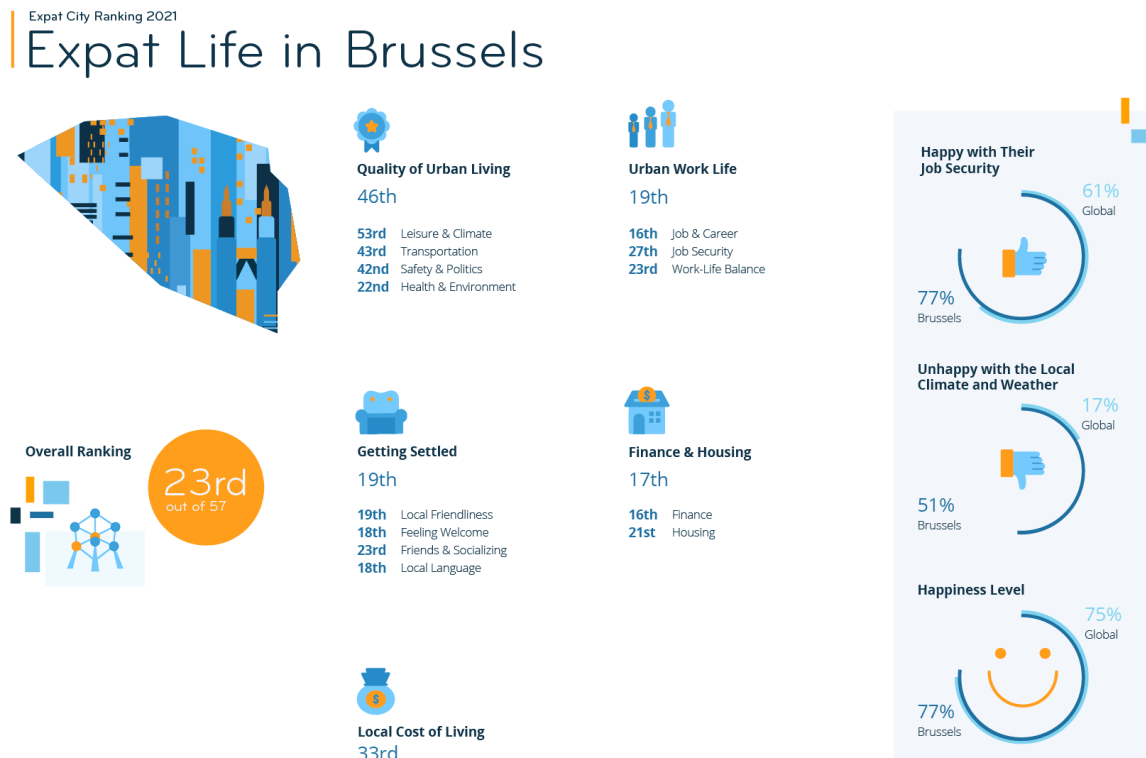


## Brussels: A Low Quality of Life but Good for Working and Making Friends

The Expat City Ranking 2021 reveals the best and worst cities for expats around the world, including Brussels.

- Out of 57 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Brussels ranks 23rd.
- Kuala Lumpur (1st), Málaga, Dubai, Sydney, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Prague, Mexico City, Basel, and Madrid (10th) are the top 10 cities for expats to live in 2021.
- On the other hand, expats consider Rome (57th), Milan, Johannesburg, Istanbul, Tokyo, Cairo, Paris, Maastricht, Moscow, and New York (48th) the world's worst cities to live in.

Munich, 1 December 2021 — Brussels ranks 23rd out of 57 in the Expat City Ranking 2021 by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org/), the world's largest expat community with over 4 million members. The city does best in the Finance & Housing Index (17th) and ranks 19th in both the Getting Settled and the Urban Work Life Indices. But expats are not so happy with the local cost of living (33rd) and rate the quality of life in Brussels rather poorly (46th).



The [Expat City Ranking](https://www.internations.org/) is based on the annual *Expat Insider* survey by InterNations, which is one of the most extensive surveys about living and working abroad, with 12,420 respondents in 2021. This year, 57 cities around the globe are analyzed in the survey, which offers in-depth information about five areas of expat life: Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, Finance & Housing, and Local Cost of Living. Together, the first four topics make up the Expat City Ranking, which reveals the best and worst cities for expats to live in.

## What Expats Think about Life in Brussels

Ranking 23rd out of 57 in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Brussels performs worst in the **Quality of Urban Living Index** (46th). It ranks among the bottom 10 for the local climate and weather (55th) and for personal safety (50th). In fact, close to one in five expats (19%) do not feel safe in Brussels, compared to 8% globally.

Brussels also has a rather mediocre result in the **Local Cost of Living Index** (33rd): 40% are unhappy with the local expenses (vs. 34% globally). However, it performs considerably better in all other indices. When it comes to the **Finance & Housing Index** (17th), 66% of expats in Brussels are happy with their financial situation (vs. 64% globally), and 81% say that their disposable household income is enough or more than enough to cover all expenses (vs. 77% globally). However, while 66% report that it is easy to find housing as an expat (vs. 60% globally), 43% find it unaffordable, which is more than the global average (39%).

Ranking 19th in the **Urban Work Life Index**, Brussels even makes it into the top 5 for job security (2nd) and overall job satisfaction (5th). More than half (54%) are also happy with the local career opportunities (vs. 45% globally), while just 62% rate the state of the local economy positively, the same as the global average (62%). Lastly, Brussels also ranks 19th in the **Getting Settled Index**. Expats describe the locals as generally friendly towards foreign residents (72% vs. 67% globally) and find it easy to make new friends (57% vs. 48% globally). A female expat from Germany mentions *“the friendliness and manners of the Belgian people”* as one of the things she likes best about life in Brussels.

### About the Expat City Ranking 2021

The [Expat City Ranking](#) is based on the annual *Expat Insider* survey by InterNations. For the survey, InterNations asked 12,420 expats representing 174 nationalities and living in 186 countries or territories to provide information on various aspects of expat life, as well as their gender, age, and nationality. In addition to their satisfaction with life in their host country, 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, considering both emotional topics and 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 all cities worldwide that had the required number of participants for the minimum sample size. (The survey also includes a Local Cost of Living Index, which does, however, not factor into the overall ranking to avoid overrepresenting financial aspects.) In 2021, the top 10 cities for expats are Kuala Lumpur (1st), Málaga, Dubai, Sydney, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Prague, Mexico City, Basel, and Madrid (10th).

For a city to be featured in the Expat City Ranking 2021, a sample size of at least 50 survey participants per city was required. In total, 57 cities met this requirement.

### **About InterNations**

With more than 4 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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