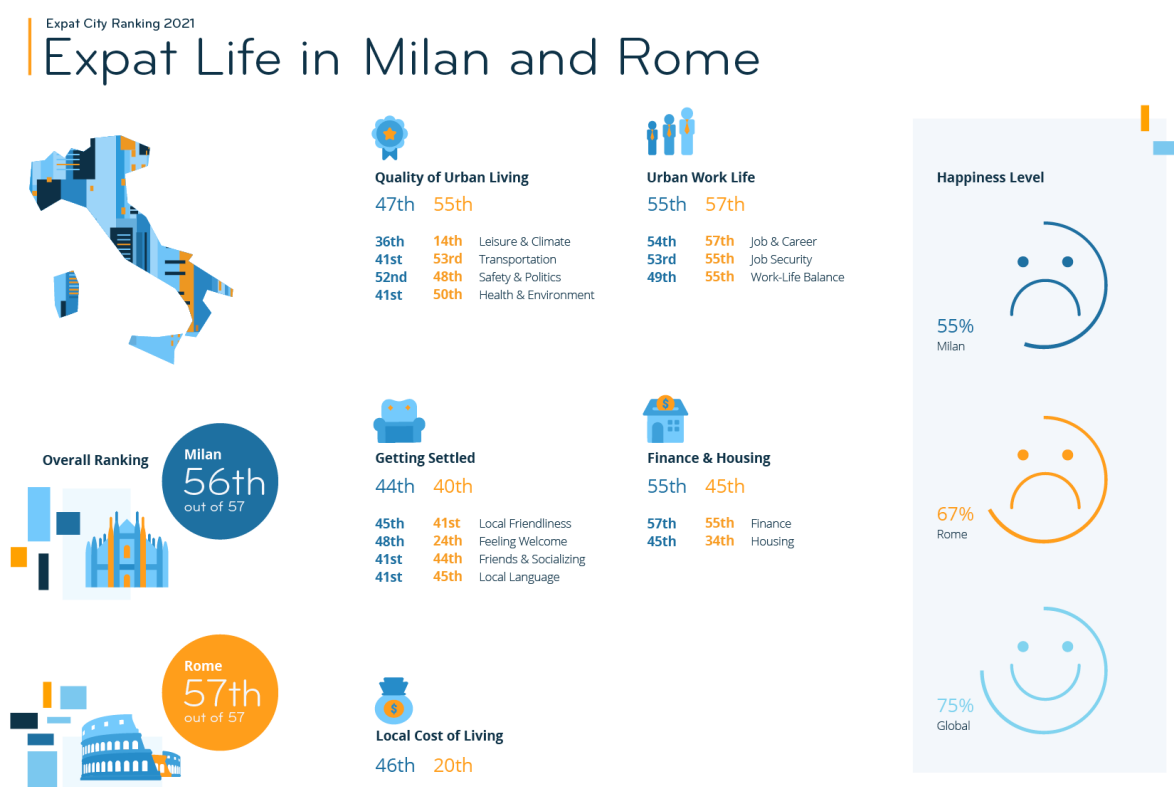


How Expats Rate Their Life in Milan and Rome

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

- Out of 57 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Rome (57th) and Milan (56th) are voted the worst.
- 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.
- Apart from Rome (57th) and Milan (56th), expats consider Johannesburg (55th), Istanbul, Tokyo, Cairo, Paris, Maastricht, Moscow, and New York (48th) the world's worst cities to live in.

Munich, 1 December 2021 — Two Italian cities are featured in the Expat City Ranking 2021 by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org/), the world's largest expat community with over 4 million members: Milan ranks second to last while Rome is voted the world's worst city for expats. Both cities land among the bottom 3 in the Urban Work Life Index: expats are unsatisfied with the career opportunities, job security, and working hours. While Rome outperforms Milan with regard to the ease of getting settled, finances and housing, and the local cost of living, Milan lies ahead when it comes to the local quality of life.



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 Milan and Rome

56 | Milan: Disappointed Expats across the Board

Coming 56th out of 57 in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Milan performs poorly in each and every index. The city lands in 55th place in the **Urban Work Life Index** and among the bottom 10 for all factors in this index. Nearly half the expats (47%) rate the local career opportunities negatively (vs. 33% globally), and 38% are unhappy with the state of the local economy (vs. 19% globally). What is more, they are unsatisfied with their work-life balance (22% vs. 17% globally) and working hours (25% vs. 16% globally). Interestingly enough, though, the average weekly working hours (full-time and part-time jobs combined) in Milan are actually shorter than the global average (38.1 vs. 39.9 hours).

Milan also ranks 55th in the **Finance & Housing Index**, coming last worldwide in the Finance Subcategory (57th). Close to one-third (32%) are unhappy with their financial situation (vs. 19% globally), and 39% say that their disposable household income is not enough to cover expenses (vs. 23% globally). What is more, housing is considered both unaffordable (68% vs. 39% globally) and hard to find (45% vs. 23% globally).

The city does just slightly better in the **Local Cost of Living** (46th) and **Quality of Urban Living** (47th) **Indices**. Regarding the latter, expats are particularly unhappy with the urban environment (23% vs. 16% globally), and 14% worry about their personal safety (vs. 8% globally). On the bright side, the city ranks 32nd for the local leisure options, which are rated positively by 76% (vs. 72% globally).

Lastly, Milan ranks best in the **Getting Settled Index** (44th). Even so, 27% describe the locals as generally unfriendly (vs. 16% globally), and 30% do not feel at home there (vs. 19% globally).

57 | Rome: The Worst City for Expats Worldwide

Rome is rated the worst city (57th out of 57) in the overall Expat City Ranking 2021, as well as in the **Urban Work Life Index** (57th). It also lands among the bottom 3 in all of this index's subcategories: Job & Career (57th), Job Security (55th), and Work-Life Balance (55th). A male expat from the UK sums it up: *"The economy is terrible, and salaries are low."* Expats are unhappy with the career opportunities (60% vs. 33% globally), job security (45% vs. 20% globally), and working hours (27% vs. 16% globally).

The city ranks 55th in the **Quality of Urban Living Index**, only ahead of Cairo (56th) and Johannesburg (57th). The local climate and weather, rated positively by 86% of expats (vs. 66% globally), is the only highlight. Expats are unhappy with the transportation system (47% vs. 20% globally) and the political stability (34% vs. 16% globally), as well as the availability (16% vs. 11% globally) and quality (20% vs. 14% globally) of medical care.

Rome only does slightly better in the **Finance & Housing Index** (45th): 32% are unhappy with their financial situation (vs. 19% globally), and 41% say that their disposable household income is not enough to cover expenses (vs. 23% globally). Moreover, housing is neither affordable (47% vs. 39% globally) nor easy to find (33% vs. 23% globally). At least, 43% rate the local cost of living positively (vs. 48% globally), which is still good enough for the city to rank 20th in the **Local Cost of Living Index** — far ahead of Milan (46th).

Lastly, Rome comes 40th in the **Getting Settled Index**. While 66% find it easy to get used to the local culture (vs. 65% globally), 46% still struggle to make new friends (vs. 32% globally). It probably does not help that 31% consider the locals generally unfriendly towards foreign residents (vs. 18% globally).

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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