

London: Great for Expats' Careers, but Still Unaffordable

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

- Out of 57 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2021, London ranks 38th.
- 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 — London ranks 38th 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. Expats in London are generally happy with their working life and vote the local career opportunities among the best worldwide. While they also find it quite easy to settle down in London (22nd), the quality of life is mediocre at best (38th). Lastly, finances are an issue since the city does poorly in the Finance & Housing Index (46th) and even ranks among the worst worldwide for the local cost of living (50th).

Expat City Ranking 2021

Expat Life in London



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 London

London ranks 38th out of 57 destinations in the Expat City Ranking 2021. The UK capital performs worst in the **Local Cost of Living Index** (50th), with 70% of expats rating this factor negatively (vs. 34% globally). *"It is too expensive to live here,"* says an Italian expat. This is also reflected in the **Finance & Housing Index** (46th): 28% of expats are dissatisfied with their financial situation (vs. 19% globally), and 78% find housing unaffordable (vs. 39% globally). *"I am not able to afford living alone and cannot even dream of owning property,"* shares a Polish expat. In fact, 33% say that their disposable household income is not enough to cover their expenses (vs. 23% globally).

The city gets rather mediocre results in the **Quality of Urban Living Index** (38th), placing second to last for the local climate and weather (56th) — only ahead of Amsterdam (57th). A Brazilian expat says: *"I miss the sun as much as I miss my family!"* What's more, just 75% feel safe in London, which is below the global average of 84%. On the bright side, 80% rate the local leisure options positively (vs. 72% globally). London ranks a lot better in the **Urban Work Life Index** (23rd), even ranking 3rd out of 57 for the local career opportunities. *"I believe there are amazing opportunities for work here,"* says an Austrian expat. Nearly three-quarters (72%) are happy with the career opportunities in London (vs. 45% globally); only those in New York (2nd) and Dublin (1st) rate this factor better. However, this seems to come at a cost — 22% rate their work-life balance negatively (vs. 17% globally).

London performs best in the **Getting Settled Index** (22nd): expats find it easy to get used to the local culture (72% vs. 65% globally), and 68% feel at home there (vs. 65% 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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