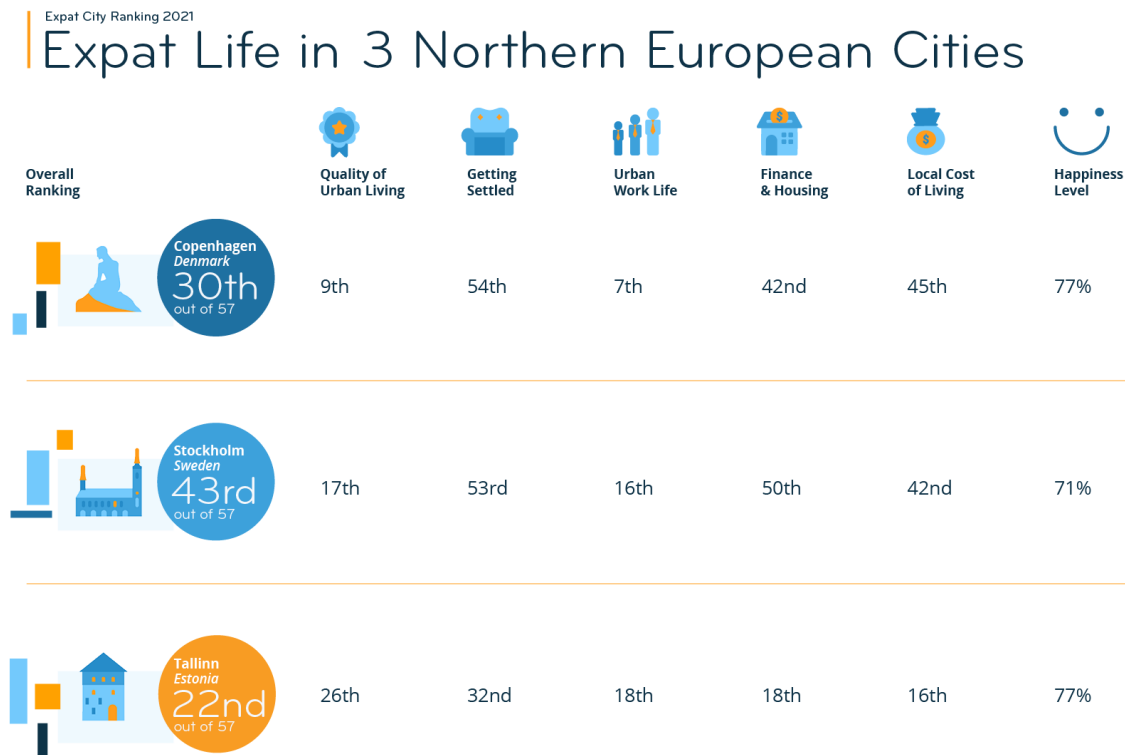


## How Expats Rate Their Life in 3 Northern European Cities

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

- Out of 57 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Tallinn ranks 22nd, followed by Copenhagen (30th) and Stockholm (43rd).
- 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 — Three northern European cities are featured in the Expat City Ranking 2021 by [InterNations](#), the world's largest expat community with over 4 million members: Tallinn ranks 22nd, followed by Copenhagen (30th) and Stockholm (43rd). While all of them perform well in the Quality of Urban Living and Urban Work Life Indices, expats struggle with settling in. When it comes to finance and housing, as well as the local cost of living, Tallinn beats Copenhagen and Stockholm by far.



The [Expat City Ranking](#) 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 3 Northern European Cities

### 22 | Tallinn Is a Safe City, but Expats Have Difficulties Connecting with Local Residents

Coming 22nd out of 57 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2021, Tallinn receives mixed results in the **Quality of Urban Living Index** (26th). On the one hand, it ranks 10th for personal safety. Nearly all respondents (97%) report being happy with this factor (vs. 84% globally). Additionally, 84% are satisfied with the urban environment (vs. 71% globally). *"It is peaceful, clean, and safe,"* a Mexican expat says. On the other hand, Tallinn performs poorly for local leisure options (43rd) and the availability of healthcare (42nd).

The city places slightly below the global average in the **Getting Settled Index** (32nd), faring especially poorly in the Local Friendliness Subcategory (40th). In fact, less than half the expats (47%) find the local residents generally friendly (vs. 69% globally). *"People here are not welcoming and quite closed off,"* shares a Ukrainian expat. Consequently, 36% find it hard to make new friends (vs. 32% globally).

Tallinn performs a lot better in the **Finance & Housing Index** (18th). Expats describe housing as affordable (50% vs. 42% globally) and quite easy to find (60% vs. 60% globally). *"My partner and I were even able to purchase a flat here, which was a rather easy process,"* a Lithuanian expat explains. Lastly, Tallinn ranks above the global average in the **Local Cost of Living** (16th) and **Urban Work Life Indices**. The city even makes it into the top 5 for working hours (4th): 73% of survey respondents are satisfied with this factor (vs. 66% globally). They are also happy with the job security (72% vs. 61% globally) and local career opportunities (55% vs. 45% globally).

### 30 | Copenhagen: Great for Working and Living in General — But Not for Socializing

Copenhagen ranks 30th out of 57 in the Expat City Ranking 2021, landing in the top 10 for two indices — but in the bottom 10 for another one. It performs best in the **Urban Work Life Index** (7th), placing 1st in the Work-Life Balance Subcategory. Most expats in Copenhagen (88%) are satisfied with their working hours (vs. 66% globally), and 82% are happy with their work-life balance (vs. 66% globally). The city also does well in the **Quality of Urban Living Index** (9th). It even comes 1st for the affordability of healthcare: 86% rate it positively (vs. 61% globally). The vast majority is also happy with the public transportation system (99% vs. 69% globally) and the urban environment (85% vs. 71% globally). However, 49% rate the local climate and weather negatively (vs. 17% globally).

However, Copenhagen lands in the bottom 10 of the **Getting Settled Index** (54th), as well as in the Local Friendliness (54th), Feeling Welcome (53rd), and Friends & Socializing (56th) Subcategories — only Stockholm (57th) does worse in the latter. Expats find it difficult to make new friends (63% vs. 32% globally) and are unhappy with their social life (37% vs. 25% globally). *"It is extremely difficult to make friends or build relationships,"* a British expat explains. It might not help that 41% of expats describe the local population as generally unfriendly towards foreign residents (vs. 18% globally).

The Danish capital does not fare much better in the **Local Cost of Living** (45th) and **Finance & Housing** (42nd) **Indices**. It ranks among the bottom 10 in the Housing Subcategory (49th): 47% of expats state it is difficult to find housing (vs. 23% globally). A British expat says: *"I have been searching for a reasonably-priced rental for two-and-a-half years without any luck."*

### 43 | Stockholm: Expats Do Not Feel Welcome in Sweden's Capital

In the Expat City Ranking 2021, Stockholm ranks 43rd out of 57, performing especially poorly in the **Getting Settled Index** (53rd). It ends up among the bottom 5 in the Local Friendliness (55th), Feeling Welcome (56th), and Friends & Socializing (57th) Subcategories. Expats do not find the local residents either friendly in general (46% vs. 16% globally) or friendly towards foreign residents specifically (34% vs. 18% globally). *"People here seem suspicious of foreign residents, as if they do not know how to relate to them,"* shares a South African expat. Just 46% of expats feel at home in Stockholm (vs. 65% globally), while another 63% have trouble making friends (vs. 32% globally).

Stockholm's results in the **Finance & Housing Index** (50th) are not much better. It ranks 56th for the ease of finding housing, only ahead of Munich (57th). In fact, 62% find this difficult (vs. 23% globally), and 65% say that housing is unaffordable (vs. 39% globally).

On the upside, Stockholm performs well in the **Urban Work Life Index** (16th), ranking 4th in the Work-Life Balance Subcategory: 77% are satisfied with their work-life balance (vs. 66% globally), and 75% rate their working hours positively (vs. 66% globally). A German expat even cites *"the cultural attitude towards work-life balance"* as one of her favorite things about Stockholm. Expats are also satisfied with the job security (80% vs. 61% globally) and local career opportunities (57% vs. 45% globally). Lastly, Stockholm ranks 17th in the **Quality of Urban Living Index**, even coming 1st for its urban environment: 93% of expats rate this factor positively (vs. 71% globally). They are also happy with the public transportation system (96% vs. 69% globally), and 79% find healthcare affordable (vs. 61% 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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