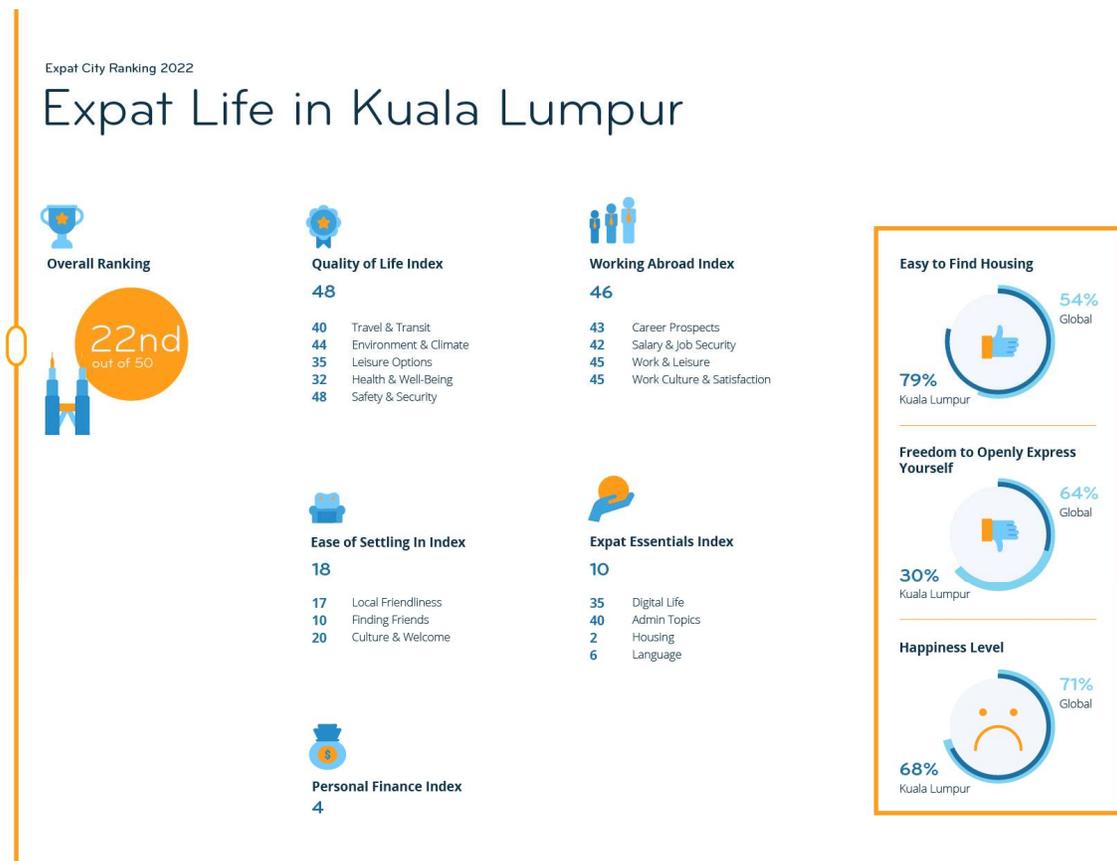


## Expats Love the Low Cost of Living in Kuala Lumpur but Have Trouble with Their Working Life

The Expat City Ranking 2022 reveals the best and worst cities for expats around the world, including Kuala Lumpur.

- Kuala Lumpur ranks 22nd out of 50 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2022, with many different highs and lows across the ranking.
- In 2022, Valencia (1st), Dubai, Mexico City, Lisbon, Madrid, Bangkok, Basel, Melbourne, Abu Dhabi, and Singapore (10th) are the top 10 cities for expats to live in.
- On the other hand, expats consider Johannesburg (50th), Frankfurt, Paris, Istanbul, Hong Kong, Hamburg, Milan, Vancouver, Tokyo, and Rome (41st) the world's worst cities to live in.

Munich, 29 November 2022 — Kuala Lumpur ranks 22nd out of 50 in the Expat City Ranking 2022 by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org/), the world's largest expat community with over 4.5 million members. The city receives rather mixed results across the five indices featured in the report. It ends up in the bottom 10 in both the Quality of Life and Working Abroad Indices, as expats struggle with safety and security, as well as many aspects of their working life. While it ranks midfield when it comes to the Ease of Settling In, it lands in the top 10 for Personal Finance and Expat Essentials, as expats are very happy with the housing situation and the cost of living in Kuala Lumpur.



The [Expat City Ranking](#) is based on the annual *Expat Insider* survey by InterNations. It is one of the most extensive surveys about living and working abroad, with 11,970 respondents in 2022. A total of 50 cities around the globe are featured this year, offering in-depth information about five areas of expat life: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Personal Finance, and the new Expat Essentials Index, which covers digital life, admin topics, housing, and language.

## 22 | Kuala Lumpur: An Affordable City with a Poor Quality of Life

### Political Difficulties & a Poor Transit System Frustrate Expats

Ranking 22nd in the Expat City Ranking 2022 overall, Kuala Lumpur's worst performance is in the **Quality of Life Index** (48th). The city ends up in the bottom 10 of the Environment & Climate (44th) and Safety & Security (48th) Subcategories: 42% of expats feel that the government does *not* support policies to protect the environment, more than double the global average (18%). And more than two in five say that they cannot openly express themselves and their opinions (42% vs. 18% globally) and are unhappy with the political stability (41% vs. 15% globally). Expats are also disappointed with the infrastructure for cars (41st) and the availability of public transportation (43rd). *"The inadequate transport system in Kuala Lumpur and the traffic jams restrict mobility and hinder social life,"* shares a British expat.

### Finances Are a Breeze

On the positive side, the city performs very well in the **Expat Essentials Index** (10th). This is largely due to its second place in the Housing Subcategory — only Bangkok (1st) performs better. Expats describe housing as easy to find (79% vs. 54% globally) and to afford (64% vs. 39% globally). Affordability seems to be a general trend, as the city ranks fourth in the **Personal Finance Index**. Over two in three expats (69%) are happy with the general cost of living in Kuala Lumpur (vs. 45% globally), and 86% feel that their disposable household income is enough or more than enough to lead a comfortable life (vs. 72% globally).

### Troubles with Work Life

However, expats encounter more difficulties when it comes to the **Working Abroad Index** (46th). In fact, Kuala Lumpur ranks among the bottom 10 for every subcategory in this index: Career Prospects (43rd), Salary & Job Security (42nd), Work & Leisure (45th), and Work Culture & Satisfaction (45th). For example, over one in four (27%) are unhappy with their work-life balance (vs. 19% globally). Additionally, expats report that the local business culture does *not* encourage creativity / thinking outside of the box (43% unhappy vs. 26% globally), independent work and/or flat hierarchies (43% vs. 28% globally), or flexibility (31% vs. 19% globally).

**You can find out more about the 50 cities featured in the Expat City Ranking in the full report as well as in the press release about the best and worst destinations worldwide (both available under "Downloads" in the email).**

### About the Expat City Ranking 2022

The [Expat City Ranking](#) is based on the annual *Expat Insider* survey by InterNations. For the survey, InterNations asked 11,970 expats representing 177 nationalities and living in 181 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 up to 56 different aspects of urban life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized their personal satisfaction with these aspects, considering both emotional topics and more factual aspects with equal weight. The individual factors were then bundled in various combinations for a total of 16 subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up five topical indices: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Personal Finance, and Expat Essentials. These were further averaged — together with the responses to the question “All things considered, how happy are you with your life abroad in general?” — to create the Expat City Ranking. In 2022, the top 10 cities for expats are Valencia (1st), Dubai, Mexico City, Lisbon, Madrid, Bangkok, Basel, Melbourne, Abu Dhabi, and Singapore (10th).

For a city to be featured in the Expat City Ranking 2022, a sample size of at least 50 survey participants per destination was required. In total, 50 cities met this requirement.

### About InterNations

With more than 4.5 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](#). Follow us on [Twitter](#) for updates and data insights on expat life.

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