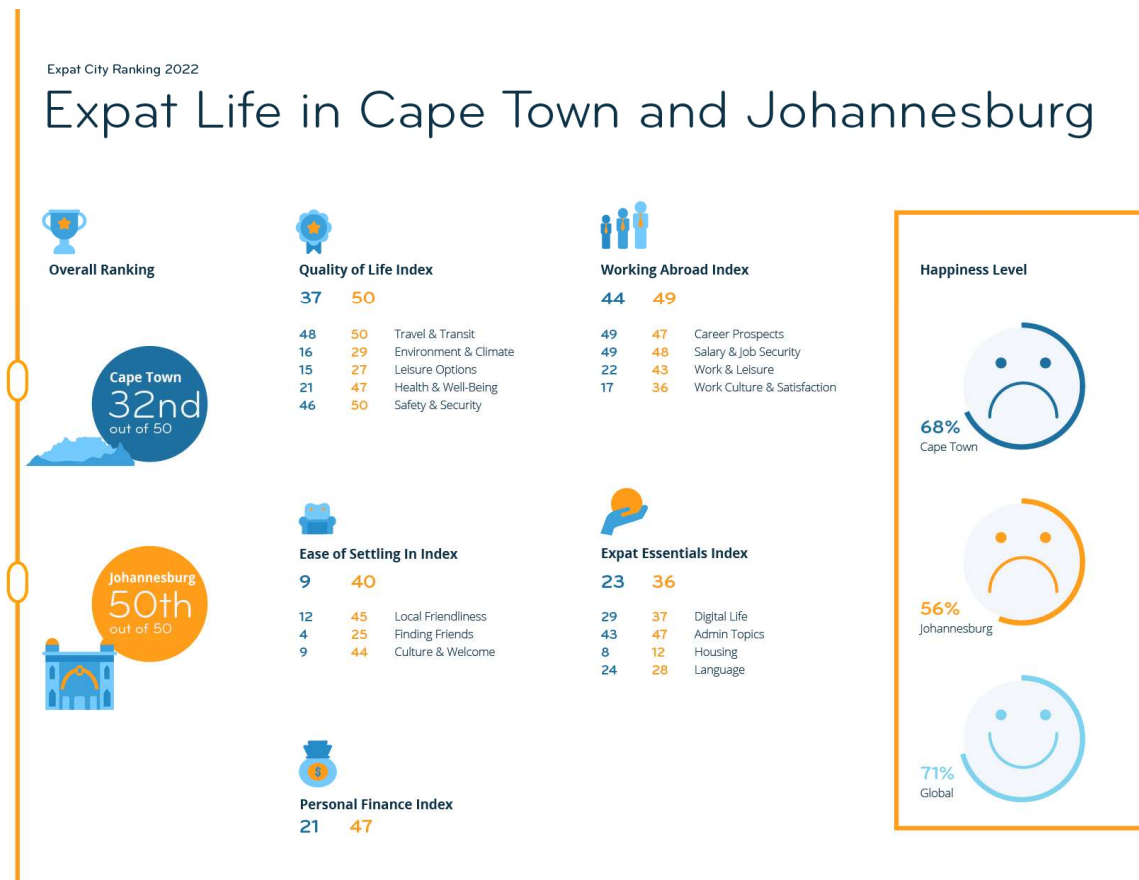


Cape Town Outperforms Johannesburg in All Respects – but Expats in Both Are Unhappy with Their Working Life & Safety

The Expat City Ranking 2022 reveals the best and worst cities for expats around the world, including Cape Town and Johannesburg.

- *Johannesburg is the world's worst city for expats (50th), while Cape Town ranks in a mediocre 32nd place out of 50 cities in the Expat City Ranking 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 2022.*
- *On the other hand, expats consider Johannesburg (50th), Frankfurt am Main, Paris, Istanbul, Hong Kong, Hamburg, Milan, Vancouver, Tokyo, and Rome (41st) the world's worst cities to live in.*

Munich, 29 November 2022 — Cape Town ranks 32nd 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, while Johannesburg is voted the worst city for expats worldwide (50th). Both South African cities rank among the bottom 10 in the Working Abroad Index. However, Cape Town outperforms Johannesburg in the Quality of Life (37th vs. 50th), the Ease of Settling In (9th vs. 40th), the Personal Finance (21st vs. 47th), and the Expat Essentials (23rd vs. 36th) Indices.



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 11,970 respondents in 2022. This year, 50 cities around the globe are analyzed in the survey, which offers in-depth information about five areas of expat life: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Personal Finance, and Expat Essentials Index, which covers digital life, admin topics, housing, and language.

What Expats Think about Life in Cape Town and Johannesburg

32 | Cape Town: A Great Place to Make Friends but Not to Improve Your Career

Cape Town ranks 32nd out of 50 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2022 and even makes it into the top 10 of the **Ease of Settling In Index** (9th). Expats describe the local residents as generally friendly (74% happy vs. 66% globally) and find it easy to make friends with them (50% vs. 42% globally). In fact, expats in Cape Town are happiest with their social life (1st): 64% rate this factor positively (vs. 56% globally), and 42% are even *completely* satisfied (vs. 23% globally).

It might help with making friends that Cape Town ranks 15th in the Leisure Options Subcategory. Expats are particularly satisfied with the opportunities for recreational sports (85% happy vs. 75% globally), as well as the culinary variety and dining options (87% vs. 77% globally). *"I have made great friends and like being outdoors here,"* shares a British expat. In fact, the climate and weather (9th) and the natural environment (6th) are two more factors with ratings among the top 10. However, in the end, Cape Town only ranks 37th in the **Quality of Life Index**. This is mainly due to expats' dissatisfaction with Travel & Transit (48th) and Safety & Security (46th). They are unhappy with the availability of public transportation (47th), and 39% do not find it easy or safe to get around on foot and/or bicycle (vs. 13% globally). What is more, 38% are worried about their personal safety in general, which is more than four times the global average (9%).

In the **Expat Essential Index** (23rd), Cape Town ranks among the worst cities in the Admin Topics Subcategory (43rd) but among the best in the Housing Subcategory (8th). In fact, expats describe housing as both affordable (41% happy vs. 39% globally) and easy to find (72% vs. 54% globally).

Lastly, Cape Town ranks 44th in the **Working Abroad Index**, even landing in second-to-last place worldwide in both the Career Prospects (49th) and the Salary & Job Security (49th) Subcategories. Close to half the expats (46%) are unhappy with the local job market (vs. 27% globally), and 20% say that moving to Cape Town has *not* improved their career prospects (vs. 18% globally). Additionally, they worry about their job security (33% unhappy vs. 20% globally) and rate the state of the economy negatively (51% vs. 17% globally).

50 | Johannesburg: The World's Worst Expat Destination

Johannesburg comes last (50th) in the Expat City Ranking 2022. It also ends up as the worst city worldwide in the **Quality of Life Index** (50th). Expats are extremely unhappy with the affordability (25% unhappy vs. 15% globally) and availability (39% vs. 17% globally) of public transportation. Close to three in five (59%) do not find it easy and safe to get around by foot and/or bicycle (vs. 13% globally) — 32% even describe it as *extremely* unsafe, eight times the global average (4%). The city ranks last worldwide for both this factor and personal safety in general: 62% do not feel safe in Johannesburg, compared to 9% globally.

Johannesburg ranks 49th in the **Working Abroad Index**, only ahead of Istanbul (50th). Expats rate the local job market (38% unhappy vs. 27% globally) and their personal career opportunities (29% vs. 22% globally) negatively, and about a quarter (24%) say that moving there has *not* improved their career prospects (vs. 18% globally). Since expats in Johannesburg also tend to be dissatisfied with their job security (34% unhappy vs. 20% globally), the state of the economy (36% vs. 17% globally), and their work-life balance (23% vs. 19% globally), it is no surprise that 24% are unhappy with their job in general (vs. 16% globally).

Interestingly, while only a slightly above average share of expats feel they are not paid fairly for their job (22% vs. 20% globally), results in the **Personal Finance Index** (47th) look much worse. Expats are unsatisfied with their personal finances (41% unhappy vs. 21% globally), and 44% say that their disposable household income is not enough to lead a comfortable life (vs. 28% globally). In fact, Johannesburg ranks last worldwide (50th) for both factors.

At least housing is affordable, according to 46% of expats (vs. 39% globally), which is one reason why Johannesburg still lands in 36th place in the **Expat Essentials Index**. On the other hand, expats rate the availability of administrative/government services online negatively (41% unhappy vs. 21% globally), and 34% struggle to open a local bank account (vs. 21% 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 WORKSE, 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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