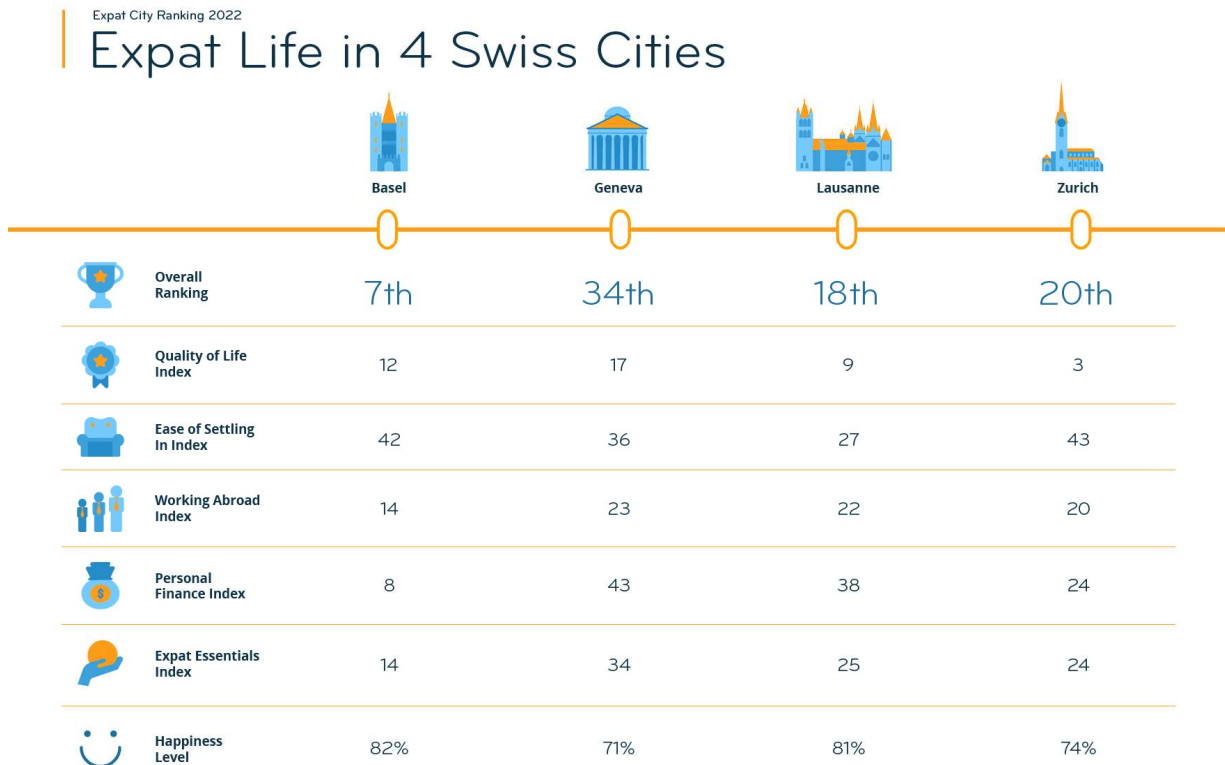


## Basel Outperforms Lausanne, Zurich & Geneva as the Best City for Expats in Switzerland

The Expat City Ranking 2022 reveals the best and worst cities for expats around the world, including Basel, Geneva, Lausanne, and Zurich.

- Basel ranks 7th out of 50 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2022, followed by Lausanne (18th), Zurich (20th), and Geneva (34th).
- 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 — Basel ranks 7th out of 50, followed by Lausanne (18th), Zurich (20th), and Geneva (34th) in the Expat City Ranking 2022 by [InterNations](https://www.internations.org/), the world's largest expat community with over 4.5 million members. All Swiss cities offer a high quality of life and perform well for working abroad. However, expats find it hard to settle in. Additionally, those living in Geneva, Lausanne, and Zurich struggle with the cost of living. In the end, Basel outperforms the other Swiss cities with regard to working life, personal finances, and administrative issues for expats.



The Expat City Ranking 2022 covers 50 cities in total.

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 4 Swiss Cities

### 7 | Basel: Expats Are Satisfied with Their Finances, Jobs & the Quality of Life

Basel is the best rated out of the four Swiss cities featured in the Expat City Ranking (7th). It does best in the **Personal Finance Index** (8th), ranking second worldwide for both expats' satisfaction with their financial situation (80% happy vs. 60% globally) and them feeling that their disposable household income is enough to lead a comfortable life abroad (68% have *more* than enough vs. 45% globally). Basel also lands in a good 14th place in the **Expat Essentials Index**, which is mainly due to its strong performance in the Admin Topics (7th) and Digital Life (12th) Subcategories. Expats are particularly satisfied with the ease of opening a local bank account (76% happy vs. 64% globally), getting high-speed internet access at home (88% vs. 79% globally), and the unrestricted access to online services (94% vs. 82% globally).

Basel also performs well in the **Quality of Life Index** (12th), particularly for Environment & Climate (2nd), Safety & Security (4th), and Travel & Transit (8th). *"The environment is great, and you can enjoy outdoor life around the year. It is easy to get around the country and abroad with public transportation or by car,"* shares an expat from Venezuela. In fact, most expats rate the urban environment (90% happy vs. 67% globally), natural environment (98% vs. 83% globally), and air quality (90% vs. 65% globally) positively. They also feel safe in Basel (98% vs. 81% globally), are happy with the availability of public transportation (96% vs. 73% globally), and find it easy and safe to get around on foot and/or by bicycle (92% vs. 77% globally). On the downside, Basel lands in the bottom 3 in the Leisure Options Subcategory (48th). One in five expats (20%) is unhappy with both the culture and nightlife (vs. 16% globally) and the culinary variety and dining options (vs. 12% globally) — the city even ranks last worldwide (50th) for the latter factor.

In the **Working Abroad Index** (14th), Basel ranks first in the Salary & Job Security Subcategory, and 79% of expats feel paid fairly for their work (vs. 62% globally). More than four in five (81%) also agree that moving there has improved their career prospects, compared to 60% globally. In the end, Basel is the city with the highest level of overall job satisfaction (1st): 86% rate this factor positively (vs. 64% globally).

The **Ease of Settling In Index** (42nd) is the only real lowlight about life in Basel: 30% of expats describe the local residents as generally unfriendly (vs. 17% globally), and 27% find it hard to get used to the local culture (vs. 19% globally). Maybe this helps to explain why 58% also find it hard to make local friends (vs. 37% globally) — 24% even find it *extremely* hard (vs. 14% globally).

## 18 | Lausanne: A High Quality of Life but Hard to Make Friends

Lausanne performs best in the **Quality of Life Index** (9th), even ranking first worldwide in the Environment & Climate Subcategory. Expats appreciate the natural environment (1st) and the great air quality (2nd). They are also very happy with the availability of green goods and services (89% happy vs. 64% globally), and 83% agree that the government supports policies to protect the environment (vs. 61% globally). Expats also feel generally safe in Lausanne (94% happy vs. 81% globally) and find it easy and safe to get around the city by foot and/or bicycle (97% vs. 77% globally). The only real lowlights in this index are the culinary variety and dining options (48th) and the affordability of healthcare (47th).

Expats generally consider the local cost of living too high (45th): 72% rate this factor negatively, more than twice the global average (35%). Still, 67% are satisfied with their financial situation (vs. 60% globally), and the city lands in a mediocre 38th place in the **Personal Finance Index**. However, 75% do feel paid fairly for their work, compared to 62% globally. The city ranks 7th for this factor, 2nd for the state of the economy, and 22nd in the **Working Abroad Index** overall. In fact, expats are happy with their personal career opportunities (66% happy vs. 58% globally) in Lausanne and are satisfied with their job in general (73% vs. 64% globally).

In the **Expat Essentials Index** (25th), Lausanne features among both the top 10 and the bottom 10 cities, depending on the subcategory. It ranks eighth for Digital Life — for example, 97% find it easy to pay without cash (vs. 84% globally) — and tenth for Admin Topics: expats find it easy to open a local bank account (83% happy vs. 64% globally) and to deal with the local bureaucracy/authorities (55% vs. 40% globally). But the city ranks 41st in the Housing Subcategory since 54% of expats say it is hard to find housing in Lausanne (vs. 27% globally).

While Lausanne has the best performance out of the Swiss cities featured in the **Ease of Settling Index**, it is still only in a mediocre 27th place. Expats feel at home in Lausanne (72% happy vs. 62% globally) and have a personal support network there (64% vs. 59% globally), but 48% find it hard to make local friends (vs. 37% globally).

## 20 | Zurich: Expensive but Expats Can Still Afford It

Zurich ranks third worldwide in the **Quality of Life Index**, only beaten by Valencia (1st) and Copenhagen (2nd). Expats are very happy with the Travel & Transit (10th) Subcategory, but even more so with the Environment & Climate (4th). They appreciate the natural environment (99% happy vs. 83% globally), the air quality (93% vs. 65% globally), and the urban environment (81% vs. 67% globally). Additionally, they feel safe in Zurich (93% vs. 81% globally) and are happy with the availability (84% vs. 73% globally) and quality (86% vs. 72% globally) of medical care. More than four in five expats in Zurich (81%) say that they can access all the healthcare services they need (vs. 67% globally).

The city also performs quite well in the **Working Abroad Index** (20th), even ranking first worldwide for the state of the local economy: 94% of expats rate this factor positively, compared to 64% globally. They are also happy with the local job market (60% vs. 47% globally) and feel paid fairly for their work (69% happy vs. 62% globally). This might also explain the results in the **Personal Finance Index** (24th): while the general cost of living is considered too high (65% unhappy vs. 35% globally), 74% are still satisfied with their financial situation (vs. 60% globally). More than four in five expats in Zurich (84%) say that their disposable household income is about enough or more than enough to lead a comfortable life (vs. 72% globally). *“You can afford to lead a comfortable life here where things just work”*, says a US American expat.

When it comes to the **Expat Essentials Index** (24th), expats find it easy to pay without cash (97% happy vs. 84% globally) and to deal with the local bureaucracy/authorities (69% vs. 40% globally). However, housing is hard to find in Zurich (41% unhappy vs. 27% globally), and 63% describe it as unaffordable (vs. 43% globally).

Placing 43rd in the **Ease of Settling In Index**, Zurich is the worst-rated Swiss city. In fact, it is among the bottom 10 for all three subcategories: Local Friendliness (44th), Finding Friends (43rd), and Culture & Welcome (42nd). Expats describe the local population as unfriendly towards foreign residents (29% unhappy vs. 18% globally) and find it hard to get used to the local culture (28% vs. 19% globally). Since they also find it hard to make local friends (54% vs. 37% globally), it is no surprise that 30% are unhappy with their social life in Zurich (vs. 26% globally).

### **34 | Geneva: The Highest Cost of Living Worldwide**

Geneva performs worst out of the four Swiss cities in the Expat City Ranking 2022. It even ranks last worldwide for the local cost of living (50th): 80% consider it too high, compared to 35% globally — 31% even find it *extremely* high (vs. 8% globally). While 73% still say that their disposable household income is about enough or more than enough to lead a comfortable life, which is about the same as the global average (72%), the city still ends up in a low 43rd place in the **Personal Finance Index**. Since housing is not only hard to afford (73% unhappy vs. 43% globally) but also to find (63% vs. 27% globally), Geneva comes 47th out of 50 in the Housing Subcategory. Other than that, the **Expat Essentials Index** (34th) does not look too bad. Expats are, for example, happy with the access to high-speed internet at home (89% happy vs. 79% globally) and find it easy to deal with the local bureaucracy/authorities (54% vs. 40% globally).

Geneva performs a little worse in the **Ease of Settling In Index** (36th), with 32% describing the local residents as generally unfriendly (vs. 17% globally). Maybe this is one reason why more than a third of expats (34%) are unhappy with their social life in Geneva, compared to 26% globally.

Similar to the other Swiss cities, Geneva does well in the **Working Abroad** (23rd) and **Quality of Life** (17th) **Indices**. It even comes third worldwide in the Safety & Security Subcategory: expats are satisfied with the political stability (89% happy vs. 64% globally) and feel that they can openly express themselves and their opinions (79% vs. 64% globally). They also appreciate the natural environment (96% happy vs. 83% globally), as well as the air quality (80% vs. 65% globally), and 86% believe that the government supports policies to protect the environment (vs. 61% globally). On the downside, Geneva ranks 44th in the Leisure Options Subcategory. While 84% rate the opportunities for recreational sports positively (vs. 75% globally), they are dissatisfied with the culinary variety and dining options (17% unhappy vs. 12% globally), as well as the city's culture and nightlife (28% vs. 16% 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.

#### **Press Contact**

Jane Masumy  
Media Spokesperson

InterNations GmbH  
Schwanthalerstrasse 39  
80336 Munich, Germany

Email: [press@internations.org](mailto:press@internations.org)  
Home page: <https://www.internations.org/press>