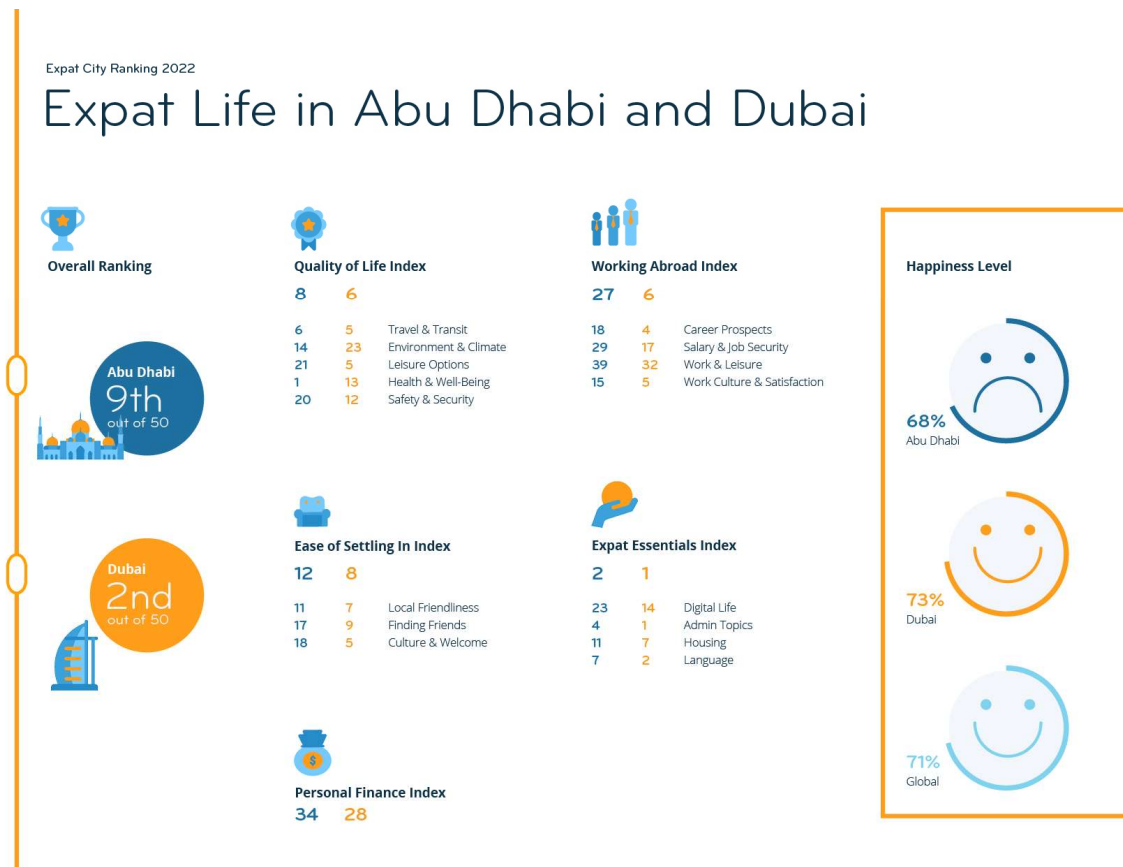


No Bureaucratic Troubles for Expats in Dubai and Abu Dhabi

The Expat City Ranking 2022 reveals the best and worst cities for expats around the world, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

- Dubai ranks 2nd while Abu Dhabi follows in 9th place out of 50 in the Expat City Ranking 2022.
- 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 — Dubai ranks 2nd out of 50, followed by Abu Dhabi in 9th place, 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 cities claim the top two spots in the Expat Essentials Index, and both also rank in the top 10 for Quality of Life. However, Dubai ranks much better than Abu Dhabi when it comes to Working Abroad (6th vs. 27th), as expats are generally more satisfied with their jobs and their compensation. And while both UAE cities do fairly well in the Ease of Settling In Index, the Personal Finance Index is their weakest point.



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.

What Expats Think about Life in Dubai and Abu Dhabi

2 | Dubai: Great for Both Work & Leisure

Dubai ranks 2nd out of 50 in the Expat City Ranking 2022, even coming first worldwide in the **Expat Essentials Index**. The Admin Topics Subcategory (1st) is a particular highlight, since almost two in three expats (66%) report that it is easy to deal with the local bureaucracy/authorities, compared to only 40% globally. This could be due in part to the fact that most expats (88%) are happy with the availability of administrative/government services online (vs. 61% globally). *"The basic things can be taken care of, you do not have to struggle for them,"* shares an Indian expat. However, nearly one in five expats (18%) are unhappy with the access they have to online services (such as social media), more than double the global average (7%). In fact, both Dubai and Abu Dhabi rank in the bottom 5 for this factor (46th and 48th, respectively).

The **Ease of Settling In Index** (8th) is another highlight for Dubai, and the city lands among the top 10 in all three subcategories of the index. Expats are happy with their social life (68% happy vs. 56% globally) and feel welcome there (81% vs. 66% globally). Expats are similarly pleased with the **Quality of Life Index** (6th), and Dubai comes in fifth place for both the Travel & Transit and the Leisure Options Subcategories. Nearly all expats (95%) are satisfied with the infrastructure for cars (vs. 75% globally), and 80% are even *very* satisfied with this factor (vs. 43% globally). It seems like there are many reasons to make use of this infrastructure, since Dubai ranks fifth for culture and nightlife, as well as third for culinary variety and dining options.

Aside from the great leisure opportunities, expats are also pleased with their working life, with Dubai coming sixth in the **Working Abroad Index**. It ranks fifth in the Work Culture & Satisfaction Subcategory, since 70% of expats are happy with their jobs (vs. 64% globally) and 78% report that the local business culture encourages creativity (vs. 51% globally). More than four in five (82%) also feel that moving to Dubai has improved their career prospects (vs. 60% globally). Despite their overall job satisfaction, their income may not be sufficient: over one in three expats (34%) say that their disposable household income is not enough to lead a comfortable life there (vs. 28% globally). This is one of the factors that lead to Dubai's mediocre performance in the **Personal Finance Index** (28th).

9 | Abu Dhabi: Excellent Healthcare & Worry-Free Bureaucracy

Abu Dhabi ranks 9th out of 50 in the Expat City Ranking 2022. The capital city performs best in the **Expat Essentials Index** (2nd), placing just behind Dubai. Like in Dubai, expats are especially happy with the Admin Topics Subcategory (4th): expats find it easy to open a local bank account (74% happy vs. 64% globally) and deal with local bureaucracy (53% vs. 40% globally). What is more, 72% say that it is easy for expats to find housing (vs. 54% globally).

However, while Dubai (6th) excels in the **Working Abroad Index**, Abu Dhabi only ranks midfield (27th). While three in four expats in Abu Dhabi (75%) feel that moving there has improved their career prospects (vs. 60% globally), 31% feel paid unfairly for their work (vs. 20% globally). Perhaps it could also be connected to the perceived low pay that the city places in the bottom 10 for expats' satisfaction with their financial situation (43rd), leading to a below-average ranking in the **Personal Finance Index** (34th).

Expats are quite pleased when it comes to the **Ease of Settling In Index** (12th). Around three in four (72%) describe the local population as being friendly towards foreign residents (vs. 65% globally). *"The local Emiratis are welcoming, helpful, and friendly,"* shares a British expat. After getting settled in, expats find a great **Quality of Life** (8th) in Abu Dhabi. The city claims first place for both the availability of healthcare and the quality of medical care in the Health & Well-Being Subcategory (1st), compared to Dubai's 13th place rank in this subcategory. While the capital city ranks much lower than Dubai for Leisure Options (21st vs. 5th, respectively), both Abu Dhabi and Dubai perform very well for personal safety (3rd and 2nd, respectively).

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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