

Germans Abroad

EXPAT PROFILE



Average age

47.9 years (versus 44.2 years globally)



Gender split

51% female

49% male



Relationship status

69% in a relationship

31% single

WORKING ABROAD



Income abroad compared to similar job at home

45% higher

25% about the same

31% lower



Employment statuses

27% employee

17% manager

11% retiree



SATISFACTION

73% generally satisfied with life abroad

TOP REASONS FOR RELOCATING

#1 Moved for love

#2 Sent by employer

#3 Found a job here

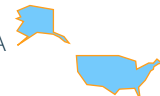
LIKELIHOOD OF RETURNING TO GERMANY

39% likely to return

41% unlikely to return

TOP COUNTRIES OF RESIDENCE

20% USA



9% Switzerland



7% UK



Successful Managers & Unexpected Romantics

Slightly older than average and highly educated, the German expat is not always rewarded with a higher income when relocating. Luckily, not all Germans are moving abroad for work.

TOP FINDINGS

- **59% have a master's degree or higher.**
- **93% speak the local language.**
- **Employment and love are the top reasons for moving abroad.**
- **Germans have mixed feelings on making new friends.**

Coming with Previous Expat Experience, Staying Long Term

Just as Germany itself is becoming increasingly international and culturally diverse,¹ Germans as well seem to enjoy an international lifestyle. In fact, nearly four in five German expats (78%) say they've lived in at least one foreign country in the past before moving to their current country of residence. Two in five German expats have even been living in their new country for more than ten years, and 66% feel at home there, suggesting that perhaps previous expat experience is beneficial in settling in.

Especially for those German expats who have been living abroad for a while and finally feel at home, returning back home may be a tough topic, as a more divided response shows: 41% of the German respondents say that it is not likely that they will return home, but on the other hand, 39%

still consider it likely that they will go back one day.

If acquiring citizenship is any further indication, at least some German expats appear to have long-term plans in their new country: 16% of German expats have acquired the citizenship of their host country. All in all, however, while nearly one in five (19%) are still unsure of how long they will stay in their current country of residence, almost two in five (37%) may stay forever nonetheless.

Germans on Top of Their Language-Learning Game

Not only are plenty of Germans bilingual, but many also know three languages and sometimes more.² It comes as no surprise, then, that more than nine in ten German expats (93%) speak the local language of their new country at least a little — this includes more than half (51%) who speak it

¹ The Economist. Germany is becoming more open and diverse. 14 Apr 2018. <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/04/14/germany-is-becoming-more-open-and-diverse>

² Eurostat — Statistics Explained. Foreign language skills statistics. Oct 2015. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Foreign_language_skills_statistics

very well and 9% for whom it is the same as their mother tongue. Many Germans (41%) say they did not consider language a potential drawback or benefit before moving, only slightly more than the 38% global average.

The general consensus is also that learning the local language of the host country tends to be on the easier side rather than particularly hard: nearly half (49%) agree that learning it is generally easy. Compared to the global average of 36% who say the same, German expats seem to have an easier time picking up new languages. This is a good thing, as more than half (52%) say it is difficult to live in their new country without speaking the local language.

Highly Educated Expats Often Motivated by Employers

Most German expats are highly educated: almost six in ten (59%) have a postgraduate degree, whether a master's, a PhD, or a similar degree. Despite the high level of scholarship, some expats (31%) find themselves earning less abroad than they would in a comparable position back home in Germany.

Regardless of income rates, 15% of German expats have been sent abroad by their employer. Over one in four German expats (27%) describe themselves as employees, and a relatively large share work in management specifically.

About one in six (17%) say that "manager" is their main employment status, and 84% of these even report working in middle or top management. While manufacturing & engineering takes first place for field of work at 13%, IT (9%), and healthcare (8%) are also popular among German expats.

Germans Reveal Their Romantic Side

Besides employment, love is another major reason why Germans move abroad. In fact, nearly seven in ten German expats (69%) are in a committed relationship, and 21% cite love as one of their reasons for relocating. Over seven in ten German respondents in a relationship (73%) are romantically involved with someone not from Germany. Regardless of nationality, relationship satisfaction among German expats is nearly all in the green: 83% of German expats are generally satisfied with their relationship.

One German expat in the US describes how her only motivation for moving abroad was because of her husband: "I love that my husband has given me his love and the friendships surrounding his life on a golden plate. He is the ONLY reason why I have moved to the US."

Apart from that particular respondent, German expats seem to regard the US as quite the popular destination: every fifth respondent from Germany is currently living

there, compared to 6% of all survey participants worldwide.

No Perfect Formula for Making Friends

Even though the majority of German expats (83%) is satisfied with their relationship, making friends can be a totally different ball game for some, and there is no perfect formula for expat friend groups. German expats have fairly mixed social circles: over one in four (27%) say that most of their friends are other expats, 23% have mostly local residents as friends, and half say their friends and acquaintances are a mixture of both. However, only 6% of German expats are not at all satisfied with their life abroad when it comes to making new friends.