

# 2012 Quality Of Living Worldwide City Rankings Survey

## The results of Mercer's recent survey are as follows:

- European cities continue to dominate the top of the ranking; Vienna remains at the top, Baghdad at the bottom
- London and Birmingham are the top-ranked UK cities for overall Quality of Living
- London ranked 6 in world for quality of city infrastructure with Birmingham and Glasgow ranked 44 Singapore ranks highest for city infrastructure, Port-au-Prince the lowest.

Vienna retains the top spot as the city with the world's best quality of living, according to the Mercer 2012 Quality of Living Survey. Zurich and Auckland follow in second and third place, respectively, and Munich is in fourth place, followed by Vancouver, which ranked fifth. Düsseldorf dropped one spot to rank sixth followed by Frankfurt in seventh, Geneva in eighth, Copenhagen in ninth, and Bern and Sydney tied for tenth place.

In the United Kingdom, London (38), Birmingham (52) and Glasgow (55) are the cities ranked highest for quality of life, followed by Aberdeen (56) and Belfast (64). London was ranked number 6 in the world for the quality of the city's infrastructure. Glasgow and Birmingham were both ranked 44th while Aberdeen and Belfast were ranked 69. Globally, the cities with the lowest quality of living are Khartoum, Sudan (217); N'Djamena, Chad (218); Port-au-Prince, Haiti (219); and Bangui, Central African Republic (220). Baghdad, Iraq (221) ranks last.

Mercer conducts this survey annually to help multinational companies and other organisations compensate employees fairly when placing them on international assignments. Mercer's Quality of Living reports provide valuable information and hardship premium recommendations for many cities throughout the world. Mercer's Quality of Living index list covers 221 cities, ranked against New York as the base city.

This year's ranking separately identifies the cities with the best infrastructure based on electricity supply, water availability, telephone and mail services, public transportation, traffic congestion and the range of international flights from

local airports. Singapore is at the top of this index, followed by Frankfurt and Munich in second place. Copenhagen (4) and Düsseldorf (5) fill the next two slots, while Hong Kong and London share sixth place. Port-au-Prince (221) ranks at the bottom of the list.

'In order for multinational companies to ensure their expatriates are compensated appropriately and an adequate hardship allowance is included in compensation packages, they must be aware of current events and local circumstances', said Slagin Parakatil, Senior Researcher. 'Factors such as internal stability, law enforcement effectiveness, crime levels and medical facilities are important to consider when deciding on an international assignment, and the impact on daily life that could be encountered by the expatriate in overseas placements.'

Mr. Parakatil continued, 'Infrastructure has a significant effect on the quality of living that expatriates experience. While often taken for granted when functioning to a high standard, a city's infrastructure can generate severe hardship when it is deficient. Companies need to provide adequate allowances to compensate their international workers for these and other hardships.'

## Europe

Europe has 15 cities among the world's top 25 cities for quality of living. Vienna retains the highest-ranking for both the region and globally. The rest of the top 10 for Europe are dominated by German and Swiss cities, with three cities each in the top 10. Zurich (2) is followed by Munich (4), Düsseldorf (6), Frankfurt (7), Geneva (8), Copenhagen (9) and Bern (10). The lowest-ranking Western European cities are Athens (83) and Belfast (64).

Other European cities among the top 25 include Amsterdam (12), Berlin (16), Hamburg (17), Luxembourg (19), Stockholm (19), Brussels (22) Nürnberg (24) and Stuttgart (27). Paris ranks 29 and is followed by Helsinki (32), Oslo (32) and London (38). Dublin dropped nine places from last year to rank 35, mostly due to a combination of serious flooding and an increase in crime rates. Lisbon ranks 44 followed by Madrid (49) and

Rome (52). Prague, Czech Republic (69) is the highest-ranking Eastern European city followed by Budapest, Hungary (74); Ljubljana, Slovenia (75); Vilnius, Lithuania (79); and Warsaw, Poland (84). The lowest-ranking European city is Tbilisi, Georgia (213).

Overall, European cities continue to have high quality of living as a result of a combination of increased stability, rising living standards and advanced city infrastructures, said Mr. Parakatil. 'But economic turmoil, political tension and high unemployment in some European countries and high levels of unemployment have continued to be problematic in the region.'

With six cities in the top 10, European cities also fare well in the city infrastructure ranking. Frankfurt and Munich rank the highest at second place, followed by Copenhagen (4) and Düsseldorf (5). London (6) and Hamburg (9) are followed by Paris which ranks 12. Budapest (67) is the highest-ranking for city infrastructure in Eastern Europe followed by Vilnius (74) and Prague (75), whereas Yerevan (189) and Tbilisi (201) rank lowest.

Infrastructure in German and Danish cities is among the best in the world, in part due to their first-class airport facilities, international and local connectivity, and a high standard of public services, said Mr. Parakatil. London's high ranking in the infrastructure index reflects a combination of high level of public services offered, with its extensive public transportation system including airports, the London Underground buses and railroad services.

## Americas

Canadian cities still dominate the top of the index for this region, with Vancouver (5) retaining the top regional spot, followed by Ottawa (14), Toronto (15) and Montreal (23). Calgary ranks 32 on the overall quality of living ranking. Overall, there was almost no movement in rankings among Canadian cities from 2011 to 2012, with Calgary advancing one position, Montreal retreating one position, and the other cities remaining unchanged.

Honolulu (28) is the city in the United States with the highest quality of living,

Mercor Quality of Living Survey - Worldwide Rankings, 2012			
Rank		City	Country
2012	2011		
1	1	VIENNA	AUSTRIA
2	2	ZURICH	SWITZERLAND
3	3	AUCKLAND	NEW ZEALAND
4	4	MUNICH	GERMANY
5	5	VANCOUVER	CANADA
6	5	DUSSELDORF	GERMANY
7	7	FRANKFURT	GERMANY
8	8	GENEVA	SWITZERLAND
9	9	COPENHAGEN	DENMARK
10	9	BERN	SWITZERLAND
10	11	SYDNEY	AUSTRALIA
12	12	AMSTERDAM	NETHERLANDS
13	13	WELLINGTON	NEW ZEALAND
14	14	OTTAWA	CANADA
15	15	TORONTO	CANADA
16	17	BERLIN	GERMANY
17	16	HAMBURG	GERMANY
17	18	MELBOURNE	AUSTRALIA
19	19	LUXEMBOURG	LUXEMBOURG
19	20	STOCKHOLM	SWEDEN
21	21	PERTH	AUSTRALIA
22	22	BRUSSELS	BELGIUM
23	22	MONTREAL	CANADA
24	24	NURNBERG	GERMANY
25	25	SINGAPORE	SINGAPORE
26	26	CANBERRA	AUSTRALIA
27	28	STUTTGART	GERMANY
28	29	HONOLULU, HI	UNITED STATES
29	30	ADELAIDE	AUSTRALIA
29	30	PARIS	FRANCE
29	30	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	UNITED STATES
32	33	CALGARY	CANADA
32	35	HELSINKI	FINLAND
32	33	OSLO	NORWAY
35	36	BOSTON, MA	UNITED STATES
35	26	DUBLIN	IRELAND
37	37	BRISBANE	AUSTRALIA
38	38	LONDON	UNITED KINGDOM
39	39	LYON	FRANCE
40	40	BARCELONA	SPAIN
41	42	MILAN	ITALY
42	43	CHICAGO, IL	UNITED STATES
43	43	WASHINGTON, DC	UNITED STATES
44	41	LISBON	PORTUGAL
44	47	NEW YORK CITY, NY	UNITED STATES
44	48	SEATTLE, WA	UNITED STATES
44	46	TOKYO	JAPAN
48	49	KOBE	JAPAN
49	43	MADRID	SPAIN
49	49	PITTSBURGH, PA	UNITED STATES
49	49	YOKOHAMA	JAPAN
52	52	BIRMINGHAM	UNITED KINGDOM
52	52	ROME	ITALY
54	54	PHILADELPHIA, PA	UNITED STATES
55	56	GLASGOW	UNITED KINGDOM
56	54	ABERDEEN	UNITED KINGDOM
57	57	OSAKA	JAPAN
58	61	LEIPZIG	GERMANY
58	58	LOS ANGELES, CA	UNITED STATES
60	59	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	UNITED STATES
61	60	NAGOYA	JAPAN
62	62	DALLAS, TX	UNITED STATES
63	63	POINTE-A-PITRE	GUADELOUPE
64	63	BELFAST	UNITED KINGDOM
65	66	HOUSTON, TX	UNITED STATES
66	66	MIAMI, FL	UNITED STATES
67	67	ST. LOUIS, MO	UNITED STATES
68	68	ATLANTA, GA	UNITED STATES
69	69	PRAGUE	CZECH REPUBLIC
70	70	HONG KONG	HONG KONG
71	71	DETROIT, MI	UNITED STATES
72	72	SAN JUAN	PUERTO RICO
73	74	DUBAI	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
74	73	BUDAPEST	HUNGARY
75	75	LJUBLJANA	SLOVENIA
75	80	SEOUL	SOUTH KOREA
77	77	MONTVIDEO	URUGUAY
78	78	ABU DHABI	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
79	79	VILNIUS	LITHUANIA
80	76	KUALA LUMPUR	MALAYSIA
81	81	BUENOS AIRES	ARGENTINA
82	82	PORT LOUIS	MAURITIUS
83	83	ATHENS	GREECE
84	84	WARSAW	POLAND
85	85	TAIPEI	TAIWAN
86	86	BRATISLAVA	SLOVAKIA
87	87	LIMASSOL	CYPRUS
88	88	TALLINN	ESTONIA
89	88	CAPE TOWN	SOUTH AFRICA
90	91	RIGA	LATVIA
91	90	SANTIAGO	CHILE
92	92	BUSAN	SOUTH KOREA
93	93	PANAMA CITY	PANAMA
94	94	JOHANNESBURG	SOUTH AFRICA
95	95	SHANGHAI	CHINA
96	95	VICTORIA	SEYCHELLES
97	97	BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN	BRUNEI
98	98	ZAGREB	CROATIA
99	99	TEL AVIV	ISRAEL
100	101	JOHOR BAHRU	MALAYSIA

101	100	NOLUEMA	NEW CALEDONIA
102	101	BRASILIA	BRAZIL
103	101	MUSCAT	OMAN
104	104	MONTERREY	MEXICO
105	105	SAN JOSE	COSTA RICA
106	106	DOHA	QATAR
107	107	BUCHAREST	ROMANIA
108	108	NASSAU	BAHAMAS
109	109	BEIJING	CHINA
109	110	TUNIS	TUNISIA
111	112	ASUNCION	PARAGUAY
112	114	RIO DE JANEIRO	BRAZIL
113	110	SOFIA	BULGARIA
114	115	RABAT	MOROCCO
115	121	BANGKOK	THAILAND
115	116	SÃO PAULO	BRAZIL
117	117	ISTANBUL	TURKEY
118	119	GUANGZHOU	CHINA
119	120	KUWAIT CITY	KUWAIT
120	121	MEXICO CITY	MEXICO
121	118	LIMA	PERU
122	123	CASABLANCA	MOROCCO
123	124	WINDHOEK	NAMIBIA
124	126	AMMAN	JORDAN
125	124	QUITO	ECUADOR
126	113	MANAMA	BAHRAIN
127	127	CHENGDU	CHINA
128	128	MANILA	PHILIPPINES
129	129	SANTO DOMINGO	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
130	130	BOGOTA	COLOMBIA
130	134	NANJING	CHINA
132	132	SHENZHEN	CHINA
133	131	GABORONE	BOTSWANA
134	137	LUSAKA	ZAMBIA
135	136	BELGRADE	SERBIA
135	139	COLOMBO	SRI LANKA
137	137	QINGDAO	CHINA
138	140	JAKARTA	INDONESIA
139	141	BANGALORE	INDIA
140	142	GUATEMALA CITY	GUATEMALA
141	136	CAIRO	EGYPT
142	154	PORT OF SPAIN	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
143	144	KINGSTON	JAMAICA
143	143	NEW DELHI	INDIA
145	146	SHENYANG	CHINA
146	144	MUMBAI	INDIA
147	147	HANOI	VIETNAM
148	147	LA PAZ	BOLIVIA
149	149	HO CHI MINH CITY	VIETNAM
150	150	CHENNAI	INDIA
151	151	KOLKATA	INDIA
151	152	SKOPJE	MACEDONIA
153	152	DAKAR	SENEGAL
154	163	MOSCOW	RUSSIA
155	165	SARAJEVO	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA
156	156	LIBREVILLE	GABON
157	157	RIYADH	SAUDI ARABIA
158	158	ACCRA	GHANA
158	161	KIEV	UKRAINE
160	159	JEDDAH	SAUDI ARABIA
161	160	JILIN	CHINA
162	162	KAMPALA	UGANDA
163	165	ST. PETERSBURG	RUSSIA
164	132	BLANTYRE	MALAWI
165	165	MAPUTO	MOZAMBIQUE
166	166	MANAGUA	NICARAGUA
167	169	VIENTIANE	LAOS
168	164	CARACAS	VENEZUELA
169	172	ALMATY	KAZAKHSTAN
170	168	SAN SALVADOR	EL SALVADOR
171	170	BEIRUT	LEBANON
172	171	COTONOU	BENIN
173	167	BANJUL	GAMBIA
174	173	YEREVAN	ARMENIA
175	177	TEGUCIGALPA	HONDURAS
176	174	TIRANA	ALBANIA
177	174	NAIROBI	KENYA
178	176	DJIBOUTI	DJIBOUTI
179	178	ALGIERS	ALGERIA
180	179	ISLAMABAD	PAKISTAN
181	184	KIGALI	RWANDA
182	183	YAOUNDE	CAMEROON
183	182	MINSK	BELARUS
184	188	HAVANA	CUBA
185	186	PHNOM PENH	CAMBODIA
186	184	DOUALA	CAMEROON
187	188	DAR ES SALAAM	TANZANIA
188	190	LAHORE	PAKISTAN
188	187	TEHRAN	IRAN
190	191	KARACHI	PAKISTAN
191	194	LUANDA	ANGOLA
192	193	LONME	TOGO
193	192	HARARE	ZIMBABWE
194	195	BAKU	AZERBAIJAN
195	196	YANGON	MYANMAR
196	202	TRIPOLI	LIBYA
197	179	DAMASCUS	SYRIA
198	198	TASHKENT	UZBEKISTAN
199	199	ASHKHABAD	TURKMENISTAN
200	200	OUAGADOUOU	BURKINA FASO
201	200	ADDIS ABABA	ETHIOPIA
202	203	LAGOS	NIGERIA
203	204	DHAKA	BANGLADESH
204	206	BISHKEK	KYRGYZSTAN
205	205	ABUJA	NIGERIA

206	207	NIAMEY	NIGER
207	208	DUSHANBE	TAJIKISTAN
208	209	ANTANANARIVO	MADAGASCAR
209	197	BAMAKO	MALI
210	210	CONAKRY	GUINEA
211	213	ABIDJAN	CÔTE D'IVOIRE
212	211	KINSHASA	DEMOCRATIC REP. OF THE CONGO
213	212	NOUAKHOTT	MAURITANIA
213	214	TBILISI	GEORGIA
215	214	BRAZZAVILLE	CONGO
216	216	SANA'A	YEMEN
217	217	KHARTOUM	SUDAN
218	219	NDJAMENA	CHAD
219	218	PORT-AU-PRINCE	HAITI
220	220	BANGUI	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
221	221	BAGHDAD	IRAQ

followed by San Francisco (29) and Boston (35). Chicago is at 42 and Washington, DC ranks 43. New York the base city ranks 44. In Central and South America, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe ranks the highest for quality of living at 63. San Juan, Puerto Rico follows at 72 and Montevideo, Uruguay at 77. Port-au-Prince, Haiti (219) ranks lowest in the region.

Mr. Parakatil said, Overall, there has been little change in the rankings for North American cities. A number of South and Central American countries

have experienced positive change, essentially due to some modest infrastructural and recreational improvement. Nevertheless, political and security issues, along with natural disasters, continue to hamper the quality of living in South and Central American cities. High crime levels also remain a major problem.

In terms of city infrastructure, Vancouver (9) tops the ranking for the region with Atlanta and Montreal following at 13. Other Canadian cities that ranked highly were Toronto (16) and Ottawa

(25). In the United States, Dallas ranked 15, followed by Washington, DC (22), Chicago (28) and New York (30). Buenos Aires, Argentina (83) has the best city infrastructure in Central and South America, whereas Port-au-Prince is the lowest ranking at 221.

### Asia Pacific

Auckland (3) retains its position as the highest-ranking city for quality of living in the region. Sydney follows at 10, Wellington at 13, Melbourne at 17 and Perth at 21. Singapore remains the highest-ranking Asian city at 25 followed by Japanese cities Tokyo (44), Kobe (48), Yokohama (49) and Osaka (57). Hong Kong (70), Seoul (75), Kuala Lumpur (80), Taipei (85) and Shanghai (95) are other major Asian cities ranked in the top 100. The region's lowest-ranking cities are Dhaka, Bangladesh (203); Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (204); and Dushanbe, Tajikistan (207).

For city infrastructure, Singapore has the highest ranking worldwide followed by Hong Kong (6), Sydney (8), Perth (25), Tokyo (32) and Melbourne (34). Adelaide and Brisbane both ranked 37. Nagoya (41), Auckland (43), Kobe (44), Wellington (48), Seoul (50) and Osaka (51) are the next highest-ranking cities in this region. The region's lowest-ranking city for city infrastructure is Dhaka, Bangladesh (205).

A noticeable gap can be seen among Asia Pacific cities where several cities have improved in the region partly because they have been investing massively in infrastructure and public services, said Mr. Parakatil. Competition among municipalities has been continuously increasing in order to attract multinationals, foreigners, expatriates and tourists. Yet a considerable number of Asian cities rank in the bottom quartile, mainly due to high political volatility, poor infrastructure and obsolete public services.

### Middle East and Africa

Dubai (73) and Abu Dhabi (78) in the United Arab Emirates are the region's cities with the best quality of living. Port

Mercer City Infrastructure Ranking, 2012*		
Rank	City	Country
1	SINGAPORE	SINGAPORE
2	FRANKFURT	GERMANY
2	MUNICH	GERMANY
4	COPENHAGEN	DENMARK
5	DUSSELDORF	GERMANY
6	HONG KONG	HONG KONG
6	LONDON	UNITED KINGDOM
8	SYDNEY	AUSTRALIA
9	HAMBURG	GERMANY
9	VANCOUVER	CANADA
11	YOKOHAMA	JAPAN
12	PARIS	FRANCE
13	ATLANTA, GA	UNITED STATES
13	MONTREAL	CANADA
15	DALLAS, TX	UNITED STATES
16	TORONTO	CANADA
16	VIENNA	AUSTRIA
18	HELSINKI	FINLAND
18	OSLO	NORWAY
18	STOCKHOLM	SWEDEN
18	STUTTGART	GERMANY
22	WASHINGTON, DC	UNITED STATES
23	AMSTERDAM	NETHERLANDS
24	ZURICH	SWITZERLAND
25	BERN	SWITZERLAND
25	OTTAWA	CANADA
25	PERTH	AUSTRALIA
28	CHICAGO, IL	UNITED STATES
29	BERLIN	GERMANY
30	NEW YORK CITY, NY	UNITED STATES
31	BOSTON, MA	UNITED STATES
32	TOKYO	JAPAN
33	NURNBERG	GERMANY
34	DUBAI	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
34	MADRID	SPAIN
34	MELBOURNE	AUSTRALIA
37	ADELAIDE	AUSTRALIA
37	BRISBANE	AUSTRALIA
37	PHILADELPHIA, PA	UNITED STATES
40	HONOLULU, HI	UNITED STATES
41	NAGOYA	JAPAN
42	BRUSSELS	BELGIUM
43	AUCKLAND	NEW ZEALAND
44	BIRMINGHAM	UNITED KINGDOM
44	GLASGOW	UNITED KINGDOM
44	KOBE	JAPAN
47	GENEVA	SWITZERLAND
48	MIAMI, FL	UNITED STATES
48	WELLINGTON	NEW ZEALAND
50	SEOUL	SOUTH KOREA
51	HOUSTON, TX	UNITED STATES
51	MILAN	ITALY
51	OSAKA	JAPAN
51	SEATTLE, WA	UNITED STATES
55	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	UNITED STATES
56	CANBERRA	AUSTRALIA
57	BARCELONA	SPAIN
58	TEL AVIV	ISRAEL
59	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	UNITED STATES
60	CALGARY	CANADA
60	LEIPZIG	GERMANY
62	DUBLIN	IRELAND
63	PITTSBURGH, PA	UNITED STATES
64	DETROIT, MI	UNITED STATES
65	LOS ANGELES, CA	UNITED STATES
65	ST. LOUIS, MO	UNITED STATES
67	BUDAPEST	HUNGARY
67	LYON	FRANCE
69	ABERDEEN	UNITED KINGDOM
69	BELFAST	UNITED KINGDOM
71	LUXEMBOURG	LUXEMBOURG
72	ABU DHABI	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
72	ROME	ITALY
74	VILNIUS	LITHUANIA
75	PRAGUE	CZECH REPUBLIC
76	LISBON	PORTUGAL
77	KUALA LUMPUR	MALAYSIA
78	TAIPEI	TAIWAN
79	BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN	BRUNEI
80	BRATISLAVA	SLOVAKIA
81	JOHOR BAHRU	MALAYSIA
82	TALLINN	ESTONIA
83	BUENOS AIRES	ARGENTINA
84	BUSAN	SOUTH KOREA
85	RIGA	LATVIA
86	SHANGHAI	CHINA
87	SAN JUAN	PUERTO RICO
88	WARSAW	POLAND
89	SANTIAGO	CHILE
90	POINTE-A-PITRE	GUADELLOUPE
91	PORT LOUIS	MAURITIUS
92	LJUBLJANA	SLOVENIA
93	BEIJING	CHINA
94	MUSCAT	OMAN
95	CAIRO	EGYPT
96	MONTEVIDEO	URUGUAY
97	CAPE TOWN	SOUTH AFRICA
98	RIO DE JANEIRO	BRAZIL
98	ATHENS	GREECE
100	BANGKOK	THAILAND
101	BRASILIA	BRAZIL
102	DOHA	QATAR
103	TUNIS	TUNISIA
104	ISTANBUL	TURKEY
105	LIMASSOL	CYPRUS
106	VICTORIA	SEYCHELLES
107	LIMA	PERU
108	MONTERRREY	MEXICO
108	PANAMA CITY	PANAMA
110	MANAMA	BAHRAIN
111	JOHANNESBURG	SOUTH AFRICA
112	BUCHAREST	ROMANIA
113	KUWAIT CITY	KUWAIT
113	NOUMEA	NEW CALEDONIA
115	ZAGREB	CROATIA
116	SAO PAULO	BRAZIL
117	NANJING	CHINA
118	CHENGDU	CHINA
119	RIYADH	SAUDI ARABIA
120	MANILA	PHILIPPINES
121	CASABLANCA	MOROCCO
122	QUITO	ECUADOR
123	MOSCOW	RUSSIA
124	NASSAU	BAHAMAS
125	GUANGZHOU	CHINA

Louis in Mauritius (82), Cape Town (89) and Johannesburg (94) follow, and along with Victoria in the Seychelles (96) and Tel

126	COLOMBO	SRI LANKA
127	MEXICO CITY	MEXICO
128	BOGOTA	COLOMBIA
129	ASUNCION	PARAGUAY
130	JEDDAH	SAUDI ARABIA
131	JAKARTA	INDONESIA
132	SHENZHEN	CHINA
133	BELGRADE	SERBIA
134	MUMBAI	INDIA
135	SKOPIE	MACEDONIA
136	SAN JOSE	COSTA RICA
137	HO CHI MINH CITY	VIETNAM
138	SANTO DOMINGO	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
139	RABAT	MOROCCO
140	SOFIA	BULGARIA
141	KOLKATA	INDIA
142	ISLAMABAD	PAKISTAN
143	CARACAS	VENEZUELA
144	GABORONE	BOTSWANA
144	GUATEMALA CITY	GUATEMALA
146	HANOI	VIETNAM
146	KIEV	UKRAINE
146	TEHRAN	IRAN
149	VIENTIANE	LAOS
150	LA PAZ	BOLIVIA
151	SHENYANG	CHINA
152	QINGDAO	CHINA
153	NEW DELHI	INDIA
153	PORT OF SPAIN	TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
155	KINGSTON	JAMAICA
156	JILIN	CHINA
157	WINDHOEK	NAMIBIA
158	AMMAN	JORDAN
158	KARACHI	PAKISTAN
160	ST. PETERSBURG	RUSSIA
161	TRIPOLI	LIBYA
162	LIBREVILLE	GABON
163	MINSK	BELARUS
164	SARAJEVO	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA
165	LAHORE	PAKISTAN
165	SAN SALVADOR	EL SALVADOR
167	DJIBOUTI	DJIBOUTI
168	CHENNAI	INDIA
169	DAKAR	SENEGAL
170	BANGALORE	INDIA
171	HARARE	ZIMBABWE
172	ALMATY	KAZAKHSTAN
173	NAIROBI	KENYA
174	COTONOU	BENIN
175	BLANTYRE	MALAWI
176	ACCRA	GHANA
177	LUSAKA	ZAMBIA
178	ASHKHABAD	TURKMENISTAN
179	TEGUCIGALPA	HONDURAS
180	TIRANA	ALBANIA
180	YANGON	MYANMAR
182	TASHKENT	UZBEKISTAN
183	DOUALA	CAMEROON
184	DAMASCUS	SYRIA
185	BANJUL	GAMBIA
185	LOME	TOGO
187	HAVANA	CUBA
188	DAR ES SALAAM	TANZANIA
188	NIAMEY	NIGER
189	YEREVAN	ARMENIA
191	MAPUTO	MOZAMBIQUE
192	ALGIERS	ALGERIA
192	KINSHASA	DEMOCRATIC REP. OF THE CONGO
194	PHNOM PENH	CAMBODIA
195	KAMPALA	UGANDA
196	ABIDJAN	COTE D'IVOIRE
197	MANAGUA	NICARAGUA
198	BISHKEK	KYRGYZSTAN
199	BAKU	AZERBAIJAN
200	DUSHANBE	TAJIKISTAN
201	LUANDA	ANGOLA
201	TBILISI	GEORGIA
203	YAOUNDE	CAMEROON
204	BEIRUT	LEBANON
205	DHAKA	BANGLADESH
206	ADDIS ABABA	ETHIOPIA
207	NOUAKCHOTT	MAURITANIA
208	NDJAMENA	CHAD
209	OUAGADOUGOU	BURKINA FASO
210	KHARTOUM	SUDAN
211	BAMAKO	MALI
212	ANTANANARIVO	MADAGASCAR
213	BANGUI	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
214	LAGOS	NIGERIA
215	ABUJA	NIGERIA
216	CONAKRY	GUINEA
217	KIGALI	RWANDA
218	BRAZZAVILLE	CONGO
219	SANAA	YEMEN
220	BAGHDAD	IRAQ
221	PORT-AU-PRINCE	HAITI

\*Mercer's City Infrastructure Ranking 2012 is based on measures of: Electricity, Water Availability, Telephone, Mail, Public Transportation, Traffic Congestion & Airport Effectiveness.

Aviv (99), are the region's only other cities in the top 100. This region has 15 cities in the bottom 20, including Lagos, Nigeria (202); Bamako, Mali (209); Khartoum, Sudan (217); and N Djamena, Chad (218). Baghdad, Iraq (221) is the lowest-ranking city both regionally and globally.

In the city infrastructure index, most of the region's cities rank below 100. The exceptions are Dubai (34), which ranks the highest in the region for city infrastructure, Tel Aviv (58), Abu Dhabi (72), Port Louis (91), Muscat (94), Cairo

(95) and Cape Town (97). Port Louis, Cairo and Cape Town are the only African cities in the top 100. Elsewhere in the region, Doha, Qatar is at 102, Tunis, Tunisia, ranks 103 and Manama, Bahrain is at 110. In terms of city infrastructure, Baghdad, Iraq (220) is the lowest-ranking city regionally, along with Sana a, Yemen (219); Brazzaville, Congo (218); Kigali, Rwanda (217); and Abuja, Nigeria (215).

The ongoing turmoil in many countries across North Africa and the Middle East has led to serious security issues for locals and expatriates, said Mr. Parakatil. Many countries continue to experience violence through political demonstrations that have sometimes developed into massive uprisings and led to serious instability within the region. Countries such as Syria and Mali have seen their quality of living levels drop substantially. Employers should continually monitor the situation in these countries, as circumstances can degrade rapidly. Companies need to be able to proactively implement mitigation plans, such as emergency repatriation, or adjust expatriate compensation packages accordingly.

### Expatriates in difficult locations: Determining appropriate allowances and incentives

Companies need to be able to determine their expatriate compensation packages rationally, consistently and systematically. Providing incentives to reward and recognize the efforts that employees and their families make when taking on international assignments remains a typical practice, particularly for difficult locations. Two common incentives include a quality-of-living allowance and a mobility premium.

- Quality-of-living or hardship allowances compensate expatriates for decreases in the quality of living between their home and host locations.
- By contrast, a mobility premium simply compensates for the inconvenience of being uprooted and having to work in another country.

A quality-of-living allowance is typically location-related while a mobility premium is usually independent of the host location. Some multinational companies combine these premiums, but the vast majority provides them separately.

### Quality of Living: City Benchmarking

Mercer also helps municipalities assess



factors that can improve their quality-of-living rankings. In a global environment, employers have many choices of where to deploy their mobile employees and set up new business. Thus, a city's quality-of-living standards can be an important variable for employers to consider.

Leaders in many cities want to understand the specific factors that affect their residents quality of living and address those issues that affect their city's overall quality-of-living ranking. Mercer advises municipalities through a holistic approach that addresses their goals of progressing towards excellence and attracting multinational companies and globally mobile talent by improving the elements that get measured in our Quality of Living metrics.

### Mercer hardship allowance recommendations

Mercer evaluates local living conditions in more than 460 cities it surveys worldwide. We analyse living conditions according to 39 factors, grouped in 10 categories:

- Political and social environment (political stability, crime, law enforcement)
- Economic environment (currency exchange regulations, banking services)
- Socio-cultural environment (censorship, limitations on personal freedom)
- Medical and health considerations (medical supplies and services, infectious diseases, sewage, waste disposal, air pollution, etc.)
- Schools and education (standard and availability of international schools)
- Public services and transportation (electricity, water, public transportation, traffic congestion, etc.)
- Recreation (restaurants, theatres, movie theatres, sports and leisure, etc.)
- Consumer goods (availability of food/daily consumption items, cars, etc.)
- Housing (rental housing, household appliances, furniture, maintenance services)
- Natural environment (climate, record of natural disasters).

The scores attributed to each factor allow

for city-to-city comparisons. The result is a quality-of-living index that compares relative differences between any two locations that we evaluate. For the indices to be used effectively, Mercer has created a grid that allows users to link the resulting index to a quality-of-living allowance amount by recommending a percentage value in relation to the index.

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