

Anniversary Edition

The QOL 20th anniversary edition shows the highest increases in quality of living for select cities by region and what growth cities are doing to attract mobile talent.

EUROPE*

"In Europe, some of the highest increases in living standards over the last 20 years have been observed in Eastern European cities," said Martine Ferland, Senior Partner and President of Mercer's EuroPac Region. "The driving factors have been improvements in public services, transportation offerings and personal safety, as well as better availability of recreational facilities and consumer goods. As a result of increased living standards, a competitive labor market and talent availability, many of these cities have started attracting multinational businesses setting up new operations."



1. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina	2. Bratislava, Slovakia	3. Belgrade, Serbia	4. Zagreb, Croatia	5. Ljubljana, Slovenia
+21.5%	+19.1%	+18.3%	+15%	+13.4%
6. Prague, Czech Republic	7. Warsaw, Poland	8. Lisbon, Portugal	9. Rome, Italy	10. Vienna, Austria
+10.8%	+8.7%	+6.8%	+6.3%	+5.2%

AMERICAS*

"In North America, increases in living standards have been more muted compared to other regions," said Ken Haderer, Senior Partner and President of Mercer's North America Region. "North American locations already have high living standards and witness only marginal increases. With those increases being due to infrastructure, political environment and recreational availability, the future of work looks promising."

SOUTH AMERICA*

The highest increases have occurred in Central America, including Havana, Cuba (+6.5%). Several locations in Central and Latin America saw living standards increase following improvements in the political environment and expanding availability of consumer goods for expatriates, combined with a slight development in infrastructure.



1. Havana, Cuba	2. Managua, Nicaragua	3. San Salvador, El Salvador	4. Boston, MA, USA	5. Santiago, Chile
+6.5%	+6%	+5.1%	+4.1%	+4%
6. Montreal, Canada	7. Manaus, Brazil	8. Vancouver, Canada	9. San Francisco, CA, USA	10. Toronto, Canada
+3%	+2.9%	+2.7%	+1.8%	+1.6%

MIDDLE EAST*

"In recent decades, the people of cities throughout the growth economies have expanded an exponential increase in their living standards as part of rapidly expanding middle-class and affluent populations," said David Anderson, President of Mercer's Growth Markets Region. "With substantial investments in city infrastructure on the one hand, and the need to attract foreign investment on the other, competition for talent, industry and capital among these cities is formidable. International recognition as one of the best cities in which to live, work and retire can accelerate profitable business growth and societal progress."



The United Arab Emirates has witnessed the biggest increase in living standards (+12%) in the region, following concerted efforts over the past few decades to continuously improve infrastructure (airports, public transport, etc.) and recreational and entertainment facilities. Many international companies have settled their regional headquarters here, causing an influx of expatriates. These cities have also developed their tourism infrastructure and offerings.

1. Dubai, UAE	2. Abu Dhabi, UAE	3. Amman, Jordan	4. Kuwait City, Kuwait	5. Manama, Bahrain
+12.2%	+12.1%	+6.1%	+5.4%	+2%

AFRICA*

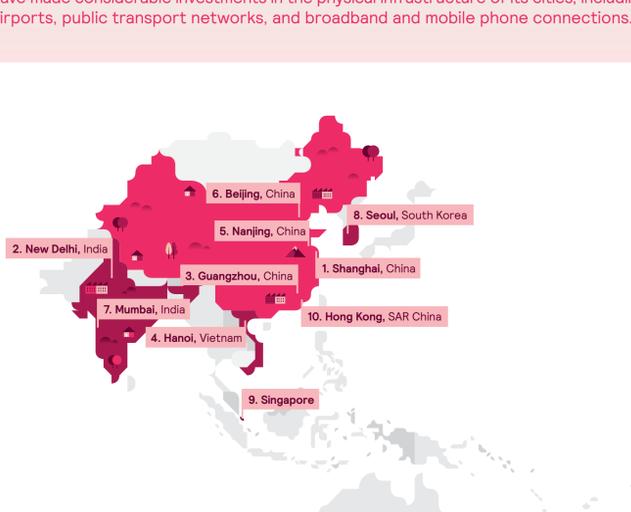
African cities have seen the gap in quality of living widen the most over the past two decades. After decades, Mozambique, witnessed the highest increase in living standards, up 15%. Maputo, Mozambique, the country has witnessed a slow and steady improvement in the city's infrastructure since the end of 90s, combined with greater economic and political stability. Africa continues to have some remarkable successes – some countries have experienced high economic growth – but also considerable challenges, including political and economic turmoil, poverty, natural disasters and lack of adequate infrastructure.



1. Maputo, Mozambique	2. Algiers, Algeria	3. Port Louis, Mauritius	4. Victoria, Seychelles	5. Cotonou, Benin
+15%	+11.2%	+6%	+5.3%	+5%
6. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania	7. Lusaka, Zambia	8. Casablanca, Morocco	9. Johannesburg, South Africa	10. Dakar, Senegal
+4.4%	+3.9%	+2.7%	+2.2%	+1.35%

ASIA-PACIFIC*

Chinese and Indian cities had the highest increases in living standards in Asia between 1998 and 2018. As two of the fastest-growing economies in the world, China and India have made considerable investments in the physical infrastructure of its cities, including airports, public transport networks, and broadband and mobile phone connections.



1. Shanghai, China	2. New Delhi, India	3. Guangzhou, China	4. Hanoi, Vietnam	5. Nanjing, China
+15.7%	+13.8%	+11.4%	+10.3%	+8.3%
6. Beijing, China	7. Mumbai, India	8. Seoul, South Korea	9. Singapore, Singapore	10. Hong Kong, SAR China
+8%	+7.3%	+6.8%	+4.7%	+4.4%

Background on QOL

*Select cities with significant increases in quality of living over the past 20 years (ranking in 1998 vs. ranking in 2018)

Note: The percentage shown is the difference in the total index between 1998 and 2018 overall quality of living calculations by taking New York, NY, USA as a base city. The figures have been rounded up to nearest decimals.