

The 10 Most Livable (and Unlivable) Cities in the World



By Alex Berezow — August 16, 2017



Haters gonna hate. (Credit: Jim Berezow)

Every year, *The Economist* Intelligence Unit publishes a ranking of world cities based on their livability.

Obviously, that's an inherently subjective ranking. I've lived in Seattle for 13 years precisely because my wife and I think it is the most beautiful city we have ever seen. That doesn't seem to matter too much to the folks over at *The Economist*, however.

Their livability index is weighted as follows: 25% for stability (e.g., crime, terrorism, war); 20% for healthcare (availability and quality); 25% for culture and environment (which includes a grab-bag of various metrics, such as temperature, level of corruption, and cultural attractions); 10% for education (availability and quality); and 20% for infrastructure quality. Using this algorithm, the researchers ranked 140 world cities.

Based on these objective-ish measures of inherently subjective qualities, what are the top 10 most livable cities in the world according to *The Economist*?

The ten most liveable cities

Country	City	Rank	Overall Rating (100=ideal)	Stability	Healthcare	Culture & Environment	Education	Infrastructure
Australia	Melbourne	1	97.5	95	100	95.1	100	100
Austria	Vienna	2	97.4	95	100	94.4	100	100
Canada	Vancouver	3	97.3	95	100	100	100	92.9
Canada	Toronto	4	97.2	100	100	97.2	100	89.3
Canada	Calgary	5	96.6	100	100	89.1	100	96.4
Australia	Adelaide	5	96.6	95	100	94.2	100	96.4
Australia	Perth	7	95.9	95	100	88.7	100	100
New Zealand	Auckland	8	95.7	95	95.8	97	100	92.9
Finland	Helsinki	9	95.6	100	100	88.7	91.7	96.4
Germany	Hamburg	10	95	90	100	93.5	91.7	100

Once again (for the seventh year in a row), Melbourne, Australia is ranked #1. In fact, Australia has three of the top ten, Canada has three, and Europe has three. Auckland, New Zealand also gets a slot. Notably, neither Seattle nor any other U.S. city is in the top 10.

Thankfully, there are no U.S. cities in the bottom 10. Here's their list of the world's worst cities:

The ten least liveable cities

Country	City	Rank	Overall Rating (100=ideal)	Stability	Healthcare	Culture & Environment	Education	Infrastructure
Ukraine	Kiev	131	47.8	35	54.2	48.6	75	42.9
Cameroon	Douala	132	44	60	25	48.4	33.3	42.9
Zimbabwe	Harare	133	42.6	40	20.8	58.6	66.7	35.7
Pakistan	Karachi	134	40.9	20	45.8	38.7	66.7	51.8
Algeria	Algiers	134	40.9	40	45.8	42.6	50	30.4
PNG	Port Moresby	136	39.6	30	37.5	47	50	39.3
Bangladesh	Dhaka	137	38.7	50	29.2	43.3	41.7	26.8
Libya	Tripoli	138	36.6	20	41.7	40.3	50	41.1
Nigeria	Lagos	139	36	10	37.5	53.5	33.3	46.4
Syria	Damascus	140	30.2	15	29.2	43.3	33.3	32.1

Some of these are not a surprise: Damascus is in a war zone. However, others are rather surprising (at least to me, anyway). I didn't expect to see Algiers (Algeria) and Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea) on the list. (Maybe the latter has something to do with [cannibalism](#) [1].) Ukraine has been invaded by Russia, but Kiev is not located in the war zone.

It's hard to know what to make of this ranking system. We can't argue that *The Economist* is purposefully biased; otherwise, British cities would appear in the top ten. However, any algorithm that ranks mostly English-speaking cities in the top ten seems a bit skewed. It's difficult to believe that no cities from Japan, Sweden, France, or Norway make the list. Likewise, it's difficult to believe that not a single U.S. city cracks the top ten.

Seattle, anyone?

Source: "The Global Liveability Report 2017." *The Economist* Intelligence Unit. 2017.

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/08/16/10-most-livable-and-unlivable-cities-world-11700>

Links

[1] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/australiaandthepacific/australia/12096587/British-tourist-and-girlfriend-fled-cannibal-kidnappers-in-Papua-New-Guinea.html>