

## The Rising Cost of International Schools

Living the expatriate lifestyle can also be an expensive endeavor if you don't plan for it appropriately.

This is especially true for any expats who are planning on bringing their children abroad and enrolling them in an international school. While these institutions have never been cheap, the price of international education has been on the rise in recent years, and in some parts of the world, makes up a substantial portion of the region's cost of living.

Take [Singapore](#), for example. One recent analysis of cost of living around the world, performed by consulting firm Mercer, found that Singapore's ranking as the 4th most expensive city in the world is largely due to the cost of international schools in the area.

According to Today Online, the report showed schools and housing are often more than \$20,000 USD per year. Before the financial crisis, these costs were rarely a burden on the expat. In most cases, the company that brought a worker over would either pay for a portion or even all of a family's education costs. But when the global economic climate shifted, it became increasingly rare for corporations to offer compensation for schooling.

### **New considerations**

Expats need to consider the cost of international schools when making the decision about whether or not to move overseas.

The rising cost of international schools is attributed to several factors, and also varies by region. In the UK, for example, more local families are sending their students to international schools, which has forced these institutions to raise their fees.

"Globally there are insufficient places to satisfy demand from the increasing number of children, both expats and locals," explained Nicholas Brummitt, managing director of the International School Consultancy Group (ISCG), according to The Telegraph. "Fees are rising across the board. Where demand cannot be met by existing schools, new international schools appear."

However, even when there are a sufficient number of schools, prices are still on the rise. According to The National, the [United Arab Emirates](#) has more international schools and pupils than any other country in the world, and also has the highest fees.

International educational brings in about US\$2.25 billion every year for the country. This amounts to about 7 percent of the total fee-based income of international schools.

"The markets in Dubai and Abu Dhabi have grown rapidly during the past decade and further growth is inevitable," another report from the ISCG noted, according to the news source.

All told, the UAE has 439 international schools, which host 389,000 students. Saudi Arabia came in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, with 195 schools, and Qatar came in 3<sup>rd</sup> with 130.

The report went on to note that Asia is far and away the fastest-growing international school market, with the Middle East a major supporting region. Kuwait now holds 80 international schools with roughly 90,000 students, while Oman has 58 schools and almost 60,000 international students.

### **Prices could keep rising**

According to The National, tuition fees at international schools are hardly regulated, meaning that the increases seen since the recession could continue. However, there are a few exceptions expats may want to consider. For example, government authorities do regulate tuition fees in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Qatar.

Not only is [moving your family abroad](#) tough, but also finding the right international school that's affordable and fits your children's needs can be quite challenging. Families that live overseas, find a high quality of life, comfort and ample job opportunities in their new countries. With that in mind, here are a [few tips to make the jump and bring a growing family abroad](#).