

GOTHENBURG IS THE MOST SOCIABLE CITY IN THE WORLD

- *The ‘Sociable Cities’ study is the first comparative analysis of the social life of world cities and the local residents’ views on global travel and tourists*
- *Study measured ‘sociability’ based on ten distinct categories including the frequency with which people socialise, openness and the ‘propensity to party’*
- *Overall, Scandinavian and North American cities are the most sociable in the world, with London ranked only in twenty-first place*

Gothenburg in Sweden is the most sociable city in the world – according to a major new study into global sociability from global hostel booking site [Hostelworld](#).

The study, the first ever comparative study of the social life of world cities, analysed the social behaviour and attitudes of 12,188 residents from 39 major cities in 28 countries, looking at ten categories of sociability – which cover how residents socialise, as well as their general openness to others – of more than 12,000 big-city-dwellers worldwide.

The findings come as social travel is on the rise with more young travellers prioritising destinations based on the social experience rather than the cultural experience. **Gothenburg**, Sweden’s Little London topped the list, followed by Stockholm, Chicago and Boston.

Table 1: Top 10 Most Sociable Cities Overall (top 36 available upon request)

1. Gothenburg (Sweden)	6. Copenhagen (Denmark)
2. Stockholm (Sweden)	7. Madrid (Spain)
3. Chicago (USA)	8. Rome (Italy)
4. Boston (USA)	9. Hamburg (Germany)
5. New York (USA)	10. Dublin (Ireland)

Marek Mossakowski, Global Head of Brand at Hostelworld, said: *“Social travel experiences are a driving force behind people’s reason to travel. Young travellers are choosing to stay in hostels*

because of the opportunity to meet other travellers, and for the social environment and spontaneous adventures that come along with it. The beauty of staying in a hostel rather than other accommodation is that it has a community of travellers from around the world to socialise with – so no matter where you are, you can meet the world. Our new study offers a window into the social lives of the people who live in the world's big cities, showing many fascinating variations between styles and cultures of socialising around the world."

In order to identify the top destinations for social experiences, respondents were questioned about their attitudes towards a variety of things including socialising with friends, eating out and partying. Differing cities triumphed across the categories; however, **Gothenburg** topped three of the ten criteria and placed in the top three in others. The top three cities in each category can be found below (see Table 2 below).

Here's our guide for travellers looking for social travel:

- **Vibrant culinary scene** – Travellers interested in eating out and engaging with locals over dinner should visit **New York, Chicago** and **Boston**, where locals eat out several times per week.
- **Authentic home cooked meals** – Travellers interested in private social gatherings with locals should visit **Copenhagen, Prague** and **Warsaw**, where locals value entertaining at home.
- **Liberal, open-minded culture** – Travellers interested in meeting open-minded locals should visit **Milan, Rome** and **Hamburg**, where locals are accepting of a wide range of lifestyles.
- **Party atmosphere** – Travellers interested in partying with locals should visit **Moscow, Madrid** and **Gothenburg**, where locals will find any excuse to party.
- **Community-mindedness** – Travellers interested in a community vibe and spirit should take a trip to **Gothenburg, Copenhagen** or **Stockholm**, where locals look to the community above the needs of the individuals.

Table 2: The 10 categories that make up sociability and the top three cities for each

Category	Top City	Second City	Third City
Social Activity			
Frequency of meeting friends (times / year)	Jakarta (151)	Madrid (134)	Boston (126)
Frequency of eating out (times/ year)	New York (89)	Chicago (88)	Boston (72)

Frequency of using social media (days/year)	Gothenburg (356)	Stockholm (349)	Copenhagen (337)
Social Attitudes and Values			
Value placed on socialising	Gothenburg	Helsinki	Paris
Value placed on entertaining at home	Copenhagen	Prague	Warsaw
Social priorities vs. 'individual' priorities	Gothenburg	Copenhagen	Stockholm
Fun, Liberality, Openness and Trust			
Trust in friends	Prague	Berlin	Gothenburg
Liberality	Stockholm	Copenhagen	Gothenburg
Openness to others	Milan	Rome	Hamburg
'Any excuse to party'	Madrid	Moscow	Gothenburg

When looking at the different categories of sociability, **New York** comes top of the cities that eat out with friends the most with New Yorkers doing it 89 times per year on average, once every four days, but only just ahead of Chicagoans, who averaged 88 out-of-home social occasions a year. **Boston** (72) is in third place and then outside of the US were **Kuala Lumpur** (63) and the Turkish cities of **Ankara** (63) and **Istanbul** (62).

As for the overall intensity of social activity, **Jakarta** takes first place, with the average Jakartan socialising with friends 151 times per year, almost every other day. But Jakartans only eat out with friends 18 times per year and instead place a much higher value on entertaining at home. **Barcelona** (and to a certain extent **Madrid**) follows the same pattern – a high frequency of socialising with friends, but relatively rarely over a meal out. But **Copenhagen** is the city that enjoys entertaining at home the most and is also one of the most socially tolerant cities, meaning that the residents of **Copenhagen** may be the world's best dinner party hosts.

The Scandinavian cities – **Gothenburg**, **Stockholm** and **Copenhagen** – top the cities that are the most 'socially minded' and put the most importance on what's good for the wider community as opposed to the individual. Behind these three are **Tokyo** in fourth and **Bangkok** in sixth – a rare strong measure for these Asian cities, which perhaps picks up a more responsible and spiritual aspect of sociability.

Similarly, the Scandinavian countries – **Stockholm**, **Copenhagen** and **Gothenburg** (in order) – are the most liberal with thinking about other people's lifestyles, including attitudes towards cohabitation

and sexuality. But interestingly it's Italians who show the most willingness to mingle while travelling themselves. **Milan** comes top when it comes to providing the most open-minded travellers, followed by **Rome** and Germany's **Hamburg** in third.

When looking at the value placed on socialising, following **Gothenburg**, which came top, was fellow Scandinavian city **Helsinki**. But also scoring highly on this measure were **Paris** (third) and **Dublin** (fourth), which, in their different ways, both demonstrate city cultures that famously put great emphasis on social life, even if they don't get together as frequently as residents in other cities.

Finally, in terms of the 'party' side of socialising, **Madrid** and **Moscow** come top when it comes to the degree to which they agree with the statement 'I will use any excuse to have a party' – followed by **Gothenburg**, **Jakarta**, **St. Petersburg**, **Seoul**, **Delhi** and **Barcelona**. This means that while Spanish and Russian cities don't top many categories, both countries boast two of the most spontaneous party hubs.

Notably absent from the top of the tables are some of the great European cities, including **Paris**, **Berlin** and **London**. Despite all three having vibrant social scenes, the local residents of each simply don't socialise as often as those in other global cities, viewing social occasions as special events rather than something done daily. Affordability of socialising out of the home, transport issues and even a lack of leisure time are also significant factors.

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About the research

The Social Cities Index was commissioned by Hostelworld and built from survey data collected by Foresight Factory (formerly Future Foundation) in nationally representative survey research conducted online in 28 countries in October 2015, February 2016 and October 2016. The Sociable Cities Index is built upon a dedicated analysis of a total of 12,188 interviews with world city dwellers, living in 39 cities in 28 countries. All five continents are represented, all of the world's major capital cities, and the great majority of the world's major travel destination cities. In addition, UN population division data and World Values Survey data was drawn upon. The 39 cities in the study are: Gothenburg, Stockholm, Chicago, Boston, New York, Copenhagen, Madrid, Rome, Hamburg, Dublin, Toronto, Sydney, Paris, Baltimore, Warsaw, Helsinki, Vancouver, Milan, Berlin, Kuala Lumpur, London, Barcelona, Tokyo, Bangkok, Moscow, St Petersburg, Jakarta, Johannesburg and Pretoria,

Mexico City, Ankara, Rio de Janeiro, Prague, Istanbul, Seoul, Mumbai, Delhi, Sao Paulo, Beijing, Shanghai.

About Hostelworld

Hostelworld Group is the leading global hostel-booking platform with Hostelworld, Hostelbookers and Hostels.com in its portfolio operating in 19 different languages. Connecting young travellers with hostels around the world, Hostelworld has over 8 million reviews across 33,000 properties in more than 170 countries.

Hostelworld's customers aren't your average tourists; they crave experiences not souvenirs and want to be in the heart of the action. They want to Meet The World, and it's the social nature of hostels that facilitates their travel adventures.

The Hostelworld Group went public in November 2015, listing on the main London and Dublin stock exchanges. Headquartered in Dublin, Hostelworld has offices around the world in London, Shanghai, Sydney and Seoul, and was recently recognised as a Best Workplace for 2016 by the Great Place To Work Institute. on