

# 'It's a wake-up call': Melbourne loses top spot on liveability ranking to Vienna



By [Clay Lucas](#)

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Melbourne has fallen to second place on the rankings.

*Photo: Darrian Traynor*

After seven years at the top of *The Economist's* rankings as the world's most liveable city, Melbourne has been displaced by Vienna.

Key to Vienna's win is less of what the Economist Intelligence Unit called "petty crime". Melbourne ranked 12th internationally among cities for petty crime, while Vienna had the best ranking.

After seven years as the world's most liveable city, lord mayor Sally Capp admits the city should be safer.

Although both cities registered improvements in their "liveability" - a ranking of 140 cities worldwide, across five broad categories of stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure - increases in Vienna's ratings were enough for the city to overtake Melbourne.

The two cities are now separated by 0.7 of a percentage point in the rankings, with Vienna scoring a near-ideal 99.1 out of 100 and Melbourne 98.4. Two other Australian cities were in the top 10: Sydney (fifth) and Adelaide (10th).

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Vienna regularly finishes at the top of other city ranking polls, including consulting firm Mercer's quality of life survey. Melbourne was 16th in that survey this year.

This is the first time Vienna has topped The Economist Intelligence Unit's rankings since they started it in 2004.

Last of the 140 cities studied was Damascus, followed by Dhaka in Bangladesh and Lagos in Nigeria. Some of the world's most dangerous cities are not included in the poll.

As well as providing Melburnians with a sense of where they stand in the world, surveys such as this provide a guide for expatriate workers and the companies who uproot them from one country to another.

The magazine's publisher says the report is done both to market *The Economist* and help multinational corporations assign staff "a hardship allowance as part of expatriate relocation packages".

An economist with Deloitte Access Economics, Daniel Terrill, has worked with Fairfax Media on liveability studies for Sydney and Melbourne, and knows *The Economist's* rankings system well.

He said the demotion of Melbourne to number two was only a small fall.

"But it is a wake up call that our liveability – and all the values that liveability encapsulates – can't be taken for granted as we grow," Dr Terrill said.

"We're the fastest growing city in the country that, within a decade, will also become the biggest city in the country."

He said most migration from elsewhere in Australia to Melbourne was because it was a good place to live.

"This brings great opportunity if we're clever but, if we're not, it threatens our liveability."

*The Age* article: <https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/it-s-a-wake-up-call-melbourne-loses-top-spot-on-liveability-rankings-to-vienna-20180814-p4zxb6.html>