

Living in Ottawa

Explore What Makes
Ottawa Feel Like Home



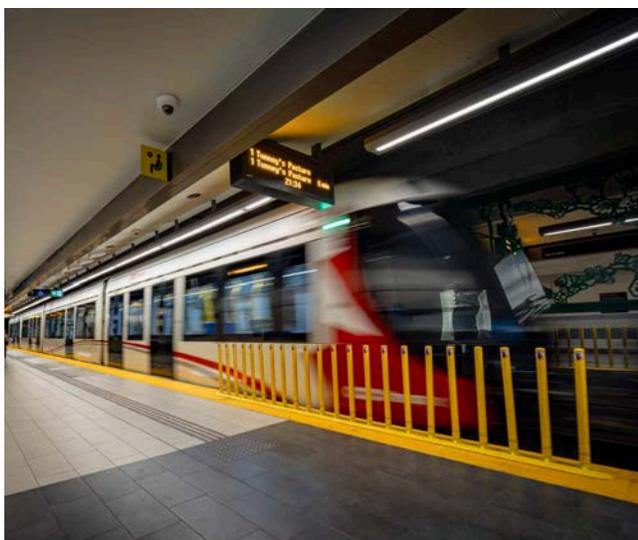
Build an amazing career, and an even better life in Canada's capital.

Ottawa offers global tech professionals a rare combination of meaningful work, an inclusive community, attainable living, and everyday ease. This is a city where you don't have to choose between opportunity and well-being — you can have both. Whether you are relocating on your own or with your family, this toolkit offers a clear, welcoming view of what life in Ottawa feels like, grounded in facts and lived newcomer experience.

A Balanced Life in a Future-Ready City

Ottawa is one of North America's strongest tech ecosystems, with more than 1,800 companies and tens of thousands of skilled professionals ([Work in Ottawa](#)). Yet it stands apart from other major tech hubs by offering a healthier, more human way to grow your career. This balance is reflected in 2026 quality-of-life rankings, which place Ottawa first in North America ([CIC News](#)).

Flexible and hybrid work options are common, commute times are shorter ([Statistics Canada](#)), and neighbourhoods are designed for convenience and green space. Daily life feels more manageable — giving you back time and energy for family, hobbies, and well-being.



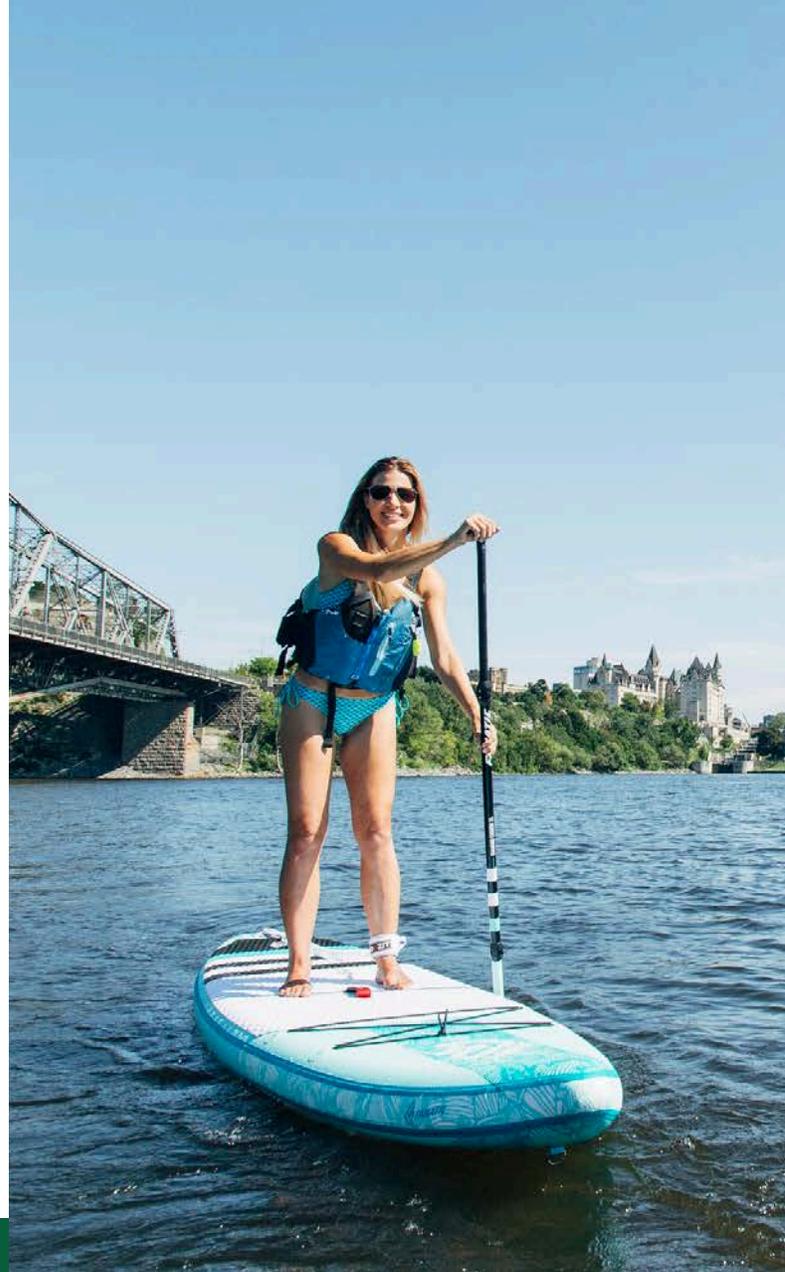
Getting around the city is simple and accessible:

- Public buses and light rail trains
- 800+ km of cycling and multi-use paths
- Walkable central neighbourhoods
- Well-connected major roads (including Highway 417)
- Rideshare and taxi options citywide

Affordability That Makes Life Easier

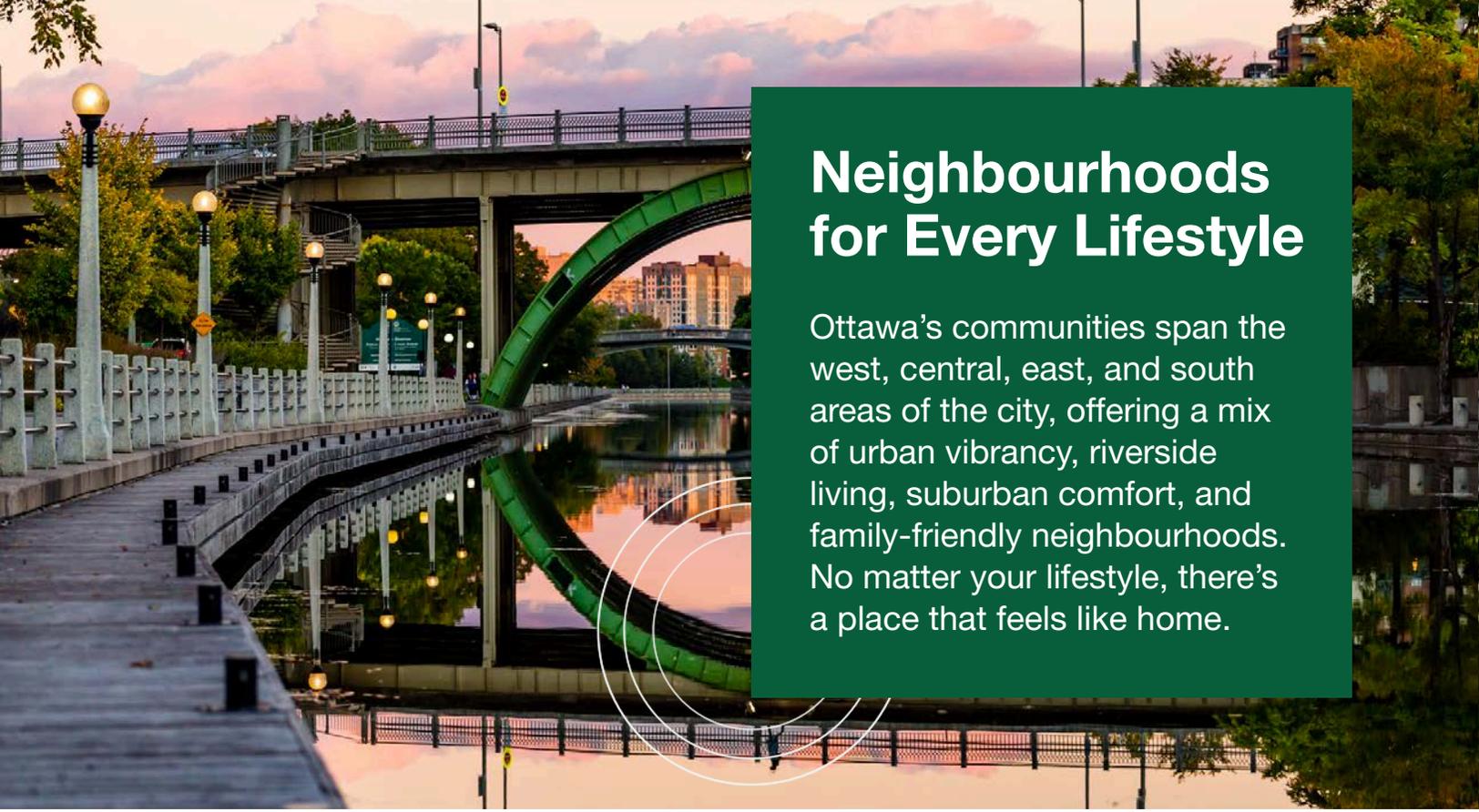
Ottawa offers one of the lowest costs of living among major North American cities ([Mercer Cost of Living Index](#)), making it easier to build stability and plan for the future.

- Benchmark home prices in Ottawa remain significantly lower than in Toronto, Vancouver, and major U.S. hubs ([CREA](#))
- Rental prices for studios, one-bedroom, and family-sized units remain more accessible, with strong availability across urban and suburban areas ([CMHC Rental Market Report, 2024](#))



Monthly living costs are predictable, with groceries, utilities, and transportation often lower than in other Canadian tech cities. As a result, many newcomers find they can save more, access better housing, and reach financial goals sooner.





Neighbourhoods for Every Lifestyle

Ottawa's communities span the west, central, east, and south areas of the city, offering a mix of urban vibrancy, riverside living, suburban comfort, and family-friendly neighbourhoods. No matter your lifestyle, there's a place that feels like home.

West Ottawa

- **Kanata North:** Canada's largest tech park; walk-to-work convenience ([KNBA](#))
- **Nepean & Carleton Place:** Spacious, community-oriented, and quick commutes

East Ottawa

- **Orléans:** Family-friendly communities with excellent parks and schools

South Ottawa

- **Barrhaven & Riverside South:** Suburban living with strong amenities, schools, and outdoor spaces

Central Ottawa

- **Westboro & Hintonburg:** Trendy cafés, restaurants, markets, and transit access
- **Glebe & Centretown:** Boutique shops, cultural events, sports, and walkable streets

Whether you prefer city energy or quieter suburban comfort, Ottawa makes it easy to find a place that feels right for your lifestyle.

Explore more neighbourhoods across the city through a local guide highlighting Ottawa's diverse communities ([Ottawa Is Not Boring](#)).

Family-Friendly Services and Education

Ottawa offers strong public services that support families and newcomers, making it an excellent place to raise children — a reassuring foundation built on high-quality education, accessible childcare, and a well-established healthcare system.



Schools and Childcare

- Four publicly funded school boards provide English, French, and French immersion pathways ([Ontario Ministry of Education](#))
- Childcare options range from licensed centres to home-based care, with before- and after-school programs widely available ([City of Ottawa Childcare](#))
- Local post-secondary institutions offer continuing education and professional courses to support career upskilling ([University of Ottawa](#), [Carleton University](#), [Algonquin College](#), [Collège La Cité](#))

Healthcare

- Ontario's public healthcare system ([OHIP](#)) covers essential medical services
- Newcomers often use private or employer-provided coverage during the initial wait period
- Ottawa is home to world-class hospitals, including the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario ([CHEO](#)), a leading pediatric centre

A Safe, Clean, and Welcoming City

Ottawa consistently ranks among Canada's safest major cities ([Statistics Canada Crime Severity Index](#)). Clean public spaces, dependable services, and a calm pace of life help newcomers feel supported from the start.

Ottawa's population includes a large immigrant community, with about 21.4 % of residents being foreign-born — reflecting the city's diverse and global character ([Statistics Canada](#)). Newcomers quickly find community through cultural organizations, meetups, festivals, and neighbourhood events.



Outdoor Living in All Four Seasons

Nature is part of everyday life in Ottawa — and one of the city’s biggest advantages.

Residents enjoy:

- 1,300+ parks and 800+ kilometres of pathways for walking, running, and cycling
- Ottawa River waterfront trails for paddling, biking, and scenic walks
- Gatineau Park just minutes away for hiking, skiing, and year-round exploring
- The Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, ideal for boating in summer and skating in winter ([National Capital Commission](#))

Ottawa’s four seasons each bring something unique:



Winter: Skating on the Rideau Canal, Winterlude, and nearby skiing



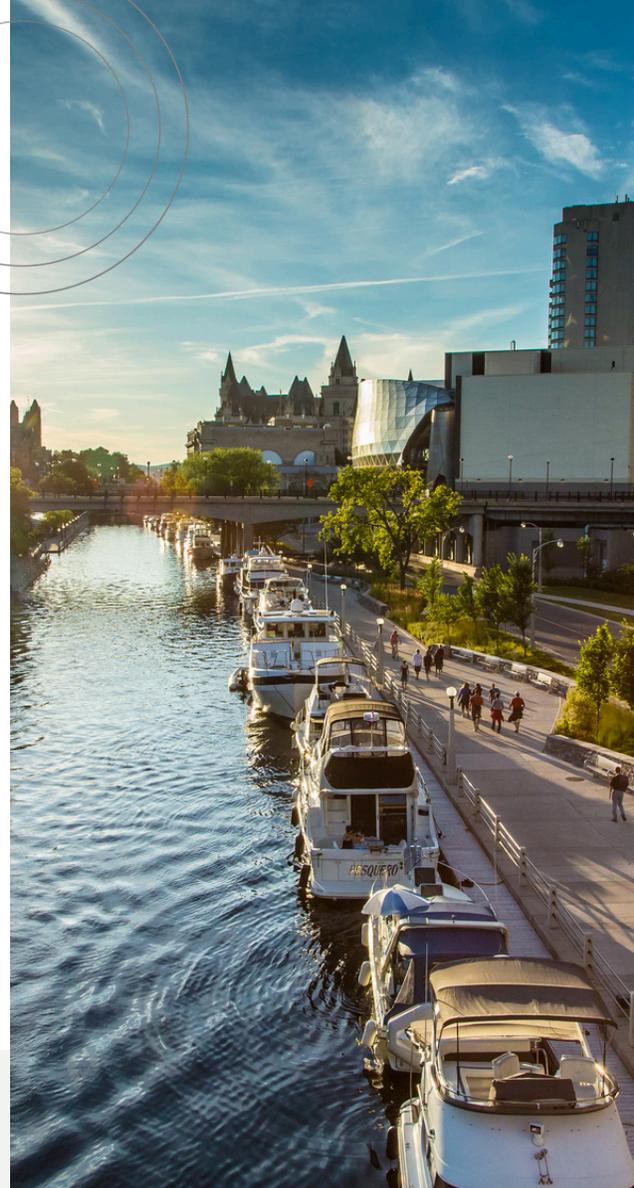
Summer: Patios, festivals, local beaches, and outdoor concerts



Spring: Tulip Festival and city-wide blossom-lined trails



Fall: Gatineau Park hikes and fall lookout points



Whether you enjoy outdoor recreation or simply value being close to nature, Ottawa makes it easy to live a healthy, active lifestyle.

Culture, Food & Community Life

Ottawa's culture blends creativity, global influence, and a strong sense of community. Explore:

- A diverse food scene filled with global flavours, local markets, and independent cafés
- Neighbourhood nightlife, from cozy pubs to live music venues



- Iconic festivals such as Bluesfest, CityFolk, Ottawa Fringe Festival, and Asian Night Market ([Ottawa Festivals](#))
- Community sports, maker spaces, arts programs, and hobby groups

There are plenty of ways to meet people, try new things, and feel connected.



Support for Newcomers from Day One

Ottawa offers a robust network of supports to help newcomers settle confidently and succeed:



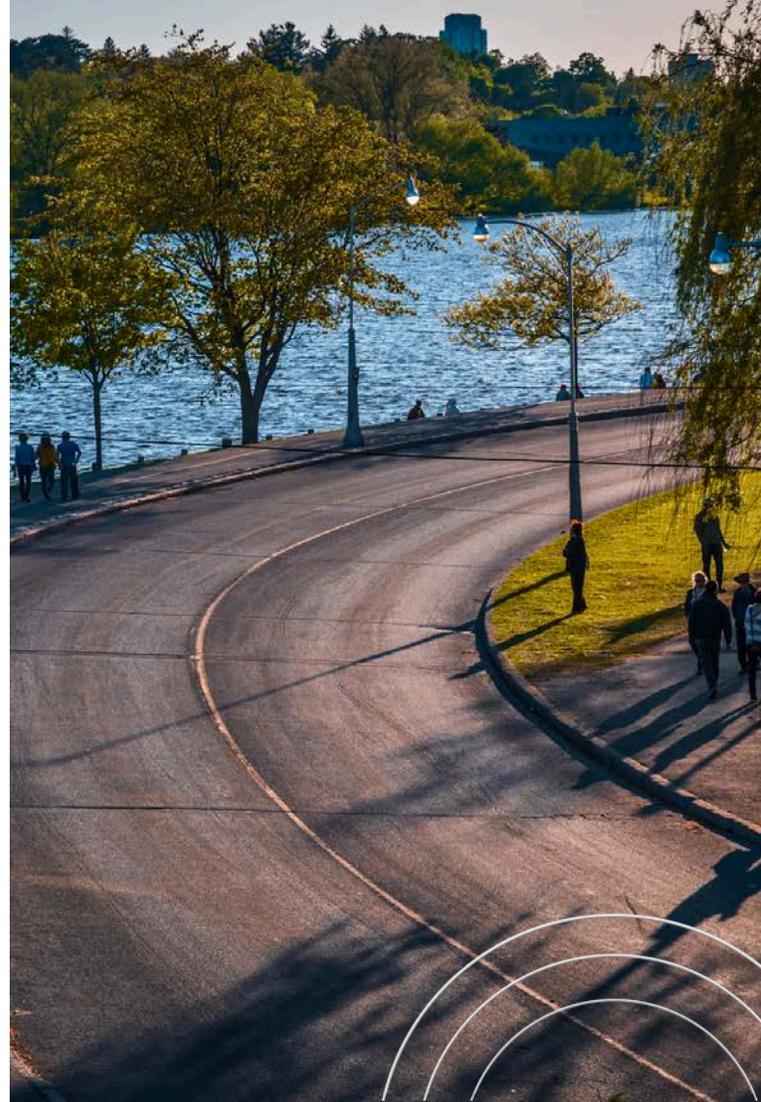
- Settlement services ([OCISO](#), [YMCA-YWCA](#), [CCI Ottawa](#), and [more](#))
- Employment support and mentorship programs
- Language training (LINC/CLIC, ESL, FSL)
- Cultural associations and newcomer meetups
- Programs designed specifically for internationally trained professionals

From housing guidance to career support, Ottawa's newcomer ecosystem helps you build confidence, find community, and build your life in Canada.



Your Next Chapter Starts Here

Ottawa offers a rare combination of opportunity, stability, affordability, and belonging — qualities that continue to place it among the very best cities to live and work in North America. It's a city where your career can grow and your life can flourish — at a pace that feels sustainable and fulfilling.



Explore opportunities, connect with employers, and start planning your move.

Learn more about life and work in Ottawa at [WorkInOttawa.ca](https://www.workinottawa.ca) and discover resources designed to help newcomers thrive.