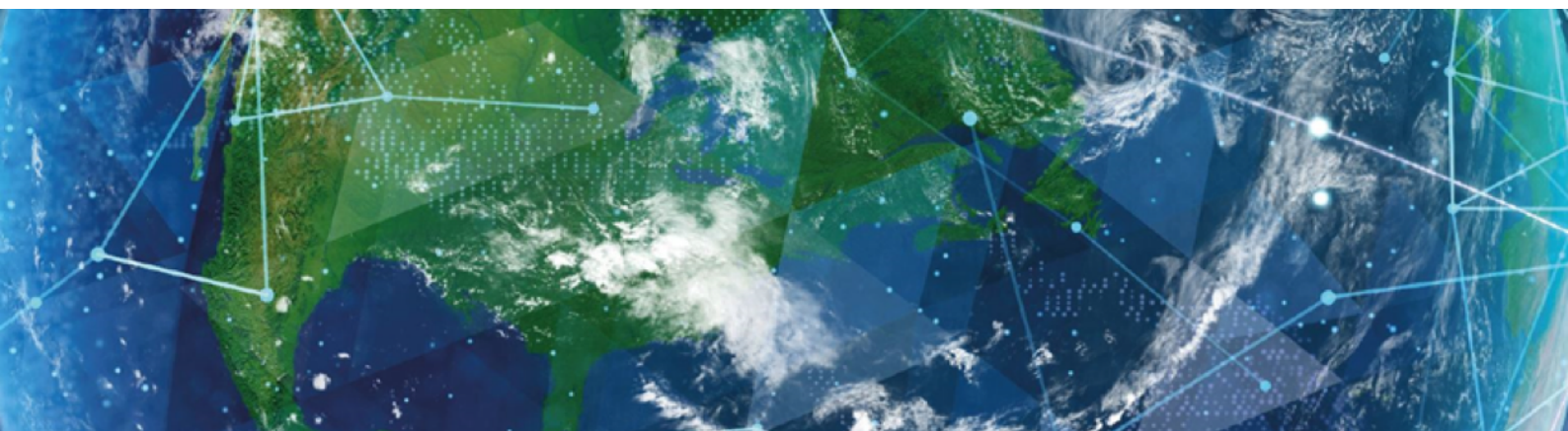


Country Travel Advice Report

Armenia

Overall Risk Rating: **Moderate | 3.00**



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Country Risk Rating Breakdown

Country Overall Risk Rating				Moderate 3.00
Security	Environmental	Infrastructural	Political	Medical
Moderate 3.00	Low - Moderate 2.75	Moderate 3.00	Moderate 3.00	Low - Moderate 2.75

Country Overview

Moderate | 3.00

Armenia is a mountainous, landlocked country at the intersection of Europe and Asia, bordering Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, and Turkey. The country is the smallest and most developed of the three South Caucasus states and, politically, has a functioning democratic system, albeit with notable problems. The level of political freedom in Armenia is questionable due to failures in electoral procedures and oversight. Civil unrest occurs occasionally, and politically motivated demonstrations have turned violent in the past, especially during election cycles. Nonetheless, Armenia has generally peaceful transitions of power. Current Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan led a peaceful "velvet revolution" that brought down the previous prime minister, Serzh Sarkisian, in 2018. Relations with neighboring Azerbaijan continue to be marked by a historical dispute surrounding the Nagorno-Karabakh region, over which the two countries have fought two wars. Border skirmishes, armed clashes, and political developments in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is internationally recognized as a part of Azerbaijan, can prompt major demonstrations in Armenia.

Armenia faces economic challenges despite significant progress in structural reforms. The country strongly encourages foreign investment and has implemented a number of laws to make the process of investing easier, although corruption remains a problem. Business and tourist facilities are expanding, though they are not yet as widespread as in developed countries. Communications and transportation infrastructure are far more advanced than those of Armenia's neighbors, though they are still far from Western European standards. Good medical care is extremely limited, with perhaps two clinics in Yerevan being the only facilities up to Western standards. Crime levels are low, though petty and opportunistic crime remains the biggest threat to foreign travelers. Overland travel presents further risks, considering the country's poorly maintained roads and the erratic driving habits of some local drivers.

Security

Moderate | 3.00

Overview

Relations with Azerbaijan over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region remain tense following Baku's successful September 2023 military operation against ethnic Armenian separatists and the region's subsequent ongoing reintegration into Azerbaijan. Petty crime is on the rise but remains relatively uncommon. Civil unrest occurs with some frequency, especially around election periods. Large protests took place following Azerbaijan's September 2023 military operations in Nagorno-Karabakh; similar protests previously following the Second Karabakh War in 2020 resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, which triggered early elections. Pashinyan won the elections convincingly, giving him a strong mandate to continue peace talks with Azerbaijan. Socioeconomic grievances and perceived corruption are further triggers for unrest.

Political

Moderate | 3.00

Overview

Armenia is generally stable; however, regional geopolitics have the potential to provoke domestic crises. Snap parliamentary elections were held June 20, 2021, after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was forced to sign a peace agreement with Azerbaijan following the defeat of ethnic Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh, an international recognized region of Azerbaijan. Although Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won the election in a landslide, Armenia remains politically polarized and regional developments retain the ability to greatly impact domestic politics.

Some level of corruption exists in many Armenian public institutions at both local and national level, and officials may try to solicit bribes from foreign travelers in order to provide assistance or expedite the process of doing business. The Armenian police force is understaffed, poorly trained and may lack the resources needed to effectively maintain law and order in the country. There is currently an arms embargo in force on Armenia, declared by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Infrastructural

Moderate | 3.00

Overview

There are no major safety concerns regarding air travel to and within Armenia.

The country's road network is established, but it is considered limited by western standards and overland travel can be hazardous. There are concerns over the standards of driving demonstrated by some local road users and accidents are common.

The port infrastructure is reliable.

Utilities infrastructure varies between rural and urban areas and is in need of investment, with power outages continuing to occur periodically.

Cybercrime is a growing concern and the frequency of attempted cyberattacks in Armenia is high for the region.

Environmental

Low - Moderate | 2.75

Overview

Landmines are prevalent in many areas along the Armenian-Azerbaijan border. The continuing military standoff has meant that demining efforts have been limited and not all minefields are well marked. Safety concerns also remain over Soviet-era industrial and nuclear facilities in Armenia, and industrial accidents pose risks to individuals in the area. Earthquakes are common, although most are relatively minor and cause minimal damage. Landslides and flooding occur periodically during periods of heavy rainfall.

Medical

Low - Moderate | 2.75

Overview

Travelers' diarrhea is the most common ailment among travelers to Armenia. Malaria has been reported along the Armenian-Turkish border, although infected mosquito populations are highly localized and cases remain uncommon. There are limited medical facilities outside Yerevan. Numerous pharmacies can be found in Yerevan and other major urban centers, but are significantly less common in more rural areas. Tap water is not safe to drink.

Fact Box

Government Type	Semi-presidential Republic
Population	3,017,712 (2015)
Currency	Armenian dram
Languages	Armenian (official) 98%, Other, including Kurdish 2%.
Time Zone	UTC+4
Religions	Armenian Apostolic 93%, Other, including evangelical, none and unspecified 7%
Traffic	Drives on the right
Plug Types	Type C and Type F
Ethnicities	Armenian 98%, Other, including Yezidi, 2%
Drinking Water	Not Safe to Drink
Additional Information	<p>Significant Dates:</p> <p>Jan 1 - New Year's Day Jan 2-4 - New Year's Day Holiday Jan 5 - Armenian Christmas Eve Jan 6 - Armenian Christmas Day (Surb Tsnund) Jan 7 - Christmas Remembrance Holiday Jan 12 - Anniversary of Gyumri Killings (potential for unrest) Jan 28 - National Army Day March 8 - International Women's Day April 21 - Easter Holiday April 24 - Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day May 1 - Labour Day May 9 - Victory and Peace Day May 28 - First Republic Day July 5 - Constitution Day July 9 - Vardavar/Transfiguration Holiday Sept 17 - Exaltation of the Cross Holiday Sept 21 - Independence Day December 7 - Spitak Earthquake Memorial Day December 31 - New Year's Eve</p>
International Country Code	+374

Travel Risk Advice

Vaccinations and Key Health Risks

You should visit a health care professional at least four to six weeks prior to the trip. Travellers should ensure that they have routine vaccination courses and boosters. Routine vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, and annual flu vaccine.

Most travellers will require vaccines from:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid

Dependent on work, reason for travel, or underlying health conditions, some travellers visiting may require vaccines from:

- Hepatitis B
- Rabies
- Tuberculosis

Pre-departure

Corruption is a significant issue in Armenia and travellers may be pressured to pay bribes in order to facilitate business or access services. Business travellers should therefore undertake bribery and corruption training. Travellers should undertake a pre-travel security briefing and are recommended to have undertaken annual travel security training.

Travellers should provide friends and family with a copy of their travel itinerary, make a copy of important travel and identification documents, and obtain their visa prior to arrival. Travellers should also have information on the meeting host, accommodation, relevant embassies and trusted local contacts easily accessible.

Travellers should ensure they have adequate travel insurance in place to enable rapid medical treatment or emergency extraction from the country and should review contingency options, business continuity and crisis management plans.

Civil unrest occurs with some frequency and may escalate into violence. Travellers should conduct research into the current political situation in Armenia. If the travel dates coincide with planned elections, anniversaries or significant dates, additional measures may need to be taken.

Travellers should be aware that the regions of Tavush and Gegharkunik, that border Azerbaijan, continue to face an increased conflict risk and travel to these areas is likely to require more detailed planning, contingency options and possible security support.

Cyber-attacks are an increasing concern in Armenia. Travellers should implement a range of IT security measures for electronic devices and not check business or personal electronic devices with their luggage at the airport.

On Arrival

There are no significant measures to undertake on arrival in Armenia.

Travellers should carry a copy of travel documents at all times.

In Transit

Travellers should avoid hailing street taxis but should utilise pre-booked private hire vehicles or locally vetted transport providers.

Travel to the regions of Tavush and Gegharkunik should be undertaken with security trained drivers in low-profile vehicles. Dependent upon the reason for travel, further consideration should be given to the use of an Executive Protection Agent or security coordinator. Travel should be pre-booked as much as possible, in order that safe routes may be identified. Travellers should phone ahead to the destinations before departure to ensure that routes are open and remain apprised of the latest security situation and should not detour from planned itinerary in this region.

- While Armenia's political situation is relatively stable, it is polarised with tensions increasing during election cycles. Travellers should not become involved in local political issues and avoid discussing politically sensitive topics in public.

At Your Hotel

- Travellers should stay at reputable hotels with good standards of international-level security. Civil unrest occurs with some frequency and may turn violent, and hotels should be located in areas of town that have not previously witnessed protests or demonstrations and are not marred by ethnic or political tensions.
- On arrival at the hotel, travellers should ensure the driver stays on site until their check-in has been confirmed.

In the Street

- Petty crime is on the rise and crowded market areas and dimly lit streets in Yerevan are higher risk areas in terms of criminal activity. Travellers should avoid walking down dimly lit isolated streets and overt displays of wealth, dress discreetly and appropriately to the environment, not display money, jewellery or valuables and maintain a low profile.
- Travellers should use only small denominations of the Armenian dram, and keep large amounts of cash and cards in a separate place on their person. Travellers should reduce the contents of their wallet or purse, particularly cards which may denote affiliations, memberships or accounts. Do not use credit or debit cards unless necessary and then only at respected, well-known retail and service establishments.
- Travellers should always ensure that their phone is carried with sufficient battery life and programmed with appropriate emergency numbers and carry an ID card or passport and emergency medical information.
- Travellers should be aware of the national culture and behavioural expectations, maintain a low profile, not become involved in local political issues and avoid discussing politically sensitive topics in public. Photographing government buildings or military facilities may result in detention by authorities.
- Homosexuality was decriminalised in 2003, and there are currently no laws against homosexual activity or same-sex couples in Armenia. However, Armenia is a conservative society and negative attitudes toward LGBT+ issues are widespread, especially in more rural areas. Verbal and physical harassment has been reported. Travellers should make fully informed, risk-based decisions while in country.

COVID-19 Information

Travel Restrictions: Domestic Measures The current COVID-19-related state of emergency is slated to remain in effect until June 20. Wearing a facemask is mandatory on public transport and in other public spaces.

International Travel Restrictions Until May 1, individuals arriving in Armenia must have proof of a negative result from a PCR test taken within 72 hours before arrival or a vaccination certificate indicating full vaccination against COVID-19. Individuals arriving without the required documentation must pay for a test on arrival and self-isolate until receipt of a negative result. After this date, no international entry restrictions will be in effect.

Additional Information: <https://www.gov.am/en/covid-travel-restrictions/>

Threat Scale Reference

Threat Rating	Implication
1 - Negligible	The operating environment is benign and there are only isolated threats to business and/or travel.
2 – Low	The operating environment is generally permissive, although there are a limited number of threats to business and/or travel that requires basic mitigations.
3 – Moderate	The operating environment is challenging and there are serious threats to business and/or travel that requires some mitigations.
4 – High	The operating environment is hostile and there are significant threats to business, personal safety and/or travel, requiring comprehensive mitigations and planning.
5 – Extreme	The operating environment is characterised by pervasive direct threats to business, personal safety and/or travel, requiring strict risk management procedures.

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