












Colombia - High



Colombia Country Map

-  POLITICAL
-  ARMED CONFLICT
-  TERRORISM
-  CRIME
-  CIVIL UNREST
-  MARITIME AND PIRACY
-  HEALTH
-  ENVIRONMENTAL
-  TRANSPORTATION

Last Published: 05 December 2025

## COUNTRY OVERVIEW

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Colombia is a high-risk destination. This is due to high crime rates, armed conflict involving the state and domestic militias, and a high threat from civil unrest.

Environmental and health threats are also present and may affect travel to Colombia.

Violent crime rates are high in Colombia, and drug-related crimes and narco-trafficking are a pressing issue. There is evidence of high levels of coca cultivation in multiple regions, including Cauca, Putumayo, Caqueta, Meta, Guaviare, Catatumbo, northern Antioquia, and southern Bolivar. Areas where drug production and trafficking are prevalent experience especially high rates of violent crime. The Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC, or Gulf Clan) is the country's largest and most powerful drug cartel, and also operates as a paramilitary force.

Multiple armed groups in Colombia are engaged in clashes with the government and with each other. Most of these groups are dissident offshoots of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). They include the umbrella group Central General Staff (EMC), the Segunda Marquetalia, and the National Liberation Army (ELN). The government of Colombia has managed to strike temporary ceasefires with some of these groups, such as a 2023 deal with EMC. However, these agreements are fragile and have repeatedly collapsed.

Colombia's relationship with Venezuela presents multiple challenges. The deterioration of the security situation in Venezuela has had a knock-on effect in Colombia. The border region has become lawless in many places and the situation has left an increasing number of people displaced.

## **CULTURAL INFORMATION**

### **Cultural Tips**

- The official language is Spanish, and it is almost universally spoken. A small portion of the population speaks indigenous languages.
- The standard greeting is a handshake upon introduction as well as departure.
- It is considered disrespectful to rush a greeting.
- The tipping of taxi drivers is optional. Porters at airports and hotels are usually tipped USD 0.50 to 0.75 for each piece of luggage. A service charge is usually included in hotel and restaurant bills; however, an additional 10 per cent is expected.
- Homosexuality and same-sex marriage are legal in Colombia.

## KEY FACTS

<b>CAPITAL</b>	Bogota DC
<b>CAPITAL CITY PHONE CODE</b>	1
<b>COUNTRY PHONE CODE</b>	57
<b>CURRENCY</b>	Colombian Peso
<b>ELECTRICITY</b>	110 V, 60 Hz
<b>GMT</b>	-5
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	Spanish
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	President Gustavo Petro
<b>OFFICE WORK WEEK</b>	Monday-Friday
<b>OFFICIAL COUNTRY NAME</b>	Republic of Colombia
<b>PLUG STYLES</b>	Types A, B
<b>POPULATION</b>	52.3 million
<b>RELIGION</b>	Christianity
<b>TIME ZONE OFFSET</b>	UTC-5
<b>TYPE OF GOVERNMENT</b>	Republic

# RISK SUMMARY

## **Political - Moderate**

Colombia has a moderate political risk level. This is due to the central government's instability and lack of administrative control in parts of the country. Moreover, institutional corruption is widespread at the local, regional, and national levels.

In August 2022, Gustavo Petro became the first left-leaning president of Colombia, which had traditionally been governed by right-wing, elitist parties. Petro won the election on a thin mandate, with just over 50 per cent of the vote. Petro's economic policy is rooted in plans to move Colombia's economy away from relying on oil exports, which are vulnerable to global price fluctuations, and towards agriculture.

Petro's line towards the armed groups operating in the country was initially known as the "Total Peace" approach. It saw varying degrees of success, however, reducing violence while not achieving a permanent end to the ongoing low-intensity insurgency. Petro has likewise taken a "softer" stance on combating drug trafficking, reducing efforts to attack cartels at their "base" of low-level individuals such as associates and farmers. Following the resurgence of violence in early 2025, however, the "total peace" approach effectively ended, with Petro unilaterally ending peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Since taking office, Petro's government has worked to mend diplomatic ties with Caracas. This has meant the reopening of their shared border, which was closed in a spat over Nicolas Maduro's disputed 2018 re-election as Venezuelan President.

## **Armed Conflict - High**

Colombia has a high risk of armed conflict, which is almost completely driven by the presence of domestic armed groups. The risk level has increased in 2025, due to a higher volume and severity of attacks carried out by the country's armed

groups, as well as the collapse of several ceasefire agreements between the groups and the government.

Colombia has had several decades of domestic insurgencies, beginning in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The current stage of the conflict dates back to 2016, when the demobilisation of the country's most important guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), resulted in the development of several splinter groups.

Petro's presidency has coincided with the "total peace" approach, allowing the government to negotiate with armed groups and strike ceasefire deals. The total peace framework, despite some early successes, has since faltered. Data indicates that, since the plan's beginning in 2023, armed groups have increased their manpower by approximately 50 per cent, with estimates from June 2025 putting the total number of militants at 22,000. Moreover, the early ceasefire agreements reached in the early stages of the plan have, for the most part, collapsed. Since early 2025, a severe increase in armed groups' attacks, assassinations, and kidnappings has likely marked the end of the total peace plan.

Armed groups in Colombia include FARC splinters (often referred to as "FARC dissidents") like the *Estadio Mayor Central* (EMC) and *Segunda Marquetalia*; the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN), another far-left guerrilla group that has been active since the 1950s; and the *Clan del Golfo* (CDG). Several other groups are referred to under the acronym BACRIM (standing for "criminal bands"). Many of these originate from the far-right *United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia* (AUC), which demobilised in 2005.

Colombian armed groups have access to sophisticated weaponry and can often match the government forces' firepower. In addition to light and heavy firearms, Colombian armed groups utilise improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and have increasingly adopted first-person view (FPV) drones. Armed groups have recruited foreign fighters who have participated in conventional conflicts such as the war in Ukraine. Moreover, several groups, such as many FARC dissidents, have Venezuelan backing.

While cartels, like the Medellin and Cali Cartels, were the most powerful armed groups in Colombia in the 1980s and 1990s, guerrillas now represent the main force in the production and smuggling of narcotics. In many cases, Colombian armed groups have close contacts with Mexican cartels and with other cartels in South and Central America.

While armed groups retain their strongest bases of support in rural areas of Colombia, and especially in border regions, they retain the ability to stage attacks in cities, posing a threat to civilians. Several large-scale attacks occurred in 2025, coinciding with the overall increase in the conflict's intensity. In August, likely EMC members detonated a vehicle-borne IED outside a military academy in Cali, killing six civilians and injuring 60. This followed a general offensive launched by EMC in the country's southwest in June, which included several bombings in Cali. Also in June, presidential candidate Miguel Uribe Turbay was assassinated in Bogota, in an attack that was highly likely organised by the Segunda Marquetalia.

The US has deployed considerable military resources to the Caribbean region to interdict vessels suspected of smuggling narcotics, but has also threatened to conduct strikes on Venezuelan soil. Strikes have become increasingly likely following the designation of Venezuelan organised crime groups as foreign terrorist organisations (FTO), including the Cartel of the Suns, which is allegedly run by the Maduro administration. US strikes in Colombia are unlikely in the case of a major escalation with Venezuela. However, border areas and Barranquilla may experience indirect threats associated with the potential conflict. US military strikes may disrupt regional air operations and result in increased refugee flows to Colombia

## **Terrorism - Moderate**

There is a moderate threat of terrorism in Colombia. The threat is not from transnational terrorist groups motivated by extremist ideologies, nor by self-radicalised "lone wolves". Rather, the country's armed groups and criminal organisations may employ terrorism as part of their conflict with government forces.

Starting in the mid-1980s, Colombia's cartels carried out several attacks on civilians and government targets. These included the 1985 Supreme Court siege, the 1989 murder of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan, the bombings of Avianca Flight 203 and the DAS building in Bogota. The Medellin Cartel, headed by Pablo Escobar, was responsible for several acts of "narcoterrorism", as this type of attack has been categorised, in efforts to influence the government to reverse its policy of allowing the extradition of narcotraffickers to the US.

Currently, Colombian armed groups retain the ability to stage terrorist attacks across the country's territory, particularly targeting government institutions, and military and police facilities. The case of the August 2025 IED bombing in Cali, which injured 60 people and killed six, showcases the significant threat that these attacks pose to bystanders.

## **Crime - High**

Colombia is a major global supplier of cocaine, marijuana, and heroin. The cultivation and trafficking of drugs continue to have a negative impact on security, the formal economy, and the environment. Organised crime, guerrillas, and other terrorist groups are known to attack civilians. Militant groups are responsible for widespread abuses, including killings, disappearances, torture, sexual violence, forced displacement, recruitment of children, extortion, and death threats against community leaders. This risk is particularly significant in rural areas adjacent to the borders with Panama, Venezuela, and Ecuador; in the Parque Nacional Natural de La Macarena in the Department of Meta; and the port towns of Buenaventura in the Department of Valle del Cauca, Turbo in the Department of Antioquia and Tumaco in the Department of Narino.

Between November and December 2023, approximately eight suspicious deaths of US citizens occurred in Medellin. The deaths appear to involve involuntary drugging, and several appear to involve the use of online dating applications. The US Embassy in Bogota has recorded an increase in reports of incidents involving the use of dating applications to lure victims, typically foreigners, for robbery by force or using sedatives to drug and rob individuals. Travellers are advised to be cautious while using online dating apps in Colombia and consider meeting in public areas if meeting a stranger.

New criminal gangs now have experienced paramilitary fighters within their ranks. These members are increasingly losing ideological notions in favour of expanding criminal expertise. One such group is the Clan del Golfo, also known as the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia – AGC), which emerged from Colombia's paramilitary movement to become the dominant criminal force in Colombia in recent years.

Street crime is endemic in major cities, including Bogota, Medellin, Cali, and Santa Marta. Muggings and pickpocketing can be accompanied by violence. Foreigners have been robbed at gunpoint in the Candelaria area of Bogota. Express kidnappings, short-term opportunistic abductions aimed at extracting cash from the victim, also occur. Robbery of taxi passengers is a serious problem in Colombia. Theft frequently occurs when a passenger is travelling alone and has hailed a taxi on the street.

Drink spiking is a notable threat at local bars and nightlife establishments. Perpetrators in Colombia have used scopolamine (informally referred to as “Devil’s breath”), which causes sedation, retrograde amnesia and reduced inhibitions. Cases of drink or food spiking targeting foreign travellers have been recorded at upmarket bars and restaurants. There are also reports of dating apps being used by criminals to lure foreign victims.

## **Civil Unrest - High**

Localised and country-wide demonstrations occur from time to time and can turn violent. Local transportation services can be affected as protesters often establish roadblocks and vandalise cars. Airports may also close if unrest gets particularly violent. Tourists visiting areas affected by strikes and roadblocks have found themselves unable to leave, sometimes for days or weeks. Colombian police often use violent crowd control methods, including pepper spray, tear gas, stun grenades, rubber bullets, and water cannons. There are widespread reports of police brutality targeting protestors.

The majority of protests are caused by domestic political grievances. The main drivers of unrest include widespread corruption, socioeconomic inequality, lack of labour opportunities, and demands for political reforms. While less frequent,

protests can also follow notable international developments, particularly in neighbouring countries or the United States.

In April 2024, tens of thousands of Colombians protested against proposed health, labour, and pension reforms. Demonstrations occurred across major cities including Bogota, Medellin, and Cali. While large-scale protests have subsided in 2025, underlying tensions remain unresolved and political grievances could spark significant unrest. The slow implementation of government reforms, persistent violence by armed groups, and economic inequality are particularly salient issues among the public.

President Gustavo Petro has participated in mass mobilisations. For example, in mid-2025, he announced protests alongside labour unions and social organisations to support a referendum on labour reform.

## **Maritime and Piracy - Moderate**

There is a moderate maritime and piracy risk in Colombia. The risk is primarily linked to the operations of drug cartels and human traffickers.

The most notable threat is that of crime and violence at ports. Ports like Cartagena are international hubs for drug trafficking, and authorities often seize large shipments of narcotics headed towards Europe or North America. In many cases, narcotics shipments are guarded by heavily armed gang members, and there is a possibility of violence breaking out during police raids.

The *modus operandi* associated with drug trafficking is hiding drugs on otherwise legal shipments, often by tampering with containers while in port. In some cases, "carriers" are threatened to comply with traffickers' demands. There have also been cases of "drop off" actions while at sea, where traffickers will board civilian vessels and force them to take narcotics on board.

The island of San Andrés is an important hub for the trafficking of drugs and people towards the United States. Multiple high casualty events have occurred in the stretch of waters between the island and the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua, due to traffickers overloading vessels carrying migrants.

Some violent attacks targeting yachts have been reported in Colombia over the last few years, mostly in Cartagena or surrounding areas. Most of these attacks

have taken place in Colombian territorial waters and have been carried out by small groups of criminals using small vessels and unsophisticated weapons. Robberies of large vessels have also been reported while at anchorage. Attacks on internal waterways are rare but have happened, with some hijackings of vessels being recorded on Colombian rivers.

Of Colombia's ten port zones, two are located on the Pacific coast, in the Bonaventura area. This area has several logistics-related issues, including repeated roadblocks by protesters and local labour unions, which have affected port operations. In general, the quality of Colombia's port infrastructure is superior on the Caribbean coast, which has higher economic activity than the Pacific coast.

Colombia is engaged in some active maritime disputes with its neighbours. Nicaragua claims exclusive economic rights in the Caribbean Sea via its continental shelf, particularly in the San Andrés Archipelago and its surrounding waters. Colombia and Panama have a maritime dispute, also in the Caribbean Sea, over their boundary near the Old Providence and Santa Catalina islands. The most notable maritime dispute for Colombia, however, is with Venezuela and regards the maritime borders near the Esequibo region. Occasional naval encounters and tensions over fishing rights have occurred in the area.

There are a few notable navigational hazards in Colombian waters. There is a risk of grounding due to shallow waters near the San Andrés Archipelago, as well as near the Atlantic coast of Barranquilla. The waters near San Andrés have strong currents and tidal change. The lack of comprehensive nautical charts for the Gulf of Urabá and parts of the Caribbean coast also poses a navigation risk. Finally, severe weather conditions, including tropical storms and hurricanes, are common on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of South America.

The Colombian Coast Guard can be contacted on VHF 13/14/16.

## **Health - Moderate**

While some hospitals and clinics in Bogota offer satisfactory levels of care, medical facilities outside the capital or major cities often offer limited quality care and may lack specialised facilities. Private hospitals and physicians usually expect an up-front payment.

Malaria is a risk throughout the year. Outbreaks of other mosquito-borne diseases, such as dengue fever and chikungunya virus, also occur occasionally. Colombia is experiencing ongoing transmission of the mosquito-borne Zika virus. The infection often occurs without symptoms, but in some cases, it can cause fever, rash, severe headache, joint pain, and muscle or bone pain. It can also cause microcephaly in unborn children.

Immunisations are advised when travelling to Colombia; hepatitis A and tetanus are essential, but other vaccines to consider include diphtheria, hepatitis B, typhoid, and yellow fever.

Many areas of Colombia are above 2,500 metres, which can lead to some travellers experiencing altitude sickness.

## **Environmental - Moderate**

Coastal areas of Colombia are subject to hurricanes, landslides, mudslides, and flooding. In the event of a hurricane, disruptions to essential services can occur.

The rainy season extends from April to December. This period is marked by the occasional heavy storms, as well as frequent flash floods and landslides. States of emergency can be declared at the municipality level following intense periods of heavy rainfall.

Colombia is located in the seismically active Pacific Ring of Fire region. Earthquakes and volcanic activity occur regularly and there are numerous active volcanoes in the country.

Droughts, particularly during El Nino events, can significantly affect water supply and agriculture in Colombia. In the first half of 2024, Bogota faced significant water shortages due to water levels in the surrounding reservoirs falling to very low levels. Water rationing was introduced to combat the drought.

During the dry season from December to April, wildfires are frequent. These can cause major traffic and service disruptions, and pose a threat to people and physical assets.

## **Transportation - Moderate**

Colombia is a large country with varied terrain and poor infrastructure. The busiest airport is El Dorado International Airport (BOG) in Bogota, which serves most international flights. Several small airports exist and internal flights are a common and relatively cheap way to get across the country. Due to the dangerous nature of the infrastructure network, flying represents a safer and faster option.

Road travel in Colombia can be dangerous, especially at night. Some roads are poorly maintained or vulnerable to heavy rain and mudslides. Mountain roads may lack safety features such as crash barriers or guard rails, and conditions are frequently made more treacherous by heavy fog. Rural highways and poor conditions make travellers easy targets for criminal organisations and militants. Many highways are unlit with poor markings. Traffic laws and regulations are often ignored and rarely enforced, creating dangerous conditions for drivers and pedestrians.

Despite the dangers, the principal method of transport between cities in Colombia is long-distance buses, that connect nearly every town in the country. It is common for buses to stop at military checkpoints. The soldiers at checkpoints will typically ask everyone to get off the bus, check everyone's identification, and then pat people down. They may look through people's bags but often ignore foreigners altogether.

Taxis are widespread in major cities and towns. Most cabs have metres that should be used if available. When there is no obvious price, drivers are likely looking to take advantage of foreigners and prices should be haggled. Taxis are often used in street crime and therefore should be avoided.

In Bogota, the primary method of transport is the Transmilenio, the largest BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) system in the world. This system is reliable, cheap and regular. However, buses often get exceptionally crowded and are a hotbed for petty crime. There are also several cable cars that help ascend or descend certain parts of the city.

It is recommended that all travel, particularly rural travel, is conducted with a security driver and a Close Protection Officer, depending on the destination, to help mitigate the risk of scams and crime. Travel to rural areas can be affected by weather and mudslides are common in the rainy season (April-December).

## EMERGENCY DETAILS

**IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY CONTACT SOLACE GLOBAL 24/7 OPERATIONS CENTRE AT +44 (0)1202 795 801. LOCAL EMERGENCY SERVICES CAN BE REACHED BY DIALLING 123 BUT RESPONSE TIMES MAY VARY, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS.**

<b>POLICE NUMBER</b>	123
<b>AMBULANCE NUMBER</b>	123
<b>FIRE NUMBER</b>	123
<b>EMERGENCY DETAILS</b>	There will not be an English speaker answering the telephone

## TRAVEL

### TRAVEL ADVICE

Due to the political situation and the threat of armed criminals and dissident groups, it is best to avoid crossing the Venezuela-Colombia border by land.

When possible, use prearranged transport and be suspicious of strangers. Do not display valuable items, wear expensive-looking jewellery, or carry more cash than needed. Do not leave food or drink unattended and do not accept any from strangers.

Travellers to Bogota may need time to adjust to the altitude of 2.6km.

Due to the importance of informal relationships and unofficial channels for the conduct of business in the country, it is advisable to find trusted and vetted third parties prior to travel. These may include a local distributor, representative, salesperson and/or lawyer.

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

**MARCH 08, 2026**

- **Women's Day:** Colombia - Observance

**MARCH 20, 2026**

- **March Equinox:** Colombia - Seasonal

**MARCH 23, 2026**

- **Saint Joseph's Day:** Colombia - National

**MARCH 29, 2026**

- **Palm Sunday:** Colombia - Observance

**APRIL 02, 2026**

- **Maundy Thursday:** Colombia - National

**APRIL 03, 2026**

- **Good Friday:** Colombia - National

**APRIL 05, 2026**

- **Easter Sunday:** Colombia - Observance

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

**APRIL 23, 2026**

- **Language Day:** Colombia - Observance

**APRIL 25, 2026**

- **Children's Day:** Colombia - Observance

**APRIL 26, 2026**

- **Secretaries' Day:** Colombia - Observance

**APRIL 29, 2026**

- **Day of Trees:** Colombia - Observance

**MAY 01, 2026**

- **Labor Day / May Day:** Colombia - National

**MAY 10, 2026**

- **Mother's Day:** Colombia - Observance

**MAY 15, 2026**

- **Teacher's Day:** Colombia - Observance

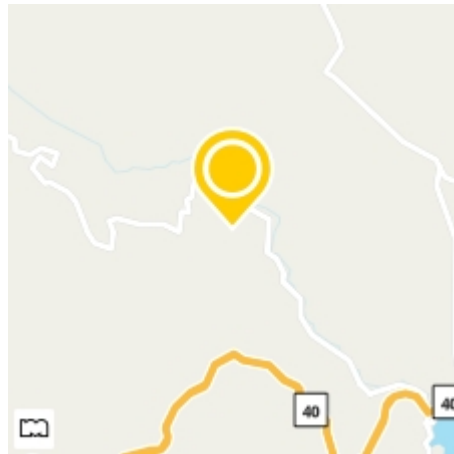
**MAY 18, 2026**

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **Ascension Day:** Colombia - National

## RECENT ALERTS

**UPDATE: 14 DEAD AND 9000 HOMES DESTROYED FOLLOWING FLOODING IN COLOMBIA**



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate

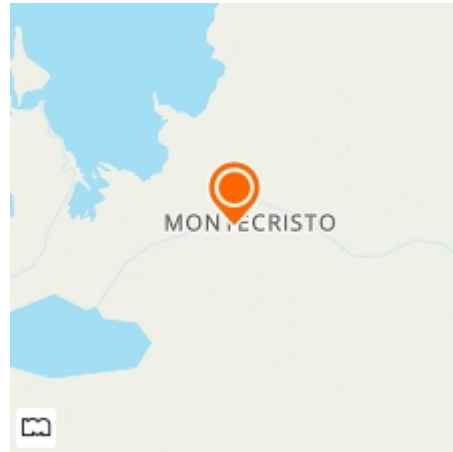


07-Feb-2026 05:54

Local media reports the heavy rain that led to flash flooding in Colombia has so far left 14 dead, 9000 homes destroyed and 50,000 families affected. Rain continues to be forecasted for the next ten days despite it being Colombia's dry season, therefore the floods are likely to continue or worsen in the coming days.

**SEVERE FLOODING IN MONTECRISTO, BOLIVAR**

## RECENT ALERTS



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** High



06-Feb-2026 15:56

Local media reports that several areas of Montecristo, Bolivar have been flooded following heavy rainfall. Footage circulating online shows that roads have been entirely submerged. A Columbian Senator has described it as "a worrying situation" and "95% underwater". There have been no reports of casualties at this time. The full extent of the damage remains unclear.

## LARGE FIRE AT THE POSTOBÓN PLANT IN MALAMBO



**Category:** Caution - **Risk:** Moderate

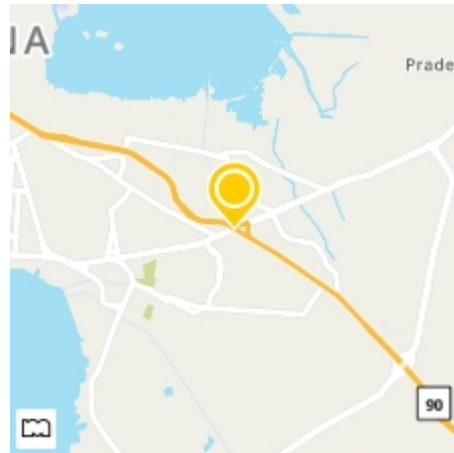
## RECENT ALERTS



05-Feb-2026 20:32

Local media reports a large fire has broken out at the Postobón plant in Malambo resulting in the emergency evacuation of hundreds of employees. Footage circulating online shows thick plumes of smoke rising from the plant. Emergency services are attending the scene. There has been no news of damages or casualties at this time.

## ADVERSE WEATHER EFFECTS DUE TO A COLD FRONT HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE CITY OF CARTAGENA



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate



04-Feb-2026 11:49

The Colombian Office of Risk and Disaster Management has reported extensive damage on the northern coast of Colombia due to the arrival of the effects of a cold front. The city of Cartagena has particularly been affected by high waves, strong winds and heavy rainfall. It is unclear how long the cold front will last, however, we will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates when necessary.

## RECENT ALERTS

### 65 MUNICIPALITIES ACROSS COLOMBIA UNDER RED ALERT FOR LANDSLIDES



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate

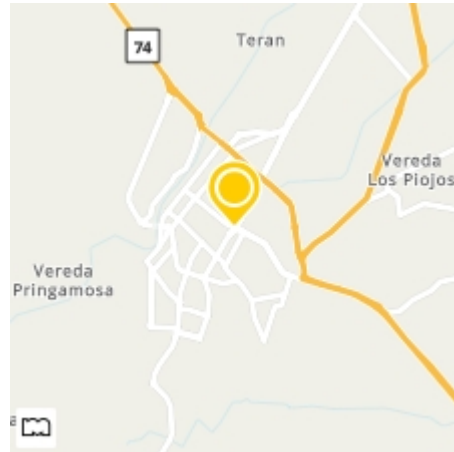


03-Feb-2026 19:34

Local media sources report that Colombia has placed 165 municipalities under a red alert for landslides as heavy rainfall continues. The Antioquia department is reported to be the most affected. Authorities warn that flooding and landslides could disrupt travel and pose risks to communities in the affected areas. Further details remain limited at this time.

### PUBLIC CALAMITY DECLARED IN CORDOBA FOLLOWING HEAVY RAIN

## RECENT ALERTS



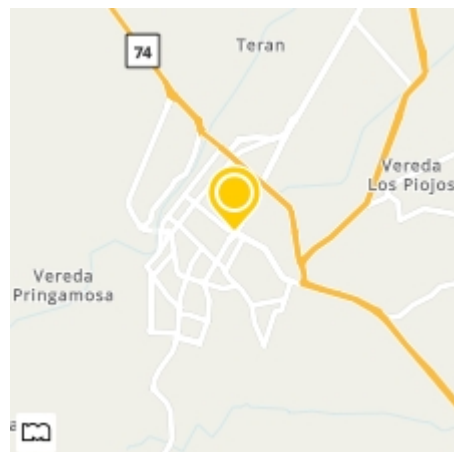
**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate



02-Feb-2026 22:31

According to local media sources, Governor Erasmo Zuleta Bechara has declared a public calamity in Cordoba following heavy rain in the region. It has been reported that routes for mass shipment of humanitarian assistance will be activated in due course. Further information remains limited at this time. We will continue to monitor the situation and update accordingly.

## SIGNIFICANT FLOODING REPORTED IN MONTERIA



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate

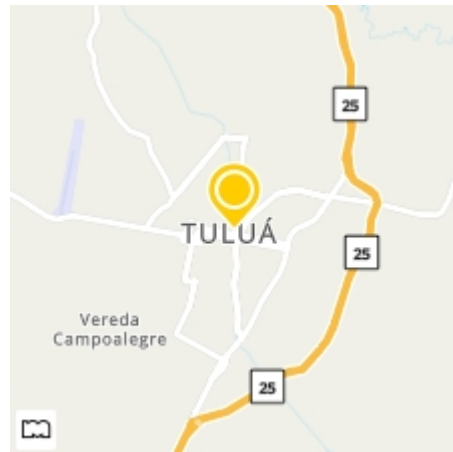
## RECENT ALERTS



02-Feb-2026 15:48

Local media sources report that heavy rainfall has caused widespread disruption and flooding in parts of Montería. Flooding is particularly severe in riverside communities, where rising water levels are linked to the Urrá I reservoir exceeding its maximum operating capacity. Authorities are reportedly delivering humanitarian assistance, coordinating evacuations, and monitoring conditions in the most affected areas. Residents in high-risk zones have been advised to evacuate as soon as possible due to the continued risk of further flooding. Further information remains limited at this time.

### FLOODING REPORTED IN TULUA FOLLOWING OVERFLOW OF NEARBY RIVER



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate



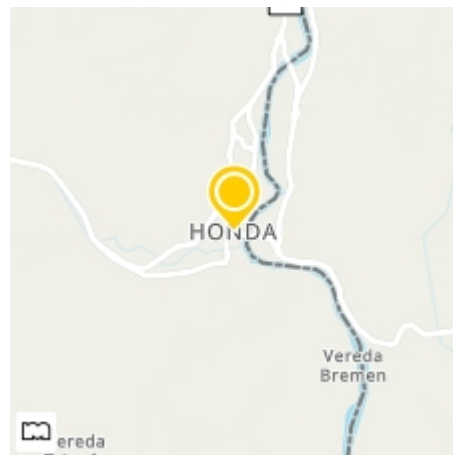
02-Feb-2026 02:07

According to local media reports, significant flooding has occurred in the Uribe Uribe neighbourhood of Tulua following the overflow of the nearby Tulua River. Footage circulating on social media shows a large torrent of water on one of the

## RECENT ALERTS

roads in the town. At present, no casualties have been reported. It is currently unclear if any residents have been evacuated.

### ONGOING FIRE AT A ROAD TOLL BOOTH BETWEEN HONDA AND GUADUAS



**Category:** Caution - **Risk:** Moderate

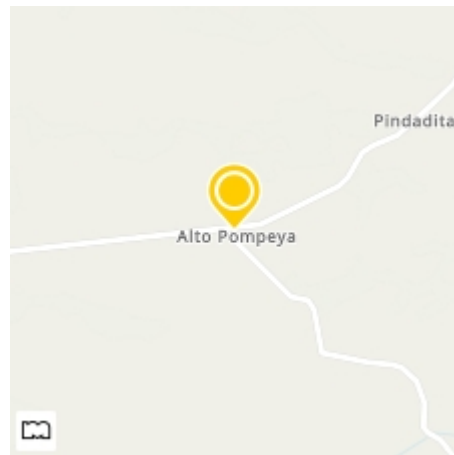


31-Jan-2026 02:56

Local media reports that a fire is ongoing at a road toll booth between Honda and Guaduas. Emergency services are on the scene. According to the Honda Fire Department, the situation is being brought under control and the damage is being assessed. The fire originated with a car, which then spread, affecting the entire infrastructure. The road remains closed. Footage circulating online shows the whole toll infrastructure ablaze with large clouds of black smoke emanating.

### PROTESTORS BLOCKING VILLAVICENCIO-PUERTO LOPEZ ROAD

## RECENT ALERTS



**Category:** Civil Unrest - **Risk:** Moderate



30-Jan-2026 13:08

Local media reports a protest blocking the Villavicencio-Puerto Lopez road in the Pompeya Alto locality of Colombia. Residents of the Peralonso village have created a blockade on the road to protest power shortages in the city. The protestors state they will only allow vehicles to pass for 20 minutes every two hours until the electrical issues has been resolved. There is no further information regarding the size of the protest.

# FCDO SUMMARY

Last updated: 12/29/2025 16:17:16

## Warnings and insurance

Your travel insurance could be invalidated if you travel against advice from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

## Areas where **FCDO** advises against all but essential travel

### Colombia-Venezuela border and northern Colombia

**FCDO** advises against all but essential travel to:

- all of Norte de Santander Department, including Cúcuta.
- all of Arauca Department, except for the department capital, Arauca
- the municipality of Puerto Carreño in Vichada Department, except for the department capital, Puerto Carreño
- within 5km of the rest of the border with Venezuela.

**FCDO** currently advises against all travel to [Venezuela's border regions with Colombia](#). You should not use any of the Colombia-Venezuela land crossings.

### Pacific coast and Colombia-Panama border

**FCDO** advises against all but essential travel to:

- Chocó Department, except for the department capital Quibdó, the whale-watching towns of Nuquí and Bahía Solano and the tourist site of Capurganá
- the western part of Valle del Cauca Department, including Buenaventura
- the western part of Cauca Department
- the South Pacific, Sanquianga and Telembi regions of Nariño Department
- the southern part of Córdoba Department
- the Urabá and Bajo Cauca regions of Antioquia Department
- the southern part of Bolívar Department

### Central Colombia

F.C.D.O. advises against all but essential travel to:

- all of Guaviare Department, except for the department capital San José del Guaviare
- Cartagena del Chairá, San Vicente del Caguan, Puerto Rico, El Doncello, Paujil and La Montañita in Caquetá Department
- the Ariari region of southern Meta, except for Caño Cristales

If travelling to the tourist site of Caño Cristales, travel by air from the town of La Macarena with a reputable tour company.

## **Colombia-Ecuador border and southern Colombia**

F.C.D.O. advises against all but essential travel to within 5km of the border with Ecuador except for:

- the border crossing on the Pan-American highway at the Puente Internacional de Rumichaca
- the city of Ipiales in Nariño Department

F.C.D.O. advises against all but essential travel to Orito, San Miguel, Valle del Guamuez, Puerto Caicedo, Puerto Guzmán, Puerto Asis and Puerto Leguizamo in Putumayo Department.

Find out more about [why F.C.D.O. advises against travel](#).

## **Before you travel**

No travel can be guaranteed safe. Read all the advice in this guide. You may also find it helpful to:

- see [general advice for women travellers](#)
- read our [guide on disability and travel abroad](#)
- see [general advice for LGBT+ travellers](#)
- read about [safety for solo and independent travel](#)
- see [advice on volunteering and adventure travel abroad](#)

## **Travel insurance**

If you choose to travel, research your destinations and [get appropriate travel insurance](#). Insurance should cover your itinerary, planned activities and expenses

in an emergency.

## About [FCDO](#) travel advice

[FCDO](#) provides advice about risks of travel to help you make informed decisions.

Find out [more about \[FCDO\]\(#\) travel advice](#).

## Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow [FCDO](#):

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)
- [Travel Aware on Instagram](#)

## Entry requirements

This information is for people travelling on a full '[British citizen](#)' passport from the UK. It is based on the UK government's understanding of Colombia's current rules for the most common types of travel.

The authorities in Colombia set and enforce entry rules. If you're not sure how these requirements apply to you, contact the [Colombian Embassy in the UK](#) (for English choose 'Ingles' from the drop down menu).

## Passport validity requirements

To enter Colombia, your passport must be valid on entry. However, Colombian immigration authorities recommend your passport has an 'expiry date' at least 6 months after the date you plan to leave.

Check with your travel provider that your passport and other travel documents meet requirements. [Renew your passport](#) if you need to.

You will be denied entry if you do not have a valid travel document or try to use a passport that has been reported lost or stolen.

## Dual nationals

When returning to the UK, British citizens must carry a valid [British passport](#) or [certificate of entitlement](#). See [Dual citizenship](#).

### British-Colombian dual nationals

If you're a British-Colombian dual national, you must enter and leave Colombia using your Colombian passport and Colombian identification card (Cedula).

## Visa requirements

You can visit Colombia for up to 90 days without a visa for business or tourism, at the discretion of the Colombian immigration officer on arrival.

You must be able to show an onward or return ticket valid within the 90-day period.

### Applying for a visa

Check the latest entry requirements and how to apply for a visa with the [Colombian Consulate General](#) in London before you travel.

If you have a Colombian visa with more than 90 days of validity, you must register the visa at a [Migración Colombia office](#) (in Spanish) or [register the visa online](#) (in Spanish) within 15 days of arrival in Colombia. If you do not register, you may get a fine.

You may be able to extend your stay once you are in Colombia by up to 120 days by applying at the immigration office [Migración Colombia](#) (in Spanish). As a visitor, you cannot remain in Colombia for more than 180 days in any 12-month period.

If you overstay your visa, you could get a fine, or be deported at your own cost.

## Checks at border control

Colombian authorities advise that you can speed up your entry to the country by [completing the 'Check-Mig' form on Migración Colombia](#), although this is not mandatory. You can complete the form between 72 hours and one hour before

you travel to Colombia. You will receive a confirmation email that you will need to show to immigration officials when you arrive.

Make sure you get your passport stamped.

If you enter Colombia by land, sea or river, make sure the immigration authorities stamp your passport. If it is not stamped, you could get a fine when you leave. If the immigration office on the border is closed, go to the nearest office of [Migración Colombia](#) (in Spanish).

## Travelling with children

Children aged 17 and under who have resident status in Colombia and who are travelling on a British passport need a [notarised letter of permission from any non-accompanying parents or parent](#) (in Spanish). The letter must be authenticated by a notary or by a Colombian consulate. You can get more information from [Migración Colombia](#) (in Spanish) or by contacting the [Colombian Consulate in the UK](#) (in Spanish).

## San Andres Archipelago

If you're travelling to the islands of San Andres, Providencia or Santa Catalina, you must buy a tourist card from the boarding gate, on the day of the flight. You do not need one if you're staying less than 24 hours.

## Departure tax

Departure tax is usually included in the price of the airline ticket, but check with your airline.

## Vaccine requirements

To enter Colombia, you must have a certificate to prove you've had a yellow fever vaccination if you are arriving from certain countries with a transmission risk. You may also be asked to show it if you are travelling to areas in Colombia which are considered high risk. Carry your vaccination certificate at all times.

For full details about medical entry requirements and recommended vaccinations, see [TravelHealthPro's Colombia guide](#).

## Customs rules

There are strict rules about [goods you can take into or out of Colombia](#) (in Spanish). You must declare anything that may be prohibited or subject to tax or duty.

## **Taking money into Colombia**

You can bring up to 10,000 US dollars-worth of any currency into Colombia. You must declare anything above this amount with the [National Tax and Customs Directorate \(DIAN\)](#) (in Spanish).

## **Safety and security**

### **Terrorism**

There is a high threat of terrorist attack globally affecting UK interests and British nationals, including from groups and individuals who view the UK and British nationals as targets. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times.

UK Counter Terrorism Policing has information and advice on [staying safe abroad](#) and what to do in the event of a terrorist attack. Find out [how to reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad](#).

### **Terrorism in Colombia**

Terrorists are very likely to try to carry out attacks in Colombia.

### **Armed groups**

Despite the landmark peace agreement between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in 2016, many armed groups remain active throughout the country.

These groups may attack with little or no warning. The focus is predominantly in areas where there are active illicit economies and narco-trafficking but attacks have historically targeted some tourist locations, including:

- transportation hubs including airports
- markets and shopping malls
- local government facilities

- hotels, clubs and restaurants
- places of worship
- parks and other public areas
- major sporting and cultural events
- educational institutions

Police and military personnel and installations are frequently targeted, including in large cities.

Past methods of attack have included car bombs, grenade and drone attacks, and explosive devices left in buildings and on main roads. Stay alert and follow the advice of the local security authorities.

Regularly reassess your security arrangements and consider carefully any travel around the country.

## **Political situation**

Colombia has suffered from internal armed conflict for over 50 years. In 2016, Colombia's then-President Juan Manuel Santos signed a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) movement to end the civil war.

The peace agreement is still in place today, but Colombia remains seriously affected by conflict. Delays in the implementation of the peace agreement have led to a resurgence in violence in parts of the country. Much of this involves armed groups fighting for control of territory, the cocaine trade, and other illicit economies.

## **Protests**

Protests and demonstrations happen regularly throughout the country and often start at short notice. They can turn violent and may lead to an increase in the police and military presence. Road closures and roadblocks can cause travel disruptions for visitors.

Avoid protests, strikes and demonstrations and follow the advice of local authorities or tour operators if you are affected. Allow extra time to reach your destination and monitor local media, including social media channels.

There is a heightened risk of violence across the country when elections are held due to the interference of armed groups and criminal gangs in the electoral process. During national and state elections, avoid large gatherings or political rallies and be alert around polling stations.

## **Crime**

Drugs, organised crime and terrorism are inextricably linked in Colombia. There's evidence of high levels of coca cultivation in:

- Nariño Department
- Cauca Department
- Putumayo Department
- Caquetá Department
- Meta Department
- Guaviare Department
- the Catatumbo region in Norte de Santander Department
- northern Antioquia Department
- southern Bolivar Department

There's a risk to your safety in any area where coca, marijuana or opium poppies are cultivated and near to cocaine processing labs.

Illegal armed groups and criminal gangs are active in all of the departments where coca is cultivated, processed or transported, as well as in many cities. The risk is particularly significant in:

- rural areas near to the borders with Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador
- the Parque Nacional Natural de La Macarena in the Department of Meta
- the port towns of Buenaventura in the Department of Valle de Cauca, Turbo in the Department of Antioquia and Tumaco in the Department of Nariño

Money laundering, extortion and prostitution rackets are all part of organised crime activity.

## **Street crime**

Pickpocketing, mugging and armed robbery are a problem, especially in major cities, including Bogotá, Medellín, Cali and the Caribbean coast. British nationals

have been robbed at gunpoint in the Candelaria area of Bogotá and across many cities in Colombia.

Be vigilant in public places used by foreign nationals or near official buildings. Take care on city streets, especially in deprived areas of cities, after dark or if you are on your own. Do not carry large amounts of money or wear expensive-looking jewellery or watches.

## **Criminal kidnapping**

Short-term opportunistic abductions known as 'express kidnappings' are common in Colombia. Criminals – often posing as taxi drivers may track and select a target victim, often from around ATMs and often at night. They also attack at random. The kidnappers force the victim to empty their bank account by making multiple transfers, or drive them to ATMs and force them to withdraw cash. Normally victims are quickly released, but there have been incidents where those who have resisted the kidnappers' demands have been killed.

Be aware of your surroundings and always let someone you trust know your whereabouts. Use ATMs during business hours so you can go inside a bank, supermarket or shopping centre.

If you fall victim to a kidnapping, follow the kidnapper's instructions.

Kidnapping rates remain high and widespread in Colombia. Illegal armed groups kidnap hostages – both for ransom and for political purposes. While foreign nationals are not the primary targets, foreigners have been kidnapped in recent years, particularly those working for (or believed to be working for) oil, mining and related companies where armed groups operate.

British nationals are seen as legitimate targets, including tourists, humanitarian aid workers, journalists and business travellers. If you are kidnapped, the reason for your presence is unlikely to protect you or secure your safe release.

## **Drug assisted robberies and sexual assaults**

The British Embassy has received reports of criminals in Colombia using drugs to subdue their victims. This includes the use of scopolamine, which temporarily incapacitates victims. Criminals can administer drugs through food, drinks,

cigarettes, aerosols and even paper flyers. Victims become disoriented quickly and are vulnerable to robbery, sexual assault, rape and other crimes.

Criminals use dating applications and websites to identify and lure foreign nationals who are travelling alone and looking to meet local people. Criminals work in teams, with women easing the victim into a false sense of security. Victims are incapacitated and robbed. Incidents have been reported in nightclubs, bars, restaurants, public transportation, including taxis, and on city streets. Do not accept invitations from strangers to their accommodation, and do not invite strangers to your accommodation.

Do not leave food or drinks unattended and do not take anything offered by strangers. These drugs can cause serious medical problems, including loss of consciousness, memory loss and can be fatal if administered in large quantities. Get local medical attention as soon as possible.

Where possible, plan how you will travel to and from your destination. Only use pre-booked taxis.

## **Public offences**

The law against the sexual abuse of children (aged 13 and under) is strictly enforced, especially when it involves tourists. If convicted, you could face a long prison sentence.

The 141 national toll-free line and the [Child and Adolescent Police](#) are available for 24-hour protection, emergencies and orientation of children and young people.

## **Police scams**

Criminals posing as police are known to operate in Bogotá and elsewhere. They may ask to inspect money to see if it is counterfeit. If you are approached, ask them to escort you to the nearest local police station (CAI or 'Centro de Atención Inmediata').

## **Crime in rural areas**

In many rural areas, the authority of the Colombian state is limited, and the British Embassy's ability to help British nationals in trouble in these areas will also be limited. Mobile and internet connection in rural areas is often limited.

# **Laws and cultural differences**

## **Personal ID**

Always carry a colour printout of the photo page and Colombian visa from your passport for identification. Keep the passport somewhere safe.

## **Alcohol**

It is illegal to consume alcohol in public spaces.

## **Illegal drugs and prison sentences**

Colombia has severe penalties for possession, use or trafficking of illegal drugs.

Colombian drug detection methods are sophisticated and anyone attempting to traffic drugs can expect to be arrested. British nationals have been arrested and detained for trying to smuggle cocaine out of the country. Prison conditions are harsh. Pack your own luggage and keep it with you at all times. Lock your cases to protect them from tampering. Never carry items for other people. Never exchange money for strangers, as this is a common practice among money launderers.

## **Spiritual cleansing**

Traditional hallucinogenic tea, known as Yagé or Ayahuasca, is brewed and marketed to tourists as spiritual cleansing. The various preparations typically contain dimethyltryptamine (DMT), a strong hallucinogen that's illegal in the UK and many other countries.

There are many risks involved. Consumption is not regulated. Intoxicated travellers have been assaulted and robbed. There have also been reports of sexual assaults during these ceremonies.

Health risks are not well understood and some people have suffered serious illnesses and in some cases death after taking these drugs. The jungle retreats are often a long way from medical facilities making the risks even greater. Some have basic medical services, but others do not. Some do not have an established plan for how you can access medical facilities in case of an emergency.

## **Taking photos in secure areas**

Photographing military or strategic government sites is illegal.

## **LGBT+ travellers**

Same-sex sexual activity is legal in Colombia, but same-sex relationships are not widely accepted, especially in rural areas.

Read more [advice for LGBT+ travellers](#).

## **Money**

You can exchange US dollars and euros at banks and authorised money exchanges. Do not change money on the street.

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in hotels, shops and restaurants. Keep the receipts in case you need to show customs what money you have spent when you leave.

## **Transport risks**

### **Road travel**

If you are planning to drive a hire car or a UK vehicle, see [information on driving abroad](#).

You can use a UK photocard driving licence to drive in Colombia. If you still have a paper driving licence, you may need to [update it to a photocard licence](#).

Hire car companies often have stricter requirements for their customers, such as:

- a year of driving experience
- being aged 18 years and over
- holding an International Driving Permit (IDP)
- a citizenship card or passport
- a credit card to guarantee the vehicle hire

Carry all vehicle documents in physical form, in case you are pulled over by the police.

### **Driving standards**

Driving standards are poor and traffic accidents are common. Avoid driving at night, which can be particularly hazardous. Do not hitch-hike. The risk of violence and kidnapping is higher in some rural areas, and there is a risk of being robbed at roadblocks set up by illegal armed groups. Main roads are generally safe during daylight hours.

## **Public transport**

Be cautious when using public transport in Colombia.

There have been several recent incidents of armed robbery on buses. Avoid displaying valuable items like laptops, cameras and mobile phones. Do not wear jewellery and only carry minimal amounts of cash. Avoid travelling on your own or at night, especially at border crossings or areas where there are few other people around. When travelling to remote areas, it may be safer to travel with others or take part in a tour with a reputable company.

## **Taxis**

There have been reports of express kidnappings, assaults and robberies in unlicensed taxis. Use licensed telephone or internet-based taxi services whenever possible or book through your hotel. Many restaurants in Colombia will book a taxi for you. Do not hail taxis on the street.

There are authorised taxi booths at most airports in Colombia. Bogotá's El Dorado International Airport only allows authorised taxis to pick up passengers at its terminals. Authorised taxis are yellow with white licence plates and plate numbers on doors and roof. The driver's information will be shown inside the vehicle. Well-known taxi companies can be booked via Uber and Cabify.

## **Landmines**

There is a risk from landmines throughout Colombia, especially in rural and remote areas. Mined areas are often unmarked. Be vigilant when visiting remote areas or travelling off the main roads.

## **Air travel**

The departmental capitals of Amazonas, Vaupes and Guainía are only accessible by air due to the lack of road infrastructure in these departments.

# Extreme weather and natural disasters

Find out what you can do to prepare for and respond to [extreme weather and natural hazards](#).

## Hurricanes

Although uncommon, hurricanes and tropical storms can affect the Caribbean coast and the Archipelago of San Andres, Providencia and Santa Catalina.

Monitor local news and check [World Meteorological Organization weather reports for Colombia](#), the [US National Hurricane Center](#), and the [Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies \(IDEAM\)](#) (in Spanish).

## Earthquakes

There is a high risk of earthquakes across Colombia. Earthquakes occur regularly, particularly in Santander Department and the Andean Region.

Familiarise yourself with safety procedures and any instructions in your hotel or accommodation.

If an earthquake happens, monitor local media reports, follow instructions from the authorities and keep essential belongings, such as your passport and money, with you.

Get real-time information (in Spanish) following an earthquake from:

- [National Unit for Disaster Risk Management \(UNGRD\)](#)
- [Colombia's Geological Services](#)

You can find a real-time earthquake map and further information about earthquakes in Colombia from [Colombia's Geological Services](#).

The US Federal Emergency Management Agency website has advice about [what to do before, during and after an earthquake](#).

## Flooding

There is a risk of floods and landslides after heavy rains throughout Colombia, especially in the Colombian Andes. Get local advice before travelling on mountain roads after heavy rain.

## Volcanic eruptions

There are 25 active and monitored volcanoes in Colombia. Check the latest [daily bulletins about volcanic activity](#) (in Spanish).

If you are in areas of volcanic activity, monitor the [Servicio Geológico Colombiano](#) for any updates or alerts.

Notify friends and family of your location, stay alert, and follow any advice from local security authorities or your travel operator. Be prepared to make travel arrangements or follow evacuation plans at short notice.

Check before travelling on the Pan-American highway, which passes near a volcano. Call 767 for information (in Spanish) from the Colombian Highway Police about road closures.

## Regional risks

This section has safety advice for regions of Colombia. It only covers regions where the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office ([FCDO](#)) has specific advice.

You should also read [FCDO's overall travel advice](#) and [safety and security advice](#).

## Colombia-Venezuela border and northern Colombia

[FCDO](#) advises against all but essential travel to:

- the Catatumbo region of Norte de Santander Department
- all of Arauca Department, except for the department capital, Arauca
- the municipality of Puerto Carreño in Vichada Department, except for the department capital, Puerto Carreño
- within 5km of the rest of the border with Venezuela, except for the city of Cúcuta

[FCDO](#) currently advises against all travel to [Venezuela's border regions with Colombia](#). You should not use any of the Colombia-Venezuela land crossings.

## **Pacific coast and Colombia-Panama border**

ECDO advises against all but essential travel to:

- Chocó Department, except for the department capital Quibdó, the whale-watching towns of Nuquí and Bahía Solano and the tourist site of Capurganá
- the western part of Valle del Cauca Department, including Buenaventura
- the western part of Cauca Department
- the South Pacific, Sanquianga and Telembi regions of Nariño Department
- the southern part of Córdoba Department
- the Urabá and Bajo Cauca regions of Antioquia Department
- the southern part of Bolívar Department

The Pacific coast of Chocó is a popular eco-tourist destination. However, much of Chocó is remote. Illegal armed groups are active and involved in the drugs trade throughout the department and particularly near the border with Panama. If you intend to travel to the whale-watching towns of Bahía Solano and Nuquí, only do so by air and do not travel inland or along the coast out of town.

### **Darien Gap**

The 'Darien Gap' is a dangerous area renowned for the presence of several illegal armed groups, illegal migration and drugs trafficking. There's no road crossing between Colombia and Panama. Avoid crossing between Panama and Colombia by land.

## **Colombia-Ecuador border and southern Colombia**

ECDO advises against all but essential travel to within 5km of the border with Ecuador except for:

- the border crossing on the Pan-American highway at the Puente Internacional de Rumichaca
- the city of Ipiales in Nariño Department

ECDO advises against all but essential travel to Orito, San Miguel, Valle del Guamuez, Puerto Caicedo, Puerto Guzmán, Puerto Asis and Puerto Leguizamo in Putumayo Department.

# Central Colombia

ECDDQ advises against all but essential travel to:

- all of Guaviare Department, except for the department capital San José de Guaviare
- Cartagena del Chairá, San Vicente del Caguan, Puerto Rico, El Doncello, Paujil and La Montañita in Caquetá Department
- the Ariari region of southern Meta, except for Caño Cristales

If travelling to the tourist site of Caño Cristales, travel by air from the town of La Macarena with a reputable tour company.

## Ciudad Perdida – ‘Lost City’

If you travel to the ‘Lost City’ in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, only do so as part of an organised tour.

## San Agustín Archaeological Park

The San Agustín Archaeological Park (‘Parque Arqueológico de San Agustín’) is in the department of Huila. Enter and leave the park on the main road through Neiva or Popayán.

## Health

Before you travel check that:

- your destination can provide the healthcare you may need
- you have [appropriate travel insurance](#) for local treatment or unexpected medical evacuation

This is particularly important if you have a health condition or are pregnant.

## Emergency medical number

Call 123 and ask for an ambulance.

Contact your insurance company quickly if you’re referred to a medical facility for treatment.

# Vaccine recommendations and health risks

At least 8 weeks before your trip:

- check the latest [vaccine recommendations for Colombia](#)
- see where to get vaccines and whether you have to pay on the [NHS travel vaccinations page](#)

See [what health risks you'll face in Colombia](#), including:

- Yellow fever, especially in the Departments of Tolima and Cundinamarca
- Zika
- Malaria and Dengue
- Chikungunya

Altitude sickness is a risk in parts of Colombia, including Bogotá and areas in the Departments of Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Nariño and Antioquia. Read more about [altitude sickness on TravelHealthPro](#).

## Drinking tap water

Tap water is safe to drink only in Bogotá. You should drink only bottled water and avoid ice in drinks.

## Medication and prescriptions

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or bought in the UK can be different in other countries.

You can find most medication in pharmacies in large cities, but medicine for complex treatment may be unavailable in rural areas and small towns. You may need a prescription from a local doctor to get some controlled medicine.

If you take prescription medication, you will be responsible for determining its legality in Colombia. Always keep your medication in the original container, bring sufficient quantities of your medication with you, pack your medication in your carry-on luggage and carry a copy of your prescriptions.

Pharmacies in Colombia ('droguerías') have a cross on their signage and are easy to find in the main cities in Colombia. They are less common in rural areas.

Most pharmacies in Colombia will have a delivery service. Prescriptions must be written in Spanish, in the metric system and using the medicine's generic name.

Read [best practice when travelling with medicines on TravelHealthPro](#).

## Healthcare in Colombia

Medical facilities in Colombia vary widely in quality. In large cities and state capitals, private clinics provide good quality care for routine and complex treatment.

Public health facilities and those in smaller cities are generally ill equipped and poorly funded. Ambulance services in remote areas are unreliable and public hospitals often lack adequate medical supplies.

Make sure you have adequate travel health insurance and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment abroad and repatriation.

[FCDO](#) has a [list of medical providers in Colombia](#) where some staff will speak English.

## Travel and mental health

Read [FCDO guidance on travel and mental health](#). There is also [mental health guidance on TravelHealthPro](#).

### Getting help

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office ([FCDO](#)) cannot provide tailored advice for individual trips. Read this travel advice and carry out your own research before deciding whether to travel.

## Emergency services in Colombia

Ambulance: 123

Fire: 119

Police: 123

# Contact your travel provider and insurer

Contact your travel provider and your insurer if you are involved in a serious incident or emergency abroad. They will tell you if they can help and what you need to do.

## Refunds and changes to travel

For refunds or changes to travel, contact your travel provider. You may also be able to make a claim through insurance. However, insurers usually require you to talk to your travel provider first.

Find out more about [changing or cancelling travel plans](#), including:

- where to get advice if you are in a dispute with a provider
- how to access previous versions of travel advice to support a claim

## Support from FCDO

FCDO has guidance on staying safe and what to do if you need help or support abroad, including:

- finding English-speaking [lawyers](#), [funeral directors](#) and [translators and interpreters](#) in Colombia
- dealing with a [death in Colombia](#)
- being [arrested or imprisoned in Colombia](#)
- getting help if you're a [victim of crime](#)
- what to do if you're [in hospital](#)
- if you're [affected by a crisis](#) such as a terrorist attack

## Contacting FCDO

### Help abroad

See [how to get help from the UK government abroad](#) including in an emergency.

### Help in the UK

You can call FCDO in London if you need urgent help because something has happened to a friend or relative abroad.

Telephone: 020 7008 5000 (24 hours)

[Find out about call charges](#)

## Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow ECDO:

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)

## Risk information for British companies

The Overseas Business Risk service offers [information and advice for British companies operating in Colombia](#) on how to manage political, economic, and business security-related risks.

---

## PACK SMART

Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Carry a duplicate wallet with small denomination notes and old cards that you could relinquish if threatened by robbers. Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Always check the destination restrictions regarding medications when planning your trip.

### **STAY SAFE: Hotels**



Request a hotel room between the third & seventh floor. Ground floor rooms should always be avoided as they are easily accessible from the outside. Higher levels mean in the event of a fire there are many stairs to navigate and in some countries firefighters may not have ladders capable of reaching higher than the seventh floor.



Check your room phone works in case you need to call reception for help.



Know where your fire exits are. Count the number of doors to the fire exit from your room so you can feel your way in the event of a fire and a smoke-filled corridor.



To prevent unauthorised entry into your hotel room, make sure the windows and doors lock. Bolt the deadbolt and use the door wedges you've brought with you from home to wedge the main door closed.

### **TRAVEL SAFE: Out & About**



When you are out and about, be aware of your surroundings - don't display obvious wealth, such as expensive jewellery, watches and mobile phones.



Use ATMs inside banks and shopping centres, where there is greater security and CCTV. Safety in numbers. If you are travelling with

colleagues, stay together for meals and trips out. If you are alone, avoid quiet areas and trust your instincts.

### **Road traffic accidents are still the greatest threat to travel safety.**



- Use licensed taxis.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Keep doors locked & windows up.
- Avoid night-time driving.
- If the driver is using a phone or driving dangerously, insist they slow down/stop using their phone.

Check in regularly. Use the 'Check In' button on the Solace Secure app so your location can be monitored and you can view all intelligence alerts within your vicinity.

### **SAFE TRAVEL:** Health Tips

**See a medical travel specialist at least 4 weeks before travel.**

**Ask about recommended vaccines for specific destinations.**

**First aid kit with regular & special medication for trip - carry in hand luggage.**

**Evacuation & travel insurance to cover health emergencies while abroad.**



Take an extra month of prescribed medication for pre-existing conditions.

Risk of malaria - take precautions to prevent mosquito bites and take malaria pills as advised.



Avoid drinking alcohol and becoming dehydrated.

Verify & consume safe water and food. Have a supply of medicine for

self-treatment of diarrhoea.



Excessive sun exposure should be minimised by the use of sunscreen - sun can be more intense over water, snow and at altitude.

Leave animals alone. Animal bites or scratches can transmit rabies.

### **THINK SAFE:** Know Your Destination

Understand the culture of your destination. Dress and behave so as not to cause offence or draw attention.



Know if the tap water is suitable to drink if not; only accept water from a sealed bottle.

Avoid ice in your drinks & salad washed in tap water.

Research where you are travelling to. Make a note of the local emergency services number. Know the current security and medical threats and advice. See the FCO website for general information ([gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)).

### **DOCUMENT SAFE:** Know Your Destination

Take photos/scans of your essential documents and email them to yourself. You can then access them remotely if your belongings are stolen:

- Passport
- Driver's Licence
- Travel Insurance Document
- Visa

- Medical Certificates

For 24/7 travel risk advice and emergency assistance contact Solace Global Risk operations: + 44 (0)1202 795 801

The Solace Secure desktop and app provide up-to-the-minute alerts, providing latest information on your travel location even when you are there.

#### CONTACT SOLACE GLOBAL RESPONSE TEAM

This report has been prepared for you by Solace Global Risk Ltd.

If you need urgent help, advice or assistance at any time please contact the 24/7 Response and Assistance Team.

If you have a question about this travel advice or any other location please email [SGR@solaceglobal.com](mailto:SGR@solaceglobal.com) for further safety and security information.

For support using your Solace Secure platform or app please contact [support@solaceglobal.com](mailto:support@solaceglobal.com).

Solace Global Risk, Twin Sails House, West Quay Road, Poole, BH15 1JF, UK