



# **GLOBAL BUILDERS PROGRAM HANDBOOK-2018 Lori Region**

**Updated February, 2018**

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## WELCOME FROM FULLER CENTER FOR HOUSING ARMENIA

This handbook contains some useful info about Armenia and Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA). You may want to review all the contents now, and then read the pages/topics that you need to know as the time gets closer to your trip.

*Dear Global Builders' team members,*

Many thanks for your interest and willingness to join Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) in building simple, decent, affordable and healthy homes in Armenia. You will be a great help in this developing country and will surely have many exciting experiences while working with homeowners and visiting different parts of Armenia. Our staff, board and volunteers are here to assist you with any questions you may have. Do not hesitate to contact anyone whenever you have questions. This handbook is meant to answer questions that you may have before landing in the country. Feel free to read it from the beginning or choose chapters you may want to read first.

*We're looking forward to meeting you here in Armenia and wishing you a great time and experience.*

In Christian partnership,

Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) staff, board, volunteers and homeowners

## INFORMATION ON THE FULLER CENTER HOUSING (FCH) AND FULLER CENTER FOR HOUSING ARMENIA (FCHA)

### *History*

***The Fuller Center for Housing*** was founded in the spring of 2005 at Koinonia Farm in rural southwest Georgia. After 29 years of tireless service to the poor with Habitat for Humanity, Millard Fuller, the founder and president of Habitat, was motivated to expand his vision of eliminating substandard housing worldwide. The Fuller Center for Housing, faith driven and Christ centered, promotes collaborative and innovative partnerships with individuals and organizations in an unrelenting quest to provide adequate shelter for all people in need worldwide. The FCH has programs in 70 U.S. cities and in 20 countries around the world.

***Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA)*** was registered in the spring of 2008. It is a non-governmental charitable organization that supports community development in the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh by assisting in building and renovating simple, decent and affordable homes and advocating the right to a decent shelter as a matter of conscience and action.

***The goal of FCHA*** is to eliminate substandard housing in Armenia. Sub-standard housing is all too common in Armenia. Fuller Center for Housing Armenia plans to build in all regions of Armenia. *The choice of communities is based on the scale of housing need, and the willingness of the community*

*to start a partnership.* The Fuller Center for Housing Armenia focuses on completing unfinished houses, replacing and renovating roofs, and installing sanitation and heating systems for low-income families in both urban and rural areas. Fuller Center for Housing Armenia provides long-term, interest-free loans to low-income families. Their monthly repayments flow into the Revolving Fund and are used to help more families, thereby providing the financial foundation for a sustainable community development effort.

From April through October each year, the Armenia program hosts teams of local and international volunteers who help build and renovate houses.

***Since 2008 FCHA has been changing the lives of Armenian families. So far we have reached out to over 623 families. Helping one family at a time makes a big difference and impacts more than one generation.***

2018 is a remarkable year for Fuller Center for Housing Armenia. We are celebrating 10 years of building homes and empowering families through decent, affordable housing.

***To make the 10th anniversary memorable and to assist more families in housing need the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) will build 10 homes till December 2018 to commemorate the 10th year of serving families in housing need.***

## ***Donors and Volunteers***

To accomplish its mission, Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) is garnering volunteer and financial support from individuals, organizations, corporate partners and churches. International and local volunteers come together to work shoulder to shoulder with the families and help decrease the construction costs.

## ***Programs and Partnerships***

***ARDI Program (Advanced Rural Development Initiative):*** ARDI is a 5-year program funded by the US Agency for International Development. Launched in September 2013, the program aims to increase rural employment by tackling constraints to rural economic development of select rural communities in the Syunik, Vayots Dzor and Lori marzes (provinces) of Armenia. The program will support interventions in three main rural economic sectors/ Value Chains involving Dairy Processing, Fruit Processing and Rural Tourism.

Since its inception ARDI program has implemented 70 infrastructural projects. Interventions have been undertaken for the establishment of 7 milk collection units, 5 milk processing plants, 4 fruit cold storages, 1 laboratory, 1 agricultural machinery park, 1 herbal tea production , 3 farmer service centers , sixty animal watering points in 19 communities, 14 irrigation systems, upgrading 13 existing Bed & Breakfasts and 2 dry fruit production plants. Besides the above mentioned infrastructural projects 100 small grant projects have been provided for women and young entrepreneurs in different subsectors of agriculture.

***Partnership with VivaCell-MTS:*** It's already the sixth year VivaCell-MTS, Armenia's leading mobile operator, makes a secure social investment in the protection and development of Armenian communities becoming part of the mission of eliminating poverty housing in Armenia through a Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) Global Builders' Handbook – 2018

striking example of corporate social responsibility. **In 6 years 150 families have been assisted through Fuller Center for Housing Armenia & VivaCell-MTS partnership.**

***Partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC):*** The partnership with ICRC is aimed to assist families of missing and the victims of mine/ERW (explosive remnants of war) to rehabilitate their homes. **In 8 years 136 families have been assisted through this partnership.**

***Partnership with ARDA Charitable Foundation and Vanadzor Municipality:*** In 2008 a memorandum was signed between ARDA Charitable Foundation, Vanadzor Municipality and Fuller Center for Housing Armenia, which planned to build decent homes for families of Vanadzor city, Lori Region living in temporary shelters, called domiks ***As a result of this partnership already 67 families moved from metal containers into their decent homes.***

The Lazarian polystyrene (or Styrofoam) block is the basis for these homes. With these blocks, the housing structures become simple and inexpensive to build. The buildings are energy efficient and the blocks keep out moisture, resist pests, and contain fire retardant materials all within each block.

***Other Continuing Strong Partnerships:*** The year was also prominent with continuous solid partnerships with Heifer Project International Armenia, KPMG Armenia, Armenia Marriott Hotel Yerevan, U.S. Embassy Armenia Helping Hands, AGBU, AVC, Birthright Armenia, FLEX (Future Leaders Exchange), Armenia Tree Project, Peace Corps in Armenia, UWCD, also new partnerships with American University of Armenia (AUA), Armenian Assembly of America, Teach for Armenia and Microsoft Armenia and many others.

### ***Housing need in Armenia***

***Need:*** According to “Social Reforms in Armenia” approximately 64,000 families have housing need in Armenia, of which about 26,000 are without permanent shelter. They live in temporary structures, in most cases metal shipping containers, so-called domiks. Others live in former hotels, schools and kindergartens which were converted to temporary housing. Alongside those without



permanent shelter are the tens of thousands of families requiring better housing conditions.

The real estate market in Armenia has experienced dramatic growth in volume, and prices have consistently increased over the last five years. The majority of residential construction targets wealthy customers, and is not accessible even to the middle class. The construction boom has driven a rapid boost in the Price Index for Construction with continuing trends making it extremely hard for low income groups to build or renovate their homes. Homelessness and housing poverty have grave material and psychological consequences for the families and society, which are in complex cause and consequence relations and create a closed cycle of poverty.

## ***Types of need addressed by Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA)***

***Unfinished houses:*** Many families had begun to build their own homes after the collapse of Soviet Union. With the ensuing economic crisis, homes were left unfinished - thousands of these foundations and semi-structures can be seen littering the countryside. Many families live either in the dark and damp basements of such houses unable to complete them. Fuller Center Armenia recognizes this as an opportunity to leverage resources already invested in housing solutions. Therefore, the program can help two or three families rather than one, since completing a half-built house is more economical than beginning construction anew.



***Broken and leaking asbestos roofs:*** Because of heavy rains and lack of maintenance, the roofs of many Armenian houses are severely deteriorated - slates are often broken, and rainwater leaks in. Besides, most roofs are made of asbestos, which is a hazard for the health of the residents. Fuller Center replaces broken asbestos roofs with corrugated tin roofs on timber frameworks.

***Deteriorated housing stock:*** The economic difficulties of the past decade have left their mark on the existing housing stock. More than a decade of insufficient investment in maintenance and repair as well as in housing infrastructure has resulted in a deteriorating housing stock and inadequate provision with housing utility services. Recognizing this problem and aiming at the preservation of existing housing stock, Fuller Center Armenia also provides opportunities to the families to renovate their houses.



***No sanitation systems:*** In rural areas, where Fuller Center for Housing Armenia works predominantly, only 14.2% of houses are equipped with basic amenities (kitchen, toilet with draining system, bathroom). Fuller Center Armenia helps families to install a sanitation system in their homes promoting the maintenance of hygiene and healthy living conditions.

***No heating system:*** More than a decade of insufficient investment in maintenance and repair as well as in housing infrastructure has resulted in a deteriorating housing stock and inadequate provision with housing utility services. Recognizing this problem and aiming at the preservation of existing housing stock, Fuller Center Armenia also provides opportunities to the families to renovate their house and to install heating systems.

***Overcrowding:*** Several related families and multiple generations of one family often crowd into small houses and apartments. The living space per person is far below the minimum set by the

Armenian government. Not only does this situation threaten people's physical health, but it contributes to a variety of psychological and family problems, including increased divorce rates.

**Other:** In places where prices are still moderate and affordable, Fuller Center Armenia assists families living in domiks or in overcrowded conditions to purchase a house or an apartment.

### ***Construction techniques***

Armenia has a wealth of natural colored stones which makes it possible to build solid, healthy, and aesthetically beautiful homes. The most useful stone, “toof,” is a porous volcanic material. We cut the tuff into 19x28x40cm blocks, and then build double walls in order to keep the homes cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Thanks to the effectiveness of this stone and this method, we do not require any additional insulation. Armenia is located in a seismic zone, so we also build our homes using several kinds of supporting techniques.



### ***Construction work***

***Global Builders’ construction work involves primarily:*** concrete work, mixing sand and cement, pouring water, making the mixture and carrying with buckets, hauling toof blocks, plastering and painting walls, sanding the window and door cavities and walls, fixing roofs.

***Tasks for 13-16 year-old-volunteers:*** passing empty buckets, shoveling and cleaning up the equipment and work area.

***Partner Families:*** We are now in the process of selecting future FCHA families with whom your Global Builders’ team will be working. Details about these families will be provided later.

### ***Daily and Trip Schedules***

Your team’s specific schedule will be provided in detail later; this is just a typical schedule for work days:

**8:30am** - breakfast

**9:30am** - pick up for travel to the construction site

**10:15am** - start to work (depends on how far the site is)

**1:00-2:00 pm** – lunch

**4:30pm** – coffee break

**5:00-5:30pm** leave the work site

**7:30- 8 pm** – dinner in restaurant

*Please note this schedule is not final and it may be changed slightly depending on worksite distance and team’s preference.*

*It is suggested that every 2-3 work days be followed with a sightseeing day.*

## ***Logistics***

### ***Visa***

**[January 1, 2015, U.S. citizens will be able to travel to Armenia visa-free. \(http://armenia.usembassy.gov/visas.html\)](http://armenia.usembassy.gov/visas.html)**

Passports are required for all travelers to Armenia and must be valid for an additional six months after the planned departure date from the visited country. Please bring 2-3 copies of the picture page of your passport. To enter Armenia you also need a visa.

From most countries, you can buy your visa when you arrive at the airport in Armenia, but please check your country status with the host coordinator. Buying a tourist visa at Zvartnots International Airport in Yerevan for 21 days will cost 3,000 AMD (\$10).

You can also obtain an e-Visa online. The service is available through web sites at [www.armeniaforeignministry.am](http://www.armeniaforeignministry.am) and [www.armeniadiaspora.com](http://www.armeniadiaspora.com) as well as through the websites of Armenian embassies around the world. Go to the link, follow instructions and pay the fee. If you receive e-visa, make sure to print and keep it with your passport till your departure from Armenia.

Please discuss the visa options (at the airport or e-visa) with your team leader before you make your decision about which way to obtain it.

For those of you traveling through Russia, anyone wishing to leave an airport between flights should check with the embassy of that country because regulations are different and keep changing.

### ***FAQ about visa***

1. How long are e-Visas valid? - E-Visas are valid for travel for up to 90 days from date of issue. They are good for a single entry, and a stay of up to up to 21 days.
2. What happens after I apply for my e-Visa? - As soon as your application is received, you receive an immediate confirmation, with the reference number that your application is assigned. Then, your credit card is verified and charging authorization is received from your bank. Finally, your application goes through a verification process. You should use the reference number to check the status of your e-Visa by clicking the "Check Status" option online.

### ***If your application is:***

#### ***In process***

You should check back later. Although most applications are processed within two business days, some applications may take little longer to process.

#### ***Approved***

You should see a graphic representation of a visa, complete with your visa number and other particulars. You may want to print the page and keep it for your records. Upon arrival in Yerevan Zvartnots International Airport simply inform the border guards that you have been issued an e-Visa. Border guards will electronically verify validity of your e-Visa. If data submitted in your application does not exactly correspond with your factual information, you will be considered to have arrived without a visa and will be processed accordingly.

### ***Denied***

Your application for an e-Visa could not be approved on line. You may want to contact an Armenian Mission nearest you and apply for a conventional visa. Since e-Visas typically take only 2 days to process and are only good for 90 days, I would have your team members apply about a month in advance. That way, you have time to keep reminding them before you leave and they have time to deal with any problems. And you're sure that the visa is good while you're there.

### ***Foreigners registration at their Embassies***

All foreigners residing in or visiting Armenia are strongly encouraged to register with their Consular Section. Registration helps the Embassy provide important services to their citizens abroad. This includes: issuing a replacement passport, locating individuals in cases of family emergency, relaying important travel and safety information about the region, and other administrative services relating to personal documentation. For contacts please see below.

### ***Foreign Embassy contacts in Armenia***

#### ***Embassy of the United States of America***

1 American Avenue  
Yerevan 375082, Republic of Armenia  
Telephone: (+37410) 464-700  
Fax:(+37410) 464-742  
E-mail: usinfo@usa.am  
Consular E-mail: consular@usa.am

You may register at the Consular Section between 14:00 and 17:00 Monday thru Friday. Please bring your U.S. passport. You may also register by letter, telephone, fax, or online at <http://www.usa.am/consular/register.html>. If you are registering by letter or fax, please include a photocopy of your passport data page.

#### ***Embassy of Great Britain***

Address: 34 Baghramyan Avenue, Yerevan 375019, Republic of Armenia  
Telephone: (+374) 10 26-43-01  
Fax: (+374) 10 26-43-18  
<http://www.britishembassy.am>

#### ***Embassy of France***

Address: 8 Grigor Lousavorich Str., Yerevan  
Phone: (+374) 10 56-11-03, 56-46-67, 10 58-35-11  
Fax: (+374) 10 56-98-35  
E-mail: admin@ambafra.am

#### ***Embassy of Germany***

Address: 29 Charents St, Yerevan, Republic of Armenia  
Telephone: (+374) 10 58-65-91, 10 52-45-81

## **Transportation**

### **Airport Transfers**

You are responsible for getting to and from Armenia, which includes obtaining your tickets, getting to/from your departure airport and for checking your luggage. Consult with your team leader before booking your tickets—they may want to travel as a team or they may advise you when you are required to meet the team in Armenia. Be sure to check with your airline about baggage allowances before packing and arriving at the airport.

FCHA staff will meet you at Yerevan’s International Zvartnots airport as a group and drive you to your hotel either in the city of Yerevan or directly to the Lori Region. We request all team members arrive and depart Armenia together. If this is not possible, FCHA will assist you with making arrangements for separate arrivals and departures, but we can't guarantee that we can pick you up or take you back to the airport and you may incur additional expenses. The airport is located about 8 miles southwest of the city center of Yerevan, approximately 20 minutes by car, and about 2 hours from Vanadzor, Lori Region.

### **In-country Transportation**

Transportation in-country will be handled by FCHA to/from the work site and for sightseeing, but most evenings you will walk to nearby restaurants in the city center for dinner. You will be provided with a map of Vanadzor upon your arrival to Armenia.



**Taxis** are a convenient way to get around Vanadzor. The minimum fare is 600 drams for up to 5km. After the first 5km, the rate is 100 drams per km. Although the taxis don’t usually have meters, you can estimate how many kilometers you’ve gone. Most rides in Vanadzor should not cost more than 1500 drams (8 kilometers) anywhere in the center of the city. You pay when you get out. There are no English speaking taxi services in Vanadzor, so be prepared to say your destination in Armenian.

Several Taxi service telephone numbers:

- 30666 TAXI ARPI, works 8:00am - 1:00 am
- 44444 TAXI EVRO, works 8:00am - 12:00 am
- 41881, 21881 TAXI ROBA, 24 hours

### **Vans (Marshutkas):**

The vans are a good way to get around Vanadzor. They generally have the price posted in the front of the van, but usually they cost 100 drams per person. You pay when you get off.

### **Buses:**

We would suggest you avoid taking buses in Vanadzor. They are usually slow and crowded. But if you do use them, they cost 70 drams, and you pay when you get off.

## **Security**

### **In Vanadzor**

Vanadzor is a very safe city, perhaps safer than comparable cities in Western countries. The residents are friendly and the streets are not considered dangerous. However, volunteers should

take all the usual precautions: travel in pairs, do not go to restaurants and bars alone, especially after dark, and be careful when displaying money or other expensive items.

Volunteers will be housed in a modest hotel. While we do our best to provide a safe environment for your personal belongings, we can't guarantee safe keeping. **We strongly recommend that you do NOT bring items with any significant monetary and/or sentimental value.**

## On site

Whatever personal belongings volunteers bring to the work site are their responsibility. Volunteers bringing personal tools may want to mark their tools with their name or other information for easy identification. We do not recommend taking valuable items to work site.

## Accommodation

You will stay at a modest hotel near to the city center. You will be informed about your hotel separately. We will do our best to accommodate you as comfortably as possible, but please be aware that accommodations are not comparable to Western hotels. Your room will have a private bathroom with a shower, a small refrigerator, and air conditioning.

The electrical power supply in Armenia is AC 220 Volts, 50Hz via sockets for 2-pin plugs. More about this to come.

## Meals

Fruits and vegetables are very delicious and organic in Armenia! However we would like to warn you against eating too much raw food to prevent any "intestinal discomfort" while in Armenia.

## Armenian traditional foods

In Armenia you can taste many traditional Armenian foods. From ancient times Armenian cuisine is famous for its fish dishes. Lake Sevan is rich variety of fishes – trout, sig, koghak.

**Lavash (on the right)** is baked in "toneer" which is a round-shaped clay oven dug into the ground. Lavash has an oval shape. Armenians use lavash to wrap herbs, cheese, khorovats (BBQ), etc. You can buy lavash from any shops or markets.



Lamb, veal or pork are used for cooking khorovats (BBQ). The meat is specially chosen, marinated and then cooked on metal skewers.

Armenia is famous for its fruits--pomegranates, apricots, grapes, peaches, pears and figs. You can find them all around in every market. Armenians are master wine and cognac makers. Today you may try not only a wide range of Armenian grape wines but also very tasty pomegranate wines. Armenian cognac is world renowned.

One of the Armenian traditional pastry is **gata (on the left)**. Long ago Armenians made it especially for Christmas. In villages gata is usually made in an oven in the ground, called a toneer, and a coin is put in the dough for luck.



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The most famous dish in Armenia is ***dolma (on the right)***. Dolma is prepared from ground meat, rice and spices which is wrapped either in grape leaves or cabbage. Summer dolma is the same filling stuffed in eggplant, pepper or tomatoes. Grape leaf dolma is served with madzoun (yogurt) and garlic. Yogurt is indispensable from Armenian table. It is also used for making spas (traditional soup).

### ***Breakfast***

Breakfast is served at your hotel. Offerings may include eggs, yogurt, bread, cheese, juice, tea and coffee.

### ***Lunch***

On working days you will have lunch at the work site. There will be hot food including meat, vegetables, salads, fruit, cheese, and bread. The homeowners may bring something special to the table, perhaps from their garden or kitchen. On non-working days we will arrange lunches at a restaurant.

### ***Dinner***

Your host coordinator and team leader will make arrangements for dinners in restaurants. The recommended restaurants are all within walking distance from the hotel. If you'd prefer to take a taxi, you are welcome to do so (at your cost).

### ***Alcoholic Drinks:***

Please be advised that FCH does not pay for alcoholic drinks, so you will be required to pay for them yourself if you order any.

Below is a list of recommended restaurants you may enjoy with your team :

<b>Restaurant</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Tashir Pizza	Pizza and other burgers and salads	65 a Tigran Mets st.	(0322)44411, (0322)44401
Izagri cafe	Mixed style/excellent salad bar and pizzas, good khachapuri (cheese in toast)	Artsakh sq.	(055)042218
Melnitsa	Armenian and mixed	31 Moskovyan st.	(0322) 45622
Elkani restaurant	Armenian	2-1 Zoravar Andranik	(0322)51919, (0322)21919
Oasis cafe	<b>Mixed style/excellent salad bar</b>	42 Tigran Mets St.	(0322)40646
KFC	Fast food place	73 Tigran Mets	(060) 500505
Vernatun restaurant	Armenian cuisine	12 Tumanyan st.	(093) 397971
Palma restaurant	Armenian cuisine	22 Grigor Lusavorich	099 32587
Lorva Orran	Armenian cuisine	On Pambak way	(094) 409393
Jazz cafe	Mixed cuisine	34 b.Tigran Mets St.	098 117282
Argishti hotel Restaurant	Armenian and mixed, you may also order something you would	Batumi 1	42556, 42557

### ***Drinking Water***

Please take necessary precautions to adjust to local water. We recommend you drink ONLY bottled water in Armenia. FCHA will provide bottled drinking water on the worksite and for your room. It will also be served at all meals. Do stay hydrated and drink plenty of water throughout your trip. It will help you stay healthy!

### ***Conveniences***

While the homes we will be building will eventually be equipped with indoor plumbing, our work site may not be. Outdoor toilets will be available for homeowners and team members. These certainly are no substitute for your bathroom at home. But the volunteer hotel will have flushing toilets and bathing facilities. We appreciate your understanding of this issue!

### ***Laundry***

There are laundry facilities available at some hotels or nearby. FCHA will provide information on how you can have it washed and folded. It will take a day or two and it will cost a minimal amount.

### ***Safety Information***

#### ***No job is so important that it can't be done safely!***

- Wear work boots that protect your feet and have heavy soles to resist penetration from nails and rocky surfaces
- Don't lift beyond your strength--bend your knees and lift with your legs
- Hard hats are required when working in an area where items could fall or be dropped from above
- Speak up if something looks unsafe. An observer can spot danger quicker than a worker.
- FCHA requires that you protect your eyes with safety glasses when working around dust or when using power tools
- Know where the drinking water and first aid kit are located. Tell your Team Leader immediately in the event of an injury.
- Think and concentrate on your task
- If you are uncertain about how to do a task or use a tool, ask your Team Leader
- Don't leave loose objects on the roof, ledges, ladders or scaffolding
- Use a ladder that will reach the work. An extension ladder should extend three feet (3') above the step-off point. Move the ladder with your work. Avoid overreaching. Place step ladders on solid, level footing. Don't work at a height beyond which you are comfortable.
- Scaffolding should be placed only on solid, level footing. Dig down if necessary. Don't stack loose material (scrap lumber, bricks, concrete blocks, etc.) under scaffolding legs to level. Use leg leveling devices provided with the scaffolding. Make sure that walk boards are fastened securely and are adequate for the number of workers on the scaffolding. Don't work at a height beyond which you are comfortable.

- When using utility knives, keep hands out of the path of the blade. Always retract the blade when not in use.
- Keep the work area clean. Put all trash and debris in a trash container or a designated trash area.

**If you are uncertain about how to do a task, or how to operate a power tool, ask your Team Leader.**

### ***Health Care***

Your health is one of our major concerns. We strongly recommend that you seek professional medical advice to insure that you are healthy enough to handle hard work in a hot and dry climate in a poor country. Please bring all medication needed while you travel. It is also important that you bring prescriptions for all your medications with you. If you have an extra pair of glasses, make sure to have them with you as well.

For your safety on the construction site, it is important that you are up-to-date with your tetanus shot or have one administered prior to your arrival in Armenia, upon the advice of your doctor.

### ***First-Aid***

There will be a first aid box on site for any worker who becomes ill or injured at the construction site. In the event of a serious illness or injury, arrangements for transportation to the local hospital will be made. ***Make sure you inform your team leader and host coordinator if you are hurt, don't feel well, or if there is an emergency.***



### ***Churches***

The main religion in Armenia is Christian, specifically Armenian Apostolic. There are 3 Armenian Apostolic Churches in Vanadzor. There is also one Russian Orthodox Church, and one Evangelical Church. There are church services every Sunday in all churches, where the language is Classical Armenian (Grapar). Church services usually begin at 11am and last approximately 2 hours.

During sightseeing we will visit many beautiful and ancient churches. If you are interested in attending Sunday services let your team leader know in advance.

Please dress appropriately when visiting churches either for touring or for services. Women: shoulders and knees should be covered, and during Sunday services your head should also be covered. Men: long trousers and shirts are appropriate. Sandals are ok for women and men

### ***Post office***

To send a postcard to Europe/United States it costs 240 drams, but generally there are no specific stamps provided for a postcard, so you would need to buy an envelope (60 drams) and send it that way.

To send a letter to Europe/United States it costs 350 drams, plus 60 drams if you buy the envelope at the post office. You can either go to the post office on your own, or give your mail to FCHA staff along with the postage costs and they will mail it for you.

Sending a post card/letter to USA and Europe generally takes 14 days but can at times take up to a couple of months.

## **Money**

The local currency of Armenia is called the dram (AMD). It was introduced in November 1993 replacing the Russian ruble as the official currency. There are 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 and 100,000 dram bills, and the coins are in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 drams. **As of February, 2018, the exchange rate is AMD 480 to 1 USD.** If a bill is anything less than 10 drams, it will be rounded up or down.

### **Currency Exchange**

Currency exchange offices are available in the city center of Vanadzor. The rates between different establishments don't fluctuate much so don't bother looking for a good deal. Almost all exchange places advertise their rates on signs posted outside. Usually you will get a receipt for the exchanged amount. If you don't, just ask. Armenians tend to be very honest but count your money before leaving the window as accidents do happen.

### **ATM Machines and Credit Cards**

***Credit cards, travelers' checks and personal checks are not widely accepted and most transactions are made in cash. Some banks accept credit cards and cash traveler's checks.***

Some establishments, especially those serving tourists, such as souvenir shops and restaurants, accept credit cards (mostly Master Card and Visa). In Vanadzor, there are many ATM machines. Most of them are in the central part of the city and are close to the hotel. You will pay service charges to use these machines. It is best to bring cash to spend on your incidentals and souvenirs.

### **Telephone and Internet**

Check with your internet/cell phone provider about whether or not you have an international calling/data plan and what your options are if you'd like to use your phone/smart phone in Armenia. Or, you can purchase a calling card in grocery stores in Armenia which will allow you a set number of minutes for calling overseas. These cards and the rates are very reasonably priced.



In Vanadzor some establishments (such as hotels, restaurants, and cafes) have free wi-fi so you may be able to use your smart phone, tablet, or laptop. Internet service is not as fast as in the US and there will be times it may not work. Please be patient. There are also Internet clubs where you can log into a public computer and connect to the internet for around 300 AMD for an hour (less than 1 US Dollar).

FCHA staff will assist you with these details.

*Please note that making international phone calls from hotel-land line is very expensive.*

### ***Fuller Center Armenia Numbers***

Armen Avetisyan ED of FC Armenia	Office: (374-10) 20-43-90 Mobile: (374- 94) 40 75 59
Rouzanne Sakanyan (Resource Development Manager)	Mobile: (374- 077) 07 37 39
Gohar Vardanyan (Program coordinator)	Mobile: (374- 93) 41-52-54
Sona Azaryan (Program coordinator, Vanadzor site)	Mobile: (374- 93) 39-16-36

### ***Local Emergency Numbers***

Fire	101
Police	102
Ambulance	103
Information	109
"Spyur" Yellow Pages, <a href="http://www.spyur.am">www.spyur.am</a>	51-99-99

### ***Phone Facts***

AT&T Operator	0-800-111
Sprint Operator	0-800-155
MCI Operator	0-800-122
From GB to Yerevan	00-374 10 + phone number
From Yerevan to GB	00- 44 + area code + phone number
From US to Yerevan	011-374-10+local number
From US to Yerevan cellular	011-374-91(93)-(94)-(98) –(55)-(75)-(77) (45)+ local number
From Yerevan to USA	00 – 1- area code + phone number
From Yerevan to Marzes (regions in Armenian)	0+Marz code+number
From Marzes to Yerevan	0+Yerevan code+number
From Yerevan and Marzes to Cellular	0+91+cell number 0+93+cell number 0+94+cell number 0+98+cell number 0+77+cell number 0+ 43+cell number 0+45+cell number 0+55+cell number
From Cellular to Yerevan and Marzes	0+Yerevan or Marz code+number

### ***Emergency Contact Information***

You will receive emergency contact information to leave with your family so they can reach you in case of an emergency. You will also receive a list of important numbers to carry with you in Armenia, along with information on how to call the US.

## Weather

In summer expect daytime temperatures to be around 20-28° Celsius (68-82°).

It is never as hot in Vanadzor as it is in Yerevan or in the southern part of Armenia, but it generally has nice weather in summer and in the beginning of autumn, neither very cold, nor very hot. It does rain often, so do be sure to be prepared. And it can get cool at night, so you will need a jacket or sweatshirt.

Check this web site for weather forecast: <http://www.wunderground.com/weather-forecast/AM/Vanadzor.html>

## PACKING LIST

### **For the worksite**



**Boots:** You should have sturdy work or hiking boots to work on the construction site. *No sneakers are allowed!* The ground at a construct site is very rocky and uneven and you need a sturdy sole under your feet—one that does not bend. You also need tough uppers on your boots in case you drop a bucket full of concrete on it. It doesn't matter if they are above or below the ankle, but be sure they are sturdy. You'll be wearing your boots for 8-10 hours on workdays, so they should also be comfortable. If you're buying them new for the trip, it's best to wear them for a few days before the trip. Also, wear good socks that will wick moisture away from your feet and keep you from getting blisters.

**Clothing:** Wear lightweight, comfortable clothing to work. Shorts or lightweight pants with t-shirts are ideal. Shorts and tank tops should be modest. Short-shorts and skimpy tank tops are definitely not recommended—you will be uncomfortable and you will attract attention that might become problematic for yourself and for the team. Early mornings can be cool in Vanadzor so do bring a sweatshirt you can wear to start the day. You won't need it all day, but it's good to have handy. You'll also need rain gear—if it rains while we're working, we tend to keep working. A hat and a lightweight rain repellent jacket is great to have.

**Work supplies:** In addition to the work boots, there are 4 must-haves for every volunteer—please bring these items with you. There may be additional supplies your team leader asks you to bring closer to the trip.



You'll need work **gloves**. You will be working with metal buckets and rocks, so your hands need protection. Don't bring fabric garden gloves! Leather is really much better. It's wise to bring two pair and put your name on them.

Bring a package of respirator **dust masks**. You will be working in a dry, dusty environment and you may shovel sand or dirt or do sanding. The masks will be necessary. You can bring a package of 3 and conserve them for the 7 work days or bring 7 so you'll have a new one each day.



**Plastic eye protectors**—these are clear plastic glasses that go over your eyes or glasses to protect you from dust.



You'll be glad to have a **back support** (left). These are essential to prevent injury to the back during all work activity--lifting, passing, and carrying.

### For evenings/touring

Generally Armenians 'dress-up' more than the average American, and although you do not need to keep up with them, you may want to consider this as you pack. Always avoid looking sloppy, especially in the evenings or when touring at sacred sites. Women: dressy shorts, skirts, slacks, sundresses and jeans are all fine. Again, please don't wear things that are immodest. Short shorts and revealing tops are not appropriate. As for shoes, be aware that sidewalks and tourist areas can be uneven and broken, so your shoes/sandals may take a beating. You'd be much better off wearing comfortable walking shoes or sneakers than high heels or fashion shoes. Men: slacks are always the best choice, but if you must wear shorts, be aware that only men who are tourists wear shorts. You won't need a tie or jacket. If you have questions about clothing choices, ask your Bring clothing which fits comfortably, preferably cotton outfits. Steel toe work boots are preferred, but other boots are okay for construction. No sandals are allowed on the construction site. We highly recommend flip-flops and bathrobe for bathing. It is acceptable for women to wear shorts at the construction site, but not too short. However, women should not wear shorts while visiting churches; admittance may not be allowed.

Generally Armenians 'dress-up' more than the average American. You will be noticed and stared at if walking around in construction clothes. If you don't mind, this is fine. But, please be aware that it may happen.

### Recommended packing list

***Please, be sure to bring a jacket or warm clothes as the weather in Vanadzor is cooler than other places in Armenia.*** Often the weather is like that in London: it can be cloudy or rainy, and the temperature may fall down to 60° F.

***For work:*** 3 shorts or slacks, 3 t-shirts, sweatshirt, work boots, 3 pair socks, bandanas, hat, leather gloves, dust masks, plastic eye protection, back support.

***For evenings and touring days:*** 3-5 nice shorts/slacks/skirts with 3-5 nice tops, 2 pairs of comfortable shoes, pajamas, rain jacket, sweater

- Basic toiletries (bar soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, razor, etc. If you forget anything, all these things are readily available in many shops in Armenia.)
- Basic first aid (Band-Aids, aspirin, Benadryl, foot/blister aids, medications, glasses, etc.)
- Money belt to carry cash, passport, insurance card, and emergency numbers at all times
- Backpack or bag to carry supplies, camera, water, hat, etc. to worksite and touring
- Small flashlight (for the occasional power outages)
- Alarm clock
- Towel/washcloth (the hotels provide towels, but not washcloths...you might prefer to have your own)
- Flip flops for the shower/bath
- Sun block
- Sunglasses

- Hand sanitizer/wet wipes
- Bible
- Camera
- Journal
- Bathing suit
- Water bottle with your name on it
- The most important item to pack: An open heart and mind! You are there to help build homes their way. They have their own materials, equipment, methods and ways. Engineers will guide you to do exactly what needs to be done. We are not there to do it our way. Most Americans find this very difficult, and you will each struggle with this at some point. But try to remember, *we are there to help them do it their way.*

\*\*Special request: please bring one roll of duct tape. This is hard to get in Armenia and the quality is much lower than in the US. It is invaluable for wrapping glass windows and for many other uses on the construction site. FCHA can always use it and will be grateful for it! Pack it in your checked luggage, as it could be confiscated in your carry-on luggage.

## Sightseeing in Northern Lori Region and its surroundings



**Vanadzor** is Armenia's third largest city (after Yerevan and Gyumri), set in a river valley with a colder climate in summer and milder in winter. It is surrounded by mountains and forests. There are 3 Apostolic Churches, one Russian Orthodox, and one Catholic. It has a very beautiful Cultural Palace, nice parks, and monuments. The people are hospitable, simple and trusting.

**Dendropark** is a botanical garden in Gyulagarak, 20-25 km away from Vanadzor (30 minutes away). This splendid botanical garden covers 35 hectares. Dendropark is a cool and beautiful sanctuary unlike anywhere else in Armenia.

**Lori Berd** is to the east of Stepanavan city surrounded with wonderful mountains landscapes. It is 35 km away from Vanadzor. Lori-Berd contains the ruins of one of feudal Armenia's capitals. The town stretches on a mountain plateau of almost triangular shape, bordered by deep ravines of the Miskhan and Dzoraget rivers.

**Kobayr** is a tiny hamlet almost invisible in the trees, in the neighborhood of the elevated little train station. A flight of steps leads up and back, finally climbing steeply up the side of the gorge. The monastery complex there was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and has breathtaking frescoes of Christ and the Apostles. It is 40 km away from Vanadzor.

**Sanahin** is 50 km away from Vanadzor. It is a unique complex of monasteries. Between Surb Astvatsastin and St Amenaprkich monasteries was built a hall, which was called Magistrate School. The Library of the school is one of the most beautiful buildings in Armenia. The books were moved to Madenadaran during 1920s. There is a tram that may take you to Sanahin from Alaverdi town. There is a splendid view of the town from the tram.

**Haghpat** (65km from Vanadzor) is one of Armenia's most beautiful monasteries, perched atop the rim of a gorge. The monastery was founded by Queen Khosrovanush around 976. One of the churches of the complex, S. Nshan church, was finished in 991 by Smbat Bagratuni and his brother Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) Global Builders' Handbook – 2018

Gurgen, and served as the religious headquarters of the Kyurikians. Haghpat Monastery is listed among the UNESCO World Heritage List

**Dsegh** is 30 km away from Vanadzor. It was called Tumanyan from 1938-1969, after its famous son, the writer Hovhannes Tumanyan (1869-1923). Toumanyany's house museum is open for tourists. In the village there is a basilica of 654 housing an ethnographic museum, and nearby a 7th c. church built by the Mamikonians.

**Dilijan** is 40 km away from Vanadzor. It is called the "Little Switzerland" of Armenia. Near this forested town are some great examples of traditional architecture of the region—it's worth a brief trip to the beautiful monasteries of Haghartsin and Goshavank.

**Haghartsin Monastery** is 45 km away from Vanadzor, close to Dilijan. It is situated in a dense oak forest, with gorges of small but turbulent mountain rivers all around.

**Parz Lich** is 32 km away from Vanadzor taking the road E from Dilijan. It winds through about 8 km of forest to end at a modest green lake. This is an excellent place for a picnic and forest hikes in a quiet setting. There is a cafe and you can rent boats.

**Ijevan** is 75-80km away from Vanadzor. The name "Ijevan" means "Inn," reflecting the fact that the capital of Tavush Region is an important stopping place on the vital E-W road as well as the railroad since 1870.

### List of Museums in Lori Region

NAME	ADDRESS	HOURS	PHONE
Stepan Zoryan House-Museum	Vanadzor, 24 Stepan Zoryan St	10:00 AM—4:00 PM closed Monday	4-30-93
Hovhannes Tumanyan House-Museum	Dsegh	10:00 AM—4:00 PM	
Geghagitakan Centre	Myasnikyan 19a	10:00 AM—17:00 PM closed Sat, Sun	2-53-94
Art Gallery	52 Tigran Mets	10:00 AM—5:00 PM closed Monday	4-39-38
Mikoyan Brothers Museum	Sanahin	Flexible	N/A
Lori Tradition and Culture Museum	Kurtan	Flexible	N/A
Lori Local Tradition Museum	Vanadzor, Railway Park	Flexible	N/A

### INFORMATION ON ARMENIA (EXTRA)



Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, is one of the oldest cities in the world. The history of Yerevan dates back to the 8th century BC, with the founding of the fortress of Erebuni in 782 BC by Menua's son Argishti. With a population of 1,000,000, there are lots of museums, shops, bars and restaurants. The elevation in Yerevan is 900- 1200 meters.



- Armenia is located in the Caucasus, neighboring with Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey.
- Armenia is 29,800 sq km (11,500 sq miles). About the size of state of Maryland, USA.
- The population of Armenia is 3.2 million (3,200,000).
- The official language is Armenian. English and Russian are the most common foreign languages.
- Armenian history goes back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC.
- The Armenian alphabet was created in 405 AD by Mesrop Mashtots.
- The main religion is Christianity. In 301 Armenia proclaimed Christianity as a state religion.
- Government type is republic
- Time difference : UTC+ 4 (9 hour ahead of Washington , DC during Standard Time)
- Administrative divisions: 11 provinces ( marzer, singular- marz) Aragatsotn, Ararat, Armavir, Gegharkunik, Kotayk, Lori, Shirak, Syunik, Tavush, Vayots Dzor, Yerevan
- Flag description: three equal horizontal bands of red (top), blue and orange: the color red recalls the blood shed for liberty, blue the Armenian skies as well as hope and orange the land and the courage of the workers who farm it.
- If you look at a map of Armenia you may notice that it looks like a queen's head with a crown on it.
- The population of Armenians living outside the country is more than living in Armenia.
- Armenia is rich with churches from different centuries and people sometimes refer to Armenia as an open air museum



## **Culture**

Time is flexible and situational. Armenians are generally on time but don't be surprised if schedules aren't rigidly followed.

Rules are also flexible and situational. Individuals may work to "get around" rules by offering a bribe or involving an influential friend.

Traffic flow is fluid and based on immediate circumstances. For this reason, please be extra careful when crossing the street.

Business is "embedded" in family and personal relationships. A friend's loan may not need to be repaid directly.

Armenians ignore strangers on the street; avoid eye contact and do not smile. When greetings those they know, it's customary to embrace or kiss on the cheek. Casual, friendly relationships between men/men, men/women and women/women are expressed in relaxed physical contact such as kissing, embracing or holding hands.

Personal space is rare. Current living conditions are crowded and offer very little personal/private space. Armenians usually walk and stand in close proximity. On the sidewalk they may walk abreast in groups and are inattentive to creating space for others to pass by.

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A visitor/guest in Armenia is treated as a “king.” Armenians take pride in being hospitable, it means they will likely be sensitive (particularly men) about who picks up the bill for meals, trips, gifts, whatever. There is no comprehension of 'going Dutch.'

Meals include many individual dishes and are served “family style.” A traditional meal may extend over several hours. Guests are served by those seated nearby and refusals for more food/drink are generally ignored. An empty plate means it needs to be filled up, so if you don't want more, leave some on your plate. And if you don't want more and they are 'forcing' it on you, let them (it saves face) and then simply don't eat it. Please don't feel forced to eat or drink; Armenians are accustomed to refusing food and drink three times before accepting and thus will ask you repeatedly.

Toasting is an important part of drinking in Armenia. Usually one person is in charge of toasting, he is called the “Tamada.” His job is to keep a semblance of order to the toasting and, at long ceremonies, to monitor the pace of drinking. If you would like to give a toast, ask the Tamada for permission. Do not toast with anything other than alcohol unless you are in a familiar setting where they really don't mind. If you don't want to drink, use the shot glass to clink with everyone else and then either just put it to your lips or simply set it down. Using other drinks, especially mineral water, shows disrespect. Clinking your glass lower than the other person shows respect.

### ***Famous Armenians***

***Aram Khachaturyan*** (1903 – 1978) composer of classical music.

His works include concertos for violin, cello and piano (the latter originally including an early part for the flexatone), concerto-rhapsodies for the same instruments, three symphonies the third containing parts for fifteen trumpets and organ, and the ballets Spartak (Spartacus) and Gayane, the latter featuring in its final act what is probably his most famous movement, the "Sabre Dance." He also composed some film music. In connection with the composer's 100th anniversary, UNESCO announced 2003 the Year of Khachaturian.

***Viktor Hambartsumyan*** (1908 - 1996) astronomer. Longtime president of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, Founder and director of the Byurakan Observatory. He was one of the pioneers of theoretical astrophysics. He worked on the cosmogony of stars and galaxies, stellar dynamics, and gaseous nebulas. In 1947 he discovered stellar associations. Winner of the Bruce Medal and Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1960 also the Lomonosov Gold Medal in 1971.

***Tigran Petrosyan***, (1929-84) World Champion of Chess from 1963- 1969.

***Djivan Gasparyan***, duduk player

***Gohar Gasparyan***, opera singer

***Martiros Saryan***, painter

### ***Famous Armenians from overseas***



***Arshil Gorki***, painter USA

***Charles Aznavour***, singer and actor, France

***William Saroyan***, novelist, USA

And many others...

***Armenian chess team is Olympic champion***

**On 24 November, 2008** in Dresden, Armenia beat China to clinch their second consecutive gold medal. A tremendous performance from Aronian, Akopian, Sargissian, Petrosian, and Minasian, brought the gold medal home to Armenia for the second straight Olympiad. In all, they played six of the top ten teams by rating, as well as the strong Serbian and Netherlands teams.

**On July 15-26, 2011** in China Armenia takes first place in World Team Chess Championship Armenia's team: captain Arshak Petrosian - Levon Aronian, Sergei Movsesian, Vladimir Akopian, Gabriel Sargissian and Armenia 2011 champion Robert Hovhannisyan. On August 27 to September 10, 2012 Armenia win gold medals in the 40th Chess Olympiad in Istanbul, Turkey. It was memorable day for all Armenians.

### ***Weather***

In summer expect daytime temperatures around 28-35 Celsius (80-95 F). In July and August it is much warmer with daytime temperatures from 30-40 Celsius (90-100 F). In the evening it might be a few degrees cooler.

You need to take precautions and remember the following:

- Place yourself. If the temperature rises, move slowly and take occasional breaks if necessary.
- Drink large quantities of fluids ***before you get thirsty***. We will provide volunteers with bottled water. Armenians do drink tap water but ***we would not suggest for you to do the same***.
- If you feel dizzy, get a headache or stop perspiring, stop work at once. Immediately inform the team leader and then report to first aid.
- Check this web site for weather forecast. [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) type "Yerevan, Armenia"

### ***Web sites on Armenia***

Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA)  
[www.fcharmenia.org](http://www.fcharmenia.org)

The Fuller Center for Housing (TFCH)  
[www.fullercenter.org](http://www.fullercenter.org)

### ***Useful sites to know more about Armenia.***

<http://www.fructusarmeniacus.com>  
<http://www.armeniaweek.com>  
<http://www.matenadaran.am>  
<http://www.armeniainfo.am>  
<http://www.armeniaguide.com>

[www.cilicia.com](http://www.cilicia.com)  
<http://www.narek.com>

### ***Books on Armenia***

***Rediscover Armenia*** by Brady Kiesling, which can be downloaded free from:  
<http://www.arminco.com/embusa/>

### ***Economy***

After several years of double-digit economic growth, Armenia faced a severe economic recession with GDP declining more than 14% in 2009, despite large loans from multilateral institutions. Sharp declines in the construction sector and workers' remittances, particularly from Russia, were the main reasons for the downturn.

The economy began to recover in 2010 with nearly 5% growth. Under the old Soviet central planning system, Armenia developed a modern industrial sector, supplying machine tools, textiles, and other manufactured goods to sister republics, in exchange for raw materials and energy. Armenia has since switched to small-scale agriculture and away from the large agro industrial complexes of the Soviet era. Armenia has managed to reduce poverty, slash inflation, stabilize its currency, and privatize most small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, Armenia had made progress in implementing some economic reforms, including privatization, price reforms, and prudent fiscal policies, but geographic isolation, a narrow export base, and pervasive monopolies in important business sectors have made Armenia particularly vulnerable to the sharp deterioration in the global economy and the economic downturn in Russia.

The conflict with Azerbaijan over the ethnic Armenian-dominated region of Nagorno-Karabakh contributed to a severe economic decline in the early 1990s and Armenia's borders with Turkey remain closed. Armenia is particularly dependent on Russian commercial and governmental support and most key Armenian infrastructure is Russian-owned and/or managed, especially in the energy sector. The electricity distribution system was privatized in 2002 and bought by Russia's RAO-UES in 2005. Construction of a pipeline to deliver natural gas from Iran to Armenia was completed in December 2008, and gas deliveries are slated to expand due to the April 2010 completion of the Yerevan Thermal Power Plant.

Armenia has some mineral deposits (copper, gold, bauxite). Pig iron, unwrought copper, and other nonferrous metals are Armenia's highest valued exports. Armenia's severe trade imbalance has been offset somewhat by international aid, remittances from Armenians working abroad, and foreign direct investment. Armenia joined the WTO in January 2003.

The government made some improvements in tax and customs administration in recent years, but anti-corruption measures have been ineffective and the current economic downturn has led to a sharp drop in tax revenue and forced the government to accept large loan packages from Russia, the IMF, and other international financial institutions. Armenia will need to pursue additional economic reforms in order to regain economic growth and improve economic competitiveness and employment opportunities, especially given its economic isolation from two of its nearest neighbors, Turkey and Azerbaijan.

***GDP (purchasing power parity):***

\$16.86 billion (2010 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 133

\$16.43 billion (2009 est.)

\$19.14 billion (2008 est.)

*Note:* data are in 2010 US dollars

***Labor force***

1.481 million (2007 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 132

***Labor force - by occupation:***

Agriculture: 46.2%

Industry: 15.6%

Services: 38.2% (2006 est.)

**Industries:**

Diamond-processing, metal-cutting machine tools, forging-pressing machines, electric motors, tires, knitted wear, hosiery, shoes, silk fabric, chemicals, trucks, instruments, microelectronics, jewelry manufacturing, software development, food processing, brandy

**Unemployment rate:**

7.1% (2007 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 73

**Population below poverty line:**

26.5% (2006 est.)

Investment (gross fixed):

33.6% of GDP (2010 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 12

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):**

8.2% (2010 est.)

Country comparison to the world: 191

3.4% (2009 est.)

**Exports - commodities:**

Pig iron, unwrought copper, nonferrous metals, diamonds, mineral products, foodstuffs, energy

**Exports - partners:**

Germany 16.5%, Russia 15.4%, US 9.6%, Bulgaria 8.6%, Georgia 7.6%, Netherlands 7.5%, Belgium 6.7%, Canada 4.9% (2009)

**Imports - commodities:**

Natural gas, petroleum, tobacco products, foodstuffs, diamonds

**Imports - partners:**

Russia 24%, China 8.7%, Ukraine 6.1%, Turkey 5.4%, Germany 5.4%, Iran 4.1% (2009)

Updated on October 17, 2011

Source :<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/am.html>

**Education**

Education has traditionally played a central role in Armenia, and it has a long history, perhaps beginning in a formal sense as far back as the early Bronze Age, when the stone observatory and 'university' at Karahundj were constructed. The first universities in Asia Minor appeared in Armenia at Ani, Tatev and Gladzor, along with academies attached to monasteries throughout the kingdom.

The beginning of modern education is traced to the Russian takeover of Eastern Armenia beginning in the early 19th century. It should be noted that education for the masses was never a priority in Armenia until the 20th century, and was often reserved for clergy or the upper classes. In the 20th century, for the first time, education became available for the entire population, as thousands of Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) Global Builders' Handbook – 2018

schools were followed by colleges, institutes and universities. Armenia remains the most literate of the republics of the former Soviet Union, and despite woefully inadequate funding and support by the government, among its most educated. In the early 1990s, Armenia made substantial changes to the centralized and regimented Soviet system. Because at least 98 percent of students in higher education were Armenian, curricula began to emphasize Armenian history and culture. Armenian became the dominant language of instruction, and many schools that had taught in Russian closed by the end of 1991. Russian was still widely taught, however, as a second language. The majority of people (56%) are between the ages of 17 and 59 and the level of education is high. Education continues to be one of the main values in Armenian society. Today, there are 18 state universities, 8 foreign managed (American University, French University, European University and 5 Russian universities) and the remainder are private. There are more than 77,000 third-level students.

### **Today**

The law still requires eight to ten years of schooling, from the ages 6-16. State schools are still the norm in Armenia, with classes normally lasting 4-6 hours, but lots of homework rounding out the program. Parents take deep interest in their children's education. After primary schooling, students have the opportunity to attend a 2-year college (vocational school) or university. Armenia has an extensive network of universities and institutes, all of which offer graduate programs. There are twenty-five public institutions of higher education in Armenia (including seven colleges) with 26,000 students recorded in 1995. There are also forty private educational institutions having a total of 14,000 students (1995).

The leading educational institutions, such as *Yerevan State University, Yerevan State Engineering University, Yerevan State Medical University, the Armenian Academy of Agriculture, Yerevan State Linguistic University after V. Brusov* and *Yerevan Komitas State Conservatory*, have historically been among the best in their fields.

Officially guaranteed for all citizens free of charge, education has in fact become a private system, deeply threatened by lack of funding and support from the government and outside sources. Kindergartens are considered essential to the education process, and the closing of many of them has created a private system, with families scrambling to raise the money to place their kids.

#### **Educational Indicators:**

1	Education Compulsory Age (years):	6-17
2	Illiterate Total (15+) 1995:	1.6%
3	Illiterate Males (15+) 1995:	0.7%
4	Illiterate Females (15+) 1995:	2.4%
5	Gross Enrolment 1994:	
6	Secondary % of relevant age:	M:80; F:90 (1993)
7	Tertiary % of relevant age:	MF:48.9 (1991)

- 8 Public Expenditure on Education:
- 9 As % of Current Government Expenditures: n/a
- 10 Expenditure on 2nd Level: 57.7% (1993)
- 11 Expenditure on 3rd Level: 22.6% (1993)

Updated on October 17, 2011 Source: <http://www.tacentral.com/economy.asp>  
<http://www.tacentral.com/education.asp>

## **HOW TO SAY IT IN ARMENIAN**

Usually you will be able to find somebody around who is willing to help you express yourself. However, it is convenient to have some knowledge of the pronunciation of Armenian and to learn a few words.

<b>English</b>	<b>Armenian phonetic</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Armenian phonetic</b>
A little	Mi kich	I don't speak Armenian	Es chem khosum Hayeren
Airport	Otanavakayan	I don't know	Es chgitem
Armenian	Hay	I'm tired	Es hognats em
Bad	Vat	I'm thirsty	Es tsarav em
Car	Avtomekena	I understand	Haskanum em
Do you speak English?	Duk angleren khosum ek?	I want	Yes uzum em
Excuse me or pardon	Neroghutyun	I am fine	Lav em
Good	Lav	Map	Kartez
Good bye	Tsetesutyun or hajogh	Museum	Tangaran
Good evening	Bari yereko	My name is	Im anunn e
Good morning	Bari luys	No	Votch/che
Good night	Bari gisher	No problem	Harts chka
Hi	Voghchuin	Right/left	Ach/dzakh
Hello/good day	Barev dzez	Taxi	Taksi
Help me, please	Khndrum em oknek indz	Thank you	Merci
Here	Aystegh	Theatre	Tatron
Hotel	Hyuranots	Very	Shat
Help my back is hurt	Ogneceq mechks cavum e	Very bad	Shat vat
How are you?	Vonts ek? Inchpes ek?	Very good	Shat lav
Fine	Lav	What is your name?	Dzer anunn inch e??
I am Armenian	Yes hay em	Where is the...???	Vortegh e....????
I don't understand	Chem haskanum	With	Het
I don't want	Yes chem uzum	Watch out	Zguysh eghir
Yes	Ayo	Without	Arants

You are welcome/please	Khntrem	Stop/ wait	Spasir/kangnir
<b>Time indicators</b>			
At night	Gishery	Today	Aysor
In the evening	Yerekoyan	Tomorrow	Vaghy
In the morning	Aravotyan	Yesterday	Yerek
<b>Tools</b>			
Hammer	Mourch	Cement	Cement
Bucket	Douil	Glue	Sosindz
Ladder	Astichan	Nail	Mekh
Spade	Bah	Pillar	Akcan
Spackling knife	Matskich	Saw	Sghoc
<b>Eating out</b>			
Armenian soup prepared from yogurt	Spas	Ground beef and rice rolled in grape leaves or cabbage	Tolma(Dolma)
Armenian style BBQ	Khorovats	I am full	Kusht em
Beaten meat ball, can be stuffed and boiled	Kyufta	It is delicious	Shat hamov e
Bread	Hats	Salad	Salat
Cheese	Panir	Seasoned ground beef formed on a "shish"	Kebab
Give me the menu, please	Tvek menyun khndrum em	The bill, please	Hashivy khndrum em
		Traditional Armenian flat bread	Lavash
<b>Drinks</b>			
Beer	Garejur	Mineral water	Jermuk,Bjni,Arzni
Brandy	Cognac	Tea	Tey
Coffee	Surch	Vodka	Oghi
Juice	Hyut	Water	Jur
Milk	Kat	Wine-red/white	Gini-karmir/spitak
<b>Numbers</b>			
Zero	Zero	Seven	Yot
One	Mek	Eight	Ut
Two	Yerku	Nine	Iny
Three	Yerek	Ten	Tas
Four	Chors	Hundred	Haryur
Five	Hing	Thousand	Hazar
Six	Vets	How many?	Kani?
<b>Shopping</b>			
Big	Mets	How much does it cost?	Inch arzhe?
Cheap	Ezhan	Market	Shuka
Closed	Pak	Money	Dram,pogh
Expensive	Tank	Open	bats

Cost	Arzheq	Small	Pokr
<b><i>Days of the week</i></b>			
Sunday	Kiraki	Wednesday	chorekshabti
Monday	Yerkushabti	Thursday	Hingshabti
Tuesday	Yerekshabti	Friday	Urbat
		Saturday	Shabat
<b><i>Tools</i></b>			
Wall	Pat	Plastic gloves	Retine dzernocner
Plaster	Tsepamacik	Goggles	Pashtpanakan aknocner
Shovel	Bah	Paint brush	Nerkelu vrdzin
Wheelbarrow	Dzernasajlak	Window pane	Patuhanapeghk
Sand paper	hghkatoght	Scaffolding	Henacu

If you have questions or comments please contact [fcarmenia@fcharmenia.org](mailto:fcarmenia@fcharmenia.org).

***THANK YOU***