

Chile - OVERVIEW

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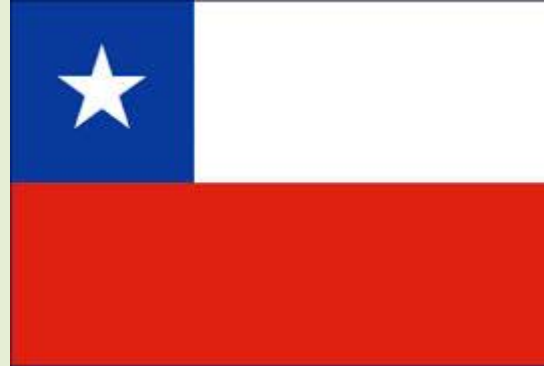


Country Name Long Form: Republic of Chile

Government Type: Republic

Languages Spoken: Spanish, English, indigenous

National Flag



Chile is a Tier III Country. Significant security measures are necessary.

	Overall Assessment	Political Violence	Crime	Terrorism	Travel Safety
Chile					
Key: (L) Low – (M) Medium – (H) High – (C) Critical					

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Political Violence is rated at LOW

Chile is considered one of the least corrupt and most politically and economically viable countries in South America. Education is an ongoing, significant social issue in the country where many see associated reforms as an avenue to address perceived social inequality.

Marches and demonstrations traditionally take place on September 11, the anniversary of the 1973 military overthrow of the Allende government, and March 29, the “Day of the Young Combatant”. Although the marches commence peacefully, violence has ensued with participants throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at police. Protests have resulted in several millions of dollars of damage to surrounding businesses. Police counter these actions with tear gas and water cannon.

TERRORISM

Terrorism is assessed as MEDIUM

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While international terrorism is not a significant threat in Chile, domestic terrorism in the form of low-level bombings and threats by left-wing anti-government and anarchist groups are of moderate concern. There has been ongoing small-scale domestic terrorist activity attributed to anarchists protesting globalization through improvised explosive device detonations at banks and in public areas. Most incidents have been used to make political statements and generally occur in the late night or early morning hours intentionally avoiding populated locations and/or human casualties.

RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Chile a score of 71, indicating that the country has low level of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in their public sector, with the least corrupt country receiving a maximum score of 100.

CRIME

Crime is assessed as **MEDIUM**

The security environment is generally safe, and there is comparatively less serious violent crime experienced in Chile than in other Latin America countries. Pickpocketing, telephonic scams, vehicular theft and residential burglaries are far more common than violent crimes like express kidnappings, kidnapping for ransom, and random shootings, which rarely occur. Residents and tourists in Santiago are frequently victims of non-violent pickpocketing. Purse snatching and pickpocketing are most prevalent in crowded, tourist locations and pedestrian shopping areas in Santiago and in subway stations, bus terminals and on crowded buses and metros. In downtown Santiago, the risk of being a victim of pickpocketing increases on weekends and after dark.

Petty crime and residential burglaries, to include home invasions, have increased over the past year in the metropolitan Santiago area. Residential burglaries are a serious concern in Chile. The use of violence in residential break-ins has increased.

Credit/debit card fraud has become a concern. There has been a significant increase in the incidents reported involving credit card cloning and fraud. Police have uncovered and arrested various networks engaged in cloning credit cards and producing fraudulent blank credit cards.

KIDNAPPING

Both kidnap for ransom and express kidnapping are low level concerns across the country, particularly in large cities.

Kidnap for ransom incidents in Chile are relatively rare compared to other countries in South America. Such kidnappings generally affect high profile and/or seemingly affluent Chilean residents while foreign nationals are not commonly targeted.

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Express kidnapping is a form of abduction which occurs more frequently in comparison to kidnap for ransom, yet is still relatively atypical in the country. Victims of this type of crime are generally released unharmed after funds have been stolen. Statistics regarding this criminal act are unavailable as the government classifies these crimes as common robbery; however reports indicate express kidnappers typically target locals, high profile and/or seemingly affluent individuals. While this type of kidnapping and kidnapping in general is uncommon in Chile, it can potentially impact local residents and foreign nationals alike.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assaults occur less frequently in Chile.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Chile is located in a highly seismically active zone. There is also a subsequent risk of tsunamis in areas situated along the country's western coastline. Flooding during the rainy season (May to September) poses a concern for travelers. In addition, wildfires are known to occur in the summer months (December to February), and caution is advised in rural areas and national parks.

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- The normal attire for business travelers at official functions is darkly-colored formal clothes, although dress code is often stipulated on invitations.
- Most museums and theaters are closed on Mondays.
- Waiters often expect a ten percent cash tip in addition to the ten percent already added to the bill.
- Stay in groups, travel in a caravan consisting of two or more vehicles, and stay on the main roads.
- Ensure that someone not traveling with you is aware of your itinerary.
- Avoid hotels that do not have adequate security.
- Intercity travel after dark anywhere in should be avoided.
- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking.
- Official taxis are a suitable means of travel in daylight hours in urban areas. It is highly recommended that taxis be arranged through your hotel, or program office. Negotiate the price in advance.
- Women should be especially careful when traveling alone and avoid staying out late without a trusted male escort.
- Make sensible security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime, particularly pick pocketing and bag snatching.
- Carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling to avoid losing it in a robbery.
- Do not resist if you are being robbed and avoid eye contact and to not make any sudden movements. Victims have been killed when they resisted attack or refused to give up their money or other valuables.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your food, drinks or belongings unattended.

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- Carry bags close to your body and make sure the fasteners are secure.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or wearing expensive jewelry or valuables.
- Leave all important documents in a safe or safe deposit box at your hotel and only carry certified copies.
- Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the situation.

Important Contact Details

International Dialing Code: +56

International Dialing Prefix: 00

Victims of crime in should contact the following phone numbers for assistance

POLICE: The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in is: 133

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 132

AMBULANCE: 131

Note: Police, ambulance or fire department response may be unreliable in some parts of the country.

TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

- Infrastructure in Chile is generally adequate in urban areas. In rural areas road networks are more variable.
- Electric power in Chile is relatively well established proving both urban and rural areas with relatively reliable electric power supplies.
- Internet connectivity is widely available and reliable.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No travel to Cerro San Cristobal, the Mercado Central area and Cerro Santa Lucia after dark.
- No use of ATMs after dark.
- No rural travel after dark.
- No deviation from approved travel routes.
- No bathing or swimming in rivers.

HEALTH

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The basic standard of health care in Chile is generally acceptable. Medical infrastructure in the main urban centers, including Santiago, is of a higher standard than facilities in rural areas, where the quality of medical care varies greatly. Facilities in rural areas may offer only basic care, while certain types of medical equipment and medicines may be in short supply. Serious medical conditions may require evacuation to another country. Private clinics, with modern medical facilities and 24-hour service, can be found in the larger cities and emergency medical treatment typically meets Western standards. Most medical personnel in urban areas have a working knowledge of English; however, doctors and nurses in rural areas speak mainly Spanish and a translator may be required.

- Tap water in Chile's major urban centers is generally safe, but water quality in rural areas is variable. Travelers are advised to consume only sterilized or bottled water. This applies to water used for brushing teeth, making ice or washing foods.
- Pasteurized milk can normally be found in major cities, hotels and resorts. Unpasteurized milk should be boiled before consumption, or powdered or tinned milk should be used as an alternative.
- Fruit and vegetables should only be consumed if they have been peeled or cooked.
- Undercooked meat and fish should not be consumed.
- Food from street vendors should be avoided as this carries a higher risk of causing infection.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required:

- Hepatitis A (recommended for most travelers)
- Hepatitis B (recommended for most travelers)
- Typhoid (recommended for most travelers)
- Rabies (recommended for most travelers)

Routine vaccines recommended for all travelers include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine and a yearly flu shot. Other immunizations recommended for some travelers include typhoid, hepatitis A, hepatitis B and rabies.

SIGNIFICANT DISEASES –

- **Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome** - A life-threatening infection acquired through exposure to the excrement of wild rodents. Cases of the disease are sporadically reported in rural and forest areas of Chile, particularly in the southern and central parts of the country.
- **Diarrhea** - A common illness among travelers in the country and can be caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites, mainly found in fish or shellfish that has not been properly cooked. One of the most common causes is a bacterium known as E. coli, which is transmitted by ingesting contaminated food and liquids.

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HOSPITALS –

Centro Medico Alcantara
Av. Apoquindo 3990
Santiago
Tel: +56 (0)2 207 0427

Centro Medico Irarrazaval
Av. Irarrazaval 3695
Santiago
Tel: +56 (0)2 209 0386

US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS

UNITED STATES EMBASSY

Avenida Andres Bello 2800
Las Condes
Santiago
Tel: +56 (0)2 330 3000
Fax: +56 (0)2 330 3710
Email: infousa@state.gov

Regional Security Office (RSO)

Tel: +56 (0)2 2330-3324

USF INTERNATIONAL HOTLINE

USF 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 813-317-5815

AXA Assistance 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 1-877-577-9504 / +1-203-399-5130 (Call collect from abroad)

ASSIST ID #: GLMN 04983932. <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/resources/>

* Information derived from CIA World Fact Book, US Department of State, OSAC, and Travel Guard. This travel overview summarizes some of the most important concerns; however, it does not negate the need for detailed trip planning.