

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - OVERVIEW

Updated: May 6, 2014



Country Name Long Form: Federative Republic of Rio de Janeiro

Government Type: Federal Republic

Languages Spoken: Portuguese, German, Italian, Japanese, English and a number of minor Amerindian languages

National Flag



Rio de Janeiro is a Tier II location. Significant security measures are necessary.

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

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Political Violence is rated at MEDUIM in Rio de Janeiro

Political violence in the form of protests occurs, especially in the capital and major cities. These protests are held for various reasons: work conditions, wages, and the environment. While protests are generally non-violent, some have resulted in property damage and minor injuries. Protests tend to increase in number and intensity during the visits of high-profile foreigners and major events.

Political violence is possible in any of the major cities of Rio de Janeiro. While the majority of these protests are peaceful, violence occasionally occurs.

TERRORISM

Terrorism is assessed as LOW

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There are no known indigenous terrorist groups operating in Brazil. Brazil is a non-aligned country with no significant enemies and is not targeted by any known radical groups.

RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Brazil a score of 42, indicating that the country has moderate levels of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector, with the least corrupt countries receiving a maximum score of 100.

Corruption remains a serious concern throughout Brazil as of early 2014. The police force is often accused of being corrupt, with the most frequently reported offenses being the solicitation of bribes, particularly from foreign travelers. Security forces have also been accused of more serious crimes, including the use of excessive force and extrajudicial killings.

CRIME

Crime is assessed as **CRITICAL**

Crime is a major concern, especially in the larger cities. The police and the press report that crime is becoming more widespread. In Rio de Janeiro, robbery, assault, burglary, and theft are concerns for foreigners and Brazilians alike. Violent crimes, such as murder, kidnapping, carjacking, armed assault, and burglary, occur regularly.

Street crime is a problem especially in the evenings and late at night. Public transportation hubs, hotel sectors, and tourist areas are the locations with the highest crime rates. Caution is required when traveling at night through more rural areas and satellite cities due to the significant potential for roadside robberies.

Foreign visitors may be susceptible to targeting for certain crimes in part because visitors may be less likely to file a police report and/or return to testify at criminal proceedings should perpetrators be apprehended by police.

Organized crime in Rio de Janeiro is controlled by major drug gangs, operating mainly in slum communities (favelas). The crime in Rio's favelas is a product of organized crime, mostly centered on narcotics trafficking. Recently, the security services secured the symbolically criminally-hardened Complexo do Alemão favela and have occupied over 30 smaller favelas. There have been instances of large-scale gun battles in and around the favelas during some of the police operations.

KIDNAPPING

"Quick-napping" or "express kidnapping" is an ongoing criminal activity in which ATM users are kidnapped at gun point and taken to several ATMs to withdraw cash. These are a common kidnapping tactic throughout Brazil. Criminals abduct a victim, usually a Brazilian citizen, for a short period in order

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to receive a quick payoff from the family, business, or the victim's ATM card. However, all foreigners are vulnerable to this crime.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Women have been murdered and sexually assaulted accepting rides by men purporting to be helpful. People have been sexually assaulted after accepting drinks from strangers.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Most natural disasters are not a major concern, although significant flooding does occur during the rainy season. Flooding, and associated mudslides, have recently become a serious problem in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Be alert at open markets or crowded areas.
- 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.
- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking or driving in Rio de Janeiro.
- 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.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your belongings unattended.
- 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: 55

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International Dialing Prefix: 0021

Victims of crime in Rio de Janeiro should contact the following phone numbers for assistance:

POLICE: The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Rio de Janeiro is 190

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 193

AMBULANCE: 192

TOURIST POLICE: 2332 2924 / 2332 2885

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

TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

- The infrastructure of Rio de Janeiro is generally adequate however; infrastructure becomes severely limited in rural area.
- Roads linking the capital to other major cities are often badly maintained and prone to damage by floods, landslides and the annual hurricane season.
- Travelers intending to travel by road are advised to exercise extreme caution even when driving in major urban areas.
- The supply of basic amenities, such as power and water are reliable across all regions.

RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No use of ATMs after dark.
- No bathing or swimming in rivers.
- No walking on beaches or in parks after dark; assaults are common in these areas.
- No use of subway after dark.
- No walking around after dark.
- No travel to the slum areas (favelas) at any time.

HEALTH

The basic standard of health care in Rio de Janeiro is generally good. Private clinics offer a higher quality of healthcare than public health care institutions but are generally more expensive. Emergency medical treatment is available at both public and private health care facilities.

- Travelers are advised to consume only sterilized or bottled water. This applies to water used for brushing teeth, making ice or washing foods.
- Fruit and vegetables should only be consumed if they have been peeled or cooked.
- Undercooked meat and fish should not be consumed.

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- Food from street vendors should be avoided as it carries a higher risk of causing illness.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required if travelling to Rio de Janeiro:

- Hepatitis A (recommended)
- Hepatitis B (recommended)
- Rabies (recommended)
- Typhoid (recommended)
- Yellow Fever (recommended)

Yellow Fever (required for travelers arriving from a country where yellow fever is present)

It is also important to ensure that routine vaccinations are up to date for diseases including influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.

Significant Diseases –

Dengue Fever – An infectious disease carried by mosquitoes. The dengue fever risk in Brazil is greatest in the states of Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Amapa, Roraima, Acre, Para, Rondonia, Espirtu Santo, Minas Gerais and Mato Grosso and in rural areas.

HOSPITAL –Rio de Janeiro

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Ayrton Senna, 2541
Barra da Tijuca
Rio de Janeiro 22775-002
Tel: +55 21 2430 3600
Website: <http://barrador.com.br/>

US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS

The US Embassy Brazil

Setor de Embaixadas Sul
Avenida das Nacoes
Quadra 801, Lote 3
Brasilia
Tel: +55 (61) 3312 7000
Fax: +55 (61) 3225 9136
Email: ConsularBrasilia@state.gov

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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.