TOPONYMIC FACTFILE

pcgn The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names

ARMENIA

Country name in English (PCGN recommended name)	Armenia
Country name in Armenian (romanized in brackets)[1]	Հայաստան (Hayastan)
State title in English (PCGN recommended name)	Republic of Armenia
State title in Armenian (romanized in brackets)	Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն (Hayastani Hanrapetut'yun)
Official language	Armenian (*hye*)[2]
Script	Armenian
Romanization System	BGN/PCGN 1981 Romanization System for Armenian
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	AM/ARM
Capital	Yerevan
Capital in Armenian	Երևան (Yerevan)
Population / Area	2,976,800[3] / 29,743km^2

Introduction

Armenia is a landlocked country in Transcaucasia[4] (see map on next page). Until September 1991, Armenia was one of the fifteen Soviet republics incorporated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Geographical names policy and sources

Geographical names in Armenia should be taken from official Armenian-script sources produced by the Centre of Geodesy & Cartography (Geodeziayi ev Kartezagrut' yan Kentron), and romanized as per the BGN/PCGN 1981 Romanization System for Armenian. It should be noted that some unofficial sources may contain names in other languages, e.g. Russian or Azerbaijani, and these names should not be used. There is no known freely available digital source of official names, though there is a Names Committee: https://www.cadastre.am/en/geographical-names. However, the only document available is a list of exonyms (i.e. names for features outside Armenia). The NGA GEONet Names Server (GNS) may also be used as a source for names in Armenia.

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[1] Using the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Armenian 1981:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810208/ROMANIZATION_OF_ARMENIAN.pdf
[2] ISO 639-3 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.
[3] As of January 1, 2023, http://www.gov.am/en/demographics/
[4] Also known as Southern Caucasia, it is a region to the south of the Caucasus mountains situated between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea consisting of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia is a good source for administrative divisions: https://www.armstat.am/en/

Map of Armenia and surrounding countries, including enclaves and exclaves

Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status.

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Language

Armenian is the official language of Armenia[5]. It belongs to its own independent branch of the Indo-European group of languages, which includes all Latin, Germanic, Indian, Slavic and Hellenic languages, among others. There are two dialects of Armenian language: Eastern Armenian (*hye*) and Western Armenian (*hyw*). For most Armenians, the dialects are not mutually intelligible. Eastern Armenian is the most commonly spoken language in Armenia (by 2.9 million people[6]) and this underwent an orthographic reform during Soviet times making it further different to Western Armenian. Western Armenian is spoken in small parts of Armenia, but is mostly spoken by the Armenian diaspora in places such as Turkey, Lebanon, United States, Georgia, Syria, Iraq, Uzbekistan and France (the total number of speakers is about 1.2 million[7]). Kurdish is spoken by the Yezidi minority in Armenia and Russian is still widely spoken. The Armenian alphabet was created by the scholar and monk Mesrop Mashtots in 405AD.

Inventory of characters (and their Unicode encodings[8]):

The BGN/PCGN Romanization system for Armenian[9] contains the basic Roman letters plus ' (a right single quotation mark, Unicode encoding 2019) that is transcribed after the letters թ = t' , չ = ch', ց = ts' , փ = p' , ք = k' to represent aspirated[10] consonants.

Administrative structure

Armenia is divided into 11 first-order administrative divisions (ADM1s): the capital region (Armenian: *k'aghak'*) Yerevan, plus 10 districts (Armenian: *marz*, plural: *marzan*). The districts are further sub-divided into urban and rural communities. In the Armenian language, when generics are added to place names, another letter ի (i) is added to the proper name to demonstrate the possessive form, e.g. Aragatsotn becomes Aragatsotni Marz. If the proper name ends in ի (i), the ի (i) is replaced by ու (u), e.g. Lorri becomes Lorru Marz.

1. Aragatsotn (40° 25' 00" N 044° 10' 00" E)

Name in Armenian Script	Արագածոտն
Long form name	Aragatsotni Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	ԱրագածոտնիՄարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-AG
Variant Name(s)	Aragatzotn
Centre	Ashtarak (40° 17' 57"N 044° 21' 43"E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Աշտարակ
Website	http://aragatsotn.mtad.am/

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[5] https://www.president.am/en/constitution-2015/

[6] https://www.ethnologue.com/language/hye

[7] https://www.ethnologue.com/language/hyw

[8] See www.unicode.org

[9]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810208/ROMANIZATION_OF_ARMENIAN.pdf

[10] An aspirated consonant is accompanied by a strong burst of air as you say it.

2. Ararat (39° 55′ 00″ N 044° 50′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Արարատ
Long form name	Ararati Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	Արարատի Մարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-AR
Centre	Artashat (39° 57′ 41″N 044° 32′ 40″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Արտաշատ
Website	http://ararat.mtad.am/

3. Armavir (40° 07′ 00″ N 044° 00′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Արմավիր
Long form name	Armaviri Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	Արմավիրի Մարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-AV
Centre	Armavir (40° 09′ 16″N 044° 02′ 17″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Արմավիր
Website	http://armavir.mtad.am/

4. Geghark'unik' (40° 15′ 00″ N 045° 25′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Գեղարքունիք
Long form name	Geghark'unik'i Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	Գեղարքունիք Մարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-GR
Centre	Gavarr (40° 21′ 14″N 045° 07′ 26″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Գավառ
Website	http://gegharkunik.mtad.am/

5. Kotayk' (40° 25′ 00″ N 044° 45′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Կոտայք
Long form name	Kotayk'i Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	Կոտայքի Մարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-KT
Centre	Hrazdan (40° 29′ 39″N 044° 45′ 37″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Հրազդան
Website	http://kotayk.mtad.am/

6. Lorri (41° 00′ 00″ N 044° 30′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Լոռի
Long form name	Lorru Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	Լոռու Մարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-LO
Centre	Vanadzor (40° 48′ 16″N 044° 29′ 38″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Վանաձոր
Website	http://lori.mtad.am/

7. Shirak (40° 45′ 00″ N 043° 50′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Շիրակ
Long form name	Shiraki Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	ՇիրակիՄարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-SH
Centre	Gyumri (40° 47′ 39″N 043° 50′ 43″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Գյումրի
Website	http://shirak.mtad.am/

8. Syunik' (39° 20′ 00″ N 046° 15′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Սյունիք
Long form name	Syunik'i Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	ՍյունիքիՄարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-SU
Centre	Kapan (39° 12′ 27″N 046° 24′ 21″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Կապան
Website	http://syunik.mtad.am

9. Tavush (40° 55′ 00″ N 045° 10′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Տավուշ
Long form name	Tavushi Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	ՏավուշիՄարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-TV
Centre	Ijevan (40° 52′ 44″N 045° 08′ 55″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Իջևան
Website	http://tavush.mtad.am/

10. Vayots' Dzor (39° 45′ 00″ N 045° 25′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	ՎայոցՁոր
Long form name	Vayots' Dzori Marz
Long form name in Armenian Script	ՎայոցՁորիՄարզ
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-VD
Centre	Yeghegnadzor (39° 45′ 50″N 45° 19′ 57″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Եղեգնաձոր
Website	http://vdzor.mtad.am

11. Yerevan ((40° 11′ 00″ N 044° 30′ 00″ E)

Name in Armenian Script	Երևան
Long form name	K'aghak' Yerevan
Long form name in Armenian Script	Քաղաք Երևան
ISO 3166-2 code	AM-ER
Centre	Yerevan (40° 10′ 52″N 044° 30′ 49″E)
Centre in Armenian Script	Երևան
Website	http://www.yerevan.am

Territorial and toponymic issues

Nagornyy Karabakh
Note that the formerly disputed territory of Nagornyy Karabakh in western Azerbaijan is, as of January 2024, under the control of Azerbaijan, and the some 100,000 ethnic Armenians that inhabited it until September 2023 have departed. Until this time, it had been predominantly Armenian-populated and was considered by Armenia to be a breakaway "republic", though internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan. This formerly disputed area should now simply be shown as part of Azerbaijan with no special notes, boundaries, or names. For more information, please contact PCGN.

Exclaves
Kərki (renamed Tigranashen by the Armenian government) is an exclave of Naxçıvan, outside of its northern border, that is controlled by Armenia.

Yuxarı Əskipara (Armenian: Verin Voskepar) is an exclave of Azerbaijan within Armenia. The exclave is administered by Armenia, though the village has been destroyed.

Sofulu and **Barxudarlı** are exclaves of Azerbaijan within Armenia. They are both administered by Armenia.

Artsvashen is an exclave of Armenia which has been occupied by Azerbaijan since 1992. The Azerbaijani name is Başkənd. Mostly populated by Azeris.

There are two small farms south of Yaradullu (in northwest Azerbaijan). It is assumed that Armenia controls them and that Azerbaijan claims them.

Other Significant Locations

PCGN Recommended Name	Variant Names/Spellings	Location	Feature Type
Armenia: Arak's (Aras) Azerbaijan: Araz (Aras)[11] Turkey: Aras Iran: Rūd-e Aras (Aras)	Araks, Arax, Erez	40° 01' 04" N, 048° 27' 12" E	River
Sevan	Sevana Lich (Armenian)	40° 23' 19" N, 045° 19' 47" E	Lake
Caucasus	Kovkas (Armenian) Qafqaz (Azerbaijani)	42° 00' 00" N, 045° 00' 00" E	Region
Lesser Caucasus	P'ok'r Kovkas (Armenian) Kiçik Qafqaz (Azerbaijani) Malyy Kavkaz (Russian) Küçük Kafkasya (Turkish) (Mtsire K'avk'asioni (Georgian)	41° 00' 00" N, 044° 00' 00" E	Mountain range

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[11] The Araz river flows along the boundary between Iran and the Naxçıvan area of Azerbaijan and then into Azerbaijan, where it joins the Kura river.

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Useful references

- Administrative divisions - Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia:
  https://www.armstat.am/en/
- BBC Country Profile: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17398605
- CIA World Factbook – Armenia: https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/armenia/
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): www.iso.org
- ISO Online Browsing Platform, entry for Armenia: https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:code:3166:AM
- Languages: www.ethnologue.com , www.omniglot.com
- Unicode Consortium: www.unicode.org
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: http://geonames.nga.mil/gns/html/
- US Board on Geographic Names Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Armenia:
  Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Armenia (nga.mil)