



Country Intelligence Brief

Rwanda

Overall Risk Rating

2.75 - Moderate

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Ratings Overview

Security

2.25 - Low

Civil Unrest	● 2.25
Crime	● 2.50
Kidnapping	● 2.00
Terrorism	● 2.50
Armed Conflict	● 2.25
Security Services	● 2.00

Infrastructure

3.25 - Moderate

Ground Transport	● 3.50
Cyber	● 2.00
Air Travel	● 2.50
Utilities	● 3.25

Environment

2.75 - Moderate

Man-Made Hazards	● 2.25
Seismic	● 2.50
Storm Systems	● 3.00
Natural Hazards	● 2.75

Health and Medical

3.75 - High

Disease and Health Threats	● 3.00
Medical Facilities and Services	● 4.25
Mental Health	● 3.25
Food and Water Safety	● 3.75

Political

2.75 - Moderate

Corruption	● 2.75
Government Stability	● 2.00
Rule of Law	● 3.25
Sanctions	● 3.00

LGBTQ Security

4.00 - High

LGBTQ Legal Environment	● 3.00
LGBTQ Enforcement	● 3.00
LGBTQ Social Environment	● 4.00

FactBox

Location	Rwanda
Government Type	Presidential Republic
Population	14,569,341 (2025)
Languages	Official Languages: Kinyarwanda, French, English. Other languages that are considered official or widely spoken: Kiswahili, for trade. Languages that should only be used discreetly: None.
International Country Code	+250
Time Zones	UTC+2
Traffic	Drives on the right
Drinking Water	Not Safe to Drink

Overview

2.75 - Moderate

Rwanda has transformed into one of Africa's most peaceful countries and enjoyed robust economic growth over the past decade while avoiding renewed ethnic strife between the majority-Hutu population and minority Tutsis. Despite the regime's systematic repression of dissent, President Paul Kagame continues to enjoy popular support for bringing order back to Rwanda after the 1994 genocide which left the country in ruins. There remain concerns over insurgent activity, although this occurs primarily in the neighboring DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo), where large numbers of refugees fled following the civil war. Levels of corruption and criminal activity are relatively low by regional standards, although some concerns exist over petty crime. Armed robberies do occur but the incidence is low. The primary threats to foreign travelers are from road safety, health hazards and infrastructural weaknesses.

Security

2.25 - Low

Conflict risks are limited in Rwanda, although border regions with the DRC have been prone to spill-over of ethnic conflict and localized escalations of cross-border tensions. There is a small terrorist threat in the country, with occasional grenade attacks directed against Rwandan civilian, military and government targets, although these have become rare in recent years. Crime rates are low by regional standards, with the main threat stemming from non-violent opportunistic theft, but there has been an increase in some offenses in Kigali in recent years. Civil unrest is rare and most demonstrations tend to be peaceful, with most recorded demonstrations being linked to the 1994 genocide.

Civil Unrest

● 2.25

Protests and strikes in Rwanda are relatively rare and peaceful when they do occur. The primary triggers for unrest over the past 20 years have revolved around the 1994 genocide, although there have become much less frequent in recent years. These gatherings are mostly staged in the vicinity of embassies in Kigali, although there have been no such recent mobilizations. Demonstrations staged by refugees have the potential to turn violent, notably in areas located along the border with DRC. Protest organizers are required to apply for a permit, and police typically disperse all unsanctioned demonstrations. Political rallies by the opposition are not common although they may occur during election periods.

Crime

● 2.50

Levels of criminal activity in Rwanda are relatively low by regional standards and have remained so since the political situation stabilized in 2003. Petty theft, particularly pick-pocketing in crowded public places and street crime, is the main threat facing foreign travelers in Kigali and the country in general. Theft from cars and hotel rooms in the capital has also become more common in recent years. Burglaries have reportedly been on the rise in Kigali since 2016 and have occasionally been directed against expatriates, with incidents generally being carried out by opportunistic perpetrators looking for unsecured and easily transportable items. Violent crime is relatively rare, although sporadic incidents of armed robbery, carjacking, and home invasion have been reported in urban centers. An increase in assaults and robberies targeting pedestrians after dark has also been reported in recent years, including in Kigali's Kimihurura and Kiyovu districts, although foreign nationals have rarely been affected. Most organized crime is linked to trafficking and has little impact on foreign business interests.

Kidnapping

● 2.00

The threat of kidnapping in Rwanda is generally low; kidnappers are more likely to target locals. The most common type of abduction in Rwanda is political kidnapping. Victims of political kidnapping may be held for long periods of time without any guarantee of safe release. Foreign nationals may be targeted due to their perceived; however, such incidents have not been reported in recent years.

Terrorism

 2.50

The threat of terrorism in Rwanda is relatively low and foreign interests are not believed to be at elevated risk. The threat posed by the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and other Hutu rebel groups has decreased over the past decade and is primarily limited to areas along Rwanda's border with the DRC. Attacks attributed to Hutu rebels have generally been directed at Rwandan civilian targets, and foreigner travelers and their interests have not been singled out in such incidents. There have been dozens of small-scale grenade attacks in Rwandan urban centers since 2010, although the frequency of such attacks has declined in recent years and none have been reported since June 2017. While authorities have been able to make several arrests linked to these grenade attacks, the exact identity and motives of the assailants have remained largely unclear. Officials have blamed several attacks on Hutu rebels, particularly the FDLR, although the incidents may be politically-motivated and linked to the growing authoritarian nature of Kagame's administration.

Armed Conflict

 2.25

Despite a recent history of ethnic violence and civil war, conflict risks in Rwanda have dwindled since the turn of the century under the regime of President Paul Kagame. With the expulsion of the main ethnic Hutu militias into the DRC, the country has largely stabilized with few incidents of violence recorded in recent years. Nonetheless, latent tensions between Hutu and Tutsi populations have persisted, and with the stifling of all forms of political dissent, including allegations of extra-judicial killings of opponents, there remains potential for instability and insecurity in the long-term. There is also a credible threat of conflict along Rwanda's western border with the DRC linked to the continued presence of armed rebel groups and simmering tensions between Kinshasa and Kigali. Violence linked to non-state armed groups, typically along ethnic lines, continues to be reported along the DRC border. This violence is primarily contained inside the DRC, although spill-over from the fighting has occurred sporadically.

On 27 June 2025, the Democratic Republic of the Congo-Rwanda peace agreement, or Washington Accord, was signed to end the conflict between both parties. The main points of the agreement were to cease hostilities, halt support for non-state armed groups, and establish an economic agreement for critical minerals trade, which will also involve the US. However, the peace deal has been fragile, and its implementation has stalled.

Security Services

 2.00

The capabilities and responsiveness of security services in Rwanda are generally adequate, but police responsiveness and investigative capabilities may be affected by limited resources in rural areas. Although Rwanda has different security forces, the Rwandan national police is likely to be the most relevant for foreign nationals and local staff. Police officers are typically able to speak English and, occasionally, French. There is a low incidence of corruption. Foreign nationals can rely on security forces, but should also liaise with their diplomatic mission when dealing with an emergency.

Infrastructure

 3.25 - Moderate

The country's main commercial airport, Kigali International Airport (KGL), is small but offers good facilities and air travel in the country is generally considered safe and efficient.

Roads in major towns and cities in the country are generally paved and in good condition. However, some secondary and minor roads are poorly maintained and can become impassable during the rainy seasons, leaving some remote areas effectively cut off for weeks at a time.

There are no seaports in Rwanda.

The government has also been investing heavily in its electricity production and transmission infrastructure with a goal of 100 percent electricity access by 2024, although progress has so far been relatively slow.

The country is considered an attractive target for cyberattacks. Its defenses against such an attack are thought to be weak.

Ground Transport

 3.50

Rwanda has invested heavily in its road network in recent years and those between Kigali and other major towns and cities in the country are generally paved and in good condition. However, some secondary and minor roads are poorly maintained and can become impassable during the rainy seasons, leaving some remote areas effectively cut off for weeks at a time. Potholes, wandering livestock, and poor lighting characterize secondary roads, with many only passable by four-wheel-drive vehicles. The standard of road safety regulation is relatively weak, and its implementation is generally poor. Many vehicles on the roads are in poor repair, and some local road users drive erratically, particularly at night.

Rwanda had a high road traffic fatality rate, according to the WHO. Bus services are not generally recommended for foreign travelers due to safety concerns and issues of comfort and reliability, with many vehicles being poorly maintained and drivers not necessarily adhering to the rules of the road. Taxis are widely available in the country, but most are shared. Taxi busses are painted white, but most foreign travelers seek private hire vehicles, known locally as 'taxi voiture' or 'special taxi'. These can typically be found at taxi stations and stands but are significantly more expensive than other travel options. Private taxis are also painted white but usually have an orange stripe. Fares should be negotiated prior to departure.

Local Buses

 Unrated

Buses

Public buses can be found in most urban centers. Generally, they run on time, and are safe. For travel between cities, buses are appropriate. Personal and property security is generally fair aboard intra- and inter-city buses.

Mass Transit

 Unrated

Metro

Cities in Rwanda do not have metro systems.

Taxis

 Unrated

Taxis and Ride-Sharing Services

Taxis are readily available in Rwanda at official stands outside of airports, and train or bus stations, or at organized queues in downtown areas; it is safe to hail a cab on the street. Official taxis usually feature orange stripes. Taxi drivers are generally trustworthy, but prone to overcharging, so always agree on the cost of the journey, any conditions on multiple passengers, and availability of receipts, if necessary, before entering the vehicle. If possible, have a local host or hotel staff order a trusted taxi service.

Ride-sharing services or vehicles ordered through online apps are not available in Rwanda.

Train Travel

 Unrated

Train Travel

Rwanda does not have a rail network.

Vehicles and Roads

● Unrated

Car Rentals and Driving Conditions

Car rentals are available in major urban centers. Foreigners planning to drive in Rwanda must have a valid driver's license. Consider road and weather conditions in your choice of vehicle. Road safety in Rwanda is generally fair. Ensure familiarity with local laws and driving practices. Keep doors and windows locked, and valuables out of sight, as thieves may target parked vehicles, as well as those trapped in slow-moving traffic or at stop signals. Park in well-lit, populated areas or secure facilities.

Cyber

● 2.00

Geostrategic Concerns

The cybersecurity environment in Rwanda presents an overall medium level of threat - this is shaped by the balance between threat activity, institutional capacity, and digital resilience. Rwanda faces moderate exposure to state-linked cyber espionage, with frequent targeting of key sectors, including its financial sector.

The legal and regulatory environment in Rwanda is evolving, with key measures including the Protection of Personal Data and Privacy Law and the Cyber Crimes Law. These laws impose requirements on personal data protection, cybercrime prevention, establishing minimum cybersecurity standards, and incident response. Rwanda has laid out its National Cybersecurity Strategy 2024-2029, which builds on existing policies to strengthen regulation in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. Their effectiveness is assessed as high, reflecting robust enforcement of their cybersecurity laws. Institutional capacity is provided by the National Cyber Security Authority (NCSA), which ensures strong coordination between the government, private sector, and critical infrastructure providers. Overall, domestic digital infrastructure is moderately secure, with protections weakest in artificial intelligence regulation.

Cybercrime

Cybercrime in Rwanda is assessed as a high threat. Common threats include phishing, ransomware, credential theft, and online scams, with multinational firms and critical sectors most vulnerable to compromise.

Law enforcement capacity is moderate, with authorities proactive in addressing cybercrime, and regulatory enforcement is consistent. Cooperation with international partners remains weak. Systemic resilience depends heavily on institutional resources and global partnerships.

Maritime

● Unrated

Rwanda has significant river ports along Lake Kivu. Travel via ferry or large passenger vessel is available between Gisenyi and Cyangugu. Ports of call vary in provision of security. Gisenyi and Cyangugu are generally safe but prone to petty theft. Ferries are generally safe but can be prone to accidents due to overload and poor maintenance. Maritime piracy is uncommon on Lake Kivu.

Air Travel

● 2.50

Rwanda's airport infrastructure is limited: only four commercial airports in the country with paved runways. However, air travel in the country is generally considered safe and efficient. Kigali International Airport (KGL) is currently the country's main international hub, located around 3km (2 miles) east of Kigali city center. The facility is small but has modern facilities and is generally considered safe and well-organized. However, a new international airport intended to become the country's air travel hub is currently under construction in Bugesera, around 20km (12 miles) south of Kigali. There are also domestic airports located at Butare, Gisenyi, Kamembe and Ruhengeri.

The country's flag carrier, RwandAir, operates services to various destinations in the region and several European airports as well as some domestic flights. A number of other international airlines including KLM, Brussels Airlines and Ethiopian Airlines also operate flights to Kigali.

Those entering Rwanda have often been searched at customs and may have banned items, including plastic carrier bags, confiscated.

Utilities

3.25

Almost half of the Rwandan population has access to electricity, both from the country's national grid and alternative sources. Rwanda's electricity infrastructure remains concentrated in urban areas, although access has been improving in recent years in rural areas. The government has invested heavily in the country's electricity infrastructure in recent years with a goal of 100 percent electricity access by 2024, although progress has so far been relatively slow and limited transmission infrastructure continues to present a barrier to access, with about ten percent of the population currently relying on off-grid energy sources.

The government has also invested heavily in the development of the country's internet infrastructure in recent years, although it started from a very low base. Despite significant improvements, internet connections remain concentrated in Kigali and a few other urban centers, with an estimated 30 percent internet penetration across the country. WiFi connections are available at hotels and some other businesses in Kigali but can be slow, although internet speeds have increased in recent years. The surveillance of online activities in the country is believed to be common, with authorities also blocking access to several independent media outlets and blogs.

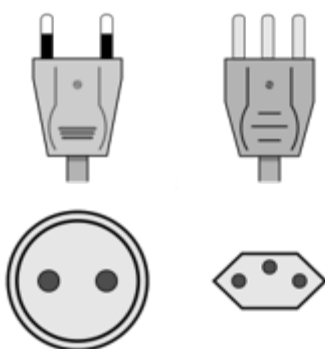
Mobile telephone and data network coverage are extensive in Rwanda and the country has a high mobile penetration rate of over 75 percent. There are three main mobile operators in Rwanda, MTN, Tigo and Airtel, but data roaming costs for foreign connections on these networks are high and most travelers purchase local SIM cards to use during their time in the country.

Electricity

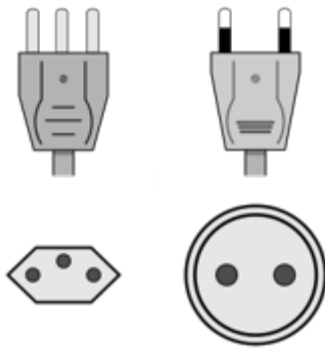
Unrated

Electricity is supplied in Rwanda at 230 V, 50 Hz. Rwanda uses Type C and J plugs.

Plug Types



Types de prises



Internet and Telecommunications

● Unrated

Internet service in Rwanda is readily available in most public accommodations, and internet cafes. Internet activity will be monitored in most areas - see Information Security advice sheet.

Environment

2.75 - Moderate

Rwanda is located in a seismically active region and experiences occasional earthquakes, although these are typically of moderate intensity and rarely cause significant damage or casualties. The country is also prone to significant flooding and landslides, particularly during the rainy seasons that run October-November and March-May. Several parts of Rwanda are subject to periodic droughts, while the El Niño phenomenon has increased the scale and scope of flooding in some years. Deforestation and destructive farming practices have also increased the impact of floods and landslides.

Man-Made Hazards

● 2.25

Deforestation, poor farming practices and environmental degradation have increased the impact of flooding and landslides in Rwanda in recent years. Deforestation in Rwanda's Northern, Southern and Western provinces, in particular, has increased the impact of flooding and increased the frequency of landslides. Fires in rural areas are relatively common during the dry months of July and August, with the burning of waste, farming practices and littering often cited as the cause of wildfires.

Seismic

● 2.50

Rwanda is located in a seismically-active region and experiences occasional earthquakes, although these are typically of moderate intensity and rarely cause significant damage or casualties. However, stronger earthquakes occur infrequently and have the potential to cause infrastructural damage, travel disruption and fatalities. Active volcanoes, including Nyiragongo and Nyamulagira, are located in the border region between Rwanda and the DRC. Nyiragongo last erupted in 2002, killing scores in the DRC and damaging nearby property.

Storm Systems

● 3.00

Hazards, including landslides and flooding, occur with some frequency during the wet seasons, October-November and March-May. These floods and mudslides have the potential to cause widespread damage to farmland and road networks as well as disrupt electricity and water supplies. Heavy rainfall often overwhelms water evacuation and drainage systems in urban centers, inundating roads and damaging infrastructure and buildings. Even major highways have been rendered impassable after prolonged torrential rainfall. Major roads between

Kigali and other Rwandan towns and cities are generally good; there are few viable alternative routes in some remote areas, and some towns can become cut off following mudslides and flooding.

Natural Hazards

● 2.75

Forecast models indicate an increased likelihood of wetter-than-normal conditions over most of the Greater Horn of Africa, including Burundi, Djibouti, coastal Eritrea, southern Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, southern South Sudan, far northeastern Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, October-December as El Niño strengthens. Early to normal onset is likely across much of the eastern and southern parts of the region, including Somalia, central and eastern Kenya, southern Ethiopia, and most of Tanzania. An increased likelihood of warmer-than-average temperatures is forecast across most of the region, with the highest probabilities over the eastern parts, particularly eastern Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and most of Somalia.

The October-December season is a critical rainfall period for the equatorial and southern parts of the Greater Horn of Africa, contributing up to 70 percent of total annual rainfall in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia, and up to 40 percent of total annual rainfall in parts of Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Rwanda has a tropical highland climate, with the country's altitude meaning that temperatures are typically lower than in many other equatorial countries. The country often experiences heavy rainfall during its rainy seasons October-November and March-May. Several regions are also prone to drought due to a high frequency of rainfall deficit, late rainfall onsets, and early rainfall cessations. Among the most affected regions are the Bugesera, Nyagatare, Gatsibo, Kayanza, Ngoma, and Kirehe districts in Eastern Province and the eastern parts of Nyanza and Gisagara districts in Southern Province. Periods of drought have occasionally led to heightened communal tensions as pastoralists are forced to search for grazing grounds, often bringing them into conflict with farming communities.

Air Quality

● Unrated

Air pollution routinely exceeds recommended thresholds in urban areas. Individuals with asthma or chronic cardiorespiratory conditions should consult with a healthcare provider and carry necessary medications. On days when air quality is particularly poor, affected individuals should take personal precautions to reduce respiratory stress.

Health and Medical

3.75 - High

Mosquito-borne and insect-related diseases are present, including dengue fever, chikungunya, and malaria. Vaccines before travel are also required, for example, for yellow fever. Adequate health facilities are available in Kigali and other major cities, but health care may be of poor quality, especially in rural areas. Access to mental health services is limited. Tap water is not considered safe for drinking.

Disease and Health Threats

● 3.00

- **African Sleeping Sickness (Trypanosomiasis):** Transmitted through tsetse fly bites. There are two types of African Sleeping Sickness: East African and West African. The names are based on the region of Africa where they were historically found. East African Sleeping Sickness is more acute and affects the central nervous system earlier than West African Sleeping Sickness. Left untreated, both types of African Sleeping Sickness usually progress to death. Risk is low in Rwanda.
- **African Tick-Bite Fever:** Transmitted through tick bites. The symptoms usually develop within two weeks after a tick bite. Symptoms include fever, headache, and muscle soreness. Some individuals will develop a red sore with a dark center at the site of the tick bite. Risk is year-round in rural areas; however, risk is highest November to April.

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- **Altitude Sickness:** Some locations in Rwanda are above 2,440 meters (8,000 feet). Some people may experience adverse health effects at such altitudes. Ascend gradually to allow acclimatization and remain watchful for signs of altitude sickness or more severe manifestations.
 - **Chikungunya:** Transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, mostly during daytime hours. Bite prevention is essential. Symptoms commonly include fever, joint pain, muscle pain, headache, and rash. People usually develop symptoms three to seven days after being bitten. Most people recover within a week, but joint pain can sometimes persist for months. Risk of infection exists nationwide. Risk is year-round and is highest during and immediately following the rainy season, which typically occurs March to May and from September to November.
 - **Dengue Fever:** Transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, mostly during the day. Bite prevention is essential. Symptoms of dengue fever include a sudden onset of fever and at least one of the following: severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, muscle and/or joint pain, rash, easy bruising, and/or nose or gum bleeding. Fever and other symptoms generally appear abruptly four to seven days after being bitten. Some people have reported experiencing no symptoms. Risk of infection exists nationwide. Risk is year-round and is highest during and immediately following the rainy season, which typically occurs March to May and from September to November.
 - **Hepatitis A:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. Hepatitis A does not always cause symptoms. If they occur, symptoms appear two to six weeks after exposure and include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fatigue, dark urine, loss of appetite, joint pain, and jaundice. High risk in Rwanda.
 - **Hepatitis B:** Transmitted through infected blood and bodily fluids, and effectively prevented with vaccination. An unexpected medical or dental emergency may place the unvaccinated traveler at risk. Practice safe sex and ensure medical procedures, tattoos, or piercings are conducted using sterile equipment. Symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, fatigue, dark urine, loss of appetite, joint pain, and jaundice. Intermediate risk in Rwanda.
 - **Hepatitis E:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. Symptoms appear two to eight weeks after exposure and include fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, joint pain, and jaundice.
 - **HIV/AIDS:** Transmitted through infected blood and bodily fluids. Practice safe sex and ensure medical procedures, tattoos, or piercings are conducted using sterile equipment. Within two to four weeks of HIV infection, many people, but not all, experience influenza-like illness including fever, swollen glands, sore throat, rash, fatigue, muscle and joint pains, and headache. These symptoms, also called acute retroviral syndrome (ARS), can last from days to weeks. The infection later progresses to a clinical latency stage, and in the late stage, to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).
 - **Lymphatic Filariasis:** Transmitted through mosquito bites. Many bites over several months or years are needed for infection. Risk is lower for short-term travelers than for long-term travelers, expatriates, or nationals. For those who do show symptoms, the most common is lymphedema, which is the swelling and accumulation of fluids due to a poorly functioning lymphatic system. The most commonly affected areas are the legs, but breasts, arms, and genitalia can also present lymphedema. These symptoms usually appear many years after infection. There is no immunization and medications may be challenging to procure.
 - **Malaria:** Transmitted through mosquito bites. Symptoms of malaria most commonly include fever, chills, headaches and body aches, nausea and vomiting, and general malaise. These symptoms usually develop 10-28 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. However, there are reports of symptoms beginning as early as seven days to as late as one year. Preventative medications (prophylaxis) are available. Risk of infection is intermediate and exists nationwide.
 - **Onchocerciasis:** Also known as "river blindness". Transmitted by repeated bites of infected blackflies. Symptoms of river blindness affect both the skin and the eyes. These include vision loss, intense itching, rashes, and lumps/nodules under the skin. The risk of infection exists primarily near rapidly flowing rivers and streams. Risk is low in Rwanda.
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- **Rabies:** Transmitted through the saliva of infected wild or domesticated mammals, usually by a bite or scratch. Do not approach unfamiliar animals. Stray dogs pose the greatest threat in both urban and rural areas.
- **Schistosomiasis:** Transmitted via small parasite larvae through exposure to contaminated freshwater bodies. Symptoms include an itchy rash, fever, muscle soreness, and cough. Without treatment, schistosomiasis can persist for years, causing abdominal pain, blood in the urine, problems passing urine, blood in the stool, and an enlarged liver.
- **Traveler's Diarrhea:** Transmitted by contaminated food and water. This is the most common illness in travelers. People who become ill by an infectious agent that causes Traveler's Diarrhea most often experience nausea, vomiting, fever, bloody stools, and/or the urge to constantly pass stool despite an empty gastrointestinal tract. High risk in Rwanda.
- **Tuberculosis:** Transmitted through respiratory droplets released by coughing or sneezing. Individuals planning an extended stay should consider obtaining a PPD skin test to reference against future suspected infections. Symptoms commonly include chest pain, a bad cough lasting three weeks or longer, and coughing up blood and/or sputum. Some people also experience chills, weight loss, fever, weakness, night sweats, and loss of appetite. Intermediate risk in Rwanda.
- **Typhoid Fever:** Transmitted by contaminated milk, water, and food. Raw fish and shellfish from contaminated waters are likely to be infected. Symptoms of typhoid fever usually include fever, abdominal pain or discomfort, chills and body aches, weakness, and loss of appetite.
- **Yellow Fever:** Transmitted through mosquito bites. Symptoms of yellow fever include fever, muscle pain, backaches, and chills. Yellow fever is not considered endemic in Rwanda; however, there is a low risk of infection. Some countries may require proof of yellow fever vaccination or a valid medical waiver for any traveler who has visited or transited through Rwanda. Be sure to check yellow fever vaccine requirements for the next country or countries on your itinerary.
- **Zika Virus:** Transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, mostly during the day, or sexually through an infected partner. Mosquito-bite prevention and practicing safe sex are essential. In many cases, Zika virus is asymptomatic; however, in some, it may cause symptoms similar to dengue and chikungunya, including fever, rash, joint pain and red eyes. Significant birth defects have been associated with Zika virus infection in pregnant women. Partners of women who have recently traveled to an area with Zika virus circulation are encouraged to use condoms for at least six months or for the duration of a partner's pregnancy. Risk of infection exists nationwide. Risk is year-round and is highest during and immediately following the rainy season, which typically occurs March to May and from September to November.

Health Requirements

● Unrated

Yellow Fever: Vaccination Required

Yellow fever is not considered endemic in Rwanda; however, there is a low risk of infection. Some countries may require proof of yellow fever vaccination or a valid medical waiver for any traveler who has visited or transited through Rwanda. Be sure to check yellow fever vaccine requirements for the next country or countries on your itinerary. Single dose, full-strength yellow fever vaccine is valid for life. Vaccination is **required** upon arrival for all travelers aged one year or over who have visited a country with risk of yellow fever transmission.

HIV Testing

No known restrictions

Health Recommendations

● Unrated

Recommended Immunizations for Travel to Rwanda

Travelers should ensure that they have routine vaccination courses and boosters. You should visit a healthcare professional at least four to six weeks before the trip. Routine vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, and the annual flu vaccine. Travelers should consider obtaining COVID-19 vaccination where available, even if the destination country does not require it.

- **Cholera:** Unless contraindicated, it is recommended for individuals staying in endemic areas or where there are current outbreaks. Cholera vaccine is not a substitute for thorough hand washing with soap and water, observing good personal hygiene, and taking food and water precautions. Three WHO pre-qualified oral cholera vaccines (OCV) exist: Dukoral, Shanchol, and Euvichol. All of these require two doses for full protection.
- **Hepatitis A:** Recommended for most individuals unless contraindicated. Two doses, administered at least six months apart, are required for long-lasting protection. It is recommended that all susceptible people traveling for any purpose, frequency, or duration to countries with high or intermediate hepatitis A endemicity be vaccinated or receive immune globulin before departure. A booster is recommended for partially vaccinated travelers.
- **Hepatitis B:** Recommended for most individuals unless contraindicated. Widely used formulations require three doses administered over the course of six to 18 months, depending on the recipient's age and vaccination history. Booster doses after a complete series are usually not required to maintain immunity. If exposed before finalizing the full series, individuals may receive a special booster within 24 hours for short-term protection.
- **Meningococcal:** Recommended for individuals traveling to a country where meningococcal meningitis is present and where their stay may be prolonged or they are involved in activities that may increase their personal risk of exposure to the disease, such as working in a healthcare setting and/or living closely with the local population. Vaccination should ideally be administered at least seven to ten days before travel. Unless contraindicated, one dose is required, with a booster three to five years later. Rwanda lies within the meningococcal disease belt of Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Rabies:** Unless contraindicated, the WHO and CDC recommend vaccination for individuals who will be performing occupational or recreational activities that increase the risk for exposure to potentially rabid animals, such as animal handlers, field biologists, cavers, missionaries, veterinarians, and some laboratory workers. It is also recommended for travelers who might have difficulty getting prompt access to safe post-exposure prophylaxis. Rwanda has reported rabies in domestic and wild animals, thus most travelers are at risk. Bats are likely to carry bat rabies.
- **Typhoid Fever:** Recommended for most individuals unless contraindicated, especially those staying with friends or relatives in endemic areas or visiting smaller cities or rural areas. Widely used formulations require between two and four doses, depending on the formulation and the recipient's vaccination history. Booster vaccination is required every two or five years depending on the formulation. The last dose should be taken at least one week before travel.

Medical Facilities and Services

● 4.25

Healthcare facilities in large cities are adequate for most basic medical needs, but are of varying quality. Adequate health facilities are available in Kigali and other major cities, but health care, especially in rural areas, may be of poor quality. Hospitals and clinics can lack adequate equipment, supplies, and specialists for treating serious illnesses and injuries. Ambulance services are available but may be slow to respond, especially in rural areas. Hospitals and doctors in Rwanda often require upfront payment before service or admission, regardless of whether you have travel health insurance. Severe or complicated medical emergencies will likely require evacuation to another country for adequate treatment.

Medications and Pharmacy

 Unrated

Access to pharmacies in Rwanda is variable by region. Supply of essential medicines needed by travelers is limited. It is recommended to travel with enough medication for the entire duration of your stay. Prior to travelling confirm the status of your "over the counter" medicines with accredited foreign government offices of Rwanda in your country. Always carry your prescription medication in its original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription and any other relevant documentation.

Mental Health

 3.25

Mental health service availability is limited and conditions are moderately managed.

Food and Water Safety

 3.75

Drinking water is generally unsafe in Rwanda. Use only bottled, boiled, or otherwise purified water for drinking and cooking. Do not use ice cubes made from unpurified water sources. Eat only thoroughly cooked food served hot, or fruits and vegetables that you have cleaned and peeled; avoid salads. Consume only pasteurized milk and dairy products, or use powdered or canned milk and cured cheeses. Avoid street vendors and unregulated food establishments.

Political

 2.75 - Moderate

Rwanda has emerged as one of the most stable governments in the region over the last two decades, in part due to the complete domination of President Paul Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The party has comfortably won every legislative and executive poll since 2003 and the government continues to enjoy significant popular support. Corruption is low by regional standards, with authorities credited with a low tolerance for graft and misappropriation of public funds. Rule of law has also improved in recent years, although the independence of the judiciary remains tenuous and security agencies have been dogged by allegations of extrajudicial activities targeting opponents.

Corruption

 2.75

Corruption in Rwanda is low compared to other countries in the region, with Rwanda repeatedly ranked as one of the least corrupt nations in Africa. The government introduced its anti-corruption law in 2018 and has been credited with taking steps to curb the misuse and misappropriation of public funds. Rwandan authorities previously indicated that it would "name and shame" senior officials accused of graft. Government officials have previously been convicted of corruption by the Rwandan courts. Nonetheless, outside of high-profile government-led efforts, fear of reprisals as well as the domination of the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) is believed to have restricted investigations into government and security officials as well as civil servants. Limited public access to information has also impeded some independent investigations into corruption allegations.

Government Stability

 2.00

Rwanda has enjoyed a period of relative political stability since the 2003 constitution ended the post-genocide transitional government. President Paul Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) has comfortably won every legislative and executive poll, and the government continues to enjoy significant popular support. The ruling party also secured enough votes to win a December 2015 referendum that would allow Kagame to run for an additional three consecutive presidential terms. Despite being nominally a multi-party democracy, the regime has been accused of stifling all forms of dissent and limiting opposition participation in the political process, especially around election periods. Kagame was re-elected in July 2024, securing 99,18 percent of votes with an official turnout of around 98 percent of the electorate. The vote further underscored the president's broad popularity due to his role in stabilizing the country in the wake of the 1994 genocide and fostering

economic growth. Nonetheless, the RPF's authoritarian tactics continue to raise concerns that the continued domination of the party, the low tolerance for political dissent, and the restricted democratic landscape could potentially fuel discontent going forward, particularly should economic conditions deteriorate.

Rule of Law

3.25

Improvements to the rule of law in Rwanda have been ongoing over the past decade, with observers crediting authorities with increasing access to lawyers, expanding training of judiciary staff, and revising the legal code. Nonetheless, the judiciary remains closely aligned to the government and thus the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), allowing the legislative and executive to weigh in on rulings and trials. The opposition has alleged that its leaders and members have been subjected to unlawful detentions, torture, and assaults by the security apparatus. Human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch (HRW), frequently report that the ruling party targets journalists and government critics, including prominent opposition figures and activists, through forced arrests and threats.

Sanctions

3.00

There are currently no broad international sanctions on Rwanda. However, in March 2026, the US Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) and some senior officials over their support for M23 rebel group in the neighboring DRC. Other countries may implement similar targeted sanctions in the near future; in March 2025, the EU imposed sanctions on individuals and an entity linked to M23 in DRC.

Legal

Unrated

Visitors to Rwanda are subject to local laws, which may not mirror, either in whole or in part, those of their home country. Those deemed to be in violation, even unknowingly, may be fined, detained, imprisoned, or temporarily or permanently expelled. Those convicted of possessing, using, or trafficking in illegal narcotics could face heavy fines or imprisonment. Home-country consular officers are not typically systematically informed of a detention but are permitted to provide support services at the request of their detained citizens. When there is no treaty in force, notification and access depend on whether the two countries have direct or indirect diplomatic relations. Consular officers cannot interfere with local judicial proceedings, nor provide legal advice or representation at trial, and are unable to pay legal fees or fines with government funds. The status of dual nationals will be determined by local officials, with all attendant ramifications for access and support.

Emergency Contacts

Unrated

Emergency Contacts

Ambulance NA

Fire NA

Police 112, 113 (traffic)

Embassies and Consulates

Unrated

French Embassy

Address Rue du Depute Kamuzinzi, BP441, Kigali

Fax [\(250\) 252 551 820](tel:(250)252551820)

Web Site www.ambafrance-rw.org

British Embassy

Address Parcelle No 1131, Boulevard de l'Umuganda, Kacyiru-Sud, BP 576, Kigali, Rwanda

Fax [\(250\) 252 582 044](tel:(250)252582044)

Email BHC.Kigali@fco.gov.uk

Web Site <http://ukinrwanda.fco.gov.uk/en/>

Canadian High Commission

Address Limuru Road, Gigiri (P.O. Box 1013), 00621 Nairobi

Fax [\(254-20\) 366 3900](tel:(254-20)3663900)

Email nrobi@international.gc.ca

Web Site <http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/kenya>

German Embassy

Address KN 27 St no. 5, Kiyovu, Kigali

Fax [\(49\) 30 1817 67201](tel:(49)30181767201)

Email info@kigali.diplo.de

Web Site <http://www.kigali.diplo.de>

Australian High Commission

Address Riverside Drive, 400 mtrs off Chiromo Road, 39341 Nairobi

Fax [\(254-20\) 427 7139](tel:(254-20)4277139)

Email australian.hc.kenya@dfat.gov.au

Web Site <http://www.kenya.embassy.gov.au>

Austrian Embassy

Address Limuru Road 536, Muthaiga, 00100, Nairobi

Fax [\(254-20\) 406 0025](tel:(254-20)4060025)

Email nairobi-ob@bmeia.gv.at

Web Site www.aussenministerium.at/nairobi

U.S. Embassy

Address #2657 Avenue de la Gendarmerie, P.O. Box 28, Kigali, Rwanda

Fax (250) 252 580 325 / 596-591

Email ConsularKigali@state.gov

Web Site <http://rwanda.usembassy.gov/>

Entry/Exit

Unrated

Travelers can obtain specific information about visas and other entry-exit requirements at <https://entry-exit.crisis24horizon.com>.

HIV Testing Requirement Not required.

Pre-Departure

● Unrated

Travelers should undertake a pre-travel security brief on the associated threats and operating environment in Rwanda and are recommended to have undertaken annual travel security training.

Travelers should have adequate travel insurance in place to enable rapid medical treatment or emergency extraction from the country and should review contingency options, business continuity and crisis management plans. Travelers should identify possible sources of medical support in Rwanda, such as the availability of a hotel-provided doctor for minor ailments.

Travelers should conduct research into the current political situation in the country. If the travel dates coincide with planned elections, anniversaries or significant dates, additional measures may need to be taken.

Travelers should provide friends and family with a copy of their travel itinerary, make a copy of important travel and identification documents, and if applicable, obtain their visa prior to arrival. Travelers should also have information on their meeting host, accommodation, relevant embassies and trusted local contacts easily accessible.

On Arrival

● Unrated

Those arriving on flights into Rwanda should have a meet and greet procedure in place and minimize the time spent in the common areas of the airport. Travelers should proceed through arrivals in a timely manner and depart as soon as practicably possible.

Travelers should continually monitor and reassess the security and threat environment through a range of multi-source intelligence advisories.

Travelers should carry a copy of their travel documents at all times.

In Transit

● Unrated

Travelers should avoid using street taxis but utilize low-profile hotel booked taxis or locally vetted transport providers. Travelers should establish the formal identification of the driver before commencing any trip.

Travel routes should avoid isolated areas and potential choke points where practical.

Some off-limits military zones in Kigali may not be well-lit or signposted and travelers should take care not to unintentionally enter these areas, particularly at night.

Travelers should travel with minimal non-essential valuable items. Any valuables should not be displayed publicly.

At Your Hotel

● Unrated

Travelers should stay at a reputable hotel with good standards of international-level security and should avoid hotels that have scheduled high-profile conferences during the stay. Hotels should ideally be located in areas that have not previously witnessed major protests or demonstrations.

On arrival at the hotel, travelers should ensure that the driver stays on site until their check-in has been confirmed.

Travelers should favor rooms between floors 2 and 6, and as far as possible from the main entrance and principal public areas. Rooms with access from a side balcony or fire escape should be avoided where possible.

Travelers should always lock the door (and any connecting doors) to their room and use the chain or spy hole when receiving a visitor. Do not open the door to your hotel room, especially late at night, until you have confirmed the visitor's identity and meet strangers in the lobby, not in your room.

In the Street

● Unrated

Travelers should avoid leaving the hotel, or secure accommodation, after dark.

Travelers should avoid sensitive areas, and during periods of heightened tension, symbolic places such as police stations, government buildings, and locations of previous protests.

Travelers should maintain a low profile, not become involved in local political issues and avoid discussing politically sensitive topics in public. Although homosexuality is not illegal in Rwanda, some areas of the country are culturally conservative and same-sex couples may face discrimination from officials and members of the public.

Travelers should be aware of the national culture and behavioral expectations.

Travelers should be aware that photographing government buildings or military facilities is illegal in Rwanda and may result in detention by authorities.

Travelers should avoid any demonstrations, protests and rallies, which may attract security forces and present a dynamic and volatile environment.

Travelers should avoid overt displays of wealth, dress discreetly and appropriately to the environment, not display money, jewelry or valuables and maintain a low profile.

Travelers should use only small denominations of the local currency, and keep large amounts of cash and cards in a separate place on their person. The contents of wallets and purses should be reduced, particularly cards which may denote affiliations, memberships or accounts. Credit and debit cards should not be used unless absolutely necessary and then only at respected, well-known retail and service establishments.

Travelers should ensure that their mobile phone is carried with sufficient battery life and programmed with appropriate emergency numbers. Travelers should also carry an ID card or passport and emergency medical information.

Travelers should be aware of their location and surroundings, avoiding high-crime areas such as Kigali's Kimihurura and Kiyovu districts and walking through dimly lit streets after dark. Travelers should know routes and carry a map if necessary, but keep it concealed.

In crowded situations, travelers should be aware of jostling as this may be used as a ploy by pick-pockets. Travelers should also be aware of people loitering, and also attackers may first pass their victim to attack from behind.

Travelers should ignore verbal bait from passers-by, not get into an argument and avoid eye contact with strangers.

Culture

Unrated

Standard Hours of Operation

Business: Monday-Friday, 0800-1230 and 1330-1700

Government: Monday-Friday, 0800-1230 and 1330-1700

Banking: Monday-Friday, 0800-1800, Saturday, 0800- 1300

Business attire is generally semi-formal. Men should wear a coat, suit jacket, or a blazer and a tie, a button-down shirt, suit pants, and dress shoes. For women, a skirt or pants suit and blouse with dress shoes is appropriate.

Appointments are best scheduled Monday to Friday between 0800-1200 or 1400-1700. Arriving late to meetings or social engagements is a common practice. Informal or personal discussions are uncommon. Scheduled meetings will typically run longer than expected. If a meeting includes dining out, the host offers to pay the check. Alcohol taken during lunch or dinner meetings is considered normal.

English is commonly used for business purposes. Attempts by visitors to use phrases in the native language are well-received but not expected. Business cards are widely used and are presented using one hand. Always use Mr./Ms. until the host indicates that using first names is appropriate. Addressing the host according to their official title is seen as a sign of respect. When beginning and departing the meeting, shake hands.

Gestures

● Unrated

Business cards are widely used; when in use, they are presented using one hand.

When beginning the meeting, men shake hands with the other men, and women shake hands and/or nod at other women. Men and women shake hands or nod when greeting each other.

When departing, shake hands and/or nod again.

Avoid using the following gestures or habits, as they are deemed offensive or insulting:

- Engaging in public displays of affection
- Pointing a finger at someone
- Inquiring about someone's ethnic affiliation
- Dressing provocatively

Religions

● Unrated

Protestant 50.2%, Roman Catholic 44.3%, Muslim 2%, other 0.9%

Ethnicities

● Unrated

Hutu 84%, Tutsi 15%, Twa 1%

Significant Dates

● Unrated

2026 Significant Dates

Jan. 1 New Year's Day

Feb. 1 National Heroes' Day

Feb. 2 National Heroes' Day (observed)

April 3 Good Friday

April 6 Easter Monday

April 7 National Mourning Day (Genocide Remembrance)

May 1 Labour Day

July 1 Independence Day

July 4 Liberation Day

July 6 Liberation Day (observed)

Aug. 7 Umuganura (Harvest Thanksgiving)

Aug. 15 Assumption Day

Aug. 17 Assumption Day (observed)

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Dec. 26 Boxing Day

Dec. 28 Boxing Day (observed)

Financial

Unrated

Financial systems can differ considerably by jurisdiction. Acceptance of cash, debit, and credit cards also varies across the country. Some locations may only accept cash due to the absence of card-processing machines. Banks or legal money changers typically offer the official exchange rates. While the import and export of both local and foreign currency are authorized, sums should not exceed the amount declared upon arrival.

Currency

● Unrated

Currency Name / Code

The official currency of Rwanda is the Rwandan Franc (RWF). One franc is made up of 100 centimes. Other currencies accepted for transactions include US dollars issued after 2006.

Currency Convertibility

Banks or legal money-changers generally offer currency exchange services in Rwanda. Larger banks may offer the best exchange rates on average. The use of unofficial money-changers entails unnecessary risk. Rwanda forbids foreigners from exiting with local currency in amounts greater than RWF 5,000.

Credit Card

● Unrated

Major credit cards are accepted in major shops, restaurants, and hotels mainly in Kigali.

Taxes and Tipping

● Unrated

It is customary to tip hotel personnel, wait staff in restaurants, and taxi drivers; service charges are usually included in restaurant bills. It is also customary to tip small amounts in appreciation for good service.

Bank and ATM

 Unrated

ATM Availability

Automated teller machines are rarely available in Rwanda, except for Kigali, but some ATMs may not accept foreign cards. Always choose a machine located in a secure area, preferably within hotels or banks.

Bank Availability

Banks are generally open Monday through Friday 0800-1200 and 1400-1700, and Saturdays 0800-1200. Cash advances on major credit cards issued by foreign banks are permitted in limited banks.

LGBTQ Security



The security environment in Rwanda is moderate for LGBTQ individuals and the trend is slowly improving. Overall violent crime rates are relatively low compared with several neighboring states, and the absence of criminal penalties for same-sex sexual acts reduces the risk of prolonged detention or prosecution tied directly to sexual orientation or gender identity.¹ However, LGBTQ individuals report sporadic harassment, blackmail, and short-term detention by both private actors and security forces, who at times invoke broadly framed public order or morality provisions to justify questioning or arrest.⁴⁵ Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals face higher exposure to street-level harassment and abusive treatment in custody, including reports of violent detention and mistreatment linked to perceived gender expression.⁵ For most short-term business or leisure travelers who exercise discretion, physical violence specifically targeting perceived LGBTQ individuals appears uncommon, but incidents of intimidation, outing, or extortion remain

LGBTQ Legal Environment

 3.00

The legal environment in Rwanda poses a low-to-moderate threat and remains relatively stable. Same-sex sexual acts are legal, and the 2018 Penal Code does not include provisions criminalizing consensual same-sex intimacy between adults; attempts in 2009 to introduce explicit criminalization were ultimately dropped after domestic and international pushback.¹⁷ The Constitution defines marriage as a civil monogamous union between a man and a woman, and the state does not recognize same-sex marriages, civil unions, or comparable partnerships, limiting relationship-based rights for LGBTQ couples.² Rwanda has no comprehensive national law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics, and there is no legal procedure to change a gender marker on identity documents.¹³ Nonetheless, several sectoral policies in areas such as public procurement, health care, and data protection explicitly list sexual orientation or sexual life as protected characteristics, offering limited but notable protections in specific contexts.³

LGBTQ Enforcement

 3.00

The legal enforcement environment in Rwanda poses a moderate threat and remains uneven. Authorities do not actively prosecute consensual same-sex sexual acts, and senior officials have periodically affirmed that LGBTQ individuals enjoy the same rights as other Rwandans, contributing to a lower risk of targeted prosecutions compared with many regional peers.¹⁶ In practice, however, LGBTQ organizations and local advocates report that police and local security actors sometimes rely on vague provisions related to public morality, vagrancy, or public nuisance to justify stops, detentions, and intrusive questioning of perceived LGBTQ individuals, particularly in urban public spaces and informal nightlife venues.⁴⁵ Transgender individuals are especially vulnerable to charges unrelated to same-sex sexual acts but linked to perceived non-conforming gender expression, and accounts of verbal and physical abuse in custody indicate that safeguards against ill-treatment are inconsistently applied.⁵ Access to effective remedies remains limited; victims often avoid pursuing complaints due to fears of further exposure, stigma, or retaliation by local authorities.⁴

LGBTQ Social Environment

 4.00

The social environment in Rwanda poses a high threat for LGBTQ individuals, though visibility and community organizing are gradually

increasing. Survey research suggests that large majorities of respondents view the sexual orientation or gender expression of LGBTQ individuals as contrary to religious or cultural values, and many characterize LGBTQ people as “ungodly” or “unnatural,” reinforcing broad social exclusion.⁴⁸ LGBTQ individuals frequently report discrimination in access to housing, employment, education, health care, and religious life, as well as pressure to conceal their identity to avoid family rejection and community-level ostracism.^{48,9} Qualitative studies highlight patterns of “othering” that frame LGBTQ identities as foreign or “un-African,” with transgender and gender non-conforming individuals facing particularly acute stigma and economic marginalization.⁵⁹ At the same time, a small but growing number of civil society organizations operate in Kigali and other urban centers to provide legal aid, psychosocial support, and health services, and occasional supportive public statements by officials and cultural figures signal incremental shifts in elite discourse, primarily in urban settings.³⁶ These developments slightly mitigate social risks for informed travelers and expatriates but do not fundamentally alter the high-threat social environment, especially outside major cities.⁴⁸

Active Alerts

No Alerts

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