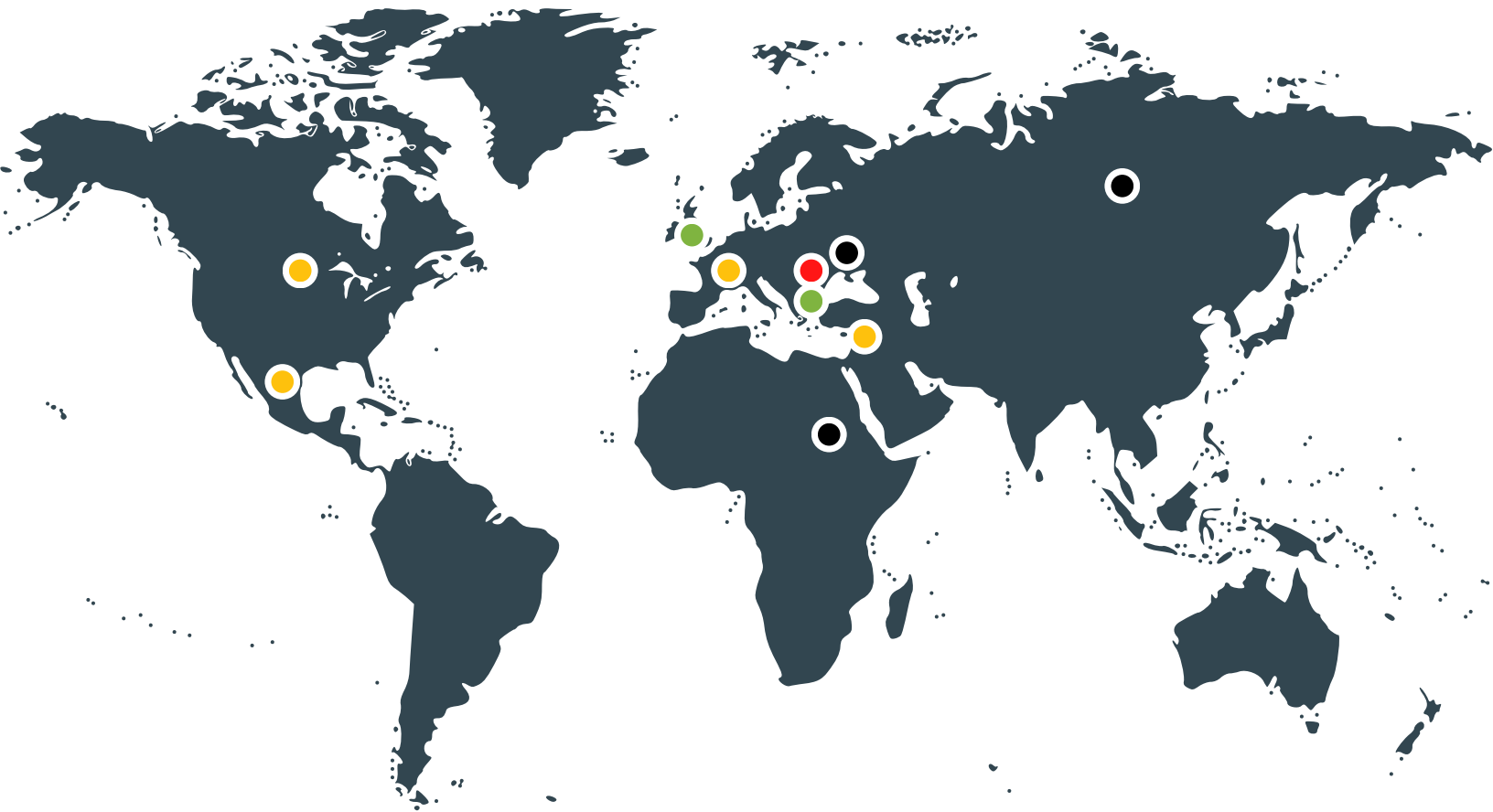


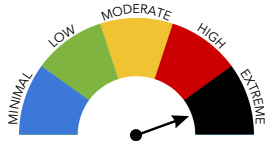
WORLDWIDE HOTSPOTS

July 2023



Concentric identified several hotspots prone to travel risks in July 2023, including a failed coup in Russia, natural disaster warnings in Canada, conflict in Sudan and Ukraine, and political tensions affecting Israel and Kosovo. We also urge travelers to remain wary of crime in popular British and Greek vacation destinations.

RUSSIA



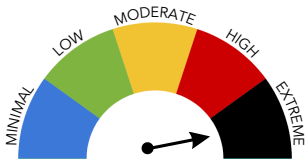
The overall threat to travelers in Russia is **EXTREME**.

On June 24, the private Russian military company Wagner Group, headed by a long time Kremlin ally, attempted to attack Moscow. Wagner Group briefly occupied a Russian army base 500km away from Moscow before standing down and relocating its forces to Belarus. Both [U.S.](#) and [U.K.](#) officials assess the incident exposes the weaknesses of the internal security situation in Russia.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should reconsider any travel to Russia. The U.S. Department of State (DoS) issued a Level 4: Do Not Travel Warning due to the risk of wrongful detention for visitors to Russia.
- Russian security forces may confiscate electronic devices without prior notice from travelers at airports and even duplicate their hard drive.
- Russia has a surveillance system, known as System of Operative Investigative Measures, that allows the government to lawfully intercept phone calls and telephone networks operating within Russia.

UKRAINE

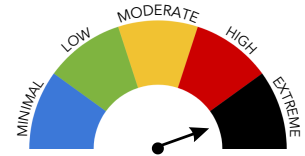


The overall threat to travelers in Ukraine is **EXTREME**. The security situation in Ukraine remains unstable and may deteriorate without warning. In recent weeks, Ukraine began a counteroffensive against Russian troops with limited success. However, missile strikes by the Russian government against Kyiv continue and Russia also targets critical infrastructure throughout Ukraine. On June 6, Russian forces [targeted](#) the Kakhovka dam in southern Ukraine which led to the flooding of several nearby villages.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local and international news for updates on the developing security situation, and other travel disruptions.
- Travelers should exercise caution and remain vigilant of their surroundings. Although Kyiv is still a vibrant city it is important to remain alert and vigilant at all times. DoS warns travelers against ongoing war conflict and civil unrest.
- Travelers should be familiar with emergency response and air raid protocol and know where to locate near-by bomb shelter locations.
- Law enforcement and emergency personnel speak limited English and translators are not readily available.

SUDAN

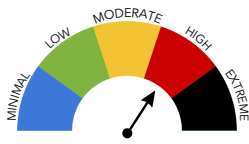


The threat to travelers in Sudan is **EXTREME**. After two ceasefires, fighting has renewed in Sudan between the Sudanese Army and the opposition Rapid Support Forces. Clashes continue in the principal cities of Khartoum and Om Dorman, as well as rural provinces.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should reconsider travel to Sudan. Rural and urban areas are scenes of frequent clashes between the military and militias attempting to overthrow the government. Government buildings are the frequent targets of militias.
- Travelers should monitor local and international news for updates on the developing security and political situation. Ceasefire violations are frequent between the warring factions.

KOSOVO

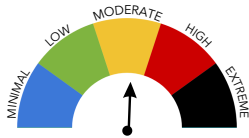


The overall threat to travelers in Kosovo is HIGH.

Tensions are growing in Kosovo after ethnic Serbs boycotted municipal elections because they view newly elected mayors as illegitimate. Serbian troops recently [arrested](#) Kosovar policemen whom they claimed were in a disputed border area near Serbia, sparking further clashes. NATO deployed peacekeepers to stabilize the Serbia-Kosovo border.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local media for updates regarding planned or spontaneous demonstrations and modify travel routes to avoid these areas.
- Demonstrations and protests are common in Kosovo. Protests related to ethnic issues between local Albanian and Serbian communities can turn violent.
- Travelers should be aware that any Serbian products or vehicles with Serb license plates are now [banned](#) in Kosovo.



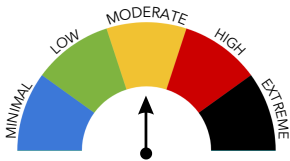
ISRAEL

The overall threat to travelers in Israel is MODERATE.

Lone wolf attacks by pro-Palestinian militants are [increasing](#) as Palestinian youth become dissatisfied with the Arab-Israeli peace process. Israel is also witnessing frequent protests due to proposed changes to its judiciary.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local news for updates on local demonstrations, terrorist activity, and other travel disruptions.
- Visitors should avoid travel to the West Bank due to [clashes](#) between Israeli security forces and Palestinian militants that left several dead within the past month. Media reports [warn](#) clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians are also becoming more frequent.
- Travelers should exercise caution and remain vigilant of their surroundings. DoS warns travelers of terrorism and civil unrest in Israel. Threat actors aim to harm areas popular with high pedestrian traffic, such as markets and cafes, and areas of worship claimed by Israelis and Palestinians.
- A proposed law changing the selection method of top judges spurred a large protest movement that [continues](#) to hold demonstrations. At times protesters have [blocked](#) the road to Israel's airport in Tel Aviv.



CANADA

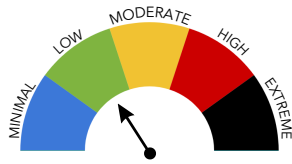
The overall threat to travelers in CANADA is MODERATE.

According to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire, there are [over](#) 400 active forest fires in Canada. In June, smoke from Canada's wildfires blanketed parts of the U.S. Media reports warn this phenomenon can become more frequent this summer.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local media for updates regarding the location of wildfires in Canada. Forest fires are [consuming](#) land and spreading at a record rate this year.
- Travelers should avoid being outdoors in areas near wildfires, especially those with respiratory problems.
- Canada's well-established infrastructure and well-trained firefighters mitigates risks.

GREECE



The overall threat to travelers in Greece is LOW.

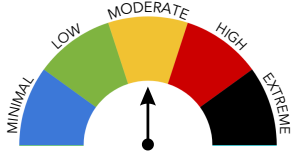
Strikes and protests are common in Athens and can turn violent. A major train crash due to poor safety standards [resulted](#) in the deaths of 59 people. Greek resources on the islands are [strained](#) as officials continue to cope with the ongoing refugee crisis. The country also faces staffing [shortages](#) in the tourism sector resulting in long wait times at tourist destinations.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local news for updates on demonstrations and work stoppages by labor unions that can disrupt travel. Demonstrations by labor unions often [disrupt](#) train and ferry services.
- Travelers should stay informed of local weather conditions and take necessary precautions. Greece experiences extreme temperatures and forest fires. Travelers should stay well hydrated and avoid areas where wildfires are present.
- Concentric recommends travelers remain vigilant around popular tourist attractions. Popular travel destinations in Athens, specifically the neighborhoods around the Acropolis, are frequent sites of pickpocketing.

OTHER KEY AREAS TO WATCH

MEXICO



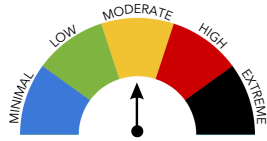
The overall threat to travelers in Mexico is MODERATE.

Mexico is currently [witnessing](#) extreme weather, with daily temperatures exceeding 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The heatwave is causing rolling blackouts throughout the country as the constant use of air conditioners is straining the Mexican electricity grid. According to media reports, piracy increased in the Gulf Of Mexico in 2022 compared to 2021, mainly within the Bay of Campeche. Pirates will attack by using small speedboats and attempt to board a ship to rob it. Mexican authorities are [boosting](#) their presence in popular tourist areas such as Cancun to mitigate risks for the ongoing tourism season.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should stay informed of local weather conditions and take necessary precautions, such as staying in doors during times of extreme heat.
- Concentric recommends travelers remain in tourist zones, stay in well-lit pedestrian areas, and avoid downtown areas after dark. Popular travel destinations in Mexico experience moderate to high crime rates exacerbated by organized gang violence. Though visitors are most likely to encounter petty crime, kidnapping for ransom and virtual kidnappings also pose serious risks to foreign travelers.
- Travelers should monitor local news for updates on crime, road closures, demonstrations, and other travel disruptions. Mexican law prohibits foreigners from participating in political activity, and violations may result in detention.
- Travelers should purchase medication in consultation with a medical professional and only from reputable establishments. Counterfeit medication is common and may prove to be ineffective, the wrong strength, or contain dangerous ingredients.

PARIS



The overall threat to travelers in Paris is MODERATE.

Anti-police [protests](#) in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre occurred in late June after a teenager was shot by police in an altercation at a checkpoint. Additional demonstrations are planned nationwide and could become violent. Protesters are not targeting tourists but demonstrations could limit or disrupt travel. The Tour de France will also start July 1 and pass through Paris July 23. Routes and street closure information can be found [here](#).

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local media for updates regarding planned or spontaneous demonstrations and modify travel routes to stay away from these areas. Demonstrations and strikes occur frequently and protests can be unpredictable and have a history of travel delays and turning violent. Protesters may exhibit reckless disregard for public safety and cause property damage in populated tourist areas.
- Travelers should keep their belongings close to them in crowded areas and stay particularly vigilant around tourist attractions and cash points. Violent crime significantly increased in recent years, especially in the northern suburbs. Crimes targeting foreigners typically include pickpocketing, break-ins, and other forms of theft.
- Terrorism remains a threat and terrorists may attack with little to no warning, targeting tourist locations, transportation hubs, government facilities, and other public areas.
- Cybercrime is common in France, and hackers often compromise Wi-Fi hotspots to intercept communications or gain control of the connecting device. The U.S. government advises travelers to use secure Wi-Fi connections to access sensitive private information.

LONDON



The overall threat to travelers in London is LOW.

Travelers face possible [disruption](#) due to record numbers of tourists, staffing shortages on airlines, and possible protests. The U.K. is currently [experiencing](#) a cost of living crisis as inflation strains the average citizens' purchasing power. This in turn is motivating many unions to protest government policies. Railway workers are planning to strike on July 22 and July 29 which might disrupt or slow down rail service.

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- Travelers should monitor local media for updates regarding planned or spontaneous demonstrations and modify travel routes to stay away from these areas.
- Though demonstrations are common, they rarely result in violence. Protests often occur around the city squares and government buildings.
- Petty crimes, such as pickpocketing, purse snatching are common around tourist sites in major urban areas.
- Cybercrime attacks, especially data theft from high-profile targets such as large companies, continue to increase. Phishing is the most common form of cyber attack against travelers. We recommend travelers avoid public Wi-Fi and use VPNs in London.

Intelligence-led security is essential for effectively managing risk in a complex threat environment. Concentric's background in national security enables us to leverage cutting edge intelligence methodologies to improve our clients' ability to detect threats and manage risk. Concentric's in-house research and analysis team has top-tier analytical capabilities and a robust technical toolkit.

Active Monitoring

Periodic Threat Reporting

Online Sentiment & Exposure Analysis

Deep and Dark Web Report

Red Team Analysis Report

Travel Risk Assessments

Security and Risk Audits

Event Risk Assessments

Risk Intelligence

For a more detailed travel risk assessment of these locations, or any other area of interest, please contact Concentric

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