

17 Feb 2023

Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria: overview and advice for travellers

Travellers are reminded of health risks if travelling to areas affected by the earthquakes

On 6 February 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Gaziantep and neighbouring provinces in the south-east of Turkey [1]. On the same day a 7.5 magnitude earthquake hit the neighbouring province of Kahramanmaras. There have been several strong aftershocks [1].

The Turkish government has announced a national emergency in the 10 provinces affected by the earthquake [2]. These are the provinces of Kahramanmaras, Gaziantep, Malatya, Diyarbakir, Kilis, Sanliurfa, Adiyaman, Hatay, Osmaniye and Adana. Significant numbers of people have lost their lives, and many thousands have been evacuated from the affected areas [3].

Across Syria, 8.8 million people are affected in 43 districts [5]. The most affected areas include Aleppo governorate and Idilib governorate in Northern Syria [5].

Huge destruction is reported in the affected areas in both countries causing damage and disruption to major infrastructures, including health care facilities and to resources such as provision of drinking water, electricity and food supplies. The risk of subsequent tremors, harsh winter conditions and potential spread of infectious diseases are hampering the relief efforts [2, 4, 5].

Advice for travellers

For general information and for advice relating to natural disasters and safety and security, we advise you to follow advice from the [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office \(FCDO\)](#). You can also subscribe to updates from FCDO to stay up to date with their current advice.

Although you may feel compelled to travel to provide help in areas of humanitarian crisis, we recommend against travelling independently and advise you to contact appropriate aid/charity agencies for guidance and options for deployment.

The Turkish government has stated that only vehicles which carry aid teams and aid materials will be allowed to enter cities deemed to be inside the area of the disaster. If you are in the affected area, you should exercise caution and follow the advice of the local authorities [1]. The FCDO currently advise against all travel to Syria [6].

If you must travel to the affected areas:

- Speak to a health professional before you go about your travel plans and measure you can take to reduce your risk of travel related accident and illness and see the travel health advice on our [Country Information pages](#).
- Arrange [travel insurance](#) appropriate for your trip.
- See our factsheet on [travel to areas of humanitarian crisis](#). Ensure you stay up to date with FCDO advice.

Resources

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Earthquakes](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Stay safe after an earthquake](#)
- [WHO: Earthquakes](#)
- [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office](#)
- [Areas of humanitarian crisis: humanitarian aid workers and those advising those travelling to areas of conflict or disaster](#)
- [US Federal Emergency Management Agency: Earthquakes](#)
- [The impact of earthquakes on public health: a narrative review of infectious diseases in the post-disaster period aiming to disaster risk reduction. Mavrouli M, Mavroulis S, Lekkas E et al. Microorganisms 2003; 11\(2\):419](#)

References

1. [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Foreign Travel Advice: Turkey. \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)
2. [Presidency of the Republic of Turkey. News. 7 February 2023. \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)
3. [Ministry of Interior. Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency. Press Bulletin - 30 about the earthquake in Kahramanmaras. \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)
4. [World Health Organization. News. WHO sends health supplies to reach 400,000 people impacted by the earthquakes in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic. 10 February 2023 \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)
5. [ReliefWeb. Syria Earthquake February 2023 Government - controlled area, Daily Highlights - 14.02.2023. \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)
6. [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Foreign Travel Advice, Syria. \[Accessed 17 February 2023\]](#)