

U.S. State Department Upgrades Russia in Travel Advisory System

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Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency

The U.S. State Department has moved Russia out of a list of countries to which “travel should be reconsidered” in an updated travel advisory published on Monday.

In January 2018, the State Department listed Russia as one of the most dangerous countries for travelers in a new four-tier advisory system, along with states including Sudan and Pakistan. The new system replaced the State Department's travel warnings and alerts and is based on seven risk factors including crime and unrest. Travelers to Level 1 countries are told to “Exercise Normal Precautions” while the Level 4 category means “Do Not Travel.”

Related article: [U.S. Urges Travelers To Reconsider Visiting Russia](#)

In its renewed travel advisory, the State Department reclassified Russia as a Level 2 “increased caution” country, together with states including Italy, Spain and France.

U.S. travelers to Russia are advised to "exercise increased caution due to terrorism, harassment, and the arbitrary enforcement of local laws" and are encouraged to monitor local media for breaking events.

Travelers are specifically advised not to visit the North Caucasus region, including the republic of Chechnya and Mount Elbrus, "due to terrorism and risk of civil unrest," as well as Crimea, "due to Russia's occupation of the Ukrainian territory and abuses by its occupying authorities."

Russia's Embassy in the United States [welcomed](#) the reclassification as the "acceptance of obvious realities" in a Facebook statement on Tuesday.

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The embassy suggested that the FIFA World Cup in Russia had helped create a perception of the country "different from the one 'portrayed' by local [U.S.] mainstream media fueled by Russophobic circles in power."

The statement was accompanied by a video promoting the North Caucasus and Crimea.

"We will continue to advertise these Russian regions to the Americans," the embassy added.

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