

City Report  
FIFA World Cup 2026

# Guadalajara



Issued  
20th May 2026



# Guadalajara (Zapopan)

## Overview

Country	Mexico
Host stadium	Estadio Akron (FIFA tournament-time name: Guadalajara Stadium), Zapopan, Jalisco
Distance to Downtown	~7 miles (12 km) northwest of Guadalajara Centro
Stadium capacity	44,330
Roof / cover type	Open-air; no roof
Altitude	~1,566 m (5,138 ft) at moderate altitude
Timezone (June-July 2026)	Central Standard Time (UTC-6)
Official language(s)	Spanish (English understood in tourist zones and the venue)
Match count & dates	4 Group Stage matches (11 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> and 26 <sup>th</sup> June): Mexico vs South Korea on 18 <sup>th</sup> June is the headline fixture
Primary airport(s)	GDL (Guadalajara International); PVR (Puerto Vallarta) is a secondary option, about a 3.5-hour drive west
Population (metro)	~5.3 million

## Risk ratings

Security	MODERATE
Travel Disruption	MODERATE
Medical Infrastructure	MODERATE
Natural Disasters	LOW
Storms/Hurricanes	LOW
Heat	MODERATE

The Mexican Armed Forces operation in Tapalpa that killed CJNG leader Nemesio “El Mencho” Oseguera Cervantes on 22nd February set off the largest coordinated wave of cartel blockades (narcobloqueo) in modern Mexican history; over 250 blockades were reported countrywide and led to a temporary suspension of Guadalajara public transport. Tourist zones were largely spared by the retaliatory wave, and Guadalajara’s tourist infrastructure has been fully operational since early March 2026.

An increased security presence, with a 1-mile (1.5km) road cordon for matchdays, is in place to mitigate the risks of incidents relating to cartel activity. While Healix assesses Jalisco State as a HIGH security risk environment, elevated compared to Mexico City, several elevated risk factors in the state are moderated in Guadalajara due to the presence of security forces. Mexico’s home match on 18th June in Guadalajara will likely see the most disruption to travel and business operations.

# Arrival, departure and transportation

## Airports and public transport

Aeropuerto Internacional de Guadalajara (GDL) is the primary airport, about 11 miles (17 km) south of Centro. Allow two and a half hours for international departures during the tournament window. The Puerto Vallarta Airport (PVR) is a secondary option, about a three-and-a-half-hour drive west, which is practical only if the itinerary requires it. Mexico City's MEX is about an hour by air for connections.

## Recommended accommodation zones

Centro Histórico is the cultural and tourist core, 30 to 45 minutes from Estadio Akron. Chapultepec, Lafayette, and Tlaquepaque are all good alternatives, each 30 to 45 minutes from the venue. Zapopan is closer to the stadium, at 10 to 30 minutes away, and also has suitable accommodation for international fans. Andares and Puerta de Hierro provide upscale alternatives near Zapopan.



# Security and medical risks

## Crime

Guadalajara’s crime profile is similar to other similarly sized urban centres in Mexico, with the main risk posed by opportunistic criminality, though violent crime involving organised crime is also commonly reported. The dominant security threat is organised crime activity, concentrated in rural Jalisco and along overland routes connecting Guadalajara to Michoacán, Colima and Guanajuato.

Tourist zones, such as Centro Histórico, Colonia Americana/ Lafayette, Chapalita, Providencia, Zapopan core, including Andares and Puerta de Hierro and Tlaquepaque centre, are well-policed and permissible for tourists who follow standard best practice risk mitigation measures for Mexico; intentional homicide rates in the city of Guadalajara and Zapopan are roughly comparable to a high-rate US

city like Baltimore or Saint Louis. The dominant tourist exposures are petty theft, pickpocketing on transit, and tourism-targeted scams, including unofficial money changers and taxi overcharging. “Express kidnapping” (short-duration ATM-coerced kidnap) poses a latent risk to travel in Guadalajara, but it is less common than in other regions of the country and generally targets local nationals; an effective mitigation measure for this is using accredited ground support providers, or hotel-approved taxis or rideshare services for shorter journeys.

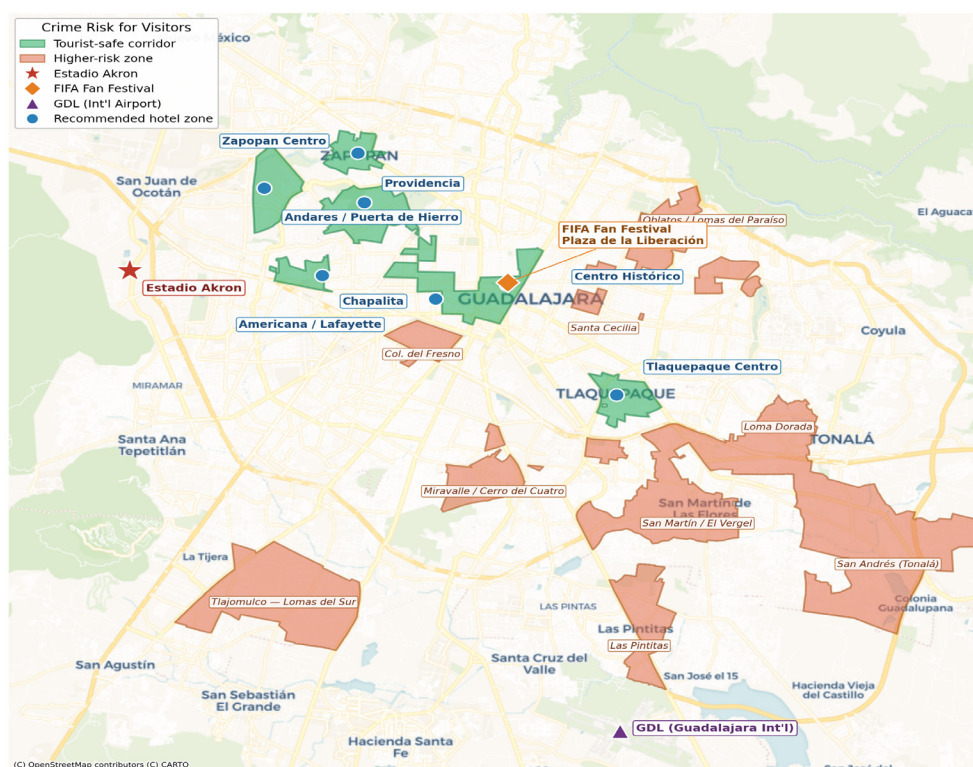
Homicides are concentrated in San Pedro Tlaquepaque and Tlajomulco de Zúñiga areas; first-quarter 2026 reporting from the Fiscalía del Estado de Jalisco shows homicides down about a third and pedestrian robbery down about 30% year-over-year.

## Terrorism

Mexico’s terrorism risk profile is lower than in Western Europe or US host cities. While the *Cártel Jalisco Nueva Generación* (CJNG) is active in rural Jalisco, it rarely targets tourists in the Guadalajara metropolitan area. The cartel power vacuum following the death of former CJNG leader El Mencho is the primary security risk ahead of the tournament. CJNG retaliation demonstrated significant capabilities and intent, with ~250 narcobloqueos across 20 states, highlighting mobilisation capability.

In Jalisco, 25 National Guard personnel were killed in six attacks, including one officer in a car bombing, indicating proven intent to use complex and high-impact tactics and leadership targeting. Disruption extended to civil aviation, with United, American, Delta, Alaska, and Air Canada temporarily suspending flights to Guadalajara (GDL) and Puerto Vallarta (PVR), reflecting elevated threat perception and impacts on critical infrastructure. Tourist-zone targeting did not occur in Guadalajara and was not reported in subsequent months; in contrast, an attack did occur in the Puerto Vallarta tourist zone.

For the tournament, the federal government is deploying approximately 99,000 security personnel nationwide. Locally in Jalisco, this includes Guardia Nacional, Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA), Policía Estatal, Policía Municipal de Zapopan-Guadalajara, and Fiscalía del Estado, coordinated through a command centre and a dedicated CCTV/ counter-drone footprint around Estadio Akron, the Plaza de la Liberación Fan Festival site and primary transit corridors. Visitors



# Security and medical risks

should expect visible security at GDL airport, the C5-linked transit nodes, the venue perimeter and the Fan Festival site throughout the tournament window. Highest-probability triggers for renewed disruption are further high-profile cartel arrests in Jalisco during the tournament window.

## Unrest

Guadalajara, as the second-largest city in Mexico, poses a higher risk of unrest than Monterrey and similar to that of Mexico City and US host cities. Protest activity in recent months has been centred around cartel violence and the eventual perceived lack of appropriate response by the security forces. Flashpoint locations include the Plaza de Armas, the Palacio de Gobierno (Jalisco state government) and the Universidad de Guadalajara campuses. Tournament-window large-unrest risk is low to moderate; personnel and travellers should monitor local news and embassy alerts to stay apprised of potential flashpoints for unrest.

## Natural disaster

The earthquake risk is moderate as Jalisco sits along the Mexican subduction zone and the Cocos Plate. The 2022 Michoacán earthquake (M7.6) produced shaking felt in Guadalajara. Volcán de Colima, about 78 miles (125 km) southwest, is one of Mexico's most active volcanoes; its most recent eruption was from 11th to 17th October 2023. June marks the start of the rainy season; afternoon thunderstorms with localised flooding are common. Hurricane and tropical-storm exposure is via Pacific remnants, such as Hurricane Roslyn in 2022, but is primarily a risk for operational disruption rather than significant infrastructure damage.

## Heat

Guadalajara's altitude moderates high temperatures in the summer months, with average highs in June and July of 80 to 86°F (27 to 30°C). Solar UV at altitude is materially higher than at sea level (UV index 11+). Estadio Akron is open-air, with no roof; afternoon kickoffs increase the risk of heat-related illness.



# Stadium and matchday

## Match schedule

Date	Match	Stage	Kickoff (local)
11 <sup>th</sup> June	South Korea - Czech Republic	Group A	21h00
18 <sup>th</sup> June	Mexico - South Korea	Group A	20h00
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Colombia - DR Congo	Group K	21h00
26 <sup>th</sup> June	Uruguay - Spain	Group H	19h00

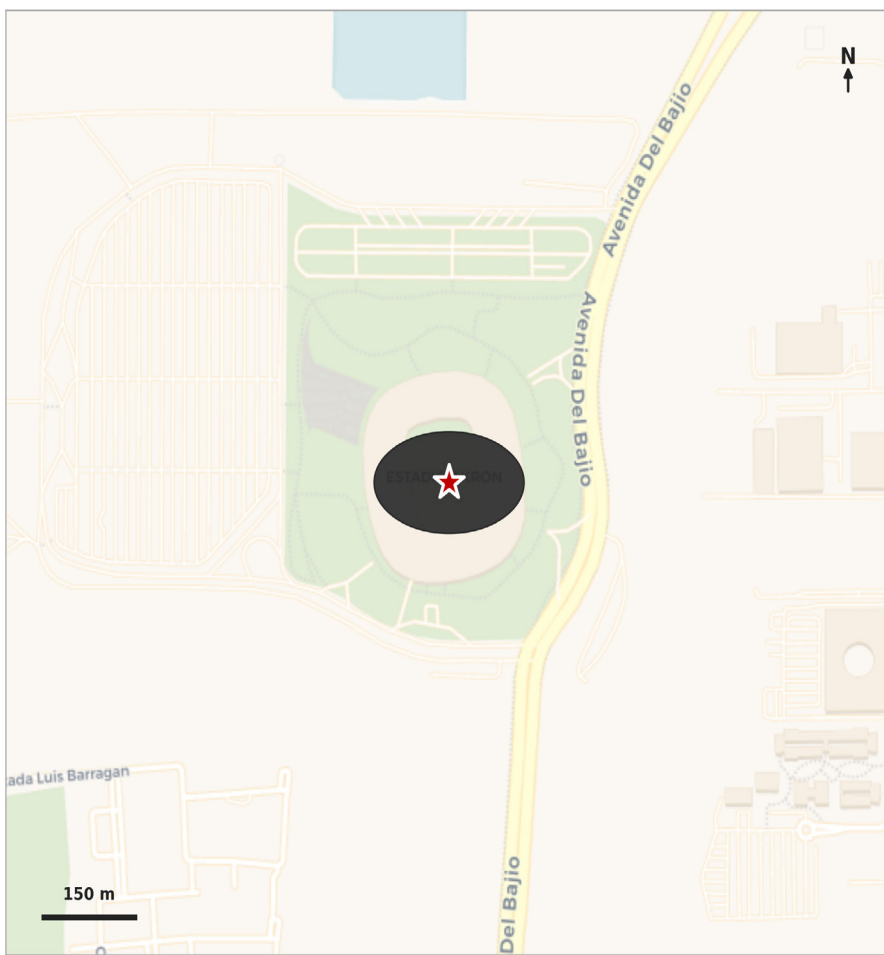
## Public transport and transportation to the stadium

Estadio Akron sits in Zapopan, about 10 miles (16 km) northwest of Guadalajara Centro. Public transport is not recommended as the SITEUR Tren Ligero Lines do not reach the venue. Driving routes converge on Avenida Vallarta and Periférico Poniente; both close to non-credentialed traffic four hours before kickoff. Parking is limited; travellers are strongly advised to use Uber, Didi, or hotel-affiliated taxi service rather than street taxis for journeys in lower-risk zones; business travellers and higher-profile fans are strongly advised to use local security providers for ground support and protective services. The venue is open-air with no roof.



## Entry/gates into the stadium

Estadio Akron gates open two hours before kickoff. The FIFA-standard clear-bag policy is enforced, including clear bags up to 12" x 6" x 12" (about 30 cm x 15 cm x 30 cm) or a one-gallon Ziploc, plus a small clutch up to 4.5" x 6.5" (≈11 cm x 17 cm); there is no bag check or storage on-site. Screening is by metal detector and manual bag inspection. Prohibited items include professional cameras with detachable or telephoto lenses, drones, banners larger than 1.5 m x 1 m, glass or hard-plastic containers and any flagpoles. Heavy police and Guardia Nacional presence is standard for major fixtures and will be expanded for tournament matches.



## Fanzones

The official FIFA Fan Festival is at the Plaza de la Liberación in Centro Histórico, next to the Catedral Metropolitana, and runs from 11th June to 19th July, with free public access. The site has been confirmed to operate under the FIFA “The Most Mexican Party” theme, with five giant screens broadcasting all 104 tournament matches live alongside live music, gastronomy and cultural programming.

The daily capacity is in the tens of thousands; site-perimeter screening is enforced by Policía Municipal de Guadalajara and Protección Civil. Because the Fan Festival is in Centro Histórico rather than near the venue, fan-flow congestion concentrates on the Avenida Hidalgo-Avenida Alcalde corridor and on Centro-Zapopan transit links on match days.



# Match risk rating

Match	Date and Kickoff (All Times Local)	Match Risk Rating
South Korea – Czech Republic	11th June 20h00	LOW
<p>This match is rated as LOW risk due to Guadalajara’s overall security risk environment, with minimal match-specific risks. Disruption due to authorities’ heightened security posture is the main risk affecting matches in Guadalajara following cartel violence in the region in February 2026. Accordingly, while South Korea and the Czech Republic are likely to both have moderately sized fanbases travelling to the city, disruption is more likely at transit hubs and in high-footfall areas due to an elevated security posture compared to other venues, particularly those in the United States and Canada. Travel delays on matchdays are likely to be recorded on the Macro Periferico bus line, as well as arterial roads such as Route 15, Vallarta Avenue and the Guadalajara Ring Road, due to demand surge during matchdays.</p>		
Mexico – South Korea	18th June 19h00	MODERATE
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to the participation of a host nation. Mexico fans are likely to gather in large numbers at fanzones and other venues during the match; general disruption is most likely to affect Mexico during host-nation matches compared to the USA and Canada; travellers in the city should anticipate the closure of private businesses and potential reductions in operating hours at offices and certain government facilities. While fan turnout is almost certain to be high, clashes between the two fanbases have a remote chance of occurring; Mexican and Korean fans have a good relationship dating back to the 2018 FIFA World Cup, where they held multiple joint fan gatherings after both teams knocked out Germany from the tournament’s group stage. Travel delays on matchdays are likely to be recorded on Line 1 and 3 trams and the Macro Periferico bus line, as well as arterial roads such as Route 15, Vallarta Avenue and the Guadalajara Ring Road, due to demand surge during matchdays.</p>		
Colombia – DR Congo	23rd June 20h00	MODERATE
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to elevated fan turnout and Guadalajara’s overall security risk environment. Colombia is likely to have a large fan turnout, particularly for this match, given that Mexico is a Spanish-speaking country. While the DR Congo fanbase is unlikely to be large, a moderate turnout cannot be ruled out, given that this is the country’s first World Cup since 1974. Accordingly, disruption in the Centro neighbourhood of Guadalajara is a credible risk on MD-1 and matchday, particularly in main squares and parks such as Alameda Central. Clashes between the two fanbases are highly unlikely to be recorded, though precedent from the 2024 Copa America underscores that general fan unrest cannot be ruled out. Travel delays on matchdays are likely to be recorded on Line 1 and 3 trams and the Macro Periferico bus line, as well as arterial roads such as Route 15, Vallarta Avenue and the Guadalajara Ring Road, due to demand surge during matchdays.</p>		
Uruguay – Spain	26th June 18h00	MODERATE
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to elevated fan turnout and Guadalajara’s overall security risk environment. While Spain and Uruguay are likely to have large and moderate fanbases at the tournament, respectively, fan turnout for this match is likely to be elevated given that Mexico is a Spanish-speaking country. Accordingly, disruption in the Centro neighbourhood of Guadalajara is a credible risk on MD-1 and matchday, particularly in main squares and parks such as Alameda Central. Clashes between the two fanbases are highly unlikely to be recorded, though isolated instances of unrest cannot be ruled out due to the evening kickoff, particularly after the match if the result is contentious. Travel delays on matchdays are likely to be recorded on Line 1 and 3 trams and the Macro Periferico bus line, as well as arterial roads such as Route 15, Vallarta Avenue and the Guadalajara Ring Road, due to demand surge during matchdays.</p>		

# Business as usual operations

Demand surges around match days are almost certain, especially Mexico vs South Korea on 18th June. Avenida Vallarta and the Periférico are closed to non-credentialed traffic on match days. Inflated short-term rental pricing in Centro, Chapultepec, and Zapopan has been recorded for matchdays. The most affected sectors include tech and IT services, retail and tourism.

## Recommendations for businesses and organisations

- Consider implementing hybrid or remote operations on matchdays, particularly as several key arterial roads will be closed or significantly disrupted.
- Ensure business operations account for closures of businesses and limited availability of some services on 18th June when Mexico play their match in Guadalajara.

- Activate remote-work options for staff commuting near Zapopan, Andares or Puerta de Hierro on all match days. The Avenida Vallarta corridor will close to non-credentialed traffic four hours before kickoff.
- Pre-book hotel blocks for visiting staff. Andares, Providencia and Centro Histórico inventory will be limited on match days, particularly around the 18th June match.
- Follow best practice for transportation in Guadalajara, particularly using reputable local providers for transportation for business travellers. Contact Healix for ground support and protective services for business travel.
- FIFA marks restrictions apply identically in Mexico; Instituto Mexicano de la Propiedad Industrial (IMPI) is the local IP enforcement counterpart; ensure

all material is compliant ahead of the tournament window.

## Recommendations for residents

- Plan errands and medical appointments away from match-day afternoons at Estadio Akron on the 11th, 18th, 23rd and 26th June, particularly the Mexico match on 18th June.
- Refresh earthquake-preparedness kits and verify ALERTAS SISMICAS settings on your phone.
- Keep extra cash on hand in case card-network outages co-occur with surge events.



# Multi city travel

Guadalajara sits in FIFA's Mexican cluster with Mexico City, located about an hour by air, and Monterrey, located about an hour and a half by air. Overland routes traverse cartel-active corridors and are not recommended. Cross-border travel to US host cities requires a passport for all nationals and, depending on

nationality, either an ESTA or a visa. Travellers entering Canada need a passport; visa-exempt nationals flying in need a Canadian eTA before boarding, while visa-required nationals need a visitor visa unless they qualify for an eTA exception. See the Special Advisory for routing guidance.

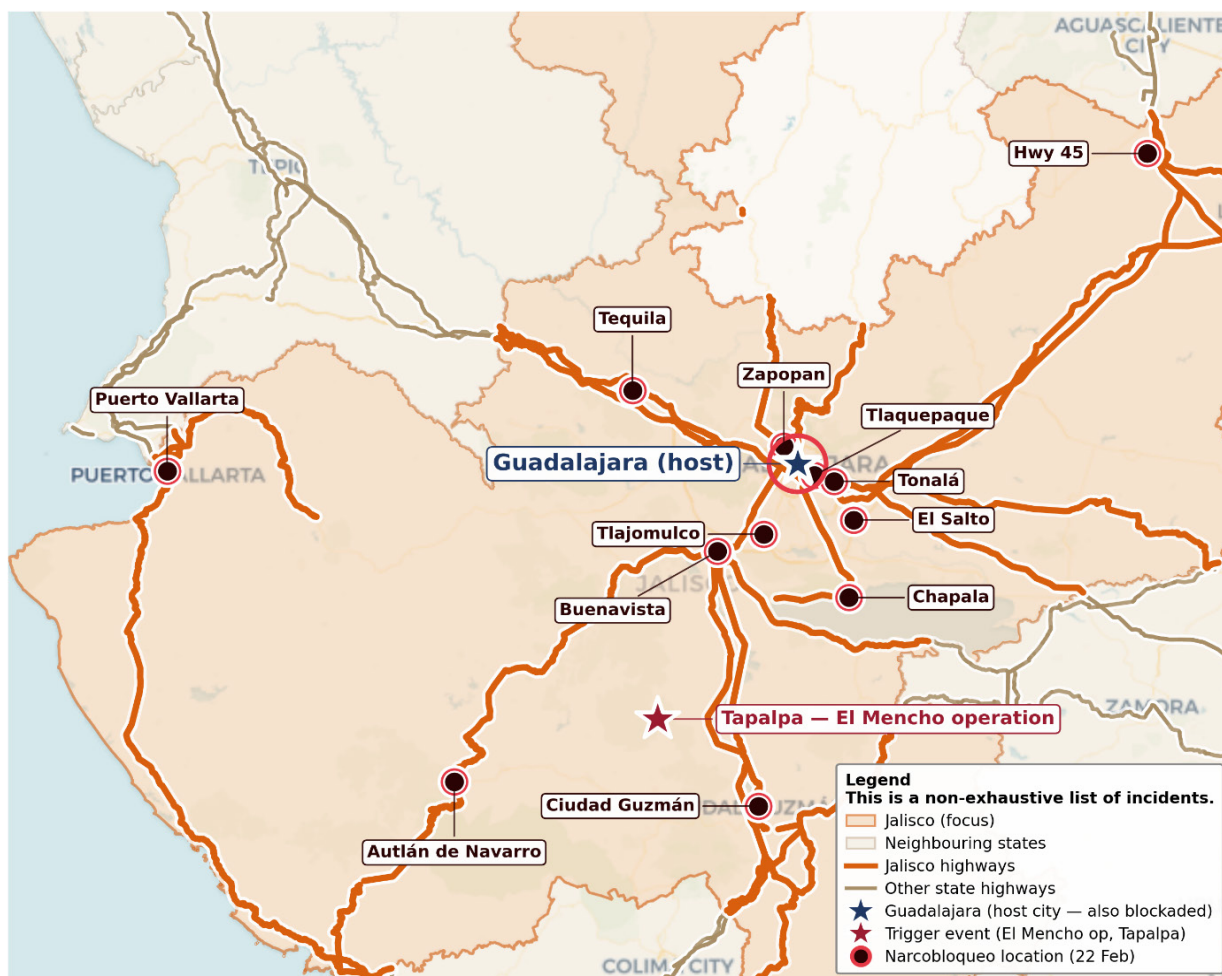


# City-specific risks

Guadalajara’s defining tournament-window security exposure is the surrounding Jalisco context. CJNG is the dominant organised crime group in the state and was the target of the Mexican Armed Forces operation in Tapalpa that killed El Mencho on 22nd February. The retaliatory narcobloqueo wave consisting of about 250 blockades countrywide, disrupted transport-network disruption inside Guadalajara, and caused flight cancellations by United, American, Delta, Alaska and Air Canada at GDL and PVR; this demonstrated CJNG’s continuing capacity to project disruption at scale; tourist zones including Centro, Lafayette, Providencia, Tlaquepaque, Zapopan core, Andares and Puerta

de Hierro, were not targeted then and have not been since. The most likely trigger for the rapid deterioration of the security environment during the tournament period is another high-profile cartel arrest or kingpin operation between May and July 2026.

While Healix assesses Jalisco State as a HIGH risk environment, elevated compared to Mexico City, several elevated risk factors in the state are moderated in Guadalajara due to the presence of security forces. Deferring non-essential travel to higher-risk suburbs and areas outside of Guadalajara remains the primary risk measure to mitigate against cartel activity in the state.



# General advice

- **During major events, plan journeys avoiding common protest flashpoints.** The Plaza de Armas, the Palacio de Gobierno and the Universidad de Guadalajara campuses are likely locations for organised demonstrations.
- **Pedestrian travel is permissible across Centro, Chapultepec, Zapopan core, Tlaquepaque and Andares before nightfall as long as basic security precautions are followed.** Minimise non-essential travel in the following areas: Colonias Miravalle, El Cerro del Cuatro, Oblatos, Lomas del Paraíso, Santa Cecilia, Colonia del Fresno and along the Av. Mariano Otero and Calzada Niños Héroes corridor, and in the peripheral outskirts of Tonalá and southern Tlaquepaque. Business travellers are advised to use ground support providers for transportation.
- **Use Uber, Didi or hotel-arranged taxis for moves in lower-risk zones of the city; avoid using street taxis.** Keep extra MXN cash on hand for smaller businesses where card payment is not always available.



# Appendix: methodology

## Risk ratings

MINIMAL	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME
Locations in this category are likely to be affected by small-scale, peaceful, protests that occur sporadically and represent no security risk but may cause temporary localised travel disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by small-scale protests and low-level clashes, resulting in a heightened police presence in the affected areas. Multiple arrests are reported, resulting in travel and operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by medium to large-scale protests and multiple low-level clashes. Local businesses are at a heightened risk of being damaged and looted, resulting in operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by large-scale protests and clashes taking place resulting in the deployment of National Guard units to contain the unrest. Movement restrictions are implemented to contain unrest, resulting in significant operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by significant civil unrest resulting in the temporary absence of law and order. Strict movement restrictions are imposed and a significant deployment of National Guard units leads to severe operational disruption.

## Incident impact ratings

MINIMAL	LOW	MODERATE	SIGNIFICANT	CRITICAL
Incidents in this category are routine within the risk environment and do not pose a threat to life. Incidents rarely impact beyond the immediate vicinity and / or there is negligible implication associated with the risk factor.	Incidents in this category are routine within the risk environment but rarely pose a threat to life and / or the casualty impact is incidental and highly localised. Incidents rarely impact beyond the immediate vicinity or the implications are incidental.	Incidents in this category are fairly common for the risk environment and may pose a threat to life, occasionally resulting in mass casualties. The impact is typically restricted to the immediate vicinity and / or is incidental.	Incidents in this category occasionally occur in the risk environment and typically pose a credible and imminent threat to life, occasionally resulting in mass casualties. The impact may spread beyond the immediate vicinity.	Incidents in this category are highly out of the ordinary for the risk environment, pose a significant and imminent threat to life and will likely result in significant mass casualties. The impact is likely to have wider-reaching implications.

## Risk trends

RAPIDLY IMPROVING	IMPROVING	STABLE	DETERIORATING	RAPIDLY DETERIORATING
The situation is improving in the short term, with the potential for an event to cause a sudden and unexpected improvement.	The situation is improving in the medium term, at a steady and predictable rate.	The situation is unlikely to see a significant improvement or deterioration over the medium term.	The situation is worsening in the medium term, at a steady and predictable rate.	The situation is worsening in the short term, with the potential for a sudden and unexpected deterioration.

## Source evaluation criteria

CANNOT BE JUDGED	UNRELIABLE	RARELY RELIABLE	FAIRLY RELIABLE	USUALLY RELIABLE	RELIABLE
No basis exists for evaluating the reliability of the source.	Lacking in authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. Frequent history of misinformation or inaccuracy.	Significant doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness or competency. Some history of misinformation or inaccuracy.	Doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of some valid information.	Some doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of valid information most of the time.	No doubt of authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of being reliable almost all of the time.

## Information validity

CANNOT BE JUDGED	CONFIRMED FALSE	LIKELY FALSE	POSSIBLY TRUE	PROBABLY TRUE	CONFIRMED TRUE
No basis exists for evaluating the validity of the information.	Confirmed as false by reputable independent sources.	Not confirmed. Possible but not logical. No other information on the subject or information is contradictory.	Not confirmed but reasonably logical. Limited other information on subject.	Not confirmed but logical in itself and consistent with most other information on subject.	Confirmed by reputable independent sources and logical in itself.

## Forecasting

REMOTE CHANCE	HIGHLY UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	EVEN CHANCE	LIKELY	HIGHLY LIKELY	ALMOST CERTAIN
<5%	10% - 20%	25% - 35%	40%-50%	55%-75%	80%-90%	>95%

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