

CAUCASUS **BAROMETER**

ARMENIA 2024

METHODOLOGICAL REPORT

List of Abbreviations

CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
CB	Caucasus Barometer
CRRC	Caucasus Research Resource Center
HH	Household
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
RA	Republic of Armenia

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What Is Caucasus Barometer?

Caucasus Barometer (CB) is a nationwide household (HH) survey, usually conducted every two years by the South Caucasus offices of CRRC-Armenia and CRRC-Georgia (until 2015, also CRRC-Azerbaijan). CB stands out as the only research initiative in the region with a long history of continuous data collection, providing publicly accessible data. During 2004-2024, approximately 50000 citizens of Armenia (RA), Georgia, and Azerbaijan participated in CRRC CB surveys, answering a variety of questions about socio-economic issues, values, beliefs, and political positions.

The main goal of the CB is to provide the general public, researchers, journalists, and policymakers with high-quality data on socio-political and economic trends in the South Caucasus. As shown by data from the Google Scholar platform, as of 2024, CB data has been cited in more than 3200 scientific publications over the 20 years of the program's implementation, which demonstrates its widespread use in scientific work. On the other hand, more than 82 million charts created on the CB's online analysis platform¹, speak to its demand among the public. Additionally, CB data has been used in numerous public policy documents at both national and international levels.

From its inception until 2014, the CB received institutional financial support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Since 2014, the CB in RA has been funded by various organizations. In RA, in 2024, the CB was co-funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

CB data is protected by copyright. When using CB data, it is mandatory to cite the source using the format provided below, in accordance with international referencing standards.

Citation example:

Caucasus Research Resource Center. (2024) "Caucasus Barometer Armenia". Downloaded from <http://www.crrc.am/barometer> as of 15.12.2024.

Geographic and Demographic Coverage

The 2024 CB survey was conducted among the adult population (aged 18 and over) in 10 regions of the RA and Yerevan, in rural and urban areas.

Fieldwork was carried out by CRRC-Armenia from July 27 to October 10, 2024. The interviews were conducted in RA, face-to-face, using the computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) method.

1. See <https://caucasusbarometer.org/en/>:

Sampling

Survey participants were selected using a stratified multistage cluster sampling method. CRRC-Armenia used polling station lists as the primary sampling units. The sampling frame was based on the precincts from the 2021 snap parliamentary elections².

The primary sampling units were categorized into three layers: polling stations in the capital, other cities, and rural areas. Subsequently, the urban and rural strata were grouped into four geographic sub-strata: northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest. The sample size was determined based on several factors, including the number of population subgroups to be represented, the target margin of sampling error, and available resources. Adjustments were made to the sample size within each stratum to account for the anticipated number of incomplete interviews. The final sample size for each stratum was calculated using a 95% confidence interval.

In the first stage, a list of primary sampling units (PSUs) clusters was created for each geographic sub-stratum based on its size, following the principle of Probability Proportional to Size. Field visits were then conducted to the selected primary units, where households the secondary sampling units were chosen using the **random step** method. This process involved a predetermined starting point, step direction, and step size.

In the final stage, survey participants within each selected household were chosen using the 'Kish grid' method. After identifying the target household, interviewers made up to three attempts to visit it if the initial attempt was unsuccessful. Upon gaining access, interviewers explained the survey's objectives to household members and randomly selected the individual to be interviewed. If the chosen participant was unavailable, interviewers made up to three visits to complete the interview.

All instances of respondents refusing to participate were recorded on tablets during fieldwork (see Table 1).

Table 1. Results of the survey attempts (based on the classification of the American Association for Public Opinion Research)

	Armenia	
	N	%
Full query	1561	31,64
Household rejection	1878	38
Respondent's refusal	169	3,4
Other ³	1334	26,9
General	4942	100

2. <https://www.elections.am/Elections/Parliamentary>.

3. "Other" responses include the following options: "The household is closed, no contact was made, no one opened the door", "Adult household members were not at home", "They opened the door, but no one at home knew the language of the survey", "The household is unavailable", "The respondent was not at home", "Unable to contact the respondent", "The respondent didn't have time for the interview within the allotted time frame", "Interviewing the respondent isn't possible due to health or mental condition", "The respondent didn't know the language in which the survey was conducted".

Questionnaire Development and Testing

The 2024 CB questionnaire was developed by the CRRC-Armenia and the CRRC-Georgia teams through the joint efforts of staff from both organizations. It is important to note that the questionnaire underwent additional revisions in 2024 to refine its content and align it with the current context. As a result, new questions and an additional thematic section were incorporated into the CB.

The original questionnaire was created in English and then translated into the languages of the countries where the surveys were conducted. A preliminary version of the questionnaire was piloted by both CRRC-Armenia and CRRC-Georgia to address issues related to question formulation and clarity.

In RA, 31 respondents from Yerevan, Armavir, and Gegharkunik participated in the piloting of the questionnaire, which took place from March 29 to April 1. Following the piloting, the CRRC teams refined the questionnaire before proceeding with the fieldwork.

Fieldwork

Although no permission is required under RA legislation to conduct public surveys, CRRC-Armenia took the proactive step of preparing official letters outlining the survey's objectives and procedures for local authorities, as well as informational leaflets with similar content for the general public. This approach aimed to address an important ethical consideration: it ensured that residents could participate in the survey with full knowledge and were informed of their right to contact the CRRC-Armenia office for further clarification if needed.

The interviews in RA were conducted in the Armenian language. Interviewers used tablets to administer the survey, and data were collected using the SurveyCTO software.

For programming the questionnaire on tablets, CRRC-Armenia utilized the SurveyCTO data collection software, which enabled the application of logical checks and automated skipping between sets of questions.

CRRC-Armenia ensured that the data collected from the interviews was securely uploaded and stored on its encrypted servers.

The 2024 CB data collection process involved experienced interviewers, field coordinators, and managers from CRRC-Armenia. In total, 48 interviewers and 8 field coordinators participated in the data collection process. Training sessions were organized for all participants on the following dates: July 24, August 5, 12, 21, September 3, and October 8.

Training Content Scope

General information about the research

- What is Caucasus Barometer?
- What are the main goals of its implementation?

Sampling rules

- What is randomness?
- Why is the random walk principle used?
- How is the starting point (polling centers) selected?
- How is a starting HH selected in rural and urban areas?
- How are the next HHs selected for completed and incomplete interviews?
- How are respondents selected in HHs?

Basic rules and ethical norms for conducting a survey

- How to introduce yourself when a household member is ready to listen?
- How to read the questions and answer options?
- How to get an accurate and relevant answer from the respondent?

Basic principles of using tablets and working with SurveyCTO

- How to fill out the questionnaire?
- How to save and send completed surveys?
- How to make changes to an already completed questionnaire?

During the training, interviewers tested the questionnaire and sampling instructions (including random step, step size, and respondent selection) and discussed any potential issues or challenges that might arise during the fieldwork.

Collected Data Overview

A total of 1561 full interviews were conducted, resulting in an overall response rate of 31,6%.

The total number of attempts to contact households was 4942. Of these, 46,7% were made in the capital, 27,9% in other cities, and 25,4% in rural areas. Table 2 provides detailed statistics on HH contact attempts by sample strata.

Table 2: Total number of attempts to contact the HH by sample stratum:

	Capital		Other cities		Rural		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Final interviews	542	34,7	487	31,2	532	34,1	1561	100
Unreceived interviews	1766	52,3	894	26,4	721	21,3	3381	100
Total (by settlement type)	2308	46,7	1381	27,9	1253	25,4	4942	100

A total of 1555 interviews were conducted during the first visit. During the second visit, 6 additional interviews were completed, while no interviews were conducted on the third attempt.

Several quality control procedures were applied alongside the fieldwork:

- Audio recordings: 332 observations (about 21,0% of total interviews)
- Back calls: 70 observations (about 4,5% of total interviews)
- Accompanying visits by fieldwork coordinators
- Automated checks using the monitoring toolkit in the "SurveyCTO" program

Data Management

Comprehensive data cleaning efforts were undertaken to identify and correct inconsistencies where possible. Additionally, open-ended questions requiring text responses were recoded and aligned with numerical codes.

It is important to note that the use of the "CAPI" method enhanced the efficiency of data cleaning. Specifically, the pre-programmed questionnaire template helped prevent the introduction of ambiguous codes into the database and ensured that no more responses than required were accepted for each question.

Table 3 summarizes the additional procedures implemented for data cleaning.

Table 3: Additional procedures for data cleaning

The problem	The procedure
The entered answers are ambiguous, but the data cleaning specialist was able to determine which answer the respondent gave.	The value was adjusted to the answer that the data cleaning specialist believed the respondent gave.
The entered answers are ambiguous, and the data cleaning specialist was unable to determine which answer the respondent gave.	The value was coded as an interviewer error.

Data Processing

The data were weighted at two levels: household and individual.

For weighting at the household level, the following criteria were used:

- Total population in the precinct
- Total number of the precincts in the substratum
- Number of the sampled precincts in the substratum
- Total population in the substratum

For weighting at the individual level, the following indicators were used

- Household weight
- Number of adult members in the HH
- Total number of individuals in the given age-gender group

When weighting the data, it was considered the fact that different members of the population had varying probabilities of being selected for an interview, meaning they represent different proportions of the total population. Sample weights are necessary to estimate the proportion of the population that would have selected similar responses if they had participated in the survey. To calculate the sample weights, the CRRC teams used the number of voters on the precinct lists.

Next, the sample weights were adjusted for non-response. For instance, if 80% of interview attempts at a precinct were successful, the 20,0% of refusal rate increased the weight of respondents by a factor of 1,25, due to selection from that precinct.

Finally, since respondents represent different population groups by gender, age, and type of residence (e.g., male respondents aged 35-54 in rural areas of RA), the weights were adjusted to ensure that the weighted age-gender proportion of the sample is aligned with the age-gender composition of the general population. To calculate these demographic proportions, CRRC-Armenia used the 2022 population data from the National Statistical Committee of the RA.

As the CB uses a complex survey methodology, researchers are advised to consider this methodology when analyzing the database. Below is the recommended syntax for analysis using the STATA software package:

- Analysis at the HH level: `svyset PSU [pweight=HHWT], strata(SUBSTRATUM) fpc(NPSUSS) singleunit(certainty) || ID, fpc(NHHPSU)`
- Analysis at the individual level: `svyset PSU [pweight=INDWT], strata(SUBSTRATUM) fpc(NPSUSS) singleunit(certainty) || ID, fpc(NHHPSU) || _n, fpc(NADHH)`

Databases and Documents

The 2024 CB database, as well as the survey tool and information about previous rounds, are available on the websites "crrc.am/barometer" and "Caucasusbarometer.org".

The databases are available in SPSS and STATA formats.



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