LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

THE JOURNEY TO ARMENIA STARTS WITH HARTAK
YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR LIVING AND WORKING IN ARMENIA

WHAT IF GOOGLE CAME KNOCKING TOMORROW?
THE OFFICE SPACE DEMANDS OF A TECH GIANT IN ARMENIA

ARMENIAN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - PART 2
THE ARMENIAN 1600-YEAR BLUEPRINT TO SHAPING AI'S DEEPEST UNDERSTANDING

BENEATH THE APRICOT TREE
SMELL, MEMORY, AND MEANING

CODING THE ALGORITHM OF INFLUENCE
THE RISE OF TECH DIPLOMACY IN ARMENIA

THE E-LOGI FEST25 REPORT - PART 1
WHAT ARMENIA CAN LEARN FROM LITHUANIA'S LOGISTICS TRANSFORMATION

THE EDUCATION ARMENIA NEEDS IN 2025 - PART 2
GRADUATING WITH A MASTER'S IN PIRATE ADMINISTRATION

THE ARMENIAN CHAPTER
CONNECTING FOUNDERS THROUGH A RUNNING CLUB IN ARMENIA

AUG. 1ST 2025 | NO. 29 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR'S LETTER

My younger brother is moving to Armenia in a few months, and I couldn't be happier! It took me almost nine years to finally convince him and his wife to join us here. While Armenia might not be the primary hub for architects, he works mostly remotely, and truly, what better place for remote work than Armenia?

The primary driver, and what truly warms my heart, is their desire to start a family. He and his wife are planning to grow their family, and they see Armenia as the ideal environment. This country is one of those rare, genuinely family-oriented and child-friendly places in the world where children aren't just tolerated but truly celebrated, and families are deeply cherished and supported. It's a place where they feel their future children will live for real.

I worked on this magazine issue with joy filling my heart. Knowing that I played a part in convincing one more person, not just anyone, but someone who means the absolute world to me, to make this life-changing move is incredibly fulfilling. It's more than just a personal victory; it's the kind of motivation that gets me up in the morning.

Mathew Zein

Travel & Tourism Award 2025
Best Digital Nomad Guide of The Year
London, UK
January, 2025

CONTENTS

AUGUST, 1ST 2025 | NO. 29 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

THE JOURNEY TO ARMENIA STARTS WITH HARTAK YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR LIVING AND WORKING IN ARMENIA P 09

Planning a move to Armenia? The journey might seem challenging, but it doesn't have to be. Learn how Hartak.am, the national service gateway portal, could provide full guidance on different life events and be your one-stop shop for living and working in Armenia.

WHAT IF GOOGLE CAME KNOCKING TOMORROW? THE OFFICE SPACE DEMANDS OF A TECH GIANT IN ARMENIA P 15

While Armenia has the talent, its commercial real estate market faces a critical challenge. Discover the "chicken-and-egg" problem and why the country must be prepared with world-class, sustainable office spaces now to compete with regional rivals and secure its place on the global tech stage.

ARMENIAN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - PART 2 THE ARMENIAN 1600-YEAR BLUEPRINT TO SHAPING AI'S DEEPEST UNDERSTANDING P 28

Is the Armenian alphabet a secret blueprint for AI? We're diving deeper into this controversial idea, exploring how its unique, engineered structure, from numerical values to phonetic logic, may give Armenian engineers an edge. Discover how a 1600-year-old script could be shaping the future of artificial intelligence.

BENEATH THE APRICOT TREE SMELL, MEMORY, AND MEANING P 35

Why do some scents bring you back? From sticky-kneed childhoods spent climbing mulberry trees to the sacred taste of an Armenian apricot, Diana Khandilyan explores how fruits and their aromas are connected to our memories. The cherry on top is that she'll show you how to find these familiar flavors in a glass of wine.

CODING THE ALGORITHM OF INFLUENCE THE RISE OF TECH DIPLOMACY IN ARMENIA P 43

The rules of power have changed. While other nations rely on oil and armies, Armenia is making a bold geopolitical bet on a new currency: data. Learn how it's using tech diplomacy, its diaspora, and a $500M AI supercomputing hub to code a new path and redefine its influence.

CONTENTS

AUGUST, 1ST 2025 | NO. 29 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

THE E-LOGI FEST25 REPORT - PART 1
WHAT ARMENIA CAN LEARN FROM LITHUANIA'S LOGISTICS TRANSFORMATION

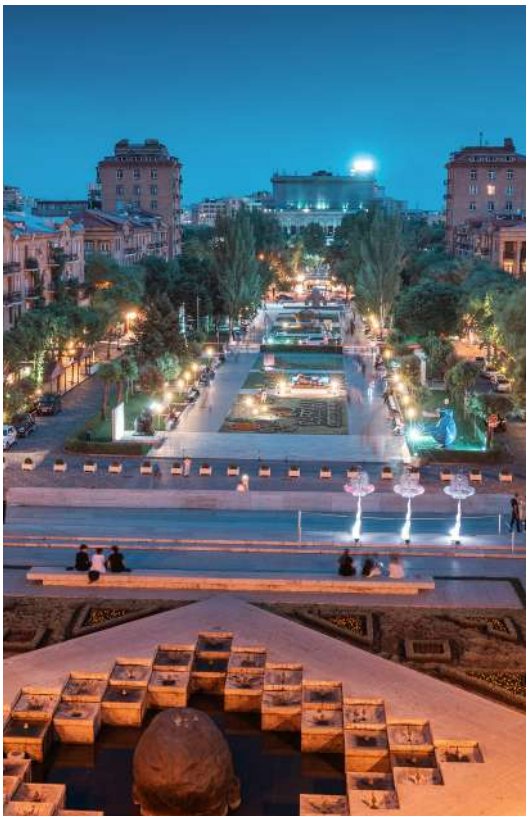
P 54

Regional logistics is at a crossroads. The e-Logi Fest25 Report offers a deep dive into the trends shaping the Armenian e-commerce and logistics industry, from new technologies to supply chain challenges. Learn what makes Armenia's path in logistics similar to Lithuania's 15 years ago.

FROM YEREVAN TO BERLIN
ARMENIAN TECH STARTUPS MAKE THEIR MARK AT GITEX EUROPE

P 59

Armenian tech is making its mark on the global stage. Learn how five startups, supported by EU4Innovation East, took their innovations to GITEX Europe in Berlin. Discover their success stories, including one that was a semi-finalist in a prestigious startup competition, as they bridge the gap between Yerevan and Europe.



THE EDUCATION ARMENIA NEEDS IN 2025 - PART 2
GRADUATING WITH A MASTER'S IN PIRATE ADMINISTRATION

P 68

What can a pirate ship teach a startup founder? Everything. Suren Markosian dives into the 'Master's in Pirate Administration' concept, revealing how lessons in big wins, instant command, and constant adaptation are the keys to survival. Discover why Armenia's tech future depends on embracing a pirate's mindset.

THE ARMENIAN CHAPTER
CONNECTING FOUNDERS THROUGH A RUNNING CLUB IN ARMENIA

P 74

Beyond the boardroom, real connections are made on the pavement. The Founders Running Club is bringing together Yerevan's tech community for weekly runs that build more than just fitness.

GITEX GLOBAL

13-17 OCT 2025
DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE

FEATURING

Global Data Centres · GQX GITEX QUANTUM EXPO · GITEX DIGI HEALTH & BIOTECH · GITEX CYBER VALLEY · GITEX GREEN IMPACT · GLOBAL DEV SLAM

THE WORLD'S LARGEST TECH, AI & STARTUP SHOW

200,000	180	40%	6,500	1,733	400+
TECH EXECUTIVES	COUNTRIES	OF ATTENDEES ARE C-LEVEL	EXHIBITING COMPANIES	STARTUPS	GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

Scan the QR code to

GET INVOLVED

#GITEXGLOBAL
gitex.com

ORGANISED BY

DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

Ucom

THE LARGEST 5G COVERAGE IN ARMENIA

www.ucom.am

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

mental
health
awareness
initiative

sponsored by

YEREVAN
MUNICIPALITY

0800 00 900

New **toll-free** number for confidential emotional support

Help us do more

mha.am/en

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

dalan technopark

DALAN TECHNOPARK

WHERE POTENTIAL BECOMES PERFORMANCE

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

Dalan Technopark

www.dalantechnopark.com

THE JOURNEY TO ARMENIA STARTS WITH HARTAK

YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR LIVING AND WORKING IN ARMENIA

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

THE JOURNEY TO ARMENIA STARTS WITH HARTAK
YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR LIVING AND WORKING IN ARMENIA

Relocating to Armenia is not that easy! Challenges arise from the very beginning, from the moment someone says, "You have to go to a polyclinic" and you're like, "poly-what!" Let alone when the landlord says, "If you face issues with the Baxi, call me" and again you're like, "issues with what?"

I still remember my first month in Armenia back in 2017. Lana and I had initially planned to stay in the country for a year before heading to Canada, so I needed to learn about the different regulations regarding residence permits, rental agreements, doing business, banking, paying taxes, and other related matters. Little did we know back then that we would be staying a lot more than one year; it's already mid-2025, and we're still counting, now even with a 3-year-old son.

Anyway, I've always preferred to research topics myself, even when I plan to hire a professional, like a lawyer or tax advisor, to handle the actual processing; this has always been my approach everywhere I go! However, in Armenia, things weren't as easy. The majority of the content available about the country was in Armenian or Russian. Any English content wasn't complete or clear. In some cases, it wasn't even written to address a foreigner's needs. I know translation is available via several online tools, but sometimes it's not just the translation you need; it's the context, and even the content itself, to be written from a foreigner's perspective so you can truly understand and relate to it.

So, to make things work for me, I hired around 10 local lawyers and tax advisors and paid each an hourly rate ($40 to $75) to explain the laws to me! Sometimes, I had to also hire a local university student to help with translation as well since some of them didn't speak English well. I still remember Googling law offices and accounting companies, emailing them or having my assistant call them on my behalf, and going for visits. I would just sit and have them explain things to me for 1-2 hours each. I used to write short summaries about this and that to make sure I was on the right track: how to pay my taxes, how to get a residence permit, how long I was allowed to stay before becoming a tax resident, and the list goes on.

Nowadays, **things have changed a lot from what they used to be 10 years ago**! At least, many people speak English, and there are resources available in English on different websites. However, it's still not entirely clear, as many processes need to be explained in detail, in a step-by-step format, especially for those considering relocating from another country. And when you add traveling with kids, you get the ultimate challenge. It means you **have to be extra well-prepared before booking a flight** to ensure nothing goes wrong.

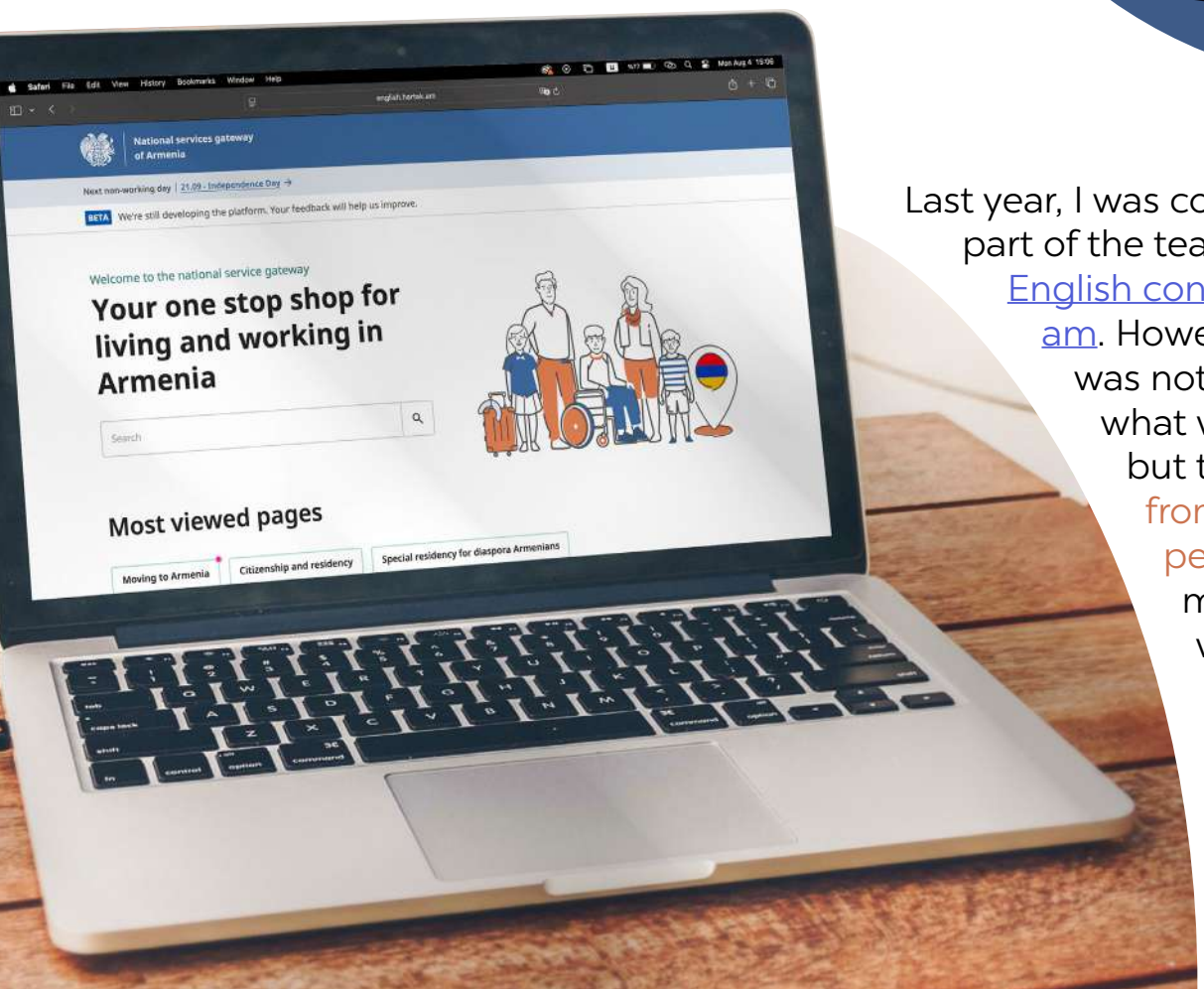
- How to import your furniture to Armenia?
- How to register a business, work remotely, and pay taxes?
- How to get an Armenian citizenship or a residence permit?
- How to buy a car and get a driving license?
- How to buy a home from the 1st or 2nd markets?
- How to manage healthcare and kids' education?

Answering these questions (and others) might be the reason many haven't relocated to Armenia yet! In fact, I'm 100% sure it is, given how many of these I get every month via LinkedIn or the magazine's inbox.

Making Life in Armenia Easier for Newcomers

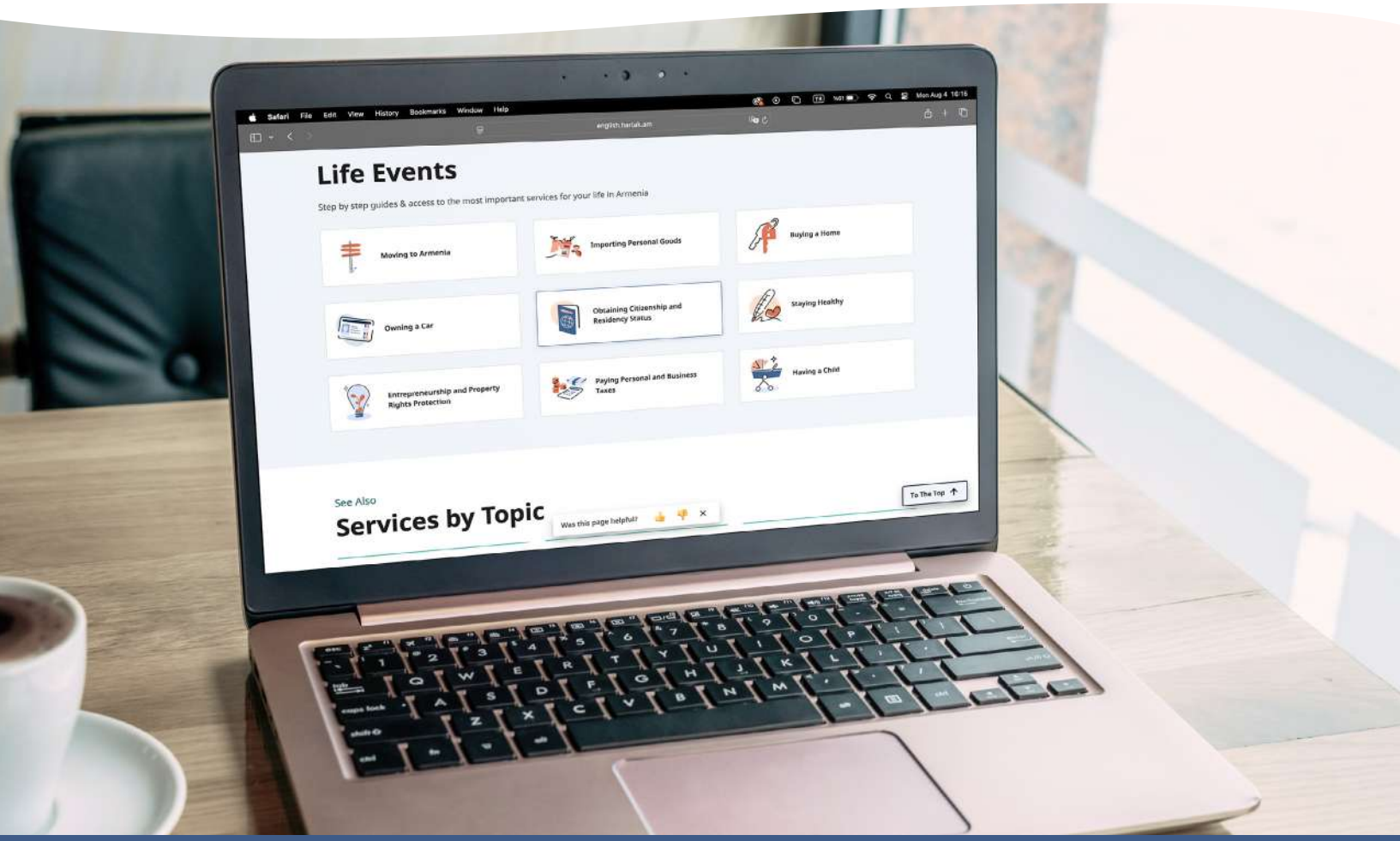
Hartak.am is a National Service Gateway Portal created by the Information Systems Agency of Armenia (ISAA) under the leadership of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Central Bank of Armenia.

The platform was first developed in Armenian, and the team continues to collaborate with institutions to ensure the content remains accurate, relevant, and easy to use, allowing users to understand what to do, where to go, and what to expect when accessing public services.



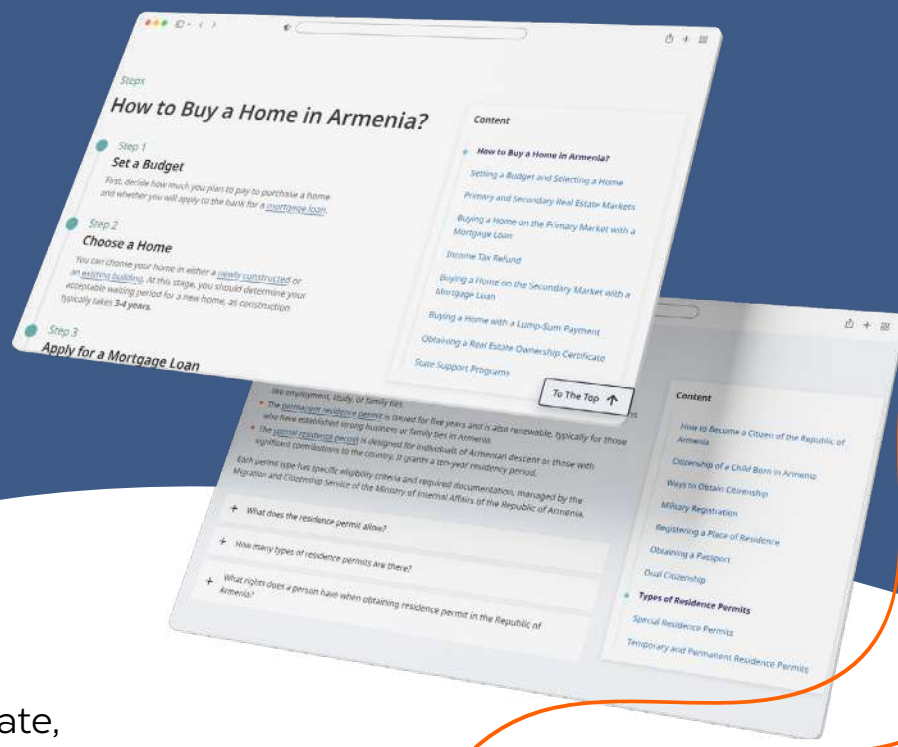
Last year, I was contracted as part of the team to build the English content for Hartak.am. However, the goal was not just to translate what was already there, but to create content from a foreigner's perspective, making it resonate with someone unfamiliar with life in Armenia.

It was the perfect opportunity for me to be part of building one of the missing pieces of the puzzle Armenia needs to attract more foreigners. The platform introduces the concept of a Life Event, which is a basic occurrence in a person's life that has financial and legal implications; these events often require interacting with government agencies and private companies. At the moment, the platform addresses nine Life Events:



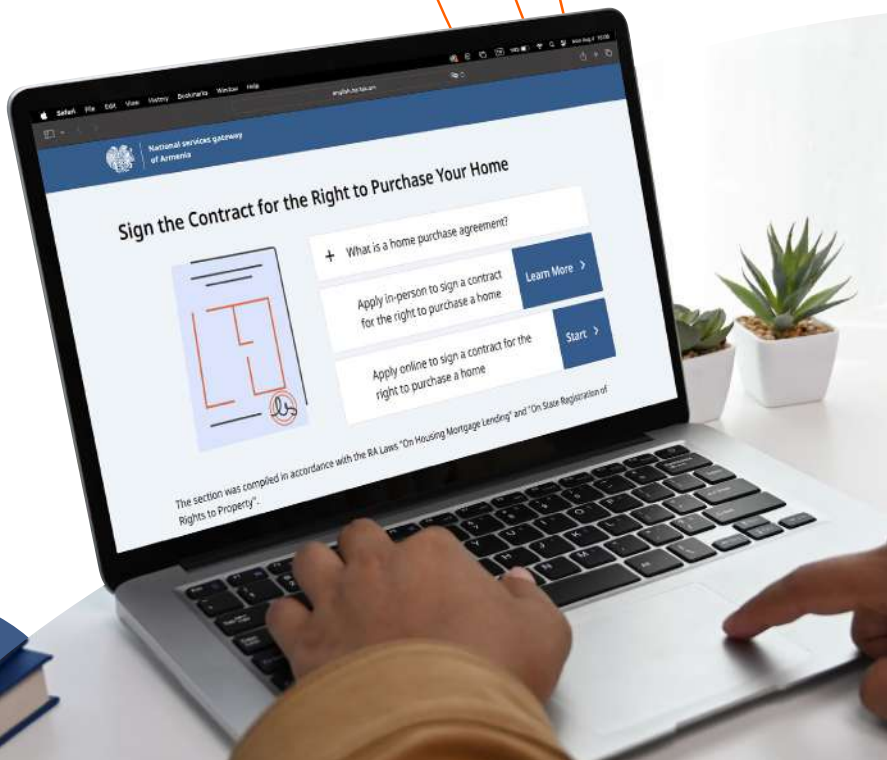
- **Moving to Armenia**
- **Importing personal goods**
- **Buying a home**
- **Owning a car**
- **Obtaining Citizenship and residence permits**
- **Staying Healthy**
- **Entreuership and property rights protection**
- **Paying personal and business taxes**
- **Having a child**

Each of these life events starts with a stepper walking the user through the process in a step-by-step format, from the very beginning to the last stage. Below are detailed descriptions of all the requirements, services, and terms, including links to separate service guides and digital public platforms that enable online service applications.



The content team did a huge job reviewing all the content details, confirming it's up-to-date and accurate, adding all the questions a foreigner might consider asking, and ensuring it all works smoothly. Even new topics were added to the platform, such as digital nomadism in Armenia and remote work from Armenia, which weren't mentioned as clearly elsewhere.

At this moment, Hartak.am has launched its beta version, and we would like to seek your feedback to make it even better. To help us improve it and make life easier for newcomers, please visit the platform, take a look, and then fill out this survey about your experience. It should take you no more than three minutes to complete, but it could make someone else's life much easier in Armenia! Also, if you're looking for a topic and couldn't find it or if you have suggestions, feel free to email info@isaa.am



WHAT IF GOOGLE CAME KNOCKING TOMORROW?

THE OFFICE SPACE DEMANDS OF A TECH GIANT IN ARMENIA

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

FEATURING

HAYK TER-TACHATYAN

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR AT DALAN TECHNOPARK

WHAT IF GOOGLE CAME KNOCKING TOMORROW? **THE OFFICE SPACE DEMANDS OF A TECH GIANT IN ARMENIA**

Imagine Google decides to establish a major presence in Armenia overnight! The news would send shockwaves through the country's tech ecosystem. Local startups would scramble to align with the tech giant, hoping for partnerships, acquisitions, or mentorship opportunities. Engineers and developers would see a surge in high-profile job openings.

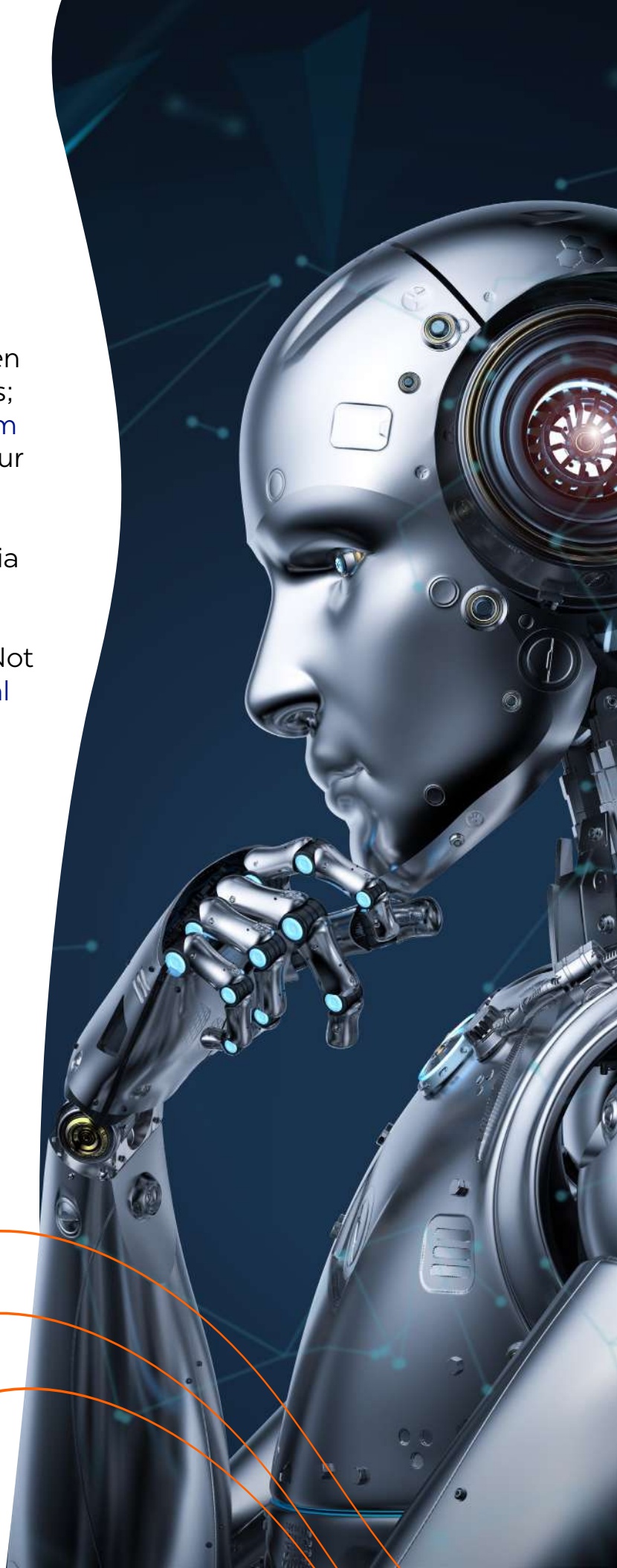
The government might roll out incentives to support the expansion, while universities could initiate specialized tech programs to meet demand. Investors would take notice and pour capital into Armenian tech ventures, anticipating a domino effect of growth. Overnight, Yerevan could transform into a center for AI research and cloud computing.

But hold on; where would a tech giant like Google set up a campus that meets its global "Googleplex" standards?

I know that as you read this you might be thinking, “Let Google decide to come first, and then we’ll figure out the perfect space for them!” But that’s not how this works. Attracting regional offices of tech giants means you have to be prepared for them, including the infrastructure to support their needs. You can’t just hope they’ll arrive and then figure out a way to meet their standards; you have to prove you’re expecting them and ready before they even consider your country.

It’s a chicken-and-egg problem! Armenia is not in the game until it can show completed projects that meet Silicon Valley’s exacting standards. Not plans. Not promises. Finished, certified, operational campuses. Every day Armenia delays is another day Tbilisi, Belgrade, or Almaty could secure these opportunities. The time to build isn’t when the news comes; by then, it’s already too late!

And while I use Google as a hypothetical example in this article, the core argument applies to any major tech company considering Armenia. The timing is particularly relevant now, following the $500 million investment announcement to build the region’s first supercomputer in collaboration between the Armenian government, NVIDIA, and Firebird.ai.



Googleplex Philosophy

Google doesn't compromise on its workspace philosophy. The Googleplex model redefines what a workplace should be, blending innovation, sustainability, and employee well-being into a harmonized experience.

At the core of Google's office philosophy is sustainability. Buildings must be LEED-certified, prioritizing energy efficiency, renewable materials, and reduced carbon footprints. Green spaces aren't an afterthought; they're integral, with rooftop gardens, indoor plants, and open-air designs that merge work with nature. Waste and water management systems are a must to ensure minimal environmental disruption.

International Headquarters of Google, Amazon, and Apple

Beyond sustainability, **Google demands workspaces that inspire**. The layout is flexible, balancing open collaboration zones with quiet pods for deep focus. Wellness is non-negotiable, with on-site gyms, meditation rooms, and cafeterias serving nutritious meals. The design fosters community, creating micro-campuses rather than unproductive corporate floors because innovation is born in environments that feel alive.

Finally, connectivity is key. **Offices must be linked to transport networks**, with easy access to public transit, bike lanes, and shuttle services. Infrastructure must be flawless with uninterrupted power, high-speed internet, and smart building technology. And with Google's reliance on cloud computing and AI, digital infrastructure must be world-class, with data centers and cybersecurity measures in place.

Google's offices are **productivity accelerators engineered to attract and retain the best minds**. For Armenia to compete, it must prove it can deliver spaces that don't just meet but exceed these standards. Only then can Armenia leverage its talent and tech ecosystem effectively, because at that point, **these two elements become true value-adds**, supported by the necessary fundamental infrastructure.

At this moment, you might be thinking, "And is Armenia that important for tech giants to consider having regional offices?" which clearly exposes your ignorance of **the Armenian tech ecosystem that ranked 51st globally in 2025**, just one spot away from the top 50. And that's without even mentioning the fact that Armenia already hosts offices for giants like NVIDIA, Synopsys, VMware, Oracle, AMD, Cisco, and others.

Assessing Existing Office Buildings in Armenia

While Yerevan has seen growth in modern commercial real estate, the market still faces a shortage of truly world-class, sustainable office buildings, especially those that align with global standards like LEED certification.

Currently, a few developments stand out as potential candidates. Kamar Business Center, located in Yerevan's central Kentron district, is one of the city's more contemporary office spaces, offering modern amenities and a professional environment. Meanwhile, Piazza Grande, another prominent business complex, provides high-quality infrastructure and premium office solutions, catering to international organizations and local enterprises alike.

However, while these buildings represent progress in Armenia's commercial real estate, I believe they might fall short of the Googleplex benchmark, particularly in sustainability, energy efficiency, and integrated wellness features.

Tech giants prioritize green construction, smart energy use, and employee-centric design, none of which are yet standard in Armenia's market. There are currently no LEED-certified office buildings in Armenia, a major drawback when competing for multinational tenants.

Without significant investment in next-generation office infrastructure, the country risks missing out on major opportunities. The talent is here, the tech ecosystem is growing, but without spaces that meet global corporate expectations, attracting a company like Google remains an uphill battle.

Dalan Technopark as a Case Study

Dalan Technopark is a vertical self-contained business ecosystem currently under construction. What sets it apart is the commitment to **becoming Armenia's first LEED-certified commercial building**, which is a critical distinction in a market where no other office spaces currently meet this global standard.

LEED certification requires energy efficiency, sustainable materials, and eco-friendly operations **from the construction phase through to the end**, all of which are integrated into Dalan's blueprint.

The challenge now is scale and speed. One building alone won't satisfy the demand if a major tech player enters the market. But Dalan's existence sends a clear signal: Armenia is beginning to build with global standards in mind. For the ecosystem to truly compete, more projects like it must follow, and fast. Because when Google (or its peers) comes knocking, they won't wait for the infrastructure to catch up.

Dalan Technopark, as it stands today, is just the starting point for this project. It's a single building within an envisioned tech park that will feature several other structures. Hopefully, it will be the smallest among the group of buildings that will eventually establish the tech industry for the entire region. Both the government and the private sector are willing to join forces, but everyone wants to see the results of this first step. They want tangible proof of this vision.

I wouldn't go into the details of Dalan Technopark's technical design. Instead, I will spotlight the building accessibility because this is an extremely critical element when evaluating a building's viability for tech corporations. I've visited the construction site several times, invited by the Operations Director, Hayk Ter-Tachatyan, and had long conversations with him about how they plan to solve the accessibility issue for their building.

Accessing Dalan Technopark

Yerevan's narrow roads and chronic rush-hour traffic are already a headache. It's one reason some resist new infrastructure projects in the Armenian capital, fearing the congestion they might bring once completed. Despite being just a 5-minute drive from central Yerevan, Dalan Technopark's immediate challenge would be mobility. An influx of 3,000 daily commuters would strain existing infrastructure, demanding a multi-modal approach to prevent gridlock and ensure smooth operations. Therefore, two new roads will be built to provide access to the building from Tsitsernakaberd Highway and Monte Street. However, without reliable high-capacity public transit, the dependency on private vehicles would overwhelm roads.

Dalan Technopark's team is working on organizing dedicated group shuttle buses that will operate to prevent traffic jams. Additionally, the building is close to an existing municipal public transport station. A second municipal public transport station will also be constructed soon, pending the government's decision. But even with accessible public transport, many would still prefer to drive. To address this, Dalan Technopark will incentivize ride-sharing among employees of tenant companies; for example, they would reserve priority parking spots for carpoolers.

Here, I must highlight the importance of active post-lease management, one that considers how the building operates and impacts people's lives, rather than simply leasing space and leaving occupants to fend for themselves.

The real change here is that Dalan Technopark plans to have a fully functional bicycle station. It will offer long-term and short-term bicycle parking lots on two floors and a special changing room, shower room, and toilets for bikers. In addition, Dalan Technopark is already discussing with the municipality about having a specific biking lane on the road from central Yerevan to the building.

While improved roads, public transport, and bike lanes will help (as outlined earlier), the best way to reduce traffic is to reduce the need for travel in the first place. Dalan Technopark will function as a true live-work-play environment, not just an isolated office park. This means on-site retail and dining, wellness and fitness centers, coworking and collaboration spaces, and entertainment and social spaces. The building is planned in a way that everything a professional needs is only one elevator ride away.

Employees of tenant companies will have access to childcare, healthcare, shopping, banking, sports, entertainment, food and beverage, and more. This will save them time usually lost before and after commuting to and from the office.

If executed well, Dalan could set a new benchmark for commercial real estate in Armenia, proving that sustainable construction is possible even in an emerging market. The stakes are high. If Armenia gets this right, it won't just attract one tech giant; it will become a legitimate destination for the next wave of global innovation. If it stumbles, the risk is being sidelined as other emerging markets race ahead. The time to act is now.

zealous™
Destination TMRW

we are zealous™
transforming VISIONS into
REALITIES

12+
Years In The Business

300+
Highly Qualified Software And Quality Engineers

50+
Countries Covered

1M+
Hours Of Software Development

1M+
Hours Of QE And QA Done

200+
Test Device Farm

www.zealous.tech

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

50 startups investors

3 days of dealmaking, networking and cultural experience

TechVillage

Moldova I September 5-7

TechVillage

@techvillage.md

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

elogi fest 25

Where **Innovation**
Meets **Motion**

Life in Armenia Partner 2025

NOR LAW

FOR PREMIUM BRANDS AND TECH INNOVATORS

- Privacy and Employment Law Compliance
- Contract negotiations
- New Products and Technologies
- Start-up Counseling
- Digitalization and Marketing Strategy
- Dismissal Procedures
- Re-integration and Improvement of Underperformers
- Works Council and CLA Matters

De Entree 201, 1101 HG Amsterdam, Netherlands
info@norlaw.nl

ARMENIAN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - PART 2

THE ARMENIAN 1600-YEAR BLUEPRINT TO SHAPING AI'S DEEPEST UNDERSTANDING

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

FEATURING

SUREN AZATYAN

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AT ZEALOUS TECH

ARMENIAN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - PART 2

THE ARMENIAN 1600-YEAR BLUEPRINT TO SHAPING AI'S DEEPEST UNDERSTANDING

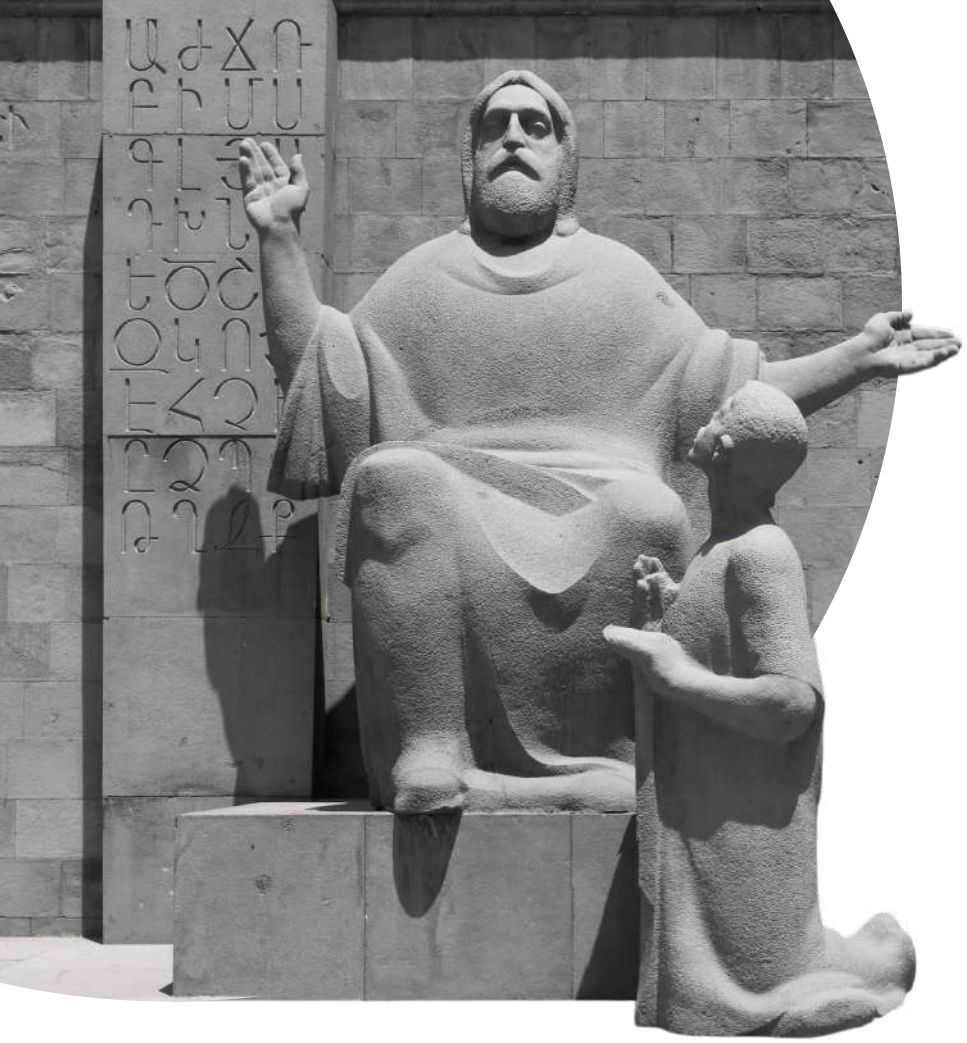
In the May 2025 issue of Life in Armenia, we explored how Mesrop Mashtots designed the Armenian alphabet as a cognitive framework that may have given Armenian AI engineers an unconscious edge in teaching machines to read between the lines. That particular magazine issue gained over 2000 new readers, and I received tens of emails and direct messages questioning if this linguistic advantage was real or just a compelling coincidence!

Page 7

The idea that a script could confer cognitive advantages isn't new. Broader debates in psycholinguistics have long revolved around this topic; researchers like Stanislas Dehaene, for instance, have shown **that the brain's "letterbox" area adapts differently to logographic versus alphabetic writing**.

What's new here is bringing the Armenian language under the spotlight. Its engineered (not evolved) alphabet makes Armenian **a unique case study for both Armenians and non-Armenians**. Having lived here for the past 9 years makes it even more interesting for me to learn about, especially as my three-year-old son prepares to go to an Armenian school for the first time later this year.

So, once again, I called Suren Azatyan, Head of Business Development at Zealous, and we spent long hours working on this article to trace **how ancient Armenian linguistic structure influences modern algorithms** and investigate why global players are turning to Armenian engineers for context-aware AI.

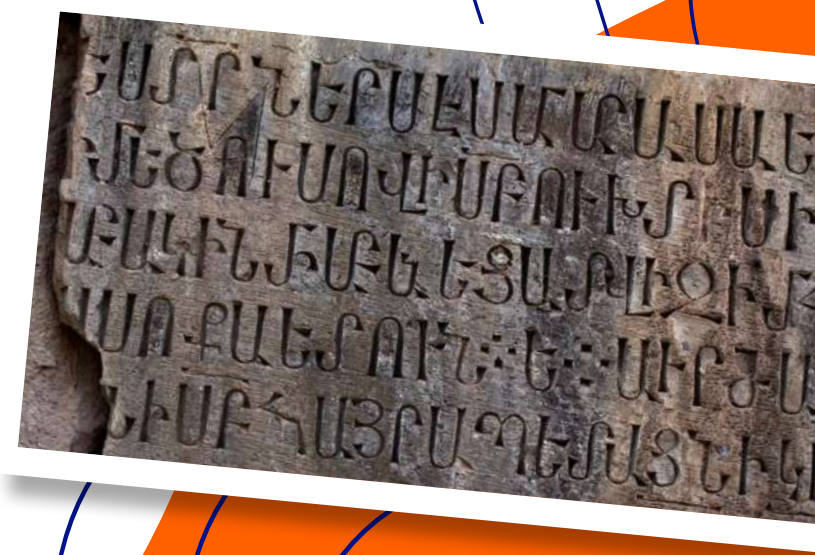


A Cognitive Blueprint

Language shapes thought. Think about these three words for a minute, and you'll realize the difference between communicating and shaping thought. Unlike naturally evolved scripts, the Armenian alphabet was engineered in 405 AD by w Mashtots with near-mathematical precision.

Each of its original 36 letters (now 39) was designed not just to represent sound but to encode logic, numerical values, and even structural patterns that mirror modern data systems. What you just read is true and not just hypothetical. This duality (letters as numbers) resembles the "duality of patterning" in computational linguistics, where symbols can be recomposed infinitely. Modern NLP systems like BERT use similar embedding layers to map words to vectors!

I know this is getting exciting, and as you read on, you'll see the dots, and you will connect them yourself.



The Numerical Architecture of Thought

The Armenian script was an early information architecture. **Each letter doubled as a numeral, embedding arithmetic directly into language**. This fusion of symbol and number created a cognitive framework where linguistic and quantitative reasoning were conjoined, **a precursor to modern computing's binary logic**. But the real revelation lies in the alphabet's sequence (e.g., Ա=1, Բ=2, etc., then Ժ=10, Ի=20, and so on for hundreds and thousands).

Critically, this isn't just numerology. Cognitive scientists like Lera Boroditsky have shown that **speakers of languages with explicit counting systems (e.g., Mandarin) outperform others in math tasks**. Armenian's built-in arithmetic might similarly bias speakers toward systemic thinking, a potential "hidden curriculum" for AI logic.

Somehow, I believe no one **connected Armenian to Mandarin to AI** before Suren and I did in this article and the previous one.

Mendeleev's Periodic Table

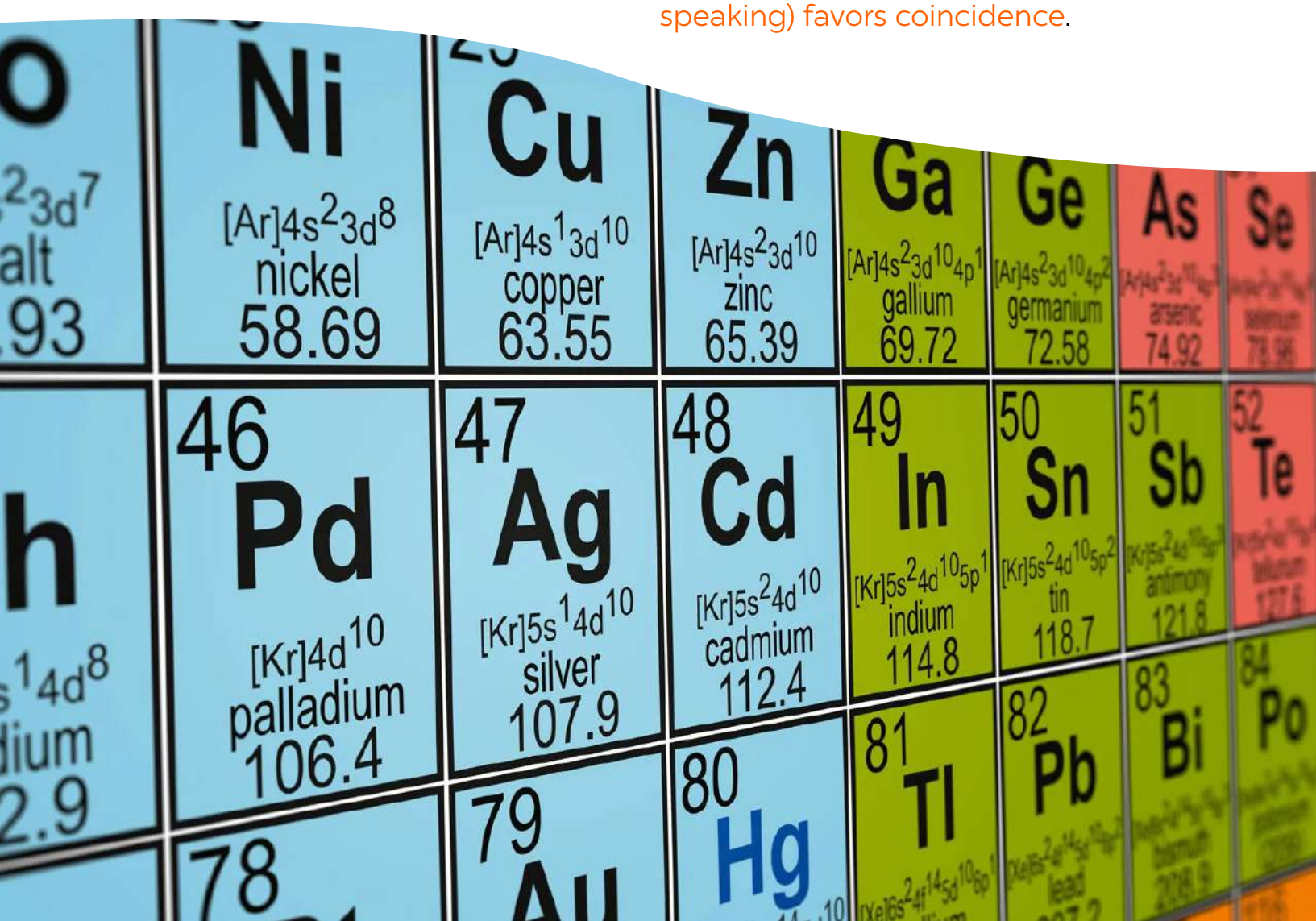
In the 19th century, Dmitri Mendeleev devised the periodic table by arranging elements based on atomic weight and properties. Yet some studies available online argue that centuries earlier, Mashtots may have done something eerily similar with Armenian letters.

Linguists note that the alphabet's order isn't arbitrary but follows a phonetic and structural hierarchy. Proponents of this thesis suggest that when the numerical values of the letters in certain Old Armenian words for metals are summed, the resulting number matches the atomic number of that metal in the modern periodic table.

Gold (Ոսկի - Voski): The numerical values of the letters Ո (24), Ս (29), Կ (15), and Ի (11) are added: 24+29+15+11=79. This sum, 79, matches the atomic number of Gold (Au) in the periodic table.

Silver (Արծաթ - Arts'at): The numerical values of the letters Արծ (Artz) are used: Ա (1), Ր (32), Ծ (14). Adding these gives 1+32+14=47. This corresponds to the atomic number of Silver (Ag).

Similar claims are made for other ancient metals known at the time of Mashtots, suggesting their numerical sums derived from their Armenian names align with their atomic numbers. In fact, there have been similar sightings in Kabbalistic gematria, but Armenian's fixed numerical assignments (unlike Hebrew's flexible interpretations) make it more like a lookup table, a proto-database. If verified, this could imply Mashtots had access to lost metallurgical knowledge, though Occam's razor (and I, honestly speaking) favors coincidence.



The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

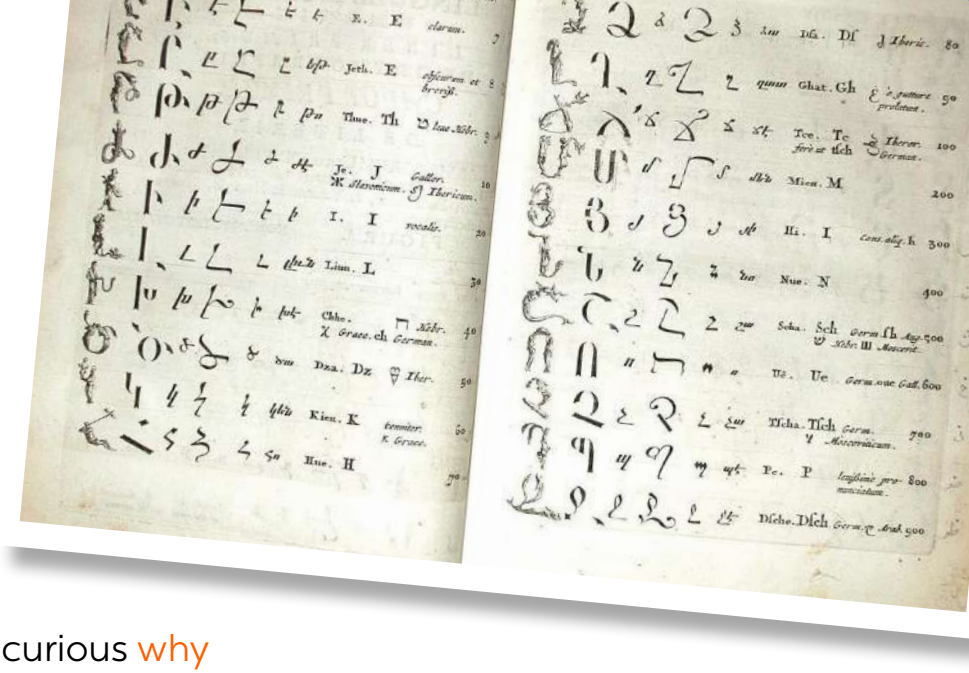
Where some languages leave meaning open to context, Armenian's structure encourages precision and interrelation of concepts. Sapir-Whorf suggests that language doesn't just express ideas; it constrains or enables certain modes of thinking.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, often called linguistic relativity, proposes that the structure of a language influences how its speakers perceive and interpret reality. While the strong version of the hypothesis (that language determines thought) is debated, the weak version (that language biases cognition) is widely accepted. Armenian, with its engineered alphabet and systematic design, presents a case study in how linguistic structure can foster unique cognitive patterns, patterns that may give Armenian AI engineers an edge in contextual reasoning.

Armenian spelling is highly phonetic; words are written as they sound, with minimal irregularities. This reduces cognitive load in parsing meaning, freeing mental resources for higher-order interpretation (e.g., subtext, tone, implication). Contrast this with English, where "through," "tough," and "though" share letters but diverge wildly in pronunciation, forcing speakers to rely on memorization rather than systemic rules. This "orthographic transparency" is quantifiable. The World Atlas of Language Structures **ranks Armenian among the most phonetic scripts**, alongside Korean Hangul (another engineered system).

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis doesn't claim that Armenian speakers are "smarter," but it does suggest **their language optimizes for systematic analysis**. When this cognitive blueprint is transferred to AI engineers, the result is machines that **don't just read words but reverse-engineer intent**.

The Context Engine



In Part 1 of this article, we discussed the software Zealous developed for a U.S. body, designed to analyze context and "read between the lines." This aspect caught our readers' attention, who were curious why a U.S. body would entrust such a project to a software company on the other side of the world. While I'm no conspiracy theorist, someone did ask me whether it could be a secret intelligence initiative, perhaps relying on the bias we mentioned earlier. I don't think so, and to understand the reason, I asked Suren to meet the brains behind their "Context Engine."

I'd like to quote what the American project lead shared with Suren back when they started negotiating the project in its early days.

> "Project Lead at a U.S. Body
>
> We don't need a system that understands words. We need one that understands why they're being used."

I'll leave it at this point, but I promise a very interesting Part 3 next month, where we'll get into the deep technical details of the "Context Engine" and what made the team in Armenia outperform others in this project.

BENEATH THE APRICOT TREE

SMELL, MEMORY, AND MEANING

DIANA KHANDILYAN

FOUNDER OF GLASS NOMAD

SMELL, MEMORY, AND MEANING

Aromas have seasons. And mine starts with mulberries!

When I was a child, we didn't just eat mulberries; we were drenched in them! We climbed the trees, barefoot and fearless, sticky-kneed with purple-stained fingers. Our lives and our clothes looked like jam jars after a kitchen accident. There was no escaping the scent.

But have you noticed? You only truly smell mulberries when they hit the ground, when they burst on hot asphalt or sunbaked stone. That's when the air changes. A fermented sweetness rises up, laced with dust and heat and childhood secrets. One sniff, and every adult knew exactly where you'd been.

In Armenian, mulberry is tut (**ւտուտ**), a short, punchy word that somehow fails to capture how deeply this fruit is woven into memory. These days, you can buy it in street markets, neatly packed in plastic containers. But that fruit is far removed from the "Cru Classe" mulberries of my childhood. No container will ever deliver the taste, smell, or thrill of climbing the tree yourself.

And yes, **Armenia has its own mulberry "Cru Classe" hierarchy:**

- White is soft and honeyed, the quiet classic, "Village Level"

- Black is bold, inky, rich with wild ins, "Grand Cru Cru Classé"

- Rose is the rarest, a fleeting pink perfection born when black mulberries ferment ever so slightly in the sun, "Vintage Mulberry"

And what did we make out of it? In the past, tuti oghi (mulberry brandy) was homemade, unregulated, and unapologetically strong. A 70% proof survival test. It wasn't so much a drink as a decision. A medicine: either you live ... or the bacteria don't.

Today, some winemakers are trying to bottle it formally. You'll find mulberry wines and brandies in villages across Tavush and Syunik, drinks that don't just recall the fruit but also the tree, the bark, and the cool air beneath its shade.

For me, the taste of mulberry is a shortcut to summers spent barefoot, up a tree, chasing the scent of ripening freedom. It will never be the same, but I invite you to make those memories while you still can. And sometimes, unexpectedly, mulberry finds its way back in a glass:

Voskehat

Armenia's flagship white variety. In some expressions, especially those aged in clay (karas) or neutral oak, Voskehat develops aromas of dried white fruits, honey, chamomile, and yes, a fleeting floral-fruity tone reminiscent of white mulberry. Try Zorah Voski or Van Ardi Voskehat.

Gewürztraminer

Especially dry styles; it may seem like a stretch, but its lychee, rose petal, and tropical notes sometimes carry a gentle, fermented-fruit echo of white or rose mulberry, not unlike a childhood secret tucked into a teacup.

From Tart to Gold

After the mulberries and before the mighty apricots arrive, there are some wild things we all eat:

Shlor, the small, fiercely unripe green plums, come first. Their acidity is searing, shocking, a full-body jolt that could strip the enamel off your teeth. Maybe that's why mine are still so sensitive. We'd eat them straight from the tree, scrunching our faces and daring each other to take another. No sugar. No balance. Just pure, electrified sourness.

Think of it as the fruit version of non-vintage Champagne on a rebellious day, or maybe a sharply etched Crémant d'Alsace Riesling from an off vintage. Angular, unapologetic, unforgettable. And I urge you not to write off that vintage too quickly; in the hands of a good winemaker, every wine has character. You may not love it, but you will respect it. Just like my Shlor.

Then came the strawberries. For 1–2 glorious weeks, Yerevan itself smells like a jam pot. The fruit is everywhere: markets, backyards, cardboard boxes on stairwells. Ripe, overripe, just-past-perfect. You didn't need to look. You could walk the streets with your eyes closed and know it was strawberry season.

There's no Premier Cru classification here. Armenian strawberries don't bother with hierarchy. They arrive, they overwhelm, and they disappear. Fast, fragrant, and utterly now.

No time for tasting notes or poetic metaphors; these are your entry-level wines of childhood. Bright, loud, and gone before you know it. But that's okay. Sometimes, you don't need sophistication. You just need juice on your chin and joy on your face.

Still, if you do want to chase that strawberry scent in a glass:

- Spanish Garnacha: Especially young or unoaked versions, often bursting with fresh strawberry and red berry fruit.

- Pinot Noir: Particularly from Oregon or Germany (Spätburgunder), where cooler climates retain that fresh strawberry perfume.

- Armenian Areni Noir: In lighter, less-oaked expressions, Areni can give off sour cherry, red plum, and yes, a whisper of wild strawberry.

Then came the peaches and nectarines, the golden-skinned stone fruit that announced real summer. Their perfume was round, juicy, and just a little sun-scorched.

In wine terms, think:

White Burgundy (Chardonnay): When ripe and mineral, it often carries soft peach, apricot, and creamy stone fruit.

Viognier: intensely aromatic with white peach, honeysuckle, and ripe yellow plum.

Armenian Voskehat (oak-aged): In warmer vintages, it can echo golden peach with a touch of salinity.

But even those luxurious scents knew what came next would eclipse them: the apricots.

The Apricot, or Nothing

Apricot is a sacred fruit for Armenians. It's more than taste. It's identity. The warm gold on our flag, the perfume of our summers, the memory of sticky fingers under a sunlit tree. We don't just like apricots; we're irrationally proud of them. And honestly, we should be.

Once you've tasted a ripe Armenian apricot, soft, sun-warmed, barely holding itself together, you'll understand. You don't bite into it. You let it yield. The skin disappears. The flesh hums gold. And the scent is like sunlight wrapped in velvet. Every bite whispers, "This is what fruit is supposed to be."

There's even a legend, maybe true, maybe not, that Alexander the Great, weary from campaign, was revived by Armenians beneath the shade of apricot trees. So pleased was he by them that he is said to have declared, "These people do not need to be conquered." Historical fact? Who cares? It feels true. That's the kind of myth apricots inspire.

And among them, one reigns supreme: the white apricot. Pale, fragile, fragrant. It barely survives the walk from orchard to kitchen. You can't ship it. You can't box it. You can only catch it once if you're lucky. That's our Grand Cru.

Until you've tasted a white apricot in Armenia, you haven't tasted apricot.

And sometimes if you know where to look, that flavor returns in a glass:

Sauternes

The crown jewel of Bordeaux's sweet wines. Noble rot–kissed and golden, wines like Château d'Yquem bloom with honeyed apricot, dried mango, orange peel, and candied fruit. A symphony of age, fruit, and sunlight in liquid form.

Viognier

Especially from Condrieu or the high-elevation vineyards of Armenia, Viognier offers ripe apricot, honeysuckle, and white peach. Armenian Viognier, like those from Voskeni or Highland Cellars, retains elegance and freshness, balancing its aromatic richness with mountain lift.

Armenian Brandy

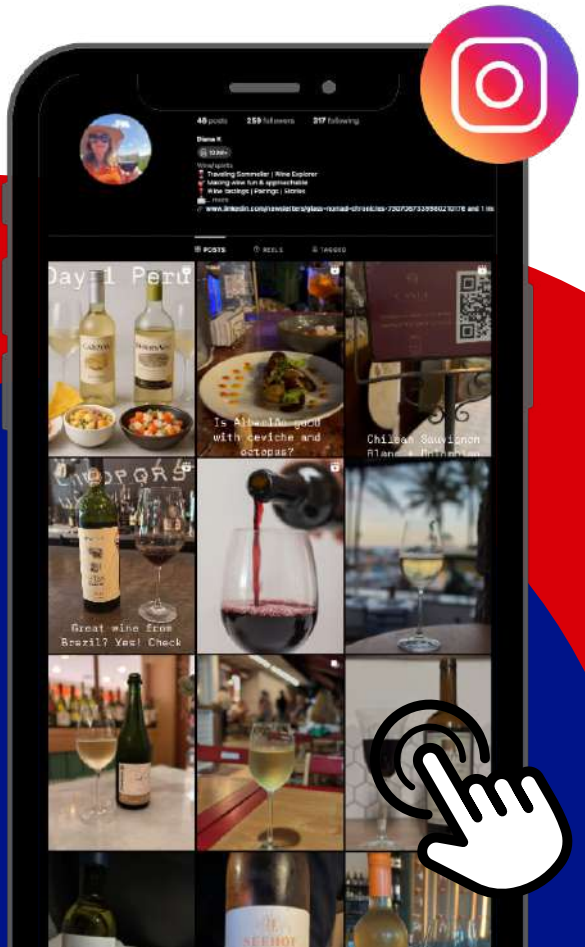
The scent of apricot deepens with age in Armenian brandy. Candied, toasted, and smoothed by oak, it doesn't just taste like apricot. It becomes apricot. It's the flavor of memory, distilled, aged, and poured slowly in the late light of summer.

The Scent that Stays

Long after the seasons pass, after the strawberries have vanished, the mulberries have fermented, and even the apricots have melted into memory, it's the scent that stays. Because smell is memory's oldest friend.

Our brains can recognize over a thousand different scents, but to recall them, to give them names, they must have made an impact. A smell must matter before it becomes part of our language. That's why describing wine is so personal and sometimes so hard.

One person's apricot is another's honeysuckle or peach jam left on a windowsill. A "hint of green plum" might mean nothing to someone who's never puckered their face around a tart shlor. Sommeliers frequently confuse gooseberry with cat pee.



When wine critics try to pin flavors down, they're really tracing their own memories, shaped by childhood trees, street corners, and summer kitchens. This is why a universal wine language remains elusive. Because every nose carries a different library. But maybe that's the beauty of it!

In Armenia, wine doesn't just taste of Voskehat or Areni. It tastes of fruit picked too early, jam made too late, and apricots eaten under the sun. It tastes like ours because we grew the memories ourselves.

So next time someone asks what your wine smells like, don't reach for the glossary. Reach for your past. It might smell like a mulberry on hot asphalt. Or a white apricot, caught once before it vanished. And that's more than enough.

On this hot and dry summer night, find a young and refreshing Armenian white from an unknown producer. Let it surprise you. Let it remind you of something you thought you'd forgotten. Then share your reflections with me: scent, memory, sip, at @glass_nomad

“Magazine **Feedback**”

Elven T.

Here’s to a magazine that doubles as a roadmap for purpose-driven nomads worldwide.

Peter B.

That’s actually a fantastic insight on bringing remote teams together for retreats in Armenia.

Haykuhi C.

Done my two hours of reading of May-June issues, thank you! Your magazine is becoming more and more technical in a good sense. Lots of useful specialist knowledge, at the same time maintaining the soul and the warmth of Armenia. Thoroughly enjoyed it, 10,000 to City of Smile. Once again thank you for all the great work you do.

Welcome to Hartak.am, your trusted guide on Armenian public services

Armenia is developing a National Services Gateway called “Hartak”, a one-stop interaction point between citizens and public services. It's a trustworthy source of information ensuring that users find the right service when they need it, and know what to expect from the process.

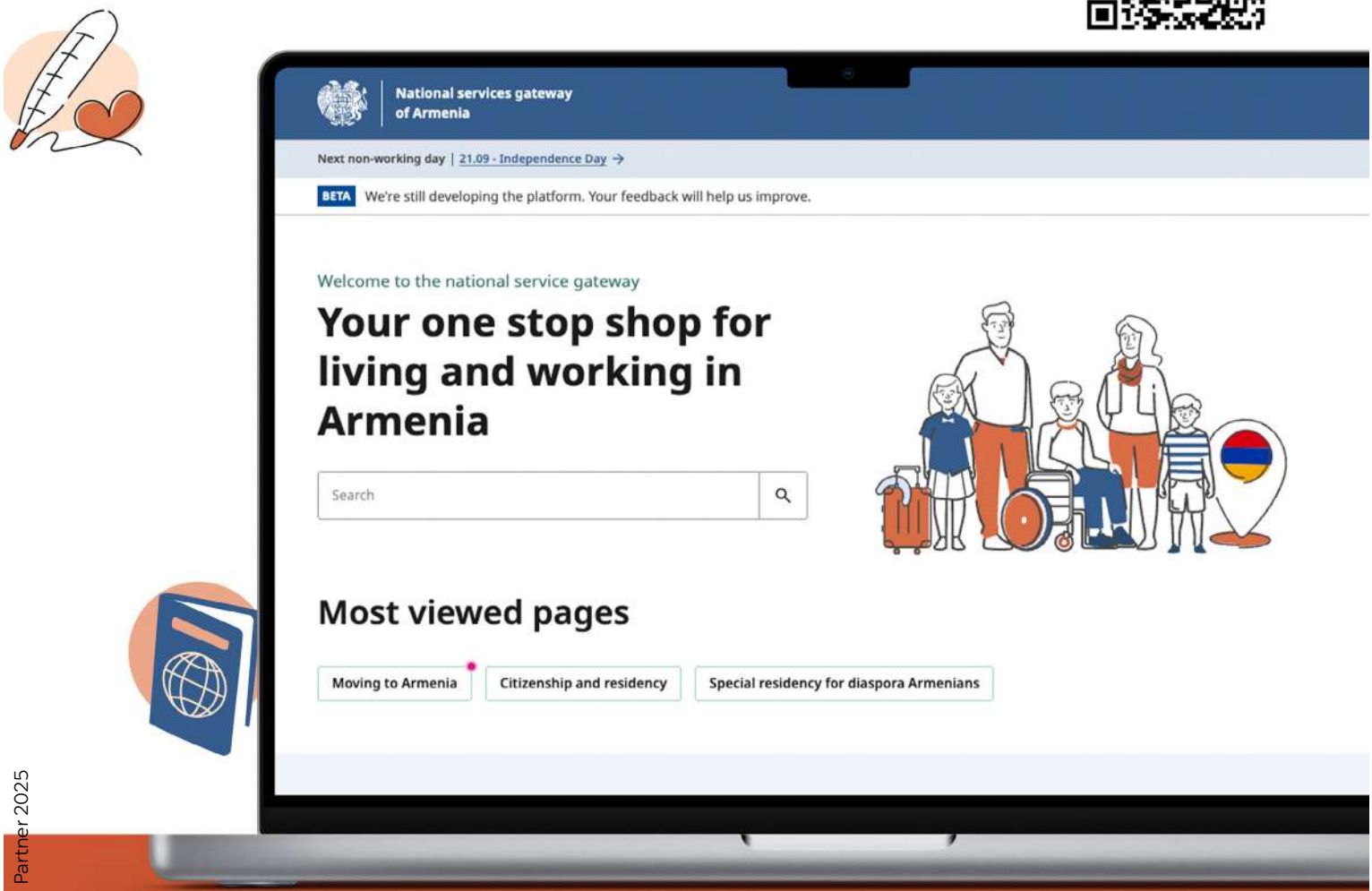
How **to** move to Armenia?

How to work **remotely from Armenia ?**

How to **buy a car in Armenia ?**

Help us create a product that meets people’s needs

*Scan the QR code and answer a few short questions about your **hartak.am** experience.*



Hartak.am is a National Services Gateway Portal created by the Information Systems Agency of Armenia (ISAA) under the leadership of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Central Bank of Armenia.

CODING THE ALGORITHM OF INFLUENCE

THE RISE OF TECH DIPLOMACY IN ARMENIA

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

LUSINE KARAPETYAN

CO-FOUNDER OF SOUTH GATE VENTURES

ARTHUR EOLYAN

CO-FOUNDER OF SOUTH GATE VENTURES

In the past, a nation's strength was defined by the size of its army, the reach of its navy, or the depth of its oil reserves. Today, the rules of power have been rewritten. In the 21st century, geopolitical power is no longer measured only by military might or natural resources. Data is the new currency, and AI infrastructure is the battleground. Nations are realizing that control over computing power, algorithms, and digital ecosystems translates into economic leverage and diplomatic clout.

The U.S. and China dominate this race, investing billions into AI research and semiconductor supremacy; they're fighting to control the foundational layers of the digital world. The U.S. restricts AI chip exports to slow China's progress, while China races to build self-sufficient AI ecosystems. The EU, meanwhile, tries to shape global norms through regulations like the AI Act.

But beyond these giants, a new playbook is emerging for smaller nations leveraging AI as a tool of geopolitical influence. This is the new world order, where cloud computing clusters are more strategic than military bases, where a nation's AI talent pool matters as much as its oil reserves, and where the right tech partnerships can rewrite a country's geopolitical standing overnight.

A New Geopolitical Currency

Armenia, a relatively small country with no oil, no coastline, and a history of regional instability, is now making a bold bet on this new world order. Instead of playing by traditional diplomatic rules, it is coding its own path using **AI infrastructure, diaspora networks, and tech diplomacy** to rewrite its geopolitical relevance.

Armenia's boldest move yet is the planned $500 million AI data factory, FirebirdCloudAI, set to launch in 2026. A joint initiative between the Armenian government, Firebird.ai, and NVIDIA, this project will deploy NVIDIA Blackwell GPUs with over 100 MW of computing capacity to **establish the largest AI supercomputing hub in the Caucasus**, transforming Armenia into a creator of new opportunities rather than just a consumer of technology.

In a region where energy pipelines and military bases have traditionally shaped alliances, Armenia is building a different kind of infrastructure. Unlike neighboring countries whose digital infrastructure is often seen as aligned with specific global powers, **Armenia offers a neutral ground for technological development**.

With this project, **Armenia isn't just entering the AI race; it's building an entirely new lane**. The $500 million FirebirdCloudAI initiative is a radical strategic bet that could redraw the Caucasus' technological map. At its core will be NVIDIA's Blackwell architecture, the same GPU platform powering OpenAI's next-gen models and Pentagon research projects. With over 100 MW capacity, enough to support large-scale AI training runs, this **positions Armenia as the only nation in the South Caucasus with exascale computing capabilities**.

By diversifying strategic partnerships in tech, **Armenia reduces its vulnerability to regional instability**. Situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, it offers a neutral ground for innovation, contrasting with the geopolitical tensions that often define the Caucasus. This positioning **allows Armenia to engage with both Western and Eastern tech ecosystems**, from Silicon Valley to emerging Asian tech hubs.

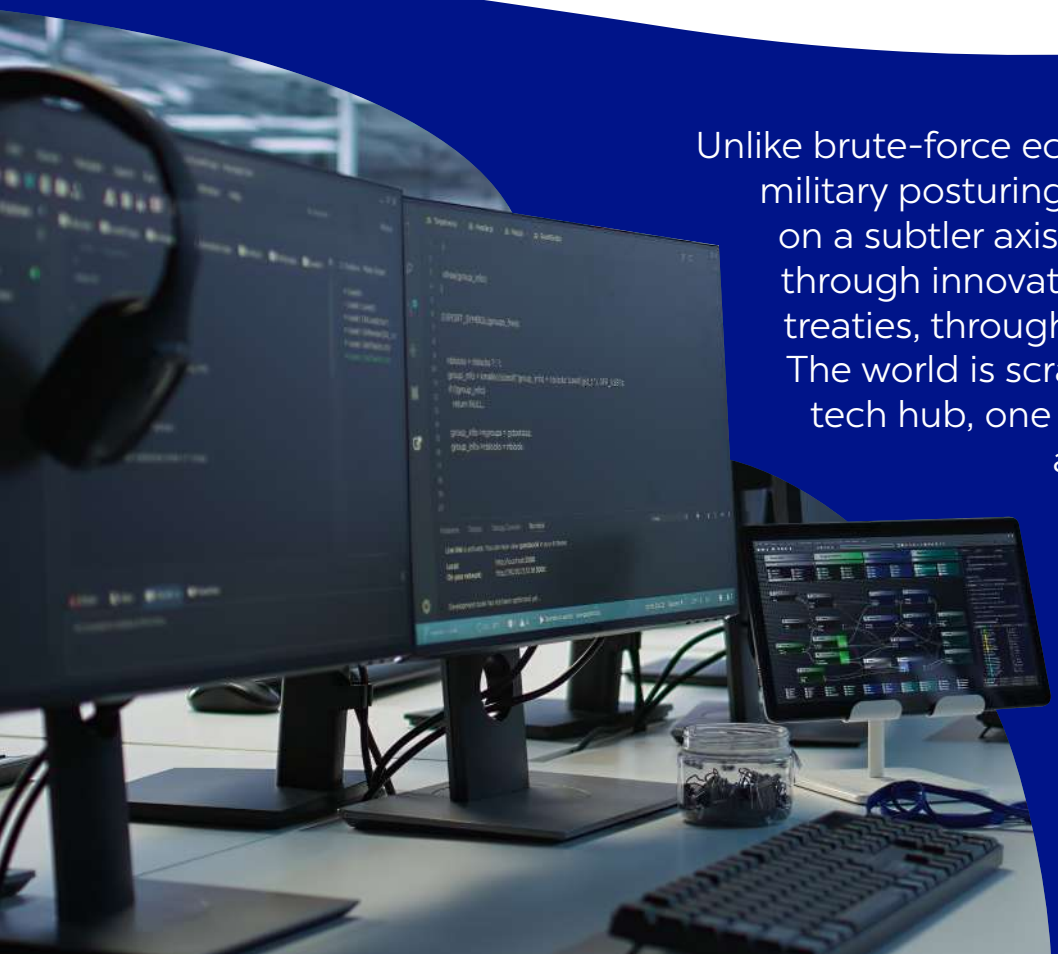
It's worth noting that Armenia's push into advanced computing is strengthened by its unique energy advantage; **the country generates nearly half of its electricity from the Metsamor nuclear power plant**, providing a stable, clean energy foundation that few regional competitors can match.

The Human Capital

Armenia lacks vast natural reserves or direct sea access. Instead, it has turned to its intellectual capital, a strong tradition of mathematics, engineering, and computer science, as its most valuable export. Armenia's Minister of High-Tech Industry, Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, recently announced plans to open a tech office in Silicon Valley. This move is designed to facilitate venture capital deals for Armenian startups, promote international R&D cooperation, and enable talent exchange between Armenia and global tech hubs.

Armenia engages in "tech diplomacy" bypassing traditional political channels and instead building influence through startups, AI research, and digital infrastructure. While embassies have traditionally served as conduits for political dialogue, Armenia is betting that a desk in Palo Alto could be more consequential than diplomatic missions. Unlike conventional trade offices, Armenia's Silicon Valley presence is designed to operate at the intersection of venture capital, research, and talent migration; three critical levers that define a nation's technological relevance.

The Valley office will institutionalize this brain trust, creating structured pathways for diaspora experts to engage with Armenia's tech surge.



Unlike brute-force economic incentives or military posturing, tech diplomacy operates on a subtler axis, embedding influence through innovation ecosystems rather than treaties, through code rather than coercion. The world is scrambling for the next viable tech hub, one that offers talent, stability, and strategic advantage **without the hyperinflation of Silicon Valley or the geopolitical baggage of emerging giants**. Armenia, quietly but deliberately, is positioning itself as that alternative.

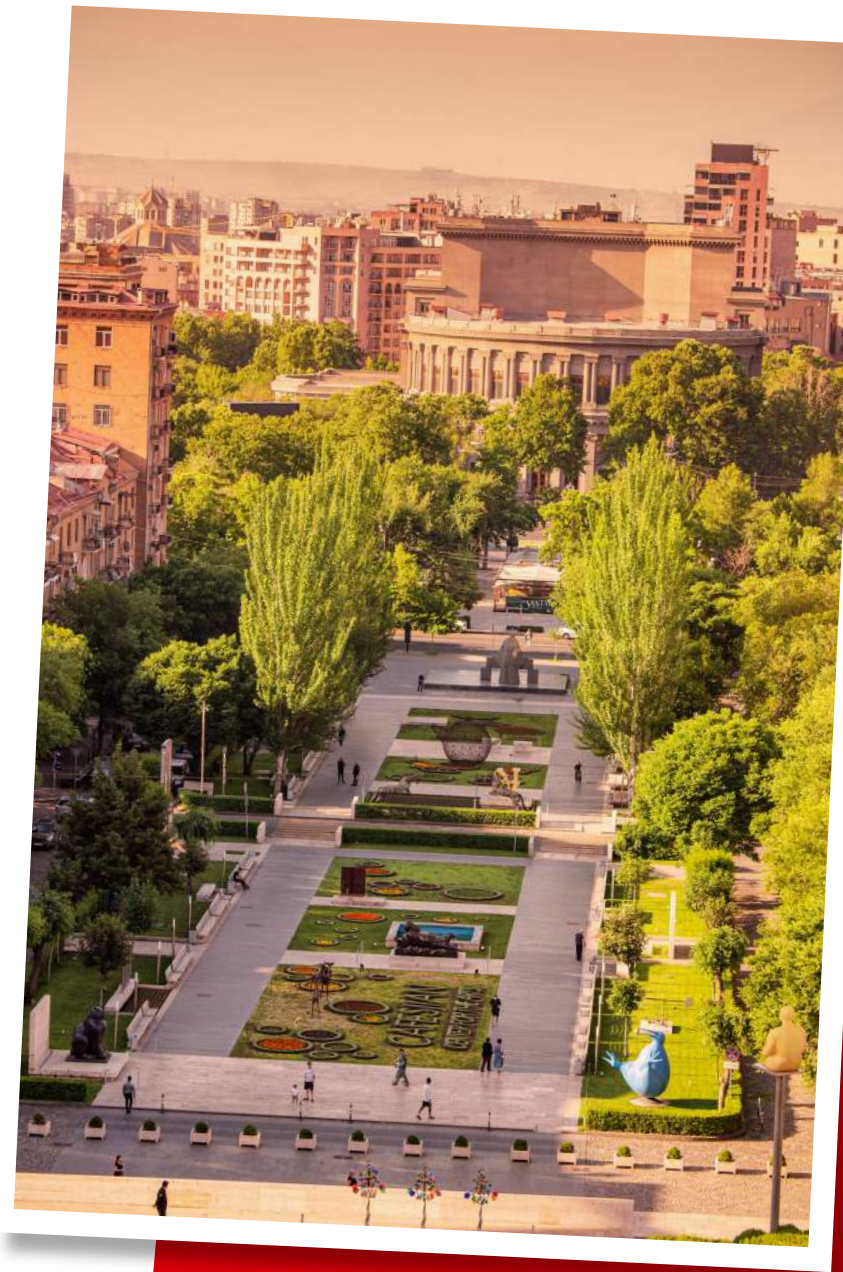
Venture Hub Yerevan

Behind the headlines, a deeper, strategic movement has been taking shape. That movement is called Venture Hub Yerevan, a systematic, globally integrated innovation platform designed to make Armenia a regional headquarters for the digital economy transformation.

Lusine Karapetyan

co-founder and CEO of Venture Hub Yerevan

We're not building another incubator. We're engineering a nation-scale platform for venture acceleration, global capital flows, and tech diplomacy."



Armenia's early-stage tech sector has flourished in recent years, with talent coming out of programs like TUMO and institutions like AUA and EIF. Angel funds and micro VCs, such as Granatus, BigStory, SmartGate, and others, have supported local startups at the ideation and seed stages. But then progress stalls.

> **Artur Eolian**
> Managing Partner of Venture Hub Yerevan
>
> We realized Armenia wasn't lacking talent or ambition; it was lacking structure. Startups get their MVPs done, and then they have to move to the U.S., London, or Berlin to scale. There was no cohesive bridge from local to global."

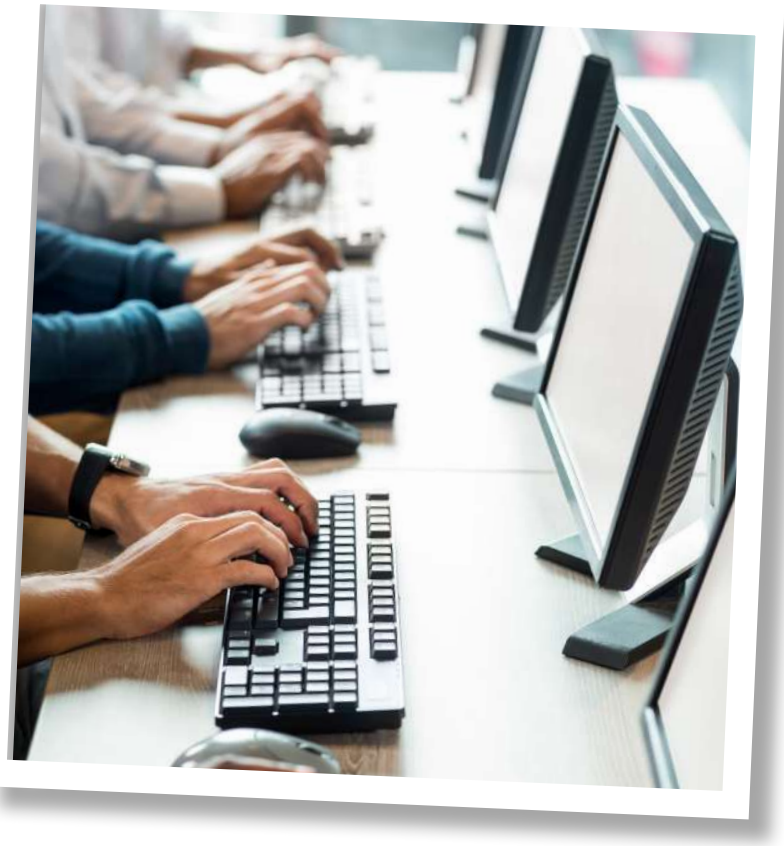
Venture Hub Yerevan exists to build that bridge and **fortify it with capital, infrastructure, and diplomacy**.

Systemic Ecosystem Engineering

The roadmap for Venture Hub Yerevan brought by Ms. Karapetyan is ambitious and precise. Built upon the philosophy that innovation doesn't happen by accident, the initiative outlines five concrete pillars to transform Armenia into a regional venture capital hub for Eastern Europe and the CIS.

Define a National Vision

Venture Hub is setting a new narrative for Armenia, one that redefines the country not by its geographic constraints but by its innovation potential. In a world post-globalization, small agile nations can lead the shift toward decentralization. Armenia's flexibility, neutrality, and deep technical talent make it ideally suited to become a strategic playground for innovation.



Create a Common Platform

To unify startups, corporates, investors, and academia, Venture Hub will launch an Innovation & Venture Space in Yerevan, Armenia, with a representation office in San Francisco, California. This physical headquarters will host global VC offices, startup cohorts, and tech teams, all under one roof. The platform will also serve as the core infrastructure for ecosystem services: legal, accounting, investment relations, and fundraising.

> **Lusine Karapetyan**
>
> co-founder and CEO of Venture Hub Yerevan
>
> We are building a global ambassador network to win a seat at the table in the Global Tech Diplomacy Playground. These are not just trade offices. These are strategic platforms to integrate Armenian startups into global capital pipelines and bring the world's best founders here."

Attract Global Partners

Armenia has already begun hosting startup events, pitch days, and VC delegations. But Venture Hub is scaling this further, launching ambassador offices and VC diplomacy missions in Silicon Valley, Luxembourg, Dubai, India, Japan, and beyond.

Foster an Attractive Investment Climate

Venture Hub is working to modernize Armenia's regulatory infrastructure for venture capital. This includes exploring English-law zones, digital residency, zero-VAT structures for funds, and building Armenia as a hub for financial service exports, a compelling alternative to over-regulated European jurisdictions.

Build Armenia's Public Profile as a Startup Nation

The team is developing a full-stack branding and communications strategy: publishing thought leadership, hosting global tech forums, launching international referral programs, and partnering with media and policy influencers to rebrand Armenia as the "Silicon Mountains."

An Ecosystem Engineered to Grow Unicorns

Venture Hub Yerevan is intentionally structured to fill the gaps that force local startups to leave. The goal is retention and elevation.

Through acceleration programs, international demo days, and innovative funding models, the platform will not just support startups; it will scale them globally.

> "
>
> **Lusine Karapetyan**
>
> co-founder and CEO of Venture Hub Yerevan
>
> Early-stage support is widely developed in the country. Meanwhile, for further growth, startups have to leave for other hubs. Venture Hub is planned to become the place not only to host and integrate local players but also to bring the world's leading VCs and enterprises to Armenia."

Its infrastructure is built around six key components found in all successful ecosystems:

1. Startup Acceleration
2. Corporate Innovation & VC Investment
3. Education for Founders & VCs
4. University-Industry R&D Cooperation
5. Professional Services & Financial Infrastructure
6. Global Market Execution and Talent Mobility

What Venture Space Will Provide

The Venture Space itself, currently under development in Yerevan, will house:

- Co-working and office spaces for VCs, startups, and international service providers.
- A Venture Services hub for fund setup, legal, back-office, and international compliance.
- A Tech Diplomacy Lounge for hosting global meetings, startup roadshows, and diplomatic events.
- Dedicated education zones for upskilling talent in deep tech, AI, cybersecurity, and more.
- A virtual residency & e-services platform for remote founders and freelancers.

It's a fully integrated economic engine, one that creates **value at the intersection of capital, talent, infrastructure, and governance**.

From Armenia to the World and Back Again

The hub's GoUSA program will land Armenian startups in Silicon Valley for acceleration, investment, and mentorship. Meanwhile, the Silicon Valley Tech Attache Office will serve as a reverse landing pad for U.S. startups and funds expanding into Armenia.

> "
>
> **Artur Eolian**
>
> Managing Partner of Venture Hub Yerevan
>
> We are not building walls. We are building bridges from a small but determined nation to the global frontier of technology. This is how Armenia will conquer the world, not with force, but with infrastructure, intelligence, and international cooperation."

from This Bold Experiment

Venture Hub Yerevan is not just a bet on Armenia. It's a bet on a new kind of ecosystem logic: one that prioritizes neutrality, agility, transparency, and shared value.

THE E-LOGI FEST25 REPORT - PART 1

WHAT ARMENIA CAN LEARN FROM LITHUANIA'S LOGISTICS TRANSFORMATION

MATHEW ZEIN

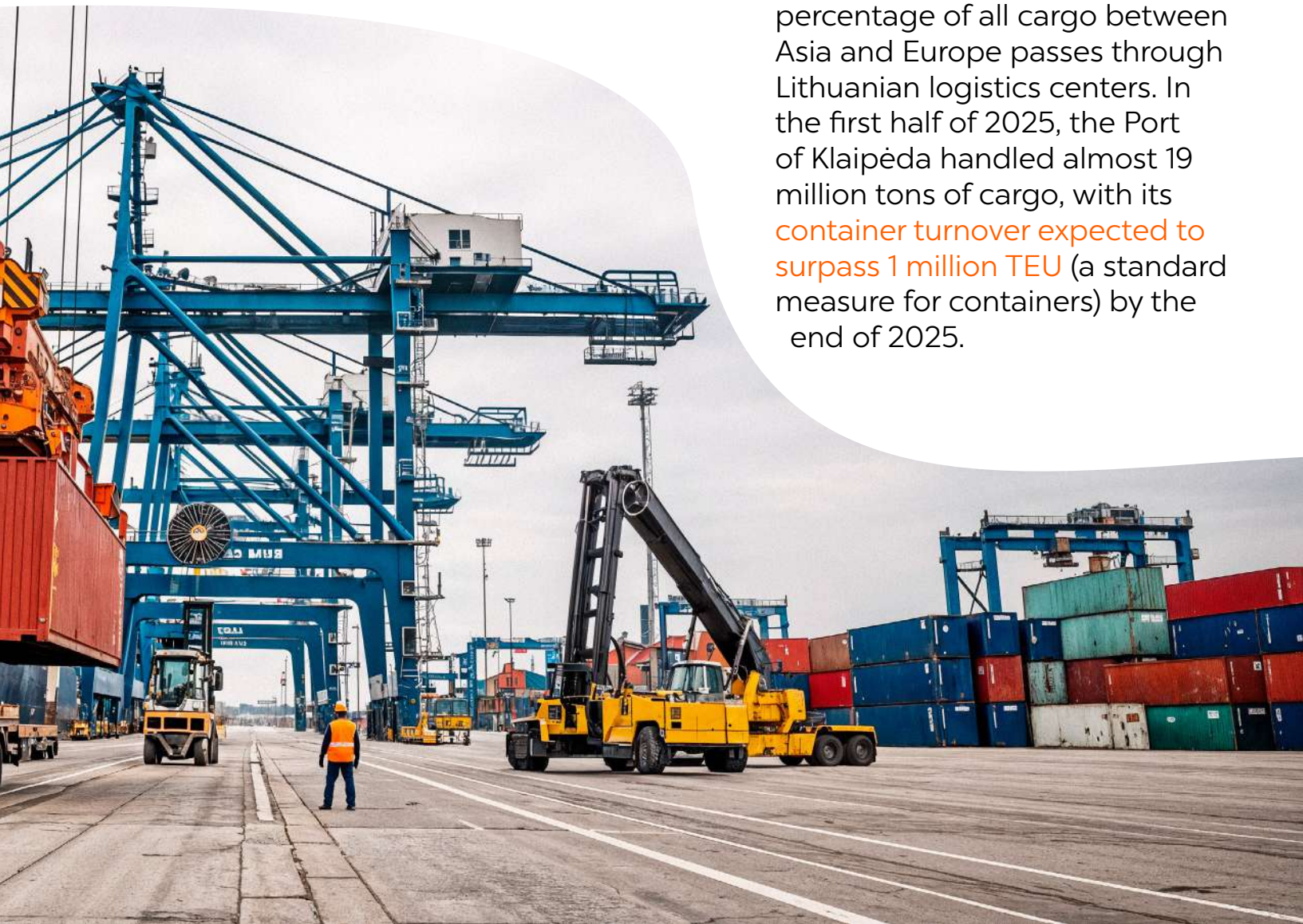
EDITOR IN CHIEF

THE E-LOGI FEST25 REPORT - PART 1

WHAT ARMENIA CAN LEARN FROM LITHUANIA'S LOGISTICS TRANSFORMATION

Geography has not been kind to Lithuania or Armenia. One sits on the Baltic, surrounded by EU markets but historically overshadowed by larger neighbors. The other is landlocked in the Caucasus, wedged between rival powers and cut off from traditional trade routes. Yet Lithuania defied its constraints to become a logistics leader in Europe. Today, Armenia stands at the same crossroads Lithuania faced fifteen years ago, with the same potential to turn its challenges into strategic advantages.

Lithuania's logistics success was born from necessity. After regaining independence, it faced a choice: remain dependent on Soviet-era infrastructure or reinvent itself as a connector between East and West. It chose the latter. Investments in Klaipėda Port, modernization of rail links, and streamlined customs procedures transformed the country into a key transit hub. Today, a considerable percentage of all cargo between Asia and Europe passes through Lithuanian logistics centers. In the first half of 2025, the Port of Klaipėda handled almost 19 million tons of cargo, with its container turnover expected to surpass 1 million TEU (a standard measure for containers) by the end of 2025.



Armenia's starting point is even more difficult, but the principle remains the same. Blockades and regional tensions have forced it to seek alternative routes through Georgia, Iran, and the Middle Corridor. Rather than seeing isolation as a weakness, **Armenia can follow Lithuania's example and turn it into a strength**. By focusing on digital trade, air cargo, and streamlined cross-border procedures, it can position itself as the **most efficient gateway in the South Caucasus**. However, there is a lot of work to be done for this vision to become a reality.

The Engine of Change

Lithuania's transformation was not accidental. The government worked closely with logistics firms, offering tax incentives for warehouse development and simplifying customs through digital platforms. The Transport Innovation Forum, which began as a small industry gathering, became a key venue where policymakers and businesses aligned on reforms. This public-private synergy was critical; it ensured that infrastructure investments matched real market needs.

Armenia's recent e-logi Fest 25, the first e-commerce and logistics expo and summit in Armenia, suggests a similar recognition of logistics as a national priority. But for real progress, the dialogue must move beyond conferences. Lithuania's success came from relentless execution; every year brought actual improvements in transit times, cost reductions, and new trade agreements. Armenia must adopt the same disciplined approach, with clear targets for port modernization (via Georgian connections), rail upgrades, and digital customs systems.

The difference between Lithuania's success and Armenia's potential comes down to ambition. Lithuania didn't just improve its logistics sector; it made it a pillar of national economic strategy. Armenia must do the same. The pieces are in place: a skilled workforce, growing tech capabilities, and increasing interest from international investors. What's needed now is the will to prioritize logistics as a driver of growth, not just in words, but in budgets, reforms, and execution.

Ambition vs. Reality

Armenia in 2024 mirrors Lithuania circa 2010, recognizing logistics as strategic but needing concrete action. The Middle Corridor's 2023 surge **offers Armenia the same transit opportunity Lithuania seized post-2008**. Digital advantages like the 2022 E-Transport Law provide foundations but require Lithuania-style execution: not just reforms, but measurable targets; for example, 24-hour customs clearance by 2026 and 50% e-commerce logistics growth by 2027.

The lesson from Lithuania's 20-year ascent is clear: geographic constraints become advantages when matched with consistent, **decade-long investment in both physical and digital infrastructure**. Armenia's e-Logi Fest25 could be remembered as its 2016 Transport Innovation Forum moment: **the starting point of a similar transformation**, if followed by equally determined execution.

In a recent conversation at the e-Logi Fest25 Summit in Yerevan, Jurgis Adomavičius, Chairman of the Transport Innovation Association, told me that the first Transport Innovation Forum had no more than 100 attendees, most of them invited by the organizers. The event was quite small-scale. Nowadays, the event has grown so popular that hundreds attend, and it sells out months ahead of time. By 2023, **the forum's opening ceremony was a high-level event** with greetings from both Gitanas Nausėda, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, and Virginijus Sinkevičius, the European Commissioner.

When Lithuania's forum began, the country had already laid important groundwork for EU membership and infrastructure upgrades but **lacked a cohesive vision for logistics as a strategic economic driver**. Yet within three years, as Lithuania's logistics sector gained momentum (evidenced by Girteka's expansion and Klaipėda Port's growing volumes), the forum's stature grew proportionally.

Lithuania's forum gained relevance by becoming a decision-making venue, not just a talking shop. Having moderated over ten international panels at the e-Logi Fest in Yerevan two months ago, I'm confident **Armenia's forum can follow suit** by dedicating future editions to solving specific pain points. I discussed these topics with local and international decision-makers, and everyone seemed to align on the same vision. Taking the first step is important, but what's more important is to keep going; the good news is that **the momentum is already building, with a second e-Logi Fest planned for 2026**.

City of Smile Charitable Foundation

Helping Children and Young Adults on their Journey of Conquering Cancer in Armenia

Barev it means hello!

LEARN MORE

www.cityofsmile.org

you can scan here!

FROM YEREVAN TO BERLIN

ARMENIAN TECH STARTUPS MAKE THEIR MARK AT GITEX EUROPE

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

INTERVIEWING

OLESEA SIMION

COMMUNICATION MANAGER & PROJECT COMPONENT LEAD AT THE EU4INNOVATION EAST

FROM YEREVAN TO BERLIN

ARMENIAN TECH STARTUPS MAKE THEIR MARK AT GITEX EUROPE

Earlier this year, a delegation from the GITEX HQ team from the Dubai World Trade Centre visited Yerevan for an exclusive networking and info session to build ties between the world's largest tech show and the Armenian tech ecosystem.

Armenia has a huge potential as a gateway to the Caucasus and Eastern European tech markets. According to StartupBlink, the Armenian tech ecosystem ranks 1st in Central Asia and 51st globally. Meanwhile, the tech startup ecosystem in Yerevan ranks 181st out of 1,400 countries and cities worldwide.

Armenia at GITEX Europe

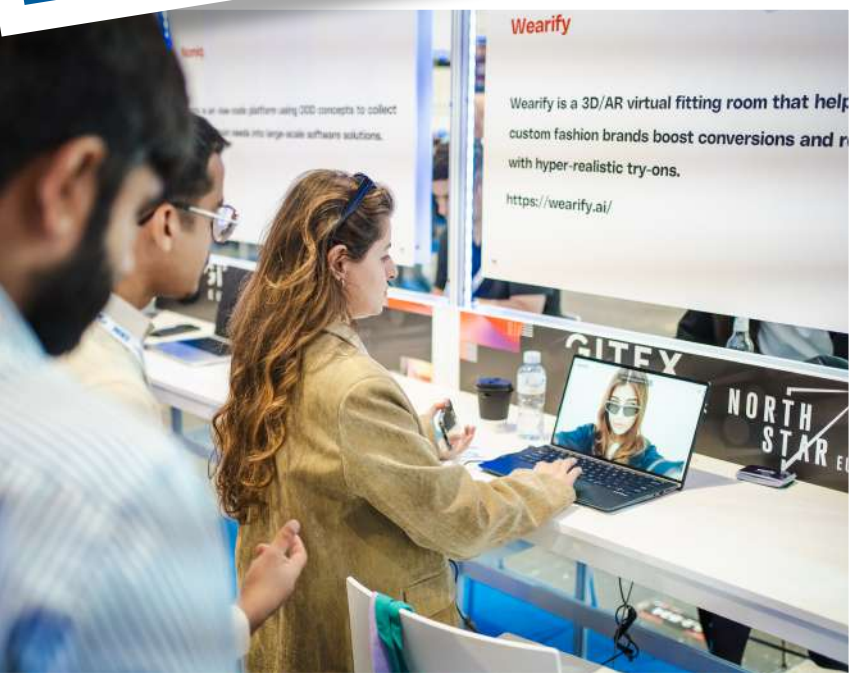
From May 21 to 23, GITEX Europe, an extension of GITEX Global, took place in Berlin, Germany. An Armenian delegation of five tech startups participated in GITEX Europe with the support of EU4Innovation East, an EU-funded initiative supporting the startup and innovation ecosystems in Eastern Partnership countries.

In my conversation with Olesea Simion, Communication Manager & Project Component Lead at the EU4Innovation East project, she shared additional details about their program. According to her, they supported five Armenian startups: Wearify, Thermaiscan, CaseLens, nomiq, and Matian, in showcasing their innovations at GITEX. With over 40,000 professionals, 2,000 exhibitors, and 1,000 startups from more than 100 countries, the event provided an opportunity for networking with global tech leaders and investors.

Selected startups benefited from a comprehensive participation package, which included dedicated exhibition booths, exposure to 1,200+ investors, personalized, pre-scheduled meetings with potential investors, corporate leaders, and strategic partners via a tailored matchmaking service, a chance to compete in the prestigious Supernova Challenge, one of Europe's top startup competitions, and access to exclusive networking events and heightened visibility.

During the initial evaluation process, applications were assessed based on the strength of submitted Letters of Intent and Pitch Decks, with scoring criteria focused on readiness, innovation potential, market relevance, and alignment with the GITEX Europe platform.

Following this evaluation, six startups advanced to the second phase, where they participated in a live online pitch session featuring a 3-minute presentation, followed by Q&A and panel feedback. Final assessments emphasized clarity of pitch, business viability, innovation, and fit for the European market. Finally, five startups were selected to participate in GITEX, with the support of EU4Innovation East.



Among the five Armenian startups that participated, Wearify stood out by being shortlisted as a semi-finalist in the prestigious Supernova Challenge. On the first day of the event, the founder delivered a compelling two-minute pitch during the semi-final round. Although she did not advance to the finals, her confident presentation captured the attention of many attendees. Over the following days, her pitch continued to generate interest, drawing a steady stream of visitors eager to learn more about Wearify and its innovative offering.

To give you a better idea of what the Armenian ecosystem has been producing recently, I will briefly introduce some of the participating startups.

Wearify is a virtual fitting room solution designed for luxury and customized clothing brands. Using advanced 3D avatars, AR, and generative AI, Wearify allows customers to try on clothes virtually with precision and realism, helping brands significantly reduce return rates and boost conversion.

Karine Martirosyan

Founder at Wearify

GITEX was an invaluable experience for Wearify. Being selected as a semi-finalist in the Supernova Challenge provided immense exposure, and we gained significant traction with potential investors and partners. The event also allowed us to refine our pitch and better understand the market demands for our product."

Aram Aghababyan

Co-Founder and CEO of CaseLens

At GITEX we met three interested investors who quickly grasped how CaseLens speeds up case preparation. Each requested our deck and booked follow-up calls. Their response shows there is real investor interest for practical AI in legal work. The event pushed our fundraising forward."

CaseLens builds AI "junior associates" that automate the groundwork behind arbitration and litigation prep, drafting case timelines, creating summaries of arguments, investigating documents, validating citations, and checking procedural rules, so lawyers can focus on strategy, not paperwork.

Nomiq is a software development platform that redefines how software is built by leveraging domain-driven design concepts and meta-programming techniques. It enables businesses to rapidly collect and transform domain-specific requirements into scalable, enterprise-level software with minimal or no manual coding.

“

Tatev Avagyan

CEO of nomiq

GITEX Europe was the first time we introduced Nomiq to the European market, and it proved to be a valuable step in our journey. With such a diverse and knowledgeable audience, it was a great opportunity to showcase our solution, receive meaningful feedback, and gain insights into industry trends and innovation. The experience helped us validate our direction and return home fueled with tangible milestones and objectives.”

Areg Gevorgyan

Co-founder of Thermaiscan

GITEX Europe in Berlin was a valuable opportunity to showcase our AI-powered healthtech solution to a European audience. We met potential investors and partners who showed strong interest in our technology and its real-world applications. The event helped us validate our positioning in the European market and gave us clear direction for scaling and regulatory alignment. We're grateful for the support that made our participation possible."

Thermaiscan is an Armenian-Swedish Life Science company transforming global access to breast cancer screenings. The startup has developed a Breast Cancer Pre-Screening solution, a proprietary AI solution combined with smartphone-based thermal imaging sensors.

Participation in GITEX Europe aligns with Yerevan's push for closer EU tech collaborations; it's **a push to integrate Armenia more and more into European tech networks**. Additionally, GITEX exposure encourages more Armenian startups to transition from service-based to product-based models.

According to Ms. Simion, the initial goal of taking local startups to GITEX Europe was to showcase the Armenian innovation and startup ecosystem to a European audience in a more structured and strategic manner. The aim was not only to raise visibility but also to contribute to bridging the Armenian and European ecosystems, as Armenia still often feels like a hidden gem or a new discovery for many first-time international observers.

Beyond the startup showcase, GITEX also offered a platform for thought leadership. Nejdeh Hovanessian, Country Coordinator for Armenia within the EU4Innovation East project, joined Narine Kotikyan, GITEX's official representative in Armenia and Georgia, for a fireside chat on the unique character of the Armenian innovation ecosystem. Their conversation highlighted the Armenian ecosystem's bottom-up approach, diaspora's pivotal role, the country's strong scientific legacy, and important EdTech initiatives. Nejdeh Hovanessian also emphasized the broader mission of EU4Innovation East: to foster cross-border innovation and collaboration across the Eastern Partnership region.

While Armenia's presence at this year's GITEX Europe was relatively modest in scale, it nonetheless served as an important step. The initiative succeeded in generating meaningful interest, sparking conversations, and planting the seeds for future collaboration. It created a small but noticeable buzz, laying the groundwork for deeper engagement and stronger ecosystem connections in the years to come.

As GITEX Global in Dubai approaches this October, Armenian startups and tech companies have a prime opportunity to showcase their innovations on a global stage. Life in Armenia team will provide focused coverage directly from the expo, highlighting all participating Armenian companies and offering comprehensive event coverage.

TECH EVENTS with ARTAK N. G.

TECH BLOGGER

AUG 1	Celebration of 10-th anniversary of Armenian Code Academy (by invitation)
AUG 7	Open doors at Matena
AUG 14	AI Thirsday: Sucessful Exit
AUG 15	Open Source Data Sprint by PyData
AUG 21	AI Thursdays: Checkout optimization using AI
AUG 22	Armenian Cryptocurrency Assets Forum

THE EDUCATION ARMENIA NEEDS IN 2025 - PART 2

GRADUATING WITH A MASTER'S IN PIRATE ADMINISTRATION

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

FEATURING

SUREN MARKOSIAN

FOUNDER AND CEO OF LIST

THE EDUCATION ARMENIA NEEDS IN 2025 - PART 2

GRADUATING WITH A MASTER'S IN PIRATE ADMINISTRATION

In the April 2025 issue of Life in Armenia, we lightly introduced the concept of a Master's in Pirate Administration, founded by Suren Markosian, the visionary behind List.am and Epic. Now, in Part 2, we will unveil real lessons startup founders can learn from pirates to showcase the similarities between these two disparate worlds.

The Lesson of Big Wins

In the startup world, where only the bold survive, the weak-minded chase small wins, missing the real opportunities. They're like the humble fisherman, happy with a few fish, while the true winner, the pirate, goes after the biggest ships.

Back in the day, pirates targeted high-value, slow-moving merchant vessels, not small fishing boats! Similarly, **startup founders must target ambitious, disruptive goals**. Playing it safe in the startup world often means falling behind the competition.

Think of the famous story of Sir Francis Drake. He wasn't some minor pirate picking off small fishing boats. Drake, with his queen's quiet approval and a burning desire for fame, went after the very heart of the Spanish Empire. He wasn't happy with a few silver coins; his goal was entire fleets, the gold and jewels from new lands, and the respect of the world's most powerful country. His attacks on Nombre de Dios and Cartagena were **planned moves by someone who saw the big picture**, who knew that real power came from breaking the whole system, grabbing the most valuable things, and making both friends and enemies respect him.

In Silicon Valley, this "big win" mindset is instinctive. Consider PayPal's goal to "democratize finance" or Tesla's vision to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. Here in Armenia, we see this spirit in companies like Krisp, which isn't just making a good noise-canceling app but aiming to change how we communicate online. They're going after the entire fleet, not just a single fishing boat. Similarly, PicsArt in Armenia didn't just aim to be a simple photo editor; it pursued the ambition of empowering everyone to be a creator, reaching hundreds of millions of users globally. **If you play it safe, you'll be out before you know it!**

The Lesson of Definite Failure

Just as 60-80% of pirate expeditions failed, so do 90% of startups. The key difference is that surviving founders can learn and adapt; failed pirates, on the other hand, often faced the gallows. Most big plans, like pirate voyages or new businesses, will crash. What truly matters isn't avoiding failure, but how one reacts to it.

While tales romanticize the daring nature of pirates, the fact remains that a majority of pirate expeditions, perhaps as many as 80%, ended with little to no profit. Many crews returned empty-handed, or worse, found themselves adrift, ships damaged, and men lost to storms or disease. For a great number, their "careers" were tragically brief, ending not in retirement on a sun-drenched isle, but at the end of a rope. The British Admiralty made swift examples of captured pirates.

A founder does not face the gallows for a failed venture. Their "failure" is a brutal teacher. The collapsed product, the bankrupt company, or the wasted investment are not death sentences, but costly, painful lessons. Think of Evan Williams, who founded Blogger, sold it to Google, and then started Odeo, and then pivoted with his team into the massive success that is Twitter

The failed pirate learned only the finality of his mistake. A founder has the privilege of learning from theirs and living to fight another day.

The Lesson of Instant Command

A pirate vessel was no place for a committee meeting. Every man aboard had a role, and every man depended on the captain's immediate, unhesitating command. Imagine Blackbeard himself, pausing to poll his crew on whether to hoist the Jolly Roger or adjust the sails in a squall. Such hesitation would spell disaster. Instead, his word was law, his decisions final, enforced by fear and the necessity of survival.

Similarly, a startup cannot afford the paralysis of consensus. While discussion has its place in shaping ideas, the moment of execution demands a decisive hand. When a market shifts, a competitor launches, or a critical bug emerges, the time for deliberation is over. A founder who allows every decision to become a debate risks missing opportunities, losing momentum, and ultimately, sinking the entire enterprise.

Like the pirate captain, the founder must sometimes make a swift, unilateral call, trusting their vision and accepting the burden of leadership. In the startup world, just as on a pirate ship, speed and clarity of command often outweigh the comfort of collective agreement.

It's lonely at the top: Founders, like captains, bear ultimate responsibility. As Suren put it, "There is no democracy, and there shouldn't be."

The Lesson of Cruel Merit

On the deck of a pirate ship, incompetence meant the end. A clumsy sailor was a threat to the entire crew's survival and success. In startups, the same cold truth applies: **low performers must "walk the plank."**

Imagine a pirate captain in the heat of battle, realizing a gunner is misfiring. He wouldn't pause for performance reviews or offer extensive training programs in the middle of a raid. The swift, brutal reality was that such a man endangered the ship, the treasure, and every life aboard. His inefficiency had immediate consequences.

Similarly, a startup cannot afford to carry dead weight. In a lean environment where resources are scarce and every contribution counts, a low performer doesn't just underachieve; they actively drain energy, slow progress, and burden the team. **They consume resources without delivering commensurate value**.

Just like the pirate captain, a startup founder must quickly identify and address underperformance.

The Lesson of Constant Adjustment

Pirates didn't have the luxury of long-term planning; they constantly adjusted their course. Startups must operate the same way. Instead of 5-year plans, focus on rapid iterations.

Consider the voyages of Captain William Kidd, who, though initially commissioned as a privateer to hunt pirates, famously turned to piracy himself. His expeditions were not guided by laid-out itineraries stretching years into the future. Instead, his course was dictated by the intelligence of passing ships, the shifting political tides that made certain waters more dangerous, or even the sudden need to resupply. He had to be ready to change direction at a moment's notice, abandoning one target for a more promising one, or fleeing when overwhelming force appeared. His crew's lives, and his potential fortune, depended on this agile, reactive decision-making, not on sticking to a pre-printed map.

In the startup world, this principle is equal. A startup that clings to a detailed five-year projection in a market that redefines itself every six months is doomed to obsolescence. Competitors emerge, technologies evolve, and customer needs change with alarming speed.

The founder who insists on executing a fixed, long-term strategy, rather than embracing continuous testing, feedback, and immediate course correction, is like a captain sailing directly into a known storm without adjusting his sails.

The true power lies not in predicting the distant future, but in mastering the art of present-moment adaptation. However, it's important to note that avoiding long-term planning doesn't mean the journey would be a short one! Magellan's expedition took 3 years. Startups require a lot of patience as well.

Suren's "Master of Pirate Administration" isn't a joke; it's a call to arms. Armenia's future depends on founders who embody the pirate spirit: daring, adaptable, and relentless. Will Suren's Pirate School become a reality? Only time will tell. But one thing is certain: Armenia's ecosystem must rally behind this mindset because in the battle for global tech dominance, **playing safe is the riskiest move of all**.

THE ARMENIAN CHAPTER

CONNECTING FOUNDERS THROUGH A RUNNING CLUB IN ARMENIA

MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR IN CHIEF

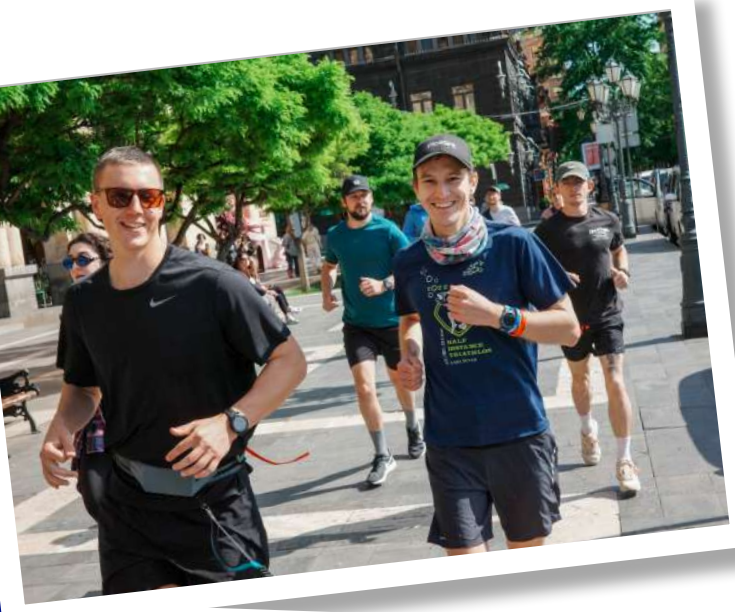
FEATURING

KIRILL CHUMACHKOV

CO-FOUNDER OF THE FOUNDERS RUNNING CLUB, YEREVAN CHAPTER

THE ARMENIAN CHAPTER
CONNECTING FOUNDERS THROUGH A RUNNING CLUB IN ARMENIA

A few weeks ago, Kirill Chumachkov added me to a WhatsApp group in Armenia. Since then, every week the invitation arrives on my WhatsApp: "Join Founders Running Club at 8:30 AM on Sunday" And every single Saturday night, a small, optimistic part of me believes this is the week! This is when I'll rise with the sun, join the active minds of Yerevan, and hit the streets!



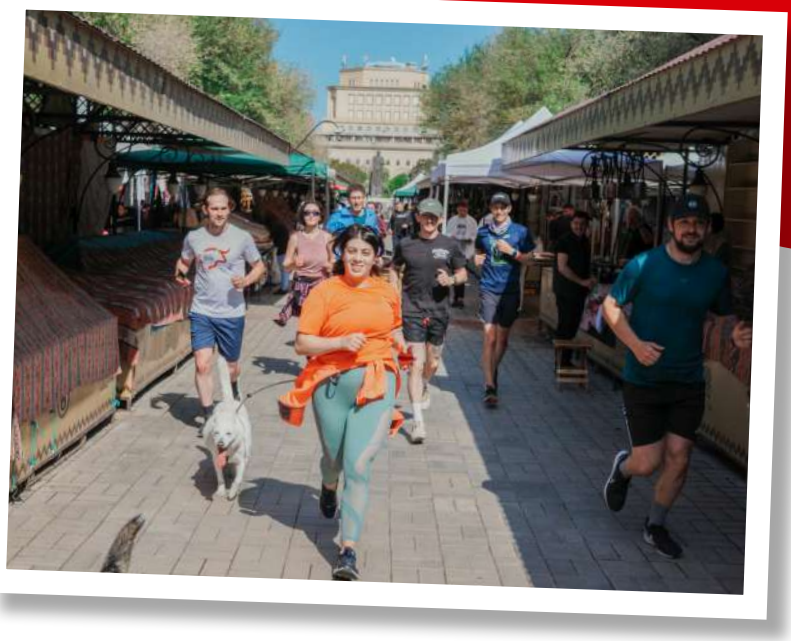
Yet, come Sunday at 8:30 AM, reality often bites, and the allure of my pillow proves too strong. While I imagine the group already out there, I'm usually still in the gravitational pull of my mattress, already anticipating a week of regret.

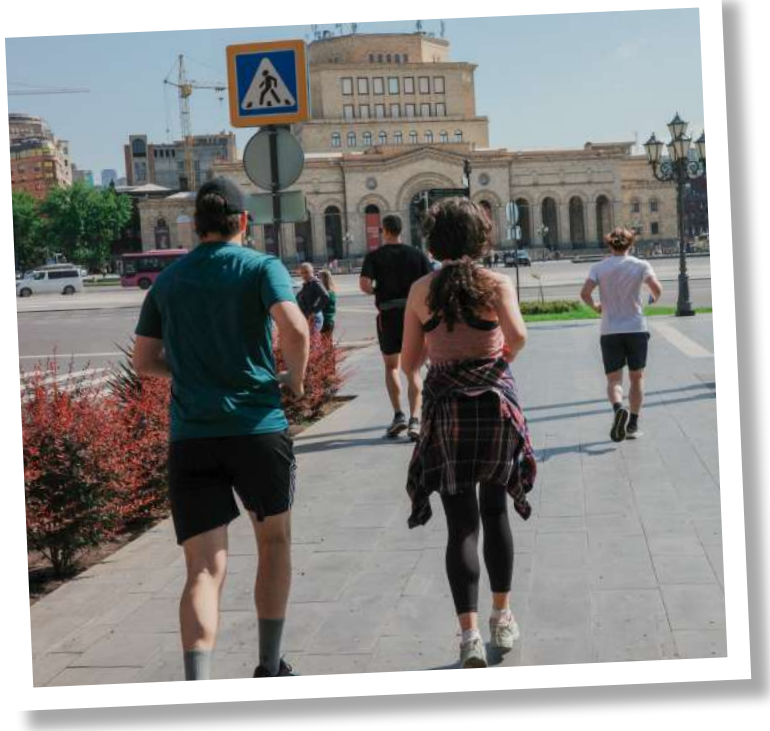
Beyond my personal Sunday struggle, I'm happy to share about the Yerevan Chapter of the Founders Running Club. For digital nomads and remote workers in Armenia, having a community means the world because a community transforms individual ambition into collective strength; it isn't just casual acquaintances; it's the unseen connections that become lifelines: an idea that finds an investor, a late-night problem that gets solved by a peer, and a moment of doubt that's met with shared experience and encouragement.

I like the simple concept of the Founders Running Club. Think about it as a different kind of networking! **Not the forced smiles and stiff handshakes of a conference hall**, but the shared rhythm of footsteps on the pavement, the collective breath of exertion, and the easy flow of conversation that only comes when professional facades melt away.

The Founders Running Club is **a global community with 34,000+ members** across 45+ locations in 32 countries on 5 continents. 800+ founders attending events weekly. 650+ joining the community each week. They bring together founders, investors, operators, and creators to connect and build a better future. It's **open not only to founders but to anyone who is interested in exploring new horizons** and breaking into tech or entrepreneurship. Hosting weekly running and networking events in SF, Dubai, Cape Town, London, New York, and São Paulo. 40+ cities and counting!

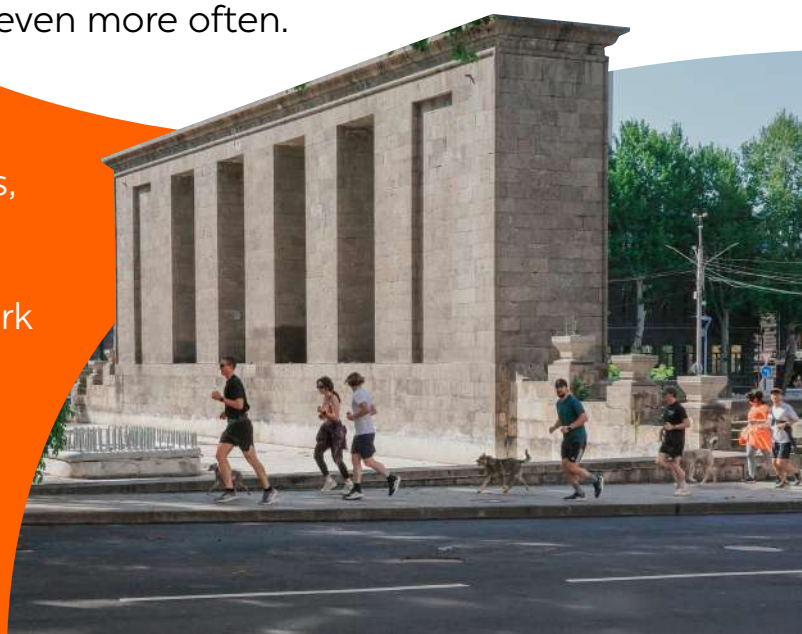
In Yerevan, FRC has nearly 200 people in the community, with 20 running each Sunday from Green Bean on Cascade. The community is the home for people with many different backgrounds and origins. Excited founders, venture capitalists, designers, professional runners, QA interns, and foreign country embassy workers, just to name a few. Origins of the members include Armenia (of course), Russia, Europe, Lebanon, the USA, Iran and many more.





The chapter's co-founders are Serge Shagal, Kirill Chumachkov, and Marianna Sargsyan. They also combine different backgrounds and origins. Serge and Kirill emigrated to Armenia in 2022, while Marianna is a native Armenian. Serge is a serial tech founder scaling technological businesses to millions of dollars in revenue and raising from top-tier investors CV VC and Antler Nordics. Kirill is an ex-venture capitalist and now also a founder of an AI business. Marianna is the project lead in an Armenian software company. But they met and decided to do Founders Running Club and run together once a week and sometimes even more often.

A single runner might go fast, but a pack runs further and stronger. When founders, investors, and visionaries gather for the morning runs, they're not even exercising their bodies; they're exercising their network in the most authentic way possible. This is how true ecosystems are built through consistent, human connections born from shared purpose and shared effort.



BAREV

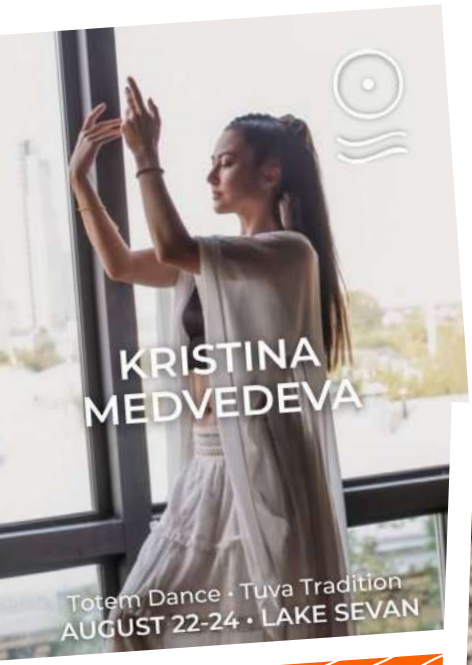
At Navasard, the ancient Armenian cosmic New Year, when Hayk's Belt rises in the sky, the call sounds to awaken the inner fire, return to the land, and begin true transformation.

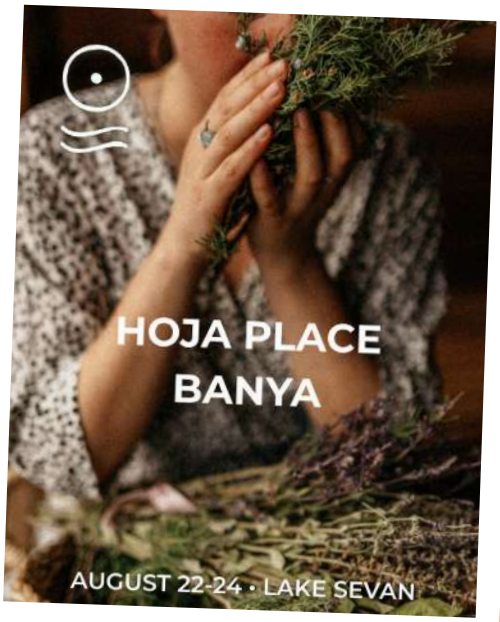
August 22-24,
by the sacred waters
of Lake Sevan, we gather for a
3-day transformational festival where elemental alchemy, live music, healing arts, and communal joy come together in a celebration of nature, renewal, and collective awakening.

Together, we move toward the Sun.

Local and International Musicians & DJs

our beloved Hogh Arthun Project from the motherland as well as, joining us from Los Angeles; Torkom Ji, J'Bon joining from Burning Man,Ara Tunes going from Raw Escapes festival and our beloved local magicians Your friend Daao, Shushiki, no u, and more. Dancing under the stars, sunrise sets, and sacred sound journeys.





Healing Arts & Workshops

Over 20 offerings: yoga, meditation, Qi Gong, breathwork, sound healing, and ceremony.

Art therapy, ancestral remembrance, and somatic practices. World-renowned teachers are coming from all over the world: India, United States, Costa Rica, Bali, Lebanon and more.

Art & Wisdom

Land art installations, exhibitions, lectures, and storytelling, Ar.e.ast Castle offering jewelry making workshops, as well as lounges with Art therapy, Ceramics making and much more.

Nourishment & Connection

A diverse food court, specialty coffee, Tajar Lounge bringing ceremonial tea, a curated bar, Wellness Sanctuary led by Ayurveda Spa & Center, Conscious Kids Village led by Azat Place, sauna ceremonies led by Hoja Place, and much more.

Doors open: August 22, 15:00
Start: August 22, 17:00
End: August 24, 18:00
Location: Artanish Beach Resort, Lake Sevan

Free entrance for children under 13

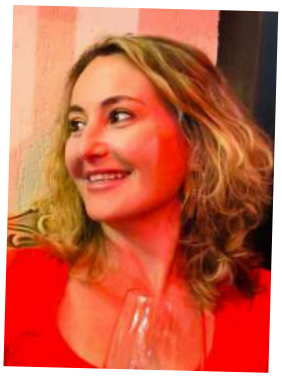
Book your ticket now!

Send word beyond mountains. Call your kin. This is the time to return, rise, and belong.

Let's begin this new cycle together.

HAYK
TER-TACHATYAN

SUREN
AZATYAN



DIANA
KHANDILYAN

LUSINE
KARAPETYAN

ARTHUR
EOLYAN

OLESEA
SIMION

SUREN
MARKOSIAN

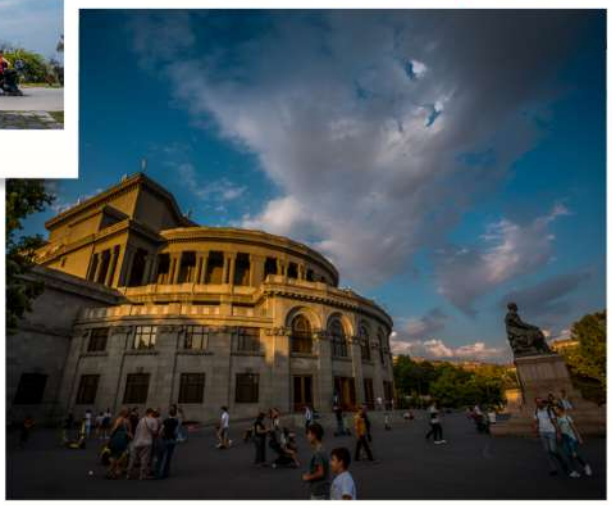
KIRILL
CHUMACHKOV

TVIN
ZEYTOUNIAN

CONTRIBUTORS
JULY 2025

LIFE IN ARMENIA
FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

CREDITS AND SPECIAL THANKS



TOURISM COMMITTEE
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

ArMENiA
The Hidden
Track

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE TOURISM COMMITTEE AT THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA FOR BEING COLLABORATIVE AND PROVIDING THE DIGITAL MEDIA (PHOTOS AND VIDEOS) TO USE IN THE MAGAZINE

www.armenia.travel

LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

AUGUST 1ST, 2025 | NO. 29 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

The information contained in this magazine is for general informational purposes only. Authors, contributors, and publishers make no representation or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability concerning the magazine or the information, products, services, or related graphics contained in the magazine for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is strictly at your own risk. No part of this magazine may be commercially reproduced or used without the publisher's written consent.