

LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2025 | NO. 25 | LIFE IN ARMENIA

WOMEN INVESTING IN ARMENIAN DREAMS

WHAT ROLE DO WOMEN PLAY IN THE ARMENIAN VC
AND ANGEL INVESTOR COMMUNITY

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING TECH MOM IN YEREVAN

HOW FEMALE-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES CHANGE
EVERYTHING FOR WOMEN

BEYOND THE CAPITAL CITY

EXPLORING POTENTIAL DIGITAL
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A GLOBAL DATA PROTECTION PERSPECTIVE

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

THE ART OF INTERMODAL LOGISTICS

ARMENIA LAUNCHES AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS
EXPO AND SUMMIT FOR THE FIRST TIME

SHE CODES, SHE LEADS, SHE STUNS

CONFESSIONS OF AN ARMENIAN HAIRDRESSER
ABOUT ARMENIAN WOMEN IN TECH

FOLLOWING THE US \$500 BILLION AI INVESTMENT

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WORKING REMOTELY FROM ARMENIA IN 2025

LEGAL AND TAX CONSIDERATIONS
FOR DIGITAL NOMADS IN ARMENIA



MATHEW ZEIN

EDITOR'S LETTER

I poured my heart and soul into this issue of Life in Armenia to explore and showcase new aspects of women's lives in this country. I was determined to go beyond the surface to find the untold stories about what it feels like to live and work in Armenia as a woman and, most importantly, how to dream and achieve as one.

I went from understanding the daily juggle of working tech mothers in Yerevan to uncovering the secrets behind the confidently charming look Armenian women have in the morning. My curiosity led me to the VC and angel investor world, where I discovered the influential roles women are playing. And, perhaps most exciting of all, I had the opportunity to meet some truly extraordinary foreign women and hear their inspiring stories of life and accomplishment in Armenia.

I hope the stories in this magazine issue capture the heart of life here and inspire you to book a flight to Armenia this spring. Who knows, maybe your own experience will become the next story featured in our pages.

Mathew Zein



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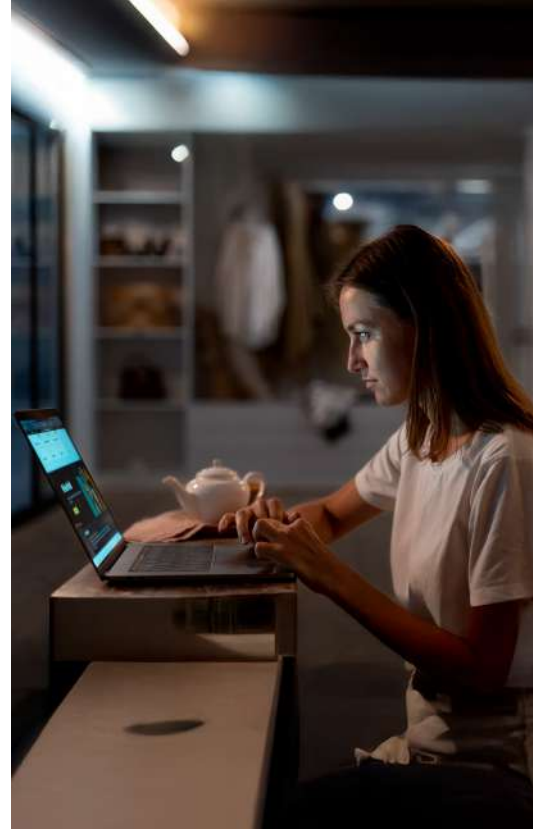


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SHE CODES, SHE LEADS, SHE STUNS CONFESSIONS OF AN ARMENIAN HAIRDRESSER ABOUT ARMENIAN WOMEN IN TECH

You'll be surprised by the elegance and style of the confidently charming tech women in Armenia. If you haven't experienced the streets of Yerevan early in the morning as the tech sector awakens, this article is for you!

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BEYOND THE CAPITAL CITY EXPLORING POTENTIAL DIGITAL NOMAD TOWNS IN ARMENIA

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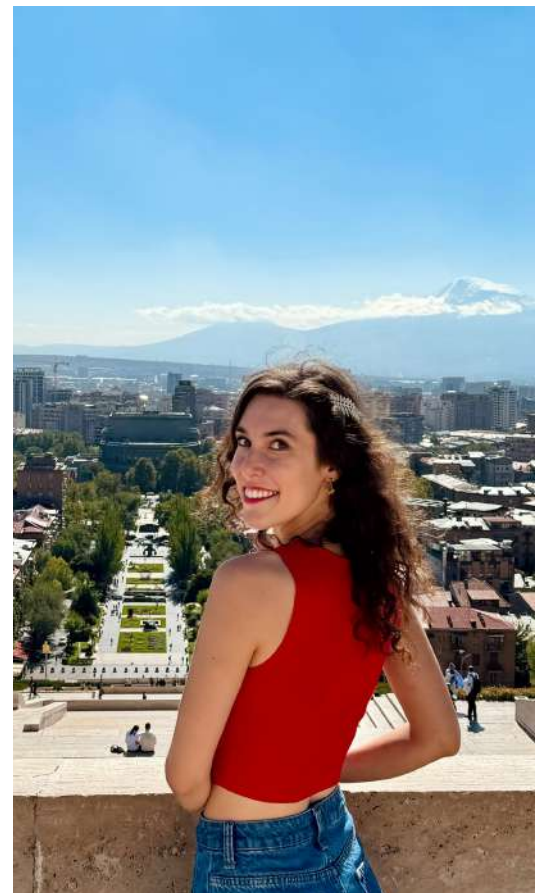
A Parisian actress follows her soul to Armenia inspired by her mother's photograph, leading her to create "Soul Country," a film about finding roots and purpose in Armenia. Discover how this country tugs at the heartstrings and makes dreams come true.

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WORKING REMOTELY FROM ARMENIA IN 2025 LEGAL AND TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIGITAL NOMADS IN ARMENIA

Planning to work remotely from Armenia? My article breaks down the essential legal and tax considerations for digital nomads in 2025. Understand residency permits, tax obligations, and EOR solutions for stays of varying lengths.

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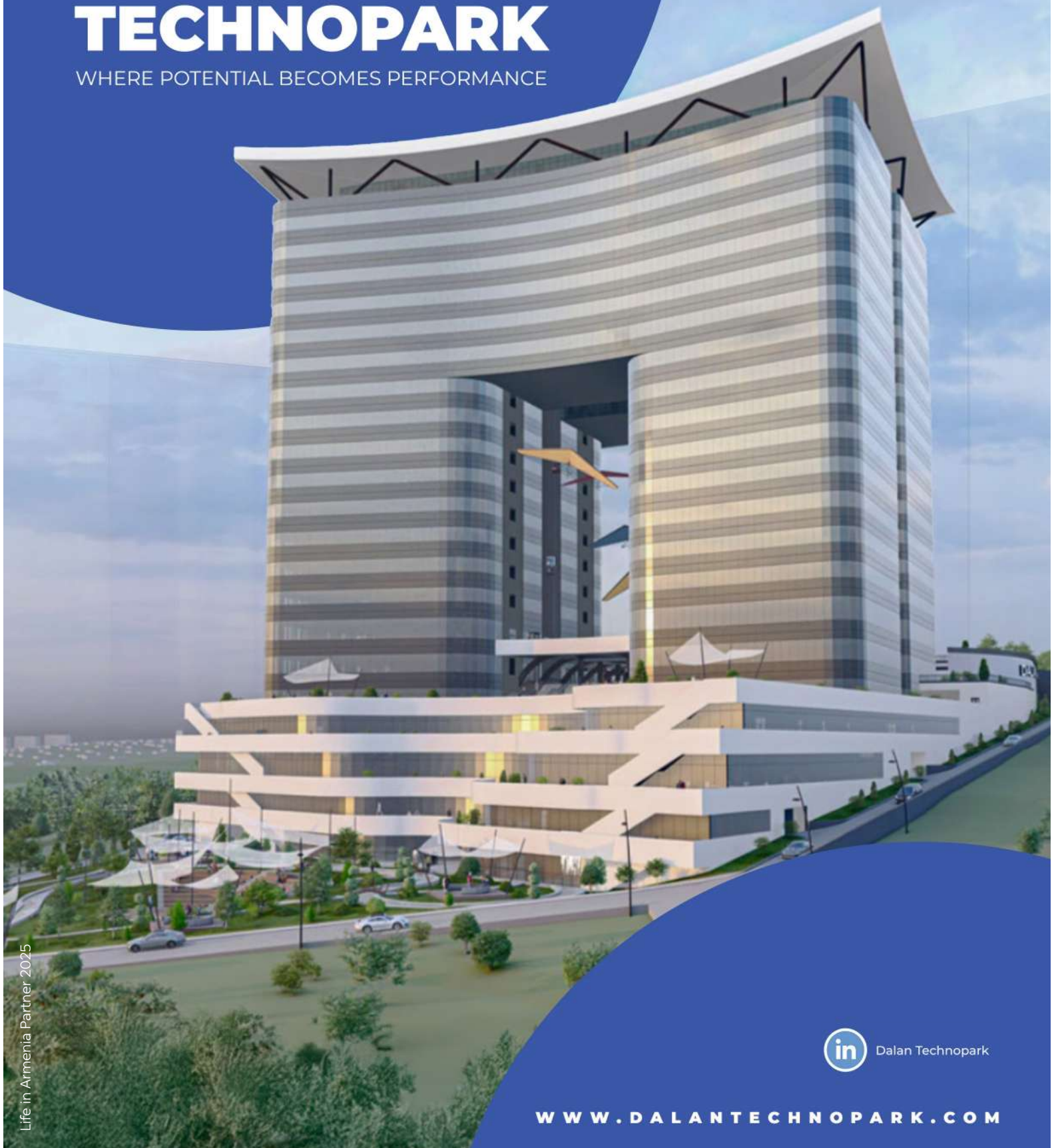
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DALAN TECHNOPARK

WHERE POTENTIAL BECOMES PERFORMANCE



WOMEN INVESTING IN ARMENIAN DREAMS

WHAT ROLE DO WOMEN PLAY IN THE ARMENIAN VC AND ANGEL INVESTOR COMMUNITY



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



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VC and Angel Investor

WOMEN INVESTING IN ARMENIAN DREAMS

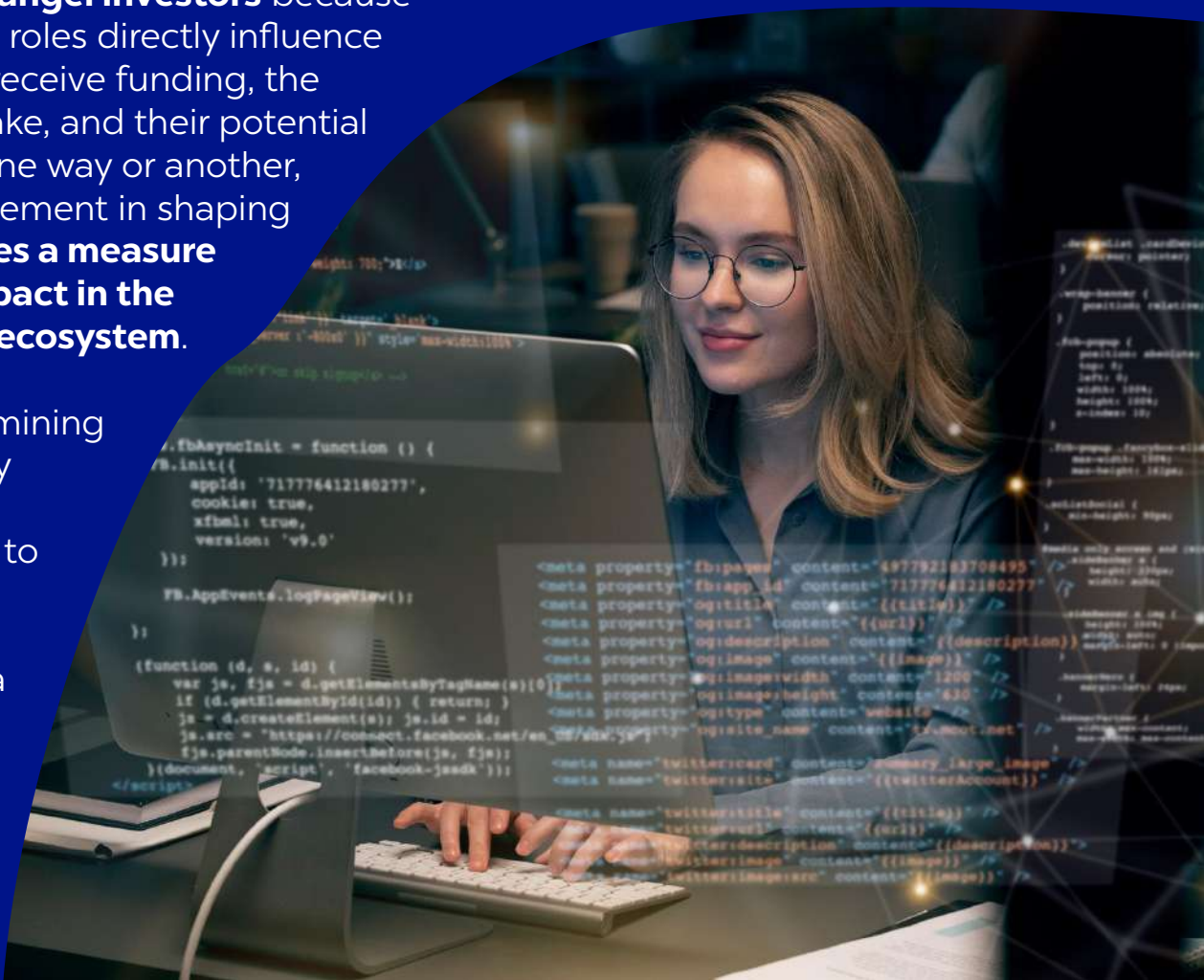
WHAT ROLE DO WOMEN PLAY IN THE ARMENIAN VC AND ANGEL INVESTOR COMMUNITY

Stating that Armenia has a high percentage of women in the tech industry is meaningless without context, even if that percentage reached 90% or 100%. **Numbers alone are not enough to tell the full story** because a single active woman driving change can have more impact than an entire ecosystem of passive women.

To understand the impact of women in Armenian tech, we must look beyond numbers and examine their participation and influence. Probably, the main question here is **how active Armenian women are in the tech ecosystem**. Answering this question tells the story and reveals an important part of the context!

I've chosen to **focus this article on venture capitalists and angel investors** because women in these roles directly influence which startups receive funding, the direction they take, and their potential for success. In one way or another, women's engagement in shaping startups **provides a measure of their true impact in the Armenian tech ecosystem**.

I started by examining investor diversity in the Armenian tech ecosystem to see if it's male-dominated and if women have a real voice.



Is It Still a Gentleman's Club?

I had a very interesting conversation with [Edita Ghazaryan](#), Deputy CEO of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE) in Armenia. She shared how the Armenian tech ecosystem shows encouraging progress in female entrepreneurship but **still faces gender imbalance in investment**. According to her, the majority of high-net-worth individuals and traditional business owners in Armenia are men, **leading to a male-dominated investor ecosystem**; this bias results in fewer women investing in Armenian startups.

This current imbalance doesn't eliminate the potential for future change, as the growing number of female entrepreneurs in the Armenian tech ecosystem is set to reshape the investment environment. Ms. Ghazaryan explained that when more women launch their own startups, they are likely to reinvest in the ecosystem in the near future, leading to a positive dynamic.

This creates a feedback loop within the Armenian tech sector, where female entrepreneurs transition into investors. However, this is not a passive process; it requires much work to ensure the feedback loop strengthens rather than weakens. It necessitates ongoing support and resources to guarantee the long-term success of female entrepreneurs. Luckily, Armenian women have a lot of potential in the tech industry.



Edita Ghazaryan

Deputy CEO of the UATE

This issue goes beyond individual choices; it reflects deeper systemic barriers. Addressing this gap requires institutional reforms and a fundamental shift in societal mindset.”



Armenian companies don't focus on quotas; they focus on competence. You either have the skills to deliver results, or you don't. Of course, breaking into executive roles can sometimes require extra effort, but at the end of the day, it's all about dedication and impact.”
Edita Ghazaryan, Deputy CEO of the UATE

Sooner or later, this gentleman's club will have a lot more ladies.

Dollars Don't Discriminate

Last month, [Formula VC](#) announced its second fund of \$30 million with the intention to invest in 40 Armenian startups. I talked to [Sona Veziryan](#), partner at Formula VC and director of BANA Angels, to learn about the ratio of women investors in their networks and the role Armenian women play in this industry.



To start, Ms. Veziryan shared a new report from [European Women in VC](#) revealing that **just 15% of venture capital general partners in Europe are women**. Similar reports from the UK and the US also showed comparable ratios, ranging from 12% to 18% for VC investment roles. This means the gender disparity in Armenian VC investment networks is no exception.

However, for angel investors, the global ratio has recently increased, with nearly **half of angel investors worldwide being women**. According to Ms. Veziryan, BANA Angels in Armenia has 15% of women angel investors. Assuming this sample is representative, Armenia lags behind the global average.

This raises two main questions: why Armenia falls short in female investor representation, and what difference it makes when women invest in startups? After all, dollars are dollars, [regardless of whether they come from a man or a woman](#).

Mathew Zein with Sona Veziryan and Edita Ghazaryan, during the announcement of Formula VC's 2nd fund of \$30 million



While it might seem that investor gender doesn't affect activity, that's not quite right. The active involvement of VCs and angel investors creates a transformative impact on the national economy. **When we add a feminine touch to this sector, disruption happens.** Women bring unique perspectives, experiences, and connections to investments. According to the report mentioned above, women investors often surpass their male counterparts in achieving returns on investments due to their **outcome-based approach and longer-term perspective.**

“

Sona Veziryan

Partner at Formula VC and
Director of BANA Angels

I believe female investors offer a unique perspective to the whole process of investment from evaluation to post-investment support, therefore having a crucial impact on startup success”



My findings from the European report align with Ms. Veziryan's observations from her experience with BANA Angels. She noted that **Armenian female investors are strategic, value-driven, and organized.** They clearly understand their investment capacity and preferred startup sectors and are committed to follow-through. Their well-defined plans and dedication to them benefit **themselves, BANA Angels, and the broader ecosystem.**

The main challenges for women investors include awareness of investment opportunities, general knowledge of angel and VC investment processes, **understanding the popularity of these models in more developed ecosystems,** and awareness of both local and international success stories.

According to Ms. Veziryan, investing in a startup isn't a quick handshake; it's a long commitment that lasts at least six or seven years. Investors and founders need to click on more than just spreadsheets and financial reports. The ability to connect makes going through the ups and downs of a startup easier. The *relationship dynamics theory focuses on how people communicate, behave, and respond* to each other. When applied to startup funding decisions, this theory reveals a founder's ability to face future challenges.

To gain a deeper understanding, I needed to speak with a female investor in the Armenian tech ecosystem about her experiences.

Karen Vardanyan, Sona Veziryan, and Grigor Hovhannisyan from Formula VC's 2nd fund announcement in Yerevan 2025



Sona Veziryan

Partner at Formula VC and Director of BANA Angels

Despite the growing number of women in the global tech industry, they haven't yet dramatically impacted the investment sector. The main obstacles are awareness and a lack of knowledge."



She's Been There, Done That—And She'll Do It Again!

It was impossible to write about angel investing and venture capital in Armenia without contacting [Ani Asatryan](#). She's the only female investor at Formula VC, alongside five other funds, and was also the first angel investor at BANA Angels, with 15 startups in her portfolio.

According to Ms. Asatryan, women in venture capital and angel investing are still a new phenomenon in Armenia. However, she sees a growing number of women becoming interested in the Armenian startup ecosystem. She shared that in the early stages, women focused on learning and gaining experience in this sector. But now, they can contribute valuable ideas, support startups, and actively strengthen the ecosystem.



When I asked about the support she provides to Armenian startups besides capital, she explained how it's important to note that Armenian startups span diverse industry sectors, from cybersecurity to quantum computing. Finding experts with deep knowledge in these specialized fields can be challenging, even within the international angel investing community. In cases where a startup operates in highly technical domains, the primary means of support often comes through networking. However, being in Yerevan presents challenges in accessing such specialized international advisors.

Ms. Asatryan spoke about the challenges startup investors face in Armenia. She explained that while Armenia offers capital gains exemptions, broader tax benefits—such as loss deductions or reinvestment incentives—are limited.

In other countries, such incentives reduce financial risk and encourage more investment, but **in Armenia, investors bear the full risk, which can discourage funding**. According to her, this results in fewer reinvestments, lower returns, and a slower-growing startup ecosystem. Introducing additional tax benefits could attract more investors, boost foreign capital, and create a more dynamic ecosystem.



Ani Asatryan

VC and Angel Investor
in Armenia

An interesting aspect of our startups is that, due to Armenia's small size, their target markets are global from day one, rather than being limited to a small regional market like in many other countries. When I spoke with international angel investors, they were often surprised to learn that our startups consistently aim for international markets from the beginning.”

Despite the challenges, she **insists on being committed to the Armenian startup ecosystem** and is interested in funding Armenian startups because she believes in their potential.

I sought a second opinion, this time from a completely different perspective on making investment decisions in Armenian startups.

Biotech Startup Investments in Armenia

[Lusine Abgaryan](#) is an American-Armenian serial biotech entrepreneur, advisor, investor, and mentor. Her **perspective on investing in Armenian scientific startups** was important to get the full picture.

Armenia's tech ecosystem is evolving rapidly, and while biotech is currently underdeveloped, Ms. Abgaryan sees great potential for its growth. **The country has strong scientific talent**, an educated workforce, and a global mindset. According to her, being present in Armenia's ecosystem and contributing to its development—especially in emerging fields like biotech—is both exciting and deeply fulfilling. While sectors like AI, SaaS, and cybersecurity are leading the way, fostering **biotech innovation can create long-term value and impact**.



Lusine Abgaryan

Biotech Entrepreneur, Advisor, Investor, and Mentor

While I invest both as an angel and through venture capital funds, angel investing gives me more hands-on opportunities to engage directly with startups. It allows me to explore opportunities more actively and bring my experience from global startup ecosystems to Armenian founders.”



According to Ms. Abgaryan, **Armenian women have a strong presence in the global tech ecosystem**. While she may not personally know all those integrating into the investment world, she believes that just like their male counterparts, successful Armenian women in tech are making their way into angel investing and venture capital. As the startup ecosystem matures, more women will **naturally take leadership roles as investors, founders, and ecosystem builders**.

“

Lusine Abgaryan

Biotech Entrepreneur,
Advisor, Investor, and
Mentor

While I invest both as an angel and through venture capital funds, angel investing gives me more hands-on opportunities to engage directly with startups. It allows me to explore opportunities more actively and bring my experience from global startup ecosystems to Armenian founders.”

Beyond capital, Ms. Abgaryan is deeply committed to providing mentorship, advisory support, and access to her network to help Armenian startups grow. Her experience **working with over 50 startups in the U.S. and globally**, as well as collaborating with lots of startup incubators and accelerators, allows her to bring valuable insights, best practices, and connections to Armenian founders.

She highlighted an important aspect of the Armenian startup ecosystem—**easy collaboration and resource accessibility**. Due to Armenia’s small size, the ecosystem is tightly connected, enabling entrepreneurs to access key stakeholders, mentors, investors, and government support, **a feat often challenging in larger markets**.

“

Lusine Abgaryan

Biotech Entrepreneur,
Advisor, Investor, and
Mentor

I can imagine that issues—such as limited exit opportunities, scaling issues, regulatory hurdles, and access to follow-on funding—are certainly present in the Armenian startup ecosystem. However, I haven’t faced these issues with the companies I invested in.”

Mathew Zein with Lusine
Abgaryan in Yerevan, Armenia



While evaluating the startups that Ms. Abgaryan considered but did not invest in, she noticed a recurring challenge: **a strong technical or scientific foundation but a lack of understanding of the business** side of things. Many founders demonstrate great tech talent but struggle with business development, commercialization strategy, market understanding, and identifying

unmet needs. Additionally, some lacked the flexibility to learn and adapt—something she refers to as “engineering syndrome”—where founders are deeply focused on product development but **underestimate the importance of market viability and business strategy**.

The Impact of an Armenian Woman on Silicon Valley

In my conversation with Ms. Abgaryan, she brought up the name of Magdalena Yesil, who defied Silicon Valley’s male-dominated culture and became an influential figure in venture capital and tech. What’s interesting is the fact that Magdalena Yesil is of Armenian heritage.

Ms. Yesil has been a force in early-stage investments, serving as a general partner at U.S. Venture Partners and founding Broadway Angels, a group of female venture capitalists and angel investors. Her work extends to founding multiple companies focused on critical internet infrastructure, including commercial internet access, e-commerce, and electronic payments.

Her journey inspires Armenian women in tech and investment, showing that with the right mindset and opportunities, they can be at the forefront of change rather than just present in the ecosystem.



Photo from the archive when Armenia hosted WCIT 2019

Someone Has to Keep Startups in Line

[Manana Melkonyan](#) is an executive team member and startup programs manager at BANA Angels. I contacted her to learn what got her into angel investing and [why the Armenian startup ecosystem specifically](#).

According to Ms. Melkonyan, the Armenian tech sector has been one of the most stable and fastest-growing industries in the wider region, [maintaining 20-25% annual growth for two decades](#). Armenia has an exceptionally skilled workforce, excelling in AI, deep tech, hardware/chip design, and software development. Armenia has produced notable startups like Picsart, Krisp, ServiceTitan, Code Signal, EasyDMARC, 10Web, and many more.



Manana Melkonyan

Startup Programs
Manager at BANA Angels

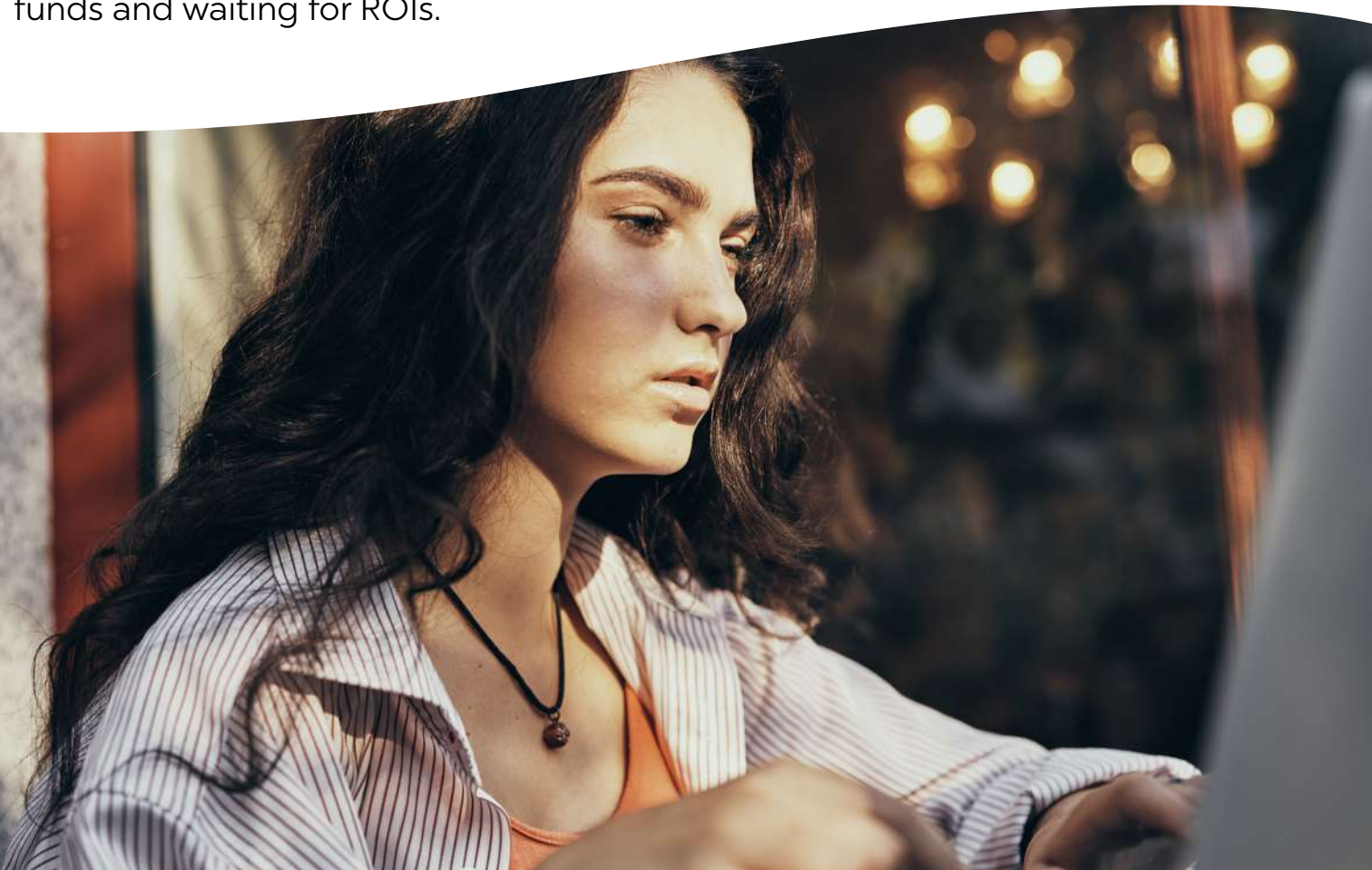
Angel investing is not just about funding; if you're passionate about startups, eager to share your knowledge and experience, and ready to navigate challenges alongside founders, then angel investing is your path."

Ms. Melkonyan shared that **BANA Angels is Armenia's first and most active angel network**, dedicated to supporting startups by connecting them with investors and guiding them through the negotiation process. They prepare startups for investor meetings, helping them refine their pitch and build investor interest.

Year after year, **more Armenian women are stepping into the world of angel investing**, mentorship, and ecosystem-building. In her role with BANA Angels, she has led various incubation and acceleration programs. Currently, they focus on organizing private and public events in collaboration with companies across different industries.

The pieces of the puzzle come together, revealing how Armenian women investors are **becoming active and growing in numbers**. Despite their relatively small numbers, their engagement level was far beyond simply placing funds and waiting for ROIs.

Armenian tech companies stand out for their strong female representation in leadership and technical roles. Women here are sophisticated, highly educated, hard-working, and confidently charming. **That's from an article I published 4 years ago about the Armenian tech ecosystem, and it remains true in 2025.**



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING TECH MOM IN YEREVAN

HOW FEMALE-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES CHANGE EVERYTHING FOR WOMEN



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A WORKING TECH MOM IN YEREVAN

HOW FEMALE-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES CHANGE EVERYTHING FOR WOMEN

A In the January 2025 issue of Life in Armenia, I introduced the concept of a true workplace and explained [why Armenia needs more workplaces built to international standards](#). While working on this magazine issue, coinciding with March 8th, I decided to focus on the specific needs of women in the workplace.

Having women in a workplace doesn't necessarily mean it is female-friendly! The number of female employees tells nothing about their comfort; they may have simply learned to adapt to existing work conditions, which were often created without their needs in mind.

Lots of office spaces these days are modern and thoughtfully designed, yet they fall short of accommodating diverse needs and default to a male-centric perspective. [This oversight multiplies the challenges for working mothers](#) and extends beyond the workday to include their commutes, daily schedules, and everything they have to do after work.



The constant feeling of being “out of sync” with the workplace environment can lead to increased stress, burnout, and a sense of isolation for working mothers. It can also **contribute to a “second shift” phenomenon**, where women shoulder the majority of domestic responsibilities after a full workday.

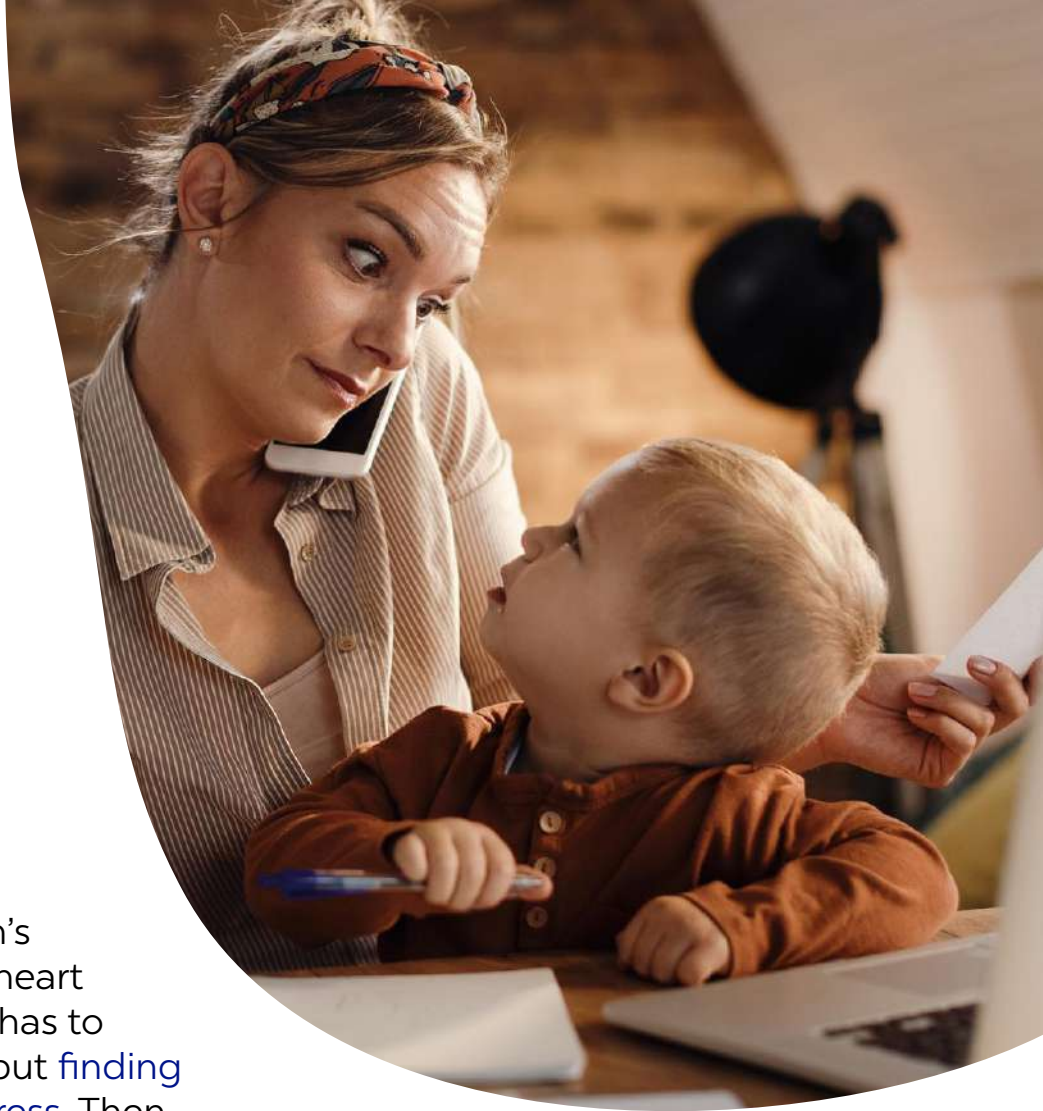
Is Vardan Okay?

To make things easier, let's imagine together Ani, a fictional mother working at a tech company in downtown Yerevan. She and her husband, who also commutes early, care for their two-year-old, Vardan. Ani wakes up before dawn, thinking, "Mama's got a big day." Yet, it's just Tuesday, Thursday, or any day.

The first challenge is Yerevan's morning traffic, where Ani's heart races against the clock. She has to drop Vardan at the nursery, but [finding parking is another level of stress](#). Then, there's the office and the struggle to find a parking spot near it! And since Yerevan's weather isn't always kind, a sudden downpour or snow can turn that simple commute into a miserable experience.

Although she works at a modern company with beautiful furniture and design, **the office lacks the simple comforts a working mom requires**; it fails to address her physical needs and ignores the demands of her dual roles as a working mom, **making it impossible for her to fully focus and excel**.

During the day, her mind is constantly split, trying to focus on coding or meetings while a little voice whispers, "Is Vardan okay?" After a long workday, Ani faces the evening traffic when picking up Vardan. Then, it's straight into dinner and bedtime. No rest, no "me time," just the same routine repeating tomorrow.



By the way, Ani's story isn't fictional but **the reality of many working mothers in Yerevan and worldwide**, whether in a first-world country or a developing one.

The constant worry about a child's well-being is a huge mental load for working mothers. This "invisible work" can detract from their focus and productivity. The lack of on-site childcare or reliable backup options exacerbates this anxiety.

The Ripple Effect

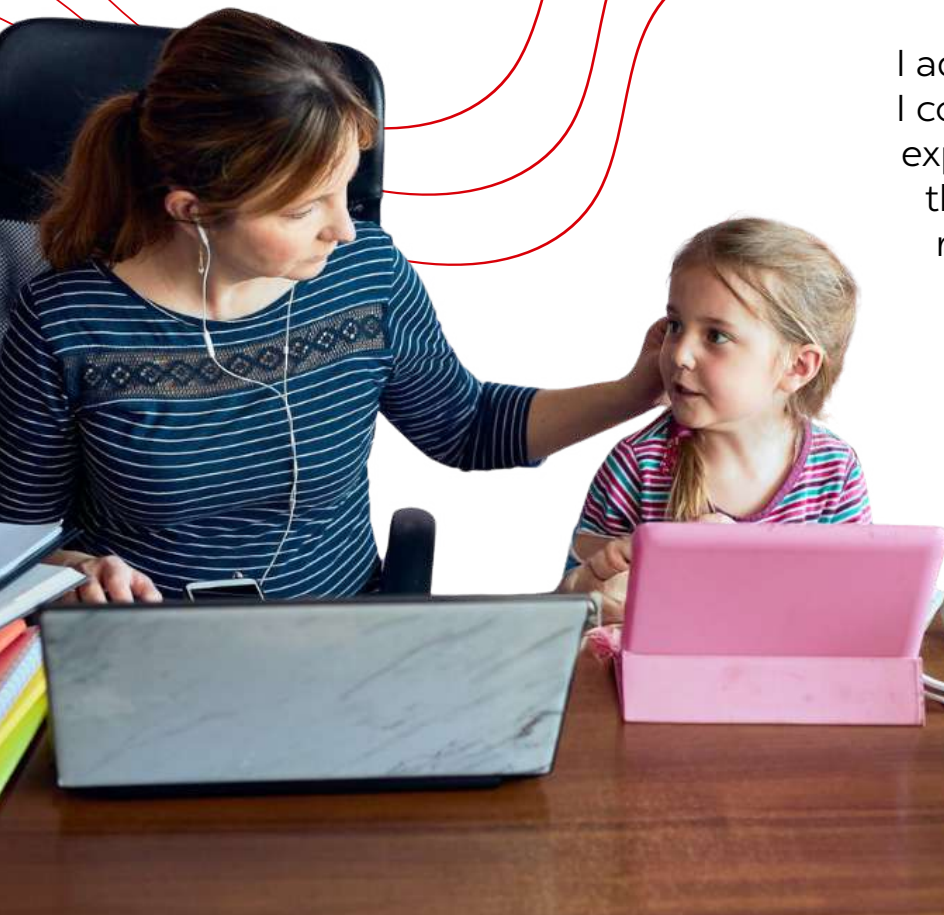
But why is that so important if things are working the way they are? In a country where women occupy 40% of the tech sector, it's important to ensure workplaces are designed to accommodate their requirements; if their productivity increases, the entire Armenian tech ecosystem moves forward.

Female-friendly workplaces are important for retaining talented women in the tech industry. High turnover rates are costly for companies and hinder innovation. When women feel supported, they are more likely to stay and advance in their careers.



Beyond parking and childcare, “male-centric” design often overlooks the need for private spaces for nursing mothers, adequate restroom facilities (especially considering menstrual hygiene), and flexible meeting schedules that accommodate school pickups or medical appointments.

In many societies, including Armenia, mothers are still primarily held responsible for childcare, creating a sense of guilt and pressure when they are at work. This societal pressure adds to the already large stress load. I know this is a new topic for a lot of men, and sadly, it might also be new for many women who don't know workplaces can actually adapt to their needs; it's worth mentioning this extends beyond the employee level, reaching employers as well, because the impact is far-reaching.



I admit that before having a child, I completely underestimated the experience of working mothers. I thought it was simply ‘working,’ regardless of gender or parental status. That changed the moment my son was born three years ago. Although my wife became a full-time mother, and I’m actively involved, we still face daily challenges.

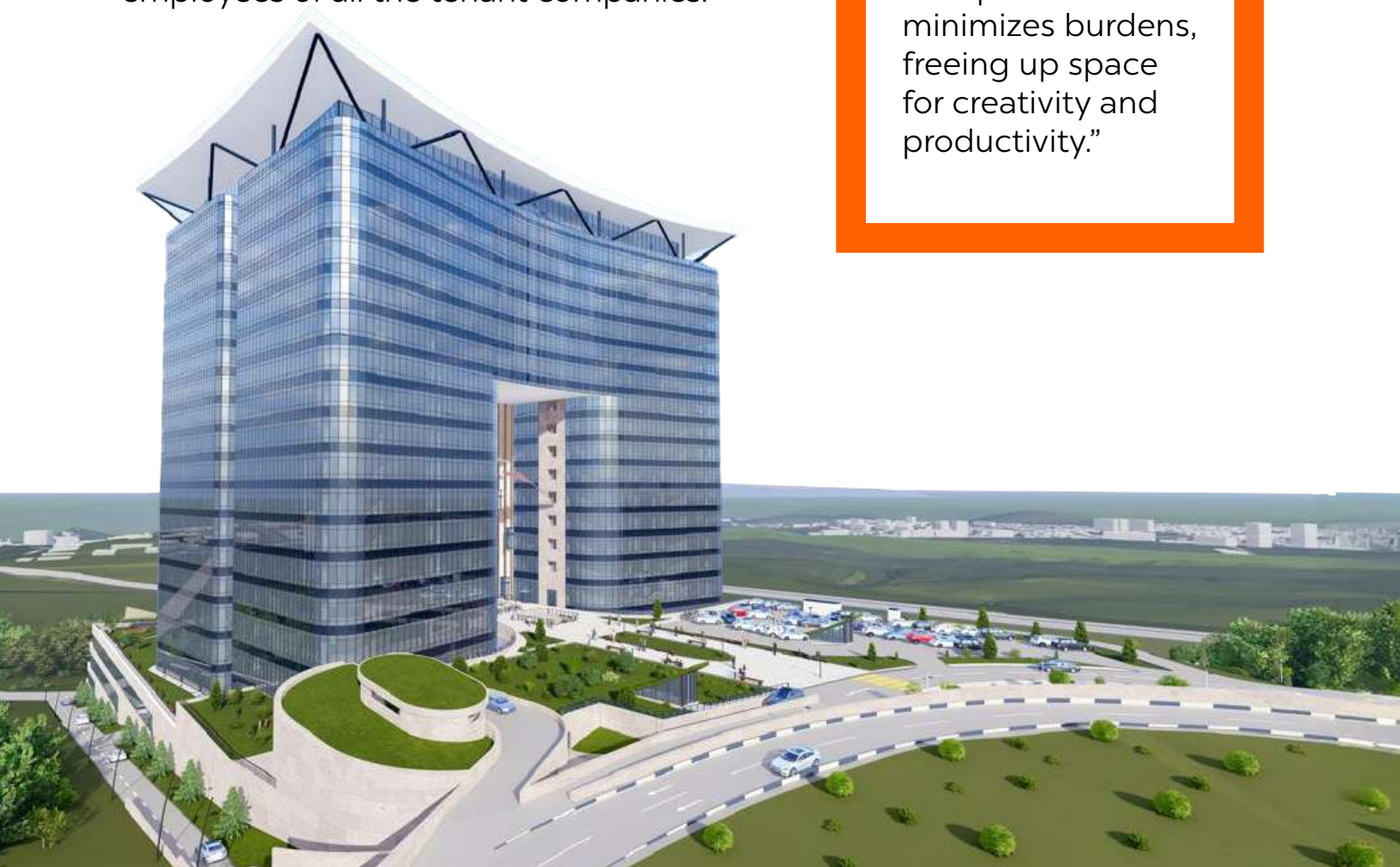
The Pursuit of Work-Life-Everything

Women have certain requirements in the workplace to feel comfortable and perform their best. A female-friendly environment [translates into tangible changes that address women's specific needs](#). While I'm not a workplace expert, I knew who to contact for more information. I reached out to the operations team at [Dalan Technopark](#), the new business ecosystem under construction in Yerevan, which aims to be the first commercial LEED-certified building in the country. I spent over three hours asking about [how they plan to make the building female-friendly](#) for employees of all the tenant companies.



Operations Team at Dalan Technopark

We can't change what people are going through, but we can make sure our workplace supports them every step of the way—before work, during the day, and after leaving. A standardized workplace minimizes burdens, freeing up space for creativity and productivity.”





Operations Manager at Dalan

Technopark

We found a lot of details when we looked at every part of women's working life in Yerevan, and that gave us a full list of things to do."

According to Dalan Technopark's team, the building will feature an educational kindergarten and nursery, offering more than just childcare; it will be a dedicated space for learning and development. With the inclusion of other facilities within Dalan Technopark, such as a modern gym, food hall, swimming pool, and recreational areas, these amenities will be strategically interconnected to [ensure maximum benefit and optimal cost efficiency for the employees of the resident companies](#). As a result, children will have a wide range of opportunities to engage in educational activities.

Additionally, strong security measures will be implemented, including controlled access to children's areas, ensuring that only authorized personnel and parents can enter. This [allows working mothers in the building to concentrate on their professional responsibilities](#), knowing their children are in good hands.

When researching the morning routines of working mothers in Yerevan, Dalan Technopark's team said they discovered that many have to leave home without morning coffee because of time pressure. To address this, a variety of convenient services will be offered in the building. Food and beverage areas will feature quick-service options like a Starbucks-style cafe, catering to the needs of busy parents who require a **fast breakfast or coffee after managing the morning routines of their children**.



Dalan Technopark will feature beauty salons, dry cleaning, and laundry services. A practical, everyday grocery store will provide food and household items, eliminating the

need for separate grocery trips after work. They also decided to house medical zones to **simplify healthcare management for busy working mothers.**



Operations Manager at Dalan Technopark

Our goal was to make sure accessing all types of services for employees of tenant companies inside Dalan Technopark was just one elevator ride away. We wanted to become a part of these people's daily lives to make a difference."

According to Dalan Technopark's team, priority parking spaces closest to the elevators will be reserved for handicapped individuals, those with children, and the elderly. This initiative adheres to LEED parking standards and reduces the daily stress of looking for parking lots, [especially for mothers juggling children and work commitments](#). Furthermore, they aim to promote and incentivize ride-sharing, with priority parking also allocated to vehicles carrying multiple passengers, pregnant women, or those with reduced mobility; this encourages sustainable commuting practices and eases access to the building.



To improve accessibility and traffic flow, two new roads will be constructed, connecting the building to Tsitsernakaberd Highway and Monte Melkonyan Street. These roads will be designed to limit the presence of large lorries and construction trucks, ensuring a safer and more efficient traffic environment. A dedicated taxi parking area will also be provided for added convenience. Furthermore, a **separate entrance will be established for non-passenger vehicles**, minimizing traffic congestion and potential risks.

As part of the LEED and Yerevan Municipality requirements, Dalan Technopark will have expansive green areas designed for recreational purposes. These park-like settings will **provide a space for promenades and relaxation**.

More Than Just a Certification

As mentioned above, Dalan Technopark aims to be the first LEED-certified commercial building in Armenia. **LEED certification promotes a female-friendly workplace by default** through various aspects that positively impact employees' lives, both during working hours and beyond, **by influencing their personal health and mental well-being.**

LEED buildings prioritize ventilation and filtration, reducing allergens and pollutants that can exacerbate respiratory issues, which can disproportionately affect women. Additionally, LEED buildings focus on maintaining consistent and comfortable temperatures, minimizing drafts and hot/cold spots; this is **important as women often experience temperature fluctuations differently than men.**

LEED standards emphasize maximizing natural light, which is proven to boost mood, reduce stress, and improve sleep quality. This **benefits women who often juggle multiple responsibilities and need to optimize their energy levels.** They also use low-

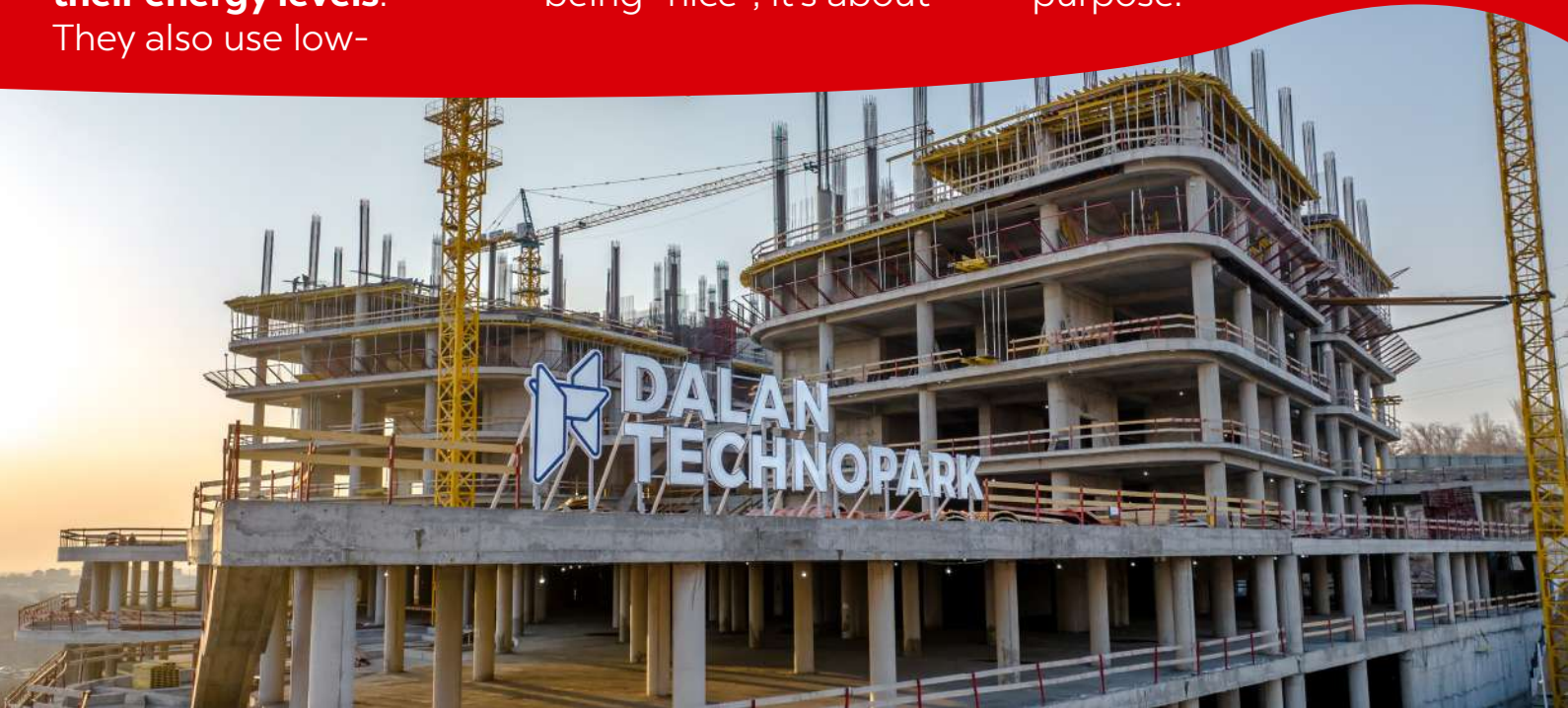
VOC (volatile organic compound) materials, **minimizing exposure to chemicals affecting hormonal balance** and reproductive health, which is an important factor for women's long-term well-being.

Increasing the number of LEED-certified workplaces in Armenia could impact the tech ecosystem by providing improved working conditions for parents. It's worth mentioning that Google has recently reported that **over 300 of its office facilities had achieved LEED certification** by the end of 2023.

Men and women have different physiological needs. Ensuring your workplace is female-friendly isn't just about being "nice"; it's about

being "normal," especially as the number of working mothers in tech increases. This process focuses on **integrating the workplace into the working mother's day.**

It's about enabling her to enjoy a morning coffee and healthy breakfast, providing peace of mind regarding her children, and ensuring their development while she's working. It includes offering basic services that streamline their post-work routine, minimizing commutes. Every commute and parking minute saved **translates to more quality time with loved ones**, enriching their lives and positively impacting their performance the next morning as they feel a renewed sense of purpose.



FOLLOWING THE US \$500 BILLION AI INVESTMENT

WHY NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO DEVELOP AI-POWERED EDTECH IN ARMENIA



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



**ALEXANDER
STORK**

Inventor of Interpersonal Skills
Lab and Simulation Pioneer



**HAROUT
TOPSACALIAN**

Investor and Consultant in
Education Technology



**SUREN
AZATYAN**

Head of Business Development
at Zealous



**ANINA
BOTH**

Angel Investor and Startup
Advisor



**BERGE
AYVAZIAN**

Senior Analyst and Consultant
at Wireless 20/20



**REKHA TAK
MAGON**

Co-Founder and Head of Education
at Boundless Life

FOLLOWING THE US \$500 BILLION AI INVESTMENT WHY NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO DEVELOP AI-POWERED EDTECH IN ARMENIA

The flutter of a butterfly's wing in Washington might set off a chain reaction building up to a distant storm in Yerevan. It's the core principle of the butterfly effect, which proves the sophisticated and unpredictable nature of complex systems. These effects observed in natural systems, as described by the theory, **are also present in tech ecosystems.**

A minor adjustment, a policy change in data privacy, or even a local power outage in one city can create a ripple effect, **escalating into a system-wide failure in another country.** Tech ecosystems around the world are interconnected, and even the smallest disturbance can ripple outwards. A single line of code written in Armenia might impact millions of users in the United States and vice versa. This is **the essence of what I would call the digital butterfly effect.**

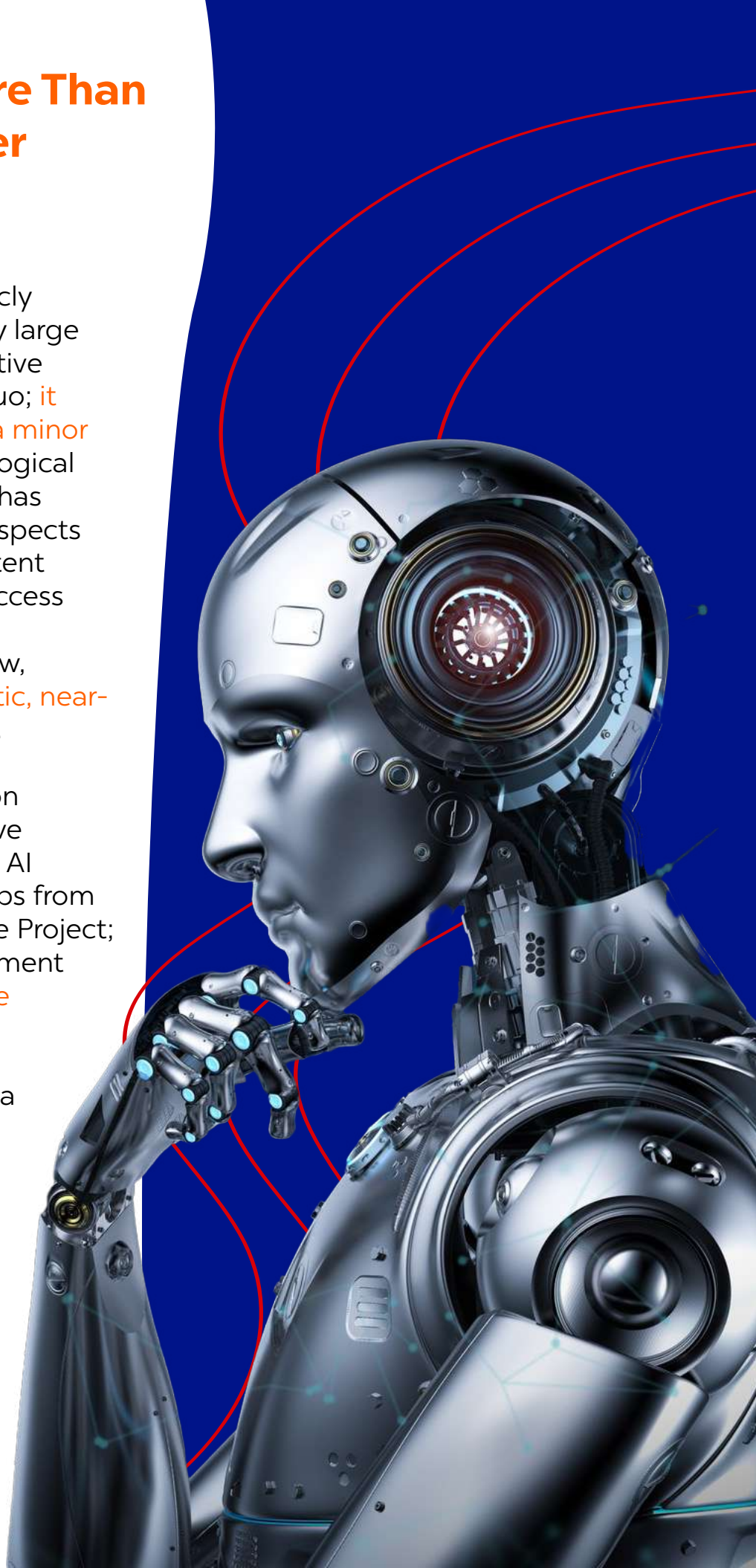
But what are the consequences when monumental actions disrupt the delicate balance of these tech ecosystems?



\$500 Billion Is More Than a Butterfly's Flutter

Over the past two years, the emergence of powerful, publicly accessible AI tools, particularly large language models and generative AI, has disrupted the status quo; **it was a major shift rather than a minor flutter**. Unlike gradual technological development, this influx of AI has instantly penetrated various aspects of our lives, from creative content generation and information access to workflow automation and personalization. It wasn't a slow, evolving change **but a dramatic, near-instantaneous transformation**.

Recently, the US administration announced an initiative to drive a \$500 billion investment into AI infrastructure, with partnerships from tech giants under the Stargate Project; this massive financial commitment would **create a powerful ripple effect throughout global tech ecosystems**. The American focus on building colossal data centers and the necessary power infrastructure would accelerate the physical foundation required for advanced AI. As a result, this expansion would intensify the global AI race, **creating a surge in demand for related technologies and services around the world**.



Who's Training Whom?

From my own point of view, **EdTech would be a prime beneficiary and a key driver** of this transformative change. Although it won't benefit directly from the recently announced US investment, it will be impacted by the outcome, and that's enough to make waves in the industry.

If you're wondering why EdTech in particular, the answer is quite simple. AI was born from the pursuit of knowledge but is now redefining the pursuit of knowledge itself. You can see it as a strange loop where the consequence becomes a factor in its own creation, almost as if time were folding back on itself. Thinking about that alone for a moment shows **the disruptive nature of the emerging system.**

The integration of artificial intelligence is **reshaping the foundation of traditional education.** Where once standardized curricula and uniform teaching methods were dominant, AI now

offers the promise of personalized learning journeys. This isn't a technological upgrade; it's a shift, moving from a system focused on delivering information to one centered on individual growth and understanding.

The ripple effects will extend far beyond the classroom, potentially reshaping societal understanding of education, the role of educators, and the very nature of knowledge acquisition. Just as a butterfly's wings can trigger a distant storm, the early "flutters" of AI in education are now causing a **transformative force that will redefine learning** for generations to come.

In a recent conversation with [Harout Topsacalian](#), an investor and consultant in education technology in the US, I asked him about the Stargate Project's impact on EdTech.

According to Mr. Topsacalian, developing such an extensive AI infrastructure should have a major impact on various sectors, including education. The advanced AI capabilities resulting from Stargate will likely **facilitate the creation of AI-driven educational tools**, personalized learning platforms, and/or intelligent tutoring systems. Just like COVID-19 resulted in expanding the capabilities and use of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), Zoom, etc., he imagines that such a huge investment in AI infrastructure will result in **changes in education, how it is delivered, and customization capabilities.**

Additionally, Mr. Topsacalian believes that if Stargate will create up to 100,000 new positions, as they forecast, in AI research and development, **schools will have to adapt their curricula and how they teach to meet that demand.**

Can Armenia Seize the Moment?

With the US plans to invest half a trillion dollars in AI, **what will be the impact on Armenia's tech industry** halfway around the world? How will this massive push influence AI development here? And if we factor in the EdTech revolution alongside this huge AI investment, how does Armenia fit into this global context? This country can build on the momentum just in time, but will the local tech ecosystem seize this opportunity?

The US investment plan isn't just about building colossal data centers; it's about setting a global standard. **It's a declaration that AI is becoming a fundamental infrastructure**, similar to electricity or the internet. The "flutter" is happening, and the "storm" of AI-driven education is on the horizon. For Armenia, this creates a unique window of opportunity.

Although Armenia is a relatively small country, it benefits from greater **flexibility in adapting to change compared to larger nations**. For example, Armenia has already begun integrating AI into its public schools and after-school education programs. The Armenian tech ecosystem is already mature in AI development, having been active in this field even before the current global surge of LLMs. Armenia has already taken a bold step in AI-powered EdTech, even **exporting its educational solutions to first-world capitals worldwide**. However, increased visibility and recognition of Armenia's tech ecosystem, especially its capabilities in AI EdTech and beyond, are what the country needs.

To start with, it's important to examine **the current state of AI education in Armenia**.

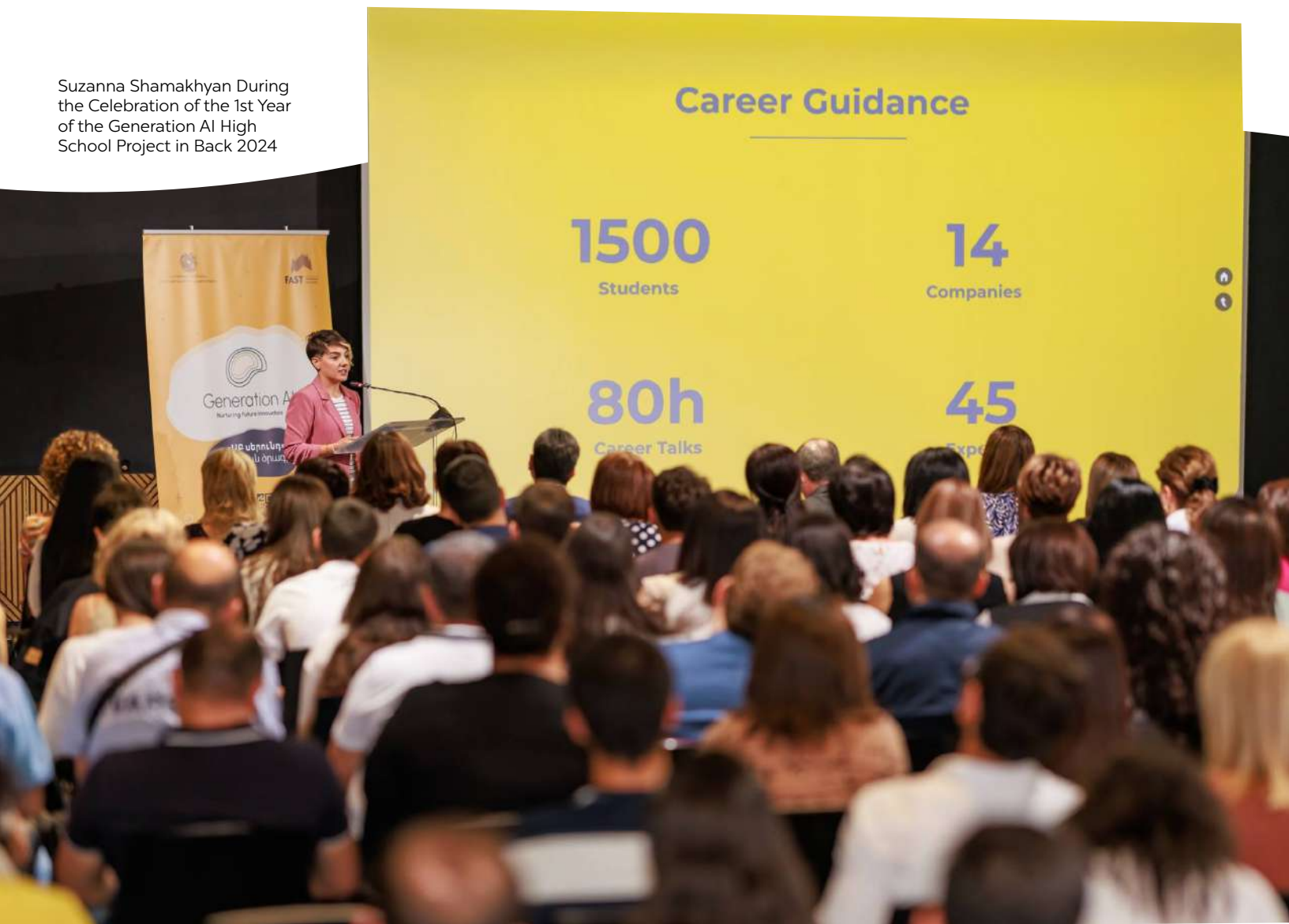


AI in Armenian Public High Schools

In response to the growing importance of Artificial Intelligence, the [Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology \(FAST\)](#) launched the Generation AI program in September 2023 to bring AI education to Armenian public schools in cooperation with the Armenian Ministry of Education. Initially, FAST implemented the program in 15 high schools targeting grades 10-12 with **a curriculum focused on mathematics, Python programming, and AI fundamentals**. FAST aims to expand the program to reach over 80% of public school students by 2026.

This program **doesn't simply teach students how to use AI tools** but its underlying principles, potential applications, and ethical considerations. On EVN Report's podcast, [Suzanna Shamakhyan](#), VP of Strategic Programming at FAST, explained their vision to create globally competitive AI solutions for the world from Armenia. They have developed Generation AI as **the first pillar in building a pipeline of AI talent in Armenia**.

Suzanna Shamakhyan During the Celebration of the 1st Year of the Generation AI High School Project in Back 2024



Introducing First World Capitals to Learning Paths

There is no way I can talk about advanced education in Armenia without mentioning TUMO, **which I believe is the pride of this country.** The [TUMO Center for Creative Technologies](#) is a leading educational program headquartered in Yerevan. It offers free-of-charge education in various fields, including animation, game development, filmmaking, web development, music, writing, programming, and AI. **Students use educational software to create their own learning paths,** adapting to their interests and pace.

In recent years, TUMO has established centers in various cities outside Armenia, such as Paris, Berlin, Tirana, and others, **bringing its unique educational model to a global audience.** This international expansion is facilitated through partnerships and agreements that can be considered a form of “franchising,” where the TUMO model is replicated in new locations. Simply put, **learning paths developed in Armenia are being adopted worldwide** to help people learn about various fields, including programming and AI.



Photo from TUMO Center for Creative Technologies



Photo from TUMO Center for Creative Technologies

It's worth mentioning that while working on this article, TUMO invited me to cover [ai/teens](#), a global conference by teenagers for teenagers. The conference organized by TUMO **follows the daylight through 16 cities and 12 languages**, from Japan to the U.S. West Coast. The goal is to inspire teenagers around the world about AI.

With that context in mind, it's now time to discuss the potential of Armenian developers in AI-based solutions.

Photo from ai_teens Conference in Yerevan



AI's Journey to Armenia

According to the latest [Armenian tech market report](#), in 2024, there were 1253 active tech companies in Armenia and 58,700 tech professionals.

Armenia has a strong tradition in mathematics and computer science, dating back to the Soviet era when it served as a capital of innovation for the entire union. This historical foundation contributed to the early adoption of data-driven technologies and AI techniques. In fact, Armenian tech teams were actively engaged in data analysis, machine learning, and pattern recognition well before “AI” became a popular term.

Last year, Armenia hosted the World Congress on Innovation and Technology (WCIT 2024) in Yerevan under the theme of “AI Beyond Limits Within Ethics.” During the conference, [Berge Ayvazian](#), Senior Analyst and Consultant at Wireless 20/20 in the US, caught my attention with his

plan to position Armenia as a global AI capital. He was so serious that he announced hiring one of the most brilliant marketing minds in Armenia for the campaign. Was it a data-driven decision or just a promotional strategy?

I contacted Mr. Ayvazian to find the answer. I wanted to know what made him so confident that Armenia could be a global AI capital. According to him, Armenia can emerge as a worldwide leader in AI, machine learning, and data science. He also shared how Armenians have prioritized the development of AI-enabled technologies and marketing and have been marketing their Leadership in AI, ML, and data sciences since Digitec 2019. Armenia has been growing AI companies for more than ten years, believing that AI's goal is not to replace humans but to make humans more capable.



According to Mr. Ayvazian, Armenia is now carving out its niche and is already on the path to becoming a global leader in the future of Generative AI, machine learning, and data sciences to innovate across diverse sectors – robotics, biotech, life sciences, analytics, voice and image processing and AI cloud. Armenia's ascent to global tech leadership and the role of AI in Armenia's economic transformation: The numbers speak volumes. In 2024 alone, 24 Armenian startups attracted \$216 million in investments. Companies like Picsart, ServiceTitan, SuperAnnotate, Cognaze, Krisp, Gecko Robotics, Renderforest, and Hercules AI are becoming synonymous with Armenian AI excellence.

Armenian AI companies recognize that the **source of information for GenAI doesn't have to be the open web.** With its headquarters in Silicon Valley, more than 50 members of the HerculesAI technical team work in their Armenian office. [HerculesAI](#) is focused on the delivery of enterprise-grade AI solutions to address the most pressing back-office operational challenges of the legal industry. They're creating highly targeted, well-trained GenAI algorithms linked to corporate data that have been carefully collected and analyzed to yield good results.

We should now start branding Armenia Certified Generative AI, said Mr. Ayvazian. According to him, this follows NVIDIA's establishment of a

research center in Armenia focused on accelerated computing and AI. Additionally, the National Supercomputer Center of Armenia, named after Charles Aznavour, has opened in Engineering City. It features 24,500 cores connected by high-speed channels, with a 1 PETAFLOP capacity, making it the **first AI-enabled supercomputer in the EU's Eastern Partnership countries.** Furthermore, the Cloud Center of Intelligent Computing, dedicated to AI research, is planned to open at Yerevan State University in 2025.

Building AI-EdTech in Armenia

I was checking my LinkedIn feed a few months ago when a comment by [Alexander Stork](#), an inventor and simulation pioneer from Switzerland, stopped me! He mentioned that **an Armenian engineering partner has developed their gamified training simulation**, which is also used as a human factors training instrument for astronauts in the Astronaut Training Center at ESA in Cologne.

I couldn't help but reach out to Mr. Stork to learn more about their solution and Armenian partner. He explained that many years ago, he invented the [Interpersonal Skills Lab](#), **a computer-based, real-time multiplayer simulation** used to train competencies for communication, leadership, and collaboration. It was once developed for training pilots and astronauts and is now also used for training any kind of people for high-performance collaboration. Mr. Stork shared that [Zealous Tech](#) in Armenia, formerly Instigate Mobile, has been handling their software development for over ten years. Given that, I knew without a doubt whom I should call.

I had a very long conversation with [Suren Azatyan](#), head of business development at Zealous, about their EdTech development and **the integration of AI in their educational solutions**. I was surprised to discover the level of their software engineering work, including collaborations with global industry giants, from automotive to entertainment and more.

Zealous Tech at Digitec
2024 in Yerevan, Armenia



Mr. Azatyan told me about a US client who wanted **an online AI-based proctoring solution to assist proctors in their daily work**, increasing their capacity and ensuring consistency over evaluations. The EdTech they've developed covers everything from digital identification and onboarding to **AI-assisted monitoring during examinations**.

Another project for the US market was an AI-assisted candidate evaluation that **uses AI and automation to reduce costs**. According to him, the solution scans and extracts information from diplomas and related documents, matches the extracted information to required subjects (considering specific form/license), generates a draft evaluation with the confidence level, and **incorporates system feedback into the AI model for continuous training**.

He also shared other interesting educational solutions they've developed, like an **AI co-pilot using Generative AI** with Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG), which ingested user requirements and customized exam generation based on difficulty, question types, and wrong answers.

The discussion about their portfolio in AI-powered EdTech went on and on. I learned about tens of projects for the international market, and suddenly, the debate I raised earlier about **the role Armenia could play in this industry had become proofread by example**. Another interesting point was that many of Zealous's AI-EdTech projects were developed years before the recent LLM surge. As noted, Armenian tech professionals **have been developing AI-based solutions for years**.

Developing AI-powered EdTech presents an opportunity for the Armenian tech ecosystem.

Mathew Zein with Suren Azatyan, Head of Business Development at Zealous



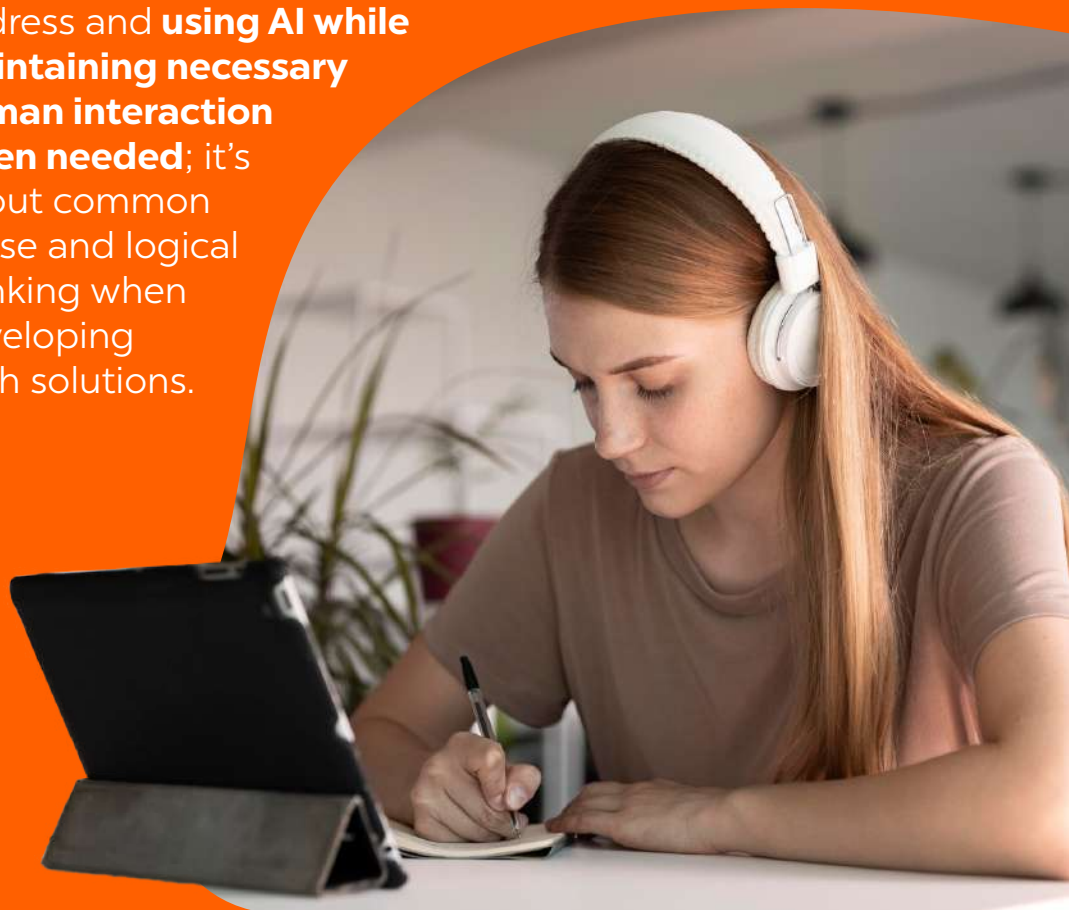
Is This an Opportunity for Armenia?

Armenian tech companies have a proven track record of delivering high-quality AI and educational solutions for international clients. Just thinking of TUMO's success in developing a learning path for early education is enough to be confident of the country's potential in this particular sector.

In a recent conversation with [Anina Botha](#), an angel investor and startup advisor from South Africa currently residing in Georgia, I asked about AI-powered Edtech from an investor's perspective.

According to Ms. Botha, **the best EdTech products don't just automate education**; they improve how people interact with learning tools. What really attracts investors isn't AI itself but engagement, trust, and real-world adoption where students, teachers, and institutions actually use the product. She explained how AI isn't what makes an EdTech startup investable; it's just a tool.

AI can help EdTech scale and make educators more efficient, but **the real value is in how well a product supports actual learning behaviors**. Sometimes AI makes sense, sometimes a hybrid model works better, and sometimes the best solution is purely human-driven. It was clear from her words that developing EdTech isn't just about writing code; it's about deeply understanding the problems these solutions address and **using AI while maintaining necessary human interaction when needed**; it's about common sense and logical thinking when developing such solutions.



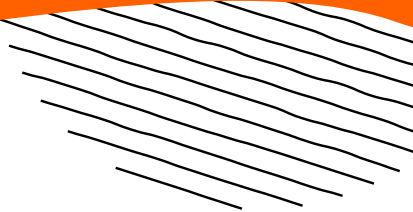
Ms. Botha continued that what excites her about AI in EdTech isn't automation but adaptive, borderless learning. With more families living location-independent lives and education becoming more global, the best solutions will create flexible, personalized experiences that fit different lifestyles and learning needs. That's where the real opportunity is!

Location independence presents an opportunity for the Armenian tech sector, particularly given the rapid growth of digital nomads and remote workers seeking location-independent education for their children. This opens doors for tailored solutions serving diverse backgrounds. It's a relatively new market with a lot of potential.

[Boundless Life](#) offers a program for digital nomad families seeking location-independent living experiences, including a forward-thinking educational system for children. I reached out to [Rekha Tak Magon](#), co-founder and head of education at Boundless Life, to ask about the integration of AI in their

EdTech solution for this segment of learners. She explained how they always explore ways to integrate technology to enhance every aspect of education. As a founder, she believes the future belongs to those who can adapt, think critically, and **leverage technology as a springboard rather than a crutch**.

Ms. Tak Magon continued: We are committed to the thoughtful and intentional use of technology in the classroom, which is why we were **proud to introduce an AI-powered math program for our older students** last year—designed to foster confidence, critical thinking, and empowerment. AI-powered educational technology is innovative and complements our programs. It makes learning and teaching more flexible and personalized while also keeping our students globally connected. **Education is no longer tied to one location**; students can take their learning with them wherever they go, seamlessly adapting to their mobile lifestyle.



Like it or not, the digital butterfly effect is becoming a reality for interconnected tech ecosystems worldwide. With the upcoming US investment and the rapid development of AI solutions globally, **education as we know it is about to change once and for all**. As a result, the demand for new, adaptive EdTech powered by AI will become a worldwide necessity. Armenia can seize this moment to become a hub for AI-EdTech with the right positioning.

A GLOBAL DATA PROTECTION PERSPECTIVE

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



**MARTA
HOVANESIAN**

CO-FOUNDER OF NOR LAW

A GLOBAL DATA PROTECTION PERSPECTIVE

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



When Mathew contacted me about contributing this series of articles to Life in Armenia, I had to start from the intersection of global reach and privacy compliance, especially for tech companies eyeing the European market.

I am a Dutch qualified privacy & data protection attorney for innovative tech companies. I've spent six years at American Big Law advising the world's biggest companies on all areas of data protection. Recently, I co-founded Nor Law to make my knowledge and experience accessible to the clients I care most about: Armenian tech companies. I focus my practice on working with start-ups and scale-ups seeking to develop privacy compliance strategies for their innovative data driven products and services. I am passionate about and dedicated to using my skills to help the Armenian tech ecosystem thrive.

We live in a time when data is gold, and you want to have as much data as possible. You need it to understand how your product is used, what can be improved, and what you need to phase out. You collect as much data as you can, just in case you may need it in the future for other purposes. You may also want to use the collected data to train an AI.

Data protection regulations are likely the last thing on your mind.

You're just trying to develop an amazing product. However, data protection doesn't have to be a roadblock. Rather, it can help you collect data with intent, increase the quality of data (and therefore its usefulness), and prepare your product for global success.

What is Personal Data?

It may seem like data protection is a European thing, but the truth is that most countries in the world have data protection regulations. Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is one of the most stringent frameworks, but many other countries have since mirrored their own laws to resemble the GDPR (including many U.S. state laws).

The GDPR and other **privacy laws** apply to “personal data” or “personal information” – any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. This definition of personal data entails that (1) data can be linked to an individual by reason of its content, purpose, or effect, and (2) the individual

can be identified, or re-identified, by means that are reasonably likely^[1] to be used by the relevant company. **The threshold for data not to be considered personal data is rather high.** For example, it has been decided in case law that IP addresses can also be considered personal data.



Privacy Principles

Most data protection laws agree on the core principles that need to be taken into account when collecting and further processing personal data. These privacy principles include purpose limitation, data minimization, retention limitation, security, fairness, transparency, lawfulness, accuracy, accountability, and confidentiality.

The GDPR requires that companies that develop products take these privacy principles into account in the design and default settings of

their product. These are the “privacy by design” and “privacy by default” concepts of the GDPR.

Privacy by Design means that you design a product in the most privacy preserving manner

Privacy by Default means that you use the most privacy-friendly setting as the standard/default in your product

Implementing privacy-by-design and privacy-by-default measures into your product will set you up for success. Not only will your product comply with data protection regulations and be ready

to scale globally, but your **consumers will trust you with their personal data.**

You’ll be able to pitch your product to investors with confidence, knowing that investing in your business won’t expose them to regulatory fines. And you’ll be able to contract with European customers, knowing that you can meet their contractual data protection demands.

How you implement the privacy principles will depend on your specific product, but we offer a checklist below to guide you.



Privacy Principles



Purpose Limitation

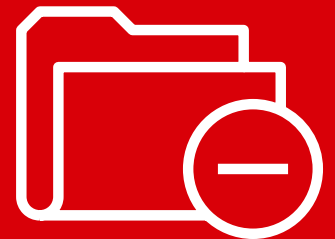
Only process personal data for the purposes for which it was collected.

- When developing your product, consider your points of data collection and the associated data flows. What is the purpose of the collection of personal data? Do you need it for any additional purposes?
- Identify and document the various purposes for processing the collected personal data (this can include creating analytical insights or training an AI model).
- Limit further use of personal data that you have not considered as part of this exercise.

Data Minimization

Only collect the personal data that is necessary for the identified purposes.

- Consider whether you can achieve the same purpose with less or less sensitive personal data.



Security

Implement appropriate security measures to protect personal data. This includes the requirement to pseudonymize personal data where appropriate.

Consider whether you can achieve the same purpose with pseudonymized or key-coded data (in particular when it comes to creating insights for product development or training a large language model).



Retention Limitation

Do not retain personal data for longer than is necessary for the identified purposes.

- Store the personal data for the shortest period of time that you need it for. Consider whether partial deletion of personal data is possible (for example, when you don't need the whole set for your identified purposes but only parts of the records).

Fairness

Consider the individual's interests and the impact of the processing on the individual's privacy. Balance this interest against your own interests and objectives.

- You will notice that if you implement the other privacy principles, you will automatically also limit the impact on the individual's privacy. This balancing test will be more likely to work out in your favor.



Accuracy

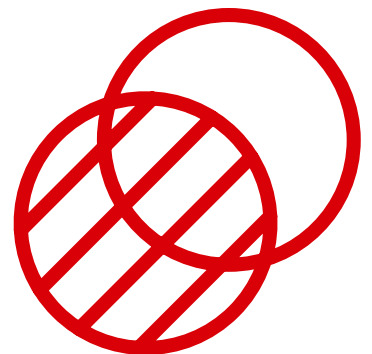
Ensure that the personal data that you collect and use is accurate.

- Enable individuals to correct or update their personal data where appropriate, for example, through self-service options.
- Ensure that personal data remains up-to-date and accurate by implementing appropriate processes.

Transparency

Explain what personal data you collect and how you use it in a transparent manner to individuals.

- Make sure your privacy policy is easy to find and the content is understandable to your audience.
- Individuals do not have to agree with your privacy policy or check a box. They simply have to be presented with it.





Confidentiality

Ensure that people have access to personal data on a need-to-know basis.

- Set granular access rights to personal data for specific (groups of) persons.

Lawfulness

Ensure you have a legal basis for the processing of personal data.

- Consider which legal basis is appropriate for your identified purposes of processing. This is not always consent (remember that consent can always be withdrawn, and you'll need to stop processing the personal data in that case).

- The GDPR identifies six different legal bases (they are listed in Article 6 of the GDPR). You'll be more likely to be able to identify an appropriate legal basis if you've implemented the privacy principles discussed above.



Note that “lawfulness” is mentioned last because it is a requirement for “controllers” only. If you are a mere service provider (i.e., “processor”) that processes personal data on behalf of (and upon the instructions of) another party (i.e., your customer), then it will be the responsibility of your customer to ensure that they have a legal basis. We will explore the difference between controller and processor, the various legal bases for processing, and other requirements under the GDPR in a follow-up article.

Please feel free to reach out to [Nor Law](#) if you'd like to know more about how data protection regulations may affect your business.

[1] Reidentification is not considered to be “reasonably likely” if it is prohibited by law or is practically impossible because it requires a disproportionate effort in terms of time, cost, and manpower.





50

ANGELS

500+

JOBS CREATED

127

BENEFICIARIES

WITH 7 EDUCATIONAL
PROJECTS

33

STARTUPS

\$180M+

CUMULATIVE
VALUATION OF
THE PORTFOLIO
STARTUPS

\$4M+

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THE ART OF INTERMODAL LOGISTICS

ARMENIA LAUNCHES AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS EXPO AND SUMMIT FOR THE FIRST TIME

in



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

in



INTERVIEWING

**CRISTINA
YERMEYAN**

Co-Founder of e-Logi Fest25

in



**SHUSHAN
MARGARYAN**

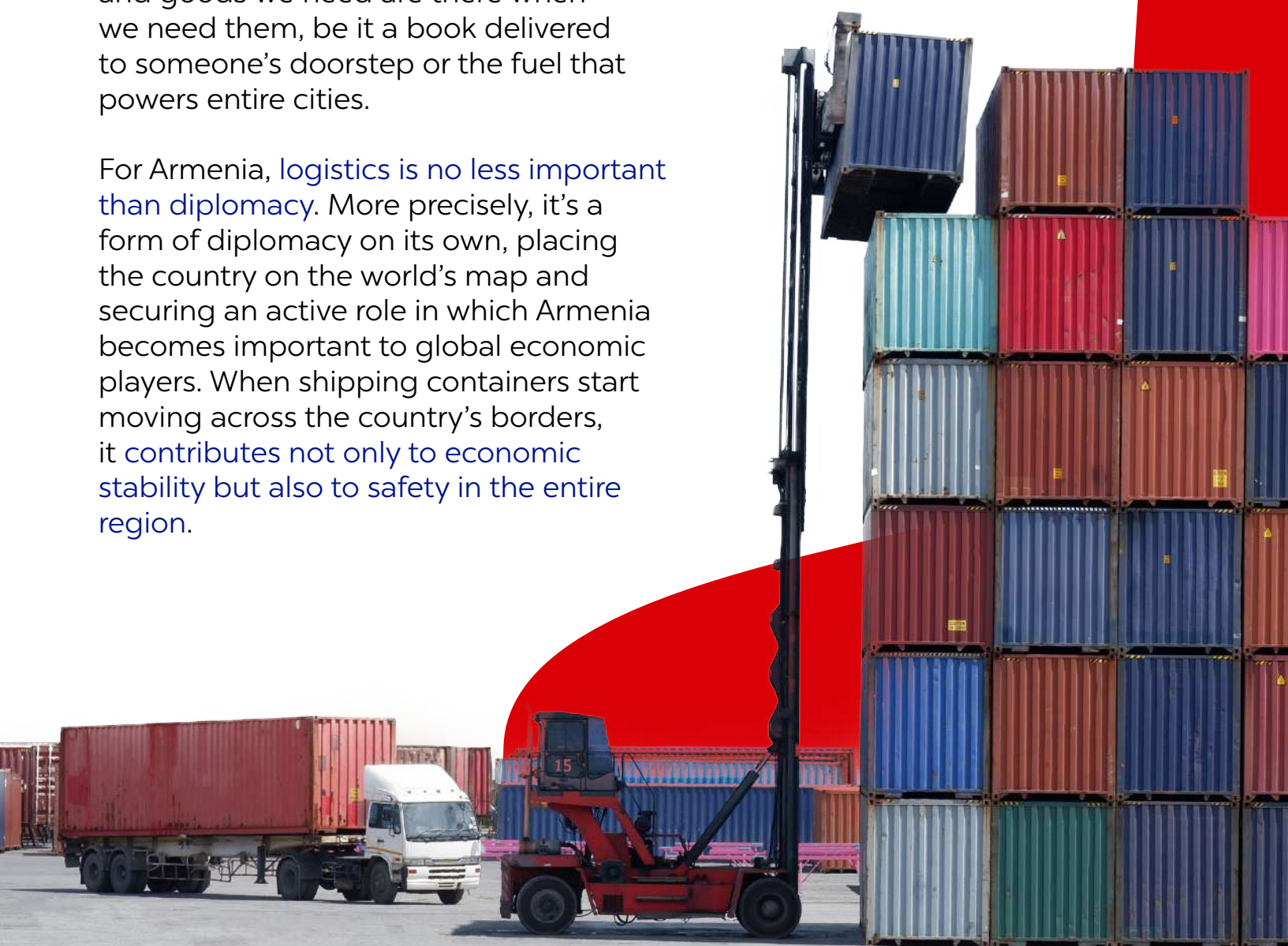
Co-Founder of e-Logi Fest25



THE ART OF INTERMODAL LOGISTICS ARMENIA LAUNCHES AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS EXPO AND SUMMIT FOR THE FIRST TIME

Everything we touch, everything we use, and [everything that makes our lives tick depends on logistics routes](#). It's this massive, insane, global network that's constantly humming and shifting, making sure all the materials, supplies, and goods we need are there when we need them, be it a book delivered to someone's doorstep or the fuel that powers entire cities.

For Armenia, [logistics is no less important than diplomacy](#). More precisely, it's a form of diplomacy on its own, placing the country on the world's map and securing an active role in which Armenia becomes important to global economic players. When shipping containers start moving across the country's borders, it [contributes not only to economic stability but also to safety in the entire region](#).



Singapore, Panama, and other nations have capitalized on their logistical advantages to build strategic partnerships.

Armenia has the potential to emulate this success and prove that a “safe land bridge” in a relatively unstable geopolitical region is a unique competitive edge; this small country can **mitigate the region’s instability through economic interdependence.**

What initially appears to be a logistical disadvantage in the country’s geographical location can be transformed into a strategic asset. Modern logistics solutions can mitigate the impact of geographical constraints, **turning Armenia into a vital transit point connecting markets** in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

It’s Happening, This Time In Armenia!

There is no magic spell to change the fact that [Armenia doesn’t play an active role in the current global logistics sector](#). This industry necessitates massive investments in infrastructure, including roads, railways, and warehousing facilities. Nevertheless, that doesn’t mean there’s no room for action.

Last year, I met [Cristina Yeremyan](#) and [Shushan Margaryan](#) when they approached me with information about their plans to organize a logistics expo in the country. The topic was so interesting that we engaged in hours of discussion, leading to a meeting at the [Matenadaran](#) to research the history of Armenian trade and the [logistics routes Armenians controlled in the past](#).



In my previous magazine issue, I analyzed the logistics infrastructure for regional e-commerce in Armenia. I mentioned an upcoming expo, [e-Logi Fest25 2025](#), which will take place in Yerevan for the first time in about two months from now (May 30-June 1).



This isn't about moving goods; it's about **architecting a strategic pivot in complex geopolitical circumstances.**



Cristina Yeremyan

Co-Founder of e-Logi Fest25

Logistics isn't just about movement; it's about creating economic pathways. We're building bridges, not just routes."



A green and yellow toy truck is positioned on a map of Central Europe, specifically over the region of Germany and Poland. The map shows major cities like Würzburg, Heilbronn, and Stuttgart, as well as various roads and geographical features. The truck is oriented towards the bottom left of the frame.

Armenia is Capable and Willing

A logistics expo in Armenia in 2025 extends far beyond a simple trade show. It's a clear signal to regional and global players that [Armenia is serious about its intentions in the logistics sector](#) and actively pursuing strategic partnerships and international support to move forward. It's a calculated move to [position Armenia as a viable and secure transit hub](#).

The level of international interest in e-Logi Fest25 over the past few months is the only proof I have for my writing. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) funding of the expo alone [speaks volumes about international belief in the country's potential](#).

Major logistics companies, including Yandex Go, FedEx, Joom, and Georgian Post, will exhibit. [Many other local, regional, and international service providers](#), such as Mira Trans, DGS Systems, TEX, Ozon, ATI.SU, Whatnext4u, TM GROUP, Transimpex, Garant Logistics, Yan Logistics, Safe Logistics, Prime Logistics, CDEK Armenia, and Brokus will also participate.

Industry leaders and expert speakers from around the world are traveling to Armenia to discuss the latest logistics trends. [The level of engagement has exceeded expectations](#).

In Armenia, the expo has support from several diplomatic missions, including the embassies of Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Iran, and the United States. Additionally, leading international associations have also contributed to the expo's development, such as the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the European Business Association (EBA), the American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia (AmCham), and the Armenian Logistics Association. e-Logi Fest25 will also host the [GIZ roundtable on the Authorized Economic Operator \(AEO\) Program](#) as part of the business forum.

The Tech Industry Parallel

I have always argued the importance of logistics for Armenia and even named it the “tech industry parallel” in many discussions. If you think about it for a second, just a decade ago, no one knew about Armenia’s tech talent; however, [the tech industry transformed the country’s image a few years ago](#) and showed the world its potential for innovation and skilled labor.

Similarly, a well-managed, internationally-supported logistics sector can do the same and even more. It can attract foreign investment, create high-paying jobs, and [position Armenia as a modern, dynamic economy](#). Beyond attracting foreign investment, a strong logistics sector can diversify Armenia’s economy, reducing its reliance on specific industries or external aid.

In fact, the convergence of logistics and technology presents a unique opportunity for Armenia, creating a synergy that could benefit the nation on multiple fronts. This symbiotic relationship offers Armenia a “win-win” scenario.

The logistics sector gains access to an advanced tech ecosystem that enhances its operations and competitiveness, while the tech sector finds a new and expanding market for its solutions.





Cristina Yeremyan

Co-Founder of
e-Logi Fest25

We plan to take this hackathon with the drone delivery solution abroad for upcoming years of the event.”

The two sectors can cooperate in unlimited

ways. The tech industry offers logistics a variety of products, including mapping solutions, delivery and warehouse management systems, and tailored CRM systems. Robotics and automation solutions can help with fulfillment, warehouses, sorting centers, lockers, and other applications. AI-powered route optimization, predictive analytics, and demand forecasting can enhance efficiency and reduce costs. Machine learning can also detect anomalies and prevent disruptions in the supply chain.

Drone delivery has recently started to transform the logistics and transportation industry. For this reason, e-Logi Fest25 will feature a Drone Delivery Hackathon designed to showcase the intersection of technology and logistics. This event will assemble leading teams from major companies to present **innovative software and hardware solutions tailored to drone delivery.**

The event is expected to draw approximately 100 participants. They will face three distinct challenges, each designed to assess their technical proficiency, creative ingenuity, and practical problem-solving skills. **A panel of globally recognized experts will evaluate the proposed solutions,** and the winning teams will be awarded significant prizes.

It is worth mentioning that in recent years, there has been significant interest in developing drone delivery solutions and a regulatory framework in Armenia. This hackathon has the potential to accelerate the industry's development in the country and the entire region.



Armenian Apples

If you've spent time in Armenia, you've probably noticed that apples rot quickly, compared to the US, where they stay fresh on a shelf for weeks. This applies to lots of seasonal Armenian fruits as well. If you understand why, you'll see Armenia's huge potential in agriculture.

Armenia has fertile lands and a climate suitable for producing high-quality agricultural organic products. One of the primary obstacles is the need for modernization within the agricultural sector itself and, of course, the availability of reliable logistics routes that facilitate the rapid transport of local and international agricultural products, in all their forms, across borders, and to neighboring markets.



By optimizing its agricultural production and logistics, Armenia could become a reliable food supplier to its neighboring nations.

This would involve establishing cross-border trade agreements, improving transportation infrastructure, and implementing efficient food storage and distribution systems.

Organizations like the World Food Programme have already been active in Armenia to improve food security and facilitate food distribution logistics. Once again, this industry proves to be of utmost importance for Armenia!



An Opportunity To Start Green And Clean

Armenia's position as a nation currently developing its logistics sector presents a unique advantage. Unlike countries with established, often environmentally detrimental logistics infrastructures, [Armenia has the opportunity to integrate sustainable practices from the start.](#)

This “clean slate” scenario allows for implementing modern green technologies and strategies in infrastructure development, transportation, and supply chain management. Now add that [Armenia will host the 17th Conference of the Parties \(COP17\)](#) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2026, placing the nation under the international spotlight.

It is also worth noting that the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative that Armenia has been working on has a large focus on [regional infrastructure and sustainable economic cooperation](#). So, hosting the COP17 aligns well with this ongoing work.

The [true test lies in tangible infrastructure development](#). The existing rail network, while functional, requires much modernization. Electrification, double-tracking, and integration with international rail standards are a must. It is important to develop intermodal hubs and integrate rail, road, and air transport. These hubs should have modern warehousing, customs facilities, and cold chain infrastructure. [Aligning logistics development with COP17 goals](#) demonstrates Armenia's commitment to biodiversity conservation.

“

Shushan Margaryan

Co-Founder of e-Logi Fest25

The future of logistics is in smart, sustainable solutions. Armenia has the unique opportunity to build that future from the ground up.”

Starting anything takes bravery. Two Armenian ladies enthusiastic about logistics showed that courage by launching an international expo in Armenia [with the goal of seeing concrete results down the line](#). Their plans won't turn Armenia into a logistics hub overnight but it's one step on the right path for sure.

I titled my article, The Art of Intermodal Logistics because that's what logistics is; it's the art of keeping the world moving. It's the art of bringing order to disorder, of creating a flow where there could easily be gridlock. If Armenia succeeds in mastering this art, [it will change the face of this nation](#).



TECH EVENTS

with

ARTAK N. G.



TECH BLOGGER

| | | |
|---------------|---|--|
| APRIL 1 | Tech Academy opening | |
| APRIL 1 | AI in marketing | |
| APRIL 2-3 | Green Conference | |
| APRIL 3 | Doing Digital Forum | |
| APRIL 5 | Build with AI | |
| APRIL 5 | Bitget Web3 platform community meetup | |
| APRIL 12 | DigiCode competition at AUA 10:00-18:00 | |
| APRIL 16 - 19 | Fintech360 | |
| APRIL 17 | Armenian Engineering Evolution | |

FINDING A CALLING IN ARMENIA

AN EXPAT WOMAN'S JOURNEY WITH ARMENIAN HOCKEY

in



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



in



INTERVIEWING

**NATALIA
KAZANTSEVA**

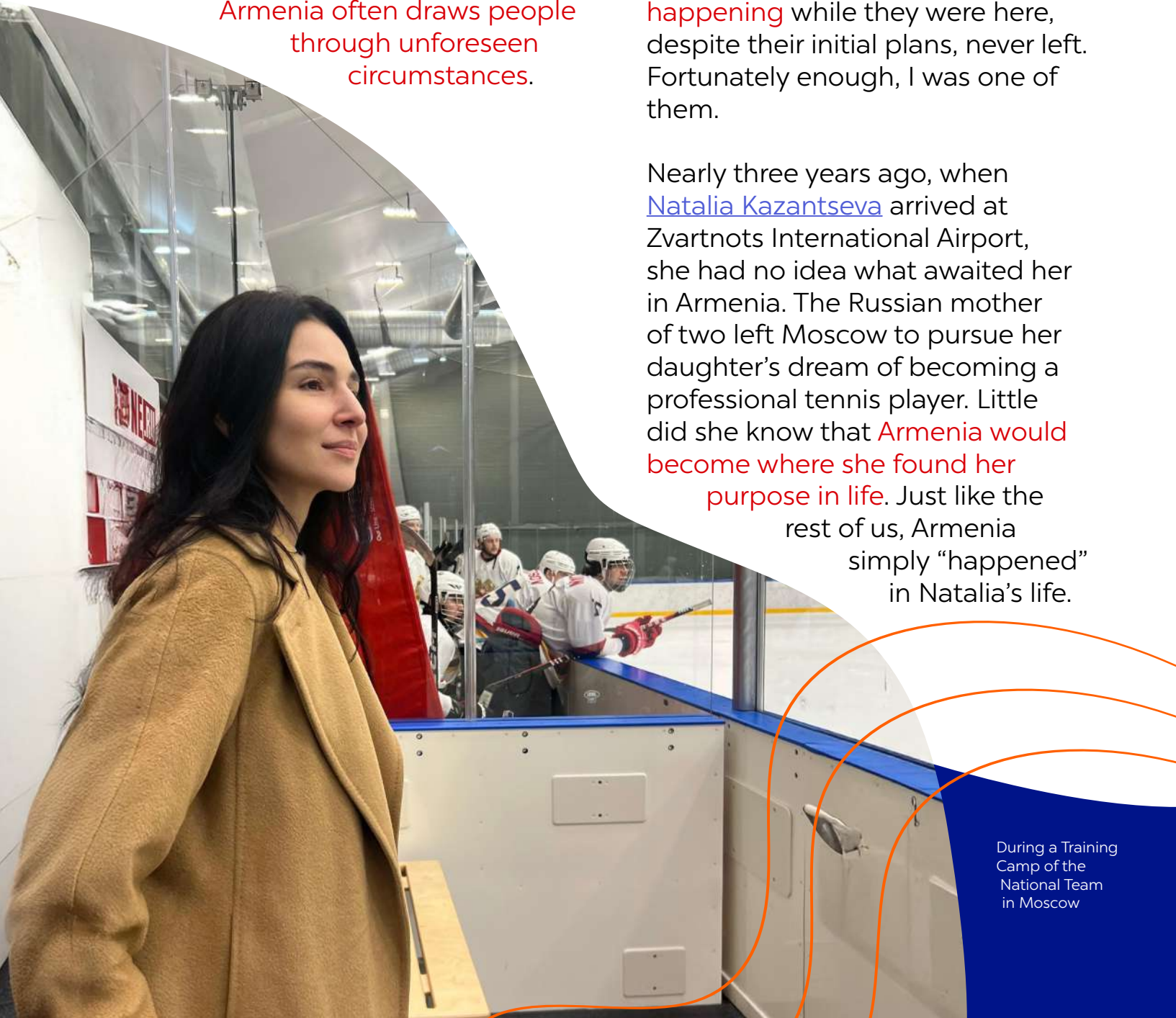
HEAD OF LEGAL, MEMBER OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
ARMENIAN HOCKEY LEAGUE

FINDING A CALLING IN ARMENIA AN EXPAT WOMAN'S JOURNEY WITH ARMENIAN HOCKEY

Sometimes, we write the most important chapters of our lives in the places we least expect, and Armenia, of all places, is probably the country you **least expect when planning where to spend years of your life**, especially if you have no roots here! Unlike typical expat destinations driven by economic opportunities or pre-planned career moves, **Armenia often draws people through unforeseen circumstances.**

Many expats here did not choose Armenia to be their second home! **Armenia simply “happened” in their lives for some reason**, and they ended up staying here for years. As John Lennon put it, “Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans.” Those **lucky enough to realize life was happening** while they were here, despite their initial plans, never left. Fortunately enough, I was one of them.

Nearly three years ago, when [Natalia Kazantseva](#) arrived at Zvartnots International Airport, she had no idea what awaited her in Armenia. The Russian mother of two left Moscow to pursue her daughter's dream of becoming a professional tennis player. Little did she know that **Armenia would become where she found her purpose in life**. Just like the rest of us, Armenia simply “happened” in Natalia's life.



During a Training
Camp of the
National Team
in Moscow

In brief, **Natalia went from knowing nothing about hockey** to playing a key role in building the Armenian Hockey League and serving on its board of directors. Last year, she visited the NHL's offices in the United States and is now among the organizing team for hosting the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championship Division IV in Armenia. Just two years ago, she was a new arrival in the country, unfamiliar with the game. Now, she's **one of the first names to come up in a conversation about hockey in Armenia.**

Her calm and balanced tone makes the story seem like it was all sunshine and roses. But once she gets into the details, you realize how tough it truly was for a woman to have an impact in a male-dominated sport in a new country where she knew no one. So, when you ask the big “why?” she simply says, “I found myself.”

In the Feb 2024 issue of Life in Armenia, I wrote the story of founding the Armenian Hockey League. It was my first meeting with Natalia, who shared the story of how the successful work of the Armenian Hockey League (AHL) led to its recognition by the Armenian Ice Hockey Federation and the beginning of their cooperation. This collaboration resulted in the formation of Armenia's national team, its upcoming participation in the IIHF World Championship this April, and—moreover—securing the right to host the tournament in Yerevan.

This article, however, moves beyond the Armenian Hockey League, which I've already covered. Instead, it focuses on female ambition and pursuing purpose in Armenia, with Natalia's story being the perfect example.

Small countries like Armenia offer increased accessibility to key decision-makers and resources and a faster path to impact. Unlike large nations like the US or Russia, where change takes time, focused effort here can have results more quickly. **In this environment, determination can translate into progress,** as the channels for influence and action are more available.



**Natalia's life in Armenia
opened doors for her!**

It led to her meeting Bill Daly, deputy commissioner and chief legal officer of the NHL in the US, and Frank Gonzalez, president of The Royal Spanish Ice Sports Federation, in Barcelona.

As the head of legal at the Armenian Hockey League, Natalia played an important role in **the development of hockey in Armenia and its integration into international sports standards**. One of the most important steps was the official recognition of the domestic championship, which required obtaining recognition from the Armenian Ice Hockey Federation. This was a true milestone in ensuring that the organization of sporting events, matchdays, and tournaments complied with international requirements.

For Armenian national team players to participate in international competitions, they must go through **a 16-month eligibility process in accordance with IIHF regulations**. This process involves extensive documentation, including integrating players into the domestic championship system. It is important to note that this requires competent legal support, ensuring that all participants have the legal right to compete and perform internationally.

In addition, much attention is paid to the proper structuring of the sports infrastructure. For clubs to operate and participate in matches, it is essential that each club is registered as a legal entity, which gives them the right to sign contracts with players and participate in the League. This approach not only ensures the legal security of clubs and players but also allows for effective functioning within the domestic sports ecosystem.

Together with
The Head Coach
of the Armenian
Diaspora Hockey
Team



Together with The Deputy Commissioner and Chief Legal Officer of the NHL, Bill Daly, in the US



All these legal aspects not only contribute to the growth of hockey within the country but also provide a solid foundation for Armenia's entry into the international sports arena.

Obtaining the right to host the World Championship in Yerevan is not the pinnacle of success but rather an opportunity to draw attention both within the country and internationally. This attention is important for the future survival of hockey, which remains one of the best sports for children.

Moving to Armenia isn't just about changing locations; it's about changing how you see the world. It was the last place Natalia thought she'd live for years, but, like the rest of us, **she wrote a new chapter of her life here.**



Together with The President of The Royal Spanish Ice Sports Federation, Frank Gonzalez, in Barcelona

“Imagine waking up in a new place, sipping coffee at a local café, and working on your terms.

This isn't just an idea, it's what I help people achieve. As the founder of Tech Nomads, my vision is simple: empower entrepreneurs to build AI-powered micro startups that open new opportunities and independence.

Armenia is quickly becoming a key destination for digital professionals. With its affordable living, rich culture, and innovation-friendly environment, it's the perfect place to launch and scale your business. Here, the barriers to entrepreneurship are lower, and the opportunities are endless. I regularly showcase how to create AI-powered SaaS products quickly, proving that building something valuable doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming.

The opportunities are here, and Armenia is the perfect backdrop to make your digital dreams a reality. The question is, are you ready to take the leap?”



Timothée Bacher

Founder, Tech Nomads | AI Micro
Startup Consultant



SHE CODES, SHE LEADS, SHE STUNS

CONFESSIONS OF AN ARMENIAN HAIRDRESSER ABOUT ARMENIAN WOMEN IN TECH



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



INTERVIEWING

**SHANT
KASBARIAN**

FOUNDER OF STYLED BY SHANT



SHE CODES, SHE LEADS, SHE STUNS CONFESSIONS OF AN ARMENIAN HAIRDRESSER ABOUT ARMENIAN WOMEN IN TECH

As an English journalist and writer in Armenia, I've entered tens of tech offices. One thing I have always noticed and admired is the female power and the role women play in the Armenian technology market. I can't recall a time when I visited an office from the tech industry without spotting high-level female developers and senior managers.

Armenian tech companies stand out for their **strong female representation in leadership and technical roles**. More precisely, I've recently learned that Armenia ranks among the top countries globally for the ratio of women in the tech industry, reaching approximately 40%, nearly double the common average of 20%. If you think about it for a minute, this isn't just a matter of filling quotas; it **reflects a societal understanding of women's intellectual capabilities** and a historical context that has often required women to step up and take on significant roles.



It's promising and joyful that **Armenian women have escalated their skills and knowledge** to increase their contribution and participate in positions dominated mainly by men worldwide. Women here are sophisticated, highly educated, hard-working, and confidently charming.

Before moving on, I would like to highlight the words “confidently charming.” Do you understand the reality behind those words? If you haven’t experienced the streets of Yerevan early in the morning, as the tech scene awakens, you’re missing the point. You’ll be surprised by [the elegance and style of working women in Armenia](#), particularly in Yerevan’s tech and corporate sectors, during the morning. Women here look and dress their best from the start of the day. However, this beauty aspect extends beyond mere aesthetic appeal. It [speaks to a self-assuredness](#) that comes from competence and recognition.

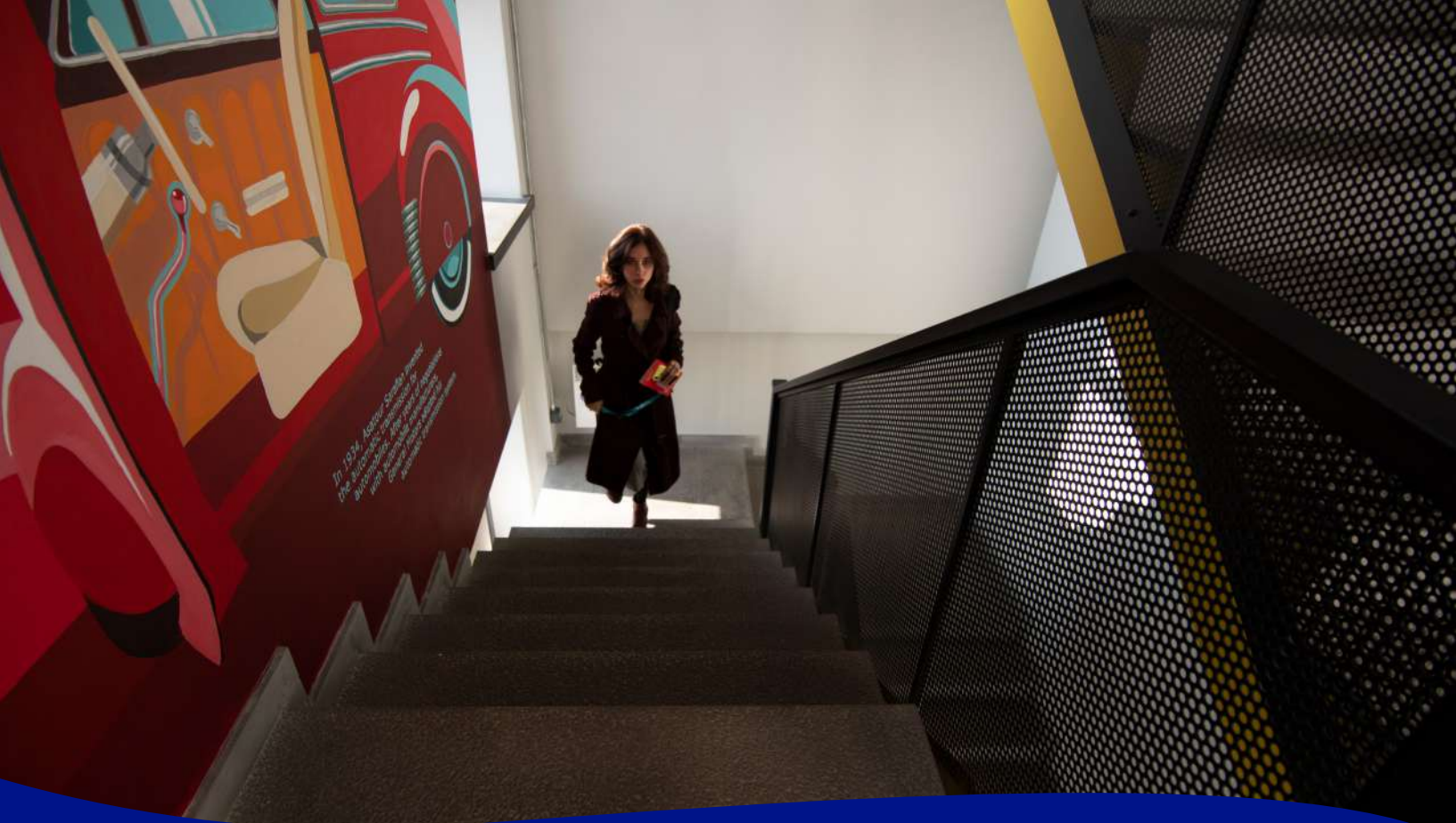


Dr. Vanessa Pozzali

Co-founder of
Synthosys

We observed that Armenians place significant emphasis on appearance and professionalism.”

Every time my friends from Europe visit, they’re always commenting on how beautiful the working women in Yerevan look in the mornings. And after eight years here, I can’t argue with them. [I know for sure it’s not the same everywhere](#). While it could be cultural, I think this is a nice Armenian trait. In many Western cultures, the emphasis on work-life balance or a more casual workplace environment can sometimes lead to a [less formal approach to professional presentation](#). In Armenia, however, there’s a sense that professionalism and personal style are not mutually exclusive. This creates a unique atmosphere in Yerevan’s tech scene, where [innovation is coupled with a sense of refined elegance](#).



“

Nadia Ait

CEO & Co-founder of Body Language Academy by Joe Navarro

At the event, I was surrounded mostly by women in elegant business suits and knee-length skirts. I find that men and especially women in Armenia value being well-dressed and well-groomed. So much so that the audience pictures sometimes looked like a well-planned photo shoot.”

In a society that values both intellect and elegance, these women embody a powerful combination. This is not about conforming to outdated stereotypes but rather **redefining what it means to be a professional woman** in the modern tech scene.

Even Beauty Has Its Own Algorithm

In Yerevan, you can't turn a corner without coming across a modern hair and beauty salon. These aren't your typical neighborhood shops; we're talking about expansive, stylish spaces, often furnished with a touch of luxury. It's gotten to the point where we wonder if personal hair salons will become a standard amenity for every resident.



[Shant Kasbarian](#) is a popular hairstylist in Yerevan and a close friend of mine whom I've known for years. So, I couldn't overlook my connection with him and had to ask him a few questions about this specific aspect, especially since many of the professional tech women I know personally in Yerevan appear on his Instagram reels when they're in his salon getting their hair done.



He's adapted his schedule to accommodate the demanding lives of the "tech ladies," as he calls them, opening his doors as early as 7 am. He said many women in the tech industry in Yerevan visit his salon early in the morning for quick hairstyling before work. Unlike many European cities where salons open later, he's gotten used to starting very early in the morning, since "tech ladies" come in once or twice a week to get their hair done before their 9 to 5 jobs start.

When I asked how much time each woman spends at the salon, he replied that it **sometimes doesn't exceed 10 to 15 minutes**. They simply want their hair styled nicely and elegantly before heading to the office.



Shant Kasbarian

Founder of Style by Shant

They need an elegant look – an updo, a blow-dry – something that speaks confidence without wasting time.”

Next time you're in Yerevan, pay attention to how Armenian women look in the morning and appreciate their efforts. These women contribute **not only to the success of the tech industry in the country but also to its beauty**. They do not seek vanity but invest in their professional confidence, ensuring they project an image of competence and sophistication.





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BEYOND THE CAPITAL CITY

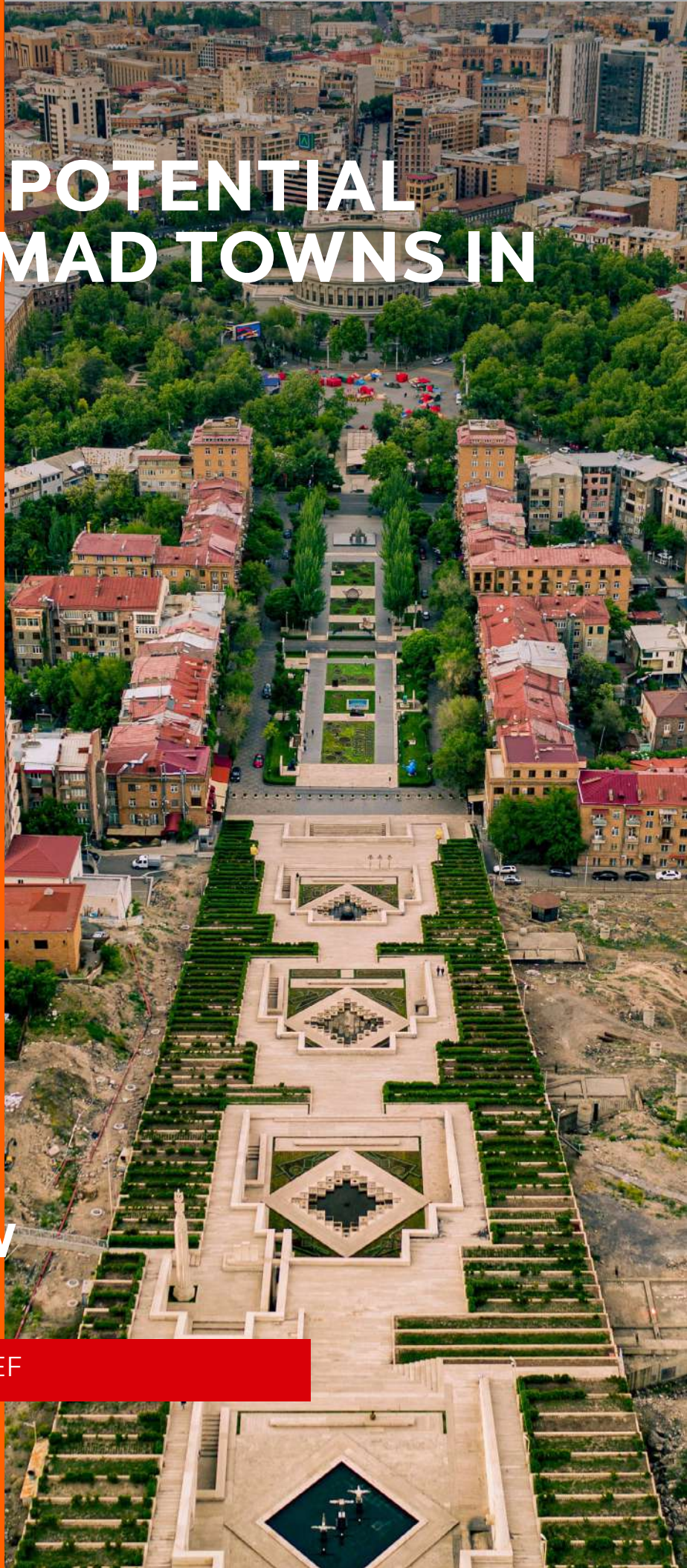
EXPLORING POTENTIAL DIGITAL NOMAD TOWNS IN ARMENIA

in



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



BEYOND THE CAPITAL CITY EXPLORING POTENTIAL DIGITAL NOMAD TOWNS IN ARMENIA



Armenia might not be a popular digital nomad destination yet, but that's exactly why it should be on your radar; the country is literally **a blank canvas for your digital nomadic adventure**. Forget the digital nomad destinations you see all the time on Instagram because Armenia offers something different. It's a chance to experience a culture and nature that most digital nomads haven't even been to. And trust me, you'll be blown away!

Before I dive into the must-see Armenian towns, let me give you one important piece of advice: **Start in Yerevan; it's the heart of Armenia. But don't just stay there!** Venture beyond the city limits. The Armenian regions are where the magic truly happens. You'll find yourself falling in love with the raw beauty of Armenian nature.

Yerevan

Yerevan offers a simple, uncomplicated urban experience. While the city is nearly twice the size of Paris, **life revolves around a relatively small city center**, and that's the beauty of it, especially for remote workers! You recognize people, and they recognize you, and you form new friendships daily. In fact, you never feel like you're working online. It's as if the entire environment, including the friendly faces you encounter, becomes an extension of your workspace.

In Yerevan's city center, you'll find modern coworking spaces, remote work-friendly coffee shops, international restaurants, and a busy calendar of tech and cultural events almost daily. By the way, English is widely spoken in the city center, often exceeding expectations compared to other European capitals. For an ideal experience, find an apartment in "Kentron" (the city center), where everything is within walking distance. Yerevan is exceptionally walkable, featuring **wide sidewalks perfect for daily strolls**.



When I first arrived in Yerevan in 2018, I met an American gentleman in the lobby of our city center hotel. He told me he'd spent the past ten years enjoying life within just a few streets of central Yerevan. I found that strange and couldn't understand why someone would limit themselves when the whole world was out there! Fast forward nine years, and **I find myself in a similar situation**. I've been living in the city center for nine years and will likely end up telling the same story. It's Yerevan's unique charm; **it creates a comfort zone you never want to leave**.



Dilijan

Dilijan is one of four cities in the Tavush Region of Armenia, approximately a 1.5-hour drive from Yerevan. The roads connecting the two cities are well-maintained and regularly patrolled by traffic police. Many of my European friends who have visited Dilijan in the summer have commented on its beauty, with **some even remarking that it somehow reminded them of the Swiss countryside.** In fact, a few international publications have called Dilijan the “Switzerland of the Caucasus.”



Dilijan has an active community of remote workers and digital nomads from all over the world. You'd be surprised how many remote working professionals have chosen to live there long-term, **even though the cost of living is not that different from Yerevan.** You can find very good coworking spaces and tech hubs in Dilijan. From my personal experience, I've found that living in Dilijan can double or even triple your productivity, especially when working on a project that needs creativity.

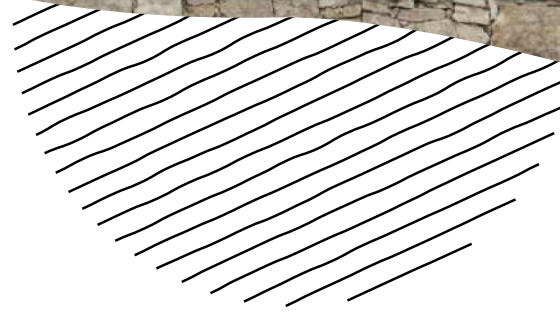


It's super easy to get to the mountains and forests in Dilijan, so **that's why I recommend it for anyone working on creative projects.** It's worth mentioning that Dilijan was a popular tourist destination and retreat during the Soviet era, which explains the presence of quality facilities such as hotels, hostels, BnBs, and restaurants. Tourism there is popular, particularly in the summer, when the city attracts travelers from around the world.



Ijevan

Ijevan is the administrative capital of the Tavush region in Armenia. The city is located about half an hour from Dilijan and has a calmer atmosphere despite its administrative status. Ijevan's charm is undeniable. The city features a river, a small local market, and a **pleasant city center that comes alive at sunset**. Many tree-lined walking paths offer hours of peaceful exploration. Personally, whenever in Ijevan, these walks are my way to **release all the negative energy and charge up my inner soul**—my “inner battery,” as I like to call it—with positive energy, ready to face the world.



Coworking spaces are available, some combining work with delicious homemade food. Honestly, nothing is better than working remotely with a full stomach with delicious home-cooked meals. It's worth mentioning that Ijevan introduced me to very unique dishes like apple dolma and lamb tongues with apples and oranges.

Ijevan is surrounded by mountains and has a mild climate, warmer in winter and cooler in summer than many other Armenian cities. While **English speakers are less common than in Yerevan or Dilijan**, the friendly locals are always ready to assist.

I've never had an issue communicating with others or making them understand what I have in mind.



Credits to [See You in Armenia](#) Campaigns



The digital nomad and remote work scene in Ijevan is still in its early days. **Establishing the core of digital nomadism in the city could be the first step** to attracting more remote working professionals.

Somehow, Ijevan reminds me a lot of the early days of Bansko in Bulgaria, which was once a small town before becoming an international remote work hub. I would also highlight that the cost of living in Ijevan, despite being very close to Dilijan, is **way more affordable, including rentals**.



Vanadzor

Vanadzor is the administrative capital of the Lori region in Armenia and is approximately a two-hour drive from Yerevan. The roads between the two cities are also well-maintained and were recently renovated. On my first visit to Vanadzor, I couldn't help but notice how much it looks like Yerevan. In fact, many **Armenian cities share similarities due to the Soviet-era influence on their urban planning** and architectural design.

Vanadzor has a growing yet relatively small remote work and digital nomad community. The city offers **an alternative to Yerevan for digital nomads seeking a slower pace** and a deeper dive into Armenian culture. Life here offers a more authentic experience of Armenian daily life compared to the capital.

Coworking spaces are a relatively new concept in the city, with **emerging ones introducing the culture and aiming for widespread adoption**. However, cafes, restaurants, and select hotels already provide suitable environments for remote work.



When the Russian- Ukrainian conflict began, many Russian remote-working tech professionals moved to Armenia. Shortly after arriving in Yerevan, they dispersed to other Armenian cities, establishing small tech communities. Vanadzor was one such city that **became active with remote working tech professionals**. Although many have since moved on outside of Armenia to other remote work destinations worldwide, it proved to me that **Vanadzor has all the potential to become a hub for digital nomads**.



These are just a few of the cities you might want to check out in Armenia. In future issues of Life in Armenia, I'll highlight more cities and smaller towns perfect for digital nomads, all with the services needed. However, it's important to note that **I'm writing from my personal experience and perspective**. You can always find more official information online about everything, such as the weather, cost of living, available facilities, etc.



ARMENIA'S DISTILLED GOLD

WHY ARMENIA MADE BRANDY WHILE GEORGIA MADE WINE?



**DIANA
KHANDILYAN**

FOUNDER OF GLASS NOMAD



ARMENIA'S DISTILLED GOLD

WHY ARMENIA MADE BRANDY WHILE GEORGIA MADE WINE?

Have you ever wondered why, during the Soviet Union, Armenia was assigned to make brandy while Georgia was making almost all the wine for the USSR? Sure, part of it ties to centralized planning and barter economies. But the deeper answer lies in **Armenia's unique terroir and climate**.

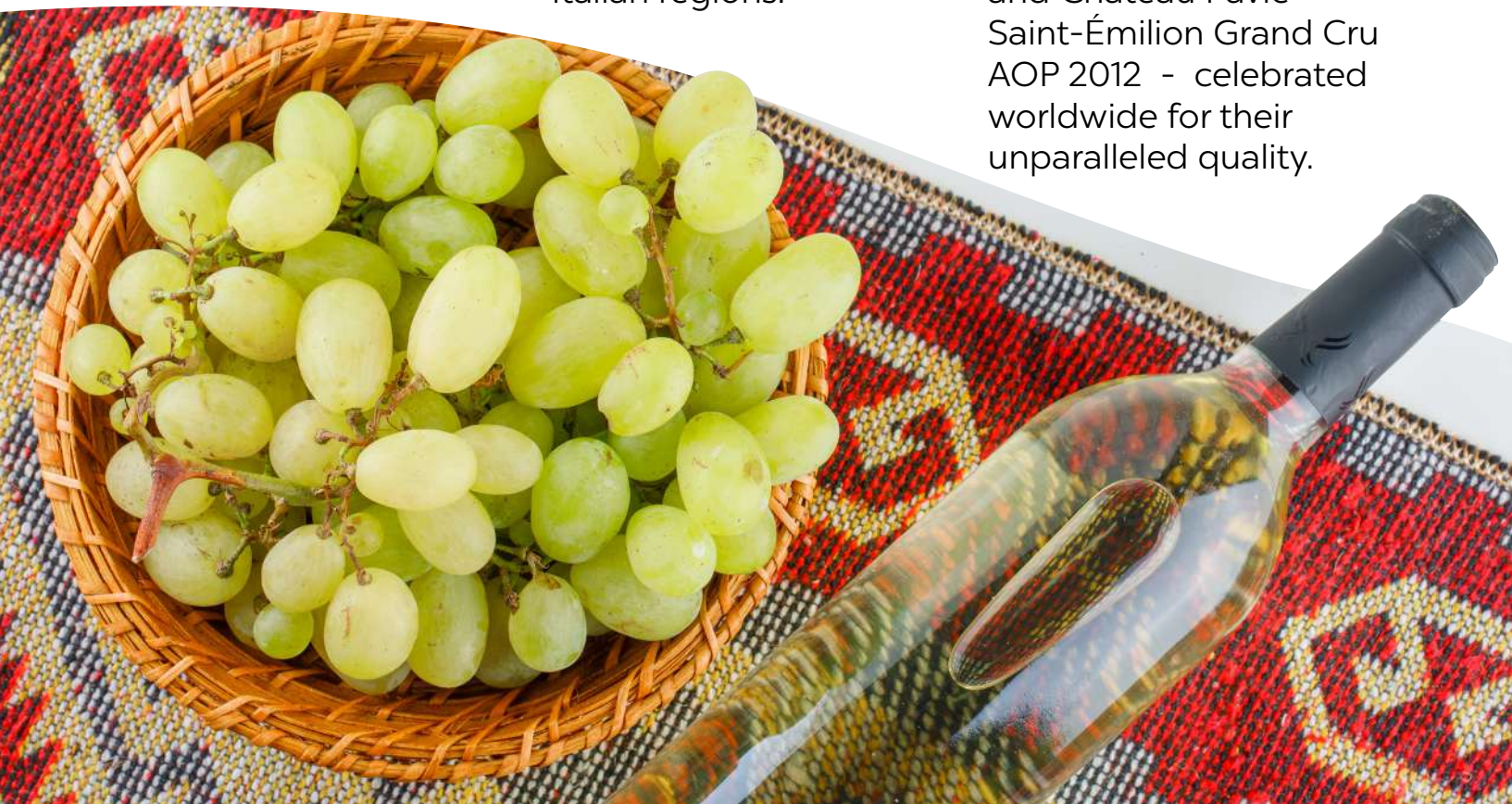
To explore this divide, we journey through millennia of wine culture, from ancient Egypt to Armenia's modern winemaking renaissance. In ancient Egypt, wine was a luxury product consumed by the upper classes and used in rituals. Grapes were grown in the fertile Nile Delta, where nutrient-rich soils benefited from the annual floods. However, poor drainage was a challenge, prompting innovations such as raised vineyard beds and ancient irrigation canals dating back to the Ramesside Period (r. 1279–1213 BCE). The Egyptians stored their wine in clay amphorae, sealed with resin to prevent spoilage; these vessels, often inscribed with details of vintage and origin, were transported via the Nile, marking one of the earliest systems of wine distribution.



If the Egyptians introduced wine as a luxury, the Greeks turned it into a lifestyle. Wine was central to their symposiums, mythology, and trade. Greek amphorae, iconic for their two handles and slender necks, carried wine across the Mediterranean, making it as valuable as gold. Their winemaking innovations—aging wine in clay, classifying by region—set the foundation for modern appellations. Homer himself celebrated wine in the *Odyssey*, describing it as “a ruby-colored nectar, sweet and divine, that brings joy to the heart and wisdom to the lips.”

The Romans elevated viticulture to new heights, integrating vineyards into every corner of their vast empire. Wine was part of a Roman soldier’s daily ration, boosting morale and serving as a safer alternative to water. Transporting wine across territories posed challenges, so Roman generals ensured local vineyards were established wherever legions were stationed, leading to the spread of winemaking techniques, from pruning methods to fermentation processes, across Europe, not withstanding today’s renowned French and Italian regions.

Fast forward to the Middle Ages, and winemaking found its caretakers in Christian monasteries. Monks saw wine as both a divine gift and a scientific pursuit, meticulously documenting grape varieties, terroir, and fermentation methods. Their experiments laid the foundation for iconic wine regions like Burgundy, Bordeaux, and Mosel. This dedication gave rise to the concept of “terroir”—**the belief that soil, climate, and location impart unique qualities to wine.** The pinnacle of this evolution? Try some French grands crus from *Vino & Vino*: Chateau Margaux, Chateau Mouton Rothschild Pauillac 2012, and Chateau Pavie Saint-Émilion Grand Cru AOP 2012 - celebrated worldwide for their unparalleled quality.

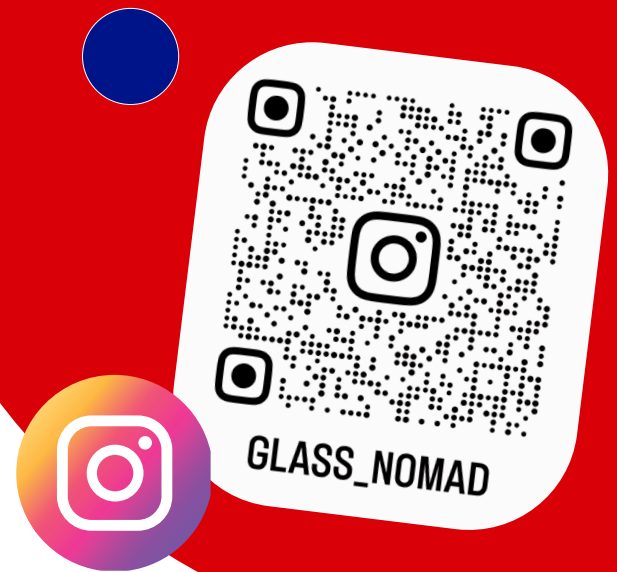


But what does all this have to do with Georgian wine and Armenian brandy? It comes down to the land. Georgia's temperate climate, ample rainfall, and gentle slopes create ideal conditions for diverse grape varieties, making it a natural hub for winemaking. In contrast, **Armenia's hot, arid conditions and high-altitude vineyards are perfect for growing grapes with high sugar content**—ideal for brandy production. The volcanic soils of the Ararat Plain add a distinct character, making Armenian brandies renowned for their depth and complexity.



Yet, Armenia's wine regions hold immense potential beyond brandy. The volcanic and mineral-rich soils of the Karas, Van Ardi, and Zorah wineries offer unique conditions for viticulture. Karas, located in the Armavir region, benefits from a mix of black volcanic soil and river stones, which provide excellent drainage and mineral complexity. Van Ardi, situated in the foothills of Aragats, thrives on volcanic ash and limestone, imparting a bold, structured character to its wines. Zorah, nestled in Vayots Dzor, harnesses the power of ancient, rocky terrain at high elevations, contributing to the vibrancy and longevity of its wines. **These regions exemplify how Armenia's terroir can shape distinctive and world-class wines.**

Armenia's modern wine story wouldn't exist without the visionaries who saw its potential. In the 1990s, pioneers like [Vahe Keushguerian](#) and [Zorik Gharibian](#) returned to Armenia, inspired by its ancient heritage. Keushguerian's sparkling wines and Gharibian's Zorah Karasi, crafted from the indigenous Areni Noir grape, are now celebrated globally. These leaders reintroduced forgotten varietals and combined traditional techniques with modern innovations, **proving that Armenia's vineyards could compete on the world stage**. Another trailblazer, Vahagn Herunikian, modernized cultivation techniques and emphasized sustainable practices, highlighting Armenia's unique terroir. Together, these visionaries connected Armenian wines to global markets, sparking a renaissance in the industry.



Scan
for more

Today, Armenian wines are no longer just a nod to an ancient past—they are bold statements about the future of viticulture. In 2024, Karas Reserve Areni-Sireni 2022 earned a place on [Forbes' list](#) of the best wines for the holiday table, celebrated for its rich aromas of cherry, prune, and violet, with earthy and mineral undertones. When you find yourself in Armenia, take the time to visit [Van Ardi](#). Ask about their vineyards—where they planted the vines, how they nurture them, and what makes their approach unique. **Each bottle holds more than a taste of the land.**

The story of Armenia's wines is still unfolding, with each vintage revealing a new chapter. What's next for this land of ancient vines and bold innovators? Perhaps it's time to raise a glass and find out—for the best stories are the ones we taste together. Today, I will toast with Van Ardi Reserve 2018.



CAN DREAMS COME TRUE IN ARMENIA?

THE JOURNEY OF A YOUNG FRENCH ACTRESS FROM PARIS TO YEREVAN

in



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

INTERVIEWING



**ESTELLE
MACARY**

FRENCH CINEMA
ACTRESS



CAN DREAMS COME TRUE IN ARMENIA? THE JOURNEY OF A YOUNG FRENCH ACTRESS FROM PARIS TO YEREVAN

I'm an old-fashioned, classic writer; last-minute changes usually get on my nerves, especially with articles submitted close to publication. But this month, something changed! I met Estelle! The person behind [a story I simply couldn't wait until the next month to tell](#). Not because of the story itself, to be honest, but because of the way she told her story.

A few days ago, I got to join a weekly morning coffee meetup for expats in Yerevan put together by Christophe Casillas. He's built this unique group of interesting people who all have one thing in common: [They're living in Yerevan and loving it](#). On my first time there, a few other new members joined, so we had a quick round of introductions.



In front of Lake Sevan, where the water mirrors the sky.



At the top of Mount Khustup, wrapped in the Armenian flag, standing above the clouds.

The moment Estelle began sharing her journey from Paris to Yerevan, it wasn't just words; it was the raw emotion that colored every syllable in her joyfully French-accented English. It wasn't about how she looked; rather, it was about how she spoke. Even blindfolded, **you could see her story through her words**, and I knew I had to make room for it in this month's issue of Life in Armenia, even if it meant disrupting my carefully laid magazine plans.

Estelle, a young French-Armenian woman, studied Dramatic Arts at Cours Florent in Paris and is now building her acting career there. Though her Armenian mother often

spoke of her homeland, Armenia remained a distant concept until she found an old photograph. It showed her mother, nearly Estelle's age, sitting by a church overlooking Lake Sevan.

“

Estelle Macary

Actress

Looking at that photograph, seeing my mother, I felt a deep calling to walk in her footsteps. I understood, in that moment, that I had to be there as soon as I could.”

Standing above the gorge at Saghmosavank, lost in the view.



Holding a memory at Sevanavank: the picture of Estelle's mother—where everything began.

Imagine landing in a country you've never been to, knowing absolutely no one. That's exactly what Estelle did when she booked a flight to Yerevan. For digital nomads, such an adventure might be just another day, but for her, it was anything but! I'd always been a fan of my Austrian friend Stefan's belief that **people could find their purpose in life in Armenia**, but Estelle found something even deeper – she called it finding her soul. "Soul Country," she'd say during our coffee meeting.

Driven by this feeling, she decided to make a movie about her journey, titled "Soul Country" or "HOKI YERKIR" in the Armenian language.



“

Estelle Macary

Actress

In July 2024, I arrived in Yerevan for the very first time. I came with no connections, no contacts, just my project in hand and a determination to make this film happen.”

As she explained, the film follows a young Parisian woman, a pianist, who decides to leave everything behind after discovering a mysterious photograph of her mother and embarks on a journey to Armenia. There, she retraces her mother's footsteps, navigating a path filled with challenges, emotions, and life-changing encounters. Along the way, she uncovers a buried secret from her mother's past, a secret that will finally allow her to understand where she comes from and guide her toward a new sense of purpose.

Playing Arno Babadjanyan
at Vagharshyan Garden.



Estelle Macary

Actress

Some journeys are just entertaining or anecdotal, but this one? It's foundational. It's a universal story that resonates with all diasporas in search of their roots. It's an odyssey, a pilgrimage, a story of life, love, and gratitude."

Celebrating cinema at the Golden Apricot in Yerevan.



But how do you make a film when you're a complete newcomer? Well, [Armenia has a way of surprising you.](#) Yerevan, despite being a capital, feels intimate, and Estelle found herself connecting with the local film scene in no time. She got involved with organizations like Birthright Armenia and helped organize the Golden Apricot International Film Festival, which allowed her to become immersed in the local film industry and connect with the people who would help bring this project to life.

Breathing in the morning light and endless green in Dilijan.



Enjoying a peaceful moment at the Lovers' Park in Yerevan



Estelle Macary

Actress

I was fortunate to be involved in a wonderful team. I'm working with Jivan Avetisyan, a talented Armenian filmmaker and member of the European Film Academy. Together with the Fish Eye Art Cultural Foundation, we're pushing to make this project a reality. But the journey is far from over."

For 10 minutes, Estelle went on and on, explaining how the film wasn't just a project but a mission to share the beauty and history of Armenia with the world. This again took me back to Stefan's saying about finding your purpose in life. Listening to her, it was clear **she had found hers in this small country, thousands of miles from her birthplace.**

At the end of her introduction, she shyly asked if we could support her ambition and contribute to the film's [fundraising campaign](#), from which 20% has already been funded by enthusiasts around the world.



At Fish Eye Art Cultural Foundation, where creativity flows.



Jivan receives a film award—celebrating talent and storytelling.

“

Estelle Macary

Actress

We're currently applying for funding to bring "Hoki Yerkir" to life. Our goal is to showcase it at international and Armenian film festivals, as well as bring it to cinemas and film platforms worldwide. We truly believe in the power of our community to bring this beautiful story to life. Every contribution, no matter how small, makes a difference."

Armenia has a way of tugging at the heartstrings. It's more than just a geographical location; it's a place where people discover deep emotional connections, even a sense of their own soul. You can see it in the eyes of those who've moved here and decided to pursue something meaningful, something they enjoy every second of their lives.

Can dreams come true in Armenia? If you've been reading Life in Armenia for the past two years, you can easily tell my answer.



Playing the guitar in the village of Dsegh, surrounded by nature.

“Magazine Feedback”

Trinidad and Tobago



J. A.

I am an IT professional working mainly in data and software engineering. I recently got a job that allows me to work remotely. I am interested in making Armenia, my base of operations for the next 3-4 months, beginning in April. Your magazine played a big part in its consideration. This will be my first time remote working in a country with a people and a culture likely very different to my own; I am from the island of Trinidad in the Caribbean; so it's important to me not only to be in a place where I can be productive, but also a place where I can be allowed to fit in and "live Armenian"

Germany



N. A.

I read your article about the Gulf countries and Armenia, and I must say it was a masterpiece. You have a deep understanding of how business and technology can be linked together. Your proposals make a lot of sense, and now it's crucial that the right people read this article and take action.

WORKING REMOTELY FROM ARMENIA IN 2025

LEGAL AND TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIGITAL NOMADS IN ARMENIA



**MATHEW
ZEIN**

EDITOR IN CHIEF



WORKING REMOTELY FROM ARMENIA IN 2025 LEGAL AND TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIGITAL NOMADS IN ARMENIA

Armenia may not have an official digital nomad visa at the moment, but it still offers lots of **benefits that make it a competitive remote work destination**, even when compared to countries with dedicated digital nomad visa programs worldwide.

Rather than focusing on standard digital nomad needs, which Armenia already provides—fast internet coverage, accessible banking, digital payment compatibility, and a very active tech community— I've chosen to take a unique angle in this article, **focusing on the tax and legal aspects relevant to digital nomads** planning stays of less than six months, six months to a year, and more than a year.



Staying Less Than 6 Months

As long as you don't have an Armenian employer, working from Armenia as a digital nomad for up to 183 days **does not require a work or residence permit**. Digital nomads can stay and work in Armenia for a valid visa or during a visa-free period, depending on their country of citizenship.

According to Armenian tax laws, individuals are considered tax residents if they spend 183 days or more in the country in a consecutive 12-month period. This means digital nomads can **benefit from residing in Armenia without immediately becoming tax residents**.



Staying from 6 Months to 1 Year

A residence permit may be necessary to stay longer than the maximum permitted by your visa. Armenia grants residence permits to foreigners engaged in lawful business activities in the country, **including digital nomads, freelancers, remote workers**, and online business owners. So, if you decide to stay longer than 183 days, digital nomads must register with the tax office and **obtain a tax identification number (TIN)** to be eligible for a residence permit.

Armenia's residency program **doesn't specify income restrictions** for remote workers. Having an Armenian annual residence permit allows you to work with both local and international clients and earn income from both domestic and foreign sources. Armenia doesn't restrict digital nomads from working with the local market.

If you're considered a tax resident of Armenia, you will be subject to taxation on your worldwide income. In some cases, exemptions may be available under international agreements

to avoid double taxation, which **Armenia has with around 50 countries**.

Taxes in Armenia, although they have increased relatively this year, are still within reasonable limits compared to many other countries worldwide. For example, you can register as a turnover taxpayer and **pay 10% of your income quarterly** if your annual turnover is less than AMD 115 million (approximately \$287,000). Additionally, you can get deductions from that 10% tax through your corporate expenses and other support programs designed for certain industries in the country.

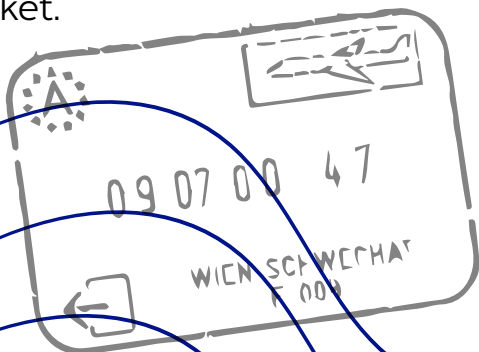


Employer of Record in Armenia

As Armenia isn't a common destination for Western employers, particularly in the US and EU, your foreign employer **might hesitate to hire you while you reside here permanently.** To address this, offer to be contracted through an Employer of Record (EOR).

An Employer of Record (EOR) is a third-party organization that legally employs workers on behalf of another company, handling all formal employment responsibilities such as payroll, taxes, benefits, and compliance with local labor laws.

Many companies now provide EOR services for remote workers in Armenia, both locals and foreign residents, seeking employment with global employers. For instance, consider [KapTek Talent Hub](#), founded by Jonah Gunter and Andrew Lott from the United States, or [Native Teams](#), which actively operates in the Armenian market.



Staying More than 1 Year

After three consecutive years of annual temporary residence in Armenia, **you can apply for a five-year permanent residence permit.** This provides expanded rights and greater stability. The five-year permit has no additional conditions beyond fulfilling the initial three-year residency requirement.

Therefore, when planning your next destination, remember that it doesn't necessarily have to be a country with a formal digital nomad visa program. Some of these programs can actually make it more difficult to obtain entry. In contrast, an emerging destination like **Armenia welcomes foreign remote workers** with reasonable tax and legal regulations.

And by the way, my personal advice, if you're considering Armenia, is to start with the capital, Yerevan, and then venture out to the regions to **enjoy the stunning mountains while working remotely.**



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LIFE IN ARMENIA

FOR DIGITAL NOMAD FAMILIES

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