



OSAC Country Security Report

Estonia

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This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State [Estonia Travel Advisory](#) and [Estonia Country Information Page](#).

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

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OSAC Country Chapter(s)

The Country Chapter in Tallinn is active and meets twice annually.

Contact [OSAC's Europe Team](#) with any questions.

Estonia Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise normal precautions in Estonia.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tallinn as being a **LOW**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia.

Crime: General Threat

Crimes against persons mainly occur in areas frequented by tourists. In the summer, pickpockets often work in teams in crowded areas, particularly in Old Town Tallinn. Pickpockets use various diversionary tactics to distract victims. One method involves bumping into the victim to draw their attention to one individual, while another takes their wallet. Victims should report the crime to the police and cancel stolen credit cards as soon as possible.

The police monitor the most high-risk areas with surveillance units, but incidents do occur. Theft from vehicles and vandalism of vehicles occur mostly in poorly illuminated areas, unsecured parking locations, and near the Port of Tallinn. Authorities generally classify the threat of thefts from vehicles, personal robberies, and residential break-ins as crimes of convenience.

Crime rates in Estonia remain low. The crime in the first half of 2025 has decreased by 2%, which can be contributed to a 10% decrease in violent offences. There has been a 4% increase in crimes against property, under which theft has gone up 11%. Fraud has gone down 3%.

Crime: Areas of Concern

Ida-Viru County, which contains the border town of Narva, experiences the highest crime rates in Estonia. Tallinn and Tartu also have higher crime rates than rest of Estonia. Pickpocketing, theft, and petty crime do occur, particularly in areas where tourists and foreigners congregate. The three highest crime areas in Tallinn are city center, Lasnamäe, and Kopli.

Review OSAC's reports, [All That You Should Leave Behind](#), [Hotels: The Inns and Outs](#), [Considerations for Hotel Security](#), [Taking Credit](#), and [Our Two Cents: Petty Crime Basics and How to Minimize the Risk](#).

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping "K" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia.

Review OSAC's reports, [Kidnapping: The Basics](#) and [Active Shooter and Kidnapping Response Tips](#).

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tallinn as being a **LOW**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism "T" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia.

There are no known indigenous terrorist organizations in Estonia, which is not a known base of support/sympathy for transnational terrorists. However, in recent years, Estonia has experienced an increase, largely online, in racially motivated violent extremism (REMVE) rhetoric, including neo-Nazi rhetoric. Due to its participation in the Schengen area, Estonia faces a similar threat of international terrorism as other European countries. The issue of foreign fighters is not a significant one for Estonia, with fewer than five reported cases over the past several years.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tallinn as being a **LOW**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia. While rare in Estonia, civil unrest in any country can develop quickly without prior notice and interrupt logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Estonia is a stable and functioning democracy. There are no security concerns regarding elections or political stability.

Protests & Demonstrations

Civil unrest is rare. Demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience are generally limited and peaceful. Authorities identify and monitor demonstrations via the government's permit process. Demonstrations generally take place near government buildings, significant landmarks, or central squares.

Review OSAC's report, [Surviving a Protest](#).

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

There have not been any significant anti-U.S. or anti-Western protests reported in recent years.

Law Enforcement

Estonia has two government security agencies:

The Estonian Police and Border Guard Board serves as the first response police force. They investigate all levels of criminal activity, provide border security, and issue identity documents. The Estonian Security Police (KAPO) operates on a federal level to fight corruption, terrorism, and threats to national security.

The Armed Forces are responsible for external security but also have some domestic security responsibilities. The Police and Border Guard Board and the Internal Security Service report to the Ministry of the Interior. Civilian authorities maintain effective control over the security forces.

Police Response

Police response times can vary from several minutes to an hour, depending on the nature of the call, time of day, call volume, and resource constraints. Police agencies are professionally trained and competent, and officers very commonly speak English. Police are highly respected by the general population, but at times deal with a lack of resources. To respond to the needs of visitors, police concentrate vehicular and foot patrols in highly populated and popular tourist areas.

The police emergency line in Estonia is **112**.

Visitors who are victims of crime should report it immediately to the police. After reporting the incident to the police, U.S. citizen victims should contact the American Citizen Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy by e-mail (ACSTallinn@state.gov) or by phone (+372-668-8100) to report the crime and request assistance.

If detained by police, comply with instructions. Incidents of police abuse and corruption are very rare. Detained foreigners who experience a language barrier should request an interpreter and should not sign any documents/reports until they are confident the document's contents are consistent with the details of the incident or the victim's statement. This is especially true for traffic accidents, as the initial police response will often attribute fault for the accident. If arrested, U.S. citizens have a right to request that the police contact the U.S. Embassy on their behalf.

Armed Conflict

The onset of the Russia-Ukraine war has heightened geopolitical tensions in Europe. While risk of armed conflict in the Baltic countries remains low, visitors to Estonia should check State Department travel guidance before beginning travel.

Transportation Security

Road Safety

Road conditions are generally good. Much like the northern latitudes in the United States there are two seasons: road construction, and winter. The winter (October-April) provides a unique set of challenges, as Estonia often receives heavy snowfall and sub-freezing temperatures. Road conditions can deteriorate quickly, with a heavy accumulation of snow/ice with little warning. City streets (even the main thoroughfares) are often poorly plowed and difficult to negotiate. Many streets in the Old Town Tallinn area are cobblestone, making icy navigation more dangerous. Additionally, there are fewer than six hours of daylight in the winter, further limiting visibility and exacerbating already difficult driving conditions. Estonian laws require the use of winter or studded tires from December 1 to March 31. Tires should bear the mark "M+S."

Streets often lack proper lighting. Exercise care when driving after dark outside of city centers. In rural areas, animals and icy road conditions can create unexpected hazards. Watch out for dark-clothed and/or intoxicated pedestrians along poorly illuminated roads or darting across

dimly illuminated roadways. Estonian law requires the use of personal reflective devices for pedestrians from December 1- March 31. Devices are available from most grocery and convenience stores.

Pedestrians have the right of way in signed/labeled crosswalks. Prepare to slow your vehicle when approaching a crosswalk if pedestrians are near, and to stop for public transportation (tram/bus) stops in the middle of the road, allowing passengers to get to/from the sidewalk. The law requires pedestrians to display a reflector on their person to aid visibility.

You must always use your headlights while driving. The use of seatbelts, both front and rear, is mandatory in Estonia, as are car seats for infants. Talking on cell phones while driving is illegal, except when using a hands-free system. It is illegal to turn right at a red light.

In case of an accident, do not attempt to move the vehicle to the side of the road until the police reach the scene. The Estonian Auto Club (*Eesti Autoklubi*) provides emergency roadside assistance. You do not need to be a member to receive assistance, although fees are lower for members. To request roadside assistance or towing service, dial **1888**.

Estonian law requires an International Driving Permit and a valid U.S. driver's license to operate a motor vehicle. Police levy hefty fines on those not properly licensed to drive. Visitors should drive defensively. To avoid vehicle-related incidents (e.g., theft, vandalism), park vehicles in secured, well-illuminated parking lots, and use an alarm/anti-theft device (e.g., steering wheel lock).

Estonian law enforcement authorities have a zero-tolerance approach to drinking and driving, and penalties are severe. Police are increasing the use of random roadblocks, speed traps, and breathalyzer tests, often subjecting drivers departing the ferry terminal to breathalyzer tests.

Review OSAC's reports, [Road Safety Abroad](#), [Driving Overseas: Best Practices](#), and [Evasive Driving Techniques](#); and read the U.S. Department of State's [webpage on driving and road safety abroad](#).

Public Transportation Safety

Overall, Estonia's transportation system is safe and effective. Trains, trams, and buses are popular. Travelers who use the train or ferry services should not loiter at the station and should arrive with adequate time to purchase a ticket and board. The port and main train station can attract criminal elements and substance-dependent individuals.

Taxis are reliable and safe, particularly those from larger, more established companies. Transportation apps like Bolt and Uber can help you request vehicle transportation.

Aviation Concerns

As there is no direct commercial air service to the United States by carriers registered in Estonia, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not assessed the Government of Estonia's Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards.

Review OSAC's Report, [Security in Transit: Airplanes, Public Transport, and Overnights](#).

Maritime Security

Estonia has a comprehensive maritime security regime through [Transpordiamet](#), the Transport Agency. Ferries are a main component of Estonian transportation, both domestically between the many islands and internationally.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Estonia, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [Gay and Lesbian Travelers](#)
- [Accessibility Needs](#)
- [Studying Abroad](#)
- [Faith-Based Travel](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention "D" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia.

The law criminalizes corruption by officials, and the government generally implemented the law effectively.

Health Concerns

The medical emergency line in Estonia is **112**. Medical care in Estonia falls short of Western standards, especially outside the larger cities such as Tallinn, Tartu, and Pärnu. Many medical professionals in Estonia are highly trained, but some hospitals and clinics still suffer from a lack of equipment, resources, and English-language proficiency. Many doctors speak at least some English, though English is less prevalent in the healthcare sector than in other parts of society. Communication may be difficult in hospitals for visitors who do not speak Estonian or Russian. It can be difficult to obtain certain medications that are readily available in the United States.

Find contact information for available medical services and available air ambulance services on the U.S. Embassy website. The U.S. Department of State strongly recommends purchasing international health insurance before traveling internationally. Review the U.S. Department of State's [webpage](#) on health insurance overseas.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Health "H" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia, Review the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) country-specific [Travel Health Notices](#) for current health issues that impact traveler health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters.

See OSAC's [Guide to U.S. Government-Assisted Evacuations](#); review OSAC's reports, [The Healthy Way](#), [Shaken: The Don'ts of Alcohol Abroad](#), [Health 101: How to Prepare for Travel](#), and [Fire Safety Abroad](#); and visit the U.S. Department of State's webpage on [Your Health Abroad](#) for more information.

Vaccinations

Tick-borne encephalitis and Lyme-disease are widespread throughout the country. Use CDC-recommended insect repellents containing either 20% DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 to help diminish bites from ticks and other insects if you intend to visit parks or forested areas (even within parks in Tallinn). Those who will be camping or have prolonged outdoor exposure should pretreat clothing and equipment with permethrin. Tick-borne encephalitis vaccinations are a series of three doses. The vaccine is not available in the United States. Those who will be living in Estonia or those with shorter visits with extensive outdoor activities in wooded areas should receive the vaccine. There are no vaccines against Lyme disease.

Like in much of Europe, outbreaks of measles are frequent in Estonia. Travelers should have two documented doses of MMR vaccine prior to traveling.

Review the CDC [Travelers' Health](#) site for country-specific vaccine recommendations.

Issues Traveling with Medications

Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription. Consider bringing common over-the-counter medications with you.

Review OSAC's report, [Traveling with Medication](#).

Water Quality

Estonian tap water is potable and safe for drinking, cooking, and bathing.

Review OSAC's report, [I'm Drinking What in My Water?](#)

Natural Disasters

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Natural Disaster “N” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Estonia.

Winter storms present a weather hazard for those in Estonia between the months of November and April. Falling ice from buildings can be a potentially deadly problem in the winter and spring, in addition to slippery roads and sidewalks. Flooding can be an issue in low-lying areas near rivers during the spring thaw.

Cybersecurity

Cybercrime is a growing concern; scam calls and phishing attacks also rose. Such crimes are conducted mainly in Estonian or Russian language, but there are cases of English mail and text messages, usually portraying some postal service provider. Estonia-based companies have also been subject to ransomware attacks, in line with global trends, and these crimes often go underreported.

Review OSAC’s reports, [Cybersecurity Basics](#), [Best Practices for Maximizing Security on Public Wi-Fi](#), [Traveling Abroad with Mobile Devices](#), and [Guide for Overseas Satellite Phone Usage](#).

Counterintelligence

Those traveling to Estonia's eastern border should recognize the increased potential for cyber security threats and respond appropriately to avoid becoming a victim. Assume that Russian sources monitor all communications (e.g., emails, calls, texts) and avoid any communication you don't want to end up in Russian hands.

Import/Export Restrictions

The [Estonian Tax & Customs Board](#) website is a complete source of information on import and export restrictions for Estonia.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).