



OSAC Country Security Report

Ireland

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

Embassy Contact Information

U.S. Embassy Dublin

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Hours: 0730-1630, Monday – Friday.

OSAC Country Chapter

The Country Chapter in Dublin is active.

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

Ireland 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 Ireland.

Crime

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

There are no areas that are off limits.

Although Ireland has a low rate of violent crime, always follow common sense personal security practices and maintain situational awareness when traveling. Rates of theft and petty crime have risen in recent years, and thieves often target tourists. In rare cases, these crimes involve physical assault or violence, more commonly in Dublin city center and in popular tourist areas. Crimes against U.S. nationals usually involve petty theft, burglary, and other minor offenses.

According to recently released crime statistics from the third quarter of 2024, homicides and related offenses decreased by 12% compared to the same period in 2023. Controlled drug offenses also decreased by 6%. However, thefts and burglaries increased by 7% and 10% respectively.

Rental cars are frequently targeted. They are easily identifiable by the rental company stickers on the rear window of the vehicle. If possible, remove these stickers and always lock your car when leaving it unattended. Do not leave valuables unattended in vehicles. When visiting city center areas, park your car in a secure car park and retain the parking ticket on your person.

Keep car doors locked while driving. Don't leave luggage or valuables visible inside a parked car and don't leave luggage on a roof rack. When picking up and dropping off your rental car, do not leave the keys in the ignition while loading or unloading luggage.

When using ATMs, protect your PIN at all times and look closely at ATMs for evidence of tampering before use. Criminals may use small electronic devices attached to the outside of ATMs called "skimmers" to steal the ATM or credit card data. In busy areas, thieves use distraction techniques at ATMs, such as waiting until the PIN has been entered and then pointing to money on the ground or asking for loose change. While the ATM user is distracted, another person will quickly withdraw cash and leave. If you are distracted in any way, cancel the transaction immediately.

When using credit cards to pay at restaurants, a portable card reader should be brought to your table. Restaurant staff should not take your card elsewhere to process a charge.

Report crimes to the local police in person to the nearest Garda (police) station or by calling **999** or **112** and contact the U.S. Embassy at +(353) (1) 668-8777. Tourists can also get free support from the Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) as a victim of crime.

U.S. citizen victims of sexual assault are encouraged to contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance. Local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes.

Kidnapping Threat

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

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Dublin 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 Ireland.

There are known indigenous terrorist organizations operating in Ireland, but these organizations tend to involve cross-border (Northern Ireland) elements that focus their activities on criminal profits rather than ideological or political concerns. Irish officials recognize and respond to the security problems created by these groups.

While Ireland has not experienced the rate of terrorist attacks as some of its neighboring European countries, the threat of lone actors and self-radicalized cells remain. Across Europe, during the long pandemic-related confinement, younger people, who were typically unknown to authorities, became more susceptible to online radicalization. Much of the terrorism threat comes from radicalized lone-actor perpetrators, who could attack using knives, vehicle rammings, guns, incendiary devices, and other methods that do not require specialized knowledge, access, or training. Preventing such offenses is a special challenge, since these attacks are committed at short notice, involving only a short planning phase and little organizational effort, and often without relying on any network or communication structures.

Lone-actor perpetrators pose a serious risk due to their ability to remain undetected, at times, until operational and their willingness to attack civilian and soft targets, such as restaurants, markets/shopping malls, hotels, clubs, and similar locations. There also remains a potential for terrorist attacks against public transportation systems and other tourism infrastructure.

Events occurring elsewhere in the world have also been used by Islamist extremists to try to galvanize individuals across Europe. For instance, since the October 7 Hamas terrorist attack in Israel and Israel's subsequent response, there have been increased calls by terrorist organizations like ISIS and al-Qa'ida for individuals to attack targets in Europe.

There have also been arrests of Dissident Republican (DR) groups in Ireland. According to the most recent 2024 European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend report, in 2023, four individuals were arrested in connection with DR groups in Ireland. While there have been no attacks by DR groups in the Republic of Ireland in 2023, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) claimed an attack against an off-duty police officer from the Police Service of Northern Ireland in February 2023.

DR groups aim to reunite Ireland with Northern Ireland and create a 32-county socialist republic in Ireland. They have a hierarchical structure, with specific roles, responsibilities and functions divided among members. DR groups have both a political wing and a militarized wing. The political wing can be viewed as a public front for the purpose of spreading propaganda, often through social media platforms. House-to-house leaflet dropping and protests are also among the channels used for the dissemination of propaganda. These groups have forged strong links to criminal organizations and are regularly engaged in criminal activities to fund their cause, e.g. through the sale of contraband/counterfeit items, the sale of drugs, extortion and smuggling. They also organize various charitable fundraisers and money collections to finance their activities. Criminals may also be in a position to provide weaponry as well as means of transportation into Northern Ireland.

There are also concerns about the rise of far-right extremism. Since the November 2023 stabbing of three children and an adult female by a foreign-born Irish citizen, there have been an uptick in far-right calls for protests and violence. The November 2023 stabbing led to anti-immigrant rioters rampaging through central Dublin, after rumors spread on social media that a foreign national was responsible for the attack. Up to 500 people looted shops, set fires to vehicles, and threw rocks at crowd-control officers. Also, there have been sporadic incidents

around the country where perpetrators have set fires to housing set aside for asylum seekers. While the far-right is a small movement in Ireland, they are feeding into and capitalizing on perceived concerns about the immigration system in Ireland, the impact that large numbers of migrants are having on Irish society, and the stress on the housing sector.

Far-left extremism is also a growing concern. Even before the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict in 2023, left-wing extremists have participated in environmental protests, and campaigned against perceived British, EU and American imperialism, sometimes actively targeting senior citizens who have previously been involved in the Republican movement. Since the Israel-Hamas conflict, far-left elements have used the mostly pro-Palestinian protests to grow and recruit.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Dublin 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 Ireland. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Ireland is a multiparty parliamentary democracy with a directly elected president, an executive branch headed by a prime minister, and a bicameral parliament. Ireland held early parliamentary elections in November 2024 following the dissolution of its government. Elections were overwhelmingly peaceful.

Protests & Demonstrations

Protests occur on a regular basis, though most are peaceful. However, some have the potential to turn violent. Following a November 2023 knife attack, which left several wounded, there has been anti-immigrant unrest around Dublin. After the attack, rumors circulated that a foreign national was responsible. Rioters torched several city buses and police vehicles, damaged more than a dozen storefronts in the city, and threw rocks at crowd control officers. Ireland’s police chief blamed “lunatic hooligan faction driven by far-right ideology” for the destruction and chaos. However, similar protests have occurred in pockets across Ireland over the past year, fueled by nativist rhetoric online, a housing shortage, and a cost-of-living crisis.

According to the Garda (Irish police), there were 1,148 protests throughout Ireland in 2024, including 636 protests in the Dublin metropolitan. Ireland’s Southern Region had 201 protests, the Eastern Region had 235, and the Northwestern Region had 76. The Israel-Hamas conflict, anti-immigration narratives, and housing of refugees continue to be the main issues for demonstrations.

In February 2024, police deployed more than 300 police officers to Dublin amid a massive march against the push for mass migration and a counter protest. The marchers and a group of counter protesters, who billed themselves as opposing racism, reportedly shouted at each other through a line of gardaí, or police.

Events around the world have also led to demonstrations in Ireland. For instance, after the start of the Israel-Hamas conflict, there have been mostly pro-Palestinian protests across the country.

Protests can be well organized and attended, and can lead to some disruption, including to traffic and public transport. Irish police presence at these events is generally adequate, although travelers should avoid areas where protests take place. Historically, only protests involving U.S. interests might lead to direct targeting of the U.S. Embassy by protesters. Avoid large gatherings and follow advice of local authorities.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

In general, anti-U.S. sentiment is extremely low and does not affect the private sector.

Law Enforcement

An Garda Síochána (or “Garda”) is the national police force and maintains internal security under the auspices of the Justice Department. Garda is Ireland’s sole provider of policing, law enforcement, and state security.

The defense forces are responsible for external security under the supervision of the Defense Department; they are also authorized to perform certain domestic security responsibilities in support of the Garda. Civilian authorities maintain effective control over the security forces. There have been no reports that members of the security forces committed abuses.

Police Response

Police response times in Ireland are typically slower than in the United States. Police response to crime in Ireland is generally adequate and timely within the larger urban areas, especially Dublin, but considerably slower in the more rural areas of Ireland.

The emergency line in Ireland is **999** or **112** for police, fire, ambulance, and coast guard from any phone, including mobiles.

Travelers with Special Considerations

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

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [LGB Travelers](#)

- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

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 Ireland. If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately.

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, and the government generally implements the laws effectively. There have not been any reports of central government corruption.

Cybersecurity

Cybercrime is a major concern, particularly with more than 800 U.S. companies and many of the leading technology firms locating their European headquarters in Ireland. Cybercrime is the most prevalent type of fraud committed in Ireland. The Irish government has been taking proactive steps to address this growing threat, including approving a new National Cyber Security Strategy.

In June 2023, the Irish government published its National Cyber Risk Assessment, which highlighted that Ireland’s critical national infrastructure faces systemic threats ranging from espionage to destructive cyber-attacks. It also stressed the importance of supply chain security in digital technologies within key sectors, including energy, transport, financial services, healthcare, and telecommunications.

Import/Export Restrictions

Carry your medical history, along with a detailed list of any current medications, including dosage and brand name, in your wallet or purse and luggage. Most types of over-the-counter medications are available but many U.S. brands are not. Irish pharmacists may not be able to dispense medication prescribed by U.S. physicians and may direct you to obtain a prescription from an Irish doctor.

There are no restrictions on satellite phones in Ireland.

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](#).