



OSAC Country Security Report

Kosovo

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

Embassy Contact Information

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

Kosovo Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise increased caution in Kosovo due to threats of terrorism-related crimes and political violence.

Crime

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

For most visitors, Kosovo remains a safe country. When compared to 2024 published statistics, homicides decreased in 2024 from 29 to 17 while serious bodily injury dropped from 209 to 197. Kosovo Police recorded roughly 46,300 cases in 2024, a decrease of 3.34% (47,903 in 2023). The lack of economic opportunity is a factor affecting crime rates in Kosovo. Crimes of opportunity are the most prevalent. Street crimes (e.g., theft, purse snatching) are somewhat common, especially in Pristina. The number of reported thefts countrywide was 5,378, a decrease from 6,399 in 2023. There were 81 robberies reported in 2023 while in 2024, the number dipped to 70.

Petty street crime is the most common crime impacting U.S. citizens, especially in tourist areas. While violent crime against U.S. citizens is rare, always be aware of your physical surroundings. Street crime and home invasion occur with some frequency. Criminals target the vulnerable or wealthy, and exploit minimal police presence, such as during holidays and large events, to

commit opportunistic crimes. Securely lock the windows and doors of your residence when not home and set your home alarm if you have one.

Robberies, thefts, and burglaries often rise sharply during year-end holidays. Criminals target shoppers with cash and gifts openly displayed in their motor vehicles. Avoid carrying and/or displaying large amounts of currency.

To avoid assault, be cautious when traveling alone in taxis or minibuses after dark. Avoid being alone in isolated areas with unfamiliar people. Do not leave drinks unattended in bars and nightclubs.

The expatriate community can be a target of crime, as criminals assume that members of the community are affluent. Expatriate homes, businesses, and vehicles are, on occasion, targets for burglary.

Criminals often commit crimes with firearms, as weapons are fairly easy to obtain in Kosovo. While violent crimes occur throughout Kosovo, the number of reported robberies often occur during late night and early morning hours. Some of these incidents included the assailant using a weapon to steal small amounts of cash. The victims of these crimes appear to have been targets because they were walking alone, in the dark, and/or were under the influence of alcohol.

Organized crime is present in Kosovo, occasionally resulting in violent confrontations between rival organizations. Most incidents are not directed at tourists or foreigners.

The U.S. Embassy in Pristina has not placed any locations or geographic areas of Kosovo off-limits to official staff due to crime.

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Kosovo.

There have not been any kidnapping incidents involving foreign nationals since Kosovo’s independence. Trafficking of persons remains a problem despite government steps to address the issue.

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Kosovo, indicating that terrorist attacks have occurred and/or specific threats against civilians, groups, or other targets may exist.

Be aware that terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Europe. European governments take measures against possible terrorist attacks, but the public is still vulnerable to transnational terrorists. The international/transnational terrorism threat is similar to that faced by most European nations. Since independence, Kosovo has experienced a rise in Islamist extremism; at the same time, it has made marked progress in the fight against terrorism.

Terrorist groups continue plotting attacks in the Balkans region, including Kosovo. Terrorists may attack with little or no warning. They may target high-profile public events (sporting contests, political rallies, demonstrations, holiday events, celebratory gatherings, etc.); hotels, clubs, and restaurants frequented by tourists; places of worship; schools; parks; tourism infrastructure; shopping malls and markets; and public transportation systems (including subways, buses, trains, and scheduled commercial flights).

In September 2023, roughly 80 armed gunmen entered Kosovo from Serbia and conducted an attack in Banjské, killing a police officer. Following the attack, Kosovo indicted 45 suspects on terrorism charges. Kosovo's legislative framework broadly allows the prosecution and incarceration of individuals suspected of supporting terrorist activities or participating in foreign wars. However, short sentences, conditional and early releases, and disorganized post-release supervision pose security threats.

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In November 2024, criminals attacked, with approximately 20 kg of explosives, the Iber Lepenc/Ibar Lepenac water canal in the Zubin Potok municipality in northern Kosovo. The Iber Lepenci regional water company, the Kosovan government, and the Kosovo Police (KP) immediately responded to the attack, which the KP announced was a deliberate act. KP arrested multiple suspects and seized caches of weapons and military-type equipment. The investigation is still ongoing.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has included a Civil Unrest "U" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Kosovo, indicating that demonstrations, protests, and/or strikes occur frequently, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond adequately. 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.

U.S. Embassy Pristina personnel are prohibited from travel to North Mitrovica, Leposavic, Zubin Potok, and Zvecan without additional security. There can be violence and tension in those areas, as demonstrated by the attack in Banjska in September 2023 and the attack on the Iber-Lepenc canal in November 2024. The U.S. government warns private U.S. citizens against

traveling to the northern region. The U.S. Embassy in Pristina has limited ability to assist U.S. citizens who encounter difficulties in these areas. Recent unrest in these areas has been politically motivated. While it has not impacted tourists or members of the international community, there is a risk that bystanders can be affected.

Elections/Political Stability

Political tensions can run high among the government and its constituents. In the past, political parties have tried to sway votes in Parliament through violent methods, accompanied by civilian protests outside the Parliament building. The most recent parliamentary elections in February 2025 were calm.

Protests & Demonstrations

Kosovo has experienced minor political demonstrations due to high unemployment, corruption, and dissatisfaction with government actions. In 2024 Kosovo Police recorded 728 protests and gatherings, compared to just 195 recorded for 2023. Protests involving more than 2,000 people can occur in Pristina, often in the downtown area near government and international organization buildings. In other areas of Kosovo, protests tend to focus on ethnically divided areas or areas of ethnic tension, such as Mitrovica. Demonstrations can cause serious traffic disruptions or violent incidents.

Sporting events may also trigger violence or protests. If you are in a crowd and the security conditions worsen, leave immediately. Remain aware of your surroundings and have a plan for escape should an emergency arise.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

U.S. nationals are generally well-received, particularly in Kosovo-Albanian communities. In fact, Kosovo is often considered one of the most pro-American countries in the world. However, there is a small population that espouses anti-U.S. sentiment. Some ethnic Serbs remain suspicious of the United States due to the NATO bombing of Serbia during the war. Returning foreign fighters from Iraq and Syria have been known to perpetuate anti-U.S. sentiment in Kosovo. Avoid drawing attention to yourself as a U.S. citizen.

Law Enforcement

Kosovo Police (KP), with help from the European Union rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR), is responsible for safety in Kosovo. KP is the law enforcement entity for the entire country, including borders. KP uniforms are light and dark blue (supervisors wear white shirts), and their vehicles are white or navy blue. While many KP officers speak English, a working knowledge of Albanian/Serbian or a translator may be necessary when contacting host-country emergency services.

KP and the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) report to the Interior Ministry and Defense Ministry, respectively. The government has begun the process of gradually transitioning the KSF into a territorial defense force, in accordance with a ten-year plan. Border Police, a KP subgroup, are responsible for security at the border. Police maintain internal security with assistance from EULEX, as a second responder for incidents of unrest, and the KFOR, an international peacekeeping force, as a third responder. KFOR is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment and ensuring freedom of movement in the country. As of October 2024, the mission had approximately 4,300 troops from 29 contributing countries. As part of their routine duties, KFOR soldiers conduct border patrols and provide other security services, such as explosive ordnance disposal, which local authorities cannot manage.

Police Response

Report non-emergent crimes to the local police by calling **192**. In an emergency, after calling the local police, you can contact U.S. Embassy Pristina at +383 (38) 5959-3000 (available 24/7). Police responsiveness to criminal reports varies greatly. Remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes.

U.S. nationals detained by the police should immediately contact U.S. Embassy Pristina's American Citizen Services (ACS), during normal business hours, and the Embassy duty officer when the Embassy is closed. Send complaints against the Kosovo Police or individual officers to the Police Inspectorate of Kosovo (Tel: 08000-3333, info.ipk@rks-gov.net). To avoid further potential difficulties or endangering themselves, U.S. nationals may file subsequent police reports in Kosovo after having departed the country, without returning to Kosovo. Email the pertinent information and your request for a police report to ilecu@kosovopolice.com. Report any incidents of police corruption, bribery, or harassment to U.S. Embassy Pristina.

U.S. nationals who become victims of crime should contact the police and then U.S. Embassy Pristina's American Citizen Services unit. Kosovo has a victims' compensation program for certain categories of crime, and an active Victims' Assistance Program that offers non-monetary support. The Victims Advocacy and Assistance Office (VAO) operates under Kosovo's Chief State Prosecutor's mandate. The VAO has a 24-hour, toll-free help line at 0800 11 112. The VAO provides information and guidance, allows the public and victims to report crime, and may help with medical exams, protection orders, or case updates.

See U.S. Embassy Pristina's [Victim of Crime](#) page.

The emergency line for police, ambulance, and fire in Kosovo is **112**. The police emergency line in Kosovo is **192**.

The fire line in Kosovo is **193** and ambulance line is **194**.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Kosovo, 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 Kosovo.

The administration of justice is slow and inefficient, and rule of law institutions suffer from lack of capacities. The judiciary is vulnerable to undue political influence. Lengthy detentions are common before and during judicial proceedings. The U.S. Embassy cannot speed up legal proceedings or secure releases and cannot help detained U.S. citizens receive preferential treatment. If police or prison officials arrest you, ask them to notify the U.S. Embassy in Pristina. See U.S. Embassy Pristina's [arrest of a U.S. citizen page](#).

There are no reports of arbitrary detention by either the government or its agents. The country has a strong legal framework to safeguard against arbitrary detention or official harassment, as well as the appropriate mechanisms to investigate and prosecute any such allegation. Direct complaints against any Kosovo Police officers for arbitrary detention, official harassment or abuse to the Police Inspectorate.

Perceived and actual corruption is highly prevalent. The law provides criminal penalties for corruption, but the authorities do not implement the law effectively. Officials sometimes engage in corrupt practices with impunity. A lack of effective judicial oversight and general weakness in the rule of law contributes to the problem. Corruption cases are routinely subject to repeated appeal, and the judicial system sometimes allows statutes of limitation to expire without trying cases. The government in some instances suspends or removes offenders from office, and the justice sector sometimes takes steps to prosecute and punish those who committed corruption crimes. Anti-corruption efforts continue to suffer from lack of forceful action, follow-through measures, and low criminal sentences.

There are reports that some Kosovo sports clubs have allegedly not honored contracts for foreigners. Consult with appropriate legal resources prior to entering into an agreement.

Cybersecurity

ATM fraud is present in Kosovo. Authorities have found ATM skimmers in the country. Avoid freestanding ATMs and always check the ATM for irregularities before use. ATMs attached to financial institutions such as banks are reliable. Travelers should take normal precautions to protect their PIN.

Be careful with public internet cafes and open Wi-Fi. Sensitive information, like passwords, can be stolen. Use a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

Import/Export Restrictions

Kosovo has no general restrictions on imports. U.S. companies' local distributors must complete an application form and health certificate to import animal food products, including poultry products. Travelers must declare, at their port of entry, cash of 10,000 euros or more. Failure to comply may result in detention and confiscation of a percentage of the funds.

There are no restrictions on the import of satellite phones or other commercial devices.

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](#).