



# OSAC Country Security Report

## Malta

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

### Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

#### U.S. Embassy Malta

Ta' Qali National Park, Attard, ATD 4000

Tel: +356 2561 4000

After-Hours Emergency: +356 2561-4150.

### OSAC Country Chapter

The Malta Country Chapter is active, and members mostly interact via messaging communication platforms.

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

### Malta 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 Malta.

### Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Valletta as being a **MEDIUM**-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 Malta.

#### Crime: General Threat

The most commonly reported crimes are simple assault, pick-pocketing, and petty theft. While armed robberies, sexual assaults, and homicides are not as common as in some major U.S. cities, they do occur. Criminals focus on areas and establishments frequented by tourists.

Crime rates in Malta have declined in recent years, and reported crimes fell by 1% in 2024 over the year prior. When compared to the EU average, Malta ranks among the safer countries and in some indexes is listed in the top 10 safest countries in the world. In 2024, a total of 16,662

crimes were recorded against a population of 563,443. The homicide rate in Malta last year stood at 0.7 per 100,000 residents, which is lower than the recorded 1.7 in 2022, though slightly up from the 0.4 recorded in 2023. Malta has had a 100% success rate at solving homicides going back to 2018. Violent crime in 2024 decreased to 344 cases, while theft—particularly entertainment-related thefts and pick-pocketing—rose from 405 cases to 650.

The above statistical data was extracted from the [Annual Crime Review 2024](#) drawn by the CrimeMalta Observatory. CrimeMalta launched in 2008 as a conveyor for crime research and reporting in the Maltese Islands. The statistics are based on an analysis of reported crime, incarceration statistics, and spatial analysis.

## Crime: Areas of Concern

Crime rates are higher in tourist areas, to include St. Julian's, Mdina, Valletta, Floriana, Sliema, Saint Paul's Bay, and Ta' Xbiex, but still lower than most U.S. cities.

Be cautious in densely populated Paceville, where it is common to encounter belligerent partygoers, excessive alcohol consumption, and heavy-handed nightclub bouncers. Disagreements with the bouncers have led to violence, including some incidents that appear racially motivated. Foreign visitors to this area have reported isolated incidents and injuries.

Exercise caution when using any ATM. Use ATMs inside shopping malls, hotels, and banks, since these are normally high-traffic areas monitored by security guards/cameras. Before approaching the ATM, scan the area for any suspicious persons or activity. Should anyone approach you while you are withdrawing money, immediately cancel the transaction and leave the area. Should you encounter issues while using the ATM, never accept unrequested assistance. Avoid the vicinity of an ATM during servicing. Scan ATMs for any odd or out-of-place device (especially around the area of the card reader), an altered keypad, and/or any other suspicious characteristics.

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 Malta.

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

## Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Valletta 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 Malta.

There were no acts of indigenous or regional terrorism in Malta in 2025.

There is a continuing general threat in Europe from persons planning attacks inspired by major terrorist organizations. Remain aware of the potential for terrorist attacks against public transportation systems and other tourist infrastructures. Always be aware of your surroundings and adopt appropriate safety measures to protect yourself. Exercise caution at holiday festivals/events. The U.S. government continues to work closely with European allies on the threat from international terrorism, including from ISIS and al-Qa’ida.

## Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Valletta 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 Malta. 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

Malta is a constitutional republic and parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary elections held in 2022 were considered free and fair. Malta’s next parliamentary elections are expected to be held in March 2027.

## Protests & Demonstrations

The Maltese people are very active politically, and at times gather to voice dissatisfaction with government policies. These demonstrations are almost always peaceful, but travelers should maintain situational awareness and exercise sound judgement when in the vicinity of protest activity.

Non-violent protests occur occasionally but there are no recent incidents of violent protest.

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

## Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

There is no apparent anti-U.S. sentiment in Malta.

## Law Enforcement

The Malta Police Force (MPF) is the main law enforcement agency in the country. The MPF comprises several divisions: Administration, Criminal investigations, Drugs, Vice/Economic Crime, Protective Services, Tactical Units, Forensic Science Laboratory, and Community Policing. The police force divides into 12 districts: 11 on Malta and one on Gozo.

While the MPF is responsible for internal security, maintaining law and order, and enforcing the law, the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) may assist if requested. The appointed Police Commissioner is under the supervision of the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security.

The AFM is responsible for external defense, with an emphasis on protecting the country's territorial waters and airspace. The Commander of the AFM is also under the supervision of the Minister for Home Affairs and National Security.

While incidents of police harassment have occurred, they are not common. Should an encounter with police occur, remain respectful and cooperative. Report instances of wrongdoing to American Citizen Services. Do not do anything (e.g., physical resistance, attempts to flee) that could put your personal safety at risk.

## Police Response

The MPF is a professional agency, responsive and capable of managing crime and providing safety and security in Malta. MPF officers generally have a quick response time in populous areas, but callers in rural areas might experience some delay.

The police emergency lines in Malta are **112** and **119**. Authorities often contact the U.S. Embassy regarding incidents involving U.S. nationals.

## Transportation Security

### Road Safety

The leading causes of motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents involving U.S. nationals are driver error (e.g., unfamiliar road signs, unusual driving customs/courtesies) and pedestrian hazards; the former is usually due to unfamiliarity with right-side drive vehicles and practices, and simple confusion by motorists driving in a foreign country. For example, double parking is illegal, but the practice is an everyday occurrence on most streets. It is common for traffic to stop abruptly when a delivery truck parks in a travel lane to unload cargo, or when a driver places a car in reverse to parallel park. Pay attention to drivers who may change lanes abruptly to avoid a double-parked car. Right-of-way and yield laws are like those in the United States but can seem

awkward and confusing for drivers accustomed to driving in larger metropolitan areas, particularly at roundabouts. Unless you are traveling on a priority road, vehicles coming from the directional right have the right of way. All drivers should be familiar with navigating roundabout road junctions.

Traffic moves on the left side of the road. Road conditions vary significantly depending on use, illumination, and state of repair, but are generally fair to good. Exercise caution while traveling on older roads, particularly in smaller villages, due to narrow alleys and inexperienced or irresponsible drivers. Road conditions can and do deteriorate quickly even with small amounts of rain, creating slippery conditions. Many roads also experience washouts even during moderate rains. Consequently, minor and major traffic accidents occur frequently on many roadways, and delays can last hours.

Road construction and road wear also present unique safety challenges. This should continue with recent, large-scale infrastructure projects across the country. Potholes pock most secondary roads. Vegetation can grow up to and over the edge of the road, particularly during the rainy season, causing a lack of visibility on bends and concealing hazards at the side of the road. Stone walls, some of which reach great height, usually ring secondary roadways, and may limit a driver's field of vision.

Traffic enforcement practices are lax, and the resulting road culture reflects a more cavalier attitude, often resulting in fender benders and occasional serious accidents. Drivers involved in traffic accidents should attempt to exchange insurance information with the other party and summon a traffic warden. Local law does require operators involved in a road traffic accident to remain at the scene and not move their cars until police or a local traffic warden arrive to make a report. Drivers (and rental cars) must carry a front-to-rear collision form in their vehicle. You can obtain this form from the website of most local insurance companies.

Talking/texting on a cell phone while driving is illegal and highly inadvisable. Fines for the use of mobile devices and other infractions can in some cases reach over €200 for a first offense.

Electric scooter (e-scooters) riders must be 18 and hold a valid driving license and third-party insurance, just as with other power-assisted road vehicles. When used on the road, scooter riders must follow all relevant traffic signs. E-scooters are banned from arterial roads, underpasses, and tunnels (with fines of up to €500) but allowed in urban areas and cycle lanes.

Thieves can and do snatch valuables through open car windows, though this is very rare. Do not get out of the car if there are suspicious looking persons nearby; instead, drive away. Be suspicious of anyone who hails you or tries to get your attention while you are in/near your car.

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

The most common form of mass transportation is the bus. Buses are reliable, and there is an app to track their location and estimated time of arrival. However, in the summer months, buses operating on popular routes are often crowded beyond capacity. This might result in a bus arriving at the stop on time without room for additional passengers, resulting in additional wait time. Also note, pickpockets are active on crowded buses during the summer season.

Although Malta's fleet of buses is new, they are better suited for cities with larger roads. Bus drivers are known to drive aggressively; yield the right of way. Taxis are safe but expensive, and do not have meters. Agree on the charge with the driver in advance. Ride hailing apps like Bolt and Uber are very popular in Malta.

## Aviation Concerns

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the Government of Malta's Civil Aviation Directorate as compliant with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Malta's air carrier operations.

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

## Maritime Security

Responsibility for maritime security is shared between the MPF, AFM, and Transport Malta. AFM handles Interdictions and rescues at sea. Malta's Civil Protection Department has a role in safety and fires at sea.

Malta runs a ferry service between the islands. There is also a ferry to Sicily. These ferries have a good safety record. Ferry service is often disrupted by rough sea conditions in winter.

## Travelers with Special Considerations

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

Malta's rule of law challenges are largely related to lengthy pre-trial inquiries, proceedings, and hearings. Trials typically last five to seven years and may contain lengthy and sometimes unpredictable delays between hearings. Foreign nationals can expect a denial of bail while a court case is ongoing, which can result in lengthy periods of pre-trial detention ranging from several months to several years. Obtaining no-fee legal aid can be a slow and difficult process, delaying already lengthy judicial proceedings. Malta's laws on the rights of arrestees are different from the U.S. For example, once you have contacted a lawyer, you lose your right to remain silent.

While corruption remains an area of concern more broadly, public sector corruption, including bribery of public officials, is not a significant challenge for U.S. firms operating in Malta. Maltese law provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and the government generally implements these laws effectively. The MPF, the Attorney General's Office, and the Permanent Commission against Corruption are responsible for combating official corruption.

Malta has taken significant steps over the years to combat corruption, including the establishment in 2002 of the Financial Intelligence Analysis Unit (FIAU) to support domestic and international law enforcement investigative efforts. In June 2024, the European Union adopted the Sixth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (6AMLD) and a new AML/CFT Regulation. Malta is expected to transpose this into national law by July 2027.

## Health Concerns

The medical emergency lines in Malta are **112** and **196**. Medical facilities are above average, and generally offer the standard of care available in most developed countries. Customer service standards are lower than in the United States, there are cultural differences regarding communication, and there may be long waiting times for non-urgent medical care. Medical care is available from private and government clinics and hospitals. Medical specialists are few. Medical clinic facilities provide limited, basic medical treatment; several major hospitals offer comprehensive medical treatment. Private hospitals generally offer better customer service, shorter wait times, and more amenities. Mater Dei is Malta's main government hospital. Though it offers full service, including a modern emergency room and trauma facilities, it can be crowded and difficult to navigate.

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 Malta. 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

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

## Issues Traveling with Medications

Pharmacies carry most prescription drugs. Many drugs are available without a prescription. However, plan accordingly and bring your needed prescriptions with you.

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

## Water Quality

There are no problems with water quality in Malta. Tap water is potable.

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 Malta.

## Cybersecurity

Computer-related crime continues to be an area of concern for Malta, as cybercrimes have risen significantly from a decade ago. This is due partly to the sophisticated nature of Malta's IT, online gaming and financial services sectors, where continued growth is expected.

The Malta Information and Technology Agency publishes an annual National Cyber Security Strategy.

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 Issues

There are no counterintelligence issues specific to private-sector operations in Malta.

## Import/Export Restrictions

Customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning currency restrictions and temporary importation into or export from Malta items such as firearms, antiquities, or any item that might be deemed to have resale value. Customs authorities encourage the use of an ATA Carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes.

There are no known restrictions on the import and use of satellite phones.

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](#).*