



OSAC Country Security Report Uzbekistan

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

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

U.S. Embassy Tashkent

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OSAC Country Chapters

The Tashkent Country Chapter includes member organizations from the private sector and educational institutions. The main point of contact for OSAC issues is the Regional Security Officer.

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

Uzbekistan 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 Uzbekistan.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tashkent 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 Uzbekistan.

To reach police services in Uzbekistan, dial **102** on a local phone; to reach fire services dial **101**. Dialing **1050** reaches the Ministry of Emergency Situations, where you can report all other critical incidents.

The Government of Uzbekistan does not release accurate crime statistics; most data comes through informal sources. Most of the information on major crimes, corruption cases, and

religious extremism is considered as “for internal use.” There are no official statistics reported for vehicle theft (including carjacking), but unofficial reports advise that it does occur.

Violent crimes against foreign victims are rare but can occur, particularly in larger cities and late at night. Travelers in urban areas should take the same precautions they would in any major U.S. city. When traveling at night, stay in well-lit areas, move in groups, maintain a low profile, and avoid displaying large amounts of cash. Be mindful of pickpockets in public places such as tourist sites, train stations, and markets. Taxis, including My Taxi app drivers, are regularly used at all hours of the day and provide reliable transportation for travelers. If traveling alone at night, it is always a good practice to let someone know which taxi you are getting into and your expected arrival time.

Uzbekistan remains a predominately cash economy; U.S. travelers should prepare to pay for goods and services in Uzbek’s national currency, the som. Establishments often do not accept international credit cards or U.S. ATM cards, and ATMs regularly run out of cash. Vendors and banks frequently reject U.S. cash that is not “crispy” (i.e., clean, no wrinkles, no marks).

Corruption is endemic in the public and private sectors. There is a substantial risk of fraud outside of major establishments and banks. Anyone engaging in black market currency exchange risks receiving counterfeit bills, as well as detainment, interrogation, or arrest.

Unofficial news outlets and informal sources report violent crimes in some of the more impoverished areas of Tashkent, including some parts of Sergeli, Chilanzar, and Hamza districts, and around the Chorsu Market in the Old City. Unsolved property and violent crimes are more common in these areas.

According to the Internal Affairs Ministry, almost 60% of offenses occurred in Tashkent, Tashkent region, Bukhara region, Samarkand region, and Fergana region. The number of crimes committed by minors remains high in some regions; 65% of these crimes were committed in Fergana, Tashkent, Namangan and Bukhara regions, according to local police.

Nightclubs frequented by foreign clientele are targets for illicit activity and have previously been the focus of law-enforcement operations. Simultaneous raids on these and similar establishments occurred frequently up until 2018. During such raids, authorities used a loosely enforced curfew to detain patrons for document verification and questioning, often taking several hours. In 2018, there were several violent incidents at nightclubs in Tashkent.

Kidnapping Threat

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

While kidnappings have occurred in Uzbekistan, the U.S. Embassy is not aware of any recent instances of kidnapping involving the expatriate community.

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tashkent as being a **MEDIUM**-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 Uzbekistan.

The greatest concern at present is lone individuals radicalized online by groups such as the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) and recruited to conduct attacks inside Uzbekistan. No terror attacks have occurred in Uzbekistan since 2004. While the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) extremist organizations are still concerns within Uzbekistan, the current level of extremist activity in Uzbekistan is low. In the past, these groups have conducted kidnappings, assassinations, and suicide bombings. In addition to al-Qa’ida (AQ) and the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM/ETIP), such groups that were once active in the region were undermined by the international fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and the government of Uzbekistan’s aggressive efforts to stigmatize religious participation other than cultivated government-approved religious practices and symbols. As a result, few radical groups have the capacity to operate in Uzbekistan or along its border. Nonetheless, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries remain concerned about the possibility of spillover of radicalized individuals from neighboring Afghanistan. Uzbek security and law enforcement bodies proactively investigate individuals suspected of radicalization or terrorism support; human rights advocates and opposition activists may also be accused of suspected affiliation with radical groups.

According to the official website of Tashkent City Police Department, since the beginning of 2022, the activities of 4 groups, whose members have been associated with terrorist organizations such as Katiba Tawhid Wal-Jihad and the Islamic State in Syria, were detected and suppressed. According to the Tashkent Police Department, some suspects planned to carry out subversive activities in public places in Uzbekistan.

Despite the Government of Uzbekistan’s efforts to extinguish extremism, Uzbekistan was a significant source of foreign fighters from Central Asia in the Syrian Civil War. There is concern about the consequences of these individuals attempting to return to Uzbekistan; so far, Uzbekistan has repatriated more than 300 of its citizens from Iraq and Syria—all women and children, an unknown number of whom face charges of religious extremism and international terrorism. In the past five years, radicalized Uzbeks have also participated in a handful of significant terror attacks worldwide, including the attacks in Istanbul (2016, 2017), St. Petersburg (2017), Stockholm (2017), New York (2017), and Abu Dhabi (2024). In 2022, through diplomatic cooperation with other countries, 59 wanted fighters and supporters of terrorist organizations have been detained and deported to Uzbekistan.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Tashkent 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 Uzbekistan. 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

Uzbekistan remains relatively stable politically and the political system is tightly controlled. The country held its seventh presidential election in July 2023. The incumbent President, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, overwhelmingly won re-election.

In June 2021, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty reported that several Uzbek university students were discouraged from joining opposition political parties after Uzbek police allegedly visited campuses in the lead-up to the election. Before polls opened, RFE/RL staff members received numerous death threats online.

Protests & Demonstrations

While Uzbekistan’s constitutional provisions afford its citizens the right to hold rallies, meetings, and demonstrations, authorities can ban or suspend these rights on security grounds. While the potential for civil disturbance exists, demonstrations are rare. Authorities often shut down the occasional unapproved demonstration, typically consisting of less than a dozen people, in front of the General Prosecutor’s Office, Monument of Courage, the Supreme Court, and district courts in Tashkent. In regions outside Tashkent, larger demonstrations and road blockages occasionally occur against utility shortages or currency issues, with some attracting as many as 200 participants. Authorities usually disperse these quickly as well. Generally, civil unrest is uncommon due to the high degree of control held by the national and local governments.

The Uzbek government is strict about public events, especially when a foreigner is present. Foreign nationals should not give public speeches or engage in other public events, regardless of size, unless the Justice Ministry or a relevant government agency has authorized their participation in the event.

Though demonstrations are rare and typically peaceful, travelers should avoid them. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn unpredictable and violent. There is a significant risk that security authorities will use force to control the demonstration, and possibly even conduct follow-on investigations and criminal proceedings against demonstrators.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Members of various terrorist groups have expressed anti-U.S. sentiment and have attacked U.S. government interests in Central Asia previously, including U.S. Embassy Tashkent, and may attempt to target U.S. government or private interests in the region.

The Government of Uzbekistan maintains friendly relations with the U.S. Government. Expressions of anti-U.S. or anti-Western sentiment are rare; the U.S. remains a popular destination for business and leisure travel for Uzbek citizens.

Law Enforcement

The government authorizes four different entities to investigate criminal activity and provide security. The Internal Affairs Ministry controls police, who are responsible for law enforcement, maintenance of order, and the investigation of crimes. It also investigates and disciplines police officers if they are accused of human rights violations. The National Guard provides for public order and the security of diplomatic missions, radio and television broadcasting, and other state entities. The State Security Service, whose chairperson reports directly to the president, deals with national security and intelligence matters, including terrorism, corruption, organized crime, border control, and narcotics. The Prosecutor General's Office is mandated to protect the rights and freedoms of citizens and legally protected interests of the state, to conduct preliminary investigations of crimes, and to prosecute persons and entities accused of crimes. Authorities occasionally detain bloggers and activists arbitrarily.

Tourist police are specially assigned to aid visitors and prevent offenses against them at sightseeing and cultural sites. You may see tourist police officers patrol areas by foot and in specially marked police vehicles. Tourist police units operate out of the regional police headquarters in Samarkand, Bukhara, Khorezm, and Kashkadarya.

While local police are available to respond to a call, there is little investigative ability to solve crimes primarily due to limited training, funding, and equipment. Police training and equipment is often below U.S. standards. Police reportedly will solicit bribes to supplement their salaries or may readily accept bribes when offered. Very few local law enforcement officials speak English.

In 2018, Uzbekistan reestablished the National Guard to ensure public order and security in cities nationwide. The National Guard patrols the streets in conjunction with local police forces.

Police Response

Travelers to Uzbekistan are subject to frequent document inspections. Travelers should have proper identity documents or a copy of their passport with them and cooperate with police authorities if stopped for questioning.

The risk of abuse while in police custody is a potential danger. If police harass or detain a U.S. citizen, or if a U.S. citizen is the victim of a crime, immediately report the incident to the American Citizen Services Unit (ACS) at +998-78-120-5450.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Uzbekistan, 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

While the U.S. Department of State has not designated Uzbekistan with a Risk of Wrongful Detention (“D”) Indicator on its Travel Advisory, it is always a good idea to have the Embassy's phone number readily available.

The law imposes criminal penalties for corruption by officials, though enforcement can be inconsistent. However, there are various reports each year of corrupt officials being charged or convicted.

Corruption is widespread in both the public and private sectors. Although laws address corruption, enforcement is often weak. Officials may attempt to extort payments for permits and licenses.

Cybersecurity

Travelers should have no expectation of privacy in any activities online. Keeping cyber security and anti-virus software updated is highly recommended. Authorities generally prohibit the personal use of drones in Uzbekistan.

Exercise caution with your electronic devices; try to keep them in your possession, keep firewalls and antivirus software active and updated, and use virtual private networks (VPNs) to protect your devices from unauthorized access.

Import/Export Restrictions

Customs regulations allow imports of up to \$2,000 in cash without customs declaration; travelers must declare any amount exceeding \$2,000 upon entry/exit into Uzbekistan. Save your customs declaration to show the amount of money declared upon entry into the country.

There are no restrictions on the import 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](#).