



Ukraine 2011 Crime and Safety Report

Riots/Civil Unrest; Crime; Terrorism

Europe > Ukraine

2/24/2011

Ukraine 2011 OSAC Crime and Safety Report

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Crime Threat

Ukraine continues to undergo significant economic, political, and social transformation. In March 2010, Ukraine experienced a change in government. There was a modicum of economic recovery in 2010. Despite continued economic hardship and political changes, the overall number of crimes reported to U.S. Embassy Kyiv continued to decrease slightly for the second year in a row. While this is a positive trend, it remains a fact that Ukraine's resident expatriate community and visiting tourists, including American citizens, continue to be the target of street crimes of opportunity and property crimes. The U.S. Department of State rates the crime threat in Ukraine as HIGH. The crime situation in Kyiv and throughout the country is aggravated considerably by widespread government corruption and inadequate law enforcement support. Unfortunately, there was no improvement with regard to corruption or inefficiency in the last year. The U.S. Embassy expects crime to remain a serious problem in 2011, in Kyiv and throughout Ukraine.

When compared to other Eastern European cities, the criminal threat in Kyiv does not appear to be significantly different. Kyiv is a big city with big city problems. The patterns observed in crimes reported to the U.S. Embassy indicate a significant percentage of incidents transpired on public transportation or in locations frequented by large numbers of foreign tourists. These incidents tended to be non-violent as street criminals in Ukraine are not prone to violence. In 2010, the majority of reported criminal activity consisted of petty theft (pick-pocketing, purse snatching) or fraud (see below). Incidents of hate crimes directed against non-Slavic ethnic and religious minorities (including the Orthodox Jewish community) continued to decrease, but remain a concern (see Hate Crimes below). Violent crime directed against foreigners is relatively uncommon.



Ukraine is still recovering from a severe economic crisis. The Ukrainian Hryvna has depreciated over 40 percent since 2008, with GDP growing 4.4 percent in 2010 after a 15.1 percent drop in 2009. In 2011, GDP is expected to continue to grow slowly (4 percent). Unemployment is currently running at 8.8 percent. These economic conditions continue to create conditions favorable to the criminal element, and crime remains the most significant day-to-day threat facing American citizens resident in or visiting Ukraine.

Fraud

Short-term visitors, including tourists who may not be entirely familiar with local customs or fluent in Ukrainian or Russian, remain more susceptible to street crime and confidence scams and are specifically targeted by criminals. The most common scam is the "Wallet Scam" (see below). Marriage and dating scams via the Internet are routinely reported. There have been numerous instances of American citizens being extorted for thousands of dollars by Internet contacts they thought were their friends, loved ones, or romantic interests. These **Internet scams** include lotteries, on-line dating or introduction services, and requests from a "friend" in trouble. Identity theft involving ATMs and credit cards is widespread. The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) considers Ukraine a hotbed of cyber crime activity. In recent years, U.S. law enforcement, including the FBI, the U.S. Secret Service (USSS), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), pursued a number of important joint cyber crime/identity theft investigations with Ukrainian law enforcement authorities. Due to corruption and the Ukrainian Government's inability to provide a Western-level police force, foreign visitors and residents must be prepared to exercise an increased level of awareness, implement precautions which would be appropriate for any large city in the United States or Europe, and review their personal security measures regularly.

"The Wallet Scam"

A very common confidence scam employed in Kyiv is the "Wallet Scam." In many cases, these incidents occur at locations frequented by foreigners, i.e., high-end hotels, Saint Sophia's Cathedral, Saint Michael's Cathedral, the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, Andriyivskyi Uzviz, etc.

There are many variations to this scam, but all involve an attempt to get the victim to pick up a wallet or a plastic bag containing currency. The typical scam involves a crook who "inadvertently" drops a wallet or a plastic bag in front of a potential victim. The crook then asks the victim if the wallet/bag belongs to him/her. More often, however, the victim picks the wallet/bag up and returns it to the person who "dropped" it. The criminal will then try to get the



victim to handle the money in the wallet/bag or will handle/count the currency himself.

After this, the criminal will state that money is missing and then loudly and aggressively (but in a non-violent manner) accuse the victim of stealing the money. The crook will threaten to call the police to panic the victim. Then a second person, again, another crook, interjects by introducing himself as a "police officer" and briefly showing "police identification" to the victim. The "police officer" will ask the victim to produce his or her wallet to ensure the victim did not take the money. The "police officer" will then count the money in front of the victim. As the victim did not take any money as claimed by the first crook, many victims hand over their wallets without hesitation to the "police officer." When the wallet is produced, the criminal(s) may grab it and flee, or more often, steal a large portion of the victim's money by sleight of hand.

If presented with the above scenario or any other variant (sometimes more than two criminals are involved), do not pick up the wallet or bag, and simply walk away, and do not engage the perpetrators in conversation. Foreigners are more likely to be confronted with this confidence scam because they do not know local laws and may not speak Ukrainian or Russian fluently. As in previous years, American citizens in 2010 were specifically targeted. There is no doubt that Ukrainian criminals will use the "Wallet Scam" in 2011 to continue to victimize unsuspecting foreigners.

Property Crime

Official Ministry of Internal Affairs crime statistics indicate a decrease in all categories of violent crime in 2010, but show a significant increase in the occurrence of theft, burglaries, and fraud. The main foreign targets for property crime are longer-term foreign residents including diplomats, business people, and persons with missionary groups and private voluntary organizations. Both violent and non-violent property crimes have been reported, albeit infrequently. The most common types of non-violent property crime affecting the resident expatriate community are vandalism, theft of personal property from parked vehicles, and residential burglaries. Violent property crimes are less frequent. In late December 2010, two U.S. Embassy contractors were violently assaulted and robbed in separate incidents, one victim was drugged prior to being beaten.

Hate Crime

While most foreigners do not encounter problems with violent crime in Ukraine, there is concern with racially-motivated attacks carried out by individuals associated with neo-Nazi, skinhead, and extreme nationalist groups. Over the past few years, hate crimes directed



against non-Slavic and religious minorities (especially members of the Orthodox Jewish community) increased through 2008, but have decreased in number in the last two years.

Victims have reported verbal harassment and discrimination as well as physical assaults resulting in serious injuries and sometimes death.

Although a majority of the reported victims are males from sub-Saharan African nations, past victims have included males and females from Asia, the Middle East, and Hispanic countries. Victims have also included members of the diplomatic community. Regardless of racial or ethnic background, all foreigners visiting or resident in Ukraine should be aware of hate crime in Ukraine and exercise an appropriate level of caution.

In 2009, a Caucasian U.S. citizen was assaulted on the Kyiv metro system by a group of skinheads who had targeted the American's Korean companion for assault. Incidents of non-violent police harassment and discrimination of minorities have been reported, as well. In 2008, plainclothes Ukrainian police officers assaulted and detained an American citizen simply because he was of African heritage. In non-violent incidents in 2010, as well as past years, uniformed police have harassed African American private citizens and U.S. Government employees simply because of their race. Asian Americans have also reported police harassment.

In 2010, a U.S. citizen reported that he had been assaulted by an intoxicated individual in a McDonalds in Kyiv, when he was mistaken to be Jewish. Another Caucasian U.S. citizen reported that he and his colleague of Jordanian citizenship were temporarily detained by police while walking in downtown Kharkiv. They were released after paying the officers a "fine" of UAH 200. Americans who are the subjects of official or other violent/nonviolent harassment should report such incidents to the American Citizen Services section of the U.S. Embassy.

The police and government's slow response to hate crimes is a serious and continuing concern. Although senior Government of Ukraine officials have publicly deplored these hate crimes and groups behind them, Ukrainian street-level law enforcement officials are either unwilling or are unable to deter hate crimes effectively or protect racial minorities adequately.

Road Safety

Vehicles in Ukraine are left-hand drive and drive on the right-hand side of the road, the same as in the United States. Traffic in Kyiv is heavy on weekdays during commute hours, and routine travel within the city during workdays is often delayed due to heavy, unexpected (and often, inexplicable) traffic patterns. In Kyiv, main thoroughfares are usually well-lit and



maintained, but side streets and less commonly used avenues are often poorly illuminated, narrow, and less well maintained. During heavy snowfall, snow removal can be haphazard especially along secondary roads. The subsequent snowfall and ice build-up can cause considerable traffic delays and parking problems.

Driving in Kyiv can be a challenge to foreigners. Traffic laws are routinely disregarded by local drivers (i.e., excessive speeding, driving the wrong way on one-way streets, driving in oncoming lanes to maneuver around blocked traffic, and driving on sidewalks). Using sidewalks for parking is an accepted practice, and pedestrians, especially those walking with small children, should exercise caution. Cars also routinely drive on sidewalks, especially in central Kyiv, moving to and from sidewalk parking, much of it illegal. Ukrainian drivers will also stop in busy traffic lanes to frequent roadside kiosks or to pick-up or drop off passengers; pedestrians often cross busy streets without hesitation. Drivers should be prepared to stop on short notice. Defensive driving is a fundamental rule that should always be observed.

Road conditions deteriorate rapidly outside Kyiv. Although there are some modern highways which connect main cities (for example, the highway from Kyiv to Odesa), a majority of these roads are in poor condition. In winter months, snow removal outside of Kyiv is rudimentary. Construction hazards are not always well marked. Most highways and roads in smaller towns are not illuminated, and emergency services are not reliable or prompt. Therefore, it is recommended to drive outside of Kyiv only during daylight hours. Visitors should plan any driving trips accordingly.

Political Violence

Historical Perspective

The Embassy's Chancery compound was the site of approximately nine anti-American protests and demonstrations in 2010, organized by various groups. Demonstrations ranged in size from eight people to 100. All demonstrations were peaceful and concluded without incident. The only other anti-American/NATO protest in 2010 not conducted at the Chancery occurred in Odesa during U.S. warship visits to the Black Sea port for a joint exercise. The largest anti-American protest in recent memory occurred at the Chancery compound on March 2008, to protest the April visit of President Bush to Kyiv. Approximately 2,500 individuals protested peacefully without incident.

Despite these protests, there is no widespread, organized anti-American political movement in Ukraine. Certain groups do espouse anti-American rhetoric and/or are opposed to U.S. "encroachment." These groups tend to be regionally based (for example, in Crimea); are very



issue-specific (the Cuban 5 for the Cuban-Ukrainian Friendship association); or have an aging and diminishing demographic base (the Communist Party of Ukraine). As a result, these groups do not have widespread support throughout the country; certainly none of the major political leaders or their parties condones an anti-American platform. The U.S. Embassy does not expect that the level, frequency, or scope of anti-American rhetoric and/or protests will change considerably from 2010 levels. Politically-motivated anti-American demonstrations are always a security concern. As in any foreign country, it is advisable for American citizens to avoid all demonstrations.

Regional Terrorism and Organized Crime

Regional or indigenous terrorism is not currently considered to be a major threat in Ukraine. There were no reports of terrorist acts or terror-related arrests in Ukraine in 2010. In October 2009, Ukrainian law enforcement authorities in Crimea arrested five individuals who may have ties to the Egyptian-based extremist organization, Al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah. Based upon information provided to the Embassy, it did not appear that this group was targeting any American interests in Ukraine.

In the past, harassment, extortion, protection rackets, and intimidation with ties to organized crime have been reported against American investors or business interests in Ukraine. In some cases, it appears that individuals with local commercial interests, who may have had links to organized crime groups, were behind these incidents. Although still a concern, these types of reported incidents have declined over the past few years. In 2010, there were no significant incidents reported to the Embassy of American businesses being targeted by organized crime in Ukraine. One American affiliated company reported receipt of an extortion letter threatening product tampering. American businesses have also reported problems with local government entities engaging in such practices as arbitrary termination or amendment of business licenses, and arbitrary "inspections" by tax, safety, or other officials that appear designed to harass.

American firms should continue to pay close attention to information protection when establishing operations in Ukraine. A heightened awareness of cyber crime is essential, as evidence strongly suggests that Ukrainian organized crime is actively supporting professional cyber criminals. As noted previously, U.S. law enforcement agencies are working very closely with their Ukrainian Government counterparts in this area. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) unsealed an indictment involving the global theft and sale of more than 40 million credit card numbers from nine major U.S. commercial firms. The indictment charged eleven perpetrators including three Ukrainian citizens. This is the largest hacking and identity theft case ever prosecuted by the U.S. DOJ. One of the Ukrainian suspects, now in a Turkish



prison, is considered to be a major figure in transnational cyber crime enterprises. This individual operated entirely on-line from Ukraine. New U.S.-Ukrainian criminal cyber crime joint investigations were opened in 2010 by the FBI and USSS and are on-going. U.S. law enforcement anticipates expanded cooperation and joint investigations in 2011.

Transnational Terrorism

Transnational terrorism is not currently considered to be major threat in Ukraine. This assessment takes into account historical data relevant to terrorist activities in Ukraine, as well as current and projected Ukrainian law enforcement and security service anti terrorist activities. Nevertheless, travelers should be aware of the U.S. Department of State's periodic Worldwide Caution Public announcement reemphasizing the continued threat of terrorist actions and violence against Americans and interests overseas. Public announcements and the Consular Information Sheet for Ukraine are available on the Department of State website at <https://www.travel.state.gov>

Ukraine did not suffer from transnational terrorism incidents in 2010. Furthermore, there have been no recorded acts of transnational terrorism committed on Ukrainian territory to date. Admittedly, Ukraine's borders are porous and transnational terrorist groups potentially could exploit them. To counter this, the Ukrainian Government is taking steps, with U.S assistance, to improve border security.

Civil Unrest

Ukraine has been largely free of significant civil unrest or disorder, with the significant exception of the November-December 2004 Orange Revolution. In late 2009 and early 2010, a number of political demonstrations were held in the center of Kyiv in the lead-up to the presidential elections in February 2010, with several hundred to several thousand participants. Most protests in the past year were in response to domestic political developments in Ukraine and not directed against U.S. interests. Although these protests caused significant traffic disruptions within the center of Kyiv, such disruptions rarely lasted more than a few hours after the conclusion of each event. There were no significant incidents of violence reported to have occurred during these protests.

Post-specific Concerns

Earthquakes and Floods



Ukraine does not suffer from earthquakes. Flooding routinely occurs in the spring in western Ukraine, particularly in the Carpathian Mountains during the spring thaw. In summer 2008, there was serious and widespread flooding in Ukraine that resulted in significant damage and loss of life. Flooding again occurred in 2009 and 2010, but not at 2008's levels. There are no other major natural disasters that routinely occur in Ukraine.

Industrial and Transportation Accidents

Radiation and Nuclear Safety:

In 1986, the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (unit no. 4), located ninety kilometers northwest of Kyiv, experienced an explosion and fire, followed by an uncontrolled release of radiation. The accident resulted in the largest short-term, accidental release of radioactive materials in the atmosphere ever recorded. The highest areas of radioactive ground contamination occurred within thirty kilometers of the Chernobyl station. A favorable wind direction kept most of the contamination away from Kyiv, although the capital city was not spared completely. The Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant's last operating reactor closed officially on December 15, 2000.

Ukraine has fifteen operating commercial nuclear reactors, but none are of the Chernobyl design. The United States has provided extensive assistance to enhance nuclear and operational safety of these reactors. All identified stabilization measures on the existing sarcophagus are complete. Construction of the new structure around the existing sarcophagus started in 2009 and is currently scheduled for completion in 2014. With the 25th anniversary of the accident in April 2011, there will be commemorative events attended by high ranking international visitors, as well as a related donor's conference to solicit financial commitments for funding a new containment structure.

Food that exceeds European norms for radiation is confiscated and destroyed. The Ukrainian government has an effective program of monitoring fresh foods and meats sold in local markets. Street purchase of produce should be avoided. Wild berries, mushrooms, and wild fowl and game should be avoided, as these have been found to retain higher than average levels of radiation. Background levels of radiation are monitored regularly by the U.S. Embassy and other organizations and to date, have not exceeded levels found on the Eastern seaboard of the United States.

In the event of any accident at a nuclear power station, the U.S. Embassy has the capability to confirm local government reporting of background radiation levels and food contamination. The Embassy continuously monitors the radiological and operational conditions at Ukrainian



nuclear facilities. Radiation measurements at all U.S. Embassies in Eastern Europe following the 1986 Chornobyl accident did not warrant the evacuation of U.S. Government employees or their dependents, including pregnant women and children. Flying and other modes of transportation used to evacuate people when nuclear material may be in the air can present a greater hazard than staying in place. If external radiation levels are high enough to require evacuation, the U.S. Embassy will notify the American community via the Embassy's warden system. On-line registration is available at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>

Transportation Accidents:

Due to heavy traffic and local driving habits, vehicle accidents are common. In Ukraine, motorists involved in vehicle accidents are not permitted to move the vehicles unless it presents a clear safety concern. Fender-benders routinely tie up traffic. Police must be notified and will go to the accident location to conduct the investigation. Persons should be prepared to wait until the police arrive and complete their report. Due to traffic and slow police response, it may take up to several hours for police to arrive, especially outside of Kyiv. When police arrive, they will ascertain responsibility, take the drivers' personal information, and file a report of the accident.

There was a bus/train collision in the Dnepropetrovsk region in October 2010 with 42 casualties. No significant aviation accidents occurred in Ukraine in 2010.

Kidnappings

Kidnapping is not a common occurrence in Ukraine and is not considered a major security issue. There are no notable instances of kidnapping which occurred in 2010.

Drugs and Narcoterrorism

Combating narcotics trafficking is a national priority, but limited budget resources hamper Ukraine's ability to effectively counter this threat. In addition, coordination between law enforcement agencies responsible for counter-narcotics continues to be stilted due to regulatory and jurisdictional constraints as well as bureaucratic intransigence.

Ukraine is not a major drug producing country; however, it is located astride several important drug trafficking routes into Europe. Ukraine's ports on the Black and Azov Seas, its extensive river transportation routes, its porous northern and eastern borders, and its inadequately financed Border and Customs Agencies make Ukraine an attractive route for drug traffickers. In recent years, Ukrainian Government law enforcement and security agencies, working with



the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), seized hundreds of pounds of heroin being smuggled from Afghanistan to Europe via Ukraine's Black Sea ports, which serve as major transit points. Notably, in 2010, Ukrainian Customs officials at the port of Odesa, in cooperation with U.S. Government agencies, made three significant cocaine seizures originating from South America: on June 29, 152 KG concealed in wood flooring were seized; on July 3, 600 KG concealed in scrap metal were seized; and July 29, 1,193 KG concealed in smelter furnaces were seized. The latter seizure represented the largest cocaine seizure in Europe in the last decade.

There are no known links between transnational terrorist and narcotics organizations in Ukraine; and in 2010, there were no charges or allegations of corruption of senior public officials relating to drugs or drug trafficking.

Police Response

General Evaluation of Police Support for Foreigners Who Are Crime Victims

Although criminal activity in Ukraine directed against foreigners is likely comparable with similar Eastern European countries, the underlying issue of why criminal activity remains a serious concern is due to the lack of adequate Ukrainian police enforcement and response as noted previously. In general, Ukrainian law enforcement agencies do not meet U.S./Western European standards, and their ability to deter street-level criminal activity is low, as is their ability to adequately investigate criminal incidents. Street criminals will have the initiative and advantage, and this situation is not expected to change. With the UEFA Euro 2012 tournament scheduled to take place in Ukraine in summer 2012, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has pledged to train large numbers of police to speak basic English, which would be a positive development. However, rather than relying on the "beat cop," foreigners instead should maintain an increased level of security awareness and rely upon their intuition and use common sense.

Corruption is a tremendous problem in Ukraine (Transparency International's 2010 corruption perceptions index lists Ukraine as 134th out of 178 surveyed countries; the Ukrainian Judiciary tied for first place in the world as most corrupt). Regrettably, Ukrainian law enforcement agencies are often part of the problem, rather than a part of the solution. In the 2010 IFES public opinion poll sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), "the police" and "the judiciary" remained in the top three of least trusted/most corrupt government institutions. Low salaries, inadequate training, poor working conditions, and shortages of basic equipment contribute greatly to systemic internal corruption and general ineffectiveness. As previously noted, police ineffectiveness and negligence in response to



countering or investigating hate crimes is especially troubling. The police response to the report of rape by a private U.S. citizen in Lviv in 2010 was poor, highlighting the difference in standards to Western policing. Police units rarely have English-language capability, even among officials working in units designated to combat crimes against foreign nationals. As a result, reporting a crime to the police is often a difficult and lengthy process. Subsequent follow-up to determine the status of a case often requires lengthy visits to police stations.

Despite this, the U.S. Embassy recommends that Americans report crimes to the police, as well as to the U.S. Embassy. In the event that Ukrainian police will not accept a crime report, the Consulate's American Citizen Services (ACS) can forward the complaint to the police. Reporting a crime is also advisable even if time has elapsed since the crime occurred, as criminals often repeat the same crime within the same general locale. Finally, a police report also is strongly recommended when an American passport has been lost or stolen.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

Under Ukrainian law, individuals are required to carry personal identification documents at all times, and it is common for local law enforcement to stop persons on the street to conduct identification checks. Unlike the United States, no "probable cause" is required. Therefore, the U.S. Embassy recommends that you carry your passport at all times. For foreigners, often these police identification checks are simply an excuse to elicit bribes, extort money, or harass minorities.

Harassment or detention by police should be reported to the Embassy at (044) 490-4000 or to the Embassy's Consulate at (044) 490-4445, as soon as possible. Ukrainian authorities are required to notify the U.S. Embassy within 72 hours of the detention of a U.S. citizen. If detained by police, it is strongly recommended that you ask (and continue to ask) for access to the U.S. Embassy as soon as possible.

Where to Turn for Assistance if you Become a Victim of a Crime and Local Police Telephone Numbers:

If you become a victim of a crime in Ukraine, you may contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance:

U.S. Consular Section
6 Mykoly Pymonenka St., 01901 Kyiv, Ukraine
Telephone: (38-044) 490-4422, fax (38-044) 486-3393



American Citizen Services unit telephone: (38-044) 490-4445, fax (38-044) 490-4040

U.S. Embassy
10 Yuriy Kotsyubynsky St. 01901 Kyiv, Ukraine
Telephone: (38-044) 490-4000.

Although there is no comparable "911" service in Ukraine, the general fire emergency telephone number is "101"; the police emergency number is "102"; the ambulance/emergency medical services number is "103." These numbers can be used in Kyiv and in major cities, however there may not be an English speaking operator.

Medical Emergencies

Contact Information for Local Hospitals and Clinics:

American Medical Center:	(044) 490-7600
Medikom Clinic:	0-55 or (044) 432-8888
Boris Clinic:	(044) 238-0000
City Emergency Hospital:	(044) 518-0629

There are no hospitals in Ukraine that provide a level of medical care equal to that found in American hospitals or which accept American health insurance plans for payment. Travelers to Ukraine are recommended to purchase insurance which covers air ambulance evacuation services from Ukraine. In addition, travelers who have chronic medical conditions which require medication should bring enough medicine to Ukraine because medicine may not be readily available in-country. Travelers may wish to review further medical advice for conditions in Ukraine at www.cdc.gov

In Kyiv, the American Medical Center (AMC) is a private clinic that offers its own health care insurance plan and, on a fee basis, provides basic Western-quality outpatient and diagnostic services. AMC provides direct billing only with the following insurance companies: Good Health, Bupa, Cigna International, Alliance, Etna, and Axa PPP.

For emergency services, such as mass or multi-trauma, major disaster, and mass casualty, City Emergency Hospital located at Bratislavska #3 on the Left (east) Bank of Kyiv would be used. City Hospital is a government facility, and there are no English speakers.

Two private clinics, Boris Clinic and Medikom Clinic, are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for life-threatening emergencies or if an individual needs immediate medical



assistance. Both clinics have English speaking receptionists on-call at all times. Boris and Medikom also offer 24-hour ambulance service. For general emergency ambulance assistance, dial "03"; however, there are no English speaking receptionists. Contact information for additional hospitals and clinics can be found at the Embassy's Consular website at http://kyiv.usembassy.gov/amcit_medical_eng.html.

The fastest way to secure Western medical care remains medical evacuation to Western Europe. This is a very expensive option, and assistance may not arrive until several hours after the need for care arises. Again, travelers should purchase medical evacuation insurance prior to travel or have access to substantial lines of credit to cover the cost of medical evacuation.

Air Ambulance Service

SOS:	8-10-7-495-937-6477 (24/7 phone)
EURO FLITE:	8-10-358-20-510-1911 or 358-20-510-1900 (24/7 phone)
MEDEX Assistance Corporation:	8-10-1-410-453-6330 (24/7 phone)
TRICARE/SOS (for U.S.military):	8-10-44-20-8762-8133

There are several European firms that provide private jet evacuations, and the AMC and Boris Clinic in Kyiv can organize and assist with evacuation for a fee. Aero medical evacuation companies that service Ukraine include: SOS, EURO FLITE, MEDEX Assistance Corporation, as well as TRICARE/SOS (for military personnel). Boris Clinic has a limited agreement with Tricare. Contact information for additional insurance and medevac companies can be found at the Embassy's Consular website at http://kyiv.usembassy.gov/amcit_medical_eng.html.

Travel Precautions

Local Crimes/Scams

As noted previously, "The Wallet Scam" remains the most common confidence scam used by criminals to victimize foreigners in Ukraine. To avoid being victimized, simply do not pick anything up. Hate crimes remain a concern as well. Increased awareness, common sense, and a regular review of your personal and residential security measures are strongly recommended.

Areas of Kyiv/Ukraine to be Avoided and Best Security Practices



There are no "off-limits" areas in Kyiv or in any other part of Ukraine. As noted, many reported petty criminal incidents occur on public transport in Kyiv, especially the metro system. In addition, many pick-pocketing incidents are also reported in those areas frequented by large groups of people or tourists.

For Kyiv and throughout Ukraine, common sense security precautions taken in any large city or Eastern European country would be prudent. To avoid becoming a victim of routine street crime, be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. When riding public transportation, where pick-pocketing and snatch thefts are a concern, keep purses, shoulder bags, and backpacks closed, in front of you, and tucked under your arm to prevent theft. Men are advised to place wallets in a front pocket while on public transportation to prevent pick-pocketing. It is recommended to maintain a low profile and to not carry large sums of cash. If possible, leave wallets or purses secured at your residence, and carry only necessary cash and identification in a front pocket. Refrain from carrying unnecessary items in your wallet or purse, such as credit cards, that you will not use. It is further recommended that you do not establish routine travel patterns or habits by varying your departure/arrival times and routes as much as possible between frequented locations.

The Embassy strongly recommends that all Americans visiting or residing in Ukraine register with the U.S. Consulate in Kyiv. Registration will permit the Consulate to contact American citizens quickly in the event of an in-country emergency. On-line registration is available at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

Embassy Contact Information

Country Code: 380
Kyiv City Code: 44

Regional Security Office: 490-4048
Embassy Kyiv General Number: 490-4000

Dialing instructions:
From another country: +38-044-490-4000
From within Ukraine: 044-490-4000

Embassy Kyiv Website: <http://kyiv.usembassy.gov>

OSAC Country Council



There is an OSAC Country Council in Kyiv, which is a committee of the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Ukraine. The current country council chair is the president of the AMCHAM. The Kyiv OSAC can be contacted through the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Officer, who is Co-Chair of the country council.