



Italy 2016 Crime & Safety Report: Rome

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Financial Security; Burglary; Rape/Sexual Violence; Cyber; Fraud; Religious Terrorism; Left-wing; Anarchist; Anti-American sentiment; Riots/Civil Unrest; Earthquakes

Europe > Italy; Europe > Italy > Rome

2/23/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: Medium

Crime Threats

The general crime rate in Italy, for most types of crime, is equal to or below the U.S. national average. Violent crime is lower than many cities of comparable size. The Regional Security Office, through information shared by our Italian law enforcement partners, has noted a small increase in non-violent crime over the last year.

American visitors are generally safe in Italy and are not targeted based on nationality; however, foreigners are easily recognized and often targeted for petty theft. Most crimes committed against Americans are petty theft, including pickpocketing and purse snatching. A common tactic is for one member of the group to distract a tourist by bumping into him/her or through other means while another member of the group steals the victim's valuables. Travel

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documents are a common item reported as stolen. The U.S. Embassy's American Citizens Services Section reported 907 U.S. passports stolen in 2015.

Other common non-violent crimes include: ATM fraud, break-ins (home and vehicle) and vehicle theft. The Italian National Police reported a 10 percent increase in break-ins and vehicle theft in Rome from 2014 to 2015. Vehicle break-ins are more likely to occur when parked on the street. Perpetrators will target electronics and other valuables left in plain sight or that are easily accessible.

The violent crime rate is lower than in the U.S. but does exist. American Citizens Services reported 18 cases of American citizens as victims of sexual assault.

Although relatively small in numbers, there have been incidents involving drivers being targeted by snatch-and-grab criminal activities. These incidents typically involve drivers being distracted by a criminal attempting to ask questions (directions, the time). With the window down, the driver has in some cases been pulled from their unlocked car and has had his vehicle stolen. In other instances, a distracted driver has pulled over and exited his vehicle, while an accomplice enters the unlocked passenger side, grabs personal belongs, and speeds away.

Cybersecurity Issues

Cybercrime is a growing concern to authorities. Sophisticated ATM fraud through skimming

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and cloning of cards are common tactics.

Other Areas of Concern

Areas identified as higher-risk for criminal activity include the area near the Termini Train Station, the Tor Bella Monaca, Romanina, San Basilio and Corviale areas.

Pickpocketing generally occurs in well-known tourist locations, densely populated areas, and public transportation hubs. Areas near the Coliseum, Roman Forum, Trevi Fountain, Termini Train Station, Trastevere, and near the Vatican are heavily-trafficked tourist areas that attract sophisticated pickpocket groups.

Residential burglaries, a majority of which take place when the resident is not present, occur at a higher rate in the Salaria-Parioli, Porta del Popolo, Vescovio, Villa Glori, Fleming ,and Vigna Clara areas.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

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Road conditions and road safety standards meet or exceed U.S standards except in the most remote areas. Roads are well maintained, and extensive lighting exists.

Driving in Italy and Rome can be a stressful experience. Traffic laws are rarely followed or strictly enforced. Traffic enforcement includes extensive use of cameras, but enforcement by local traffic officials is limited and inconsistent. Scooters and motorcycles do not often follow the rules of the road and are known to use the sidewalks and median to get around vehicles at traffic lights and in moving traffic. Drivers should drive defensively and be prepared to brake quickly and avoid scooters and other cars that can quickly cut across lanes to turn across traffic. Pedestrians frequently cross the street outside of cross walks.

American citizens are encouraged to lock vehicles and to not leave valuable items in plain view. It is recommended that cars be parked in a garage or in a well-illuminated area.

Vehicle accidents are common, and accidents involving pedestrians are also common. If an individual is involved in a traffic accident, please follow the processes listed below:

Car Accident With Injuries

Call 112 to inform the Emergency dispatcher of your location, details regarding injuries, your location, and details of the accident. Wait for emergency services to arrive. They will provide care and transport of the injured, reestablish traffic flow, and complete an accident report form. Make a note of the name and destination of any injured persons to be transported by ambulance from the scene. The police report will be helpful in this regard as well. **DO NOT** sign any documents that either are not clearly understood or do not conform to your grasp of

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the factors surrounding the accident.

Car Accident Without Injuries and No Agreement on the Facts Relating to the Accident

Call the police at 112. If vehicles are blocking traffic, Italian law requires the vehicles to be moved if possible. Before moving your vehicle, document the position of the vehicle by any means possible. Mark the four corners of the involved vehicles on the ground. Extensive photographs can help but should not be considered the sole source of evidence. Search for skid marks, broken glass, debris, or any other evidence that may help in determining the facts of the accident. Take photographs of all damage to both vehicles and pay particular attention to any pre-existing damage. Try to establish a third-party witness. Even if it is another motorist who cannot wait for the police to arrive, get a name and phone number of a witness who can be contacted by the police. Witness fabrication is common. Pay close attention to who was present at the accident scene and who is recorded on the police report as a witness. There have been reported cases of family members acting as witnesses to accident scenes who were not present. Wait for the authorities to arrive. They will document the accident scene, take statements from all parties/witnesses, and fill out the accident report.

Car Accident Without Injuries and Agreement on the Facts Relating to the Accident

If vehicles are blocking traffic, Italian law requires the vehicles to be moved if possible. Before moving your vehicle, document the position of the vehicle by any means possible. Mark the four corners of the involved vehicles on the ground. Extensive photographs can help but should not be considered the sole source of evidence. Search for skid marks, broken glass, debris, or any other evidence that may help in determining the facts of the accident. Take photographs of all damage to both vehicles and pay particular attention to any pre-existing damage. Complete the *Constatazione Amichevole di Incidente Automobilistico* (Agreed Statement of Facts on Motor Vehicle Accident). Give a copy to each party. Do not sign the completed form if there is disagreement regarding the version/sequence of events represented. Wait for the police to arrive and document the incident. Contact your insurance

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company, obtain guidance on how to send them the Constatazione Amichevole id Incidente Automobilistico and inquiry about further steps need regarding damages and related expenses.

Public Transportation Conditions

The overall public transportation system is modern and typical of many other large Western European systems. The public transportation network, from trains to Metro, trams, and buses, is an extensive and accepted means of travel. Public transportation or taxis are recommended for anyone inexperienced in driving in Rome. Travelers should be alert for transit strikes, which occur often and generally on a Friday.

The Regional Security Office has identified security concerns regarding the use of public transportation (primarily buses and trains) while in Rome. There are numerous reports of pickpocketing and purse slashing on public transportation. Buses and trains tend to be very crowded, and many victims do not realize that they have been robbed. Most crimes on public transportation are covert. Women have reported that their handbags were cut open and their valuables removed, while men have lost items from inner jacket pockets. ATAC Bus Route No. 64 from Termini to St. Peter's Basilica is a problematic route for skilled theft. Buses and metro cars are often crowded with tourists; therefore, vigilance is advised.

Several cases of sabotage against rail lines were reported in late 2014. These crimes appear to be the work of opponents to high-speed rail (TAV) and while aimed at infrastructure instead of occupied trains, infrastructure damage has the potential to endanger passengers.

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Authorized taxis are white and metered. Only use licensed taxis or a reputable transportation service.

Aviation/Airport Conditions

Several major U.S. airlines service the Rome Fiumicino airport, and airline safety is considered on par with other Western European countries.

Other Travel Conditions

There are numerous tour organizations that arrange travel throughout the country, with varying degrees of service. None are deemed off-limits.

Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: High

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Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

Information as of January 2016 suggests that ISIL, al-Qai'da, its affiliated organizations, and other terrorist groups continue to plan terrorist attacks against U.S. and Western interests in Europe. Authorities believe the likelihood of a terror attack in Europe has increased as European members of ISIL return from Syria and Iraq. There is a continuing threat in Europe from unaffiliated persons planning attacks inspired by major terrorist organizations but conducted on an individual basis. In the past several years, organized extremist attacks have been planned or carried out in Europe. European governments have taken action to guard against terrorist attacks, and some have made official declarations regarding heightened threat conditions.

Italy's concerns for terrorism are exacerbated by its proximity to North Africa and the Middle East. Additionally, Italy has figured prominently in the rhetoric of groups (ISIL, al-Qai'da, al-Shabaab). Milan and northern Italy are home to large Muslim communities with ongoing concerns of radicalization. Italy has a robust counter-terrorism program and are actively monitoring known/suspected foreign fighters and terrorists.

In support of security for the Catholic Church's Jubilee celebration and in response to the terrorist attacks in Paris and increased threat reporting of terrorist activity in Europe, the Italian government established Operation Safe Streets (Operazione Strade Sicure). Under the leadership of the Questore of Rome, the Italian Army has deployed over 2,000 soldiers to protect sensitive areas, including diplomatic facilities, metro/train stations, tourist areas, international schools, and other areas that experience large gatherings of people.

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Italy also faces several indigenous terrorist groups and radical elements, primarily consisting of left-wing and anarchist movements. Government institutions and diplomatic facilities have received bomb threats and actual explosive devices. Buildings/offices are sometimes the targets of firebombs or Molotov cocktails, although generally at night; such incidents are instigated by organized crime or anarchist movements.

Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

Most citizens and residents appear to have a positive view of the U.S. Anti-American rhetoric comes from small groups opposing specific programs (Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) satellite communications system, proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP)). The U.S. Tri-Mission in Rome, though not recently, has been a target of anti-American demonstrations. Companies that are experiencing labor disputes are also a common target.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

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Public demonstrations happen frequently. Many demonstrations involve internal Italian politics or Italian unions. All demonstrations must have a valid permit and be approved by the local police. Usually, demonstrations are well-controlled and under the tight supervision of the police. There are several common locations for demonstrations:

The Ministry of Economic Development on Via Molise

The Ministry of Labor on Via Veneto

The Ministry of Economy and Finance on Via XX Settembre

U.S. Embassy (anti-U.S. Foreign Policy), and

Piazza del Popolo or Piazza della Repubblica in Rome, Piazza San Giovanni, and Circo Massimo

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

Rome has not experienced earthquakes in the recent past. Some areas in the region (the far eastern portion of Lazio, the western parts of Abruzzo) have experienced significant seismic activity.

Critical Infrastructure Concerns

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Emergency response services will likely be disrupted significantly if there is a catastrophic event. A personal plan to overcome an expected disruption is recommended.

Police Response

Police response and services throughout Italy are good.

Crime Victim Assistance

Military Police, (Carabinieri) throughout Italy - 112

Police, Rome (Polizia di Stato) - 113

Fire Department, Rome (Vigili del Fuoco) - 115

Ambulance, Rome, (First Aid only) – 118

On January 21, 2016 the government introduced a unified emergency number system (Numero Unico Emergenza – NUE): 112. This is a Europe-wide initiative and is in now use throughout Italy. The switchboard operators receive emergency calls and will dispatch assistance (Police, Carabinieri, Ambulance, Fire assets). Though the new system is

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operational the 113, 118, and 115 numbers will also remain fully operational. There is no defined date established for when these numbers will no longer function.

Providing assistance to Americans during a crisis abroad, such as political upheaval or a natural disaster, is one of the most critical tasks a Consular staff performs. During a crisis, Consular staff will look for missing Americans and help Americans return to the U.S., among many other duties to assist Americans. Consular staff advise and help Americans who are in serious legal, medical, or financial trouble, including health emergencies, arrests, deaths, missing persons, and destitution. Americans who are in distress should contact the American Citizens Services:

American Embassy Rome

Via Vittorio Veneto 119

00187 Roma

Embassy Operator: (39) 06-4674-1

Marine Post One: (39) 06-4674-2112

Police/Security Agencies

The Polizia di Stato (state police) and the Carabinieri (military police) are well trained and equipped. These two police groups offer the full range of police services.

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Medical Emergencies

Contact Information for Recommended Local Hospitals and Clinics

Hospital Contact Information (Rome)

Policlinico University Hospital (Pronto Soccorso) Umberto I

Viale del Policlinico

Tel: 06-4997-9514/9515

Switchboard: 06-4997-1

Universita' Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Policlinico Gemelli

Via Pineta Sacchetti 644

Telephone: 06-30151

Bambino Gesu' Pediatric Hospital

Piazza S. Onofrio 4

Tel: 06-68591

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Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For additional information on vaccination and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/italy>

OSAC Country Council Information

Rome, Florence, and Milan have active OSAC Country Councils. You can email the Rome OSAC Country Council at DS_RSO_Rome@state.gov for information or to request to join the mailing list. To reach the OSAC Europe team, email OSACEUR@state.gov.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

Via Veneto 119/A

00187 Rome, Italy

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Working Hours: Mon-Fri, 8:30 am 5:30 p.m. Closed Saturday, Sunday, and American and Italian holidays.

Embassy Contact Numbers

Regional Security Office: (39) 06-4674-2175

Embassy Operator: (39) 06-4674-1

Marine Post One: (39) 06-4674-2112

Website: <http://italy.usembassy.gov/>

Nearby Posts

Consulate Milan: <http://milan.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Florence: <http://florence.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Naples: <http://naples.usconsulate.gov/>

Virtual Presence Post San Marino: <http://sanmarino.usvpp.gov/>

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Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Scams

One common scam involves criminals who ask for directions, and while the victim is offering assistance, another criminal covertly takes a piece of luggage. Other techniques may involve a thief intentionally spilling mustard, yogurt, or soda on the victim and then apologizing profusely and helping the victim clean up while an accomplice is relieving the victim of valuables. Thieves offer assistance to a person struggling with bags or strollers, picking up one of the bags and disappearing into the crowd. Use extra caution while in/around train stations. The large crowds and chaotic atmosphere provide an ideal environment for criminals.

Situational Awareness Best Practices

Be cognizant of your surroundings. Know where you need to go and walk with a purpose. Do not give the impression that you are lost or wandering. There is evidence that criminals will observe these vulnerabilities and target these individuals. Keep control of personal items. While waiting in line, keep luggage close. Pay special attention to your actions and your surroundings to avoid becoming a victim of pickpocketing. Extra care and attention should be taken when visiting tourist areas. Make a copy of the passport data page; carry the paper copy instead.

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Visitors are advised to exercise heightened security awareness while visiting public parks, especially after dark. While they are attractive locations for exercise, in twilight or evening hours, it is a good idea to travel with another person or with a group. Do not venture down isolated or dark alleyways.

Dress conservatively and leave high-priced items in a secure location. If possible, leave wallet or purse in the hotel safe. Do not carry large sums of cash. If you normally carry a wallet, put it in a front pocket. When carrying a purse/bag, tucking it under one arm is insufficient. It is recommended that it be carried fastened or zipped and in front. Block access to bag with the sides with your arms. Do not leave a purse/bag over the back of a chair at a restaurant, watch that no one kicks the bag/purse out from under the table at a restaurant, and be particularly vigilant of where belongings are placed at sidewalk cafés.

It is recommended that you tell children before a trip that their cooperation will be helpful in train stations and at airports to help ensure everyone's safety and ease of travel. Families become a prime target if children are uncooperative and attention is focused on controlling them.

Consult with credible local experts and local law enforcement to ensure your business interests are not impacted, infiltrated by, or inadvertently doing business with a criminal organization.

It is recommended that American citizens use ATMs attached to or inside of a physical bank as opposed to a stand-alone machine.

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Residents should always fully lock their doors and close their blinds when they are not present.

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