



## U.S. Embassy Valletta Malta

### Security Message for U.S. Citizens: Street Safety and Awareness

#### 27 May 2016

It is important to maintain a balanced outlook regarding crime in Malta. Although relatively safe, Malta is still prone to criminal activities. Citizens should remain extra vigilant in areas of heightened concern. Areas with crime rates at five times the national rate include St. Julians, St. Pauls Bay, Ta' Xbiex, Sliema, Floriana, Valletta and Mdina.

The St. Julians area, specifically Paceville, remains the most significant area for criminal activity. Citizens should exercise caution when visiting this area. Over the past months, violent fights have occurred in the Paceville area, at times involving bladed and/or improvised weapons. One recent incident resulted in the death of a Colombian national. Paceville, with a dense population of nightclubs, bars, "gentleman's clubs" and restaurants, is known for excessive alcohol consumption and heavy-handed tactics of nightclub "bouncers." There have also been reported incidents of "spiked drinks" leading to theft and assault.

So, what can you do to minimize the risks?

- Stay alert! Be aware of any risks as early as possible and if you sense possible danger, immediately take action to avoid it.
- Avoid confrontation, especially when alcohol is involved. Just walk away.
- If you feel at all threatened by someone, act immediately – move away/cross the road, preferably towards areas where there are other people.
- Don't make yourself an easy target for criminals. Keep valuables out of sight. Make sure at least one hand is free and you can move easily.
- Alcohol can inhibit your judgment and reaction time to a threat.
- Be cognizant of where the danger spots may be along your route, and how you can avoid them (e.g. walking in the road or in deserted or poorly lit areas).
- Always try to ensure someone knows where you are going and when to expect your return.
- Always phone or text from a safe place and not when you are walking along the street. Don't make yourself a target by being distracted.
- If carrying a bag, place it on the non-road side and/or in front of you where you have control of it. Do not place the strap across your chest.
- Keep wallets and/or phones in your front pockets.
- Have your keys ready when you approach your building so you may enter quickly and not spend time fumbling in bags or packets.
- Know where the local police stations or potential safe havens are in the areas you visit.
- Never return directly home if you are, or suspect you are, being followed. Go directly to a police station or, alternatively, a public place where you can then call for assistance.

For further information:

- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for the [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts.
- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
- The [U.S. Embassy in Malta](#) is located at Ta'Qali National Park, Attard, ATD4000 (+356 2561 4000). If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance *outside of business hours*, **the emergency after-hours number for the U.S. Embassy is (+ 356 2561 4000).**