

Special Event Threat Assessment: Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026



Lombardy & Northeastern Italy

Milan Cluster – Milan, Rho, Assago
Cortina d'Ampezzo Cluster – Cortina, Anterselva
Vallagarina Cluster – Bormio–Stelvio, Livigno
Val di Fiemme Cluster – Predazzo, Tesero
Verona (closing ceremony)

2026 Winter Olympics: February 6–22
Paralympic Games: March 6–15

Overview & Assessment

The Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics will raise risks for business operations and travelers across Lombardy and northeastern Italy due to large crowds, VIP presence, tighter security, and travel between Milan and capacity-limited alpine venues. The visitor surge will increase routine issues like petty theft, scams, and opportunistic crime, while the global spotlight also raises the likelihood of targeted violence, activism, and other potentially disruptive incidents. Because venues are spread across northern Italy, even small disruptions—weather, protests, access restrictions, road incidents, or service outages—can quickly cascade into missed connections and unplanned overnight stays, especially on Milan-to-mountain routes. Travel is best planned to reduce exposure to predictable pinch points (major stations, venue ingress/egress windows, and known protest areas) and to avoid same-day cross-cluster moves unless essential, since limited alternates and uneven connectivity can turn minor delays into a rapid duty-of-care problem.

Risk Considerations

Security / Terrorism Threats

The Olympics will expand the number of attractive “soft targets” (venues, transit hubs, public squares, and queues) and increase the risk of opportunistic or lone-actor attacks aimed at visibility and disruption. Italy is generally stable, but official advisories continue to warn of terrorism risk in Europe and urge vigilance at transport centers, tourist sites, and public events—conditions that will be constant during the Games. Geopolitical tensions could also drive localized harassment or confrontations near delegations, sponsors, or symbolic locations. While there is no publicly confirmed reporting of a specific plot against the Games as of the assessment date, any security incident can trigger sudden tightening (expanded perimeters, station closures, and access controls), especially during opening weekend and other peak days. Milan's enhanced security zones may also increase identity checks and administrative enforcement around major stations and tourist areas.

Mitigation Strategies: Layered screening and visible policing near venues and key nodes are likely, so it may help to plan movements to minimize time in unsecured queues. A low-profile posture and limited sharing of detailed itineraries can reduce exposure, and extra time in schedules can make perimeter changes and access controls easier to absorb. It can also be useful to identify fallback locations and alternate routes in each city/cluster, with major transit hubs and venue approaches treated as the most likely points for unexpected crowd surges or closures.

Resources: Monitoring official travel and security messaging from your home-country foreign ministry and U.S. Embassy/Consulates in Italy can provide timely situational awareness. For American citizens, enrolling in the U.S. Smart Traveler Program (STEP) can support alerting.

- U.S. State Department – Italy (Country Information): <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Italy.html?rel=outbound>
- U.S. State Department – Italy (Travel Advisory): <https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/italy.html>
- U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Italy – Alerts and Messages: <https://it.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/security-and-travel-information>

Protest Activity / Civil Unrest

Protests are a credible operational risk during the Games, especially in Milan, where activist networks oppose Olympic-linked development and “mega-event” impacts. The *Comitato Insostenibili Olimpiadi* (“Unsustainable Olympics Committee” or CIO) has called for “UTOPIADI” mobilizations in Milan from February 6–8, including actions on opening day and a national demonstration call on February 7. Moreover, even smaller demonstrations can trigger police cordons and localized transit impacts. For most travelers, the primary risk is disruption rather than direct harm, but localized tensions can occur where police lines, counter-protesters, or agitators converge near symbolic sites, consulates, stations, and venue corridors. Outside Milan, smaller actions tied to Olympic infrastructure—particularly around Cortina d’Ampezzo—could still create outsized delays due to limited alternate routes. Labor action also remains a standing disruptor; short-notice transport strikes can quickly ripple across multi-leg itineraries.

Mitigation Strategies: In light of the planned “UTOPIADI” mobilizations, February 6–8 in Milan may warrant being treated as a higher-disruption window, and flexible arrivals/departures can reduce pressure if conditions shift. Avoiding rally points and symbolic locations (Corso Buenos Aires, Milano Centrale, Piazza del Duomo), on announced action days can lower exposure. If proximity to a venue is unavoidable, arriving early and minimizing time outside controlled access may help, while staying ready to reroute. Building buffers (alternate travel windows and backup lodging options) can improve resilience, and if a demonstration is encountered, disengaging early—moving away from crowd flow and avoiding photography of police or demonstrators—can reduce the chance of unwanted attention.

Resources: Embassy/consulate alerts are among the most actionable English-language sources for near-term protest impacts.

- *Comitato Insostenibili Olimpiadi* (CIO) Website: <https://cio2026.org/articoli/6-8-febbraio-2026-utopiadi/>
- Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) Strike Calendar: <https://www.mit.gov.it/calendario-scioperi>
- Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) Strike Portal: <https://scioperi.mit.gov.it/mit2/public/scioperi>

Crime Trends

Petty crime will likely increase during the Games, particularly pickpocketing, bag theft, and phone snatches in crowded transit nodes, tourist corridors, and venue approaches. Travelers can also expect “distraction theft” patterns aimed at people managing luggage, displaying credentials, or using phones for navigation, especially at Milano Centrale, airport links, metro platforms, and event queues. Event-driven fraud is also likely to rise, including counterfeit ticketing, accommodation scams, and Olympics-themed phishing. For business travelers, the most disruptive outcomes are often loss of documents/devices, immediate itinerary disruption, and downstream exposure of accounts or corporate data after theft.

Mitigation Strategies: Keeping valuables in zipped inner compartments, limiting phone exposure near transit doors and dense crowds, and avoiding leaving bags unattended or items hanging on chairs can reduce opportunity. Carrying only what’s needed daily, storing passports securely when feasible, and maintaining encrypted backups of key documents can help with recovery if something is lost. It may also help to standardize check-in and account-lock procedures, so teams can respond quickly if a device is stolen.

Resources: Official travel advisories can provide baseline guidance on crime risks and common scams. For local crime support, travelers can reference official Italian police, municipal safety, and emergency services for reporting, assistance, and situational guidance.

- U.S. State Department – Italy (Travel Advisory): <https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/travel-advisories/italy.html>
- Polizia di Stato – Questura di Milano (Uffici Denunce): Official guidance on where/how to file a police report in Milan (including Questura and local commissariati), useful after theft/loss for insurance and document replacement processes: <https://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Milano/articolo/1188644f92451b2cc687772968>
- Arma dei Carabinieri – Denuncia vi@ Web: Official online portal for reporting theft or loss by unknown persons (where eligible), which can help generate documentation without immediately attending a station: <https://www.carabinieri.it/denuncia-via-web>
- Comune di Milano – Polizia Locale e Sicurezza: Municipal police directory for Milan, including neighborhood units, locations, and contact details that can support local assistance and non-emergency guidance: <https://www.comune.milano.it/argomenti/polizia-locale-e-sicurezza>
- Polizia Postale (Commissariato di P.S.) – Online reporting portal (“Segnalazioni”): Official portal that includes options for reporting certain categories of theft/loss (useful when a traveler needs a formal record and the case type is supported by the portal): <https://www.commissariatodips.it/segnalazioni/index.html>

Cybersecurity

Cyber risk will be elevated throughout the Games due to the concentration of high-value travelers, heavy reliance on digital ticketing and services, and a large ecosystem of vendors and partners. Threats are likely to include service disruption (distributed denial-of-service (DDoS), ransomware impacting ticketing, payments, and logistics) and traveler-focused compromise via Olympics-themed phishing, or fraudulent

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smartphone applications, fake booking confirmations, malicious QR codes, rogue Wi-Fi, and payment redirection scams. Corporate travelers can also expect more targeted social engineering, including impersonation of hotels, airlines, or event partners with urgent requests, potentially supported by artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled deepfakes.

Mitigation Strategies: Verifying “urgent” travel or payment requests out-of-band can reduce fraud risk, and multi-factor authentication (MFA) may help limit damage if credentials are exposed. Avoiding unofficial QR codes and limiting sensitive work on public Wi-Fi can reduce common attack paths; it may also help to disable auto-join Wi-Fi/Bluetooth, avoid public USB charging ports, and keep devices patched. A travel-mode posture (reduced privileges and minimal local data) can further reduce exposure, while limiting real-time location posting and avoiding images that reveal credentials or QR codes can reduce targeting.

Resources:

- Italy's National Cybersecurity Authority (ACN)/Milano Cortina cybersecurity Memorandum of Understanding:
<https://www.acn.gov.it/portale/en/w/acn-e-fondazione-milano-cortina-siglano-un-protocollo-per-la-cybersicurezza-delle-olimpiadi-2026>

Location of the Host Venues in Lombardy and Northeastern Italy and the Nearest Airports



Source: Google Earth. Generated in Everbridge's Visual Command Center (VCC) by Everbridge's Tactical Resolution (TRez) team. Consult the VCC platform for more detailed depictions of associated road closures and security zones linked to the Games.

Transportation and Mobility

Transport disruption is one of the most likely and consequential risks due to the Games' dispersed footprint and limited alpine redundancy. Congestion, security perimeters, winter weather, and incidents can quickly turn routine transfers into multi-hour delays, with Cortina d'Ampezzo particularly sensitive because it is road-dependent and lacks direct rail access; organizers have already capped ticket sales for some Cortina d'Ampezzo events due to transport constraints. Milan will continue normal business operations without dedicated Olympic lanes, so Games traffic will compete with commuter flows and may create sharper peak-hour congestion than visitors expect. While Milan's transit is strong and will likely run at increased capacity, inter-cluster travel often requires multi-leg routing (rail to hubs such as Milano Centrale and onward connections to regional handoff points, then shuttle/park-and-ride solutions for last-mile access). Enhanced rail service plans (including Trenord, the principal regional railway company in Lombardy) may help, but strikes and short-notice service changes remain a persistent risk. Travelers should also expect vehicle restrictions, controlled-access zones, and *Zona a Traffico Limitato* (ZTL) requirements in host areas and mountain towns, plus Milan's Area C/Area B limitations affecting vehicle access.

Mitigation Strategies: Significant buffers can make schedules more resilient, and avoiding same-day cross-cluster moves when timing is critical may reduce the risk of cascading delays. Overnighting near the venue cluster can be the more reliable option. Rail may be the more predictable backbone where available, while road-only alpine segments may be more failure-prone during peak arrivals/departures or heavy snow. Confirming access-zone/permit requirements early and anticipating controlled pickup/drop-off zones can reduce last-minute friction, and it may help to define a clear "plan B" in advance (alternate departure times, alternate routings, and a backup hotel near the destination) rather than improvising once disruptions begin.

Resources:

- Trenord: <https://www.trenord.it/en/milano-cortina-2026/>
- Olympic traffic/pass portal: <https://passauto.milanocortina2026.org/en/home>
- Cortina d'Ampezzo access restrictions: <https://cortinadampezzo.it/en/news-en/2026-olympic-games-road-access-and-traffic-restrictions-in-the-host-areas>
- Milan's public transportation operator (Azienda Trasporti Milanesi, ATM): <https://www.atm.it/en/Pages/default.aspx>
- Azienda Trasporti Milanesi (ATM) app: https://www.atm.it/en/ViaggiaConNoi/pagamenti_servizi_digitali/Pages/ATMMobile.aspx
- Area C is a limited traffic zone in central Milan: <https://www.comune.milano.it/argomenti/mobilita/area-c>
- Access prohibition under Area B in Milan: <https://www.comune.milano.it/argomenti/mobilita/area-b>
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MIT) Strike Information: <https://www.mit.gov.it/calendario-scioperi> and <https://scioperi.mit.gov.it/mit2/public/scioperi>
- Trenitalia Infomobilità: <https://www.trenitalia.com/it/informazioni/Infomobilita.html>
- ViaggiaTreno: <https://www.viaggiatreno.it/viaggiatrenomobile/indexMobile.jsp?lang=IT>
- Olympics.com venue access: <https://www.olympics.com/en/milano-cortina-2026/news/how-to-reach-the-venues-of-milano-cortina-2026>
- Transport MilanoCortina2026 app: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?hl=en&id=com.mico.client.app.prod>

Hospitals and Emergency Medical Capabilities

Milan has strong medical capacity, but mass-attendance conditions can slow Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and emergency department throughput during peak periods or major incidents. In alpine areas, response is more weather- and terrain-dependent, and road restrictions or storms can extend transport times. Travelers may want to rely on 112 for emergencies and be aware of commonly referenced direct numbers (113 police, 115 fire, 118 medical), and consider using the "112 Where ARE U" app, where supported, to transmit location data—especially helpful in mountain areas.

Mitigation Strategies: Confirming insurance and payment expectations in advance can reduce delays in care, and carrying prescriptions appropriately can prevent treatment interruptions. Pre-identifying suitable hospitals near lodging and venues in each cluster can speed decision-making during an incident, and for alpine travel days, it may help to set clear rules for delaying or overnighting when weather or road advisories deteriorate.

Climate, Weather, and Seasonal Conditions

February weather will vary by location, from cold and fog-prone conditions in Milan to severe winter conditions in alpine clusters where snow and ice can disrupt roads and increase injury risk. Avalanche and landslide hazards are persistent in the Dolomites and other high-mountain areas, and disruptions are often "compound" events where weather, congestion, and access controls stack and reduce options—especially late in the day.

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Mitigation Strategies: Packing for both urban and alpine winter conditions can prevent avoidable exposure, and daylight mountain travel may reduce risk when conditions change quickly. Conservative itineraries during storms can preserve options, and checking official avalanche bulletins daily during alpine travel windows can help guide go/no-go decisions, with elevated risk guidance used as a trigger to reduce non-essential movement.

Resources:

- Civil Protection weather alerts and bulletins: <https://rischi.protezionecivile.gov.it/it/meteo-idro/allertamento/>
- AINEVA avalanche bulletins: <https://aineva.it/bollettini/>

Communications and Language Accessibility

Italian will dominate local advisories, especially outside Milan, though English is common at major tourist and event touchpoints. Cellular congestion is plausible around venues and hubs, and coverage may be inconsistent in mountain valleys. Travelers may want to use 112 for emergencies and assume that fast-moving disruptions may be communicated first in Italian by municipal or transit authorities.

Mitigation Strategies: Configuring roaming/eSIMs before arrival can reduce connectivity friction, and caching offline maps for each cluster can help if networks degrade. Pre-loading key addresses and venue names in Italian may speed assistance, and using a single internal channel for verified itinerary changes can reduce rumor-driven movement. It may also help to ensure travelers can describe their location using landmarks, stations, or road markers if GPS/data is unreliable.



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