

Digital safety guide for people at borders or in conflict zones

Communication security: Stay in touch safely

- **Use chat apps with strong encryption**, such as Signal and WhatsApp. If you fear your device may be seized, use Signal, which requires frequent sign-ins.
- **Be careful with links** in emails and messages, even those that appear to come from people you know. They could be from scammers claiming they can provide help. When possible, verify the sender's identity (by asking questions or speaking by phone) before clicking links.
- **Before changing SIM cards**, make sure your important contacts are saved. You can import them to a Google account or simply write down important phone numbers.

Device security: Stay safe and private when using your phone

- **Turn off location settings.** On Android, open Settings, tap "Connections" or "Privacy," choose Location, and toggle to Off. On iPhone, open Settings, tap Privacy, choose Location Services, and toggle to Off.
- **Secure your passcode.** If many people know it, or it's easy to guess, change it now. Never rely on Face ID or Touch ID alone.
- **Don't hand your phone to someone else.** Only do so with people you know and trust. Someone could attempt to install software to follow you.
- **Keep your phone charged.** It'll increase your safety to have a working phone at all times. Use power-saving mode on your phone to help your battery last longer.
- **Use a trusted VPN app.** A high-quality VPN encrypts your online activity, making it harder to intercept. It can also make your device appear to be in a different country, helping hide your location and giving you access to uncensored news.

If you're under direct threat

- **Use offline chat apps.** Bridgefy lets people message each other without an internet connection, as long as they are within about 100 meters.
- **Turn off geo-tagging on photos.** Geo-tags in photo files can reveal a person's precise location when sent in messages or posted on social media.
- **Set social media accounts to private**, especially if these are being used to share updates and photos.
- **Assume someone is reading your communications.** Use pseudonyms when referring to others and avoid words directly alluding to the conflict, which could be flagged by censors.
- **Download the Tor Browser.** Using Tor, you can bypass censorship to access social media and international news sites.