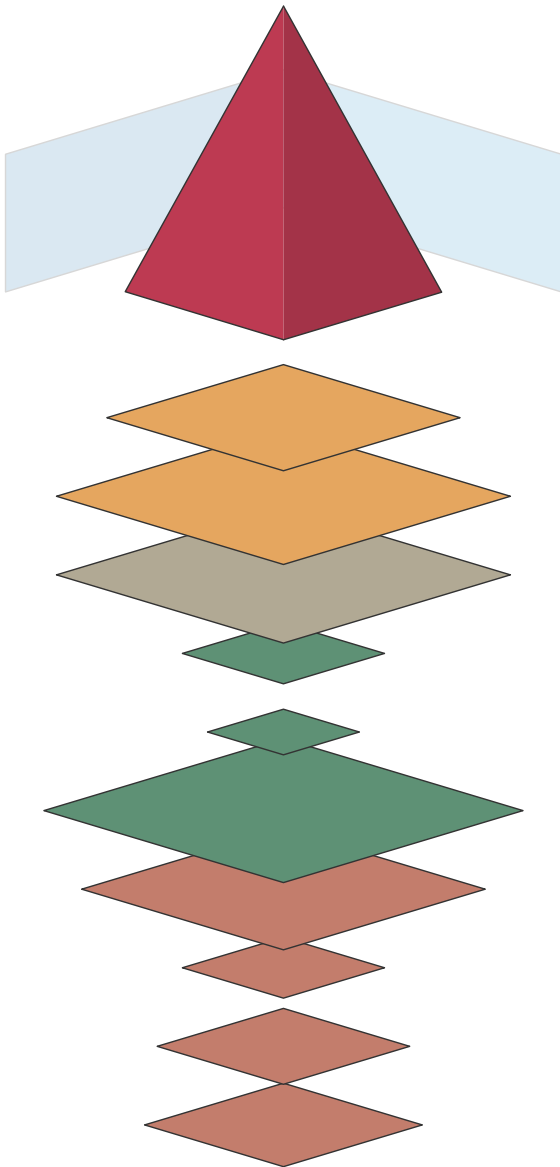




TURKEY



6.89

CRIMINALITY SCORE

12th of 193 countries
5th of 46 Asian countries
3rd of 14 Western Asian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

6.40

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	7.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	9.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	9.00
FLORA CRIMES	4.00
FAUNA CRIMES	3.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	9.50
HEROIN TRADE	8.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.00
CANNABIS TRADE	5.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS

7.38

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	8.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	9.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.00



3.54

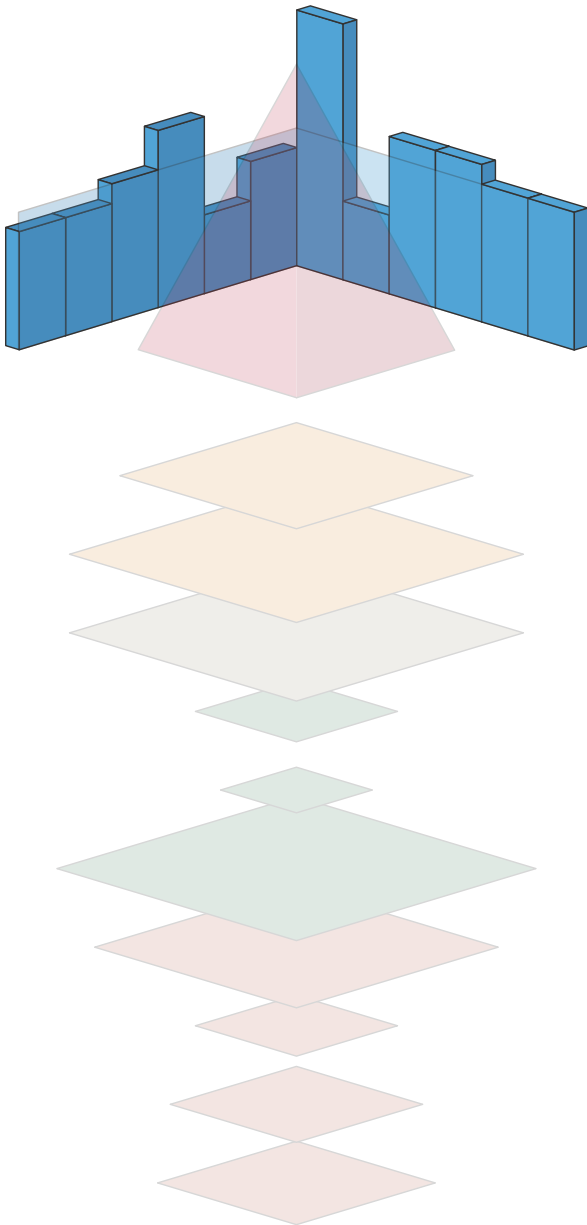
RESILIENCE SCORE

151st of 193 countries
37th of 46 Asian countries
11th of 14 Western Asian countries





TURKEY



3.54

RESILIENCE SCORE

151st of 193 countries

37th of 46 Asian countries

11th of 14 Western Asian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	3.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	3.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	2.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	3.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	2.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.00
PREVENTION	3.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.50



6.89

CRIMINALITY SCORE

12th of 193 countries

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CRIMINAL MARKETS

6.40



CRIMINAL ACTORS

7.38



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Turkey's pivotal location at the crossroads between Asia, the Middle East and Europe, combined with its long borders, makes it a key player in the transnational markets for both human trafficking and human smuggling. Human trafficking, a prominent criminal market in Turkey, is characterized predominantly by trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced labour. Human trafficking is concentrated largely in the country's tourist areas, in metropolitan cities and in cities at the country's borders. Other forms of human trafficking in Turkey are forced marriage and forced begging, as well as human trafficking to harvest organs. Human trafficking is the lifeblood of entire quarters in Istanbul and other urban areas, and is key to the border economy along the Caucasian and Iranian borders.

In 2015, Turkey emerged as a key transit state for migration and smuggling to Europe from countries such as Syria. At the height of the refugee crisis, Turkey was home to some of the most active and far-reaching smuggling networks, which facilitated migrant smuggling using false documents and transporting the individuals. The smuggling industry was, and continues to be in some cases, at the centre of the local economy in a number of towns in Turkey's border regions. After the EU-Turkey deal on irregular migration was reached in 2016, the human smuggling industry experienced an initial dramatic drop. However, significant numbers of Turkish nationals continued to seek the services of smuggling networks following the regime's persecution campaign against the members of the Gülen Movement. Moreover, in February 2020, Turkey lifted its strict controls on its land and sea borders, prompting thousands of migrants to head to the borders to try to reach Europe. It is clear, therefore, that the Turkish state is not averse to using migrant smuggling into Europe as a political tool.

TRADE

The illegal arms trade is pervasive in Turkey, with firearm use and arms trafficking on the rise in recent years. Overall, Turkey plays a role as simultaneously a source, transit and destination country to greater or lesser degrees. The players involved in the illegal arms market can be classified broadly under three main types. First, there are criminal networks that supply handguns and shotguns to neighbouring Iraq, Syria, Iran – and across the world. Second, there is a much more sophisticated arms trafficking coalition that works illicitly to supply more advanced and profitable weapons. Finally, state-embedded individuals are thought to be involved in illegally transferring weapons to Salafi-Jihadist

groups fighting in Syria and Libya, as well as providing weapons to paramilitary groups in Turkey. In sum, the arms trafficking market, therefore, is used instrumentally by the Turkish state for external political objectives.

ENVIRONMENT

The illicit trading of non-renewable resources is a critical component of Turkey's illicit marketplace. Oil- and gold-related crimes are the two most significant. Oil smuggling is one of the more profitable sources of income for organized crime groups in Turkey, which exploit a demand for cheaper oil and the opportunity to earn tax revenue from the sale of smuggled oil, sourced primarily from Syria, Iraq and Iran. Illicit oil, which is considerably cheaper than the legal alternatives, is easily accessible in the country. There are a number of factors that contribute to the pervasiveness of oil smuggling in Turkey, including the country's high taxes, its proximity to countries with far-lower oil prices, its difficulties in controlling its long borders, and its pervasive corruption. Indeed, there is ample evidence linking high-level politicians to the purchase and subsequent illicit sale of millions of dollars' worth of Islamic State oil disguised as Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish oil. With regard to gold-related criminal activity, most comes in the form of sanctions violations and associated money laundering, with recent cases illustrating the connections made by the Turkish state with Iran and Venezuela, among others. Given the country's currency crisis, coupled with its growing relationship with Venezuela and efforts to circumvent the Iranian sanctions regime, it is likely that the illicit market for non-renewable resources will continue to grow in scope and value.

Other environmental criminal markets are less pervasive in Turkey, although they remain important features of the country's illicit economy. The intentional burning of forests, one of the most severe forms of environmental degradation in Turkey, to open the path for commercial developments, is a regular occurrence in coastal areas, a phenomenon in which government corruption and political interests are key factors. With regard to fauna crimes, seizures of traditionally trafficked illegal wildlife products, such as pangolins and rhino horn, suggest that, largely as a result of the country's location and status as a global transport hub, Turkey plays an important role in the transnational illegal wildlife trade. Domestically, however, fauna crimes are not particularly pervasive.

DRUGS

Although most drug markets are important in Turkey, the heroin trade is by far the most pervasive drug market in the country. Turkey's proximity to major heroin-producing Afghanistan and to considerable consumer markets in

Europe and the Middle East has made it an important link in the heroin trade chain. Turkish organized criminal gangs control the wholesale importation of heroin into Europe. An increase in acetic anhydride seizures, a key precursor for processing morphine into heroin, suggests that heroin production is on the rise in Turkey, with laboratories scattered across Istanbul and in eastern provinces at the border. There is thought to be a two-way trafficking route between the Netherlands and Turkey, whereby heroin and morphine are trafficked from Turkey to the Netherlands, while acetic anhydride, MDMA (commonly known as Ecstasy), and other drugs are moved in the opposite direction. Indeed, the prevalence of synthetic drug use, primarily methamphetamine and synthetic cannabinoids – known as ‘bonsai’ – has been on the rise in recent years, largely because of the easy access to the drugs and their relatively low price. Turkey also acts as a transit country for Captagon (the drug compound fenethylamine hydrochloride), with tablets produced in south-eastern Europe smuggled through the country en route to the Middle East.

Cannabis use is fairly common in Turkey and it has been increasing in recent years, particularly among young males. Cannabis cultivation, both licit and illicit, is widespread, with the latter concentrated predominantly in the south-eastern region of Turkey and controlled largely by the Kurdistan Workers’ Party and its associated groups and individuals. The cocaine market is fairly limited. Turkey is not on the major transnational cocaine trafficking routes and does not play an important role as a transit route for cocaine, although the prevalence of cocaine trafficking does appear to have increased recently.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Turkey has become known as a mafia state and the evidence suggests that this is the case, now more than ever. The Turkish government often leverages certain criminal markets, such as the gold and oil trade, human smuggling and arms trafficking, for its own benefit and political purpose. Depending on political circumstances and geopolitical relations with

other countries, the Turkish government chooses to either tighten or ease its control over organized criminal activity. State-embedded individuals are thought to be involved in illegally transferring weapons to Salafi-Jihadist groups fighting in Syria and Libya, as well as providing weapons to paramilitary groups in Turkey. Organized crime and state-embedded individuals have extremely strong and complex links, dating back many decades and continuing to today. There are a significant number of mafia-style groups operating in Turkey, modelled on the traditional mafia typology, with a strong hierarchy centred on the head of family, known as a baba. But these have gradually declined in Turkey, increasingly replaced by looser, compartmentalized networks of semi-autonomous cells.

There are a huge number of loose criminal networks predominantly in areas close to Turkey’s sea and land borders, such as Adana, Izmir, Diyarbakir, Reyhanli, Gaziantep and Istanbul. These networks engage in a litany of cross-border smuggling activities, ranging from trafficking narcotics to smuggling migrants. The capacity and influence of these criminal networks has increased in recent years, as have their links with criminal networks in neighbouring countries and beyond. With the growth and increasing diversity of illicit economies in Turkey, ad hoc networks are far more influential and more reflective of the nature of both licit and illicit trade than mafia-style groups.

Although organized crime in Turkey is dominated by domestic criminal individuals, foreign criminals operate in the country as well, primarily in cross-border smuggling, including migrants, drugs and weapons, but also in transnational human trafficking operations. As such, their areas of operation are concentrated at the country’s land borders and there is strong collaboration between these foreign and domestic-organized criminals. Foreign mafia groups and illegally armed groups, including terrorist groups that engage in organized criminal activity, are becoming increasingly visible in Turkey, exacerbated to a large extent by the spillover effects from conflict in neighbouring countries.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

An increasing trend towards authoritarianism in Turkey by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan reached its peak in the wake of an attempted coup in 2016. In 2017, the regime adopted constitutional changes that concentrated power in the hands of the president. While the Turkish government has taken a public stance on organized crime, and it is a campaign issue in the country, it is used merely

as a rhetorical tool for the state’s own political purposes. Transparency and accountability are very limited and deteriorating. Almost all oversight mechanisms in the country are directly appointed and controlled by the government and are often used as a political tool to clamp down on dissent and political opposition. Corruption is rife across all levels of the state apparatus, due in large part to the ineffective anti-corruption agencies in the country and

the inconsistent application of anti-corruption laws, all of which combine to create a culture of impunity. The extent to which the government not only abets organized crime but is the perpetrator of organized criminal activity on an industrial scale is the critical challenge facing policymakers and law enforcement generally.

Turkey has a robust anti-organized crime legal framework, including legislation on most forms of organized crime, as well as legislation criminalizing the establishment and membership of an organized criminal organization. However, despite the strong presence of legislation pertaining to organized crime in Turkey, there is a major issue in the lack of application and enforcement of these laws. The problem in Turkey is not that anti-organized crime policies and legislation do not exist, but that such tools effectively become redundant when the entire system of government acts in such a way as to undermine them. On paper, Turkey appears to have strong bilateral and multilateral cooperation frameworks in place, including having ratified all relevant international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, but these are largely a relic of the country's history as an ally of the Western world. Cooperation between Turkey and the US Drug Enforcement Agency, for example, has weakened considerably since 2016, which has damaged the Turkish National Police's ability to deal with drug trafficking. Similarly, although extradition treaties are in place with a whole host of countries, there are severe concerns regarding the use of extradition processes and requests on the part of the Turkish government, which uses them only as a political tool, but also engages in illegal renditioning of suspected coup plotters. Concerns have been raised about the Turkish government's prolific abuse of INTERPOL's red-notice system to unfairly target journalists, activists and political opponents living abroad.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Turkey's extensive sea and land boundaries, combined with its position at the crossroads of Asia and Europe – located as it is on the primary trafficking routes of a number of illicit economies – make control of the country's borders challenging. Stretches of the border, in particular those with Iran and Iraqi Kurdistan are particularly porous. However, many of the illicit flows across the Turkish borders are by design and are sanctioned by official authorities who do otherwise have the capacity to stop them. Overall, law enforcement capacity in Turkey is fairly strong, with a well-trained and well-equipped police and border force, as well as a number of special law enforcement units focusing on organized crime. However, corrupt practices are commonplace in Turkey's already highly politicized law enforcement, and police abuse is customary. Similar criticism can be levelled at the country's judicial system, which is similarly highly politicized. The government has appointed thousands of judges loyal to the regime, which, with the purge of the judicial system following the failed coup in 2016 and the potential ramifications of ruling against the

executive, has severely weakened judicial independence in Turkey. From local courts to the constitutional court, the Turkish judicial system, which is the most effectively used tool against political dissidents, is under the control of Erdoğan. Long detention and pretrial periods are increasingly common in Turkey, and prison conditions are generally unsatisfactory, with severe overcrowding a major issue. Overall, therefore, as with many of the policies, legislation and institutional structures in Turkey, the judicial and detention systems look robust on paper but their effectiveness is severely compromised by the lack of independence and the extraordinary degree of interference and control by the Turkish state.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Turkey is a regional financial centre for countries in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and faces significant money laundering risks, including the illicit proceeds from drug and human trafficking, and migrant and fuel smuggling. Although significant improvements to the anti-money laundering framework have been made in recent years, a number of serious shortcomings remain about issues such as proceeds of crime confiscation, managing frozen assets and the lack of restrictions on entering the country with substantial sums of cash, which makes tracking money laundering extremely difficult. Furthermore, the government's money laundering investigative activity has been criticized for being overtly politicized, and state-embedded individuals are likely to be involved, be it directly or indirectly, in money laundering operations.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Turkish government has implemented and engaged in a number of organized-crime prevention initiatives, primarily in the trade of illicit drugs and human trafficking. The prevention of drug use is a key pillar of the state's national drug strategy, which offers drug users rehabilitation and access to information through various awareness campaigns. Opioid substitution therapy is available in Turkey and the penal code provides for the option of treatment for drug users in place of a custodial sentence.

Support for victims of human trafficking is relatively robust in Turkey, although there is a need for an increased number of victim shelters and an improvement to victim identification systems. Overall, both prevention, and victim and witness support measures in the country are sufficient. However, measures to prevent organized crime are often used as a political tool by the Erdoğan government, namely with regard to the prevention of human smuggling, as evidenced by the government's decision to lift its strict controls on its land and sea borders.

Where Turkey fails comprehensively with regard to civil society and social protection measures is in its treatment of non-state individuals. As part of the government's

broader shift towards authoritarianism, in particular since the 2016 failed coup, non-state individuals are increasingly targeted if they are viewed by the Erdoğan regime as political opponents. The clampdown is perhaps most visible in the field of journalism and freedom of the press: the government has eliminated dozens of media outlets and the country's biggest media group was taken over by a pro-government conglomerate. Turkey is one of the world's worst offenders for jailing journalists. The greatest opposition to Erdoğan's regime comes through social media, often by Turkish citizens in exile, which precipitated the introduction in October 2020 of repressive legislation aiming to limit access to social media platforms. Nevertheless, despite concerted efforts by the Turkish regime to stifle freedom of the press, Turkey's civil society generally has shown impressive resilience and ability to evolve in the face of such challenges.

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