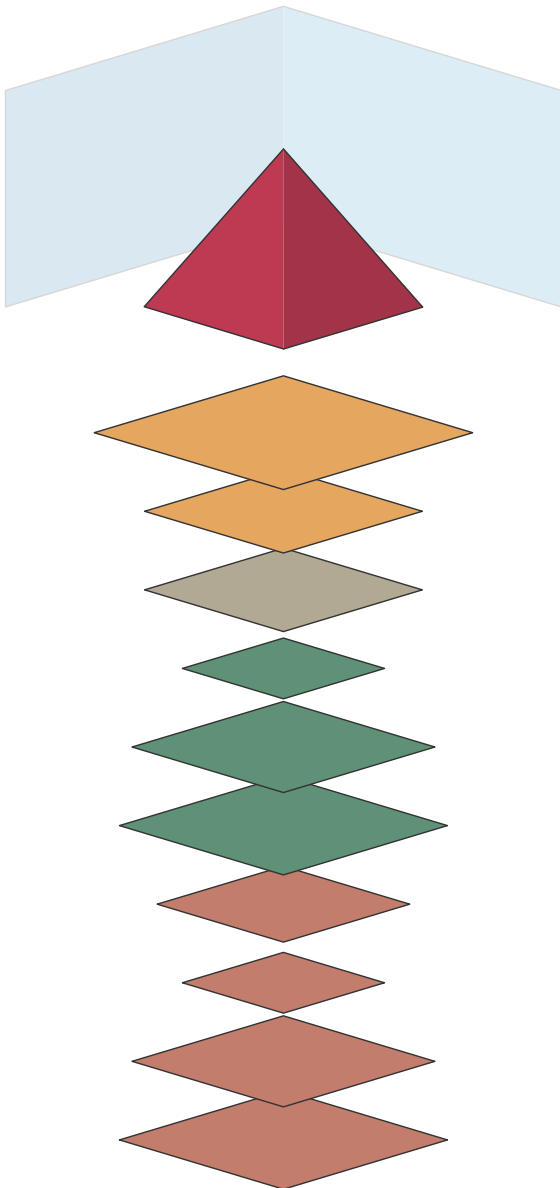


 **BAHRAIN**



 **4.83**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

100th of 193 countries
30th of 46 Asian countries
11th of 14 Western Asian countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **5.65**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	7.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.50
FLORA CRIMES	4.00
FAUNA CRIMES	6.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	6.50
HEROIN TRADE	5.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.00
CANNABIS TRADE	6.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	6.50

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **4.00**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	4.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.00

 **5.54**
RESILIENCE SCORE

55th of 193 countries
10th of 46 Asian countries
4th of 14 Western Asian countries



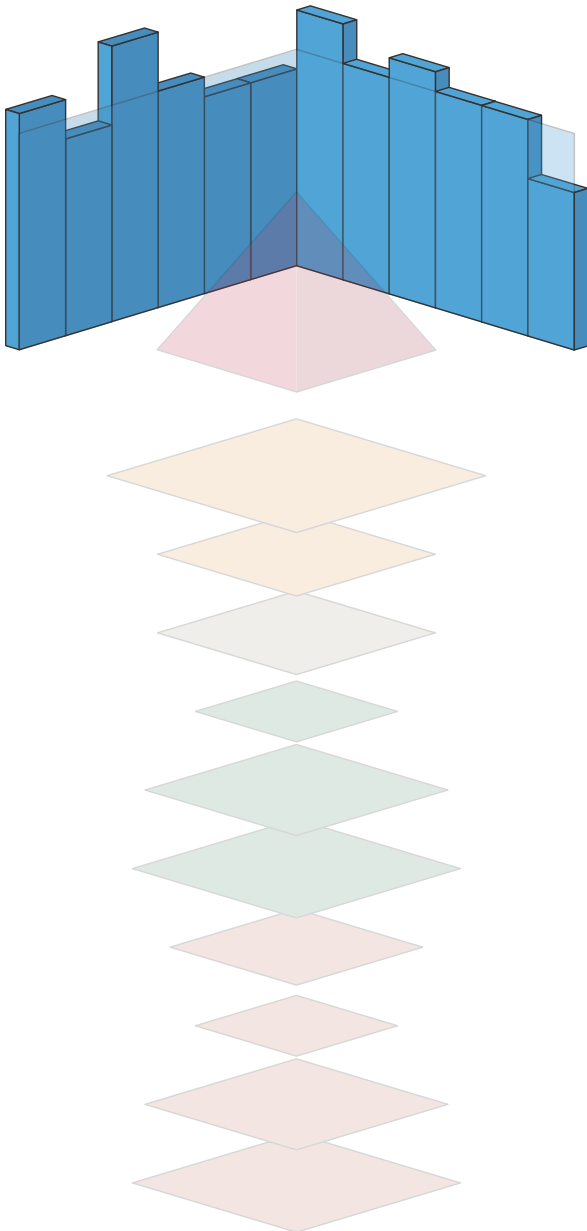
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BAHRAIN



5.54

RESILIENCE SCORE

55th of 193 countries

10th of 46 Asian countries

4th of 14 Western Asian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	6.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	5.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	5.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	6.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.50
PREVENTION	5.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00



4.83

CRIMINALITY SCORE

100th of 193 countries

30th of 46 Asian countries

11th of 14 Western Asian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 5.65



CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.00



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Bahrain's strong economy relies heavily on foreign labour. This, coupled with the lack of minimum wage regulations, makes the country a primary destination for human trafficking and forced labour in particular. Other forms of exploitation, such as forced prostitution, sexual abuse, non-payment of wages and restrictions on freedom of movement, also occur. Migrants, predominately from Southern and South-eastern Asia as well as Africa, typically enter Bahrain legally in search of high-paying jobs, but subsequently fall into modern slavery. The Kafala system – tying migrant workers to their employers (sponsors) – further exacerbates the risk of migrant workers falling victim to modern slavery. Most of the foreign workers in Bahrain are Bangladeshis, but the number of workers from African countries is on the rise. African nations do not for the most part have a diplomatic presence in Bahrain, which further increases the risk of trafficking for their citizens.

The smuggling of migrants into Bahrain is not as salient an issue as in other countries in the Gulf, largely due to the country's location near more prominent smuggling destinations like Qatar and Saudi Arabia, as well as the fact that it incentivizes migrant labour and has naturalization policies. But instances of such smuggling do occur. Human traffickers use big events in Bahrain, such as Formula 1 races – for which travellers holding race tickets are granted two-week tourist visas – to allegedly smuggle people into the country and then exploit them. Additionally, there have been a few incidents of young Saudi men entering Bahrain irregularly with their female partners, but these are likely individual attempts rather than any form of organized smuggling networks.

TRADE

Trafficking of arms is reportedly an issue, although its extent is unknown. Allegedly, foreign actors sponsored by the Iranian Quds Force traffic weapons into Bahrain. Experts, however, believe that this has not been a pressing security issue since the mid-1990s, but rather a pretext for the government to suppress political unrest in Bahrain. In recent years, reports of arms trafficking into Bahrain have decreased, but it is arguable whether this reflects a genuine decrease in trafficking, or the displacement of activity to less detectable routes. Bahrain exempts all military procurement from public tender and does not in any way regulate the use of intermediaries in procurement, which is a prerequisite for defence corruption.

ENVIRONMENT

There have been occasional reports of the smuggling of flora products into Bahrain, such as agarwood and bacteria-infected olive trees, but overall, Bahrain's role in the transnational flora-related criminal market is limited. Conversely, Bahrain is both a destination and, to a lesser extent, transit country for illegal wildlife products. In fact, the country is one of the largest destination markets for illegally trafficked African grey parrots. Instances of the smuggling of animals from abandoned zoos and breeding stations in Syria into Bahrain have also been documented. While Bahrain is not an oil-rich nation, oil theft does occur in the country. Reports describe a network of thieves, comprising both domestic and foreign actors, stealing oil from company trucks and then smuggling it to countries where prices are higher. However, the volume of oil theft remains fairly low. In 2018 Bahrain made its largest hydrocarbon discovery to date, which might increase oil theft, smuggling and bunkering. Smuggling of small quantities of gold and diamonds has also been reported, but there is no indication of the involvement of organized crime groups.

DRUGS

The domestic heroin market is small, primarily due the stigmatization of heroin use. Based on seizure reports, however, Bahrain appears to be a prominent transit country for heroin. There is little information available about the cocaine market in Bahrain, where cocaine consumption and trade appear to be considerably less significant than cannabis and synthetic drugs. Most likely, high prices limit cocaine availability to more well-off parts of society.

Bahrain is a destination country for cannabis, but also plays a role as a transit state, albeit to a lesser extent. The primary source countries for cannabis are Saudi Arabia and Iran, but the region is also supplied by North African countries like Egypt. Although domestic cannabis consumption is low, cannabis trade is among the largest drug markets in Bahrain. The country is also popular with Saudi nationals wishing to experiment with alcohol and drugs, including cannabis. It is reasonable to suggest that most cannabis comes into Bahrain via the King Fahd Causeway, and it is also smuggled from Iran across the Gulf by boat. The synthetic drug trade is considerable, with Bahrain being a destination for methamphetamine, Captagon and other synthetic drugs. Methamphetamine is largely imported through Bahrain International Airport and comes from South-eastern Asia, Malaysia and Thailand in particular. Meanwhile, Captagon enters Bahrain through Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. While the use of methamphetamine seems to be increasing throughout the region, it is arguably the highest in Bahrain, especially among young people.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

There are no indications of the existence of domestic mafia-style groups in Bahrain. Foreign criminal groups, however, do appear to operate on Bahraini territory and are particularly influential in methamphetamine and synthetic-drug trafficking in general. These actors are mainly from other Asian countries and smuggle drugs into Bahrain through foreign actors who live in the country. Whereas cannabis arriving from Saudi Arabia is usually smuggled by Saudi or Bahraini individuals in small networks of two to three people, cannabis coming from Iran tends to be sourced from larger, professionalized and more organized foreign networks. Iranian groups are allegedly smuggling arms for opposition groups in Bahrain. Furthermore, Bahrain has recently become a popular place to settle for individuals with links to organized crime, with notable cases including alleged organized criminal actors from the Republic of Ireland and India, among others.

Many criminal networks in Bahrain reportedly have a mixed membership of both Bahraini and foreign nationals. They are active primarily in the distribution of drugs in Bahrain, having ties to foreign actors. Small groups are also involved in the theft and smuggling of oil from Bahrain to neighbouring states. Criminal networks are seldom armed and rarely, if ever, engage in violence. Very limited evidence suggests state involvement in organized crime activity in Bahrain. Although organized crime actors are unlikely to have infiltrated the state apparatus, the monarchy provides patronage to a small group of supporters, particularly within the security sector, in order to protect its authority. Perceived corruption among the elite in Bahrain was one of the main drivers of the popular uprising in 2011 and in the following decade the late Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa cracked down on opposition and removed many oversight mechanisms, allowing corruption to thrive. While improvements have been made over the past few years, corruption remains a pertinent issue.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Levels of organized crime in Bahrain are fairly low, which partly explains why the issue of organized crime does not feature strongly on the country's political agenda. Nevertheless, the government continues to make efforts to combat organized crime, particularly in the area of human trafficking. However, Bahrain has experienced considerable instability since the 2011 anti-government protests. The country is an authoritarian state, with the royal family maintaining absolute control. An anti-corruption framework does exist, but it is poorly enforced and reports suggest that the situation has deteriorated over the past decade (although improvements have seemingly been made in the last few years). Access to information is not guaranteed by law, which makes transparency an issue, especially as far as the work of high-level officials is concerned.

Bahrain is party to most relevant international treaties pertaining to organized crime, with the exception of the United Nations Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition. Bahrain also works within and hosts many international anti-organized crime bodies and forums. Most recently, the kingdom signed an agreement with the UNODC to establish a regional centre of excellence for capacity building in the area of combating trafficking in people. In line with the country's international anti-organized crime commitments, Bahrain has a robust legislative framework, especially compared to some of its Gulf counterparts. A national anti-trafficking action plan

was approved for the 2019–2023 period, but the Kafala system continues to attract international criticism. In an effort to reduce labour crimes, Bahrain became the first Gulf Cooperation Council country to pass legislation for a flexible work permit, aiming to reduce the vulnerability of migrant workers to trafficking. Moreover, in 2020, the government introduced new legislation criminalizing the trade in protected animal and plant species.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

There are no specialized anti-organized crime units within the judicial system. Instead, such cases are handled by either civil law courts or the Court of Cassation. Decisions are rarely swayed by bribes or other forms of payment, but political pressure puts court independence into question. The judicial system is under the control of a member of the royal family – a fact that is often used to either manipulate or intimidate the opposition. Prison conditions have been deteriorating since 2011, when military trials for civilians and the revoking of Bahraini citizenship were introduced. As overcrowding, torture, abuse and medical negligence persist, security officers commit human rights violations with impunity. The situation has become of great concern for the international community. Bahrain is one of the most heavily policed states in the world. There are anti-organized crime units that predominately target drug trafficking. Potential indicators that may signal human trafficking, however, are handled administratively, as are labour violations. While there is nothing to suggest that law enforcement officers

engage in organized crime, they are known to carry out systemic human rights abuses with impunity. Overwhelming evidence suggests that members of law enforcement have committed torture, arbitrary detention, sexual assault and other human rights violations. As an island nation, Bahrain is less vulnerable to organized crime activities.

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ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Bahraini authorities recognize the money laundering and terrorist financing risks the country faces and have made efforts to bolster their resilience against the threat of money laundering. There is a financial intelligence unit in the country that is reportedly effective in its work, as well as a strong anti-money laundering framework in place. Nevertheless, further legislative improvements are needed and the risk of money laundering in the country remains moderate. The Bahraini economic environment is conducive to doing business while providing safeguards against the risks of illegal business penetrating the legal economy. However, a significant proportion of the labour force operates informally.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Bahrain is the first country in the Middle East and North Africa region to establish an assistance fund for the victims of human trafficking, which pays for essential services for victims and supports them financially in reintegrating themselves into their home countries or while they are seeking employment in Bahrain. Additionally, there is a government-operated protection centre, which shelters vulnerable workers and victims of trafficking, offering medical, security and legal services, as well as counselling. Despite the Kafala system being recognized as a risk factor in pushing migrant workers into modern slavery, it is illegal for migrants to flee abusive employers. In terms of prevention, Bahrain introduced legislation for a flexible work permit in an attempt to reduce the vulnerability of migrant workers to modern slavery. There are a number of drug rehabilitation centres in the country, run by NGOs. The primary focus of NGOs in Bahrain appears to be corruption and human rights. Although civil society is subject to heavy regulations and intimidation in some instances, the sector is active, largely due to the dramatic deterioration in the human rights situation in the country. The media in Bahrain is also heavily constrained. All broadcast media outlets are government owned, while the country's main newspapers are owned by individuals with ties to the state. Following the 2011 Arab Spring, drastic censorship measures were taken and since then many journalists have been jailed. Notably, it has been increasingly difficult for foreign journalists to obtain press visas to enter Bahrain.