







HEROIN TRADE

COCAINE TRADE

CANNABIS TRADE

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE

**129<sup>th</sup>** of 193 countries **23<sup>rd</sup>** of 54 African countries **4<sup>th</sup>** of 6 North African countries





5.50

2.00

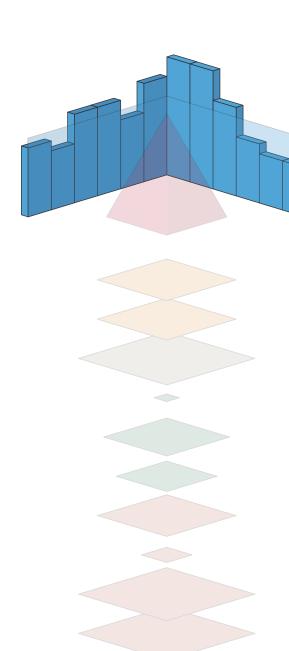
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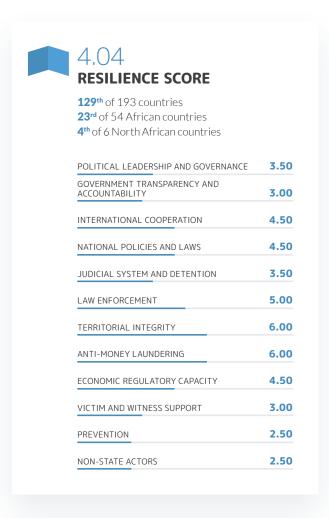
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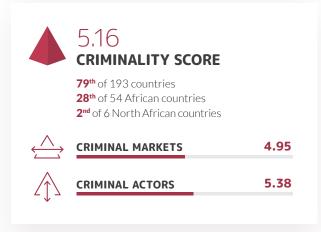
















## **CRIMINALITY**

## **CRIMINAL MARKETS**

#### **PEOPLE**

Egypt is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour, and sex and organ trafficking. Egyptian children are vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced labour in domestic service, street begging and agricultural work. There have been several reports of Egyptian men subjected to forced labour abroad, predominantly in the Gulf countries. Moreover, many migrant workers and refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East who reside in Egypt are not covered by Egyptian labour laws and find themselves vulnerable to forced labour as well as abusive practices that resemble human trafficking. Foreign women and girls who have migrated to Egypt are subjected to sexual exploitation in the country. Women from the Horn of Africa are particularly often at risk of sex trafficking in Egypt. Moreover, while not necessarily facilitated by criminal networks, organ harvesting continues and is highly organized.

A source and transit country for the smuggling of irregular migrants and refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa destined for Europe, Egypt hosts a large-scale criminal market for human smuggling. Irregular migrants from the Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa are smuggled through Egypt towards Europe, using boats that depart from the Egyptian Mediterranean shores. However, human smuggling from the Egyptian Mediterranean peaked in 2016 and 2017. Since then, the number of cases of human smuggling from Egypt has decreased and many irregular migrants may now use other countries in the region, such as Libya, as their platform for reaching Europe.

## **TRADE**

Arms trafficking is a serious issue in Egypt and controlling the circulation of arms has been a challenge for Egyptian law enforcement agencies and authorities. The situation is particularly critical in the Sinai region, where armed non-state actors have a heavy presence and are deeply involved in the illicit arms trade. Egypt may also play an important role in international arms trafficking, with numerous reports of international arms trafficking operations involving Egypt as a transit country. Additionally, Egypt's proximity to Libya and Egyptian actors' involvement in the Libyan crisis presents several arms trafficking opportunities, significantly increasing the size of the criminal market.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The main environmental criminal markets in Egypt are those for fauna and gold. Egypt is both a source and a destination country for illegal wildlife products. Protected species, including the Egyptian tortoise, falcons and fennecs, are trafficked into illegal pet markets or for traditional medicine, while poached birds of prey are sold on the criminal fauna markets in the Arabian Gulf countries. There have been reports of poachers taking advantage of the relative lack of law enforcement in desert areas of the Sinai to hunt protected animals such as the ibex, wild donkeys, oryx and Dorcas gazelles. The Egyptian black market is reportedly a destination for imported exotic animals including apes, felines and crocodiles originating in countries such as Libya, Nigeria and Cameroon. Moreover, bird poaching is a relatively widespread issue. Birds traded illegally are primarily songbirds such as finches, pipits and larks, which are either sold in local markets (often used for cooking) or trafficked abroad. Recent years have seen some ivory seizures, coming from countries such as South Sudan, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Côte d'Ivoire. Although Egypt is not a major exporter of gold, the country does host a criminal market for gold. Gold mining takes place in both the southern and northern parts of Egypt, however, in addition to the gold of Egyptian origin, there is also a criminal market for smuggled Sudanese gold. Oil smuggling in Egypt may happen, particularly because of the fuel price difference between Egypt and Libya, which provides economic incentives for smuggling. However, there is little evidence on the nature of this potential criminal market. There is little evidence of systematized illicit flora trafficking in Egypt.

## **DRUGS**

Tramadol is one of Egypt's most consumed and trafficked drugs and Egypt was one of the first countries in Africa to face a sustained Tramadol epidemic. Tramadol tends to be smuggled into Egypt from Libya or via maritime routes. Furthermore, there is some outbound smuggling of the drug, notably to Gaza. Tramadol also transits onward through North Africa and into West African consumer markets, particularly Nigeria. Despite strong laws forbidding its consumption, cannabis use is widespread in Egypt. The majority of cannabis consumed in Egypt derives from Morocco and Afghanistan, but there is also a supplementary supply of domestically cultivated cannabis. A persistent and growing domestic heroin market also exists in Egypt with evidence suggesting that heroin is relatively easy to access and has a somewhat high consumer base. Moreover, due to its geographical position, Egypt is an important transit point for heroin of Asian origin moving towards Europe, the rest of Africa and the United States. With cocaine consumption being limited to a very narrow base



of consumers and relatively minor seizures, the cocaine market in Egypt overall is negligible.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

Corruption is widespread in Egypt and seemingly occurs at all levels of the state apparatus, including in law enforcement. Civil servants and officials receive facilitation payments or are bribed to block certain procedures or grant undue advantages. Foreign criminal actors in Egypt include nationals of Sudan, Libya and various countries in Asia and the Middle East.

There are multiple prominent criminal networks with a presence in Egypt. These have significant transnational linkages and are involved in criminal markets such as human trafficking and human smuggling. Politically motivated and militant actors may play a major role in some of the criminal markets in Egypt. These include several violent extremist groups such as the Islamic State, various other Salafist militant organizations and smaller splinter groups containing radicalized former members of the Muslim Brotherhood. Mafia-style actors are known to operate in Egypt, primarily in trafficking and smuggling operations between Egypt and Sudan, Israel and Libya.

# **RESILIENCE**

### **LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

Egypt has been described as an authoritarian regime with limited civil liberties, but the government aims to take a leading position in Africa, spearheading efforts on issues linked to organized crime and violent extremism. However, Egyptian authorities often fight crime and terrorism in a heavy-handed manner that lacks strategic cohesion and accountability and are in violation of human-rights norms. Egypt suffers a grave lack of transparency in governance and entrenched corruption across government institutions. The country's integrity systems are currently not capable of adequately checking corruption risks and do not operate independently. Meanwhile, Egypt's track record on international cooperation on combating transnational organized crime is mixed.

The country is party to a number of international treaties pertaining to organized crime. Egypt also commenced cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other international bodies and has some level of bilateral cooperation with countries such as France and the United States (though that cooperation mainly gravitates around counterterrorism). Nevertheless, Egyptian law enforcement and the judiciary cooperate only to a limited extent with international partners, particularly with regard to criminal investigations and intelligence exchange. While Egypt's crime legislation touches on most criminal markets and criminalizes participating in an organized crime group, there are significant gaps in Egypt's crime legislation and its implementation.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY**

The judiciary in Egypt lacks independence and suffers high levels of corruption. Due process is often disregarded and politically motivated rulings are common. Prosecution

services and courts lack training and tend to focus on low-level offenders rather than on more organized forms of crime. Reports of physical abuse, particularly of the political opposition, are common and many detainees or criminal defendants are confessing under torture. Egypt's prison system is generally believed to be overcrowded and to suffer poor sanitary conditions. Law enforcement strategies against organized crime and terrorism often rely on heavy-handed methods such as arbitrary arrests and torture rather than more coherent and methodological approaches. Egypt's law enforcement thus lacks humanrights-compliant specialized capacity to counter organized crime groups effectively. Additionally, the state's control over some of Egypt's borderlands is occasionally in question, while the state's monopoly on violence in Sinai has eroded, allowing armed actors to operate freely.

## **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

Prior to the current global health crisis, Egypt's economy was on a trajectory of reform and stabilization with medium levels of growth. However, the country continued to suffer high levels of debt and unemployment. Weak domestic revenue mobilization and a large proportion of economic activity occurring in the informal sector are also constraints to the transformation of the Egyptian economy. Moreover, despite economic advances in the country, Egypt has seen a rise in the proportion of the population living below the poverty line.

Egypt is at medium risk of money laundering and terrorist financing. The country has somewhat limited anti-money laundering capacities and authorities have in the past failed to sever the financial flows of criminal and terrorist organizations. Nevertheless, the government has taken some steps to improve Egypt's anti-money laundering and



combating the financing of terrorism framework and build capacity in financial investigation.

## **CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION**

With very few protection mechanisms, mostly delivered by NGOs and civil society, Egypt severely lacks protection mechanisms for victims and witnesses of crime. Drug users and their families have little access to few services, treatment options are limited and most services are run by civilsociety organizations with international funding. Crime prevention strategies in Egypt are generally poorly resourced, led or implemented. The Egyptian government regularly targets NGOs and the media in the country and freedom of the press has come under significant pressure in recent years. With multiple journalists imprisoned, Egypt is emerging as one of the countries in the world where journalists, in particular those reporting on corruption, face the highest risk of imprisonment. More generally, the crackdown on opposition activities has resulted in the space for both civil society and media rapidly shrinking.

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