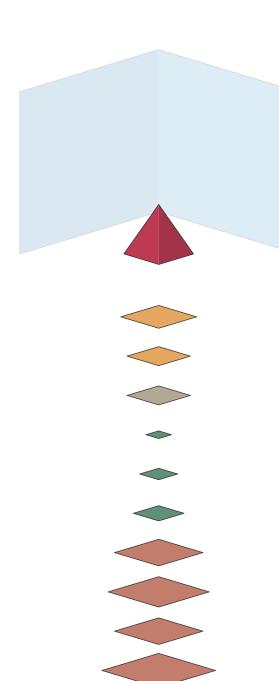




# FINLAND







## 8.42

### **RESILIENCE SCORE**

1st of 193 countries

**1**st of 44 European countries

1st of 8 Northern European countries

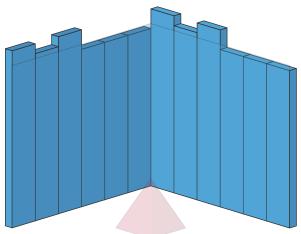








# **+** FINLAND













# **CRIMINALITY**

### **CRIMINAL MARKETS**

#### **PEOPLE**

Although Finland is not a hotspot for human trafficking, it does serve as a transit and destination country for human trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation (usually in small-scale legitimate businesses like construction, restaurants, cleaning and berry-picking), sexual exploitation, forced marriage and forced criminality. The perpetrators of human trafficking consist of Finnish natives as well as foreign criminal actors from eastern European and Asian backgrounds.

Finland does not have a large-scale market for human smuggling but is an attractive destination country and an entry point for irregular migrants seeking to enter the EU via Russia. Most migrants seeking the services of smugglers to enter Finland come from various countries in the Middle East, Central Asia & the Caucasus and South-eastern Asia. Iranians, in particular, have easy access to Russian visas, which enables them to enter Europe irregularly via Finland. Most human-smuggling cases reported by the police indicate that transnational criminal groups lead operations with support from associates inside Finland.

#### **TRADE**

While illegal arms are regularly seized in Finland, there is no evidence to suggest that their sale is a major source of income to organized-criminal groups. Nevertheless, there is evidence that illegal weapons are trafficked to Finland from Sweden and that some firearms are trafficked to neighbouring countries, such as Estonia and Russia. Additionally, there is a legal market for small arms in Finland, and criminals are known to steal legal arms and reactivate neutralized weapons. Finland is also a transit country, albeit to a limited extent, for deactivated and reactivated Kalashnikov-type assault rifles from Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany for trafficking to Russia, which is largely carried out by organized-crime groups, as well as by politically motivated groups. Arms intercepted are often procured for criminal use in Finland and most of those involved in the illicit arms trade are Finnish, including various outlaw motorcycle gangs like the Bandidos MC and United Brotherhood.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

While it is likely that environmental criminal markets exist to a very limited extent, there is no evidence of structured criminal markets in fauna or flora. Wildlife poaching does occur sporadically in Finland, but there is no evidence of

an organized market or trading in poached species. While an illicit market for non-renewable resources likely exists in Finland in relation to gold mining, there is not much in the way of publicly available evidence.

#### **DRUGS**

Cannabis is the most commonly used and traded illicit substance in Finland, as well as the most socially acceptable drug. While Moroccan cannabis has dominated the Finnish cannabis supply for many years, there is some evidence of emerging domestic cultivation of cannabis. Unlike other illicit markets that are more directly controlled by criminal organizations, the cannabis market is often facilitated by smaller, more decentralized networks. After cannabis, synthetic drugs such as amphetamines and MDMA are the most commonly used drugs in Finland. Synthetic drugs originating in Western Europe are imported via Estonia, Lithuania, Sweden and Russia. The synthetic opioid buprenorphine (Subutex) has been used in Finland since the early 2000s, almost entirely replacing heroin. The increased availability of new psychoactive substances, usually ordered online from abroad, is one of the emerging trends on the Finnish drug scene. For the most part, synthetic drugs are imported by organized-crime groups such as outlaw motorcycle gangs or foreign organized criminals.

Although cocaine seizures and consumption remain small by global standards, cocaine usage in Finland has increased steadily in recent decades. Cocaine is trafficked into Finland from the Netherlands and Belgium by organized-crime groups such as outlaw motorcycle gangs and street gangs. Finland imports only negligible amounts of heroin, and recent years have witnessed very small heroin seizures. This is most likely due to the increase in consumption of opioid substitutes.

## **CRIMINAL ACTORS**

According to police information, there are about 90 organized crime groups in the country, most of which are domestic groups, totaling around 900 to 1000 members. The largest groups of criminal actors in Finland are criminal networks and mafia-style outlaw motorcycle clubs. The most prominent biker gangs are the Bandidos MC, Cannonball MC, Hells Angels and the United Brotherhood. The most common activities these groups engage in are drug trafficking, money laundering, prostitution and human trafficking and smuggling, as well as, to a lesser extent, extortion. Along with mafia-style gangs, loose networks are expanding their influence in Finland. The latter are flexible, which allows them to relatively easily modify their organizational structure to fit a specific situation



and collaborate with foreign groups, mostly Russian and groups from the Baltic states.

Foreign criminal actors active in Finland are transnational organisations involving nationals from a range of Eastern European and African countries, including Albania, Romania, Russia and Nigeria. These actors tend to be active in the criminal markets for human trafficking and drug smuggling.

Additionally, foreign motorcycle gangs such as Outlaws MC, the Shark Riders MC, Satudarah MC and No Surrender MC (among others) also have a presence in Finland. While there have been isolated cases of state-embedded actors assisting criminals, these are not symptomatic of a wider systemic problem and there is no evidence of sustained state control over criminal markets.

# **RESILIENCE**

#### **LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

Finland is a strong, consolidated democracy characterized by efficient and inclusive governance and high regard for human rights and liberties. The government of Finland has taken clear leadership on the issue of organized crime and regularly adopts strategies and action plans to address related issues. In spite of some significant gaps in its anticorruption framework, Finland is perceived as one of the least corrupt countries in the world and performs very well in terms of accountable and transparent governance.

Finland has ratified all relevant international instruments on organized crime, as well as all relevant Council of Europe and European Union instruments. The government is committed to international and European cooperation and has signed a number of extradition agreements with countries outside the EU, including the US, Canada and Australia. Additionally, Finland is an important donor country and has a strong track record of contributing to international development cooperation related to combating transnational organized crime. Unlike other countries in the west, Finland still retains working law-enforcement cooperation with the Russian Federation. The Finish legal framework criminalizes all major criminal markets and is reliably enforced.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Finland's judiciary is well resourced, independent and reliable. Finnish courts have frequently sentenced members and leadership of organized-crime groups. The Finnish prison system puts heavy emphasis on rehabilitation, with up to a third of prisoners residing in open facilities. Finland has a very low rate of incarceration, and prison sentences tend to be short, particularly for crimes that are not associated with violence or organized criminality. Organized criminals tend to be kept in more secure prisons. In recent years, there has been an increase in organized-crime activity inside these higher-security prisons and the United Brotherhood is reported to have some level of influence in some prisons.

Finnish law enforcement and police enjoy some of the highest levels of trust among the population of any country and have generally proven effective in both preventing and combating organized crime. Finnish police have a number of entities and units specialized in investigating and combating organized crime. The expertise to investigate human-trafficking crimes has been scattered and limited, but the government is currently organising a specialized unit/network for investigating this type of crime. Finland's long border with Russia continues to expose Finland to a number of illicit flows. However, the Finnish border authorities are technologically advanced and effective and thus handle these risks well.

### **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

Finland enjoys a regulatory environment conducive to business. The Finnish economy is very open and innovative, and the country is relatively rich and has low rates of inequality. Finland has ratified legislation and international agreements against money-laundering and has an antimoney-laundering framework that is generally up to date. Overall, Finland is resilient to money-laundering and terrorist-financing. However, investigations in connection with the Panama Papers and other, more recent international money-laundering scandals have raised questions regarding the extent to which Nordic banks - Finnish banks included have been able to ensure probity and decline opportunities to increase short-term profitability and commissions by assisting in suspect financial transactions. Moreover, Finnish organized-crime groups are known to be involved in sectors such as construction, car retail, transport, airport maintenance, property maintenance and nightclubs in order to launder the proceeds of crime.

#### CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Finnish government, in cooperation with civil society, has implemented several mechanisms for victims and offers a full witness-protection programme. The Finnish state is committed to providing support and rehabilitation treatment



for drug users through the national healthcare system and public and private rehabilitation facilities. Although both the state and civil society have implemented mechanisms for protecting human-trafficking victims, key gaps remain in the capacity to respond to the issues – particularly for groups who fear repercussions from seeking assistance. Finland has a number of crime-prevention strategies and policies in place. Finland also has an EXIT programme run by law enforcement in cooperation with civil-society organisations that assists individuals who wish to leave a criminal organization or livelihoods based on criminal markets. The state allows the media broad access to investigate and report on organized crime, providing top-level crime reports on request. Press freedom is guaranteed and protected in Finland without restrictions.

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