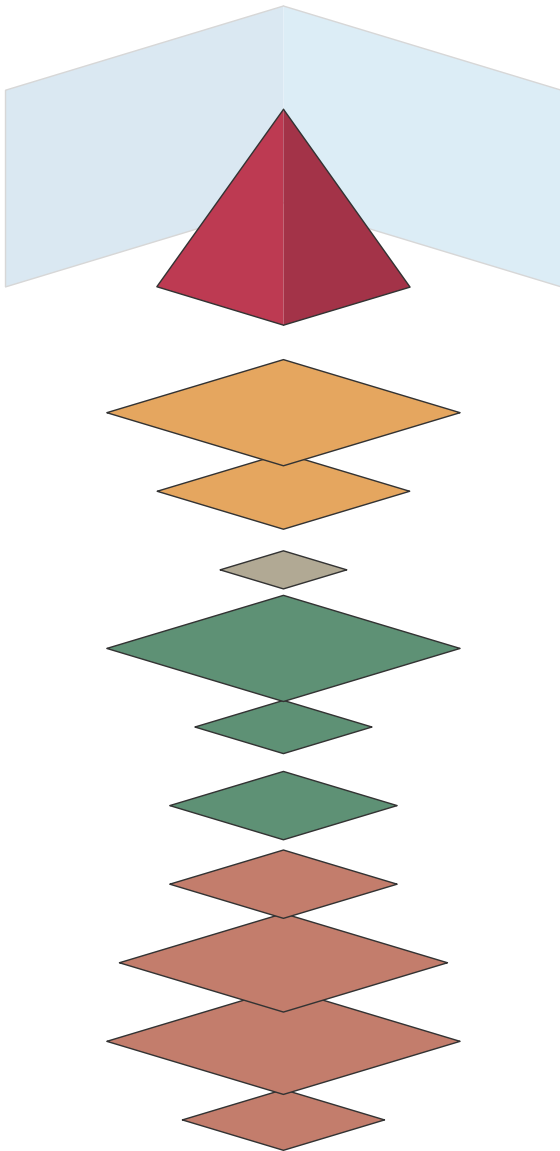


 **GAMBIA**



 **4.83**  
**CRIMINALITY SCORE**

100<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries  
33<sup>rd</sup> of 54 African countries  
13<sup>th</sup> of 15 West African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **5.15**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	7.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	2.50
FLORA CRIMES	7.00
FAUNA CRIMES	3.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.50
HEROIN TRADE	4.50
COCAINE TRADE	6.50
CANNABIS TRADE	7.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	4.00

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **4.50**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	6.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	4.00

 **5.00**  
**RESILIENCE SCORE**

90<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries  
11<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
5<sup>th</sup> of 15 West African countries



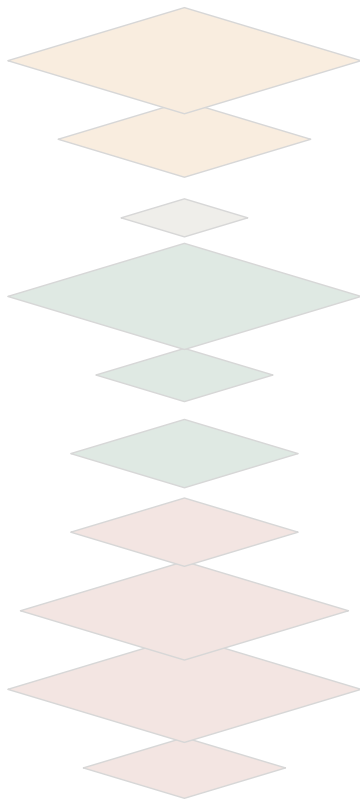
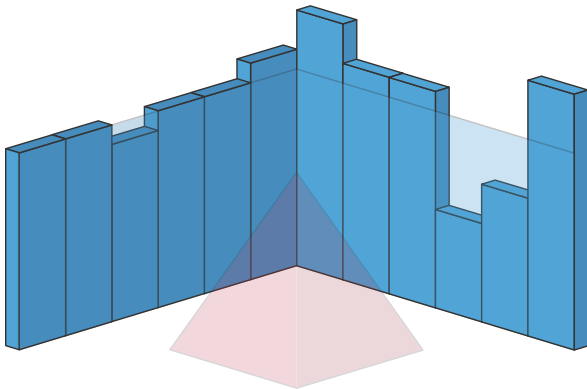
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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# GAMBIA




## 5.00 RESILIENCE SCORE



**90<sup>th</sup>** of 193 countries  
**11<sup>th</sup>** of 54 African countries  
**5<sup>th</sup>** of 15 West African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	<b>5.00</b>
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	<b>5.00</b>
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	<b>4.50</b>
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	<b>5.00</b>
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	<b>5.00</b>
LAW ENFORCEMENT	<b>5.50</b>
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	<b>6.50</b>
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	<b>5.50</b>
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	<b>5.50</b>
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	<b>2.50</b>
PREVENTION	<b>3.50</b>
NON-STATE ACTORS	<b>6.50</b>



## 4.83 CRIMINALITY SCORE

**100<sup>th</sup>** of 193 countries  
**33<sup>rd</sup>** of 54 African countries  
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 <b>CRIMINAL MARKETS</b>	<b>5.15</b>
 <b>CRIMINAL ACTORS</b>	<b>4.50</b>

# CRIMINALITY

## CRIMINAL MARKETS

### PEOPLE

Sex trafficking and forced labour are the most prevalent forms of exploitation in The Gambia, with the country being a source, a waypoint and a destination market for the trafficking in human beings. Women and girls are at the highest risk of becoming a victim of sex trafficking in The Gambia; however, boys are also vulnerable, being subjected to sexual exploitation or forced labour in domestic servitude or as street vendors. In many cases, the sexual exploitation of children involves child sex tourists who rely on European and Gambian travel agencies to facilitate their offending. Moreover, sex traffickers increasingly host child sex tourists in private residences outside the commercial tourist areas. Sierra Leonean children have also been exploited in The Gambia as 'cultural dancers'. Women may also be trafficked abroad, often to the Middle East, where they are forced into the sex trade or labour.

The Gambia is mainly a source country for human smuggling. Since the civil war in Libya in 2011, tens of thousands of young Gambians have attempted to cross the Mediterranean to Europe among other irregular routes. Gambians have consistently been one of the top ten nationalities taking boats across the Mediterranean.

### TRADE

Due to a political crisis following the 2016 election, The Gambia has become more open to possible infiltration of illicit arms brokers, although no major incidents have been recorded to this effect. Nevertheless, laws on the use and possession of dangerous weapons are strict and penalties are high, with military-style firearms being illegal in the country.

### ENVIRONMENT

In Gambia, illegal logging and timber trafficking remain the most pervasive criminal market with connections to neighbouring Senegal and Guinea Bissau. Although the current government has shown considerable political will to reduce trafficking in illicit timber and to cooperate with Senegal in this fight, cross-border illegal logging and smuggling of timber continue. In that respect, the southern border of the country hosts the trafficking routes that see flora trafficked through The Gambia to Asian markets. In regard to fauna crimes, due to illegal wildlife trafficking, chimpanzees are now extinct in The Gambia. Furthermore, hippopotamus, African elephants, lions, leopards, sperm whales, Atlantic humpbacked dolphins and the African

manatee have been listed as vulnerable and endangered. Additionally, foreign actors have been reportedly involved in illegal fishing in Gambian waters. There is very little, if any, gold mining in The Gambia. However, for the last several years, there has been much public unrest due to the illegal sand mining, which has had a severe environmental impact. Overall, however, the non-renewable resource crimes market is not pervasive.

### DRUGS

Historically, poor coastal and border controls, in addition to corrupt service members, made The Gambia an ideal transit destination for most drugs. Cannabis is the most problematic drug in The Gambia and is the cause of most drug-related crimes committed in the country. The cannabis trade appears most pervasive in The Gambia and as such, it is reportedly driving most drug-related offences in the country. Cannabis is also the most commonly seized drug in The Gambia. It mainly originates from the Casamance region in Senegal. The Gambia is a waypoint for heroin on its way to European markets. The amount of the drug that transits the country is growing at such pace that national authorities have now deemed the heroin trade a national security threat.

The Gambia is also a major transit hub for cocaine trafficked from South America to European markets. Tonnes of cocaine moving via maritime shipments and airports have been seized in the country. Moreover, the domestic cocaine market is also on the rise, partly driven by the growing tourism sector. In regard to synthetic drugs, there is some evidence that methamphetamine is produced in The Gambia. Domestic use is thought to be common, especially among tourists. The abuse of drugs such as diazepam and clonazepam is gradually increasing among the youth. Moreover, The Gambia is used as a transit country for methamphetamine from Nigeria. Benzodiazepines are also common in the country.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

Criminal networks are a prevalent criminal actor type in The Gambia. Despite the country's political transition, organized crime is still considered a threat to development, rule of law and national security. Furthermore, close to the border region between Senegal and The Gambia, separatist violence and armed banditry occurs due to the ongoing conflict in the Senegalese Casamance region. Although separatist fighters primarily target the military, civilians travelling or living in the region have also suffered attacks by both militants and criminal elements. In terms of foreign actors, there is a high presence of Chinese firms in The Gambia that have allegedly engaged in polluting the environment while producing materials ready for export to China.

Even though these activities do not constitute organized crime per se, the possibility of organized crime links does exist. The illicit distribution of psychotropic drugs is also associated with foreign actors and the tourism industry.

Police officers are perceived as the most corrupt officials in the country, along with business executives. Although corruption and extortion by public officers are punishable

under Gambian criminal code, in reality, state authorities have often been involved in corruption with no repercussion. The change of leadership has stemmed this condition. However, previous rulers have not yet been brought to justice. Currently no mafia-style groups have been identified in The Gambia.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Despite the change of leadership, there is no evidence of any proactive measures to counter the rise in organized criminal activities. Meanwhile, The Gambia's corruption is less of an issue compared to other African countries. However, there is clearly scope for significant improvement in anti-corruption efforts, especially in light of lingering doubts about the government's commitment to tackle corrupt practices.

On the international level, The Gambia has ratified the majority of relevant international treaties pertaining to organized crime. However, there are no reports of any significant collaboration with international agencies to build capacity against organized crime, except for the signing of an anti-drug memorandum of understanding with Senegal. On the domestic level, The Gambia has a number of laws related to organized crimes, including such that deem forms of organized crime a 'serious offence' or criminalize organized crime groups. Under the current administration, there is an improved policy-making environment and many relevant institutions exist to counter organized crime. The current government is also more politically sensitive to the need of legal and policy frameworks dedicated to countering organized crime.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The Gambia does not have any judicial units set up with the specific aim of fighting organized crime. However, the country has a functional judiciary, which has a history of sourcing judges from other African countries, especially Nigeria, to enhance its effectiveness. The government has also made efforts to professionalize the judiciary and recruit more Gambians so the judiciary can be considered more independent. In regard to law enforcement, there have been ongoing efforts under the current administration to diminish corruption that undermines law enforcement agencies' effectiveness, including removing the exercise of arbitrary detention and arrest. Given the small size of the country, with far shorter land and sea boundaries compared

to some other countries in Africa, The Gambia's borders are much easier to control. Border management is exercised by means of frequent patrols by the Immigration Border Patrol Unit with the help of sister services. The country is also working with international partners to build a national border control system.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Gambia's economic regulatory environment is in need of substantial improvements. The new government has shown a major interest in deepening democratic governance, which is critical to a sustainable economic regulatory capacity. The ongoing efforts pertaining to improved legal environment, enhanced anti-corruption measures and improvement in political freedoms are strengthening the economic regulatory capacity of the country. Meanwhile, The Gambia has also made clear efforts to tackle money laundering and financial crime. Under the present government, there has been a push to establish a financial intelligence unit and cooperate with the Financial Action Task Force in conducting reviews. However, the need to strengthen enforcement capacity remains.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Gambia lacks any formal programme of victim or witness protection, despite its problem of human smuggling. However, there has been an international effort to introduce a project aimed at providing assistance to high officials and front-line enforcement officers to fight organized crime in The Gambia. A training session was also held in The Gambia to improve law enforcement's capacity to better respond and tackle drug trafficking as well as other related forms of transnational organized crime. As for press freedom, The Gambia is at a critical juncture. Since the change in political power, there has been greater space for civil-society organizations, including the media, to participate in the political life of the country. Notably, laws used to intimidate and silence journalists in the country are being repealed or amended. Regardless of that, practices built in the system

during decades of repression against free press have not yet been completely overcome. This is most evident in the closure of some privately-owned media stations.

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