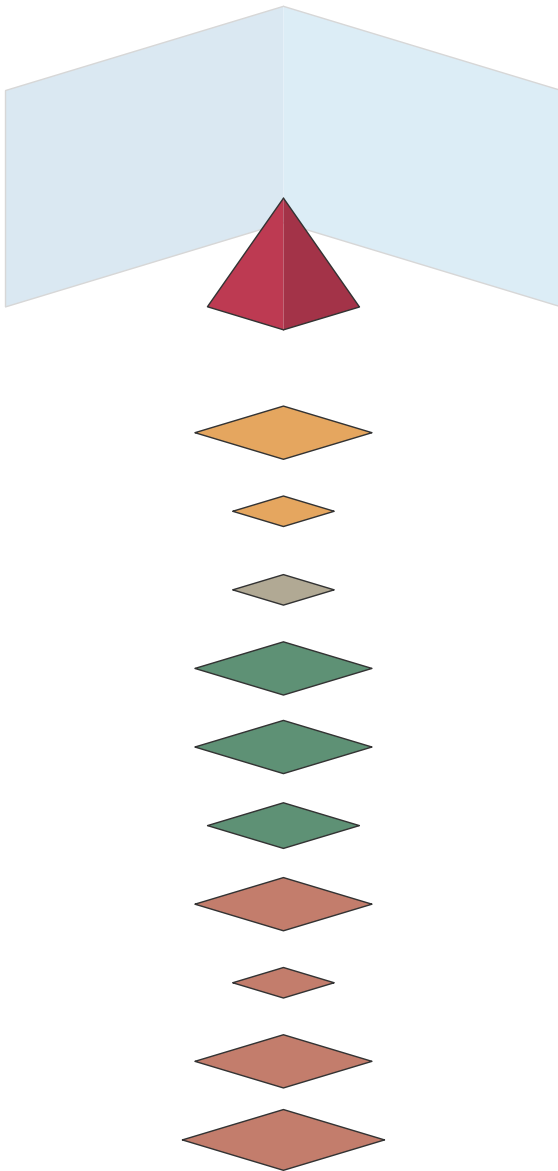


GEORGIA



2.96

CRIMINALITY SCORE

177th of 193 countries

45th of 46 Asian countries

8th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

3.05

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

3.50

HUMAN SMUGGLING

2.00

ARMS TRAFFICKING

2.00

FLORA CRIMES

3.50

FAUNA CRIMES

3.50

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES

3.00

HEROIN TRADE

3.50

COCAINE TRADE

2.00

CANNABIS TRADE

3.50

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE

4.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS

2.88

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS

2.50

CRIMINAL NETWORKS

3.00

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS

3.00

FOREIGN ACTORS

3.00



5.71

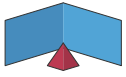
RESILIENCE SCORE

43rd of 193 countries

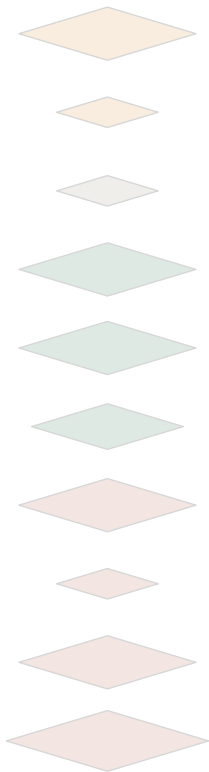
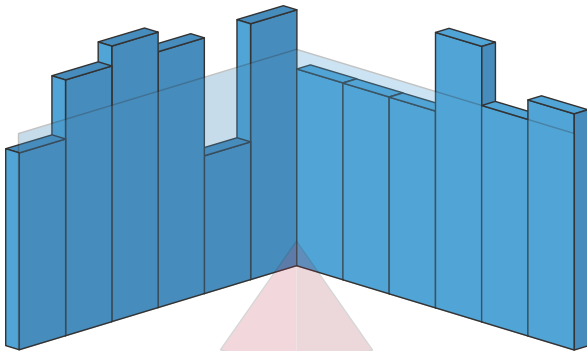
7th of 46 Asian countries

1st of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries





GEORGIA



5.71

RESILIENCE SCORE

43rd of 193 countries

7th of 46 Asian countries

1st of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	6.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	5.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	7.00
PREVENTION	5.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00



2.96

CRIMINALITY SCORE

177th of 193 countries

45th of 46 Asian countries

8th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

3.05



CRIMINAL ACTORS

2.88



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking in Georgia is characterized primarily by an extensive market for sexual exploitation, with traffickers recruiting victims to be forced into prostitution abroad, predominately in Turkey and less frequently in China and the UAE. Domestically, Georgian women and women from Azerbaijan and Central Asia are forced into prostitution in large cities in the country, such as Batumi and Tbilisi, as well as in the tourist destinations of the Adjara region. Women from former Soviet republics are trafficked through Georgia on their way to Turkey. Forced labour is also a common practice, with both Georgian men and women trafficked domestically and abroad. The primary trafficking destinations for forced labour are Turkey, the UAE, Egypt, Cyprus and Iraq. Street children as well as children working in agriculture and in the informal urban economy are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. Georgian, Romani and Kurdish children are coerced into begging and other criminal activities in the country.

Reportedly, organized crime groups targeted the Georgian borders in late 2015, smuggling individuals coming from Asia and Africa into Turkey. Little information has been available since then, suggesting that the flow has largely decreased.

TRADE

The tensions in the two breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have left Georgia vulnerable to arms trafficking. Before the 2008 Russo-Georgian war, Russia reportedly illegally supplied the de facto states with weapons. Current, concrete information is lacking on whether illicit flows of arms to the two regions are still ongoing.

ENVIRONMENT

Both commercial entities and private citizens are involved in illegal logging in Georgia. Arguably, mostly private citizens are involved in illicit logging because more than two-thirds of households in rural areas are dependent on firewood for heating. Nevertheless, logging for commercial purposes is also problematic. Corruption in the natural-resources sector is average and most logging goes unrecorded due to the limited ability of institutions to manage sustainable resources. The increased rural dependence on natural resources has also led to unsustainable hunting of endangered wildlife. Poaching incidents are recorded, but there is no indication of organized crime involvement. On the other hand, overfishing in the Black Sea is considerable, with

fishermen exceeding their legal quotas up to ten times. Additionally, Georgia is reported to be a transit country for caviar sourced in Azerbaijan and destined for the EU. Incidents of oil theft are documented, but there is no information to indicate the involvement of organized crime groups.

DRUGS

Emerging as an additional supply route for the European and, to a lesser extent, Russian markets, Georgia functions as a transit country for opiates produced in the Golden Crescent that are trafficked into Ukraine or Moldova, likely by ferries crossing the Black Sea. Mostly Turkish groups organize and control the trafficking of heroin from source to destination countries, although reports suggest they cooperate with Georgian criminal networks. Allegedly, small heroin production laboratories have been set up in Georgia over the past few years. While a domestic heroin market does exist, it is most likely very small. Cocaine trafficking in Georgia takes place on a small scale and satisfies very low domestic demand.

Georgia is not a major cannabis producing country. Local indoor and outdoor cultivation has been recorded, but takes place on a small scale and mostly for personal use. On the other hand, the country is a transit point for synthetic drugs. Judging by seized quantities, Georgia is not a major corridor for synthetic-drug smuggling operations. A domestic market exists, with MDMA and amphetamine being the most common drugs in the country after cannabis.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Most criminal networks in Georgia consist of poorly organized young people trying to gain control over a specific territory in competition with other similar groups. They are involved in petty crime, mainly robbing cars and small shops. Reports of bank robberies by better-organized violent groups have also emerged. In addition, criminal networks are also likely involved in heroin trafficking, cooperating with foreign actors. As mostly Turkish groups control the trafficking of heroin, information suggests these have established their presence in the legal economy of key countries along the trafficking route. Thus it is possible that such groups control legal businesses in Georgia. Foreign actors may collaborate with individual facilitators in the country as well, or have Georgian nationals in their ranks.

State-embedded actors were largely involved in smuggling activities and state-resource extraction in the 1990s. However, their prominence diminished in the first decade of the 21st century, following the implementation of comprehensive rule-of-law reforms. Although corruption is

still an issue, especially in regions bordering South Ossetia and Abkhazia, there is no indication of the existence of pervasive corruption activities in the higher echelons of government and law enforcement. Similar to state-embedded actors, mafia-style groups known as *kanonieri qurdebi* or 'thieves-in-law' were very prominent in Georgia in the 1990s. The highly hierarchical group, with leaders of different clans equal in status, was largely dismantled in

Georgia following the adoption of an anti-mafia strategy and the implementation of laws targeting the 'thieves-in-law'. Currently, authorities believe mafia-style groups are no longer an issue in Georgia, but the elements that survived the governmental crackdown continue to operate abroad, in Russia and Western Europe. Additionally, information also suggests that criminal subculture may have again taken hold in certain prisons in the country.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Corruption perceptions in Georgia are low even by Western European standards, but issues exist. Oligarchs reportedly continue to hold influence over policy, political interests hinder rule of law, and tenders remain a challenge for policymakers. As mentioned above, the first decade of the 21st century saw significant anti-organized crime and anti-corruption reforms, which brought down criminality. More recently, cannabis was decriminalized and parliament considered, but did not pass, a draft law that would have allowed companies in the country to grow and export cannabis and regulated domestic consumption. While anti-corruption policies continue to be effectively enforced, nepotism persists. Local governments are often ineffective and weak, while the two breakaway regions in Georgia are sources of political fragility and vulnerability. Although the legal framework guiding public access to information is fairly coherent, there have been calls for a more robust law and greater transparency. Elections are generally fair. However, some electoral issues have been observed by the international community since 2016, which should prompt an adequate response.

Georgia is party to all treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, with the exception of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the UNTOC. International cooperation on matters of justice and law enforcement is well established in both law and practice. Most notably, the US Drug Enforcement Administration opened an office in Tbilisi, a testament to the ongoing support for Georgian law enforcement and the strong operational partnership that the country has developed with the US. The Georgian legislative framework covers all criminal markets under this Index. Recently, drug reforms have been on the policymakers' agenda.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

In spite of government assurances of reforms aiming to restore justice and ensure the independence of the judicial system, no meaningful and consistent changes have been implemented. A reluctance to discuss issues in the judiciary as well as closed-door decision-making without informal negotiations have put additional pressure on the judicial branch. The judiciary is also understaffed and capacity-building efforts are required, as evidenced by the backlog of cases. Despite decriminalizing cannabis and making efforts to regulate consumption, drug laws are aggressively enforced, which reportedly causes severe and unjustifiable harm. Claims of corruption in the detention system and the re-emergence of criminal subcultures in some prisons persist. There are specialized anti-organized crime units within the Georgian central criminal police department, mandated with countering human trafficking and drug-related offences. In addition, Georgia's state security service is tasked with fighting terrorism and organized crime. Major reforms have almost weeded out low-level corruption in law enforcement; however, as with the judicial system, law enforcement bodies lack independence from political interference. Reportedly, law enforcement agencies, including specialized units, are often understaffed and lack the ability and experience to effectively respond to organized crime threats. In spite of the training programmes and seminars that are implemented, other territorial challenges, such as the lack of control over the two breakaway regions, increase Georgia's vulnerability to trafficking and illicit flows.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Georgia has made substantial progress in improving its anti-money laundering framework. The country has a financial intelligence unit, but limited resources and technical difficulties impede its work. Despite efforts to further strengthen its anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism framework and improve operational capabilities, the risk of money laundering in Georgia remains fair, with the country's gambling industry being most at

risk. In contrast, governmental policies and the economic regulatory framework of the country are on paper supportive of and conducive to starting a business. Certain issues remain, the most serious of which are oligarchic interests preventing free competition, as well as a strong business lobby affecting major government decisions.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Georgia meets the necessary minimal requirements for the elimination of human trafficking. Besides improving prosecution and law enforcement operational capabilities in relation to trafficking in persons, Georgia has enhanced victim support as well. The country financed victim assistance programmes as well as two victim shelters, staffed with medical, social and legal professionals. Furthermore, funds to NGOs for the reintegration of street children have been allocated. More mobile-identification groups were established to proactively identify victims of trafficking. In addition, over the past couple of years, more drug treatment and harm reduction programmes have been set up as well. The government continued to implement prevention efforts as well, although more inconsistently. A 2019–2020 national action plan was put into effect, but its implementation lacked transparency and no assessment of the results is available. Awareness raising has been a cornerstone of prevention efforts, with the government funding an NGO to raise awareness in 10 major cities, disseminating leaflets and organizing seminars. Nevertheless, some issues on victim support and human trafficking prevention remain, such as complicated procedures for obtaining official victim status and lack of resources, staff and proper training for an effective labour oversight. Conversely, drug use and drug trafficking prevention has not received as much attention on the part of the authorities. A national anti-drug action plan for 2021–2022 was drafted and one exists for 2019–2020, but reportedly no coherent prevention mechanisms are in place. Instead, efforts are for the most part either fragmented campaigns, limited to schools or media outlets, or NGO-spearheaded pilots, part of donor-funded projects. Evidently, the civil society sector has expanded over the past years, but is predominately concentrated in the capital. While some NGOs operate freely and are part of policy discussion, others report external pressures and defamation campaigns targeting them. The media landscape in Georgia is diverse, but reportedly polarized. Although transparency in media ownership improved, owners are often still in charge of produced content. Threats against journalists are not uncommon, but violence is becoming less frequent. Overall, the media environment in the country is well developed and free.

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