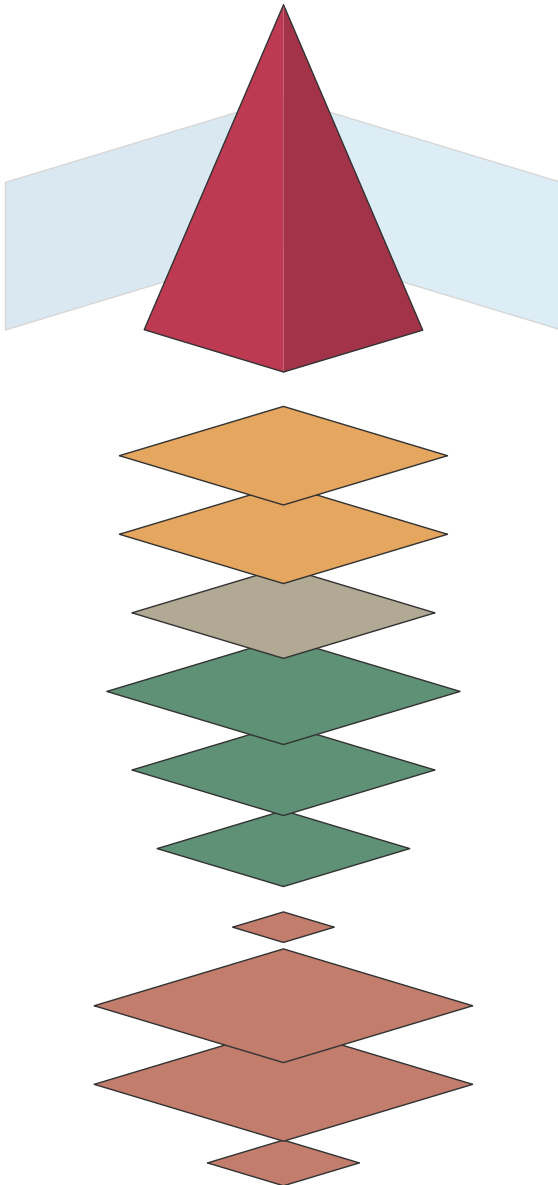




HONDURAS



6.98

CRIMINALITY SCORE

10th of 193 countries

3rd of 35 American countries

2nd of 8 Central American countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

5.70

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 6.50

HUMAN SMUGGLING 6.50

ARMS TRAFFICKING 6.00

FLORA CRIMES 7.00

FAUNA CRIMES 6.00

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 5.00

HEROIN TRADE 2.00

COCAINE TRADE 7.50

CANNABIS TRADE 7.50

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 3.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS

8.25

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 8.50

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 8.00

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 8.50

FOREIGN ACTORS 8.00



3.92

RESILIENCE SCORE

138th of 193 countries

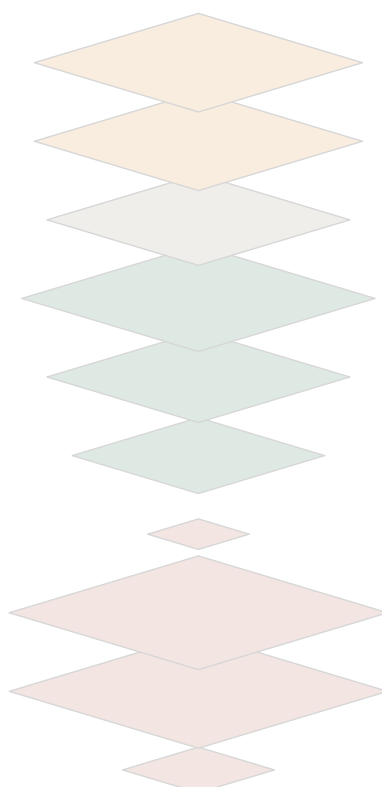
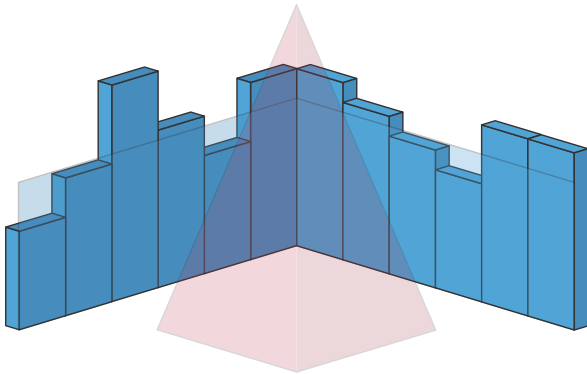
28th of 35 American countries

5th of 8 Central American countries





HONDURAS



3.92

RESILIENCE SCORE

138th of 193 countries

28th of 35 American countries

5th of 8 Central American countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	2.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	4.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	4.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	3.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	3.00
PREVENTION	4.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.50



6.98

CRIMINALITY SCORE

10th of 193 countries

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CRIMINAL MARKETS

5.70



CRIMINAL ACTORS

8.25



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Honduras is a human-trafficking hub. Victims of sexual and labour exploitation are transported to the United States as well as to other destinations including Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. Many trafficking victims are forced to work as street vendors, domestic servants and drug traffickers. They are also exploited for sex work.

Honduras is also a source and transit country for human smuggling. Migrants from the region and, increasingly, from Africa and Asia hire individuals or groups to transport them through countries including Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico on their way to the United States.

TRADE

Honduras is home to a relatively developed arms-trafficking market, which, although not controlled by any one particular group, has benefited from loose gun laws, the lack of a centralized registry, a poorly regulated private-security industry, and demand from drug traffickers, gangs, private-security firms and criminals who trade in homemade weapons. Weapons are often bought legally in the United States before being trafficked into the country. Some of Honduras's most powerful organizations also purchase high-powered weapons – including AK47 assault rifles, Dragoon sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenades – from Mexican organizations and corrupt law-enforcement officials in countries including Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Criminal groups use a number of techniques to traffic weapons into Honduras. These include smuggling parts in transport vehicles, hiding them in containers of legal goods being imported into the country, and bribing officials to facilitate passage. The easy availability of arms in Honduras is believed to be one of the main reasons for the country's high levels of violence.

ENVIRONMENT

Illegal logging is carried out by various actors including local loggers, landless farmers, drug traffickers and cattle ranchers aided by corrupt officials. It is one of the most common flora crimes in Honduras and is believed to account for more than half the timber industry in the country. Wood, mainly mahogany and cedar, is sold to China and the United States with the help of corrupt politicians and police officers. It is often trafficked alongside illegal drugs. The market is at the epicentre of Honduras's criminal activities, with activists who campaign against illegal logging being threatened and even killed in numbers that make the

country the most dangerous in the world for environmental defenders. Similarly, with regard to flora crimes, birds, reptiles (including iguanas, turtles and vipers) and jaguars are among the most-trafficked species for consumption, ownership as exotic pets, and animal parts.

A minimal market for non-renewable-resource crimes exists in Honduras, mainly in the form of small-scale illicit gold mining, which is managed by local individuals with little apparent involvement from large crime organizations. The theft of oil, which is then smuggled into the country, particularly from Mexico, reportedly takes place at the hands of powerful local gangs.

DRUGS

Honduras's location in the centre of one of the main drug-trafficking corridors in the region – coupled with signs of increasing production in the country and evidence of senior government officials being involved in the trade – puts the country at the centre of the region's criminal map. Large organizations work as the middlemen between Colombian cocaine producers and Mexican traffickers. They transport the drug through Honduras by land, sea and air from Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala to the United States. Local organizations are reported to be behind the new plantations and laboratories that have sprung up in a bid to control more elements of the supply chain than just transport.

Cannabis is believed to be one of the most sold drugs locally. Due to criminal groups looking to increase their profits, both consumption and cultivation have increased in recent years, as has the sale of krispy, a chemically laced cannabis derivative. Honduras's heroin trade appears to be relatively insignificant, with sporadic reports of opioid trafficking to and from the country over the past decade. Although the use of synthetic drugs is very low, precursor chemicals have reportedly been seized. These chemicals are believed to be mainly for the production of methamphetamine and other synthetic drugs, which are then supplied to criminal organizations in Mexico.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

In recent years, international gangs such as MS-13 and Barrio 18 have come to dominate Honduras's criminal landscape. Both these organizations have hierarchical structures, exert considerable control over the areas in which they operate, use extreme violence and draw much of their power from the prison system. MS-13 has developed a more business-oriented and discrete profile, with a relatively large membership and deep collective identity, while Barrio 18 still takes a more traditional approach. These mafia-style

groups work alongside other criminal networks to dominate the cocaine-trafficking and distribution markets. They are also involved in other criminal activities such as car theft and the extortion of large businesses. The more traditional drug-trafficking organizations engage in activities such as timber trafficking, mainly for money-laundering purposes.

Honduras is home to many family-based transportista groups, who transport illegal goods, provide security for illicit cargo and carry out other logistics-related tasks. It also has a number of loose criminal networks that are

involved in a widerange of criminal markets, including drugs, arms and human trafficking; human smuggling; and flora-and-fauna and non-renewable-resource crimes. Honduras's organized-crime groups are believed to operate in collusion with the authorities at all levels – including law enforcement, ministers, majors, members of congress and even presidents. Foreign criminal organizations, mainly from Colombia and Mexico but also from El Salvador, are active in Honduras. They tend to focus on drug processing and trafficking, among other criminal activities.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Corruption has severely damaged governance in Honduras, with high-level government officials accused of colluding with criminal organizations despite public promises to tackle gangs. While some measures have been taken, including a purge of the police and the extradition of some criminal suspects to the United States, entrenched corruption has undermined these efforts and led to high levels of public distrust in politicians and institutions, including the executive, congress, judiciary and security forces.

Honduras has signed a number of international treaties on organized crime. It also has a range of national laws to fight the problem, as well as to punish corruption and ensure transparency. However, it has faced serious challenges regarding their effective implementation, including suggestions that they protect the interests of powerful elites. The country has benefited from international cooperation initiatives with the United States, most notably in relation to intelligence and anti-gang measures, community-policing strategies and extradition arrangements. The Organization of American States is credited with the establishment of the Mission to Support the Fight against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras –which, among other things, helped pass a campaign-finance law, created a special prosecution unit, and drew attention to several high-profile corruption cases. The body, however, was constantly undermined by political and economic elites, which led to its end in early 2020, after the authorities failed to renew its mandate.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Honduras's judiciary is considered to be extremely inefficient, corrupt, underfinanced and understaffed. It is politicized and subject to intimidation and attacks. Impunity levels run high, particularly in cases against the country's elite, which has led to very low levels of public trust. Honduras's location at the centre of a major trafficking corridor for

humans, drugs and illicit goods heading from South America to the United States make law enforcement a challenging task, as do the country's thick forests and collection of islands. A severe lack of resources, including equipment and training, coupled with allegations of systemic corruption, restricts the capacity of Honduras's security agencies. The country's overcrowded, unsanitary and understaffed prisons, controlled mostly by criminal organizations, exacerbate the problem.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Honduras has been assessed as having a high risk of money laundering and terrorist financing. Its capacity to fight these crimes is hindered by a lack of investigative capabilities, training, cooperation, transparency and information sharing. Another challenge is the country's economic regulatory system, which is believed to disproportionately benefit private companies, many of which are involved in corruption or owned by criminal organizations that control sectors of the economy. Honduras is home to a very large informal sector, which affects the authorities' ability to control cash flows and customs. This makes doing business in Honduras particularly difficult.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Support for the victims and witnesses of crime is limited to non-existent, with a noticeable lack of resources or institutions. Although the authorities run programmes to fight drug trafficking and consumption, they tend to take a punitive rather than a preventative approach. A 2019 report stated that the police narcotics bureau's prevention unit had only two staff members with no relevant training, while other government-led prevention programmes, including those funded by the United States and aimed at tackling gang activity, suffered severe cuts or were fully terminated. Most prevention programmes are run

by civil-society and foreign-aid organizations, with some faith-based organizations and NGOs allowed to operate in gang-controlled territories, where they act as mediators between criminal organizations and security institutions.

Honduras is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for activists – in particular, those who work to protect the environment. They are often the targets of smear campaigns, attacks and even killings. The country is also unsafe for journalists and media workers, who are often threatened or attacked for reporting on issues related to government corruption and crime, with many self-censoring out of fear.

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