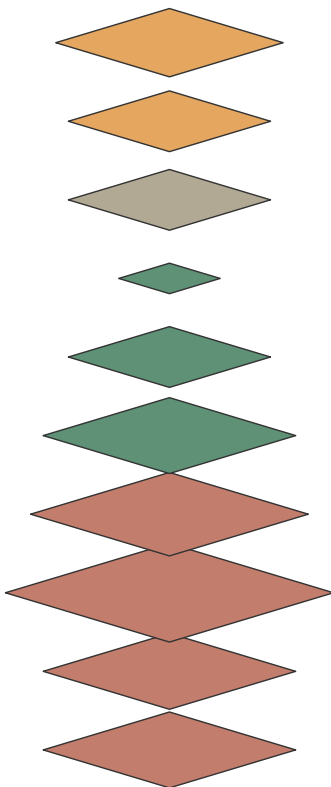
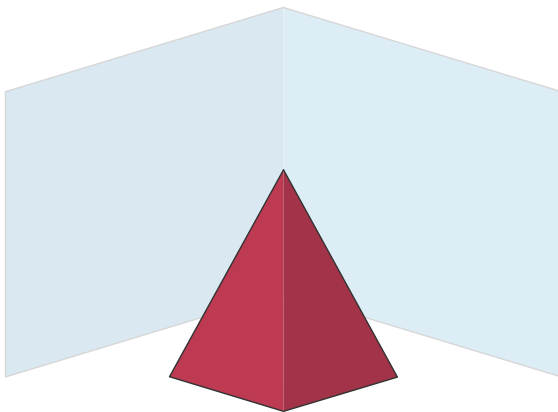




IRELAND



4.90 CRIMINALITY SCORE

95th of 193 countries
15th of 44 European countries
2nd of 11 Western European countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS **4.55**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	4.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	4.00
FLORA CRIMES	2.00
FAUNA CRIMES	4.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	5.00
HEROIN TRADE	5.50
COCAINE TRADE	6.50
CANNABIS TRADE	5.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS **5.25**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	6.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	3.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50



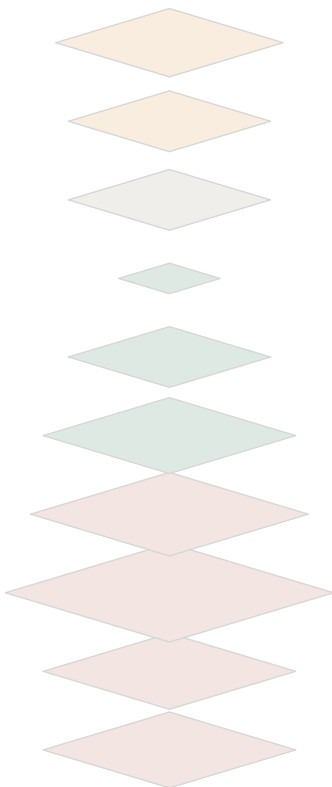
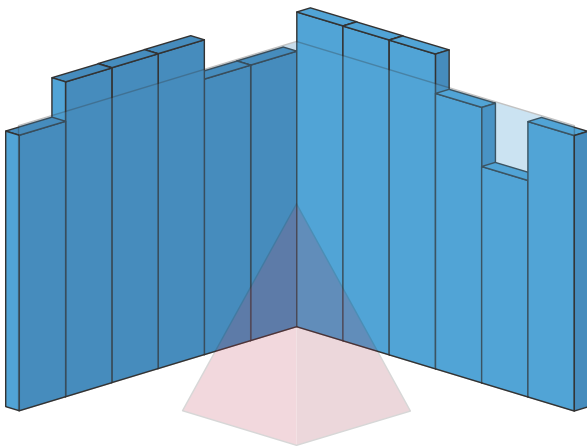
7.38 RESILIENCE SCORE

21st of 193 countries
15th of 44 European countries
8th of 11 Western European countries





IRELAND



7.38

RESILIENCE SCORE

21st of 193 countries
15th of 44 European countries
8th of 11 Western European countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	7.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	8.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	8.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	8.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	7.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	7.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	8.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	8.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	8.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	7.00
PREVENTION	5.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	7.00



4.90

CRIMINALITY SCORE

95th of 193 countries
15th of 44 European countries
2nd of 11 Western European countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.55



CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.25



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Ireland is primarily a destination country for human trafficking, with victims originating from Africa, Asia, South America and other European countries. Trafficking victims in Ireland are subject to sexual exploitation and forced labour mainly in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, waste management, domestic work, au pair, domestic care and hospitality. There has been an increase in forced labour victims, mostly males, from Nigeria, Romania, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan. Victims from Vietnam and China, who were convicted for cannabis cultivation in Ireland, reported modern slavery-like practices, such as document retention, restriction of movement as well as wage withholding. Well-organized gangs from source countries play a key role in trafficking people to Ireland.

Ireland is also a destination, as well as a transit country, for human smuggling. Data indicates that Vietnamese as well as Georgians and other nationals from Eastern Europe enter the UK irregularly via smuggling channels in Ireland. Human smuggling overlaps with human trafficking in the country. Foreign criminal networks conduct most human smuggling with the help of corrupt employees in transit hubs, such as ports or airports, who also facilitate fake passports. There appears to be coordination between foreign criminal networks and Ireland-based criminals.

TRADE

Ireland is a destination market for illegal arms, despite the fact that regulations controlling them are some of the most restrictive in Europe. Organized criminal groups smuggle firearms from former Soviet states and other Eastern European countries. There are also concerns that recent conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East and North Africa have contributed to arms trafficking to Ireland. The smuggling involves mostly small firearms. There is an overlap between weapons trafficking and drug trafficking, as those involved in the latter often rely on illicit arms for intimidation purposes. Ballyfermot is the domestic hotspot for trade in illicit weapons.

ENVIRONMENT

Ireland is a destination and transit country for illicit wildlife, which is on the rise amid concerns that it is underreported. Recent seizures have included ivory, alligator and crocodile heads, as well as skin products, conch shells and hippo ivory. This market appears to be dominated by local criminal networks. With the onset of the COVID 19

pandemic, some reports have pointed to an increase in illegal salmon and seatrout fishing. Limited intelligence suggests that organized criminal groups are capable of using drone technology to plan criminal activities, including transporting illicit cargoes across borders. There is little evidence of a significant flora crimes market in Ireland. Illicit activities appear to be sporadic and committed by individuals, rather than by organized crime. In terms of non-renewable resource crimes, Ireland has a significant problem with the laundering of marked or washed fuel. Laundering of fuel has been a source of financing for illegal paramilitary organisations. Overall, smuggling between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is attractive for criminal groups because of price asymmetries, and is controlled by criminal networks in the Republic of Ireland. There have also been isolated cases of gold smuggling related to Irish nationals.

DRUGS

Ireland is a source and destination country for cannabis, which is the most used drug in the country and reportedly the only drug produced there. Most cannabis resin seized in Ireland originates from Morocco, arriving by sea from the Netherlands and Belgium. Criminal networks primarily control the cannabis market, though individual production is on the rise. These networks are usually domestic, but international gangs are also present. Domestic cultivation overseen by organized criminal gangs is linked to abusive labour practices. Ireland, which has the second highest rate of opiate users in the EU, is also a destination country for heroin smuggled from EU hubs via the Balkans. The heroin market interacts with the market for some synthetic drugs, notably benzodiazepines, with some users switching between the two drugs. Most heroin in the country is sold by user-dealers. Foreign criminal gangs also facilitate the movement of heroin to Ireland. Dublin is considered the main problem area for the drug, though the trade affects other cities, small urban centres, and even rural towns and villages.

The cocaine market has grown in Ireland since the late 1990s. Although the drug is sold via the dark web, most of it is imported for gangs to sell wholesale. Furthermore, there is a direct link between street shootings and the levels of cocaine being trafficked into the country. Ireland is mainly a destination country for synthetic drugs from the Netherlands and Belgium. However, there is also evidence that methamphetamine was being produced in Ireland, albeit on a small scale. The country also ranks among the highest in Europe for use of MDMA in young adults, as it is cheaper than cocaine. The ketamine market is also relatively large and was growing until the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Other synthetic drugs such as Flakka are also on the rise.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Several mafia-style groups operate within Ireland. These groups have identifiable leaders and engage in a range of illicit activities. Since the late 1960s, organized crime networks have been influenced by family and kinship relations. As a result, feuds are prevalent, and concepts of family honour become conflated with material interests of networks. Gang feuds over territory do occur and have resulted in widespread violence. Other mafia-style groups include paramilitaries, which are involved in a large number of criminal activities. However, some have also engaged in vigilante operations against drug dealers and petty criminals.

Most criminal networks are concentrated in cities and there is little evidence to suggest that they operate nationally. It appears that criminal networks are involved in the fauna market, especially rhino horn smuggling, and trade in non-renewable resources, such as fuel. There is evidence to suggest that local criminal actors work closely with foreign actors to facilitate human trafficking and human smuggling, as well as for the purposes of importing and distributing drugs and arms to the UK and mainland Europe. There appears to be no collusion between state and criminal markets currently although, there have been reports that some transport workers may be complicit in human smuggling. Ongoing concerns of links between Sinn Fein and former paramilitary members engaged in criminal activities persist.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Irish government is decisively tackling organized crime, using intelligence-led investigations to disrupt and dismantle networks and prosecute those engaged in top tier organized crime groups. Laws targeting organized crime include penalties for participating in and directing a criminal organization and giving extra powers to law enforcement officers to seize assets. However, local communities in areas affected by gang fighting believe they are not getting sufficient protection from the state. Perceived levels of corruption are low in Ireland but the government has adopted policies and laws to prevent and fight it. A website has been launched by the government to increase awareness of bribery and corruption, and institutions are involved in the prevention, investigation and prosecution of corruption.

Ireland is party to several international anti-corruption agreements and supports accountability for corruption in partner states. The country has also signed and ratified international organized crime treaties and cooperates with Interpol and Europol and other countries to combat human trafficking. Extradition is not allowed for the investigation of a criminal offence unless that offence carries a sentence of at least a year's imprisonment. At a domestic level, Ireland has definitional issues regarding crime, which has led to criminals involved in organized crime being prosecuted for specific crimes they have committed rather than for their broader involvement in organized crime itself. Reports have also suggested that human trafficking convictions have been low over the last few years because of legislative confusion over the definition of such trafficking. In addition, many of the measures to tackle organized crime are controversial and implemented inconsistently.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Ireland has a Special Criminal Court that presides over organized crime cases with three judges and no jury, to avoid witness or jury intimidation. However, there are concerns regarding judges on this court, particularly the lack of transparency in the appointment process and the absence of a formal code of conduct. There are also concerns that sentencing is not effective, given that there has been a rise in arrests in the last year under the Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act 2009, which refers to criminal association and participation in an organized crime group, but just eight convictions under the same amendment. There are also perceptions that Ireland is too focused on prison sentences as punishment for crimes. Also, Irish prisons have been criticized for overcrowding and the lack of basic sanitation. Illegal drug use within prisons is widespread and there are rising levels of inter-prisoner violence. Several gangs also operate within the prison system.

In terms of law enforcement, Ireland has specialist units that specifically focus on organized crime. These units also implement initiatives and policies that support government strategies to fight crime. As an island state, Ireland is vulnerable to organized crime along its coastline and criminal groups can use the common travel area, which allows freedom of movement between the UK and Ireland, to their advantage although corruption in the customs service is believed to be low. The police forces in Northern Ireland and the Republic cooperate and share details of their joint operations. However, it is expected that smuggling will be exacerbated by Brexit.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Overall, Ireland is considered to be a wealthy country with low taxes and a supportive regime for start-up businesses. Concerns have been raised by companies about the effectiveness of the legal framework, especially with regards to settling disputes and challenging regulations. Yet, the economic environment is generally considered to be effective in mitigating organized crime. Ireland is fairly resilient to money laundering and terrorist financing. However, the migration of financial institution operations from London to Dublin under Brexit is likely to place additional stress on the country's anti-money laundering capabilities. Ireland's financial institutions already reported a rise in suspected money laundering transactions in 2018. Money laundering by organized crime groups is most commonly routed through car wash businesses and restaurants, which are also vulnerable to human trafficking activities. To prevent and fight money laundering, three levels of due diligence have been established by the country's main piece of legislation – standard, enhanced and simplified.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Ireland has insufficient victim protection efforts in place, which has raised concerns that the government might not be able to identify victims of trafficking. However, when such victims are assisted, they are provided with a wide range of health, legal and personal services by both government and NGOs. The Department of Justice and Equality also provides funding to NGOs to assist them in providing support to trafficking victims. There are also plans to develop an individual care plan for victims. The country has a health-led person-centred, whole-of-government response to drug use, which aims to promote health and wellbeing, minimize harms and promote rehabilitation and recovery. Multiple units have been created to tackle human trafficking, financial crime and organized crime as a whole. The government's Blue Blindfold campaign aims to sensitize the public to human trafficking trends. Prevention is also the main focus of the country's drug and alcohol strategy. Overall, numerous non-state actors work with victims of organized crime in the country, supported by expertise and assistance from international organizations.

Currently, Ireland has a high level of media freedom. However, media ownership is highly concentrated and there are concerns about semi-state ownership of media groups. There have also been recent attacks on journalists and, despite the constitution guaranteeing media freedom, there are often defamation suits with extraordinarily high damages awarded by courts in Ireland.

This summary was funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of State. The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of State.