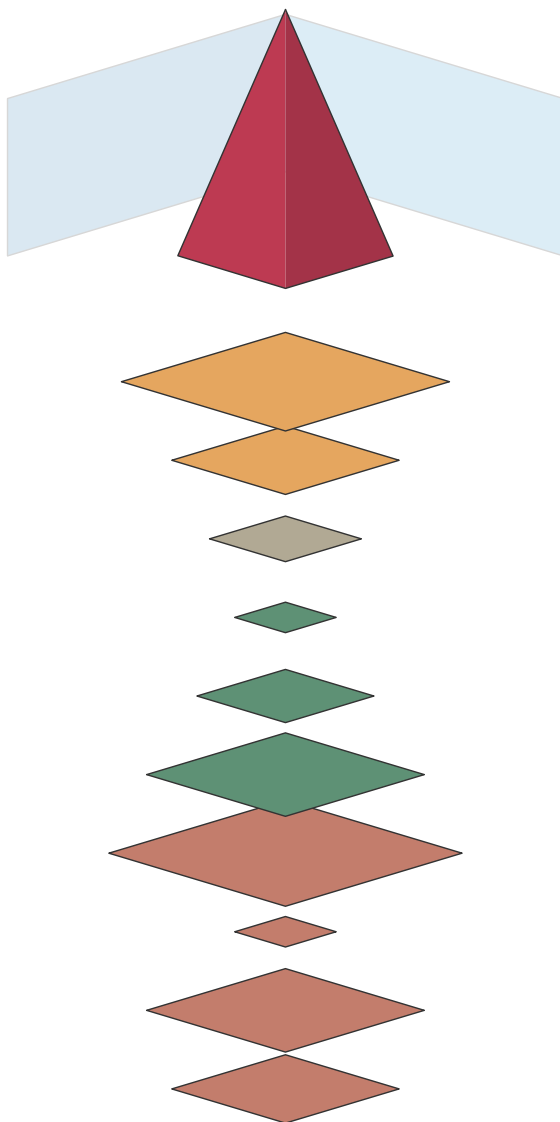




KYRGYZSTAN



5.33

CRIMINALITY SCORE

72nd of 193 countries

23rd of 46 Asian countries

2nd of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

4.40

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 6.50

HUMAN SMUGGLING 4.50

ARMS TRAFFICKING 3.00

FLORA CRIMES 2.00

FAUNA CRIMES 3.50

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 5.50

HEROIN TRADE 7.00

COCAINE TRADE 2.00

CANNABIS TRADE 5.50

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 4.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS

6.25

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 5.50

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 6.50

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 8.50

FOREIGN ACTORS 4.50



4.17

RESILIENCE SCORE

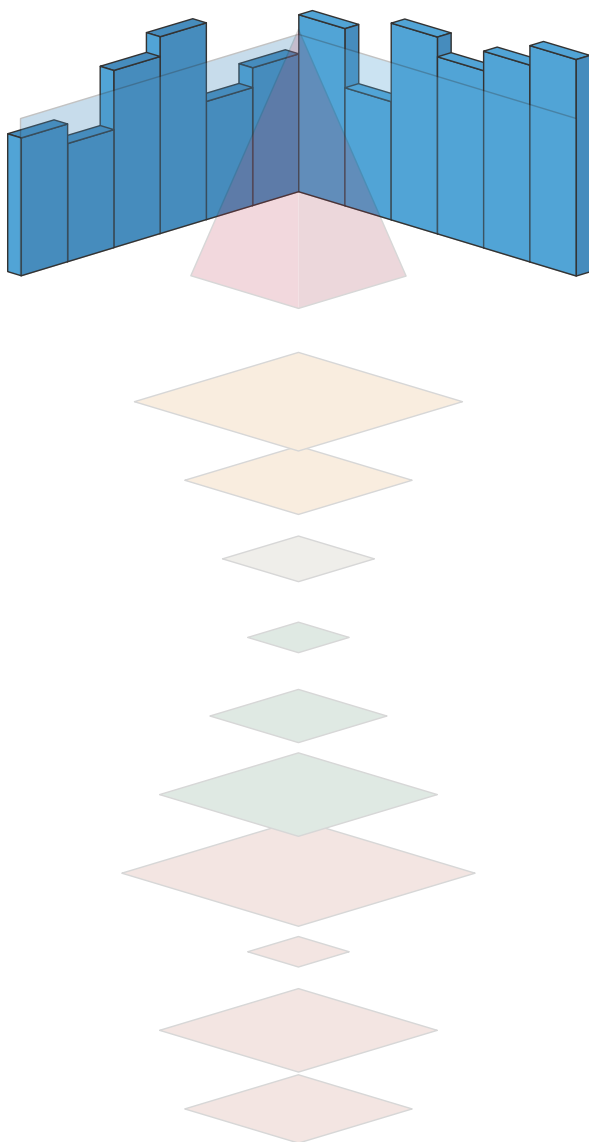
125th of 193 countries

24th of 46 Asian countries

4th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries



KYRGYZSTAN




4.17 RESILIENCE SCORE



125th of 193 countries
24th of 46 Asian countries
4th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE | 3.50 |
| GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY | 3.00 |
| INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION | 4.50 |
| NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS | 5.00 |
| JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION | 3.00 |
| LAW ENFORCEMENT | 3.50 |
| TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY | 4.50 |
| ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING | 3.00 |
| ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY | 5.00 |
| VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT | 4.50 |
| PREVENTION | 5.00 |
| NON-STATE ACTORS | 5.50 |



5.33 CRIMINALITY SCORE

72nd of 193 countries
23rd of 46 Asian countries
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| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
|  CRIMINAL MARKETS | 4.40 |
|  CRIMINAL ACTORS | 6.25 |

CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking is a significant issue in Kyrgyzstan and occurs primarily in the form of forced labour and sex trafficking. High levels of poverty, gender inequality as well as other gender practices are all identified as exacerbating the local population's vulnerability to exploitation. Women, men and children are all victimized, being forced into labour domestically or abroad, in neighbouring countries or elsewhere in Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Male labour migrants, however, appear to be most vulnerable to exploitation. Forced labour primarily occurs in the agricultural, construction and textile industries, although victims have also been forced into domestic servitude and childcare. Forced labour victims also face extortion and have their passports stolen. Children in Kyrgyzstan have been forced to participate in the drug trade, both locally and in neighbouring countries, as well as to engage in domestic servitude and begging. Kyrgyz women and girls experience sex trafficking both domestically and throughout the Middle East and Asia. Kyrgyz nationals have also been forced to participate in extremist fighting groups and subjected to sexual exploitation in Syria. Uzbek women and girls are sexually exploited in southern Kyrgyzstan, and migrants from across Central Asia who transit through the country have also fallen vulnerable to exploitation. Corrupt government officials facilitate Kyrgyzstan's human-trafficking market, enabling traffickers to operate with relative impunity.

Although Kyrgyzstan's human-smuggling market flourishes alongside the human-trafficking market, it can be difficult to distinguish the two markets, as many smuggled migrants subsequently fall victim to exploitation. Corrupt Kyrgyz officials facilitate human smuggling through the sale of fraudulent migration documents and identity cards. Most migrants smuggled out of Kyrgyzstan seek transportation to Russia or Turkey in search of better economic opportunities. However, smuggled migrants from Southern Asia and South-eastern Asia seeking transportation to Russia or Europe also transit through Kyrgyzstan. Although Kyrgyz citizens may travel freely between Kazakhstan and Russia for the purpose of labour, many migrants employ smugglers to protect against exploitation.

TRADE

Kyrgyzstan's arms-trafficking market is negligible. Nevertheless, registration loopholes and a lack of government oversight enable civilians to obtain multiple firearms, and many civilians own unregistered arms. Aside from an ammunition plant in Bishkek, there are no arms-production centres in Kyrgyzstan, suggesting the presence of an illicit

arms trade. However, Kyrgyzstan is primarily a transit country for arms trafficked from elsewhere in Central Asia to other regions. An increase in civilian demand for arms in recent years may be attributed to the legalisation of the use of hunting weapons for protection. Arms trafficking in Kyrgyzstan is primarily controlled by foreign rather than local criminals. Due to civil unrest, a limited amount of state arms has been looted in recent years.

ENVIRONMENT

As a biodiversity hotspot, Kyrgyzstan also has a high number of rare and protected flora and fauna species, which has been threatened by livestock grazing, firewood collection, construction and tree felling. Poor flora and fauna management enable criminal activity to occur, although the flora-crimes market remains rather limited, exhibiting limited evidence of involvement of organized crime groups. Poaching, however, is a more pronounced issue and many protected species are illegally traded or kept as trophies. Argali, brown bear and wolf species have been targeted and trafficked out of Kyrgyzstan to other countries in Central Asia. Saker falcons are also illicitly traded both domestically and elsewhere in Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan is a top destination for trophy hunting, threatening species such as the Marco Polo sheep. Since the illicit fauna trade generates some revenue, no effort has been taken to hinder the market. Instead, the rejection of legislation to protect endangered species has only emboldened criminals. However, the market is largely controlled by foreign actors.

Kyrgyzstan's non-renewable-resource crimes market is also flourishing. The country has several large rare-metal deposits, including gold deposits, and is rich in other mineral resources such as coal, uranium and antimony. Illicit coal- and gold-mining is widespread in southern Kyrgyzstan, and both domestic and foreign criminals engage in the market.

DRUGS

Drug trafficking in Kyrgyzstan is controlled by foreign actors from transnational organized-crime groups. Although domestic drug consumption remains low, drug trafficking is a significant issue. Kyrgyzstan plays a significant role in the Eurasian drug trade, especially regarding the transport of heroin between Afghanistan and Russia. Nearly one-fourth of Afghan heroin transits through Kyrgyzstan. Heroin from neighbouring countries and elsewhere in Central Asia is also trafficked through Bishkek by transnational organized-crime groups, and links between heroin trafficking in Kyrgyzstan and terrorist groups such as the Taliban have been uncovered. Police and political corruption also exacerbate heroin trafficking, as drug profits play a key role in elections. Notably, police officers and border guards

on the southern Kyrgyz border have been implicated in the trafficking of heroin. However, heroin seizures have declined in recent years. Local cannabis cultivation also occurs in Kyrgyzstan, and cannabis has been trafficked abroad. While hashish and marijuana seizures have dropped in recent years, cannabis seizures are on the rise, likely due to increasing demand for cannabis in neighbouring countries. Internal cannabis trafficking occurs as well. Kyrgyzstan's southern borders are particularly vulnerable to hashish trafficking between Central Asia and Russia, Europe and North America.

The synthetic-drug trade, although expanding, is still relatively small. While domestic consumption remains low, psychotropic substances intended for sale among Kyrgyz youth have been seized. Some reports suggest that locally produced amphetamines, club drugs, hallucinogens and synthetic cannabinoids are also trafficked through Kyrgyzstan. Although ecstasy is the most common amphetamine consumed in Central Asia, amphetamine use in Kyrgyzstan remains lower than that of opioids, cannabis and hallucinogens, among other. The cocaine trade is much smaller than other drug markets in Kyrgyzstan, mostly limited to use among the wealthy. It is likely that small quantities of cocaine are smuggled in the country from Russia.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Organized crime in Kyrgyzstan is dominated by local criminal groups that operate in specific criminal markets. However, regional criminal activity is on the rise and large

organized-crime groups also operate in the country. Four well-known mafia-style groups are led by Kamchy Kolbayev, Aziz Batukayev, Almaz Bokushev and Maksat Abakirov. Although the influence of these groups has decreased in recent years, mafia-style groups continue to exert influence on local populations and prisons and operate in multiple criminal markets. Numerous loose criminal networks and dozens of criminal gangs also operate in Kyrgyzstan, engaging primarily in illicit goods smuggling. Gangs in southern Kyrgyzstan tend to specialize in drug trafficking, while those in Bishkek and elsewhere in northern Kyrgyzstan tend to engage in racketeering, the embezzlement of state assets and the illicit smuggling of Chinese goods. Mafia-style groups and criminal networks alike influence the democratic process in Kyrgyzstan.

Criminal networks are intricately intertwined with the Kyrgyz state apparatus. Organized-crime bosses have strong connections to state-embedded actors and are actively protected by politicians. State-embedded actors thus facilitate and sometimes engage in criminal markets, especially in the drug trade. There is evidence of state control over illicit activities at all levels of the state apparatus. Corrupt police also facilitate organized crimes such as human trafficking. Local criminal networks engage extensively with foreign counterparts, especially in the human-trafficking, drug-trafficking and non-renewable resources crimes markets. Some local criminal groups also organize on the basis of foreign ethnicity, including Uzbek, Tajik, Azeri, Chechen and Russian gangs. The drug trade in particular is controlled by foreign criminal actors.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Kyrgyz government has taken a strong stance against some forms of organized crime, such as human trafficking and human smuggling. Since the 2010 regime change, the government has consistently requested international aid in order to combat corruption and restore the country's rule of law and has launched a major campaign against organized crime. The National Security Committee is thus responsible for combating organized crime and corruption. However, corruption and bribery run rampant in Kyrgyzstan, and public trust in governance is low. Organized crime remains largely undeterred and anti-organized-crime and anti-corruption efforts are hindered by ongoing political competition and corruption, especially in border and customs agencies. The Kyrgyz government is thus highly vulnerable to criminal influence and the political system has been largely infiltrated by organized crime, evidenced in the election of criminals to government positions. Anti-corruption efforts remain

ineffective and also lack political independence, as the fight against corruption tends to only target disloyal figures. Kyrgyzstan is thus a highly vulnerable and fragile state.

Kyrgyzstan suffers from the government's failure to preserve checks and balances, as well as a lack of protection for democracy. Laws pertaining to rights and access to information are relatively robust, however. Kyrgyzstan has also ratified most relevant conventions and treaties related to organized crime, with the exception of the Arms Trade Treaty, and has several extradition treaties in place. The Kyrgyz government also participates in international cooperation efforts against various forms of organized crime and has put forth significant effort to combat environmental crimes. However, response to other criminal markets is lacking. Although Kyrgyzstan's legislative framework addresses various forms of organized crime,

such as drug trafficking and human trafficking, laws are rather ineffective and implementation is to be enhanced.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Kyrgyzstan's judiciary lacks political independence and is extremely corrupt. There are no units dedicated to organized crime, and corruption and bribery run rampant among judges. Judges also pay bribes to obtain their positions. The right to fair trial is severely compromised, and coerced confessions through torture along with other practices, such as the negation to an attorney and arbitrary convictions, are commonplace. Intimidation, threats and violence against defendants, attorneys and judges are not unusual. The judiciary is also heavily influenced by organized crime and corrupt politicians, in turn preventing convictions of organized criminals. Prison conditions are poor. Prisoners suffer from food and medicine shortages, overcrowding and other forms of mistreatment. Organized-crime groups wield significant control over prisons. The Kyrgyz law-enforcement apparatus is also highly corrupt and many police officers accept bribes and have links to organized crime. Public trust in the police is therefore extremely low. Law-enforcement officials are also unlikely to enforce drug or other policies that threaten the illicit incomes of corrupt government officials. Nepotism, political influence and lack of professionalism limit law-enforcement capacity, especially in southern Kyrgyzstan. Police officers reportedly engage in arbitrary arrests and threaten prosecution as a means of extortion. However, community-based policing systems have aided in increasing public trust in police through enhancing cooperation between police, local government, civil society and the media.

Due to its alpine topography and rough landscape, Kyrgyzstan's borders are quite challenging to monitor, rendering the country more vulnerable to organized crime. A lack of infrastructure also prevents the use of vehicles in border regions, making the country's borders highly porous, especially in southern Kyrgyzstan where high rates of organized crime occur. The Kyrgyz-Uzbek and Kyrgyz-Tajik borders, in particular, are difficult to monitor due to widespread criminality and the eruption of long-standing ethnic tensions in borderlands. Border-control personnel are also poorly funded and under-resourced, making corruption an even more pressing issue. The country's major trading locations are at least partially controlled by criminal actors.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Kyrgyzstan has an extremely high risk of money laundering and terrorist financing, which is exacerbated by the country's proximity to terrorist groups in neighbouring countries and its positioning along major drug-trafficking routes. The country's shadow economy is also largely cash-based, making it more difficult for authorities to identify instances of money laundering and tax evasion. Despite the existence

of anti-money-laundering legislation, no explicit anti-money-laundering strategy is in place, rendering the legislation ineffective. Kyrgyz financial institutions lack knowledge about money-laundering and terrorist-financing risks.

Corruption also runs rampant in the business sector, impeding entrepreneurship in Kyrgyzstan. The economic environment does not offer many opportunities for legitimate businesses to expand. Although there are few official procedures for setting up a business in Kyrgyzstan, they are complicated by burdensome bureaucracy and bribery. The economic regulatory system also lacks transparency, in turn deterring foreign investors. Many businesses have reported paying bribes to obtain operating licenses. Nevertheless, the reliability of power supply, access to credit information and ease of paying taxes have improved in recent years.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Kyrgyzstan lacks sufficient victim-protection and treatment services. Although the government launched a three-year national action plan between 2017 and 2020 aimed at improving victim-identification mechanisms, Kyrgyzstan fails to meet international standards for victim identification and protection. Although police have referred victims to NGOs for assistance, this is a rare occurrence. Instead, police tend to intimidate and coerce human-trafficking victims, including minors, and ask for payments from traffickers to drop charges. Moreover, trafficking victims have been pressured to withdraw their complaints or settle cases informally. Victims are also deterred from cooperating with police, as they are required to attend public hearings alongside their traffickers. However, the government promotes drug harm-reduction programmes, victim-support measures and drug-awareness campaigns aimed at youth, albeit heavily supported by international funding and partnerships. Although witness-protection laws are in place and have recently been expanded, implementation remains weak.

Crime prevention in Kyrgyzstan is inefficient. However, the government and civil society have organized human-trafficking awareness training for professionals working with children. The government also provides awareness-raising activities to children and engages in the prevention of flora and fauna crimes. Overall, Kyrgyzstan's approach to crime prevention revolves around awareness-raising campaigns and training about the legal consequences of crime, especially for at-risk communities. Kyrgyz civil society largely fails to aid in victim-protection and treatment programmes, which are instead primarily led by international organisations or the Kyrgyz government. However, Kyrgyz civil society actively collaborates with the government on other issues. Civil society organizations are thus active and effective, although they tend to focus on issues related to human and civil rights, as well as consumer interests, rather than organized crime. Numerous NGOs also work to combat high-level corruption and engage in

legislative reform campaigns. However, civil society is largely hindered by inter-ethnic conflict and legal restrictions on freedoms of assembly and association. Although freedom of speech and the press are provided by law, these rights are severely restricted in practice and self-censorship due to political pressure is common. Some journalists have been subjected to intimidation and harassment by political figures. Kyrgyzstan's media also lacks diversity and both Uzbek- and Russian-language media outlets are limited.

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