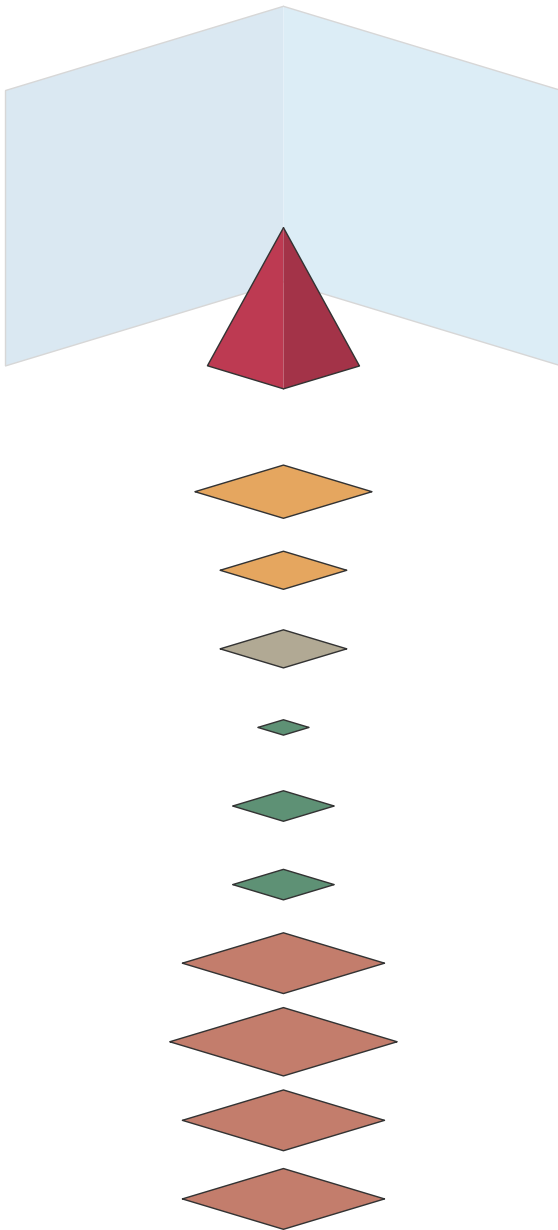


LITHUANIA



3.31 CRIMINALITY SCORE

168th of 193 countries
38th of 44 European countries
7th of 8 Northern European countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS **3.00**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	2.50
FLORA CRIMES	1.00
FAUNA CRIMES	2.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.00
HEROIN TRADE	4.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.50
CANNABIS TRADE	4.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	4.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS **3.63**

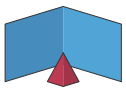
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.50
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	4.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	3.00



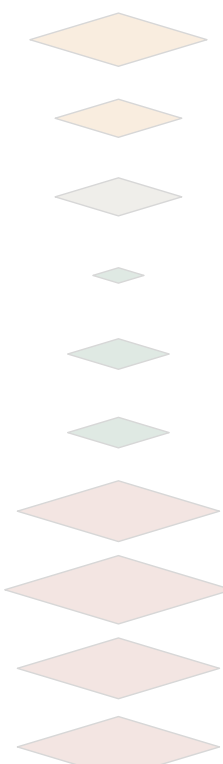
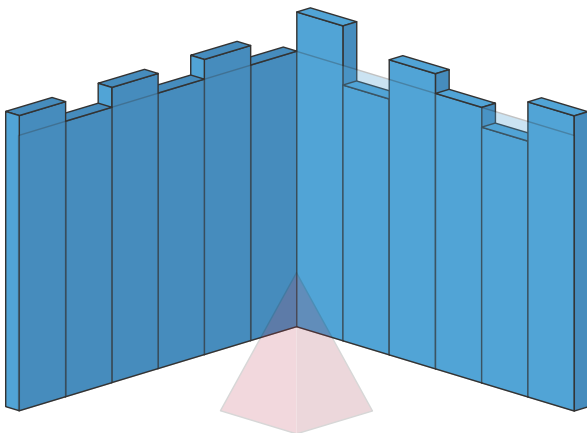
7.21 RESILIENCE SCORE

23rd of 193 countries
16th of 44 European countries
8th of 8 Northern European countries





LITHUANIA



7.21

RESILIENCE SCORE

23rd of 193 countries
16th of 44 European countries
8th of 8 Northern European countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	7.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	7.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	7.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	7.50
LAW ENFORCEMENT	7.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	8.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	7.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	7.00
PREVENTION	6.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	7.50



3.31

CRIMINALITY SCORE

168th of 193 countries
38th of 44 European countries
7th of 8 Northern European countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 3.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS 3.63



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Lithuania is primarily a country of origin for human trafficking and, to a lesser extent, a transit zone and destination. Human trafficking in Lithuania predominantly takes the form of sexual and labour exploitation, forced acts of criminality and forced marriage. Victims typically originate from poor regions of the country, where traffickers target low-income individuals with minimal foreign language skills and entice them with high salaries that would improve their economic situation. Women from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine have also been trafficked into Western Europe through Lithuania. The main destination markets for Lithuanian trafficking victims can be found in the UK, Spain and Germany, where recent trends indicate an uptick in the number of male victims sourced for the purposes of forced labour. There is also evidence of police officers or border guards being bribed to facilitate human trafficking activities.

Lithuania is primarily a transit country for migrants headed to Western Europe. However, the overall scale of human smuggling is small and holds little influence over Lithuanian society. Migrants most frequently enter the country from Belarus or Latvia, and may traverse Afghanistan, Russia, Belarus, Lithuania, Poland or Latvia to reach their destination. These routes are reportedly organized and maintained by criminal networks with ties to Russia. There has also been some evidence of conflict caused by human smuggling, such as border guards being shot at and vehicles set on fire by human smuggling rings. However in recent years, there has been a decrease in border violations, in part due to technological advancement of border monitoring systems.

TRADE

Prior to 2011, the registration of alarm weapons was not mandatory in Lithuania. During this time, alarm pistols gained popularity among criminal actors who sought to convert them to live-firing weapons, which saturated European markets with Lithuanian-manufactured converted firearms. While stringent regulation is now in place, the pre-legislation technical knowledge and experience of conversion are still available, and large quantities of alarm pistols continue to serve as a source of illicit firearms. Old firearms, such as those from the two world wars, are also quite common in Lithuania and are cheaper to buy on the illicit market. According to Lithuanian law enforcement officials, firearms are known to be sold via the internet and delivered courier services, but no cases of online firearms trafficking via the dark web have thus far been identified in the country. Additionally, most cases of illicit

firearms trafficking involved perpetrators who belonged to organized crime groups.

ENVIRONMENT

While the criminal market for flora is extremely small in Lithuania, the illegal logging of timber remains a concern. Generally, more illegal logging cases are recorded in private forests than in state-owned woodlands. Lithuania is a source and transit country in the illegal wildlife trade. Albeit limited in size and scope, there have been recorded cases of wildlife crimes, which encompass illegal hunting and fishing, as well as the use of Lithuania as a transit country for the smuggling of white rhino horns and brown bears. The poaching of wolves raises significant concerns over the extent of wildlife crimes in Lithuania. Despite numerous media publications on the apprehension of poachers, very few criminal cases related to illegal hunting or fishing are initiated in Lithuania annually. Nevertheless, the involvement of organized crime in this criminal market is likely limited to using the country as a transit point. With regards to non-renewable resource crimes, Lithuania serves as a destination and transit country for the illicit trade of amber, which is tied to foreign criminal groups. The precious stone is usually smuggled by individuals or small groups that shuttle the stone in and out of the country. Besides amber, Lithuania has reported numerous cases involving illegal fuel. Criminal groups reportedly mix diesel fuel with other substances to create another oil that is then sold abroad, free from excise duties. The illicit fuel is commonly purchased by Latvians and smuggled by Russian and Belarusian crime groups. Evidence suggests that the market for illegal fuel will continue to expand but is of now of not significant in scope and scale.

DRUGS

Lithuania is a transit country for cannabis, which remains the most frequently consumed drug in the country. While less common, evidence suggests that small-scale, local cultivation of cannabis does occur in the country. Cannabis products are usually smuggled into Lithuania from the Netherlands, Spain or Belgium through various maritime and land routes that use the Klaipeda seaport as their main point of entry, or they are trafficked through Poland. Lithuania is also a transit country for cocaine. Although cocaine is the second most seized drug in the country, it remains relatively unpopular among Lithuanians due to its high cost. Most of the cocaine seized in Lithuania enters through Klaipeda, having transited the UK, the Netherlands or Germany, and is destined for Belarus, Russia or Scandinavian countries. Lithuania's cocaine trade also appears to rely on international connections to South American and African countries, and law enforcement officials have reported

occurrences of Lithuanian criminal actors operating in South America while organizing shipments to Europe. There have been reports of the collaboration between Lithuanian and Nigerian drug traffickers for the purposes of smuggling cocaine into Switzerland and Germany.

With regards to heroin, supply generally originates from Central Asia and travels across Russia and Belarus to be redistributed within European markets and the Kaliningrad region of Russia. The smuggling of heroin from Central Asia to Lithuania is carried out by various organized criminal groups of an international nature. While heroin was among the most popular drug in Lithuania until several years ago, it has been gradually replaced in popularity by synthetic opioids such as Carfentanil. As for synthetic drugs, close links have been established between Lithuania, the synthetic drug trade and the organized criminal groups that orchestrate distribution, sale and transport. In north-eastern Europe, the production of synthetic drugs is dominated by Lithuanian and Polish organized crime groups that smuggle the illicit drugs into Russia, Belarus and Scandinavia, where land trafficking routes traverse Poland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, and Lithuania, Estonia and Sweden by sea. These Lithuanian criminal groups have also been documented trafficking drugs to the UK. In 2016, MDMA/Ecstasy became the most common illicit stimulant used by young adults. Meanwhile, new psychoactive substances are often imported from China and the Netherlands, mainly by postal or courier services.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

There are mafia groups operating in Lithuania. The leadership hierarchy of these groups is often unclear, and most of them are transnational in nature. Despite the fact that they all control defined territory in the country some

tensions exist between groups, although there have been no 'turf wars' in the last five years, in contrast to the earlier decade. Mafia-style groups are predominately engaged in drug trafficking, tobacco smuggling, luxury-car theft, human trafficking and money laundering. Over the last five years, numerous groups were targeted by law enforcement activities, and many were arrested and sentenced, resulting in the complete eradication of some groups. Despite the crackdown, stronger and more powerful Lithuanian mafia-style groups have expanded their activities, or even 'relocated' their criminal activity to Western European countries. Meanwhile, criminal networks within Lithuania have become more sophisticated during the last decade. While they still focus on traditional operations involving tobacco and drug smuggling, improvements in technology, law-enforcement capacities and international cooperation have pushed these organized criminal groups to adapt their operations. Smaller networks are concentrated in the cities, while larger ones often operate transnationally.

Organized crime networks often cooperate with South American and Central Asian criminal groups, particularly in drug trafficking. The migration of the Lithuanian population since the country joined the Schengen Area has also played an important role in the expansion of criminal activities, as Lithuanian criminal networks flourish in the European countries with the biggest populations of Lithuanian migrants. Furthermore, some foreign criminal groups use Lithuania as a transit point, due to its geographical placement and links across the wider European region. There are also reports of Russian and Belarusian actors working with Lithuanians to facilitate smuggling. With regards to state-embedded actors, there appears to be little to no collusion between the state and criminal markets. There is, however, recent evidence of corruption and border officers working with organized criminal groups in smuggling operations.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

An institutional framework exists in Lithuania to address the organized crime situation in the country. It is deemed sufficiently effective, and there are efforts to improve it further. Moreover, since the economic crisis of 2008, one of the main goals of each government has been to eliminate its shadow economy. Lithuania has also improved the investigative work of the tax office, made declarations of income and assets mandatory for the state service, and improved legislation focused on illegal enrichment. Additionally, all legal enforcement institutions have established anti-corruption departments during the last decade. Furthermore, anti-corruption checks of political

candidates are obligatory for parliamentary and municipal elections. Despite this, corruption exists in the country, including bribery and abuse of power involving politicians, businesses and the judiciary, which has contributed to a lower trust in government. Still, corruption levels are low in a global and even European comparison.

On the international level, Lithuania has improved cooperation with law enforcement agencies in the EU and other countries over the last decade. Agreements have been signed that provide for better cooperation, exchange of information and coordinated actions against organized crime. This has resulted in a decline in cases of irregular border crossings

and increasing numbers of international operations against drug and arms trafficking, tobacco smuggling, human trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime. It also allows joint actions against the use of the darknet and social media to facilitate criminality. Law enforcement also cooperates closely with counterparts in the Baltic countries, Russia and, to a lesser degree, Belarus. Additionally, Lithuania has extradition arrangements with the US, and is part of the European Arrest Warrant system. On a domestic level, Lithuania has strict sanctions and policies related to organized crime. Lithuania has also criminalized participating in, and organizing, a criminal association which consists of two or more people.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

There has been evidence of corruption in the judiciary in Lithuania. In 2019, Lithuanian authorities detained judges and lawyers in a large-scale anti-corruption investigation. The suspects were accused of bribery, trading in influence and abuse of power. Lithuania has also been criticized for extremely high levels of violence, including sexual abuse, intimidation and exploitation among prisoners in the country's detention facilities. There are also reports of drug trafficking in prisons. There are several law enforcement agencies combating organized crime in Lithuania, many of which are also attempting to fight corruption from within.

Most Lithuanians believe corruption is widespread among police and customs agents. Despite this fact, trust in the Lithuanian police increased between 2004 and 2016. It has been noted that law enforcement agencies are under resourced, which somewhat limits their scope of work, but are still effective relative to the organized crime threat they face. As for territorial integrity, the Suwalki gap, on Lithuania's eastern border, is the country's most porous entry point. The State Border Guard Service has also reported a rise in smuggling (mainly of cigarettes, alcohol, drugs and petrol) along the Kaliningrad-Lithuania and Belarus-Lithuania borders.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Lithuania has the highest cash usage among the Baltic and Nordic states. At the same time, it has not adopted a threshold on cash usage, which can present a possible vulnerability for the injection of illicit funds into the economy. Furthermore, Lithuania ranks in the top third in the EU in terms of the size of its shadow economy. Nevertheless, the country has one of the freest economies in the world, which would suggest criminal organizations do not exert significant influence over sectors in the legal economy. Lithuania is also ranked as being highly resilient to money laundering and terrorist financing. The country has a financial crime investigation service which works against organized crime, and which has helped it avoid the money laundering scandals that rocked other Baltic nations. Lithuania also has in-depth legislation on money laundering and terrorist financing.

However, recent financial scandals involving Lithuania's banking system, as well as offshore money laundering, cast doubt on the success rate of these policies.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Victim and witness support services within Lithuania are limited. However, this is changing and since 2014 there has been a rise in witness and victim protection services available through non-governmental organizations and international organizations, as well as increased government support for these services. Similarly, in terms of prevention, there is evidence of regional or national prevention schemes tackling organized crime. Perhaps most notable is the government's spending on awareness campaigns on human trafficking in major cities through media outlets. With regards to the press, investigative journalism lacks funding. Furthermore, media ownership is usually multinational, with journalists working for several major media groups simultaneously. Currently, initiatives to tackle Kremlin-led disinformation campaigns are at the forefront of the government's agenda. The media enjoy relative freedom in Lithuania, but the rise in prominence of new anti-establishment political parties may pose a threat to freedom of the press in the coming years.

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