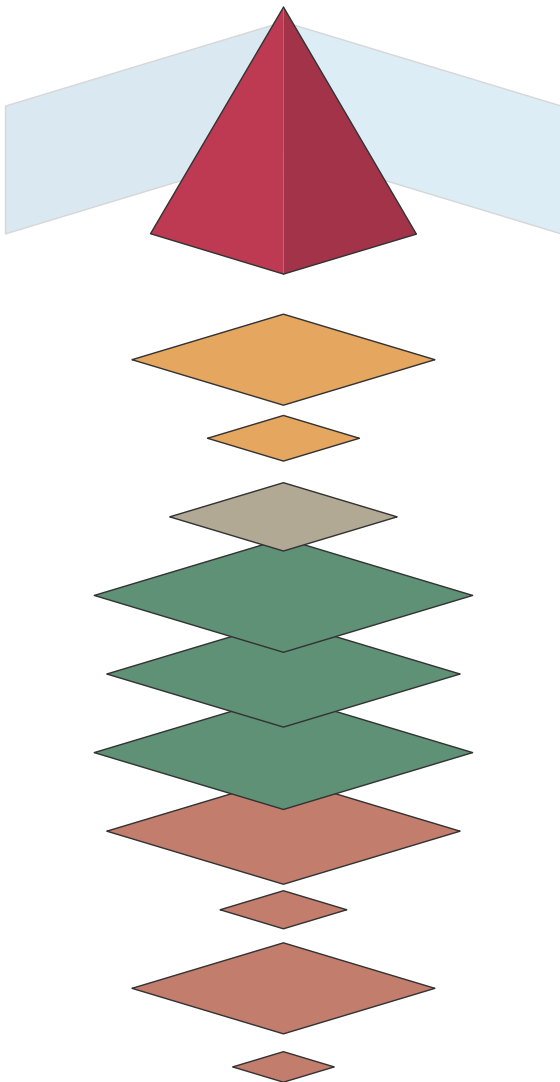




 **MADAGASCAR**



 **5.59**  
**CRIMINALITY SCORE**  
63<sup>rd</sup> of 193 countries  
20<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
4<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **5.30**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	6.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	3.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	4.50
FLORA CRIMES	7.50
FAUNA CRIMES	7.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	7.50
HEROIN TRADE	7.00
COCAINE TRADE	2.50
CANNABIS TRADE	6.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	2.00

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **5.88**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	4.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	7.00

 **3.38**  
**RESILIENCE SCORE**  
158<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries  
31<sup>st</sup> of 54 African countries  
9<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries

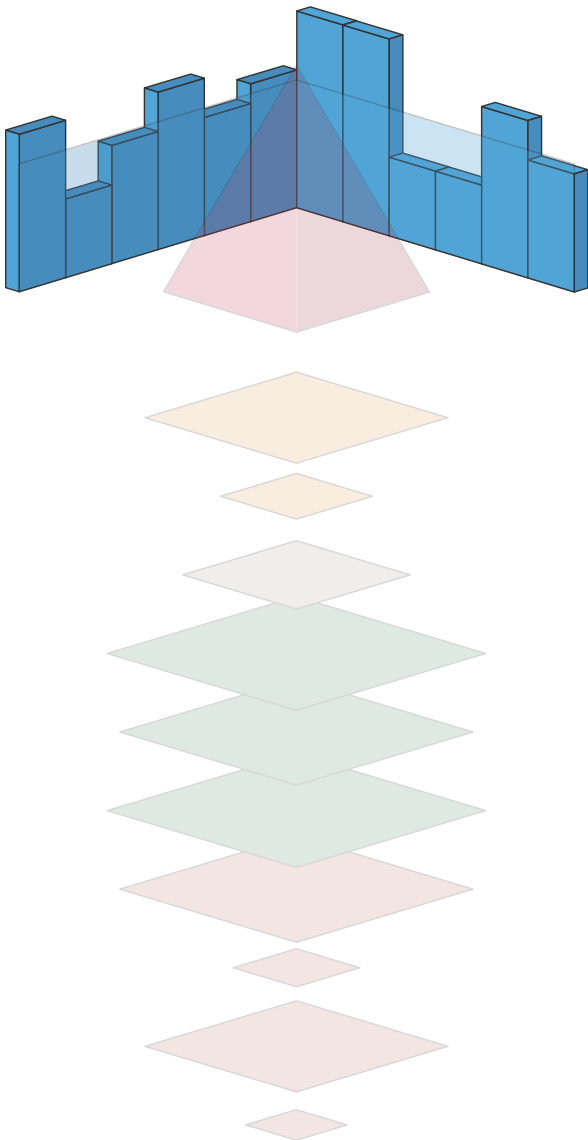


Funding provided by the United States Government.



ENACT is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Institute for Security Studies and INTERPOL, in affiliation with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.

 **MADAGASCAR**



**3.38**  
**RESILIENCE SCORE**

158<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries  
31<sup>st</sup> of 54 African countries  
9<sup>th</sup> of 13 Southern African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	4.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	2.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	3.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	3.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	2.00
PREVENTION	4.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.00

**5.59**  
**CRIMINALITY SCORE**

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 <b>CRIMINAL MARKETS</b>	5.30
 <b>CRIMINAL ACTORS</b>	5.88



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# CRIMINALITY

## CRIMINAL MARKETS

### PEOPLE

Madagascar is both a source and destination country for human trafficking, primarily in the form of forced labour and sexual exploitation. Trafficking victims for the purposes of sexual abuse are mainly women and children, but the latter are also reportedly subjected to forced begging and forced labour. French and Italian nationals are the main clients for child sexual abuse. Often parents or other family members facilitate child trafficking, rather than criminal networks, and Malagasy men have been identified as primary child exploiters. 'Ghost agencies' are also known to operate and recruit victims of human trafficking. Moreover, there have been concerns about rising rates of domestic sex trafficking and forced labour in 2020.

Madagascar is primarily a source country for human smuggling, often facilitated by illegitimate recruitment agencies. Individuals are predominantly smuggled out of the country by sea to the French island of Mayotte, although they are also smuggled by air to both China and the Middle East. Human smuggling to Comoros and Mayotte from the island of Nosy Be is also on the rise, and involves Malagasy people as well as migrants coming from the African Great Lakes region. Although the route to Mayotte through Comoros is becoming increasingly popular, it is reportedly highly dangerous.

### TRADE

Madagascar is one of Africa's arms-trafficking hotspots. Arms trafficking poses a significant threat to the Malagasy population, as it is linked to kidnapping, banditry, piracy, smuggling of other illicit goods, and other criminal markets in general. Arms trafficking is particularly prominent in the Menabe, Melaky, Bongolava, Atsimo-Andrefana, Androy and Anosy regions, where cattle rustling is commonplace. Socio-economic limitations contribute to increasing demand for arms among Malagasy youth. While domestic arms trafficking is a significant issue in Madagascar, the Malagasy national police service notes that international arms trafficking remains limited.

### ENVIRONMENT

Environmental crimes are by far the most pervasive forms of organized crime in Madagascar. Deforestation is a significant issue in the country and is driven primarily by agricultural clearing and illicit logging for high-value timber species. Demand from China has been the most important driver of illegal logging since 2013. The market is largely

facilitated by corruption and high-level political protection. The illicit trade in vanilla is also on the rise in Madagascar, with links to both illicit rosewood trafficking and money laundering. Notably, corrupt state officials facilitate the illicit trade in vanilla as well.

Meanwhile, Madagascar's fauna crimes primarily involve the trafficking of reptiles such as tortoises, turtles, chameleons, geckos and snakes as well as birds, for the exotic pet trade and traditional medicine practices. Lemurs are poached in Madagascar for bushmeat and for the exotic pet trade, while the high levels of illegal fishing endanger seahorses and exotic fish species. Cattle raiding is another significant issue in the country. International wildlife-trafficking operations are believed to have decreased in recent years, in particular of those pertaining to tortoises and turtles, seizures of which peaked in 2018.

Regarding non-renewable resource crimes, the illicit mining and smuggling of coloured gemstones are prevalent in Madagascar, particularly to Thailand. The market has a significant negative environmental impact. Meanwhile, illicit gold mining is a fairly recent phenomenon in Madagascar and is known to contribute to mercury contamination in freshwater ecosystems.

### DRUGS

Madagascar's low level of territorial integrity renders the country vulnerable to drug trafficking. The country is increasingly becoming a significant transit country for heroin, primarily trafficked by sea to East Africa from Afghanistan and Iran. Heroin traffickers in Madagascar reportedly tend to be of Nigerian, Tanzanian, Guinean, Mauritian or Seychellois descent. While the heroin trade has not significantly affected Malagasy society, domestic heroin consumption is known to occur, albeit primarily among wealthy foreign nationals. The domestic market for heroin was temporarily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in the short-term as drug traffickers sought to offload larger quantities of drugs to avoid recurring export difficulties. Madagascar is both a destination and significant transit country for cocaine trafficked from South America through West Africa, and often onward to Middle Eastern and Asian markets. Widespread poverty and unemployment are believed to be key factors driving involvement in the illicit cocaine trade. Although the average age of cocaine consumers in Madagascar is decreasing, domestic cocaine consumption is nevertheless rather limited.

Madagascar is a source, destination and transit country for the global cannabis trade. Cannabis is primarily cultivated in Ankarana, the northern district of Ambanja, and the southern region of Anosy, primarily in Mihariomby village.

Madagascar's cannabis trade has proven to be quite lucrative, and as a result the country is also one of the top cannabis seizure locations in Africa. Poverty and unemployment are key factors in the rise of both cannabis dealing and consumption. Meanwhile, little evidence points to the existence of a significant synthetic-drug trade in Madagascar. However, limited methamphetamine trafficking does exist.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

While large, organized mafia-style groups do not appear to exist in Madagascar, small associations of criminals operate under internal directives and are known to be involved in the illicit-arms trade. These groups have a clear leadership structure and specified headquarters. Members remain united and support one another in cases of arrest or imprisonment. In the countryside, family criminal organizations take prevalence. Gangs are also known to operate in the country's larger cities, although their activities are largely limited to armed attacks in specified zones. Meanwhile, criminal networks also operate across Madagascar, and are involved in a wide range of criminal activities. Criminal networks involved in human trafficking

are reportedly highly organized and collaborate with counterparts abroad, while drug trafficking networks are dominated by key figures who have controlled the country's illicit drug markets for many years.

Corrupt government officials also play a significant role in the facilitation of criminal activities. Retired army officers, colonels and generals in southern Madagascar, in particular, are known to facilitate armed kidnappings and cattle rustling, as well as arms and drug trafficking. Moreover, the Malagasy government is known to be involved in organized criminal activities throughout the country and many Malagasy officials have been implicated in the facilitation of illegitimate financial transactions and the trafficking of illicit commodities. In regard to foreign actors, East Asian businessmen are key actors in Madagascar's illicit timber trade and drug kingpins from elsewhere in Africa are also significantly active in Madagascar's drug trafficking markets. Foreign recruitment agencies are also known to collaborate closely with Malagasy criminals to carry out human-trafficking operations. Lastly, nationals from wealthy European countries are known to be key clients in the commercialized sexual abuse of children.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Malagasy government lacks the political will to effectively combat organized crime. Although various entities are tasked specifically with combating organized crime, these lack both sufficient resources and funding. While senior officials have claimed to be involved in the protection of Malagasy natural resources, an interministerial committee tasked with anti-drug trafficking efforts was disbanded in 2020 without a reason being given. Overall, corruption runs rampant in the country, and censorship is reportedly common. Since a 2009 coup, the Malagasy public have also expressed high levels of mistrust in the government. Anti-corruption agencies do exist in the country, but lack independence because they are attached to the president's office.

At the international level, Madagascar has ratified a number of relevant international treaties pertaining to transnational organized crime. All entities involved in the fight against organized crime also reportedly participate in international training programmes and conferences. Although Madagascar lacks a national policy against organized crime, various laws pertaining to specific criminal markets, such as the illicit timber trade, exist on the domestic level. The country's anti-trafficking law also outlines sex trafficking, sexual exploitation, labour trafficking, forced labour, forced begging

and debt bondage as criminal offences. The law renders child- trafficking convictions punishable by imprisonment or financial penalties. The current president also promised the establishment of an initiative aimed at ensuring peace and security across the country. However, no tangible results have emerged from this.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Reports indicate that the Malagasy judiciary significantly lacks resources and is influenced by private interests. The system therefore does not have the capacity to deal effectively with organized crime. Most human-trafficking cases brought to court reportedly result in acquittals. A similar phenomenon applies to wildlife-trafficking cases. Additionally, civil society organizations, businesses and politicians have all accused judges, along with local leaders and law enforcement officers, of involvement in cattle raiding. However, in 2018, Madagascar established its first anti-corruption court tasked with hearing cases related to corruption and organized crime.

In regards to law enforcement, Madagascar's central intelligence service contributes to the country's fight against organized crime, with a specific focus on transnational crimes such as drug trafficking and arms trafficking.

Moreover, the Special Brigade unit of the country's national gendarmerie conducts investigations into and collects evidence related to cases of organized crime. Malagasy intelligence services also reportedly collaborate with civil-society organizations, international organizations and other intelligence services abroad. Nevertheless, law enforcement in Madagascar remains a significant challenge, particularly due to widespread government corruption. As for territorial integrity, the country lacks a coast guard unit, making its sea ports very vulnerable to smuggling and trafficking operations. Although Madagascar's border control capacity is insufficient, riddled with corruption and under-resourced, the country has made efforts to combat organized crime along its borders. This is evident in the establishment of the EU-funded Centre de Fusion d'Informations Maritimes in 2015.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Madagascar has failed to put forth significant efforts to bolster its economic policy and development, and remains one of the poorest countries worldwide. Despite economic failures, Madagascar offers many opportunities for legitimate businesses to expand. Nevertheless, the country's large informal economy combined with high cash usage and limited financial deepening renders it difficult to both track and control corrupt transactions. Madagascar joined the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network for Southern Africa in 2017, which aims to enhance law enforcement capacity related to international mandates on anti-money laundering. Additionally, the Malagasy Financial Intelligence Service also serves as an independent financial intelligence unit mandated to analyze, disseminate and report suspicious transactions. While Malagasy police officials have investigated cases of money laundering, they reportedly lack the training and expertise to do so effectively. Madagascar's judiciary also lacks resources and the political will to prosecute money-laundering offences.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Madagascar's capacity to protect victims and witnesses of organized crime is significantly limited. The country also lacks an official legal mechanism to identify victims both locally and abroad, and actors attempting to do so fail to coordinate, leaving many unidentified. While the Ministry of Population in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration established a new department tasked with victim support in January 2015, primarily for human trafficking and human smuggling victims, the implementation of protective measures remains a challenge. Similarly, despite the Malagasy government's efforts to prevent organized crimes, implementation remains a significant challenge. Organized crime prevention activities primarily include training and capacity-building initiatives, which are hosted both by local and international partners. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Malagasy Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Justice and national

gendarmerie collaborated in a newly launched zero-tolerance project to combat organized crime, although successful results have been limited and the project has been criticized for the inconsistent treatment of criminal bosses and criminal followers.

Malagasy civil society plays a significant role in the country's fight against organized crime. Private companies also participate in organized crime prevention activities by providing judicial and law enforcement bodies with essential resources. However, these activities are not held in high regard by the Malagasy government. Moreover, criminal libel laws and other restrictions often undermine freedom of speech in Madagascar. The media also face safety risks when investigating sensitive subjects like cattle rustling and the non-renewable resource crimes.

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