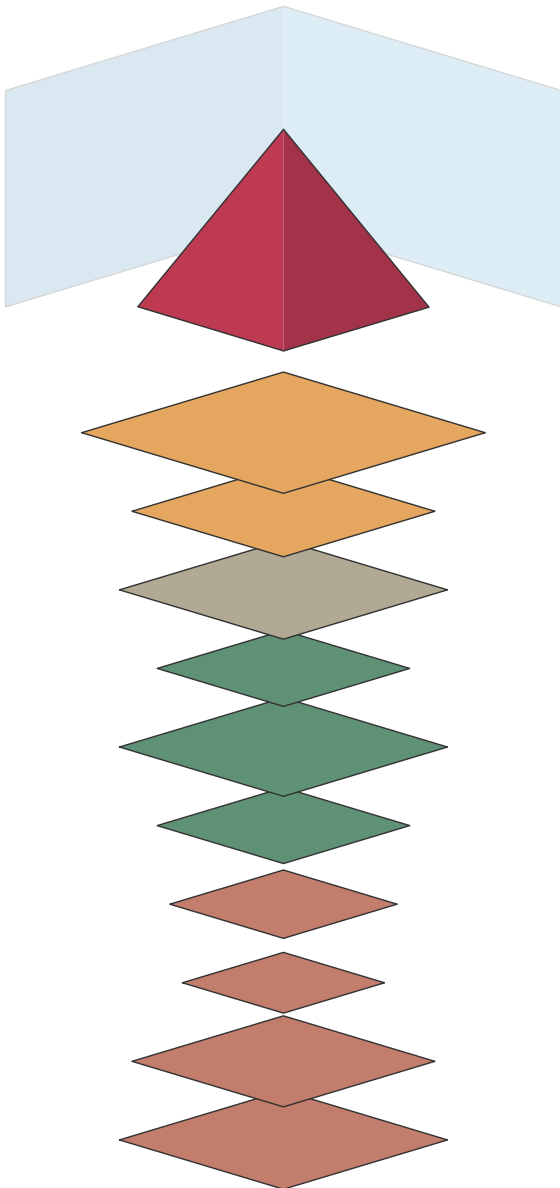




# QATAR




## 5.21 CRIMINALITY SCORE

77<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries  
24<sup>th</sup> of 46 Asian countries  
9<sup>th</sup> of 14 Western Asian countries



### CRIMINAL MARKETS **5.80**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	6.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	6.50
FLORA CRIMES	5.00
FAUNA CRIMES	6.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	5.00
HEROIN TRADE	4.50
COCAINE TRADE	4.00
CANNABIS TRADE	6.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	6.50



### CRIMINAL ACTORS **4.63**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	6.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.50

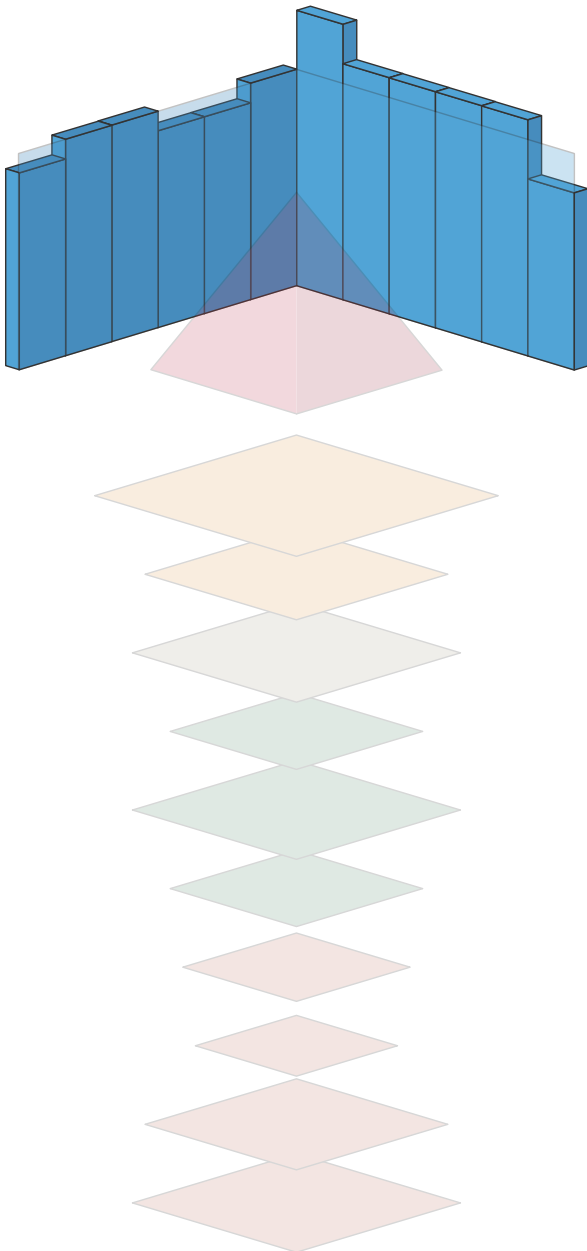


## 5.58 RESILIENCE SCORE

51<sup>st</sup> of 193 countries  
9<sup>th</sup> of 46 Asian countries  
3<sup>rd</sup> of 14 Western Asian countries



# QATAR



5.58

## RESILIENCE SCORE

51<sup>st</sup> of 193 countries

9<sup>th</sup> of 46 Asian countries

3<sup>rd</sup> of 14 Western Asian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	5.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	5.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	7.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	6.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	6.00
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.50



5.21

## CRIMINALITY SCORE

77<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries

24<sup>th</sup> of 46 Asian countries

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CRIMINAL MARKETS

5.80



CRIMINAL ACTORS

4.63



# CRIMINALITY

## CRIMINAL MARKETS

### PEOPLE

With foreign nationals making up most of Qatar's population, a sizeable domestic market for human trafficking exists in the country. Sustained by the massive infrastructure projects that are part of the preparations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the criminal market in Qatar is characterized predominantly by forced labour, although trafficking for sexual exploitation does exist as well. Victims are primarily recruited from countries in Southern, Eastern and South-eastern Asia as well as Africa, and often enter the country through recruitment agencies. As in other Gulf countries, the Kafala (sponsorship) system is present in Qatar. This system ties migrant workers to domestic sponsors, but it also increases vulnerability to modern slavery. Migrants pay exorbitant fees to recruiters and may become indebted, which often results in debt bondage, exploitation and abuse. Reportedly, recruitment agencies operate in victims' countries of origin, which implies a certain degree of collaboration between domestic and foreign actors.

Given the high demand for foreign labour in Qatar, particularly in domestic work and other services, human smuggling is a significant issue in Qatar. Undoubtedly, however, human trafficking and smuggling overlap.

### TRADE

Arms trafficking in Qatar should be interpreted in the context of the state's foreign policy goals. Qatar purportedly maintains a policy of active support for a range of militant factions across the Middle East and North Africa region, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, providing financial support and arms. Qatar is one of the leading arms importers in the world, subsequently exporting weapons to the regions listed above, essentially making arms trafficking a state-sponsored market. In addition, reports allege that Qatar has smuggled militants to Libya and aided Iran in smuggling weapons to separatists in Yemen.

### ENVIRONMENT

Evidence suggests that a moderate market for illegal flora exists in Qatar, with reports suggesting illicit activities occurring both in the desert and the mangroves of the country. While Qatar is not a country of concern as far as fauna crimes go, both the country and the region remain a major hub for wildlife trafficking. Qatar Airways, the world's largest cargo carrier, is particularly vulnerable to being used by traffickers, transporting mostly ivory, rhino horn, reptiles and birds. Furthermore, there is a comparatively

large demand for rare falcons and falcon eggs in Qatar, with source countries identified as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Mongolia. As most illegal wildlife trade is carried out through air routes, it is likely that the disruption to air travel as a result of COVID-19 would have negatively affected trafficking flows, at least to some extent. Some evidence exists that gold is illegally smuggled out of Qatar, mostly by foreign organized groups and migrant workers. The destination countries appear to be primarily India and Nepal.

### DRUGS

While there is no indication of significant domestic demand for heroin, Qatar appears to be a small-scale transit hub for the drug, smuggled via air, as well as through the Gulf from Iran. Similarly, small quantities of cocaine also transit the country, although these are likely to be isolated incidents as there is no information that Qatar is part of a particular cocaine trafficking route. Domestic demand is likewise relatively small.

Qatar is a destination country for cannabis, although how much is trafficked into the country is uncertain. Known cases implicate criminal organizations originating in Southern Asia, India in particular. Groups allegedly send drug mules to Qatar, who deliver the drugs to Doha Airport. While most likely limited in scale, there is some demand for various synthetic drugs, including methamphetamine. Reportedly, organized crime groups from Southern Asia, and to a lesser extent, domestic ones, have been involved in the import and export of synthetic drugs, with homeward-bound migrant workers often used by groups to traffic synthetic drugs out of Qatar. The country is also identified as a hub in the methamphetamine and Captagon trafficking flows.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

Domestic criminal networks operate in Qatar and transnationally, and are mainly involved in gold smuggling, drugs and human trafficking. Due to the mainly transit role of Qatar, most organized crime activities tend to be concentrated at Doha and Hamad International Airports. Organized crime groups tend to be linked to Asia – India, Nepal and Bangladesh in particular. To facilitate their illegal activities, such groups often use corruption. State actors are, however, also directly involved in the trafficking of arms from Qatar to militia groups abroad. Notably, although state-facilitated arms trafficking does occur, motivation is political rather than financial.

Foreign organized crime groups are active in trafficking drugs from countries of origin to Qatar. These hail mostly from Southern Asia. Foreign actors, either individuals or groups, are also allegedly involved in recruiting migrant

workers in their countries of origin: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, as well as various African countries.

There is no information to indicate that mafia-style groups exist in Qatar.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Qatar is an authoritarian state, with the emir and his family maintaining control over state affairs and no elected legislature to offset executive power. Countering organized crime does not seem to feature strongly on the country's agenda, but allegations point to Qatar aiding separatist and terrorist groups abroad. Corruption perceptions in Qatar are low and officials have expressed a commitment to anti-corruption and integrity measures. There are anti-corruption bodies, but it is mostly low-level officials within the state apparatus who seem to be punished. Meanwhile, senior officials and members of the royal family are not held accountable for their allocation of state resources. This suggests that effective safeguards against corruption are lacking, despite the country's participation in a number of international anti-corruption initiatives. Transparency and openness in Qatar, or lack thereof, is also subject to criticism. Institutional budgets are partly shared with the public, while the budget of security ministries is completely exempt from oversight.

Qatar is party to most international instruments pertaining to organized crime, with the exception of two of the protocols supplementing the UNTOC and the Arms Trade Treaty. Notably, however, reports point to Qatar's failure to fulfil its obligations on implementing the UNCAC. Nevertheless, Qatar is party to a number of agreements aimed at consolidating efforts in fighting transnational crime, terrorism and corruption. Increased cooperation between the US and Qatar is evident, especially in law enforcement and counterterrorism partnerships as well as in the increased information sharing between Qatari and US counterparts. In line with the country's international anti-organized crime commitments, Qatar's legislative framework covers the organized-crime activities that are of interest to this Index.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

There are no organized crime units within the Qatari judicial system. While the constitution guarantees an independent judiciary, the emir appoints judges, based on recommendations from the Supreme Judicial Council, and hold their positions at his discretion. Judges are appointed for three-year indefinitely renewable terms, with most being foreign nationals, which makes them particularly dependent on the government. While prisons

meet international standards, cases of torture have been documented. Although Qatar possesses the financial resources to provide excellent training programmes to law enforcement officers, as well as state-of-the-art law enforcement equipment, recruitment possibilities among nationals are limited. Thus, foreign nationals are often hired to staff the police force. A specialized office for combating drug trafficking does exist within Qatari security structures as an independent body. As noted above, Qatari law enforcement benefits from various capacity-building programmes, a result of the deepening cooperation with US counterparts. The country is also an INTERPOL member state and hosts a National Central Bureau in Doha. Qatari maritime and land borders are not particularly vulnerable to organized crime networks, which most commonly use air routes. Since the 2017 diplomatic crisis, neighbouring countries have cut ties with Qatar, and Saudi Arabia permanently closed the Salwa border crossing, the only land border Qatar has. Qatar's border guards and coastguards operate an advanced integrated system that is able to monitor all Qatari borders. The system's main goal is to address terrorism, maritime piracy, smuggling and illegal fishing.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

According to Qatari representatives, a law was passed in 2019 that brought Qatar in line with international standards and recommendations on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. There are two financial units: one is tasked with minimizing the risks of companies being used in money laundering activities; the other with obtaining, analyzing and distributing information on potential proceeds of crime, money laundering and terrorism financing activities. Despite the government's attempts to promote fair competition and privatization, the state still owns the country's major companies. Regulations around property ownership and starting a business are different for Qatari and non-Qatari nationals, although the latter are now able to own 100% of enterprises. Thus, improvements in the economic regulatory framework are required.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Qatar has evidently stepped up victim support efforts in recent years. There centres for victims of trafficking as well as of domestic abuse that are run by the state,

which provide basic medical and social care, along with psychological support, housing, repatriation assistance and reintegration. NGOs are active in victim support, running the daily operations of shelters. The government has also made use of the expertise of foreign NGOs, consulting them on best practice in managing trafficking shelters. Notably, the first trafficking-specific shelter in Qatar was set up in collaboration with civil society. Nevertheless, perhaps due to fear of disruption in the preparations for the 2022 World Cup, Qatar has for the most part neglected referred cases of forced labour and treated them as cases of wage theft. In terms of prevention, Qatar has a national strategy to combat human trafficking, with awareness raising among vulnerable groups as a key element of the strategy. Additionally, the government opened an International Labour Organization office in an attempt to strengthen its anti-trafficking capacities. Whistle-blowing has also been encouraged by the government in an effort to curb corruption, while Qatar is party to the Doha Declaration, committing member states to strengthening collective crime-prevention efforts and promoting the rule of law. Beyond human trafficking, however, there is little cooperation between NGOs and the government. Furthermore, all NGOs are not only closely monitored by the state but need permission in order to work in the country. There is no independent human rights organization in Qatar. The situation with the media sector is similar. Both print and broadcast outlets are censored and closely controlled by the state. Journalists in Qatar are threatened with jail sentences for defamation and tend to self-censor.

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*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.*