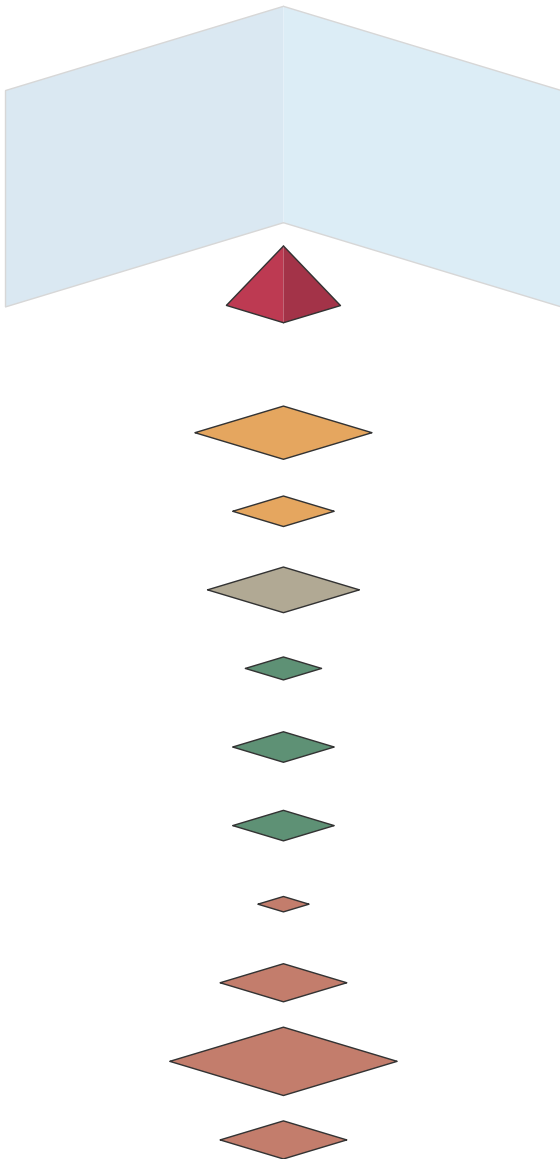


 **SAMOA**



 **2.04**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

189th of 193 countries
12th of 14 Oceanian countries
2nd of 3 Polynesian countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **2.45**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.00
FLORA CRIMES	1.50
FAUNA CRIMES	2.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.00
COCAINE TRADE	2.50
CANNABIS TRADE	4.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	2.50

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **1.63**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	2.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	1.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	2.00

 **5.67**
RESILIENCE SCORE

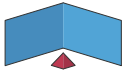
47th of 193 countries
4th of 14 Oceanian countries
2nd of 3 Polynesian countries



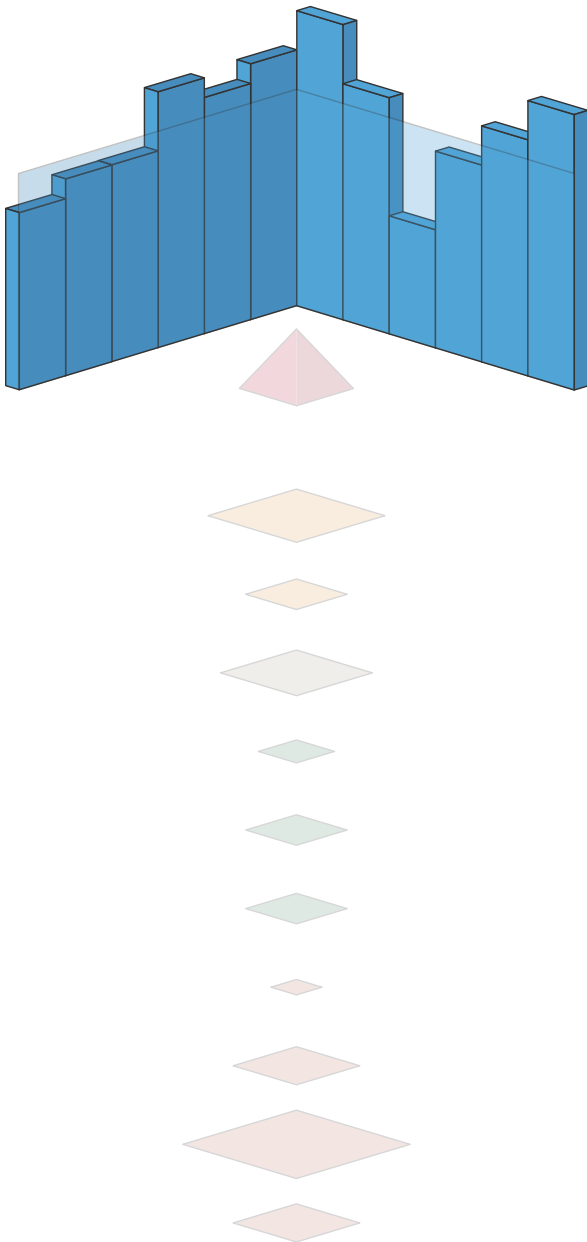
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.



SAMOA



5.67

RESILIENCE SCORE

47th of 193 countries

4th of 14 Oceanian countries

2nd of 3 Polynesian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	4.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	6.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	7.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	3.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.00
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	7.00



2.04

CRIMINALITY SCORE

189th of 193 countries

12th of 14 Oceanian countries

2nd of 3 Polynesian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

2.45



CRIMINAL ACTORS

1.63



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

The organized-crime landscape in Samoa is limited and this is no different for the human trafficking market in the country. The Samoan government has, nevertheless, warned of an increasing prevalence of human trafficking due to the country's proximity to popular destination countries such as Australia and New Zealand. While there have been isolated cases in recent years of Samoan nationals trafficked abroad for the purposes of forced labour, internal trafficking within Samoa is more common and victims of human trafficking are primarily exploited in the logging, fishing and mining sectors. With regard to the human smuggling market, Samoa similarly plays a negligible role, largely as a transit country, with only isolated cases of smuggler-facilitated irregular migration into the country.

TRADE

Although there is evidence to suggest the arms trafficking market does exist in Samoa, its scope and scale is fairly limited. While firearms are associated with gang activity and the illicit drug trade, most firearm seizures by border agencies are of small arms and hunting rifles for personal use. Nevertheless, authorities in Samoa, together with those in neighbouring Pacific Island Countries (PIC), have expressed concern regarding the possible increasing prevalence of arms trafficking in the region.

ENVIRONMENT

There are few organized environmental crimes perpetrated in Samoa and the country plays a small role in the transnational trade of illegal wildlife products and non-renewable resources. Even though illegal logging is pervasive, it is mostly carried out by locals and there is no evidence to suggest organized criminal groups play any role in the market. Similarly, while Samoa faces a number of structural vulnerabilities to illegal fishing, the scale of the criminal market is small. Although isolated cases of illegal fishing by Samoan locals, primarily for subsistence, have been reported, the most significant vulnerability faced by the country is the threat of foreign vessels carrying out illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in Samoan waters. Finally, the Pacific Ocean surrounding Samoa's islands has a small number of mineral deposits, including cobalt, nickel and copper. Illicit extraction of sand has also been recorded in Samoa. However, there is no evidence to suggest organized criminal actors exploit these non-renewable resources.

DRUGS

The most prominent drug market in Samoa is the cannabis market, which is the most popular drug in the country. Cultivated throughout the country, cannabis was initially dominated by criminal groups in the early 2010s, however, following a successful law enforcement response these groups began to recede. Nowadays, cannabis cultivation across the country is dominated by local entrepreneur-type individuals who grow the drug to satisfy the sizeable domestic demand. The cocaine market, on the other hand, is negligible, although there is some evidence to suggest that as cocaine traffickers increasingly transit through the PICs, Samoa is at risk of being used as a transit nation for cocaine trafficked from Latin America to Australia and New Zealand. Similarly, law enforcement in Samoa has reported an increase in the availability and use of synthetic drugs in recent years, in particular crystal methamphetamine, but the quantities remain minimal. There is no evidence to suggest the heroin market exists in Samoa.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Given the extremely narrow organized crime landscape in Samoa, there are few organized crime actors operating in the country. The primary actors in Samoa's illicit economies are loose criminal networks comprising opportunistic criminal entrepreneurs. These actors would operate predominantly in the cannabis markets, but law enforcement disrupted operations at their peak between 2012-2015. However, even when these gangs were at their strongest, they did not conduct their operations with violence, nor did they extort businesses. Another feature of the criminal landscape is returnees, who have been deported from foreign countries, primarily New Zealand. These individuals are often involved in gang activity abroad, and then continue perpetrating criminal activity upon their return to Samoa.

While corruption persists within the state apparatus in Samoa, there is some evidence to suggest government officials or other state-embedded actors are involved in illicit economies. Furthermore, Samoa is an extremely homogeneous country ethnically, restricting space for foreign criminal actors to operate. Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest foreign organized crime groups have been involved in moving drugs, primarily cocaine and crystal methamphetamine, into and through Samoa. Domestic mafia-style groups, conversely, do not exist in Samoa.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Samoa is on the whole fairly stable and democratic, and given the extremely limited scope of organized criminal activity, the phenomenon does not feature in the political debate in the country. While corruption is by no means endemic in Samoa, it is an issue and a cause of public discontent, with several instances of corruption coming to light in recent years. While there is no anti-corruption tribunal established in the country, there are a number of bodies tasked with pursuing allegations of corruption in Samoa. However, there is still much room for improvement as far as government transparency is concerned; there is no access to information law in place in Samoa and journalists are frequently barred from entering parliament to cover proceedings.

With regard to foreign relations, Samoa's framework for international cooperation generally, and on matters pertaining to organized crime more specifically, is fairly robust. The country is party to a number of relevant treaties and conventions, including the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, although it has not yet signed or ratified its three Palermo protocols. International cooperation is strongest with Samoa's neighbours in the Pacific Ocean, in particular via the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre, which is based in Samoa, a law enforcement-led initiative focusing on combating transnational organized crime and other regional bodies, such as the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police and the Pacific Islands Forum. While Samoa does have an extradition act in place, it is limited in practice; conversely, Samoa has legislation in place regarding mutual legal assistance on criminal matters, and assistance can be provided regardless of whether a bilateral treaty exists. Samoa also has a fairly robust legal framework as it pertains to organized crime. The Crimes Act 2013 criminalizes participation in an organized crime group, as well as a number of specific forms of organized crime, including money laundering, corruption, the smuggling of migrants and the trafficking of people. However, the drug laws, as laid out in the Narcotics Act 1967, are extremely outdated and in need of reform.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

On the whole, the judicial system in Samoa is considered independent, but in 2020, the government introduced a bill to parliament that would give the executive the power to dismiss judges without grounds or due process, thus undermining the democratic principle of the separation of powers and threatening judicial independence. Furthermore, the prison system in Samoa is in need of severe improvement, as issues such as overcrowding and an under-resourced staff threaten the security of the country's penal institutions.

Given Samoa's small population and the limited extent of criminality, the national police force is fairly small. While there is no domestic law enforcement unit focusing specifically on organized crime, a Transnational Crime Unit has been established through the Pacific Transnational Crime Network, a multi-agency initiative, supported by the governments of Australia and New Zealand, established to combat transnational crime in the Pacific. Samoa relies on international assistance, in particular on border security, which is of great importance, given Samoa's geographic characteristics as an island state that lies between two prominent regions with illicit economies, South-eastern Asia and Australasia. Overall, trust in law enforcement in Samoa is fairly high, and while there have been cases of bribery, corruption and police brutality, these have been isolated and condemned by senior figures in the police service.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Samoan economy is reliant on agriculture and tourism, the latter suffering greatly from the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the economic regulatory environment is fairly conducive to doing business, there is a considerable segment of society who lack access to formal financial services, in particular those employed in the agricultural sector. This exacerbates the urban-rural divide in Samoa, with a large percentage of the labour force is compelled to engage in the informal economy. Because of Samoa's small economy and banking sector, the country is not perceived as a haven for money laundering. The country was, however, put on the EU's non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes list in 2017. On the whole, Samoa has made progress in strengthening its anti-money laundering framework. Two key steps that direction have been the formation and launch of a financial intelligence unit and the passing of the Money Laundering Prevention Amendment Act of 2018. Nevertheless, even though the country has the legal instruments to tackle money laundering, its investigative and prosecutorial capabilities have been somewhat inhibited by the lack of resources.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Although Samoa is a member of several international groups that collaborate on combatting and preventing organized crime, and law enforcement has emphasized community policing, given the limited organized crime landscape in the country, the government's organized crime prevention framework is fairly insubstantial. Furthermore, the country's victim support measures are minimal, in particular with regards to drug abuse. Personnel for administering drug abuse treatment is inadequate and drug treatment facilities are poor. With regards to judicial proceedings, witnesses

are afforded protection and measures such as providing evidence via video link are in place. Finally, Samoa is a welcoming environment for civil society organizations (CSO), but the limited scope of organized criminal activity in the country is reflected in the dearth of CSOs focusing specifically on organized crime. Although criminal libel was reintroduced in 2017, the press environment in Samoa is largely free, with an increasing number of print and broadcast media outlets operating unhindered, in part as a result of the substantial growth of internet access.

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.