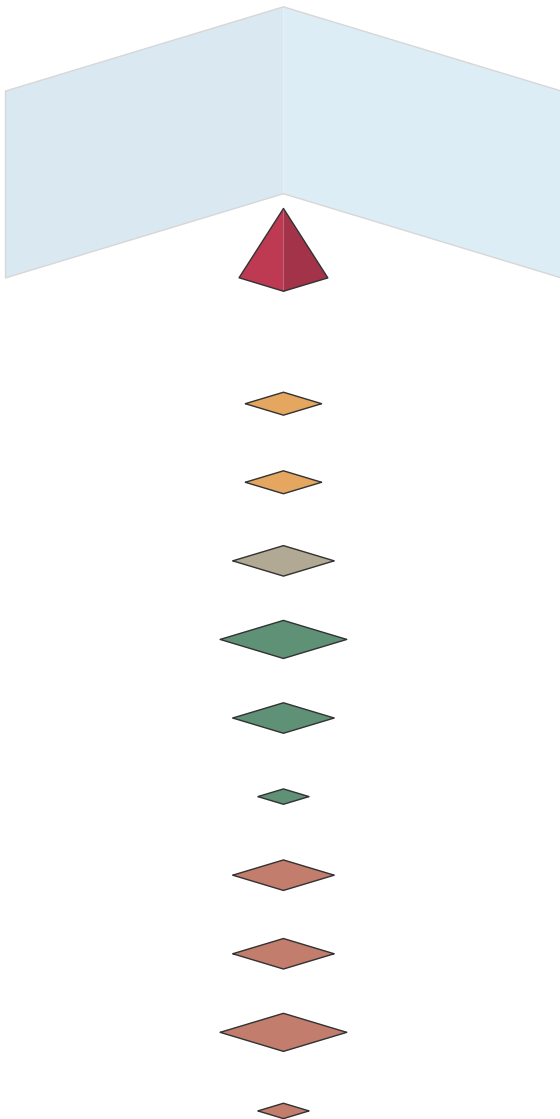




# SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE



## 1.78 CRIMINALITY SCORE

191<sup>st</sup> of 193 countries  
54<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
11<sup>th</sup> of 11 Central African countries



### CRIMINAL MARKETS **1.80**

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



### CRIMINAL ACTORS **1.75**

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



## 4.92 RESILIENCE SCORE

93<sup>rd</sup> of 193 countries  
13<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
2<sup>nd</sup> of 11 Central African countries



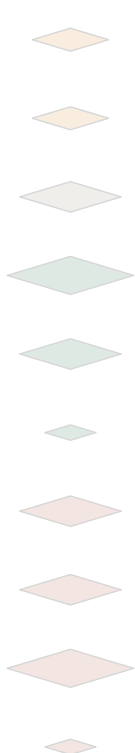
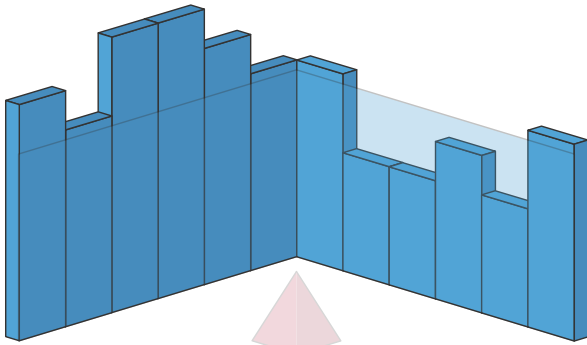
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.



# SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE



4.92

## RESILIENCE SCORE

93<sup>rd</sup> of 193 countries  
13<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
2<sup>nd</sup> of 11 Central African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	6.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	7.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	3.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.00
PREVENTION	3.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	5.00



1.78

## CRIMINALITY SCORE

191<sup>st</sup> of 193 countries  
54<sup>th</sup> of 54 African countries  
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**CRIMINAL MARKETS** 1.80



**CRIMINAL ACTORS** 1.75



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# CRIMINALITY

## CRIMINAL MARKETS

### PEOPLE

With few confirmed cases in recent years, the criminal markets for human trafficking and human smuggling appear minor in São Tomé and Príncipe. However, sex tourism has been reported and, in some cases, has led to the sexual exploitation of children. While there are no reports of organized criminal groups, including São Tomé and Príncipe nationals, involved in human smuggling, the country may be a destination for irregular migrants from countries in the region, such as Nigeria.

### TRADE

There are few reports of an illicit firearms trade, and the evidence does not suggest that there is a sizeable or pervasive criminal market for arms trafficking in the country. However, the Gulf of Guinea is prone to illicit flows of arms, drugs and humans, and São Tomé faces a potential threat of arms proliferation and piracy if the security situation in the Gulf deteriorates.

### ENVIRONMENT

While commercial agro-industrial activities have resulted in alarmingly unsustainable levels of deforestation, there are no reports of an organized crime influence on environmental degradation. However, charcoal and other timber products may potentially be taxed by criminal actors at certain border crossings, which could indirectly contribute to the financing of criminal organizations. Additionally, the country houses a number of species at risk of poaching and trafficking. The most important of these are turtles, as their meat and eggs are a common feature in the country's cuisine. While the possession, trade and sale of turtle meat have been banned, a market still exists and consumption continues. However, despite a somewhat weak enforcement of regulations, there has been an active campaign against

turtle poaching, which is believed to have had an effect. Isolated cases of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing have been reported in the country's waters. The country has a limited non-renewable resource supply, and as such, there are no reports of illegal trading.

### DRUGS

São Tomé and Príncipe has one of the lowest numbers of drug trafficking offences in Africa and drug markets in the country are negligible. Nevertheless, the country's geographical position renders it vulnerable to some drug flows. Authorities have detected drug traffickers from Nigeria and Brazil using the country as a transit point for cocaine and heroin. These drugs are believed to be en route to other countries in the Gulf of Guinea basin and in many cases, ultimately destined for Europe. Although it is quite limited, the most consumed drug in the country is cannabis. It is believed that there is a small amount of domestic cultivation and that the market is, at least to some extent, controlled by local gangs.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

The biggest organized crime threat in São Tomé and Príncipe continues to come from external sources, with the largest issue being piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. For instance, remote parts of the island of São Tomé or the Príncipe island can be used as platforms for attacks on ships in international waters. Foreign criminal actors have a presence in São Tomé and Príncipe and continue to manage drug trafficking through the islands. Corruption in the state, and particularly in the judiciary, is an issue with the potential to exacerbate some of the island's vulnerabilities. Local gangs are engaged primarily in petty crime, including robberies, hold-ups and theft, but have limited engagement with larger criminal markets. Although there are isolated incidents of robberies turning violent, this type of crime is rare. Citizens have in some cases been recruited to work as drug 'mules' by foreign criminals.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

São Tomé and Príncipe is a democracy with a relatively positive track-record for upholding civil liberties and democratic norms. The government has exhibited some

political will to combat organized crime and in 2017 launched the strategic government plan, which includes a number of new measures and initiatives to prevent and combat organized crime. Although perceptions of corruption are moderate, corruption remains a considerable impediment to

development and effective law enforcement in the country. While the government typically operates transparently and does not restrict access to information, there is a general feeling of distrust from the population towards state authorities and the integrity of some police officers has been questioned.

São Tomé and Príncipe has ratified most relevant international treaties concerning transnational organized crime. Robust bilateral and multilateral protocols and networks between São Tomé and Príncipe and other states or international organizations have been established. The country is a beneficiary of capacity-building programmes and engages in information exchanges with a variety of partners, both regionally and globally. However, the country's Constitution prohibits the extradition of its citizens from the national territory. São Tomé and Príncipe has a number of laws pertaining to organized crime and a relatively robust legal framework. The National Assembly approved a new penal code in 2012, criminalizing trafficking and the use of narcotics as well as criminal associations. The penal code has integrated principles, contained in the conventions of regional and international organizations, of which São Tomé and Príncipe is part.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judiciary is mostly independent, and courts generally uphold standards of due process in criminal matters. However, there have been cases of interference and undue influence over courts as well as corruption within the judiciary. In some cases, this may have resulted in trials dropped against politically connected people. There are a few judicial units in place with the specific aim of countering organized crime, such as the Judiciary Police. While the situation has improved, not least because of international assistance, the police and security forces lack the equipment, capacity and resources necessary to respond to crime in a timely and comprehensive manner. In particular, there is a need for improvement in combating maritime crime, and for this, São Tomé and Príncipe continues to be dependent on Portuguese and foreign vessels and warships. This need is particularly pressing in light of the long coastline and vast maritime borders that are difficult to police and monitor. Overall, oversight of national police, customs and immigration authorities, as well as the military, is adequate. Nevertheless, citizens express high levels of mistrust due to perceived inefficiency and corruption, as well as reports of police being heavy-handed.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

São Tomé and Príncipe is a lower-middle-income country. The economy is growing, driven by an increase in tourism services and agriculture in particular. However, as is the case with many other small island states, the economy is isolated and vulnerable to external shocks. Moreover, the country suffers high unemployment and poverty rates.

It is not currently an attractive investment destination and private sector development faces some serious constraints. There is little evidence that the country is exposed to large scale illicit financial activity such as money laundering. However, its Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism protocol does not currently meet global standards, and its regulatory and supervisory processes lack the capacity to respond to money laundering and terrorist financing risks, and to enforce financial regulations. While the government is working to address these deficiencies, they continue to be a source of vulnerability for the country. São Tomé and Príncipe is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, a Financial Action Task Force-type regional body.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Although there are some government initiatives to establish protection mechanisms, there are currently no strong and established assistance programmes for victims of organized crime. Moreover, while the strategic government plan contains some crime prevention measures, the country does not have an explicit organized crime prevention policy. NGOs are not restricted from operating, and regularly cooperate with the authorities to address issues such as child labour. Nevertheless, the sector is relatively small, and a lack of funding hampers the ability of NGOs to operate. The press environment in São Tomé and Príncipe is generally free, although the media sector is limited in size and a degree of self-censorship is common.

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