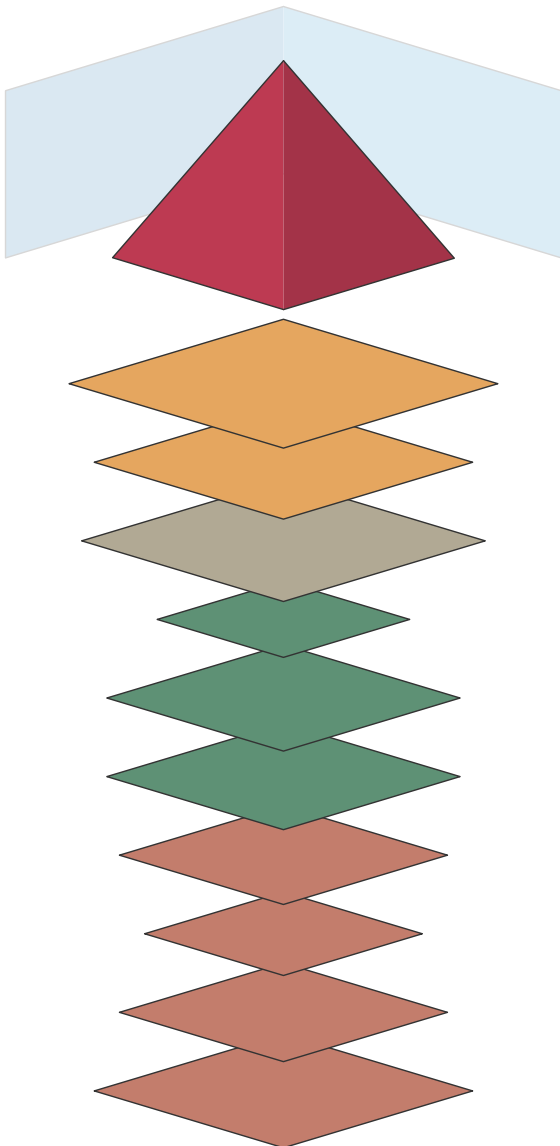




SAUDI ARABIA



6.01 CRIMINALITY SCORE

41st of 193 countries
14th of 46 Asian countries
7th of 14 Western Asian countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS **6.90**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	7.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	8.00
FLORA CRIMES	5.00
FAUNA CRIMES	7.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	7.00
HEROIN TRADE	6.50
COCAINE TRADE	5.50
CANNABIS TRADE	6.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	7.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS **5.13**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	3.00



4.29 RESILIENCE SCORE

122nd of 193 countries
23rd of 46 Asian countries
8th of 14 Western Asian countries



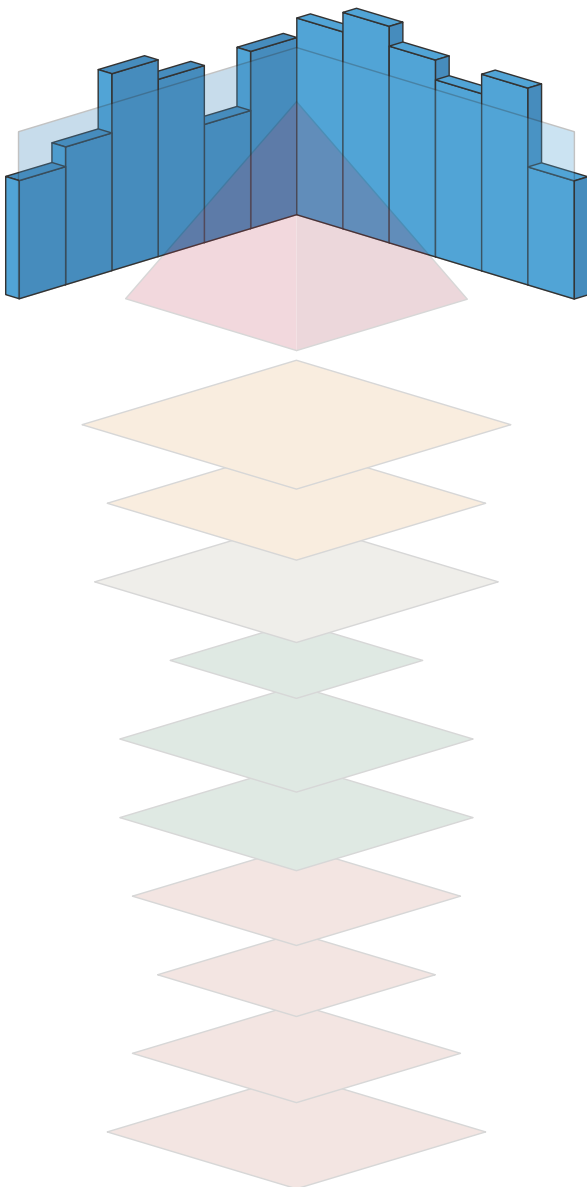
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.



SAUDI ARABIA



4.29

RESILIENCE SCORE

122nd of 193 countries
23rd of 46 Asian countries
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POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	3.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	3.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	5.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.50
PREVENTION	5.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.00



6.01

CRIMINALITY SCORE

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CRIMINAL MARKETS 6.90



CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.13



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Saudi Arabia is a destination market for human beings trafficked primarily from Asia and Africa for labour, sexual exploitation and, to a lesser extent, organ trafficking and military service. The Kafala (sponsorship) system requires foreign workers to get an approval for exit visas from their employers, rendering them vulnerable to forced labour. The approximately 11 million migrant workers in Saudi Arabia are therefore most at risk of human trafficking. Moreover, vulnerable (often underage refugee) girls from conflict-affected countries such as Syria and Myanmar have increasingly been bought for 'temporary' marriages and other forms of prostitution. There have been reports of trafficking of child soldiers for the purpose of fighting on Saudi Arabia's side in the war in Yemen. Perpetrators of human trafficking include a myriad of actors, such as families, low-ranking officials, businesses and recruitment companies located within the country and abroad, in labour-sending countries. There are two main human trafficking hubs in Saudi Arabia: the country's northern border with Jordan and its southern border with Yemen. Many traffickers exploit the power vacuum along Saudi Arabia's southern border due to the ongoing conflict in neighbouring Yemen.

In addition to being a destination country for human trafficking, Saudi Arabia is a destination market for significant numbers of irregular migrants travelling from the Horn of Africa through Yemen. This has created a sizable criminal market for criminal actors specializing in smuggling thousands of people on a monthly basis on the perilous journey from various destinations in the Horn of Africa towards Saudi Arabia. These networks are vast, stretching from Ethiopia to Saudi Arabia. Upon arrival in Saudi Arabia, many of these refugees and migrants are vulnerable to trafficking and many find themselves subject to forced labour and/or sexual exploitation.

TRADE

Saudi Arabia has a high prevalence of arms and is one of the largest firearms importers and defence spenders in the world. While the Saudi government often ships imported arms to Bahrain, Syrian and Yemen in violation of international law, massive corruption within the Saudi military facilitates the domestic arms market. Many such weapons are known to end up in the hands of violent extremist groups, including the Islamic State. Additionally, there are reports of growing criminal arms trafficking on the Saudi-Yemeni border.

ENVIRONMENT

Saudi Arabia plays an important role in various regional and global environmental criminal markets. A leading global oil exporter, Saudi Arabia is also a significant source country in the criminal oil smuggling market. Smuggling networks specializing in products such as gasoline, kerosene and diesel have increased in prominence in recent years. Such networks comprise gas station workers, distributors, drivers, smugglers in origin countries (and their partners in destination countries), distributors and small-scale vendors. For instance, fuel smuggling across the border between Saudi Arabia and Jordan has increased amid sharp increases in fuel prices in Jordan and occurs through official border crossings in some cases. In addition to smuggling in gasoline, diesel and oil, Saudi Arabia plays a key role as both a destination and transit country in global criminal markets for illicitly mined gold. While much of this illegally mined gold stays in Saudi Arabia, there have been several cases of gold being smuggled out of Saudi Arabia for destinations such as India and Bangladesh.

The criminal market for wildlife in Saudi Arabia is also both large and growing. In recent years, Saudi Arabia has reported high rates of seizures of parrots originating in countries such as Cameroon and Pakistan, and the illegal sale of wild falcons in Saudi Arabia is reportedly increasing. Poaching inside Saudi Arabia remains a problem, and although the government has taken steps to strengthen conservation, it sometimes fails to fight illegal poaching. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is reportedly another issue in the country. Flora crimes are not widespread in Saudi Arabia, but illegal imports of agarwood are a known issue.

DRUGS

Saudi Arabia is predominantly a destination country for synthetic drugs, heroin and possibly both a transit and destination country for cannabis. The consumption of amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) allegedly accounted for the majority of admissions to Saudi rehabilitation clinics in recent years, and there is a strong possibility that ATS substances are the largest, and possibly expanding, criminal drug market in Saudi Arabia. Captagon, in particular, is making its way onto the Saudi market, and authorities have made large-scale seizures of the drug in recent years. Captagon pills are believed to originate in India and are transited via Egypt, entering Saudi Arabia via the Jordanian border. However, other ATS substances are believed to originate from other countries in the Middle East, including Syria and Lebanon. In addition to Captagon, Saudi Arabia has witnessed an increase in the trafficking of methamphetamine, which enters the country via Yemen, Jordan and Iraq, as well as the Dammam and Jeddah ports and airports.

Saudi Arabia is also experiencing an increase in heroin trafficking in its territory, but it is difficult to determine whether this increase is due to domestic demand or because the country is somehow becoming a transit destination in a new, emerging heroin trafficking route. As indicated by seizures in recent years, heroin traffickers usually smuggle heroin into Saudi Arabia via its border with Jordan. Some older sources indicate that there is a domestic demand for heroin in Saudi Arabia, but the scale of this demand is unknown. Cannabis in Saudi Arabia is largely trafficked in by sea from Pakistan via the United Arab Emirates. Cannabis has not been a widely popular drug in Saudi Arabia, but reports indicate a dramatic increase in consumption in recent years, largely facilitated by corruption within the police force. The criminal market for cocaine is believed to be smaller in size than those for the three other drugs but seizures have been made, indicating some level of cocaine prevalence in the country.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Criminal actors in Saudi Arabia consist mostly of criminal networks and state-embedded actors. While there are no traditional mafia groups with a sustained presence in Saudi Arabia, organizations with political (mostly Islamist) goals and mafia-like structures engage in organized criminal

activity to finance their activities. Decentralized criminal networks operate in various criminal markets, including human smuggling and trafficking, environmental crimes and drug trafficking. In the human trafficking criminal market, these networks are spread across Saudi Arabia, although they are particularly concentrated at the borders, the coastline and within cities, where demand for (forced) labour is high.

Transnational linkages exist between Saudi criminal networks and those in various source countries for human trafficking, especially neighbouring Yemen, as well as countries in East and West Africa, and Asia. Reportedly, criminal networks based around ethnic/national groups, i.e. northern Nigerian, Chadian, Burmese, etc. operate in the country as well. Drug trafficking criminal networks are primarily linked to counterparts across the Middle East and in India. State-embedded actors have a sustained key role in a number of Saudi Arabia's criminal markets. There are persistent allegations against the royal family, who are said to engage in criminality with impunity. Corruption is also rife in the country, with reported instances of state figures' involvement in drug trafficking activity, in addition to multiple cases of grand corruption at the highest level of government. Moreover, petty corruption is likely to play some role in enabling most criminal markets.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy where ultimate authority rests with the ruling family. The country is ruled under Sharia law and citizens enjoy very few civil, political or religious liberties. In recent years, Saudi Arabia has taken a firm stance against the illicit drug market. At the same time, however, Saudi officials continue to deny the presence of organized crime actors in the country and generally refrain from addressing prominent issues such as human trafficking. While Saudi Arabia appears to perform comparatively well for its region in the fight against corruption on paper, there are very few mechanisms aimed at curbing corruption among the highest ranks of the political elite and the current anti-corruption crackdown is largely politically motivated. Abuse of power, nepotism and the use of middlemen (wasta) to do business remain commonplace, while the ruling family continue to exercise heavy control over oil funds with little transparency or accountability. Nevertheless, the kingdom's oversight and anti-corruption authority carried out mass arrests of both public and private sector individuals suspected of bribery, abuse of public funds and other forms of corrupt practices.

Saudi Arabia has ratified UNTOC, the Palermo protocols and most other relevant treaties, with the exception of the Arms Trade Treaty. Additionally, Saudi Arabia has signed a number of bilateral agreements on extradition and migrant labour recruitment, but there is certainly scope for increased international cooperation. Domestically, Saudi Arabia's legal framework for combating organized crime covers all major criminal markets. However, there are worries that Saudi Arabia's legal framework, which is founded on Sharia law, makes it difficult for victims to come forward. Drug offences, for instance, are often met with capital punishment, while, in the past, sex trafficking victims have been punished for prostitution.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judiciary in Saudi Arabia, which is overseen by the Supreme Judicial Council, lacks independence and different judges can interpret Sharia at their discretion. Trials in Saudi Arabia often lack due process and the defendants' right to legal counsel is often ignored in practice and many have confessed to crimes under torture. However, since the beginning of 2020, all cases of human trafficking are

to be referred to specialized criminal courts. The detention system in Saudi Arabia is notoriously secretive, and, as a result, there is little information on prison conditions. However, there are several reports of severe abuses taking place inside prison facilities, including torture and beatings.

Saudi Arabia's borders are under constant pressure from Jordan in the north and Yemen in the south, exacerbated by the very sandy terrain that makes it difficult to police. As a result of regional developments and ongoing conflicts, Saudi Arabia is subject to several organized crime-related issues, namely through its porous borders, despite attempts to rectify this and improve surveillance technology in recent times. Law enforcement domestically is effective, and specialized organized crime units such as the general directorate of narcotics control are key to success. However, police officers are routinely accused of physical abuse, arbitrary detention is common and there is no independent police oversight body in the country.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Overall, the business environment in Saudi Arabia is somewhat conducive to a dynamic private sector. The Crown Prince's 'Vision 2030' strategy seeks to diversify the country's economy and has led to a record number of economic reforms that have improved the business climate in the country. However, there remains nevertheless a fairly sizeable informal economy in the country, albeit no larger than other countries in the region.

Money laundering and terrorist financing is a systemic vulnerability of Saudi Arabia. However, a comprehensive revision of the legal and institutional AML/CFT framework was passed recently, which has imposed severe penalties for money launderers, which, together with political considerations, has allowed the country to avoid a place on the EU's money laundering blacklist. Nevertheless, terrorism financing in particular remains a risk and Saudi Arabia continues to be a high-risk jurisdiction for money laundering and terrorist financing.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Saudi government has failed to develop a uniform instrument to aid the identification of victims of organized crime and refer them to proper support and protection. In the area of human trafficking, for instance, the government has created a number of mechanisms for protecting victims, but also frequently engages in arbitrary deportation policies and many trafficking victims are punished for acts that they were forced to commit. The government has also attempted to take a preventive approach to human trafficking by applying a domestic labour platform that seeks to eliminate unregulated employment brokers, but compliance remains in question.

Most civil society organizations (CSOs) in Saudi Arabia are affiliated with the government and independent CSOs are subject to a restrictive legal framework. The kingdom adopted a new law on civil society in 2016 which, in theory, should make it easier to register as a CSO. However, organizations can be banned or lose their right to form if they violate Sharia or contradict public morality or national unity. In practice, therefore, an independent civil society does not exist in the kingdom. There exists no independent media in Saudi Arabia and repressive measures against journalists have intensified in recent years. Journalists tend to censor themselves because those who voice any criticism are liable to be prosecuted on charges of blasphemy, insulting religion and threatening national unity. Journalists have been killed for criticizing government policies in Saudi Arabia.

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