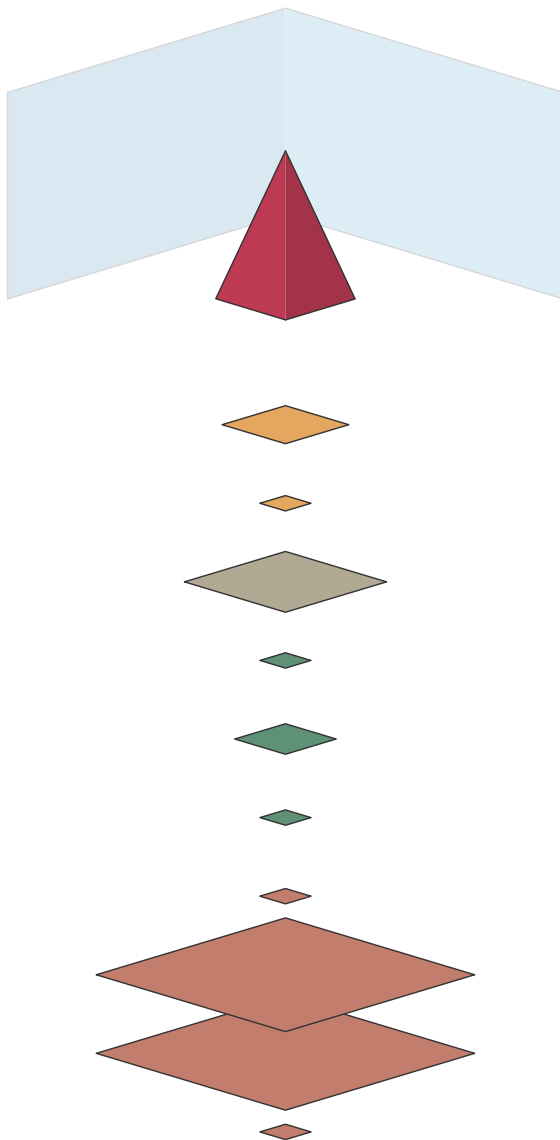




ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



3.30 CRIMINALITY SCORE

169th of 193 countries
31st of 35 American countries
10th of 13 Caribbean countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.85

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	2.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	1.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	4.00
FLORA CRIMES	1.00
FAUNA CRIMES	2.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	1.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.00
COCAINE TRADE	7.50
CANNABIS TRADE	7.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	1.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS 3.75

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	2.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	2.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00



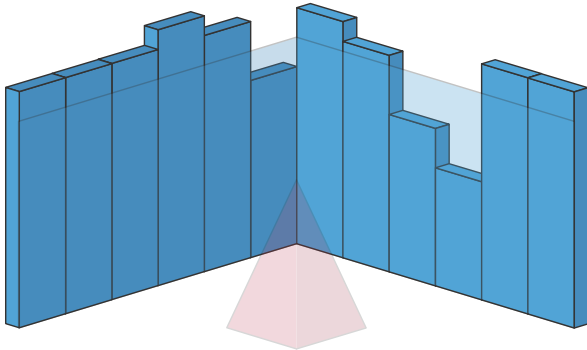
5.46 RESILIENCE SCORE

60th of 193 countries
11th of 35 American countries
3rd of 13 Caribbean countries





ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES



5.46

RESILIENCE SCORE

60th of 193 countries

11th of 35 American countries

3rd of 13 Caribbean countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	6.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	3.00
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00



3.30

CRIMINALITY SCORE

169th of 193 countries

31st of 35 American countries

10th of 13 Caribbean countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

2.85



CRIMINAL ACTORS

3.75



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Although traffickers exploit Vincentian and foreign victims domestically or abroad, the human trafficking market appears to be limited in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Reportedly, women from abroad are sexually exploited in the country, while concerns regarding the facilitation of child sex trafficking by parents and caregivers have been expressed. Foreign workers originating in the Caribbean, South America or Asia may be subjected to forced labour in St. Vincent and the Grenadines or while in transit. Both men and women have allegedly been forced into labour, mostly in agriculture, and the potential use of forced labour in cannabis production by drug traffickers has been flagged. Employees of foreign-owned companies in the country may also be vulnerable to labour exploitation.

There is very little evidence to suggest the presence of human smuggling as a criminal market within St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

TRADE

Arms trafficking is again limited in the country, but continues to grow. The COVID-19 pandemic has reportedly shifted the arms trafficking dynamics, with cannabis increasingly being used in barter exchange for high-quality arms from Trinidad and Tobago. Currently, however, trafficking of arms is mostly driven by the cocaine trade and the necessity of those involved to protect their drug stockpiles. The country is also used as a transit point in trafficking arms from the US and Canada towards South America. As with other countries in the region, the availability of arms is related to violence and high levels of homicide.

ENVIRONMENT

While the country has suffered deforestation and poor use of land, there is minimal evidence to suggest that a flora crimes market exists in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, let alone one involving organized crime groups. Fauna crimes are not a large market by regional comparisons, but do exist nonetheless. Notably, largely foreign actors are known to travel to St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the purpose of trafficking Union Island geckos abroad, mostly to Europe. No evidence indicates the existence of a non-renewable resources crimes market in the country.

DRUGS

There is no evidence to suggest that a heroin trade exists in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. While transnational syndicates may use the country as a transit point for synthetic drugs, their use in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is negligible.

Conversely, the cocaine trade is well established as the island chain's sparse population and limited law enforcement presence makes it vulnerable to trafficking. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is another waypoint for cocaine coming from South America and bound for Europe, the US and other parts of the Caribbean. The Grenadine islands continue to be a stronghold for Venezuelan crime groups, with cocaine shipments from Venezuela to the Grenadines (and Grenada) increasing at the expense of shipments to St. Lucia, likely due to groups trying to minimize the risk of interception. For the most part, crime groups organize Venezuelan fishing vessels to offload bulk quantities of cocaine in coastal waters. The drugs are then collected and stockpiled for onward loading onto pleasure crafts that are predominantly destined for Europe. The frequency of these smuggling attempts has reportedly reduced in recent years, but the quantities of cocaine trafficked have grown four/five-fold. The country is also a transshipment point of South American cannabis to the US, Europe and other parts of the Caribbean. This specifically relates to specialist high-grade South American cannabis known as 'Creepy' only. In addition, St. Vincent and the Grenadines maintains cannabis cultivation for traditional, medicinal and religious purposes, which was regulated in 2018. It is also the largest cannabis producer in the Caribbean, after Jamaica. While possession and consumption of small quantities of marijuana was decriminalized in the country, most cannabis grown in St. Vincent is smuggled to other Caribbean countries via maritime routes because no legal regional market exists.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

There is a fairly prominent presence of foreign actors in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, consisting mostly of Venezuelan groups specializing in cocaine trafficking. They often arrive in the country illegally via sea routes and work exclusively with local traffickers to remain below the radar. They allegedly have moderate influence in some circles and are believed to have a stronghold in some communities as they offer people financial reward in exchange for facilitating offshore to onshore transportation of cocaine shipments. Domestic networks are also involved in criminal markets. Reportedly, around 200 gangs with loose membership exist in the country. Prior to the 2018 reforms, criminal networks were linked to trafficking of cannabis, but this has

changed since then. Currently, networks mainly based on family and cultural connections operating predominately on the Grenadine islands are engaged in human and drug trafficking.

While many gangs operate in the country, very few could be classified as mafia-style structures. High-level corruption in St. Vincent and the Grenadines appears to be very low, if present at all, and there is no evidence to suggest that state-embedded actors are directly involved in criminal markets or organized crime more generally.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The international community has at times accused St. Vincent and the Grenadines of not doing enough to combat organized crime – allegations which have been vehemently denied by authorities. Nevertheless, while the government has introduced significant reforms in cannabis legislation and focused on youth policies as well as environmental issues, certain aspects, such as firearm trafficking, remain unaddressed. As emphasized earlier, corruption in the country is low. In terms of transparency, the government is perceived as open and transparent with leadership holding sessions with citizens on matters of concern. Nevertheless, access to information is rather poor as legislation on freedom of information is yet to be fully implemented despite being passed in 2003. Notably, there is no active legal mechanism that requires public officials to declare income, assets or gifts.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is party to a number of key international conventions and treaties pertaining to organized crime, with the exception of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Nevertheless, the country has ratified the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. The country is open to international cooperation and is currently working towards improving intelligence sharing with counterparts. Furthermore, the country is a member of the Regional Security System, under the framework of which Caribbean partner states work together in the fields of prevention of smuggling, immigration control, fishery protection, pollution control and prevention of threats to national security. In spite of being party to most organized crime-related conventions, St. Vincent and the Grenadines' legislation on human, drugs and arms trafficking face criticism for not complying with international standards and for allowing inadequate sentencing. In one of the most notable recent developments, the country passed legislation regarding cannabis production and consumption. Overall, however, legislation is adequate in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, compared to the threats the country faces.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judicial system in St. Vincent and the Grenadines builds on UK law but is antiquated and in need of reform. Limited financial resources and institutional weakness put a strain on the system's capacity, including law enforcement, to effectively counter organized crime. Reportedly, a large percentage of those awaiting trial were gang-related, while the slowness of the judicial process is believed to have allowed some criminals to reoffend whilst on bail awaiting trial. Nevertheless, there have been some improvements. The country managed to secure international funding for maritime intelligence and search units. There is an anti-human trafficking unit as well. Monitoring the country's borders is the responsibility of the Special Services Unit, which is the paramilitary arm of the police force. The task is not an easy one as the geography and topography of St. Vincent and the Grenadines make it vulnerable and its borders difficult to monitor and police. Overall, however, the measures seem adequate and proportionate to the low threat organized crime poses to the country.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Substantial efforts have been made on the part of authorities to tackle money laundering. Arguably, the country has a comprehensive anti-money laundering legislation and the risk of money laundering is medium. Conversely, doing business in the country is very difficult, with trade and customs regulations being the biggest constraints to the country's ability to integrate the global market chain.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The country has taken criticism for the lack of victim and witness protection programmes, although some improvement was registered in that respect. The government does operate a shelter in collaboration with NGOs to provide financial, social, medical and psychological assistance to victims of trafficking and domestic violence. No such facility exists for male victims. Another development in witness and victim support has been the increased training of law enforcement on human trafficking as well as deepening collaboration with international partners on planning operations against child

sex trafficking. Additionally, there is legislation to guarantee protection to victims before, during and after a trial. Crime prevention programmes exist in the country, with several developed and implemented with the assistance of civil society and communities to help crime victims and which focus on drug prevention. The government also works on the prevention of human trafficking, with the prime minister being responsible for coordinating the efforts across different government agencies. In addition to that, the national anti-human trafficking action plan was extended to 2020 with some improvements. Importantly, there is a National Commission on Crime Prevention that specifically tackles organized crime related issues. St. Vincent and the Grenadines' constitution guarantees press freedom, which is generally upheld in practice. While the state owns the primary broadcaster in the country, there are a number of other media outlets functioning in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Nevertheless, journalists remain vulnerable to vaguely worded criminal and civil defamation laws, which stipulate for a significant fine and prison time for those who are found guilty.

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