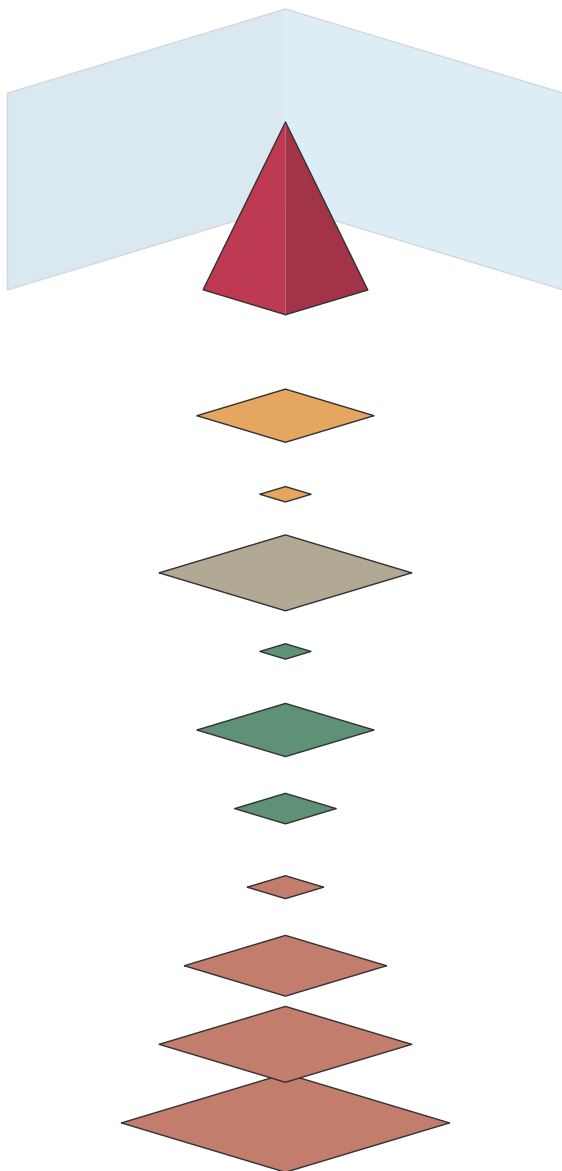


 **TONGA**



 **3.78**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

156th of 193 countries
5th of 14 Oceanian countries
1st of 3 Polynesian countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **3.30**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	1.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.00
FLORA CRIMES	1.00
FAUNA CRIMES	3.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.50
COCAINE TRADE	4.00
CANNABIS TRADE	5.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	6.50

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **4.25**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	5.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50

 **5.21**
RESILIENCE SCORE

76th of 193 countries
8th of 14 Oceanian countries
3rd of 3 Polynesian countries

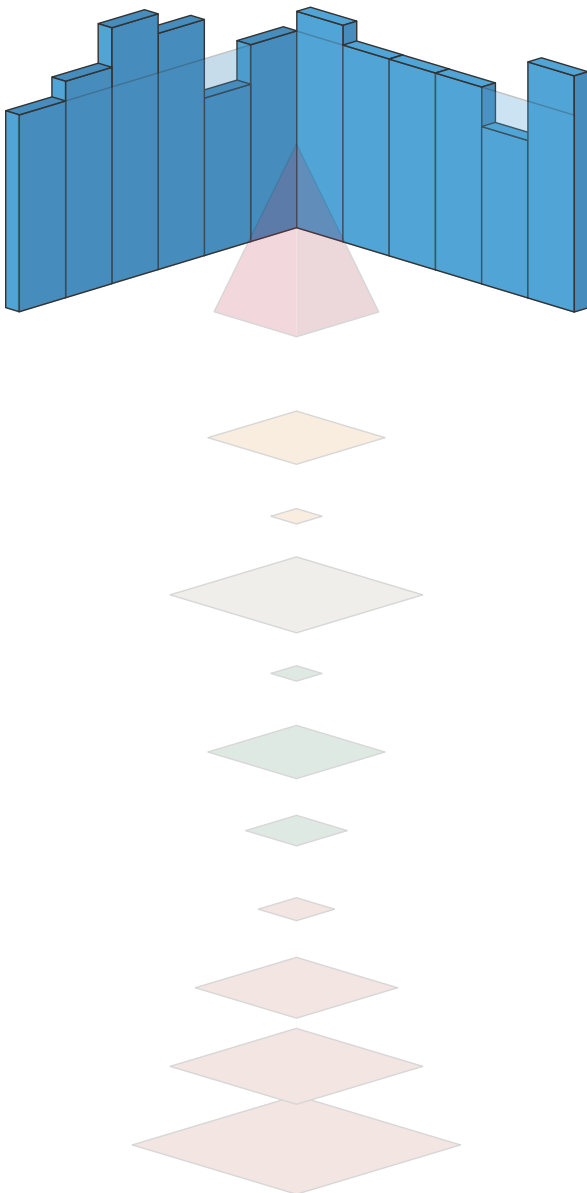


Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.

 **TONGA**





5.21
RESILIENCE SCORE

76th of 193 countries
8th of 14 Oceanian countries
3rd of 3 Polynesian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	5.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.00
PREVENTION	4.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00

3.78
CRIMINALITY SCORE

156th of 193 countries
5th of 14 Oceanian countries
1st of 3 Polynesian countries

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	3.30
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	4.25



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.

CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Tonga plays a role as a destination and source country for the trafficking of human beings. While Tongan men tend to be trafficked to countries like Australia and New Zealand for the purposes of forced labour, Tongan women and children are susceptible to being victimized and exploited in domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, both locally and abroad. With regard to the trafficking of foreign nationals in Tonga, East Asian women, primarily Chinese nationals, have been trafficked to Tonga for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Meanwhile, there is little evidence that smuggling of migrants to or from Tonga is a major issue.

TRADE

Tonga is considered a transit country for arms trafficking, with an ever-increasing volume of firearms passing through it. With its traditional linkage to the US, in particular Hawaii, shipments of firearms into and through Tonga often originate in the US. To a lesser extent, illicit arms shipments also originate in China and Latin American ports. Arms trafficking has potential links with drug trafficking operations, as there have been cases in which firearms and illegal ammunition have been transported in the same shipments.

There are concerns that an increasing frequency of arms trafficking in Tonga, and the related corruption payments, will impact community safety. Customs officials and governmental inspection services have been identified as receiving payments to facilitate the arms trade, with bribes for safe entry into the country reaching the higher echelons of the authorities.

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental crimes in Tonga are of a limited scale and scope. Tonga has little forest over its 170 islands and, as such, illicit logging is unlikely. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest non-renewable resource crimes occur in the country. Conversely, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is substantial in Tonga's territorial waters, although IUU fishing activities have not been recorded and addressed as extensively as in the other islands.

DRUGS

The criminal market for drugs continues to be the most consolidated and pervasive in Tonga, a country that serves as a transit point for cocaine and methamphetamines bound

for Australia and New Zealand. Methamphetamines, known in Tonga as 'tutu', are arguably the largest drug market in the country and a number of large-scale seizures in recent years indicate that substantial amounts of methamphetamine pass through it. The criminal market for cocaine is also quite significant, and Tonga, as is the case with a number of other Pacific island countries, is situated along the Pacific cocaine trafficking route. The route's significance and the volume of cocaine transiting through Tonga is believed to have increased since 2014. This can be attributed to the growth of the consumption of cocaine in Australia and New Zealand, which has been driving the trade in the region.

With this drugs transit trade through Tonga, there has been increasing domestic consumption of narcotics, and as a result, it is becoming a small-scale destination market in its own right. Cases have been reported of seized shipments of methamphetamine destined for Tonga, and reports of a growing methamphetamine trade in Nuku'alofa have emerged. The presence of some small-scale, rudimentary laboratories producing methamphetamines of inferior quality has also been documented.

In addition to the criminal markets for synthetic drugs and cocaine, there is evidence of a substantial consumer base for cannabis in Tonga. Domestic use of the drug has increased in recent years. This demand is partly fed by cannabis being brought into the country from the US and partly by an allegedly growing domestic production on remote Tongan islands. Lastly, there is only limited evidence of demand for heroin in Tonga, but the dynamics of the small-scale market remain obscure.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

The main types of criminal actors in Tonga appear to be foreign organized criminal groups. Nationals from China have been implicated in human trafficking, while drug trafficking organizations in North and South America, as well as Eastern Asia, are responsible for trafficking drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamines into and through Tonga.

While foreign criminal actors tend to dominate many criminal markets, they often interact with Tongan criminal networks. In some cases, Tongan criminal network members who have been deported from other countries maintain the connections they established abroad and continue to engage in criminality in their home country. Although there is little evidence to suggest state-embedded actors are directly involved in the running of any criminal market, there have been a number of reported cases of corruption within the state apparatus, with allegations of drug trafficking,

fraud, bribery and money laundering levelled at the mid and high levels of state structures.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Commitment to combating organized crime has varied between Tongan administrations, with the main project of the current prime minister, Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa, being to unify a politically divided nation. However, anti-organized crime measures are generally reactive across Pacific island states, rather than proactive, driven from the outside. Corruption is a significant issue in Tonga and the country's integrity systems are not adequately resourced safeguards against it.

The national legal framework is assessed as adequate to respond to current organized crime threats and includes acts on countering transnational organized crime, arms trafficking and IUU fishing. Tonga has signed and ratified all the relevant treaties on organized crime and corruption, except the three accompanying protocols to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Tonga cooperates with other countries via an INTERPOL National Central Bureau as well as through regional structures, including the Pacific Islands Forum, the Pacific Transnational Crime Network, the Pacific Transnational Crime Coordination Centre and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police that work to combat illicit economies and serious organized crime in the Pacific region. Finally, the country is a beneficiary of substantial international assistance and law enforcement capacity-building measures.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

While there remains significant scope for improvement, law enforcement in Tonga is fairly effective. A national drug enforcement task force has been established and the country engages in substantial regional cooperation on law enforcement matters, including collaboration with the Transnational Serious and Organized Crime Pacific Taskforce. Although there have been allegations of corruption made against the Tongan police in past years, independent civilian oversight over the police is exercised by the national ombudsman.

One of the biggest current criminal justice concerns in Tonga is the relatively large number of Tongan nationals who are deported to the country. The lack of notification of deportations from other countries has overwhelmed the resources Tonga has allocated to deportees, which has sparked concerns that many deportees could become re-offenders in Tonga. Indeed, prisons have been identified as hotbeds

for the drug trade, specifically methamphetamines. Another concern is the difficulty of monitoring the country's vast territory around remote islands; however, evidence suggests that Tonga deals with these challenges reasonably well.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In addition to tourism and agriculture, remittances and foreign aid are important sources of income for Tonga. Although significant challenges persist with regard to the ease of doing business, largely owing to excessive bureaucracy and weak legal protections, the country's economy is relatively open, and the government has expressed a desire to continue to develop the private sector. Although Tonga has been identified as vulnerable to money laundering, in particular with regard to the laundering of proceeds derived from the drug trade, the country's anti-money laundering framework is relatively robust and the volume of illicit financial flows in the country is not sizeable.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The capacity of Tongan police to assist victims of crime is limited. The government has some victim support services specifically focused on domestic violence survivors, but, apart from that, there are relatively few protection programmes. With regard to crime prevention, the Tonga Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship initiative has been set up to support young people starting their own businesses and prevent them from turning to crime in search of a livelihood.

Independent media outlets play a critical role in Tongan society but have come under increasing pressure in recent years. The government has passed laws limiting certain forms of online content and the Tonga Broadcasting Commission has suspended critical journalists for inciting distrust in the government.

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.