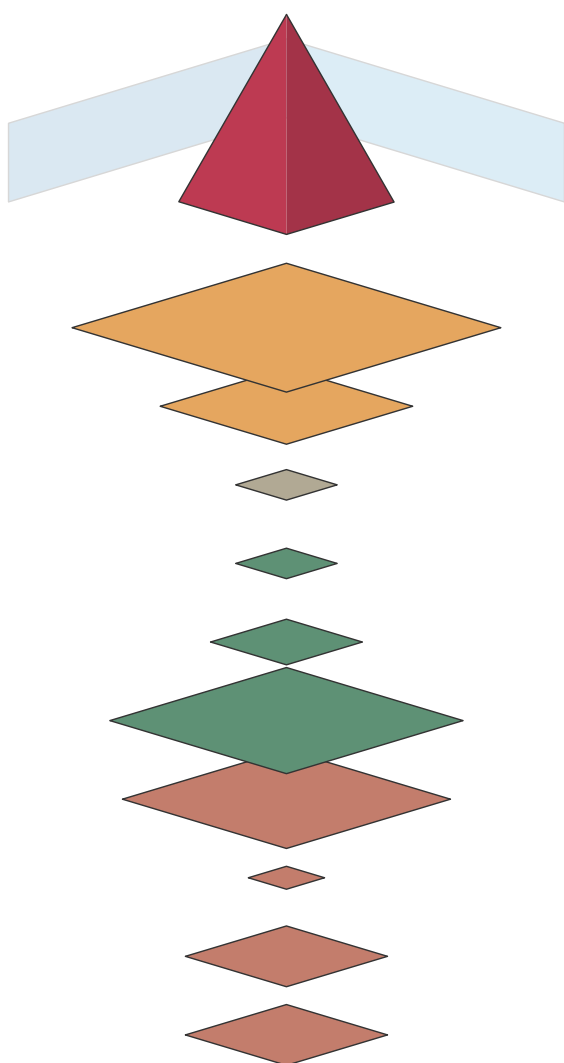




TURKMENISTAN



4.61 CRIMINALITY SCORE

113th of 193 countries
34th of 46 Asian countries
5th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries

CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.35

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	2.00
FLORA CRIMES	2.00
FAUNA CRIMES	3.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	7.00
HEROIN TRADE	6.50
COCAINE TRADE	1.50
CANNABIS TRADE	4.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	4.00

CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.88

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	3.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	4.50

2.17 RESILIENCE SCORE

183rd of 193 countries
43rd of 46 Asian countries
8th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries



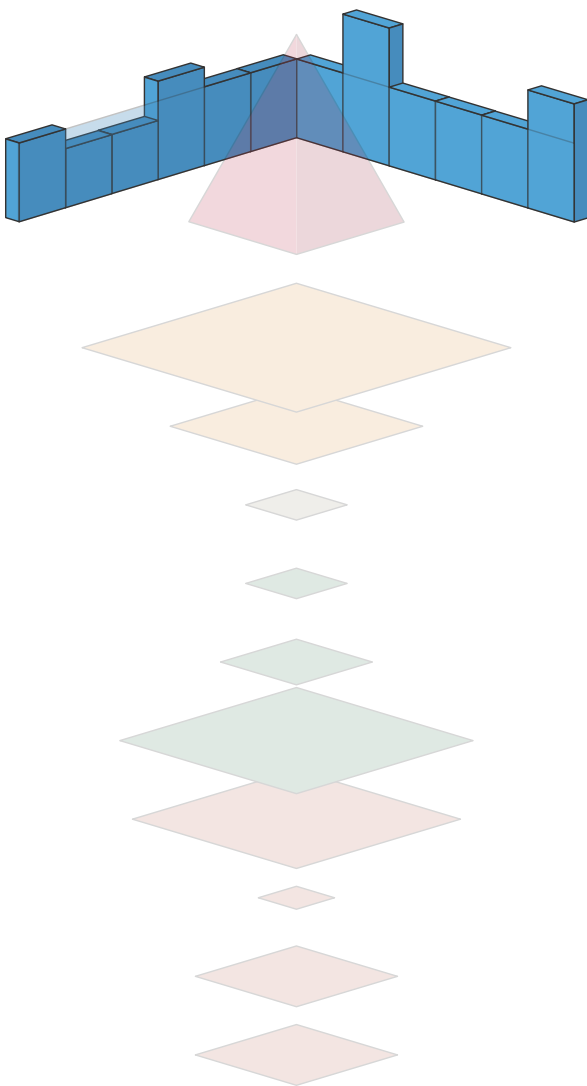
Funding provided by the United States Government.



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.



TURKMENISTAN



2.17 RESILIENCE SCORE

183rd of 193 countries
43rd of 46 Asian countries
8th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	2.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	1.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	1.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	2.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	2.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	2.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	2.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	2.00
PREVENTION	2.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.00

4.61 CRIMINALITY SCORE

113th of 193 countries
34th of 46 Asian countries
5th of 8 Central Asian and Caucasian countries

CRIMINAL MARKETS	4.35
CRIMINAL ACTORS	4.88



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

Turkmenistan is among the worst offenders with regard to human trafficking and modern slavery within Central Asia, acting as a source and destination country. Most commonly, human traffickers exploit victims for forced labour in the cotton harvest. The government imposes cotton-picking labour without pay on students and private and public sector employees to meet its quotas, and removes land from farmers who fail to meet the quota, thereby fuelling some of the demand for this illicit market. The number of Turkmen seeking migration abroad for employment makes them vulnerable to being trafficked into forced labour in foreign markets, such as Turkey, Russia and India. Turkmen women are also particularly vulnerable to being trafficked abroad for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

Although Turkmenistan is not as major a player in the transnational human smuggling market, it is nevertheless a waypoint for the smuggling of individuals from Asia to Europe. There is also a domestic market for smuggling, where those without valid travel documents in Turkmenistan make use of smugglers to move across the region, usually into Kazakhstan and Russia.

TRADE

Gun control is strict, with only very few security personnel authorized to carry handguns, and background checks and psychiatric evaluations required for civilians. Furthermore, home inspections of legal gun owners are carried out approximately every six months and gun crimes are extremely rare. Overall, there is little evidence of any consolidated arms trafficking market in Turkmenistan.

ENVIRONMENT

There is little evidence to suggest a heavy presence of organized crime groups on the flora and fauna crime markets in Turkmenistan. Conversely, the state has an opaque approach to the management of the large oil and gas sector in the country, implying high-level state looting of natural resources.

DRUGS

Turkmenistan does not appear to be a major heroin trafficking hub, but it does act as a transit point for narcotics smuggled from Afghanistan into Turkey, Russia and the European markets. There have been seizures of narcotics along Turkmenistan's border with Afghanistan and Iran. While

the numbers of seizures are small and have declined in recent years – up until the government stopped declaring seizures of opium and heroin in 2016 – there are suggestions that the small volumes of seizures could point to officials being involved in the illicit activity. Significant seizures in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, taking place near their borders with Turkmenistan, suggest there may be higher volumes of heroin crossing the border than the authorities admit. Figures around the small domestic market for heroin use are also thought to be unreliable. There is little evidence to support the existence of a significant cocaine market in Turkmenistan.

A domestic market for cannabis does exist in Turkmenistan, but use is relatively low by global standards. Similarly, the extent of the synthetic drugs market is fairly limited in the country, although scarce data shows Turkmenistan was the only country in the region to report an emergence of new psychoactive substances.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Turkmenistan has a history of dealing violently, but effectively, with mafia bosses, having eradicated all active leaders in the 1990s and even performing public executions. Currently, the most prominent mafia-style groups in Turkmenistan are the 'thieves-in-law,' where members adhere to a particular lifestyle taking oaths and living only off the profits generated by criminal activity. The groups' control, however, should not be overstated, as they generally only perform tasks outsourced by the government, such as operations within the prison population. Nevertheless, mafia-style groups have minimal control over the prison system overall. While these groups are thought to have some access to weapons, they do not carry arms openly.

There is some evidence of loose criminal networks in Turkmenistan, but it is more common for Turkmen to cooperate with transnational heroin trafficking organizations, usually consisting of US, Afghan and Sri Lankan nationals. There are also reports of Turkmen criminal groups racketeering Turkmen labour migrants in Turkey. These networks are widespread, operating throughout the country, and although the level of violence they employ varies, it is particularly high surrounding the human trafficking market.

As Turkmenistan is a dictatorship, state institutions are weak and corruption levels are extremely high among state actors, which means the state often creates and facilitates criminal markets and ideal conditions for them to thrive. Governmental transparency is low and public infrastructure contracts are often used as a way to allow elites to pocket state funds. Corruption is particularly prevalent in the highest echelons of government, where

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has control over the entire economy, legal and illegal, and power is passed on by nepotism rather than democratic processes.

Interaction with foreign criminal actors is fairly minimal, but the influence of Russian organized crime is notable by way of connections with Turkmen 'thieves-in-law'.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Turkmenistan is one of the world's most isolated and oppressive states, in which all aspects of public life are controlled and monitored by the president. Tackling organized crime is not on the president's agenda, no independent anti-corruption institutions exist, previous bodies have been used to extort revenue from wealthy officials and businesspeople, and crackdowns in criminal activity are selective and mainly reflect conflicts within the ruling elite. On the whole, the government is highly ineffective and governs in its own self-interest.

In general, the public has a severe lack of trust in the government, especially in the public sector and construction industry. The 2018 election lacked the prerequisites of a democratic process, and there is no information available to the public on government spending and budgets. Turkmenistan is a highly isolated country, with little interest in regional or international cooperation with other Commonwealth of Independent States countries or further afield. With the exception of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, Turkmenistan has ratified most relevant treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, but does not participate in them meaningfully. While the country has adopted legislation and a national legal framework criminalizing many forms of organized crime, with the notable exception of human smuggling, implementation is extremely ineffective and uneven, with priorities defined solely by the president's wishes in pursuing his own interests.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

In theory the constitution created a separation of powers, in practice the judicial branch is subordinate to the executive and under the president's control, appointing and dismissing judges unilaterally and using the courts to punish dissent and remove potential political threats. No independent judicial control exists, and international bodies are prevented from carrying out meaningful audits. Courts are unable to pass effective judgement against organized crime defendants or high-profile criminals. Turkmenistan has one of the highest imprisonment rates in the world, which has led to serious overcrowding, substandard conditions and lack of adequate medical treatment for inmates. Torture and

forced confessions are widespread especially in pre-trials, and corruption is rife among prison officials.

Like most other resources of the state, law enforcement lies in the president's control and is usually used to fight dissenters and political opponents rather than punish and prevent organized crime, especially since the unit established to fight organized crime was dissolved. The national police are tasked with maintaining internal security, and the ministry of national security, the successor to the KGB that uses similar methods, is deployed to prevent drug trafficking. There are no civilian oversight bodies governing the use of police force, and while there are laws to prevent arbitrary arrest, the practice seems to continue unchecked.

Turkmenistan's borders are long, porous and difficult to police, and the country is situated on major trafficking routes in proximity to notable criminal markets such as the opium and heroin markets of Afghanistan. While trafficking by sea seems less common due to the country's legitimate exports of controlled goods such as oil from its ports, the roads between Turkmenistan and its bordering countries have improved substantially over the past decade, and have facilitated smuggling by land. Border control officials are often corrupted, and the capacity for border control is compromised because the demarcation of the official boundaries with Kazakhstan, which commenced in 2005, is yet to be completed.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

At the beginning of the 2010s, Turkmenistan had significantly improved its anti-money laundering infrastructure and was subsequently removed from the Financial Action Task Force's monitoring process. However, although the country is not a major financial hub, it does remain a jurisdiction of concern with regard to money laundering, due in large part to the lack of governmental transparency.

The government does not have adequate mechanisms to ensure businesses can operate free from criminal interference, property rights are ineffective, and the wider economic environment does not offer opportunities for legitimate businesses to expand. There have been many stories of corruption among business leaders and the Turkmen government. The president has a small number of patronage networks that control the economy and

distribute wealth and business opportunities to his circle of appointees, leading to a culture of bribery, nepotism and embezzlement.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

While some national laws around social protection exist, the government rarely implements them meaningfully. The government has not responded to help victims of human trafficking, contrary to its obligations under its anti-trafficking law, instead leaving international non-state actors to provide treatment and care. The legal provisions for victim protection, identification and referral have also failed to be implemented and authorities had to resort to informally referring suspected trafficking victims to international organizations.

Similarly, human trafficking prevention efforts have been slim. Some collaboration of authorities and an international organization on the implementation of the country's 2016-2018 national action plan was reported, but no actions were taken to end forced labour in cotton harvest or punish labour recruiters involved in the fraudulent recruitment of workers. The government did however cooperate with NGOs to conduct awareness campaigns in rural areas, providing at-risk groups with training, information and school discussions around exploitation and trafficking.

Independent groups face incredibly difficult obstacles in openly carrying out human rights work in Turkmenistan. There exists a burdensome and punitive registration system that effectively prevents most independent NGOs from operating or fundraising. Turkmenistan has one of the most oppressive press freedom environments, with the government having complete control over the media and the heavily restricted internet. Any journalists who report and work for foreign networks are subject to intimidation, arrest and torture.

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.