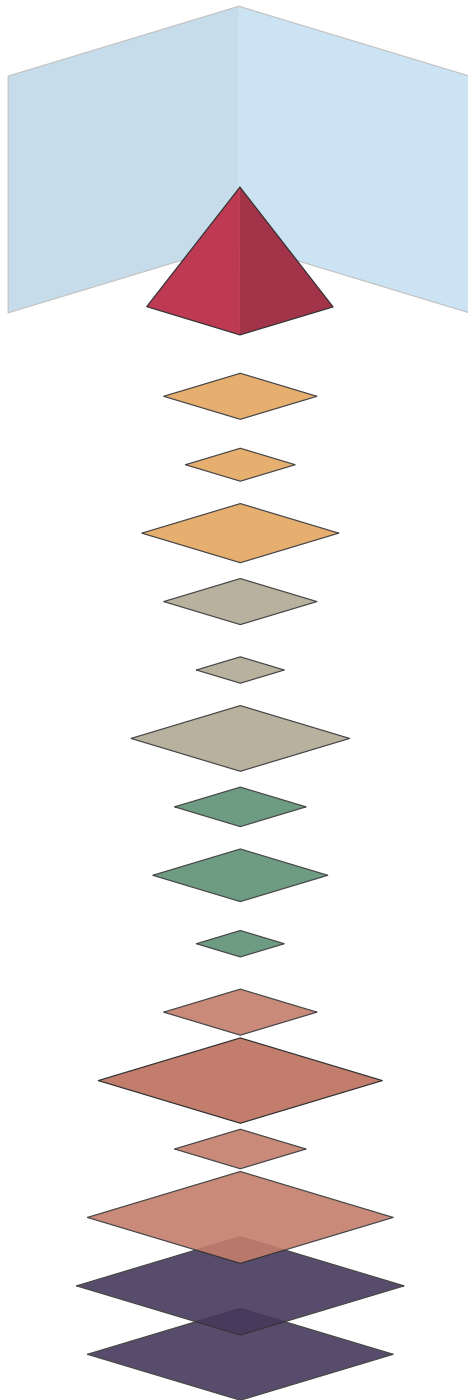


AUSTRALIA



4.00

CRIMINALITY SCORE

152nd of 193 countries

5th of 14 Oceanian countries

2nd of 2 Australia and New Zealand countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

4.30

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	3.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	2.50
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	4.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.50
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	2.00
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	5.00
FLORA CRIMES	3.00
FAUNA CRIMES	4.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.00
HEROIN TRADE	3.50
COCAINE TRADE	6.50
CANNABIS TRADE	3.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	7.00
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	7.50
FINANCIAL CRIMES	7.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS

3.70

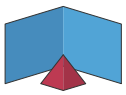
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	4.50
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	2.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	4.00
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	2.50



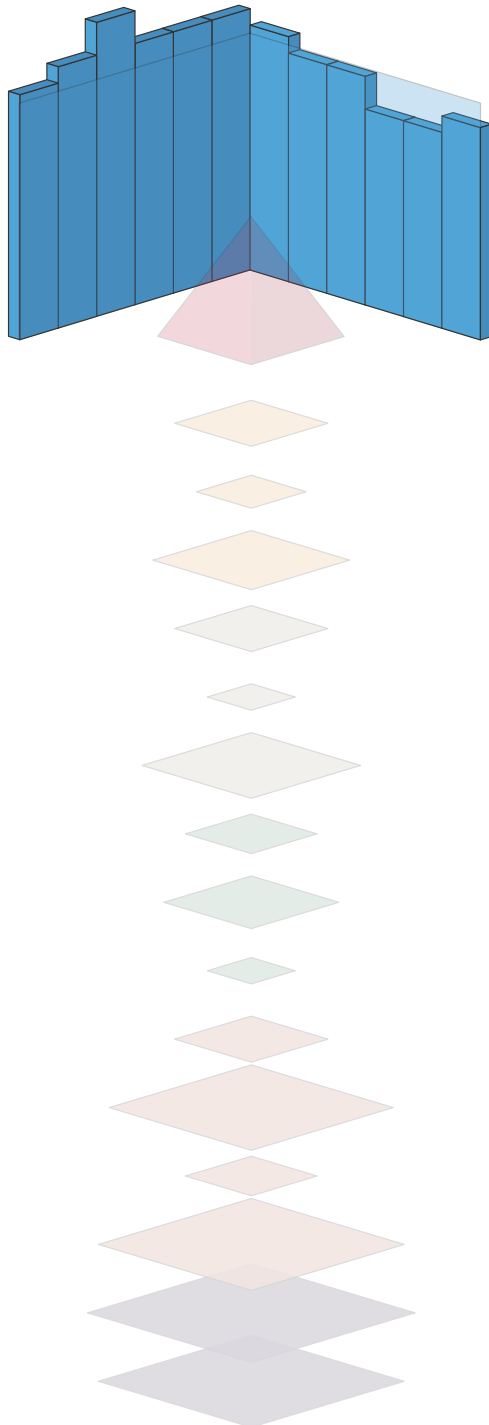
7.38

RESILIENCE SCORE





AUSTRALIA



7.38

RESILIENCE SCORE

19th of 193 countries

2nd of 14 Oceanian countries

2nd of 2 Australia and New Zealand countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	7.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	8.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	9.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	8.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	8.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	8.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	7.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	7.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	7.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	6.00
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.50



4.00

CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL MARKETS

4.30



CRIMINAL ACTORS

3.70



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Australia is a destination country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking, and for men and women subjected to forced labour. Women from Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa are coerced into prostitution in legal and illegal brothels, and massage parlours. Foreign women and girls are held in captivity, subjected to physical and sexual violence, and forced to make unexpected payments to traffickers. There have also been instances of forced labour of men and women from Asia and the Pacific Islands in the agriculture, cleaning, construction, hospitality, domestic service and fishing industries, with reports of fraudulent foreign contracting companies exploiting temporary migrants and international students. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated human trafficking, with the Australian Federal Police (AFP) warning of a potential spike in the crime after borders reopened.

There are no reports of Australian criminal groups involved in human smuggling activities. However, members of various diasporas act as facilitators for human smuggling ventures. They are commonly involved in activities such as gathering funds domestically and ensuring that they are held in escrow until the passenger reaches their destination. Additionally, there are many exploitable legitimate means of entry into the country that do not require organized crime intervention. The two most common sources of irregular migration are foreign students and young tourists who overstay their visas and request asylum to remain in the country. Since 2013, smuggled individuals caught in Australia's territorial waters are subject to deportation or detention at offshore facilities while their claims for asylum are established.

Child extortion incidents involving Australian boys have surged over the past year due to online predators who coerce children into providing sexually explicit material and then demand money under threat of sharing the images. This appears to be a recent trend and it is a cause for concern. Although widespread protection rackets are not prevalent, outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMCGs) and crime groups linked to trade unions and the construction industry have been encroaching on these activities.

TRADE

Arms trafficking in the country continues to be limited due to the strong gun control laws and strict border protection. The limited illicit firearms market in Australia is driven by OMCGs, Middle Eastern organized crime groups, and

other groups engaged in trafficking illicit commodities such as drugs. The rise in drive-by shootings and violent attacks can be attributed to battles over drug markets and the emergence of British-style post code gangs. Most undeclared firearm imports detected at the Australian border are from opportunistic individual importers not previously linked to organized criminal activity. Arms trafficking primarily involves the diversion of firearms from unlicensed and licensed dealers into the black market. The demand for illicit arms is high and now includes homemade and 3D hybrid weapons, both of which are emerging as new vectors of risk.

Counterfeit goods, such as clothing, medicines and imported food products from Asia, mostly from China, are in circulation in Australia. The Australian Border Force (ABF) is also seeing a significant increase in attempted illicit tobacco imports, with most consignments arriving from the Middle East and Asia. Due to one of the world's highest tobacco taxes – which makes illegal tobacco more attractive – and low penalties associated with the trade, criminals see the risk-reward pay-off of this market more favourably. According to authorities, crime groups are using illicit tobacco to finance the drug trade and terrorism.

ENVIRONMENT

While illegal logging is not considered to be an issue in Australia, a substantial amount of imported timber comes from countries where this practice is rampant or through countries that accept illegally harvested timber. Unregulated land clearing occurs, and sanctions, if present, are relatively light and generally fall to state agriculture/environment departments to enforce. The illegal trade of native Australian 'bush food' is also a concern due to its increasing popularity as a high-end ingredient in international cuisine.

Furthermore, Australia's endangered native wildlife, particularly birds and reptiles, are targeted for the illegal wildlife trade due to their high demand as pets. Illegal exports of Australian exotic animals continue to be a significant problem, facilitated by the dark web. The ABF has made significant seizures of illegal fauna products, identifying Asian markets as the main destination. Despite some successful enforcement actions, there is limited public awareness of fauna smuggling. Exotic animals are also smuggled into Australia for collectors, making the trade bi-directional.

Due to Australia's vast landscape, and very remote areas, it is difficult to completely prevent non-renewable resource crimes from occurring. However, the country is well-regulated, and any such crimes appear to be occurring on a small scale, making little impact on its diversified economy.

Australia does have some artisanal and small-scale gold mining, but there are no reports of illegal mining activity in the country.

DRUGS

Heroin comes into Australia mainly from the Golden Triangle of South East Asia, with fluctuating supply originating in South West Asia. Organized crime is entrenched in the market, and a range of groups are involved in the importation and distribution of the drug. International syndicates with links to Hong Kong, southern China and Malaysia facilitate transnational trafficking. Most of the heroin arrives in the country by airfreighted cargo, but alternative transport is made by sea – in containers and yachts – and light planes. While the number of heroin users has declined, heroin arrives in poly-drug shipments combined with more popular synthetic drugs. Fentanyl and acetyl fentanyl are used in Australia to enhance low-quality heroin.

Australia continues to be an attractive target for Latin American crime syndicates involved in cocaine trafficking due to high demand and high purchasing power. The street value of cocaine in Australia is among the highest in the world. Wastewater analysis in Sydney concluded that consumption in the city is higher than the regional average. Cocaine enters the country, predominantly, via air cargo, with South American cocaine producers collaborating with Asian crime groups in the trafficking of the drug. The cross-Pacific transnational trade in illicit drugs has greatly expanded with precursors shipped from China paid for in cocaine and exotic species.

Cannabis is the most popular illicit drug in Australia, with nearly all the consumption produced locally. Widespread local cultivation generally makes the trafficking of herbal cannabis into Australia unnecessary and unprofitable, with most seizures occurring when intercepting international mail. Some states and territories, such as the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia, have decriminalized cannabis possession. The trend to decriminalization is gaining momentum in the country and it is expected that, in the next two to three years, Australia may adopt uniform regulation permitting the national cultivation and use of cannabis.

Australia continues to have very high levels of consumption of methamphetamine, with organized crime groups, particularly OMCGs, deeply entrenched in the importation, manufacture and distribution of amphetamine-type stimulants. The street value for methamphetamines in Australia is among the highest in the world, making the trade lucrative for drug traffickers. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the synthetic drug trade in Australia, with the trade in methamphetamine and MDMA being affected the most, there is now an observed increase in the synthetic drug trade in the country following the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions. Recent seizures of fentanyl

may suggest attempts at introducing this opioid as a new potential source of profit.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cybercrime in Australia is a growing threat and has evolved significantly as the use of digital and communications technologies by Australians increases. Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated and are targeting a wider range of victims, including businesses, hospitals and government agencies. Ransomware is a significant threat, causing serious harm to victims and the broader community. Australia has increased its efforts to prevent and investigate cybercrime but faces challenges due to the dynamic nature of the risk and the difficulty of investigating transnational crimes. Ransomware attacks are increasingly common and often difficult to deter or reduce.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes, specifically in the form of cyber-enabled financial crime, is a growing problem in Australia, with millions of Australian dollars being funneled to cybercriminals every year through fraudulent online schemes. The proliferation of smartphones, social media, new payment technologies and online platforms has made it easier for cybercriminals to refine their strategies and engage with potential victims. Most financial frauds involve limited contact with a victim, making it difficult for individuals to identify such illicit activities and take proactive steps to protect themselves.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Australian OMCGs are now considered to be transnational crime syndicates with a growing presence in South East Asia, the Middle East and Europe. They operate according to a strict hierarchy and use their transnational presence to launder the proceeds of crime, and source firearms, narcotics and chemical precursors for importation into Australia. These OMCGs have significant connections with traditional crime groups and engage in illegal activities such as debt collection, extortion, blackmail, intimidation and violence. The 'Aussie Cartel' is, allegedly, a criminal network of independent operators and syndicates that join forces in an opportunistic manner to share capabilities and invest in each other's criminal activities. OMCGs are a significant part of this rather loose but nationwide organization. They are likely to have imported more methamphetamines and cocaine into the country than any other group and present a major threat to the integrity of the justice system and other government institutions. Additionally, loosely organized criminal networks have also been involved in local drug production to cater to the demand for illicit drugs in the country, thereby introducing a new form of criminal organization to Australia.

In addition, foreign criminal actors have been operating in Australia for an extended period, including Italy's 'Ndrangheta and organized crime groups of Middle Eastern and Asian origin. Such groups are involved in various illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, smuggling, fraud and money laundering. Chinese crime groups are financing drug importation from the Golden Triangle and have established links with South American cartels. Private sector actors

are most likely to engage in money laundering and tax evasion. The risk of corruption within Australia's private security operators is a significant concern as regulators' limited powers and resources may lead to the employment of security personnel with a criminal history or links to criminal groups. However, corruption levels in Australia are generally low, and there is no evidence of state official involvement in organized crime activities.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Australian state and its governability are among the best in the world. The position of the government against organized crime is clear and law enforcement is strong, with a network of agencies implementing laws and policies. Various task forces are formed to address specific forms of organized crime both at the state and federal level, including task forces comprising multi-agency members. Australia also has low corruption levels, even though, in the past few years, the perception of corruption has increased. There is no federal anti-corruption body and, although the government announced its intention to establish one in 2018, no such agency has yet materialized. In 2021, authorities revealed that organized crime had infiltrated supply chains at Australian ports and airports. Investigations determined that there was a 'trusted insider threat'.

Australia has a strong international legal framework for combating organized crime, with systems in place for international cooperation. It is a signatory to several international conventions and participates in different forums and working groups, as well as multi-lateral organizations such as INTERPOL and Europol. The AFP liaison programme places officers in key capital cities in the region to facilitate the exchange of criminal intelligence. The country invests in cross-national policing operations and task forces. Australia also has a robust system to deal with legal mutual assistance requests in criminal matters and extradition, and it invests in international cooperative efforts, having contributed to many such initiatives, including combating the dark web.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Australia's judiciary operates independently, with well-established legal and court systems for litigation and arbitration. The country has no specialized courts or judicial officers for organized crime, but there is judicial and quasi-judicial control over certain investigations relevant to it. The higher courts are not particularly diverse, and the irregular migration detention programme is considered extreme and draconian. Attrition rates for human trafficking and

modern slavery cases are high, with almost three quarters of them dropped. On average, people are held in immigrant detention for almost two years, a world record, prompting criticism of human rights breaches.

Australian law enforcement has a low risk of corruption, with the AFP coordinating multi-jurisdictional operational activity through its national and international networks. The AFP offers a prestigious training programme concerning the management of serious crime, and the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission works to identify, detect, disrupt and reduce the threat posed by serious and organized crime groups. However, the AFP is a relatively minor player in combatting most crime, with the bulk of this work undertaken by state forces. While there is no major corruption occurring in the federal law enforcement, there may still be pockets of corruption that persist at the state level. Recent legislation has increased law enforcement's powers to investigate crime online, particularly on the dark web, though some have criticized this as an erosion of civil liberties. ABF officers play a role in maintaining the sovereignty of Australia's maritime border. Nevertheless, the country has been criticized for human rights violations. Its approach to border integrity has remained tough, but the reopening of borders with the relaxing of COVID-19 restrictions has prompted warnings about potential spikes in human trafficking.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Australia has a robust institutional framework for combating money laundering, terrorism financing and proliferation financing. Measures imposed by the country are particularly strong in legal, law enforcement and operational areas, including targeted financial sanctions. However, the lack of legislation to curtail common facilitators, such as lawyers, accountants and real estate agents, has been widely criticized as organized criminal groups can exploit legal loopholes in these professions. Despite these challenges, Australian authorities have a good understanding of most of the main money laundering activities, and the country plays

a key role in encouraging collaboration with neighbouring countries and the private sector.

In terms of the economic regulatory environment, Australia's financial sector is considered in good health, but market concentration and the quality and price of financial services have come under review.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The Australian government has established various programmes to support victims of – and prevent – modern slavery. The government's victim support system allows victims to apply for assistance. Australia continues to work with other governments by engaging in anti-trafficking dialogue, sharing information, conducting training and providing technical assistance. There are also several national alcohol and drug programmes and services available. Despite this, witness protection regimes are not well-developed, and law enforcement agencies have limited resources to support such programmes, except for the gravest offences.

Actual effective crime prevention occurs at the local and state government levels. At the national level, cybercrime prevention initiatives have started to develop programmes that address specific needs or demographics. The Australian

government also provides funding for several grant programmes to enhance security for its population. The largest programme provides funding to address crime and anti-social behavior through the implementation of crime prevention and security initiatives. There are also prevention campaigns to dissuade would-be migrants from utilizing the services of people smugglers to enter Australia.

Australia's press freedom is fragile, due to the ultra-concentration of media ownership and growing official pressure. The independence of the process for appointing members of certain media's board of directors has been called into question, and there is a growing culture of secrecy in the administration concerning the press, including intimidation of whistleblowers. Despite this, investigative journalism appears to be in good health and civil society organizations operate freely. Although no journalists were killed in the country, many still feared an increase in threats, harassment or intimidation from the government. In general, there is respect for the rights of public assembly and freedom of speech.

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.