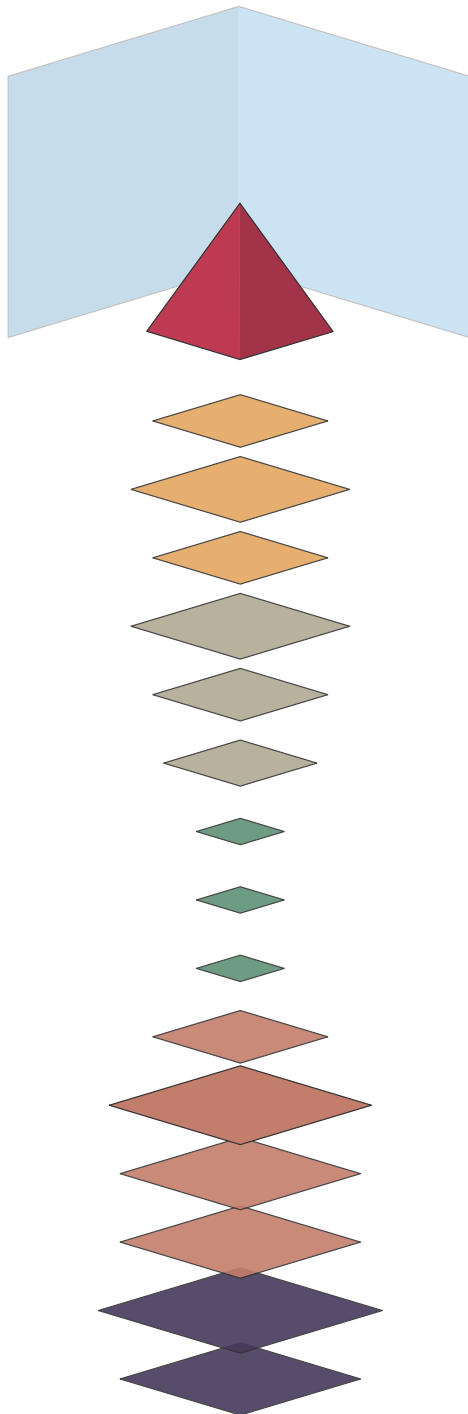
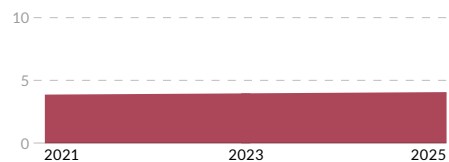


DENMARK



4.10 $\nearrow 0.08$ CRIMINALITY SCORE

148th of 193 countries $\nearrow 3$
33rd of 44 European countries $\nearrow 1$
2nd of 8 Northern European countries $\nearrow 1$



CRIMINAL MARKETS **4.30** $\searrow 0.03$

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.00	0.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.00	0.00
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	4.00	$\searrow 0.50$
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.00	0.00
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	4.00	0.00
ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	3.50	$\searrow 0.50$
FLORA CRIMES	2.00	0.00
FAUNA CRIMES	2.00	0.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	2.00	0.00
HEROIN TRADE	4.00	$\searrow 0.50$
COCAINE TRADE	6.00	0.00
CANNABIS TRADE	5.50	$\searrow 0.50$
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	6.50	0.00
FINANCIAL CRIMES	5.50	$\nearrow 1.00$



CRIMINAL ACTORS **3.90** $\nearrow 0.20$

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	5.00	$\searrow 0.50$
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	1.50	$\searrow 0.50$
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	2.50	$\nearrow 1.00$



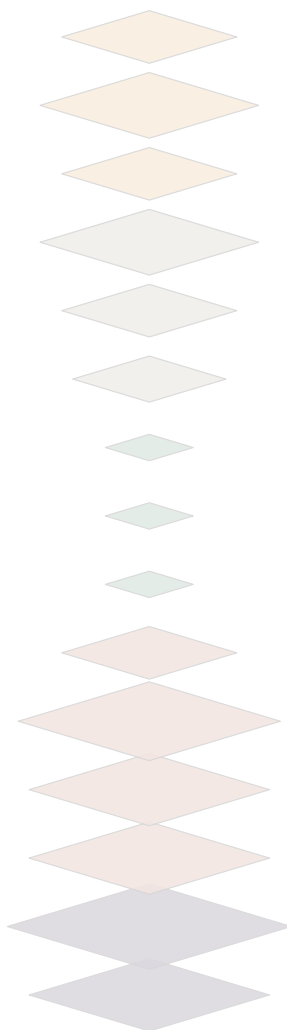
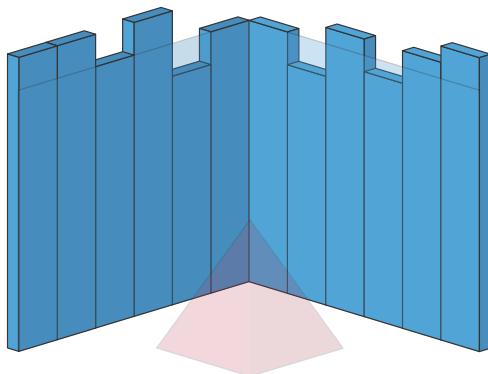
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Funded by
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DENMARK

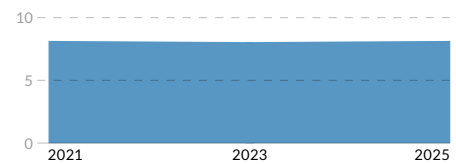


8.21 $\nearrow 0.08$ **RESILIENCE SCORE**

3rd of 193 countries $\nearrow 1$

3rd of 44 European countries $\nearrow 1$

2nd of 8 Northern European countries $\nearrow 1$



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	9.00	0.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	9.00	0.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	8.00	0.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	9.00	0.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	7.00	$\searrow 0.50$
LAW ENFORCEMENT	8.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	8.00	0.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	7.00	$\nearrow 1.00$
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	8.50	0.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	7.50	0.00
PREVENTION	8.50	0.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	9.00	0.00



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Denmark is both a destination and transit country for the trafficking of foreign nationals, particularly from Africa, Eastern Europe and South East Asia. Labour exploitation primarily affects men from Africa and South East Asia, especially in industries such as construction, trucking, agriculture and domestic work. Traffickers often employ coercive tactics, including debt manipulation, wage withholding and threats of deportation. Danish nationals are also subject to trafficking, albeit to a lesser extent. Victims of trafficking are frequently forced into criminal activities such as drug trafficking and cannabis cultivation, exacerbating the vulnerabilities they face. Human trafficking operations are largely opportunistic, and the market is dominated by small-scale criminal groups and individuals rather than large, organized networks. The demand for domestic servitude, forced labour and commercial sex work remains persistent, and vulnerable groups, including asylum seekers, unaccompanied children and Ukrainian refugees fleeing the Russian invasion, face heightened risks. NGOs have raised concerns that Denmark's stringent immigration policies may inadvertently increase trafficking. Additionally, the country has faced scrutiny over misconduct in international adoptions, leading to the suspension of placements by its international adoption agency.

Denmark also functions as a transit hub for human smuggling, especially for people attempting to reach Sweden from regions affected by conflicts such as Ukraine, Syria and Afghanistan. Although Denmark has introduced effective countermeasures, transnational smuggling networks remain active and are frequently linked to drug trafficking and document forgery. This illicit market undermines immigration control and contributes to social tensions, as some communities view migrants as a security concern.

Extortion and protection racketeering, while not as widespread, remain present, particularly among Danish chapters of motorcycle gangs such as the Hells Angels and Bandidos. These groups, along with local gangs like Loyal to Familia, are involved in extortion and operate across multiple criminal markets, including drug trafficking and violent crime.

TRADE

Denmark serves as a transit country for arms trafficking, particularly for firearms smuggled into Sweden and Norway. The Öresund Bridge, which connects Copenhagen and Malmö, is a key route for illicit weapons, including blank-firing

pistols that have been modified to fire live ammunition. While some experts downplay the scale of the market, others caution that conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine could increase the availability of trafficked weapons in the Nordic region.

There is strong domestic demand for counterfeit goods in Denmark, particularly among younger consumers. Counterfeit clothing, footwear, electronics and performance-enhancing substances are widely available, with most originating in Asia, particularly China and India. Denmark's thriving e-commerce sector has further enabled the sale of counterfeit products, complicating law enforcement efforts. This illicit market is closely linked to other criminal activities such as narcotics and arms trafficking, with profits benefitting both domestic and transnational networks.

The illicit trade in excisable consumer goods, especially cigarettes, is largely driven by Denmark's high tobacco taxes, prompting many consumers to purchase cigarettes across borders to avoid taxation. Cigarette smuggling continues to generate substantial illicit revenues, despite a declining market share linked to the rise of alternative tobacco products and falling smoking rates.

ENVIRONMENT

While Denmark is not a major source of illegal timber, the country plays a role in facilitating its transit through international shipping operations. Investigations have linked Danish shipping firms to the transport of illicit timber from Mozambique to China. Within the country, flora-related crimes remain relatively obscure.

Fauna-related crimes, though limited in scope, are linked to trophy hunting, with Danish hunters ranking among South Africa's top European clients. While the practice raises both ethical and legal concerns, the illicit activity is primarily carried out by individual actors – such as enthusiasts or small-scale, specialized smugglers – with no evidence indicating the involvement of organized crime groups.

Non-renewable resource crimes remain limited in Denmark, although the country has previously come under scrutiny for sanctions evasion in the energy sector. Growing interest in Greenland's mineral resources may pose future risks, particularly in relation to environmental harm and Indigenous rights. As international demand for Greenland's rare earth elements intensify, concerns are emerging about potential exploitation and illicit mining operations.

DRUGS

Denmark's long-standing heroin market has been in decline in recent years, as reflected by decreasing consumption and a general drop in local demand. Nevertheless, the shrinking market continues to pose a significant public health concern. While the ethnic Albanian mafia plays a central role in smuggling heroin along the Balkan route, domestic distribution is typically managed by Danish gangs who outsource street-level operations.

Cocaine trafficking has increased with large-scale seizures indicative of Denmark's growing role as a key hub for shipments destined for other European countries. The cocaine trade has contributed to rising gang-related violence, including shootings and explosions between rival groups. Criminal networks involved in the trade range from South American cartels to local biker gangs, with Danish ports being used more frequently for smuggling.

The cannabis market is consolidated within criminal networks, particularly in urban areas such as Pusher Street in Christiania. Gangs such as the Hells Angels and Loyal to Familia have historically controlled distribution. Although recent enforcement efforts and community-driven initiatives have aimed to curb the illegal trade, demand remains high. The overlap between legal medicinal cannabis and the illicit market continues to pose regulatory challenges.

Synthetic drug trafficking is also expanding, with growing demand for amphetamines, MDMA and prescription opioids such as Tramadol and Oxycodone. This market is closely tied to online platforms, with social media facilitating distribution. Rising hospitalizations for opioid-related poisonings point to a worsening public health crisis.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Denmark's status as a digitally advanced nation makes it a frequent target for cyber-dependent crimes. Ransomware attacks, data breaches and distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) incidents are notable, affecting both businesses and public institutions. Criminal actors range from transnational organized groups to state-sponsored entities. The country's critical infrastructure, including energy companies, has been targeted by major cyber-attacks, underscoring the growing threat. Cybercriminals have also exploited weaknesses in financial institutions, resulting in significant losses.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crime in Denmark includes fraud, tax evasion and sophisticated digital scams. Payment card fraud and social engineering attacks, such as phishing, have surged, with scammers exploiting digital banking and payment platforms. While organized criminal groups are involved, white-collar actors also commit financial crimes by exploiting regulatory loopholes. In recent years, Denmark has

faced major financial scandals, from dividend tax fraud to energy price manipulation schemes. Despite having strong legal frameworks in place, the country continues to face challenges in addressing large-scale financial fraud, particularly in transnational cases. Efforts to enhance regulatory oversight have encountered resistance from some financial institutions.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Several prominent motorcycle gangs and organized groups in Denmark display mafia-style characteristics. Groups such as the Hells Angels, Loyal to Familia, Brothas and Bandidos operate through a mix of hierarchical leadership models and loosely structured networks. In Denmark, the local Satudah chapter disbanded in 2023 and rebranded as Comanches MC in response to growing scrutiny. While some of these groups are involved in isolated acts of violence, many are engaged in drug trafficking, extortion and violent crime, and are increasingly active in money laundering and human trafficking. Although the exact number of gang members in Denmark is unknown, police estimate that over a thousand people are affiliated with criminal gangs, primarily concentrated in urban areas. Recent law enforcement actions and community-led initiatives, such as those targeting Pusher Street in Christiania, have challenged gang dominance and territorial control. Nevertheless, violent clashes, including shootings and stabbings between rival groups, continue to threaten public safety in Danish cities.

Denmark's criminal landscape is shaped by decentralized, opportunistic networks involved in human smuggling, drug trafficking and financial crime. While these groups often collaborate with motorcycle gangs, they generally lack the rigid hierarchy typical of mafia-style organizations. Many maintain international links, using Denmark's position as a trans-shipment hub to move drugs, arms and people across Scandinavia and the broader European region. Danish networks also cooperate with foreign counterparts, particularly those from the Balkans, who play a major role in the heroin and cocaine trade. Criminal activity extends into the illicit sex industry, notably in areas like Istedgade in Copenhagen, and intersects with trafficking operations.

There is little evidence to suggest that state-embedded actors play a significant role in Denmark's criminal markets. Although isolated cases of financial misconduct and regulatory lapses have been reported, there is no indication of systemic exploitation of state structures for organized crime. The absence of major corruption scandals involving law enforcement or political officials points to a relatively low risk of state actors facilitating or directly engaging in criminal activity.

Denmark's criminal markets are partly shaped by foreign actors, including organized crime groups with transnational ties and varying levels of involvement among diaspora communities from Türkiye, West Asia, North Africa and

Eastern Europe. The Black Cobra gang, which includes members from diverse ethnic backgrounds, operates in both Denmark and Sweden, engaging in drug trafficking, extortion and violent crime. Other groups, such as Brothas, maintain similar cross-border connections.

Spillover effects from organized crime conflicts in Sweden have been observed, with Swedish gang members seeking refuge or expanding their operations into Denmark. Some foreign actors are believed to direct criminal enterprises from outside the country, including from Spain, Lebanon and Türkiye, controlling drug trafficking routes and facilitating the smuggling of narcotics and other illicit goods into Denmark. Interactions between foreign and local criminal networks continue to influence the organized crime landscape, particularly in the distribution of controlled substances.

Private-sector actors have been implicated in financial crimes and illicit trade, with businesses and financial institutions sometimes serving as facilitators of fraudulent schemes. The recent international adoption scandal exposed serious flaws in private-sector oversight, revealing that children were trafficked through fraudulent adoption practices. High-profile financial scandals and the involvement of Danish firms in sanctions evasion, have raised concerns about corporate compliance. Companies, in sectors such as shipping and banking, have been linked to illicit financial flows and regulatory breaches, underscoring the need for stronger oversight. In response, authorities have increased scrutiny of private-sector actors. However, regulatory gaps and the transnational nature of financial crime continue to present challenges.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Denmark has consistently demonstrated strong political leadership and governance, underpinned by stable democratic institutions and effective policymaking. Public trust in government and law enforcement remains high, contributing to the country's overall political stability. Legislative responses to organized crime include targeted anti-gang laws, stricter sentencing measures and expanded police powers, all of which have contributed to curbing gang violence. The government also works with local municipalities to implement crime prevention programmes, particularly those aimed at youth vulnerable to recruitment by criminal networks. While political commitment to tackling organized crime remains strong, fluctuations in funding have affected the sustainability of long-term crime prevention efforts. Inconsistent budget allocations have made it difficult for some municipalities to maintain community-based interventions.

Transparency and accountability are key strengths of Denmark's governance, supported by oversight bodies such as the supreme audit institution and the Danish financial supervisory authority, which monitor public spending and financial transactions. The Danish parliamentary ombudsman investigates complaints related to public administration, and public procurement processes are subject to rigorous scrutiny. However, despite these safeguards, Denmark does not have a mandatory asset disclosure system for politicians, increasing the risk of conflicts of interest. Furthermore, recent legislative efforts have enabled authorities to withhold certain government documents from public access, prompting concerns about transparency.

Denmark actively participates in international efforts to combat organized crime, working closely with EU institutions,

Europol and other regional bodies to strengthen cross-border investigations and intelligence-sharing. Extradition agreements and international legal frameworks enable Danish authorities to pursue transnational criminal actors. Law enforcement agencies also regularly take part in joint operations with European counterparts targeting drug trafficking, human smuggling and cybercrime.

Denmark has established a robust legal system to combat organized crime. Laws targeting gang-related violence impose harsher penalties for offences committed within criminal organizations, and the Danish Penal Code includes provisions for increased sentences in cases involving firearms or explosives. Authorities also have the power to restrict gang members' presence in specific municipalities and with expanded police powers, conduct covert investigations. Legislation covers a broad range of criminal activities, including drug trafficking, cybercrime, human trafficking and financial crime. Recent amendments have strengthened the state's ability to seize assets, enabling the confiscation of proceeds from criminal enterprises.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Denmark's judicial system is well-equipped to handle organized crime cases, with specialized courts and dedicated prosecution units focused on complex criminal matters. The judiciary functions independently, and legal proceedings uphold high standards of due process. Recent reforms have aimed to expedite the prosecution of organized crime, although ensuring that sentencing effectively deters criminal activity remains a challenge. Denmark's prison system also faces strain related to overcrowding, leading to the outsourcing of some detention services to facilities

abroad. This has raised human rights concerns particularly as Denmark's domestic prison system emphasizes rehabilitation, including vocational training and reintegration programmes – standards that may not be observed in foreign facilities.

Law enforcement agencies in Denmark are well-resourced, with professionally trained personnel dedicated to combating organized crime. Specialized units focusing on financial crime, cybercrime and gang-related activity play a central role in disrupting illicit networks. Authorities employ advanced investigative techniques, including digital forensics and undercover operations, to track and dismantle criminal enterprises. Community policing initiatives have fostered collaboration between law enforcement and residents, strengthening trust and engagement in crime prevention. However, some marginalized communities continue to exhibit distrust toward police, which may limit cooperation in criminal investigations.

Denmark maintains strong territorial integrity through coordinated border control and surveillance measures. The country actively contributes to Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, and conducts periodic border checks to combat organized crime. Cooperation with Sweden and Norway enhances maritime security, particularly along trafficking routes. Despite these efforts, Denmark's strategic position as a transit point for Scandinavian drug markets continues to pose challenges for intercepting illicit flows.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Denmark's anti-money laundering framework has been revised in response to recent financial scandals. Regulatory agencies have strengthened oversight of banks and financial institutions, mandating stricter compliance measures to prevent illicit financial flows. While these efforts have improved transparency, challenges remain in consistently enforcing regulations, particularly concerning complex international transactions and digital financial services. Authorities are pursuing enhanced cooperation with international financial intelligence units to mitigate risks associated with money laundering and terrorist financing. Although increased efforts to detect fraudulent schemes have led to a rise in investigations, the complexity of modern financial crime continues to test regulatory capacity.

The country's economic regulatory environment supports lawful business operations, underpinned by stringent rules aimed at preventing corporate crime. Denmark's financial institutions are required to conduct thorough due diligence on clients and transactions, reducing opportunities for criminal exploitation. However, certain sectors, such as real estate and offshore financial services, remain vulnerable due to limited oversight of high-value transactions. Regulatory bodies continue to refine compliance standards to address emerging financial crime risks. Scrutiny of digital payment

systems has also increased, as fraud and illicit transfers have become more prevalent over the past decade.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Denmark has established a strong support framework for victims and witnesses of organized crime. Victim assistance programmes provide legal aid, psychological support and reintegration services. Witness protection measures include relocation and identity safeguards, although ensuring long-term security for high-risk people continues to be a challenge. NGOs and civil society organizations complement state-provided victim services by offering specialized support for survivors of human trafficking and other forms of exploitation. However, non-governmental initiatives frequently face funding constraints.

Preventive measures against organized crime in Denmark include community engagement initiatives, educational programmes and public awareness campaigns. Law enforcement agencies work closely with local communities to identify and address vulnerabilities to criminal influence. Some efforts focus on preventing youth involvement in gang-related activity, with varying degrees of success. Early intervention has become a priority for authorities, and educational institutions are increasingly integrating crime prevention awareness into curricula to help deter at-risk youth.

Non-state actors, including civil society organizations and media outlets, play a vital role in Denmark's resilience to organized crime. NGOs deliver essential services for victims and contribute to policy discussions on justice reform. The Danish media benefits from strong editorial independence, enabling investigative reporting on corruption and financial crime. However, concerns persist over access to government information due to restrictive transparency laws. Collaboration between the state and civil society remains robust, with public institutions drawing on NGO expertise to enhance crime prevention and victim support initiatives.

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.