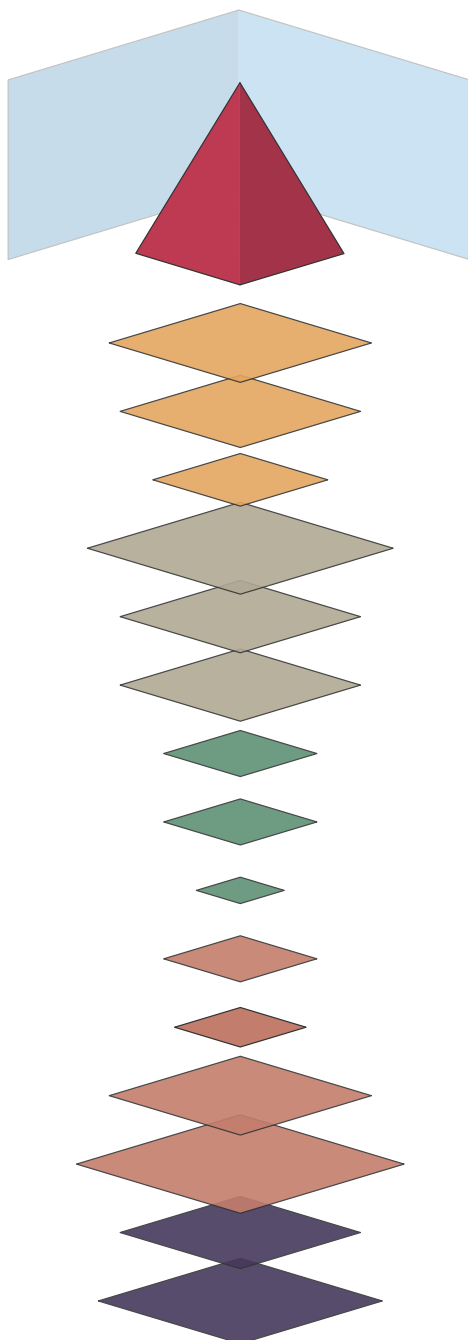


JORDAN

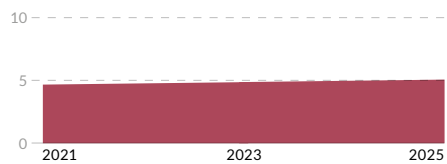


5.08 $\nearrow 0.15$
CRIMINALITY SCORE

96th of 193 countries $\nearrow 6$

27th of 46 Asian countries $\nearrow 2$

11th of 14 Western Asian countries $\nearrow 1$



CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.97 $\nearrow 0.10$

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 6.00 0.00

HUMAN SMUGGLING 5.50 0.00

EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING 4.00 0.00

ARMS TRAFFICKING 7.00 $\nearrow 0.50$

TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS 5.50 0.00

ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS 5.50 $\nearrow 0.50$

FLORA CRIMES 3.50 0.00

FAUNA CRIMES 3.50 0.00

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 2.00 0.00

HEROIN TRADE 3.50 0.00

COCAINE TRADE 3.00 0.00

CANNABIS TRADE 6.00 0.00

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 7.50 $\nearrow 0.50$

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES 5.50 0.00

FINANCIAL CRIMES 6.50 0.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.20 $\nearrow 0.20$

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 1.50 0.00

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 7.00 0.00

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 6.00 0.00

FOREIGN ACTORS 5.50 $\nearrow 1.00$

PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS 6.00 0.00



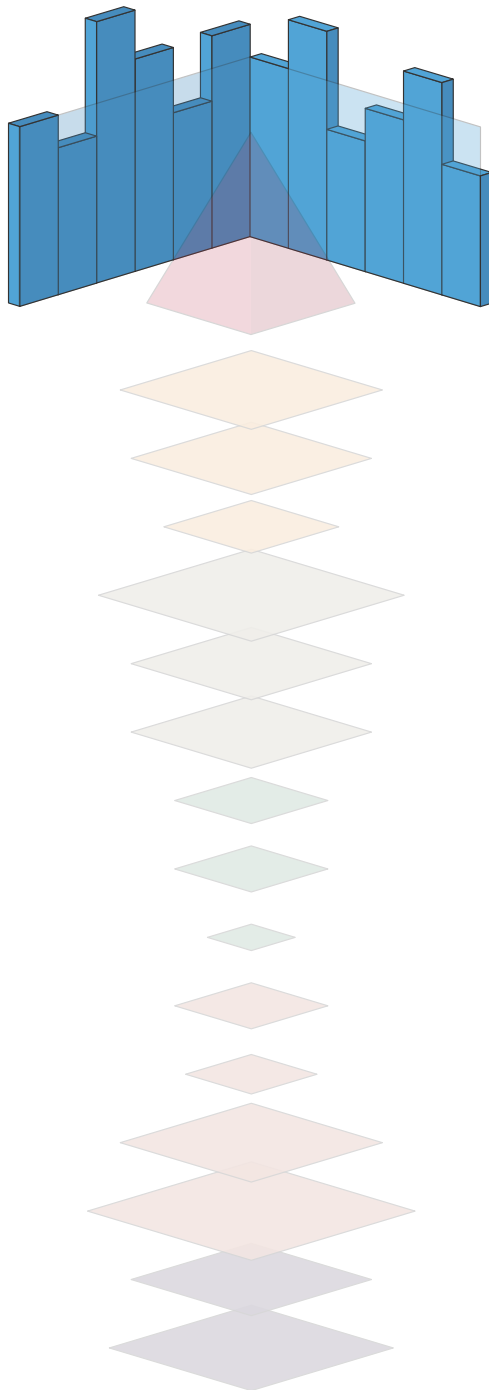
This project was funded in part
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States Department of State.



Funded by
the European Union

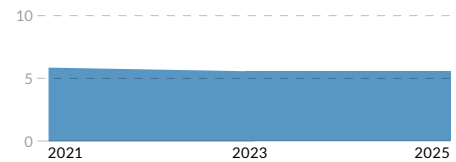
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JORDAN



5.63 $\nearrow 0.04$ **RESILIENCE SCORE**

47th of 193 countries $\nearrow 7$
5th of 46 Asian countries $\nearrow 3$
1st of 14 Western Asian countries $\nearrow 1$



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.50	0.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.50	0.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	8.00	0.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4.50	0.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	6.50	0.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.50	$\searrow 0.50$
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	7.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.00	0.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
PREVENTION	6.50	0.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00	$\searrow 0.50$



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking remains a prevalent concern in Jordan, with the country functioning as a source, transit and destination hub. Sex trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude and increasingly, organ trade, take place in the country. Victims are primarily from South East Asia, East Africa, Egypt and Syria, with documented cases also involving Jordanian nationals. Furthermore, refugees, particularly from Iraq and the Palestinian Territories, face heightened risks of human trafficking in Jordanian refugee camps. Domestic workers, especially women from Ethiopia, the Philippines and Bangladesh, often work under exploitative conditions in the garment and domestic sectors. Migrant workers from Egypt – among the largest foreign labour population in Jordan – are similarly affected in the agricultural, construction and service industries. Jordan's Kafala sponsorship system, which governs migrant labour, has been widely criticized for fostering conditions that increase vulnerability to trafficking. Corruption, particularly in the context of organ trafficking, has been identified as an enabling factor, with allegations of officials expediting procedures for certain patients. The prevalence of unlicensed recruitment agencies, online advertisements and deceptive practices further complicates regulatory oversight.

Jordan functions both as a destination and transit country for human smuggling, which is particularly concentrated in border areas in the country's north-west and near the Negev desert. Smuggling networks recruit people through online channels, with some operations reportedly conducted on open digital platforms. The country continues to receive a large number of Syrian migrants, particularly along desert routes from southern Syria, northern Jordan and Lebanon. However, tightened border controls and enhanced military surveillance following formalized rules of engagement have significantly curtailed movement across the Jordan-Syria border. Foreign workers, including Bangladeshis and Egyptians who initially enter legally, are sometimes moved westward under deceptive conditions. Additionally, Palestinian refugees residing in Jordan have been reported to seek irregular routes to Europe, including via Mediterranean crossings. Smuggling methods are varied and include the use of transport vehicles and forged travel documents, with reports noting the exploitation of tourist visa schemes.

Extortion and protection racketeering is not uncommon, particularly in under-resourced areas such as East Amman and Zarqa. Known locally as the 'fear tax,' extortion affects a wide spectrum of victims, including shop owners and street vendors. Organized criminal groups are reported

to operate with hierarchical structures, and in some cases, their influence appears to exceed that of law enforcement. Despite campaigns and hotlines aimed at encouraging citizens to report incidents, enforcement efforts remain limited, allowing criminal actors to exploit the country's socio-economic challenges.

TRADE

Jordan's arms trafficking market is influenced by its regional location and tribal dynamics. Although smaller in scale than in neighbouring countries, arms trafficking involves both light weapons and heavier arms, particularly along borders with Syria and Israel. Tribal networks facilitate smuggling operations, often working across national lines, with some routes controlled by actors linked to groups such as the Islamic State and Hezbollah. Smuggling networks are becoming more sophisticated, employing drones and benefiting from corruption among border officials. Arms trafficked from Syria, Iraq and Jordan are frequently bound for the West Bank and Israel, with demand and prices rising in tandem with regional instability. While some trafficking is linked to terrorist organizations, most incidents are attributed to criminal networks, including tribal actors. Government crackdowns have uncovered smuggling bazaars and illicit transactions, although societal norms surrounding weapon ownership complicate enforcement.

Jordan serves both as a transit point for counterfeit trade particularly through the port of Aqaba, as well as a destination country for counterfeit items such as foodstuffs, medicines and electronics being distributed both locally and across borders. Online platforms and postal exemptions are frequently exploited to move counterfeit items under the guise of personal imports. Some criminal actors reportedly benefit from collusion with customs officials, enabling large-scale distribution of fake goods. While some authorities report a decline in counterfeit medicines, other sources suggest that they still represent a notable portion of the domestic market. Similarly, Jordan's market for illicit trade in excise goods, particularly tobacco, also remains prevalent. Although the country's relatively low customs taxes reduce incentives for certain types of smuggling, the cigarette trade stands out. Trucks carrying illicit tobacco products are frequently intercepted by customs authorities. Smuggling networks are complex, involving local and foreign actors as well as elements within the private sector and state institutions. The duty-free area at the King Hussein Bridge has been flagged as a point of concern, with goods entering Palestinian territories without adequate oversight.

ENVIRONMENT

Flora-related crimes in Jordan, particularly illegal logging, are present but remain smaller in scale compared to other criminal markets. Forests in regions such as Jerash and Ajloun are among the most affected, where illegal logging is often facilitated by intentional wildfires and the use of silencer-equipped saws to avoid detection. The primary driver of logging is the demand for firewood during the winter months, a situation worsened by widespread poverty. Organized groups, commonly referred to as 'logging mafias,' operate with relative impunity, often benefiting from the protection or complicity of corrupt officials. In addition to logging, the unregulated harvesting of wild plants for medicinal purposes has placed increasing ecological pressure on native species, including Tulipa, Narcissus, Lupinus and Cyclamen. Similarly, fauna crimes are present but limited, with Jordan functioning primarily as a transit point for trafficked wildlife. Animals smuggled from Syria and Iraq – such as falcons, tortoises and deer – are transported through Jordan toward the Gulf states and other destinations. Regional instability and conflict have contributed to an uptick in wildlife trafficking, making existing smuggling routes more active.

Crimes involving non-renewable resources are limited in scope but remain present, particularly in the form of fuel smuggling. Although Jordan has domestic reserves of oil shale, potash and phosphates, the country largely relies on imported fuel. Price differentials between Jordan and neighbouring countries – especially Saudi Arabia – create incentives for illicit trade, resulting in occasional smuggling activities. Fuel smuggling operations frequently involve modified vehicles with additional fuel tanks and are reportedly supported by organized criminal networks operating on both sides of the border.

DRUGS

Heroin trafficking in Jordan is relatively limited, primarily due to high prices and low domestic demand. Jordan functions largely as a transit country for heroin trafficked from Afghanistan via Syria and Iraq, en route to the Gulf and Israel. While the volume of heroin seized remains modest, Jordanian authorities have implemented border surveillance and security measures to combat the trade. Recent fluctuations in seizure volumes suggest varying levels of trafficking intensity. Similarly, the cocaine market in Jordan is minimal, also due to high costs. Cocaine typically enters the country via air travel from Latin America and is often concealed within cargo or postal shipments. Seizures, while rare, do occur and have involved sizable quantities. These operations suggest the involvement of international trafficking networks working in coordination with domestic actors.

Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug in Jordan. Most cannabis resin enters the country from Lebanon, either directly or through Syria and Iraq. Border authorities

frequently seize cannabis during military operations, though much of it still manages to evade detection. Hezbollah is reported to play a role in facilitating cannabis distribution networks across the border, working with local actors. Large-scale seizures indicate the persistence of this trade, with cannabis often smuggled alongside other drugs such as Captagon.

Synthetic drugs, particularly Captagon and crystal methamphetamine, dominate Jordan's illicit drug market. The country functions both as a transit route to the Gulf and as a growing domestic market. Captagon is largely produced in Syria, with Jordan serving as a key corridor. Authorities have seized millions of Captagon pills and have increased military operations along the Syrian border, including airstrikes targeting smuggling operations. Despite these efforts, the use of synthetic drugs continues to rise, particularly among youth in lower-income areas. Local production of synthetic cannabis variants such as 'Joker' further complicates the landscape. Corruption among border officials and the use of advanced smuggling techniques, such as drones and armoured vehicles, have made enforcement difficult.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cyber-dependent crimes are an emerging challenge in Jordan, with the number of reported incidents rising sharply. In recent years, authorities responded to thousands of cyber incidents, including hacking attempts, ransomware and the use of remote-access malware. Attacks have targeted both public and private institutions, often exploiting outdated or unlicensed software. Significant incidents include disruptions to municipal networks and media outlets. Data breaches, such as the leak of thousands of government employee records, highlight the vulnerability of digital infrastructure.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Jordan continues to grapple with a range of financial crimes, notably cyber-enabled fraud, embezzlement and tax-related offences. Cyber-fraud remains particularly prevalent, with fraudulent investment websites and deceptive online schemes targeting many citizens. Furthermore, institutional integrity has come under scrutiny due to several high-profile corruption investigations involving both former and current senior public officials. Reports have highlighted embezzlement activities within various sectors, including public institutions and religious bodies. While tax evasion remains an ongoing challenge, recent administrative reforms – such as the rollout of digital tax services and increased public outreach – have reportedly helped reduce non-compliance.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Mafia-style groups in Jordan are limited in presence and influence, with only a few identified organizations fitting this classification. These groups are largely based on Bedouin tribal affiliations and operate across borders with Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Their structure and activities follow a historically rooted pattern tied to tribal loyalty rather than contemporary organized crime dynamics. Criminal networks, on the other hand, are widespread and play a pivotal role in sustaining the country's function as a regional transit point for illicit trafficking. These networks operate with significant intensity in areas bordering Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and are known to engage in drug, arms and human trafficking. Their reach often extends into refugee camps inhabited by Palestinian and Syrian populations. Moreover, these groups are frequently affiliated with armed and political entities, such as the Islamic State, Lebanese Hezbollah and Syrian regime-aligned militias. Some networks have also been reported to engage in human organ trafficking, taking advantage of economically vulnerable people. The complexity and adaptability of these networks, reinforced by regional affiliations and local socioeconomic conditions, underscore their entrenched presence and capacity to operate across multiple illicit markets.

State-embedded actors in Jordan play a more limited but still significant role in organized crime. Corruption is especially documented among personnel at the country's borders and various branches of military intelligence. These actors have been linked to smuggling operations involving drugs, weapons and people, with reports suggesting that external groups such as Hezbollah and the Syrian army's Fourth Division finance bribes to facilitate these activities.

While there is no indication that state actors maintain dominant control over criminal markets, isolated cases highlight potential vulnerabilities.

Foreign actors are also active in Jordan's criminal landscape, with their influence most visible in border regions and trafficking networks. Syrian, Iraqi and Palestinian criminal groups are particularly active, leveraging cross-border tribal and familial ties to conduct arms and drug trafficking. Recent trends show an increase in Syrian smuggling groups who have begun to confront and undermine local competitors. The network responsible for this operation reportedly spans Syria, Türkiye, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, with indications that the transactions may involve laundering proceeds from narcotics smuggled into Saudi Arabia. Lebanon's Hezbollah plays a major role in regional criminal markets, including within Jordan, where it participates in the trafficking of arms, drugs and people. Militia groups aligned with regional powers and based in Syria have also become increasingly active, contributing to smuggling-related violence and instability in northern Jordan.

Some private-sector actors in Jordan enable organized crime because of cultural norms and inconsistently enforced compliance standards. A notable factor is the practice of 'wasta', a system of social mediation grounded in personal networks and mutual obligation. This practice, while culturally embedded, has been linked to corruption risks, as it can facilitate preferential treatment, expedited services and access to privileged information. In such contexts, regulatory oversight may be weakened, creating opportunities for individuals or entities to bypass formal procedures for personal or commercial advantage.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Jordan's leadership and governance landscape reflects a blend of proactive institutional measures and entrenched political constraints. The country's hereditary monarchy holds broad executive authority, appointing the prime minister, the cabinet and the Senate. Although recent legal reforms have expanded political inclusivity by lowering the candidacy age and increasing female representation, tribal affiliations and state-sponsored patronage networks continue to dominate electoral processes. The intelligence services reportedly exert influence over the electoral landscape, reinforcing perceptions of limited democratic practices. Jordan has prioritized the fight against organized crime prevention through the active involvement of specialized institutions, the involvement of both domestic

and cross-border operations as well as parallel investments in cybercrime prevention, underscoring the government's proactive security strategy. Despite these measures, there are persistent reports of arbitrary arrests, censorship and limitations on freedom of assembly and civil society operations. These factors, coupled with ongoing tensions over economic grievances, the regional conflicts and perceived inequality in law enforcement, continue to affect public trust in political leadership.

Corruption continues to pose a challenge to Jordan's transparency and accountability frameworks. While the Penal Code criminalizes corrupt practices and the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission leads implementation efforts, enforcement is inconsistent. High-ranking officials are infrequently prosecuted, and

limitations on access-to-information laws – characterized by broad exemptions and procedural ambiguity – constrain transparency. Practices such as ‘wasta’ further complicate equitable access to public services. The government has introduced measures to improve oversight, including publishing budget details online and supporting anti-corruption campaigns through public initiatives like hackathons. However, ongoing barriers include limited investigative journalism and the absence of independent oversight institutions, with weak asset disclosure obligations and constrained parliamentary scrutiny of the national budget.

Jordan actively participates in international cooperation mechanisms. The country is a signatory to major conventions such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, and it works closely with INTERPOL and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. These partnerships support the training of law enforcement and judiciary personnel and enable cross-border collaboration. Jordan also maintains bilateral agreements with countries such as Iraq and Indonesia to combat transnational crime. Additionally, the US provides substantial financial and military aid, reinforcing Jordan’s role in regional security.

Jordan has enacted a variety of national policies and laws addressing human trafficking, drug and arms trafficking, environmental crimes and cybercrime. The recent Cybercrime Law expanded legal definitions to include offences such as spreading misinformation and defamation online. However, the law has attracted criticism from civil society and international actors for its potential to curtail freedom of expression. While enforcement of existing laws is a persistent challenge because of limited capacity and allegations of corruption, the government continues to adopt national strategies to combat illicit markets.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Jordan’s judiciary operates under a constitutional framework that nominally guarantees independence. Specialized courts that handle cases related to organized crime and terrorism exist within the Jordanian judicial system. While these courts are noted for swift judgments, concerns remain over their impartiality due to executive influence. The king appoints key judicial figures, including Constitutional Court judges, and the Ministry of Justice retains oversight of judicial promotions. While judicial reform efforts include rehabilitation programmes for inmates and alternative sentencing methods, such as electronic monitoring, challenges like overcrowded prisons, inadequate healthcare and reports of mistreatment persist, particularly against political detainees. Conditions in some facilities fall below international standards, despite ongoing efforts to build new infrastructure and allow independent monitoring.

Jordan’s law enforcement architecture comprises several specialized units, including the Public Security Directorate,

the Gendarmerie and the Anti-Trafficking Unit. These are supported by the General Intelligence Directorate, whose members are trained internationally and play a significant role in countering organized crime. Community policing initiatives and environmental protection units, such as the Environmental Rangers, underscore a broad approach to internal security. Law enforcement institutions coordinate annual security campaigns and are viewed as responsive, with short pre-trial detention periods generally observed. However, corruption in border control operations continues to pose challenges, with reports of bribes paid to facilitate drug smuggling.

Maintaining territorial integrity remains a core priority. Bordering Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the West Bank, Jordan’s location places it at the intersection of regional conflicts and trafficking routes. Despite infrastructure investments and increased security coordination with Saudi Arabia, challenges persist, particularly along desert borders with Syria and Iraq. In 2024, smuggling operations involving human trafficking and narcotics increased, prompting Israel to propose the construction of a border fence along its border with the country. Jordanian forces have intercepted drug-smuggling drones and participated in joint monitoring efforts. Cybersecurity infrastructure has also seen improvements, with the expansion of local cybersecurity firms and collaborative efforts positioning the country as a regional hub for digital resilience.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Jordan’s anti-money laundering (AML) framework has undergone significant reform, particularly after it was included on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in 2021. The government responded by introducing a revised legal framework aligned with international standards and enhancing the investigative capacity of financial intelligence units. The central bank also implemented a Know Your Customer programme and formed a national committee to oversee AML compliance. As a result, Jordan was delisted from the FATF grey list in October 2023. Nevertheless, the country remains vulnerable due to its exposure to illicit flows from regional conflicts and a still-developing compliance culture.

The broader economic regulatory environment presents mixed resilience characteristics. Jordan maintains regulatory mechanisms to address economic crimes and enforces white-collar crime cases through designated prosecutorial units. However, the country continues to rely heavily on foreign aid and loans to support economic activity, particularly in the face of persistent unemployment, poverty and limited foreign investment. Informal labour remains prevalent, with over half of the workforce participating in unregulated employment. Recent tax reforms and reductions in customs duties aim to curb smuggling and broaden the formal economic base, though results are yet to be fully assessed. Jordan has implemented a new

Investment Environment Law to support foreign investment through clearer policies and dispute resolution mechanisms. While strategic sectors such as tourism and information technology are prioritized, regional instability has affected investor confidence. The decline in tourism during late 2024 because of the Israel-Gaza conflict highlighted the sector's vulnerability to geopolitical shocks. Nonetheless, regulatory bodies continue to explore reforms to encourage private sector-led growth.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Jordan provides several services aimed at supporting victims and witnesses of organized crime. In 2024, the government intensified its efforts to identify and assist trafficking victims. Collaborating with civil society, the government drafted new standard operating procedures for victim identification and a national referral mechanism. Under the Anti-Human Trafficking Law, a dedicated fund exists to assist victims, and there are operations coordinated to remove vulnerable children from the streets. These operations include screening for trafficking indicators and providing access to social and medical support. A hotline also exists facilitating reporting, though language limitations reduce accessibility for some Asian communities. Drug users who voluntarily seek treatment are exempt from punishment and referred to rehabilitation centres operated by both public and private entities. While witnesses may be offered confidentiality and support services, protection varies based on the perceived importance of each case. Shortcomings remain, especially for foreign labourers who fear deportation, and challenges persist in collecting evidence and apprehending perpetrators.

Preventive strategies are embedded within the mandates of several law enforcement and educational institutions. Programmes such as police initiatives promote public engagement and awareness at the community level. Authorities distribute educational materials to migrant workers and raise awareness about the risks of early marriage among refugee populations. Work permits and access to public education for Syrian refugees have also improved. The government's anti-trafficking strategy, alongside anti-drug awareness campaigns and environmental crime monitoring tools like a new mobile application, reflect a multidimensional approach to crime prevention. Jordan also demonstrates an active whistle-blower protection framework, with successful cases of asset recovery reinforcing the role of public reporting in anti-corruption efforts.

Non-state actors, including civil society organizations (CSOs), play a vital role in Jordan's resilience framework, particularly in areas such as human rights, education and service delivery. More than 2 000 CSOs operate in the country, and many collaborate with international organizations. However, their activities are generally non-confrontational due to regulatory constraints. The governmental bodies retain authority over CSO registration,

funding and dissolution, limiting their independence. Media freedom is similarly constrained. Laws regulating defamation, criticism of the monarchy and foreign relations restrict journalistic freedom. Journalists face surveillance, gag orders and routine interrogations, resulting in widespread self-censorship. While there have been no recent killings or detentions of journalists, reports of spyware usage and restrictive laws signal a tightening civic space. Nonetheless, Jordan maintains a vibrant, albeit cautious, civil society sector whose engagement remains critical to the national response to organized crime.

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