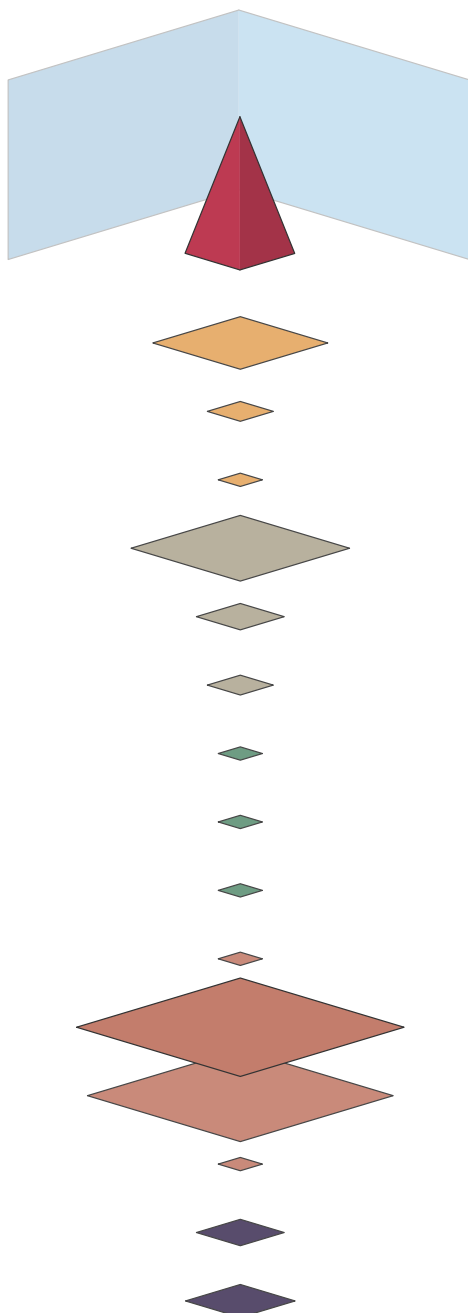
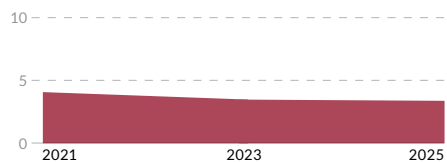


ST. LUCIA



3.35 $\nearrow 0.18$
CRIMINALITY SCORE

168th of 193 countries $\searrow 2$
28th of 35 American countries $\searrow 1$
6th of 13 Caribbean countries -



CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.60 $\nearrow 0.07$

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.00	0.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	1.50	0.00
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	1.00	0.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.00	0.00
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	2.00	0.00
ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	1.50	0.00
FLORA CRIMES	1.00	$\nearrow 1.00$
FAUNA CRIMES	1.00	0.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	1.00	0.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.00	0.00
COCAINE TRADE	7.50	0.00
CANNABIS TRADE	7.00	0.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	1.00	0.00
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	2.00	0.00
FINANCIAL CRIMES	2.50	0.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.10 $\nearrow 0.30$

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	3.00	$\nearrow 2.00$
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00	0.00
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	1.50	$\nearrow 0.50$



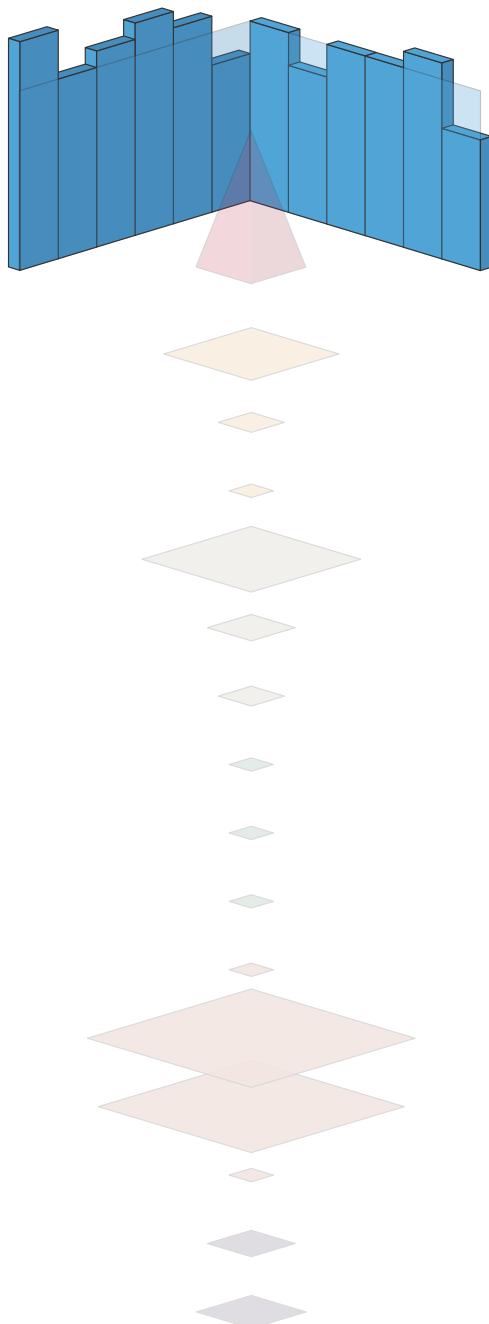
This project was funded in part
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the European Union

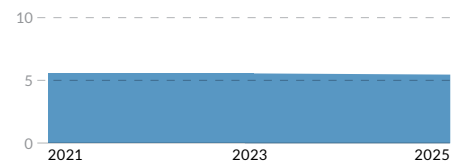
ENACT is funded by the European Union
and implemented by the Institute for
Security Studies and INTERPOL, in
affiliation with the Global Initiative Against
Transnational Organized Crime.

ST. LUCIA



5.54 $\nearrow 0.04$ RESILIENCE SCORE

52nd of 193 countries $\nearrow 2$
9th of 35 American countries -
3rd of 13 Caribbean countries $\nearrow 1$



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	7.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	5.50	$\nearrow 1.00$
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.00	$\nearrow 0.50$
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50	0.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00	0.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50	0.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.50	0.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	4.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.50	$\nearrow 0.50$
PREVENTION	6.00	0.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00	0.00



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking remains a significant concern in St. Lucia, affecting both local and migrant populations – particularly individuals from Jamaica and Haiti – for purposes of sex trafficking and forced labour. Victims, often young adults and children, are frequently exploited by caretakers, with involvement from both local and foreign actors. Although the domestic market is relatively small, cases of St. Lucians being trafficked abroad have also been recently reported in Canada and the UK. Human trafficking is closely linked to other illicit activities such as arms and drug trafficking, which contribute to local violence and inequality. Despite ongoing government efforts, challenges persist due to under-reporting and a lack of reliable data.

In contrast, the market for human smuggling remains minimal and largely unorganized, with limited data and media attention preventing an accurate assessment of its prevalence. Although the country's geographic location aids such activities, its smuggling market is smaller and less structured compared to other Caribbean nations – possibly due to its recent economic decline, which has reduced migration flows from countries like Haiti and Venezuela.

While there are concerns about gang-related extortion in commercial areas such as Vieux Fort and Central Castries, there is no evidence to suggest the existence of organized extortion or protection rackets in recent years.

TRADE

Arms trafficking, linked to rising gun-related violence, remains a concern despite limited data on illicit firearms. St. Lucia's role as a transit point for criminal activities, particularly drug trafficking, contributes to the trade of weapons, including modified and 3D-printed firearms. Recent law enforcement actions have led to seizures of ammunition, firearms and drugs. Despite these efforts, arms trafficking continues to fuel local gang activity and violence, affecting the economy and health system.

The counterfeit goods trade is minimal and unorganized, with no significant increase in cases in recent years. While the production and sale of counterfeit goods are illegal, purchasing them is not, creating some legal ambiguity. The market remains fragmented, with no evidence suggesting St. Lucia serves as a hub for counterfeit goods. Similarly, the country does not have a significant market for the illicit trade of excisable goods, despite its geographic location, which could potentially facilitate such activities. Although a recent increase in an excise tax on tobacco may encourage

illicit trade, there is no indication of a notable rise in this market. St. Lucia is not a major hub for this trade, and it does not contribute to local violence or conflict.

ENVIRONMENT

There is no recent evidence indicating the existence of a criminal market for flora-related crimes in St. Lucia. Similarly, the country currently lacks official data on the relevance of its market for fauna-related crimes. However, there is evidence of the illegal wildlife trade, notably involving the endangered St. Lucia iguana, which has been advertised for sale in the US. The country also performs poorly for port state responsibility in its illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing risk assessment, underscoring its vulnerability to illegal fishing. Despite these concerns, there is no evidence to suggest the involvement of organized criminal groups in these illicit activities.

Similarly, there is no evidence of a consolidated criminal market for non-renewable resources in St. Lucia. While these resources – particularly raw and refined petroleum – are crucial to the country's exports, there is no indication of illegal activity surrounding their trade.

DRUGS

St. Lucia does not have a consolidated criminal market for heroin, nor does it have any notable connection to regional criminal networks involved in the heroin trade. The cocaine trade, however, is a pervasive criminal market, largely due to the country's strategic location as a transit point between South America and North America and Europe. St. Lucia's weak law enforcement and low interdiction capacity make it an attractive stop for drug shipments, primarily from Venezuela. Cocaine is smuggled via pirogue vessels and fast boats, then stored for onward shipment to French territories and international markets. This market is intertwined with regional criminal activities like arms and human trafficking. While domestic consumption of cocaine remains low and related violence is minimal, the majority of profits benefit foreign actors rather than local markets.

The cannabis trade is also well-established, fuelled by widespread domestic consumption. Local criminal groups manage production and distribution, and although the market has minimal economic impact, concerns over youth and mental health persist. While profits are mainly generated locally, there is some involvement from foreign actors, particularly in the tourism sector.

Lastly, St. Lucia does not have an established synthetic drug market. While isolated incidents – such as the discovery of drug-laced candy in schools – have raised concerns about

potential future risks, there is no evidence of a systemic presence of synthetic drugs in the country.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

St. Lucia does not face a widespread issue with cyber-dependent crimes, which are largely limited to isolated incidents involving malware, social media hacking and ransomware attacks. However, the true scale of this market remains unclear due to under-reporting and the lack of a comprehensive tracking system.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

While financial crimes are not widespread in St. Lucia, there have been indications of their impact on the banking system, including concerns over unexplained wealth and potential tax avoidance. Additionally, the possible misuse of funds from the Citizenship by Investment programme has generated considerable debate over the past year.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

St. Lucia has experienced a rise in gang activity, ranging from organized mafia-style groups to less structured local networks. These groups are primarily involved in arms trafficking, acquiring weapons for drug protection and violent confrontations. Revenue from human trafficking supports the financing of arms and drug operations. Although minimal corruption between gangs and the state is noted, mafia-style violence poses a direct threat to state actors. The growing number of firearm-related murders signals an increasing availability of weapons among gangs. Criminal groups, particularly in the south, exert notable influence on

local communities, providing protection while legitimizing their operations. The rise in violence, including kidnappings and extortion, contributes to a complex criminal landscape with both foreign and local actors involved.

Loosely organized criminal networks are also active in St. Lucia, acting as intermediaries for international traffickers to facilitate the distribution of drugs. These networks are dispersed across the country, with connections to regional and transnational groups – including those in Martinique and South America – which are involved in drug and arms production.

State-embedded actors are also involved in the country's criminal landscape. There are strong suspicions that certain high-level politicians, government officials, businesspeople and police officers may be facilitating criminal activities, potentially indicating a link between organized crime and corrupt public figures. However, there is no evidence to substantiate claims of organized crime's infiltration of state institutions.

Strong links exist between local criminal networks and foreign actors, especially from Latin America, the US and Europe. Foreign actors play a dominant role in drug – particularly cocaine – and arms trafficking, using St. Lucia as a transit point for commodities en route to the US, Canada and Europe. Venezuelan nationals are notably involved in overseeing bulk cocaine shipments, often staying in the country for brief periods to manage sales.

There is no evidence that organized crime groups control any particular sector of the private industry in St. Lucia. However, it is suggested that some businesspeople may play a role in facilitating criminal activities.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

St. Lucia continues to perform well in areas such as political stability, government effectiveness and the rule of law. The government has a clear strategy to combat organized crime, focusing on regional cooperation and domestic reforms. However, resource constraints and a rise in firearms-related crimes have impeded progress. The opposition has criticized the government's response to escalating crime, advocating for more comprehensive measures. Additionally, concerns about cybercrime are growing, and efforts are under way to improve cybersecurity and law enforcement capabilities.

Regarding transparency, the country has laws criminalizing corruption, supported by institutions such as the Integrity Commission and the Financial Intelligence Authority. However, there is no comprehensive anti-corruption strategy, and public perception of corruption remains high, with significant distrust in government officials, police and tax authorities. Concerns about transparency in campaign financing and its potential impact on elections have also been raised. The 2024 'Passportgate' scandal, involving the illicit issuance of passports, further fuelled criticism of public officials' integrity, highlighting issues of accountability and putting at risk the country's international reputation.

St. Lucia has made significant strides in combating organized crime through its international commitments and treaties. It has bilateral extradition agreements with the US and France, as well as multilateral arrangements like the Caribbean Community Arrest Warrant Treaty, as evidenced by recent extraditions. The country has also made notable drug seizures, particularly of cocaine, and actively participates in regional cooperation. It has ratified several key international conventions related to firearms trafficking, corruption and narcotics control. However, St. Lucia lacks a unified strategy to counter organized crime – one that integrates these international instruments and fosters comprehensive coordination among government agencies and with international partners.

Domestically, St. Lucia's legal framework is fairly strong and up to date, addressing critical criminal markets such as drug, human and arms trafficking. The country has decriminalized possession of up to 30 grams of cannabis and permits firearm ownership with government-issued licenses. Focused efforts on gang violence include the Anti-Gang Act and the Firearm Act, though the Computer Misuse Act needs updating to tackle cybercrimes effectively.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

St. Lucia's judiciary is composed of district courts and a High Court, with the entire system overseen by the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. Although the courts can address organized crime cases, the judicial process is often slow, resulting in case backlogs and prolonged pre-trial detentions. The country lacks specialized units for organized crime within the judiciary. The prison system comprises a single facility; although criminal groups do not play a role in prison management, there have been incidents of abuse by prison staff. Despite staffing shortages in medical personnel, inmates have access to basic healthcare and educational programmes.

The Royal St. Lucia Police Force (RSLPF), overseen by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security, is the country's primary law enforcement body, with a staff of between 900 and 1 000 officers. While it has specialized units including a drug squad and a marine unit, it faces challenges due to limited resources. The force participates in regional and domestic training, covering areas such as firearms, drugs, human trafficking and cybercrime. However, instances of police brutality have led to public mistrust, prompting the implementation of community policing. In December 2024, the RSLPF began enhancing its crime-fighting strategies, emphasizing long-term solutions and regional cooperation to improve public safety.

St. Lucia, located along key cocaine and cannabis trafficking routes between the Americas and Europe, faces challenges in policing its porous borders – particularly due to its proximity to Martinique, a critical drug transit point. Despite modernizing its coastal vessels, the country faces

a significant funding shortfall that hampers effective crime control. Furthermore, public perception of corruption is high, with 46% of survey respondents believing customs officers are corrupt. In October 2024, the Customs Department introduced advanced scanning equipment and improved data systems to enhance drug detection and interception at ports. These technological upgrades are part of broader efforts to strengthen law enforcement and address illicit activities that threaten national security.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

St. Lucia has implemented anti-money laundering (AML) measures through the Financial Intelligence Authority and ongoing reviews of its AML infrastructure. However, money laundering remains linked to the drug trade, involving both domestic and foreign criminal actors. Financial institutions are believed to inadvertently engage in transactions involving proceeds from narcotics trafficking. While the country is not blacklisted for money laundering, it faces challenges due to its offshore financial services sector, which increases its vulnerability to financial crime.

The economy is considered moderately free, with a stable environment conducive to business expansion, particularly in offshore banking and financial services. The country encourages foreign investment through transparent business regulations, with equal treatment for both citizens and non-citizens. However, St. Lucia's tax haven status and offshore services raise concerns about potential misuse for asset concealment. Although the economy has shown resilience in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, issues like political interference, nepotism and corruption – particularly in the banking and finance sectors – have undermined governance, weakened public trust and damaged economic stability.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

St. Lucia provides relatively effective victim support services, particularly for those affected by human trafficking. The country has established the Counter-Trafficking Act and related protections such as witness protection. While it lacks a fully developed victim treatment programme for all criminal markets, it has set up rehabilitation centres for drug and alcohol abuse, including the specialized 'Turning Point' facility. Primary healthcare facilities also address drug-related issues. Meanwhile, NGOs support victims and work on poverty reduction, which indirectly helps reduce vulnerability to criminal activities like human trafficking.

The country has also expanded its public education efforts on drug use and human trafficking risks, targeting youth, police officers and community leaders. These initiatives include workshops and community policing programmes. Despite significant progress in combating trafficking, challenges remain, including a lack of convictions and insufficient penalties. St. Lucia also launched a drug trafficking

initiative in October 2024, focusing on border security and law enforcement cooperation with international partners. The initiative is supported by modern technology and an Early Warning System. Additionally, programmes aiming to strengthen youth resilience against gang recruitment and crime exist in the country.

The government primarily leads the fight against organized crime, with limited involvement from civil society. NGOs focus on education, health and victim support, particularly for domestic violence survivors. Few civil society groups are involved in psycho-social support or reintegration efforts. Some communities affected by gangs have established volunteer-led violence interruption networks. While the state supports an independent civil society, it faces resource shortages, especially in combating human trafficking. The constitution guarantees freedom of expression and communication, and press freedom is generally respected in practice. A variety of news sources report on a wide range of topics, including corruption and criminal markets. However, criminal libel laws remain in effect, with civil lawsuits becoming more common.

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.