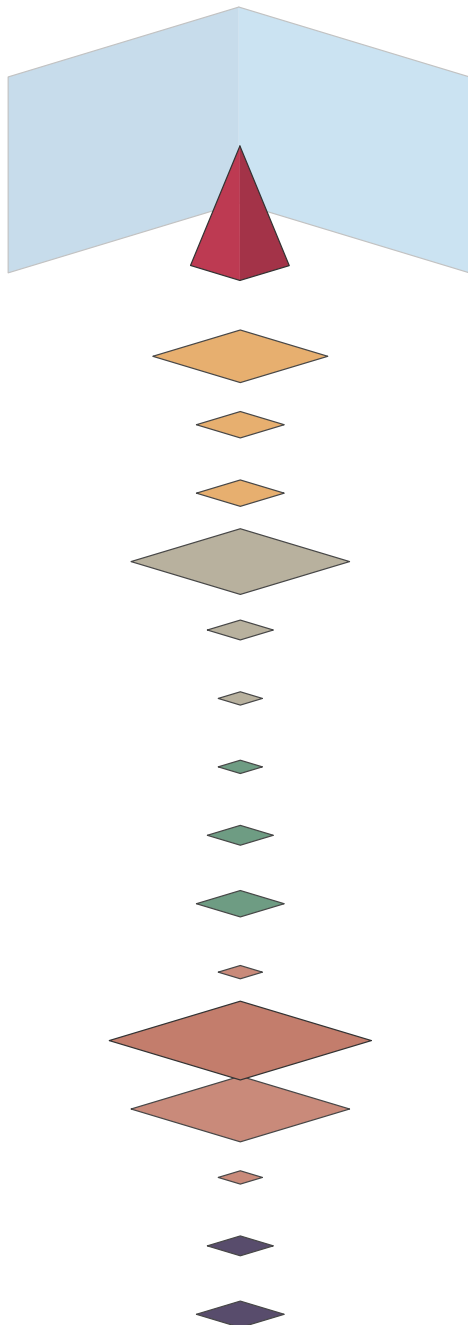


BARBADOS



3.07

CRIMINALITY SCORE

175th of 193 countries

32nd of 35 American countries

10th of 13 Caribbean countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

2.43

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 4.00

HUMAN SMUGGLING 2.00

EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING 2.00

ARMS TRAFFICKING 5.00

TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS 1.50

ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS 1.00

FLORA CRIMES 1.00

FAUNA CRIMES 1.50

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 2.00

HEROIN TRADE 1.00

COCAINE TRADE 6.00

CANNABIS TRADE 5.00

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 1.00

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES 1.50

FINANCIAL CRIMES 2.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS

3.70

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 5.00

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 4.50

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 4.00

FOREIGN ACTORS 2.50

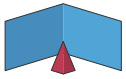
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS 2.50



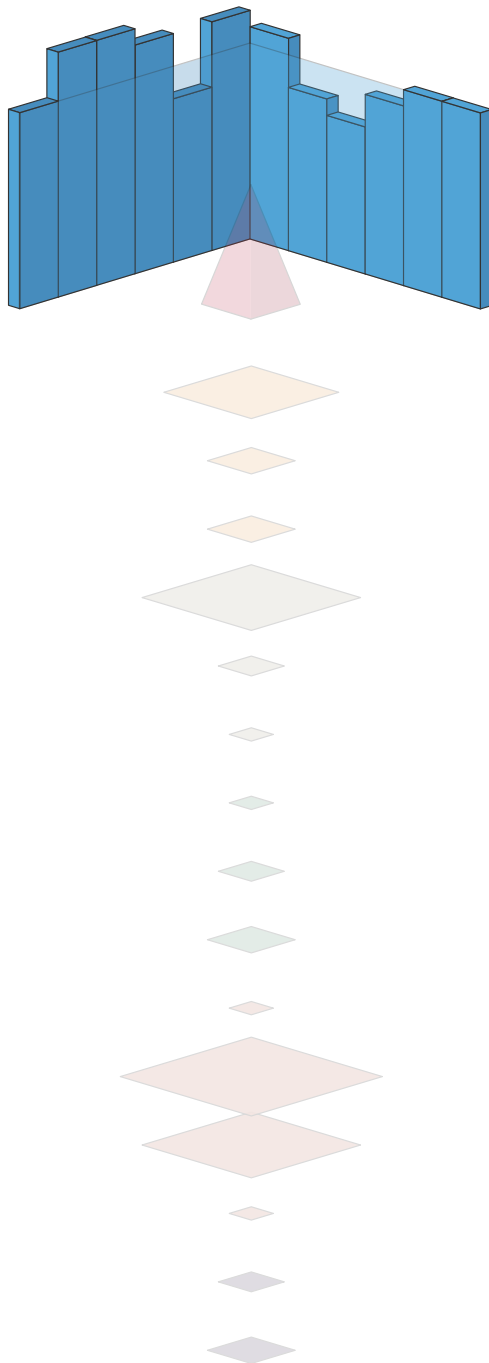
6.13

RESILIENCE SCORE





BARBADOS



6.13

RESILIENCE SCORE

34th of 193 countries

5th of 35 American countries

1st of 13 Caribbean countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	6.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	7.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	7.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	5.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	7.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	5.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.50
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	6.00



3.07

CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.43



CRIMINAL ACTORS 3.70



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Human trafficking appears to have a limited, although increasing, influence on Barbados, and the island nation is both a source of and a destination for the crime, with predominately women and children forced into sexual exploitation. Barbados has been recognized as a top sex-tourism destination in the Caribbean. Immigrants who enter the country legitimately, many of them flying in from Jamaica, Venezuela, Haiti, Trinidad and Guyana, are especially vulnerable. Also at risk of becoming victims of trafficking are women searching for alternative ways to fend for themselves and their families and men who are unemployed or have experienced job insecurity or low wages. While there is no evidence of large organized human trafficking networks operating in Barbados, there are instances of recruiters working on their own or on behalf of businesses. The documents of victims are withheld and they are subjected to debt bondage, restriction of movement and low wages as well as physical, verbal and psychological abuse. Authorities have noted the increased use of social media to recruit victims, especially during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which increased economic vulnerability.

The fact that Barbados is an attractive destination for migrants enables the human smuggling market. Smuggling rings use the same boats that import legal commodities from neighbouring countries to bring in migrants. Border security guards are reportedly bribed to facilitate human smuggling and allow irregular migrants into the country. There is little information about extortion and protection racketeering carried out by organized crime.

TRADE

Even though arms trafficking in Barbados is limited in scale and influence, there was a considerable rise in this crime in 2022. An increasing gang culture has fuelled a demand for firearms, which are used to protect drug markets, and drugs and stolen goods are often used to pay for arms and ammunition. Most of the illegal arms in Barbados are believed to be smuggled from the US, where firearms are easily accessible. It is common for drug traffickers to use associates or relatives in the US to purchase arms and smuggle them by sea. Illegal arms also originate from neighbouring islands and Barbados is a transit point for regional arms shipments. Although this is not a major destabilizing factor yet, legal shipments have gone missing, only to turn up in other countries, where they are used to commit crimes.

There appears to be little trade in counterfeit goods in Barbados and there is no information about the illicit trade in excise goods.

ENVIRONMENT

There is no evidence to suggest that there is a flora crime market in Barbados. Although there is no direct link to fauna crimes in the country, there is evidence of fishers from other Caribbean countries fishing illegally in Barbadian waters. Even though there is no evidence indicating the existence of a non-renewable resource crimes market there are some risks related to money laundering through the purchase of precious metals and gemstones.

DRUGS

While there have been some instances of heroin use, these have mainly been connected to tourists or migrant workers. Thus, it seems that the heroin market is either very small or non-existent in Barbados.

On the other hand, cocaine continues to be readily available in the country, which is a smuggling point for the Eastern Caribbean cocaine trade and is important, although not central, to that route. The bulk supply of cocaine continues to move from the north coast of Venezuela via go-fast boats and, increasingly, from Guyana, on general cargo vessels. There are still deliveries in bulk, but they are less common than they are in other Eastern Caribbean islands. As is the case in other Caribbean island nations, cocaine shipments are usually smuggled into Barbados via freight carriers, the loads originating in Venezuela, Guyana and Trinidad. Connections have also been identified between Colombian drug traffickers and Barbados, with several reports of large amounts of cocaine being seized from Colombian nationals. Once the freighters near Barbados the shipments are offloaded to small boats and carried ashore, where the drugs are either locally distributed or smuggled by courier into larger consumer markets, such as Europe, Canada or the US. To that end, Barbadian diasporas, primarily in the UK, as well as in Europe and North America, help facilitate the movement of significant quantities of cocaine. Tourism also plays an important role in cocaine trafficking: relatively wealthy visitors keep both demand and prices high and small quantities of cocaine and heroin have allegedly been smuggled on cruise ships to Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. It appears that state authorities are largely complicit, with criminal actors admitting to bribing customs officials, police officers, judges and politicians. The growing demand for and use of cocaine are the primary drivers of increasing violence in the country.

Cannabis is grown locally, but in small quantities, mostly for personal and small-scale consumption and St Vincent, which is a significant producer of cannabis in the region, continues to supply the bulk of the drug to Barbados. Shipments from Jamaica are usually concealed in freight and containers. Local consumption is steady, as is the consumption of cannabis by tourists, who pay inflated prices and fuel the demand. In March 2022, the Government of Barbados decriminalized the possession of small quantities of cannabis, but the effects on the market are yet to be seen.

Tourists are also the primary consumers of synthetic drugs in Barbados. Despite some evidence of the importation and sale of synthetic drugs, the illegal market is not a subject of concern.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Although Barbadian law enforcement bodies have, for several years, warned citizens to prepare for an increase in cyber-dependent crimes, there is little evidence to suggest that Barbadians are either major perpetrators or targets of cybercrime. Overall, there is little information available about such crimes in the country. Nevertheless, cyber-attacks are expected to become more prolific as the country engages in more e-commerce and online methods of doing business.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes do not appear to have been prevalent in recent years and there have been few reported instances of fraud or tax evasion on the island.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Mafia-style organizations, in the form of gangs, have a negative influence on society in Barbados. Gangs have been

found to recruit among young people, typically preying on economically and socially disadvantaged youth. Their structures are sophisticated and organized and include 'dons' or leaders, hit men and even legitimate businessmen armed with high-powered rifles. They engage in various forms of organized crime, including robbery, theft, drug trafficking, firearm possession, serious bodily harm and murder. However, they have little international scope and are generally identified as localized gangs, mainly involved in micro-trafficking. Today's gangs focus on maintaining territory, using symbols to indicate their existence and turf. They often maintain relationships with suppliers, transportation agents and buyers.

Loose domestic criminal networks typically engage in drug and gun trafficking but may also have a stake in human trafficking and smuggling. They seem to be slightly less pervasive than gangs and mafia-style groups in the country. State-embedded actors remain an issue, though their influence appears to be limited rather than systemic. Parliamentary representatives maintain that drug lords exercise influence not only over communities and families, but also over some political groups. Low-level officials allegedly take bribes to facilitate trafficking flows and information suggests that some politicians are under the influence of gang leaders.

Although there have been reports of foreign actors being involved in cocaine, cannabis and arms trafficking in the country, no research indicates that these markets are controlled by foreign nationals. More recently, instances of foreign nationals engaging in money laundering activities in Barbados have also been revealed, but whether these individuals had any criminal structure or organization is still unknown. Similarly, there is little evidence that private state sector actors are involved in organized crime, except for anecdotal and sporadic reports pertaining to their involvement in money laundering activities.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Although those who lead and govern Barbados are proving their efficiency, they are only beginning to confront organized crime. The increase in crime is an issue, as it has clear consequences for tourism, which is one of the country's major sources of income. This has led to several political parties on the island raising the issue as a matter of urgency. In this respect, the current prime minister has taken an active stance on crime, including fast-tracking several pieces of legislation and increasing the resources

of the police, border security and the court system. Although the perceptions of corruption in the country are low by global standards, the population has become increasingly concerned about the problem since the 2018 elections, which were accompanied by allegations of vote buying and a lack of trust in political leaders. The country has, however, performed better than its neighbours in alleviating corruption. Since the current prime minister took office, in 2018, Barbados has developed stronger institutions, more transparent public procurement, better

anti-corruption polices and improved legislation. This has marked some progress compared to the situation reported under the previous government.

Barbados is party to a number of international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime. The country is also an active and prominent participant in numerous law enforcement initiatives and maintains excellent strategic and tactical relationships with foreign agencies and international organizations, notably in the area of organized crime. It continues to work closely with the UK and with European countries as well as with the European Union (EU) and US agencies and engages with international partners in training initiatives and information sharing. Barbados is a member of an operation coordinated by INTERPOL and targeting human trafficking in the Caribbean, Central and South America. In September 2021 it took a significant step in its fight against organized crime when INTERPOL opened a liaison office for the Caribbean islands there with the aim of helping Caribbean countries with their crime fighting efforts. Following its international anti-organized crime commitments, Barbados has implemented legislative reforms to bring national legislation in line with international standards.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judicial system, modelled on British law, is considered outdated, slow and cumbersome. Prosecution may take years instead of months, with very few complex cases being heard in court. Thus, drug traffickers are often granted bail or merely fined, while the low number of prosecutions and convictions for human trafficking-related offences is of great concern. In some cases, prisoners are on remand for prolonged periods, with no known likelihood of a trial. Although the increase in the number of judges in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has helped the country deal with the backlog, there are still procedural aspects resulting in delays, especially when it comes to criminal law. Barbados only has one prison, which reportedly meets international standards.

By Caribbean standards, the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) is well resourced and equipped, with specialized units dedicated to criminal markets such as human and drug trafficking. The Barbadian coastguard, together with the RBPF, also works to counter trafficking flows. The Barbadian Defence Force has increased law enforcement capacity to support an 'elite' RBPF anti-crime unit, which patrols hotspot areas. The government is working actively to strengthen the police marine unit and the coastguard, to enable them to continue to monitor effectively illegal drug flows at sea. Barbados is a member of CARICOM IMPACTS, which focuses on strengthening border controls to combat illicit firearms trafficking. The country also signed a memorandum of understanding with the EU in May 2022 in order to renew its commitment to fighting illicit maritime trafficking and protecting its borders. Despite the efforts to

strengthen the country's territorial integrity there are still deficiencies, including an inefficient coastal radar system, intended to prevent drug trafficking flows, that leaves significant gaps in coverage, reducing its effectiveness.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Although Barbados has been identified as having strategic anti-money laundering deficiencies, it made high-level commitments to enhancing its anti-money laundering framework. Some progress has been made, evident in the completion of an initial risk assessment, which concluded that Barbados's vulnerability to money laundering was related to the pervasive drug market. The country has a Financial Investigative Unit, a Financial Intelligence Unit and additional enabling legal authorities. More comprehensive national risk assessment is being developed to better identify money laundering vulnerabilities.

Barbados has the wealthiest economy in the Eastern Caribbean, with profits from tourism, light industry, offshore finance and information services making a significant contribution to its budget. The economic regulatory environment is moderately conducive to doing business. However, there is allegedly a significant informal economy in the country.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The government has a framework in place to provide support for trafficking victims, but there are significant weaknesses in victim and witness support. For instance, the Trafficking in Persons Prevention Act regulates the safeguarding of the identities of trafficking victims and their families, including providing protection during legal proceedings. It also establishes the right of trafficking victims to pursue restitution from offenders. There is a formal referral process for government authorities and NGOs for the care of those affected by human trafficking, and the Gender Affairs Bureau has been designated to cooperate with local NGOs. The intention was to allow female trafficking victims to reside at the NGO-operated women's domestic shelter on the island, however, the shelter did not have sufficient resources and struggled to assist the victims. There are also drug rehabilitation clinics, one of which offers treatment to young adults, as well as support mechanisms provided by NGOs in the form of counselling, detoxification, education and prevention programmes.

Prevention efforts are not remarkable, but the government has reinforced its pledge to reduce the incidents of trafficking in persons with the launch of an awareness campaign in cooperation with international institutions. Nonetheless, prevention largely depends on public awareness campaigns, although the lack of financing might have hindered the endeavour. Government's attempts to prevent drug abuse centre on awareness-raising campaigns in schools, led by officers from the country's drug squad and the community

relations unit. Barbados's media are independent and free from censorship or government influence, with journalists reporting freely on issues of organized crime and corruption.

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.