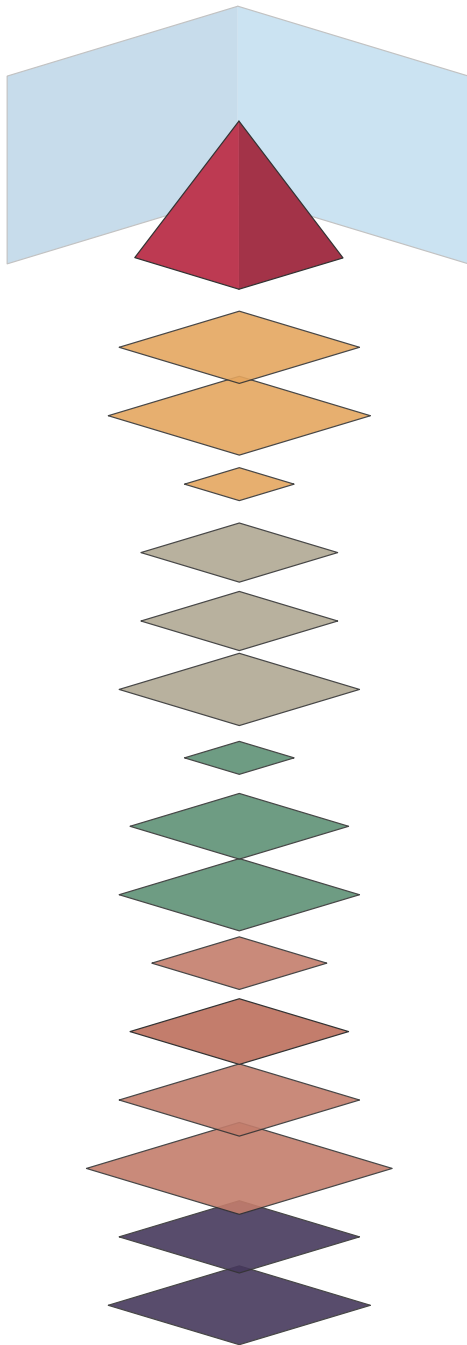




POLAND



4.48

CRIMINALITY SCORE

125th of 193 countries

28th of 44 European countries

16th of 17 Central & Eastern European countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

4.97

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 5.50

HUMAN SMUGGLING 6.00

EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING 2.50

ARMS TRAFFICKING 4.50

TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS 4.50

ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS 5.50

FLORA CRIMES 2.50

FAUNA CRIMES 5.00

NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES 5.50

HEROIN TRADE 4.00

COCAINE TRADE 5.00

CANNABIS TRADE 5.50

SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE 7.00

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES 5.50

FINANCIAL CRIMES 6.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS

4.00

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS 2.00

CRIMINAL NETWORKS 6.00

STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS 4.50

FOREIGN ACTORS 3.50

PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS 4.00



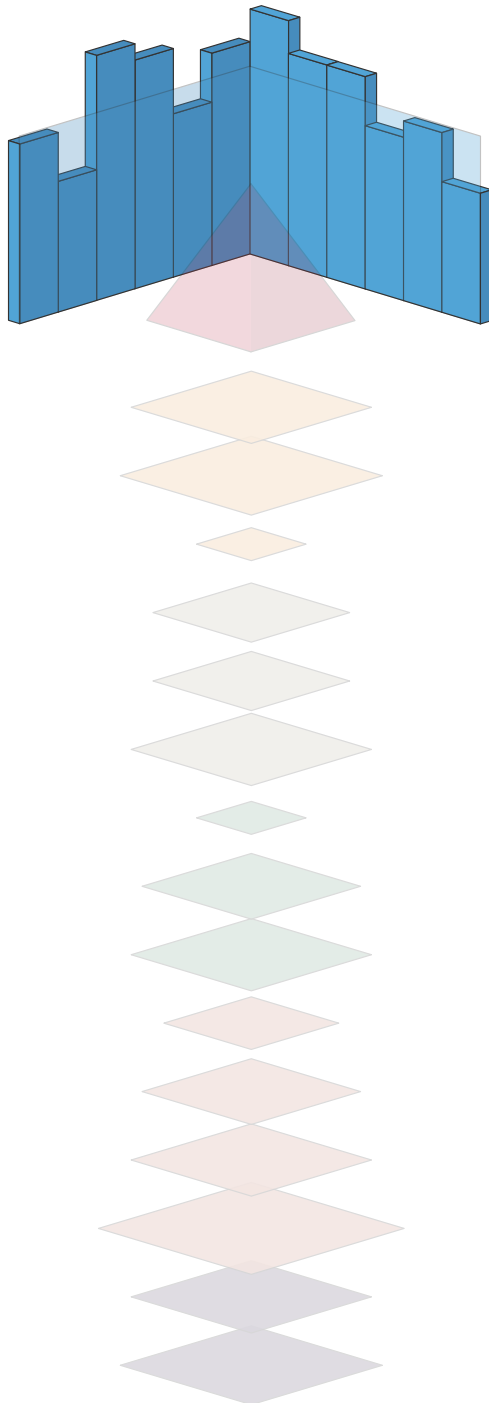
5.88

RESILIENCE SCORE





POLAND



5.88

RESILIENCE SCORE

42nd of 193 countries

27th of 44 European countries

5th of 17 Central & Eastern European countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	5.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	7.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	7.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	5.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	6.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	7.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	6.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.00
PREVENTION	5.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00



4.48

CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.97



CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.00



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Poland is a source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. Forced labour is the main form of trafficking and male foreigner nationals are usually targeted. Women and children, especially from Eastern and south-eastern Europe as well as South America, are mainly trafficked for sexual exploitation in the country. Criminal groups often recruit Polish, Ukrainian and Russian women through advertisements on the internet and then force them into prostitution. Polish victims are also forced into begging, stealing, or extorting credit and social benefits.

Human smuggling in Poland has become a significant source of income for organized crime groups and funds received from such activities are often used for other criminal practices. Smuggling routes usually cross the Belarussian and Ukrainian borders to Poland, to continue further west. On the Belarussian border, massive pushbacks of migrants coming from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan and lack of cooperation between the two countries, combined with the involvement of state actors in these practices, have increased opportunities for human smugglers. In addition, the war in Ukraine brought millions of Ukrainians to Poland and the sudden influx and chaotic humanitarian operations in the first months of the crisis made the refugees vulnerable to smugglers and traffickers. Extortion and protection racketeering are recorded in the country, although such criminal activities are limited to rare incidents and are carried out in an opportunistic and unorganized manner.

TRADE

Although still relatively modest in scale, arms trafficking is increasing in and through Poland, despite the strict regulations and the military's control of the arms market. The southern border, with its well-established trafficking routes, is a particular source of concern for Poland. There is a small but steadily developing illegal arms market in the country, with guns being trafficked from Slovakia and Czechia. There is also an emerging trend of the illegal transport of firearms out of Poland, mainly to Ukraine and Libya. Furthermore, arms trafficking is linked to other forms of trafficking, mainly drugs and excise goods. Illegal weapons are smuggled from the US to Poland and other European countries through the darknet. There is also an emerging market in 3-D-printed weapons, with illegal workshops set up across the EU.

Counterfeit goods in Poland are a growing challenge and are either produced locally or, more often, imported from

China. A good percentage of Polish consumers accept that they buy counterfeit goods, predominantly clothes, leather goods and cosmetics as well as toys, games, sport equipment, food, medicine and electronics. The COVID-19 pandemic increased trade in counterfeit products, as many consumers started to use e-commerce websites, while highly specialized criminal networks adjusted their marketing and production strategies.

Trade in excise goods in Poland is carried out along with trade in counterfeits. However, it is seen as an opportunistic activity in the country, while international trade is more organized. Poland is a popular destination for illegal trade in cigarettes and alcohol without excise. The market for cigarettes is, for the most part, fed by products produced in illegal factories. Nevertheless, occasional attempts to smuggle large quantities of cigarettes occur both by road transport, mainly from Belarus, and by sea. This illicit market is mostly operated by Polish citizens and those from neighbouring countries.

ENVIRONMENT

The market for illicit trade in flora is not well developed in Poland. There is, however, a growing concern about the illegal flora trade on the internet. In the last two years, an increase in illegal logging across the entire country has been noted. There have been cases in which crime groups are reported to supply illegally logged timber to sawmills where timber is converted into planks. Furthermore, since the war in Ukraine, Polish companies are reported to circumvent EU sanctions by paying Belarussian companies to import timber with false documents, which claim that the wood comes from Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan instead of Russia.

Poland is both a destination and transit point for wildlife trafficking, which is increasingly expanding in the country. Live birds, reptiles and caviar are some of the most illegally traded wildlife and wildlife-derived products. Crime groups involved in this market distribute produce through courier networks to Western European countries. This indicates the presence of structured criminal supply chains involved in the illegal wildlife trade in Poland. The country's border with Ukraine has been identified as a critical wildlife trafficking hotspot. In addition, some organized crime groups are involved in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in Poland. This is a lucrative business and the crime groups involved sometimes use violence against law enforcement officials.

Poland has a pervasive market for the illegal extraction and smuggling of natural resources. The country's key non-renewable resources include coal, silver, natural gas, amber, copper and salt. Organized criminal networks,

mafia-style networks and private sector actors participate in illegal trade of non-renewable resources in Poland, predominately fuel. Polish criminal groups are also involved in the illegal trade of coal and amber. Due to the coal crisis and high heating fees in Poland, there is a resurgence in the phenomenon of illegal mining. In addition, diesel, mainly imported from the east, is laundered and sold as a biofuel in Poland. The perpetrators of the crimes take advantage of the differentiation of excise tax rates for diesel and heating oil, as well as the tax exemptions for other fuels. Smugglers use land and maritime routes; source countries are based in Western, southern and Eastern Europe, as well as the Black Sea region.

DRUGS

Poland is a source, destination and transit country for heroin. However, while domestic heroin is mostly produced for the Polish market, heroin arriving in the country originates from Afghanistan and is transited through the Balkans to Germany or the United Kingdom. The heroin market is dominated by organized mafia-style groups dispersed across Europe who are often involved in numerous criminal markets. However, there is a decline in heroin consumption in Poland, which may be related to the significant increase in the popularity of drugs derived from cannabis.

Poland is primarily a transit and destination country for smuggling of cocaine from South America to Western European countries. The illicit cocaine trade in Poland is a dynamic and international market, where distribution is flexible in a loose, horizontally structured network, allowing more small distributors who employ a variety of marketing strategies to enter the market. However, cocaine is considered a luxury drug in Poland due to its high price and it is mostly consumed by affluent individuals. Cocaine is commonly smuggled in containers containing legal products, such as food, wood, industrial machinery and citrus fruit, which are received by legally operating Polish or international companies. Polish citizens are also used as couriers for cocaine smuggling using the mail or the 'ingestion' method.

Poland is a source and transit country for cannabis products including hashish, resin and dried leaves. Medical use of marijuana is legal in Poland and it can be obtained at pharmacies with a prescription. The illegal cultivation and production of cannabis products is predominantly run by organized criminal groups including groups composed of citizens from various Asian countries. However, members of Polish criminal groups are also organizers of cannabis cultivation outside Poland's borders, especially in Spain. In recent years, the smuggling of cannabis-related drugs from cannabis from Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands has become a regular part of the earnings of Polish citizens who, when leaving the country, transport precursors for the production of synthetic drugs and when returning to Poland transport marijuana and hashish.

The illicit synthetic drugs market is the largest drug market in Poland. The most common synthetic drugs are amphetamine, methamphetamine, MDMA, Ecstasy, GBL, BMK and other designer drugs. The illegal synthetic drug market (primarily focused on amphetamine, methamphetamine and MDMA) is controlled by organized criminal groups or mafia-style groups with international ties. Additionally, amphetamine is produced in Poland for European markets, while amphetamine in liquid form is smuggled into the country. Polish criminal groups import it because it is easy to process into an inhalable form. Another drug frequently imported into Poland is Ecstasy pills. It comes overland from the Netherlands and Belgium transported by couriers who use their own vehicles.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cyber-dependent crimes in Poland mostly consist of ransomware. Due to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, the number of cyber-attacks has drastically increased. Perpetrators use the cyber vulnerabilities created by the Russia-Ukraine war to commit both financially motivated and politically motivated crimes. Perpetrators target individuals with assets, such as crypto wallets. They also attack government agencies' websites and online resources, satellite operations and critical infrastructure, such as state institutions and banks.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes in Poland are on the rise. The country has had numerous cases involving VAT fraud carried out by organized crime groups. Schemes include mis-invoicing, trade in fictitious goods, forging VAT documents and similar activities, which have earned vast amounts of money for the perpetrators. Goods involved in illegal or fictitious trade include the purchase and sale of services, including transport, construction, IT and commercial goods, fuel, food and beverages, event services and the trade in steel products. In terms of property crime, many crimes are committed in cyberspace or using electronic communications. Furthermore, organized criminal groups conduct scams on the internet, such as 'remote desktop' scams that are built around investments. The pandemic period also had a tremendous impact on the increase in cybercriminals' activity, who improved known and implemented new online fraud mechanisms.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Organized crime networks are fairly widespread in Poland, but groups in bigger cities dominate the main illicit economies. Criminal networks are most prevalent in drug-related crimes and economic offences. Depending on the illicit market, often in the drug trade, these groups have moved onto the darknet and other forms of social media platforms, to maintain anonymity. Furthermore, football hooligans

occupy a stable space in the criminal networks landscape in Poland. Members of a local Silesian football club were charged with participation in organized criminal groups along with other charges including drugs and firearms trafficking, robbery and money laundering.

There is little information in governmental and media sources on the potential involvement of private-sector and state-embedded actors in criminal activities. However, an increasing number of reports on high-level corruption provide a troublesome picture of state actors engaging in, if not criminal, at least questionable ventures. Some state-owned companies in the country, in particular those involved in the oil industry, are suspected of distorting market rules and engaging in corrupt practices to generate more profits. Also criminal activities conducted by private sector actors in Poland include various financial crimes, such as tax evasion.

Many foreign national actors participate in the trade of narcotics and human trafficking using their international links in Poland. Most criminal diasporas in the country run locally organized criminal activities but are equally involved in international criminal activities. Illegal trade in narcotics is still believed to be the focus of foreign national groups, along with high levels of cigarette smuggling. Additionally, Georgian and Ukrainian organized crime groups, participate in the illegal smuggling of migrants across Poland's eastern border. Furthermore, Poland continues to be free from domestic mafia-style groups, as two of the most famous ones, Pruszkow and Wolomin, were dissolved early in the first decade of the 2000s. However, older members of these groups sometimes attempt to get back into their business after being released from prison. In 2021, the Polish Police Central Bureau of Investigation arrested in Warsaw a man associated with the 'Old Pruszkow' mafia.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The Polish government and political parties continue to express the desire to fight organized crime. However, in practice, organized crime is not a priority, nor is it an issue raised in political debates. The impetus to fight organized crime is to halt financial crime and close the VAT tax gap, which the Polish government hopes will make additional funds available for social welfare programmes. However, recent reports suggest that the available VAT tools have not had the desired effect in eliminating organized tax fraud. Furthermore, political parties and the government are the least-trusted institutions in the country. The Central Anti-Corruption Office in Poland has been working to combat public and economic corruption at various levels, though they are perceived as 'political police'. Other institutions, including the border guard, the military gendarmerie, the military counter-intelligence service and the national revenue administration, are also responsible for combatting corruption in the country. Documentation relating to national budgets, legislative changes, public procurement and legislative processes are publicly available through information bulletins and government websites. However, even though international reports indicate improvement in corruption management in the country, public perception continues to believe in a worsening situation. There are also reports showcasing an increase in the number of corruption scandals linked to the current government and gradually normalized corrupt practices among those in power.

Poland has ratified and adopted various international statutes pertaining to various forms of organized crime. As a member of the EU, Poland participates in the implementation of EU

policies relating to counteracting and combating crime, including economic crime. The country's internal security agency cooperates internationally within the Anti-Terrorist Centre and is also a part of the EU's counter-terrorism strategy. Furthermore, the Polish police participates in the work of the Task Force for Combating Organized Crime in the Baltic Sea Region, in which Polish Central Police Investigation Bureau officers actively participate. Poland also has extradition agreements with several countries and various bilateral cooperation agreements in the fight against organized crime. Poland's regulatory framework criminalizes acts of organized crime, including drug offences; obstruction of justice; participation in organized criminal groups; smuggling of migrants; illegal trade in cultural property; and people trafficking. Poland also has an anti-corruption strategy, a programme combating economic crime, an anti-drug strategy, a strategy to develop state security, and a national plan to combat human trafficking.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Poland's justice system consists of a supreme court, common courts, administrative courts and military courts, all of which are allowed to pass judgment against organized crime. Penalties and prison sentences are imposed effectively. There have been reports of visible levels of destabilization in the judiciary in Poland. Notably, judicial proceedings are typically lengthy, and, as organized crime cases are often more complex, these can take a toll on the judicial system. The judiciary reforms implemented by the current government are not compatible with EU law and planned changes to the legal system may further undermine democracy in Poland.

The treatment of prisoners in Poland is not in line with EU standards, nor with international human rights standards.

The police in Poland cooperate with the military police and the military information services in the fight against organized crime, and the national prosecutor's office has a department for organized crime and corruption. The activities undertaken by the Polish police's central bureau of investigation are aimed at combating organized crime of a cross-border nature that are related to terrorist acts. The internal security agency was established to protect the internal security of the state and its citizens, and deals with recognizing structures, undertakings and methods of operation of organized crime. Nevertheless, law enforcement is not effective enough in countering organized crime and face challenges with political interference. Furthermore, Poland's ruling party recently introduced new legislation that effectively allows mass surveillance, which is against EU law. In December 2021, reports emerged about the government's use of the Israeli spyware Pegasus to keep many Polish opposition figures under surveillance.

Poland's position on the eastern border of the European Union makes it attractive for the smuggling many products, such as tobacco and cigarettes. Despite this position, Poland is an independent country with no challenges to its territorial integrity. The scale and dynamics of crime on Poland's eastern border are determined by political decisions on the rules relating to border crossings and are also determined by economic factors, such as differences in the price of excise goods. The Polish border guard is a well-organized and functioning institution that cooperates with many counterparts in neighbouring countries, as well as with Frontex, Europol and Eurojust. However, Poland's cyberspace is threatened by the increase in cyber-dependent crimes, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. To ensure the integrity of its national cyberspace, Poland makes efforts to systematically strengthen and develop its national cyber-security system. These efforts include the establishment of a new cyberspace defence force that is being developed by the National Cyberspace Security Centre, as a specialized component of the Polish armed forces.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Polish system of counteracting money laundering and the financing of terrorism is shaped by both national and EU regulations. The General Inspector of Financial Information is the mandated authority to verify suspicions of money laundering or terrorist financing contained in reports issued by various local and foreign institutions and finance investigating units. The national tax administration, the internal security agency, the central anti-corruption bureau and the central investigation bureau are also tasked with investigating irregularities and enforcing the relevant regulations. However, the authorities have limited understanding of money laundering and terrorism financing, and this renders the regulatory framework ineffective. Recent

changes were introduced in the Law on Counteracting Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism and certain other laws to improve the functioning of the laws on anti-money laundering and anti-financing of terrorism. Nevertheless, the effects of these amendments are yet to be observed. Legitimate businesses are reported to be influenced by criminal groups carrying out activities in Poland. The government fails to protect legitimate businesses due to a lack of effective regulations. Furthermore, the grey economy has continued to grow in recent years, fuelled by the COVID-19 pandemic.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Poland has victim assistance measures in place. The Minister of Justice recently approved a programme to assist victims of crime in response to a diagnosed need to introduce uniform standards of assistance to crime victims and witnesses. Poland has also adopted a national action plan against trafficking in human beings. However, the Fund for Victims' Aid and Post-Penitentiary Assistance's financial management was conducted in violation of the principles governing public finance, as some of the funds were spent to achieve other goals rather than to help victims of crime. Currently, there are 16 main assistance centers that provide support in the form of free legal, psychological, social and other services to people who have been victimized by crime. Various NGOs and other organizations provide witness protection and support victims of organized crime.

Poland has several strategies in place that relate to the prevention of drugs crimes, economic crimes, corruption and human trafficking. Many programmes and strategies directly or indirectly aim to fight organized crime. For instance, the Polish police has initiated a training cycle to raise awareness about human trafficking victims among crime prevention services. There are also various local programmes and workshops raising awareness about human trafficking and drug use. However, not enough evaluation of the effectiveness of these efforts has been done.

Civil society organizations are an important component of maintaining the balance of power, exposing irregularities and working to moderate against government actions in political and social life. Researchers and scientists in criminology or law prepare many studies on organized crime. Meanwhile, media independence from the government plays a significant role in the disclosure of organized crime. However, the media have experienced unprecedented harassment and government intimidation in various forms, including requests to remove news articles uncovering corruption, suing newspapers and taking control of national TV, spreading disinformation and promoting the ruling party.

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