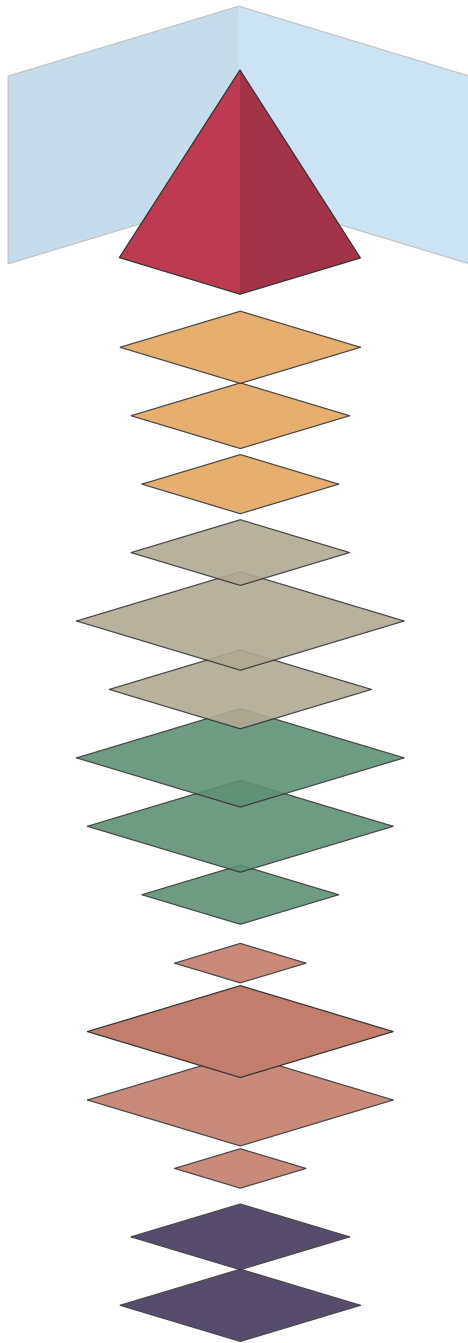




# SENEGAL



5.52

## CRIMINALITY SCORE

73<sup>rd</sup> of 193 countries

22<sup>nd</sup> of 54 African countries

7<sup>th</sup> of 15 West African countries



### CRIMINAL MARKETS

5.53

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	5.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.00
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	4.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.00
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	7.50
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	6.00
FLORA CRIMES	7.50
FAUNA CRIMES	7.00
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.50
HEROIN TRADE	3.00
COCAINE TRADE	7.00
CANNABIS TRADE	7.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	3.00
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	5.00
FINANCIAL CRIMES	5.50



### CRIMINAL ACTORS

5.50

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	3.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	5.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.50
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	7.00



5.79

## RESILIENCE SCORE



Funding provided by the United States Government.

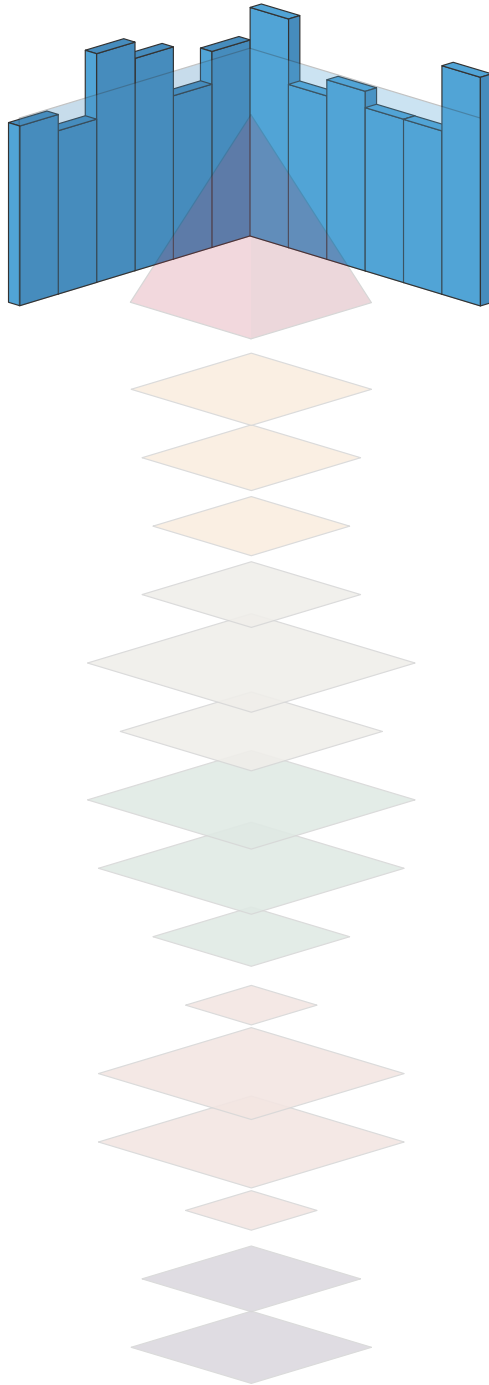


Funded by the European Union

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# SENEGAL



5.79

## RESILIENCE SCORE

45<sup>th</sup> of 193 countries

2<sup>nd</sup> of 54 African countries

2<sup>nd</sup> of 15 West African countries

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



5.52

## CRIMINALITY SCORE



**CRIMINAL MARKETS** 5.53



**CRIMINAL ACTORS** 5.50



# CRIMINALITY

## CRIMINAL MARKETS

### PEOPLE

Senegal functions as both a source and destination country for human trafficking. Of particular concern is the trafficking of children from Guinea-Bissau to Senegal, and of Senegalese children within the country, by so-called Quranic teachers. This traditional practice was originally instituted to educate children in Islamic teachings and values, but it has been corrupted over time owing to the profitability of child begging. Sex trafficking is also a serious issue. Senegal is a hub for labour agencies that recruit people from West Africa to work in the Gulf, the Middle East, and Europe. However, a lack of regulation enables exploitation and trafficking to occur, particularly forced sex work, which predominantly affects women. Kedougou, a mining region in the south-east of Senegal, has emerged as a major destination for trafficked women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Although victims from various countries, such as Ghana and Guinea, are involved, the vast majority originate from Nigeria, and the trafficking networks moving Nigerian women to mine sites are highly organized.

Senegal has played over the past decade a major role as an origin and transit point for individuals being smuggled to Europe. Since 2020, the maritime irregular migration route to the Canary Islands experienced a significant resurgence. A large proportion of movement along this route is facilitated by smugglers, although many of these smuggling networks are informal and loosely organized. There are departure points across Senegal's coastline, but the major embarkation hubs are Mbour and Saint Louis. This irregular migration route is among the most deadly in the world, with many boats sinking en route. While some nationals from other West African countries travel to Senegal to embark on this smuggling route, particularly Malians and Gambians, the majority are Senegalese nationals. Senegal remains a hotspot for document and visa fraud, as individuals from other countries seek fraudulent means of passage by land, sea, or air to reach Europe.

Regarding extortion and protection racketeering, even though these illicit activities are not widespread in the country, sporadic cases of extortion have been reported in recent years, especially after the outbreak of the COVID-19.

### TRADE

Senegal, a generally peaceful and stable country, is grappling with a low-scale conflict in the southern region of Casamance involving the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC). Since 1982, the MFDC has been acquiring arms, primarily homemade weapons, in order to carry out insurgency against the government. Reports suggest that weaponry stolen from Senegalese army personnel and the alleged supply of weapons from Iran to MFDC rebels play a role in the arms trade. However, it is unlikely that external arms flows are exacerbating the Casamance conflict significantly, as the rebel movement primarily relies on locally seized or acquired weapons. The presence of different types of arms, including AK 47 and other automatic weapons, is also reported in the gold mining sites of the south-eastern region of Kedougou. These arms are allegedly trafficked from Mali. Besides Kedougou and the Casamance, Madina Gounas has also emerged as an important hub of arms trafficking in the country. Arms in Madina Gounas mainly come from Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, and are used for robberies and attacks in the vast south-eastern region of the country, including in the Kedougou mining sites. Despite these concerning dynamics, the arms trafficking market in the country remains relatively small in scale.

Senegal has emerged as a thriving hub for the trade of counterfeit medications, particularly pharmaceuticals. These illicit products often lack active pharmaceutical ingredients, contain the incorrect amount of ingredients, or are contaminated or expired. They are predominantly sold on the street in rural areas and markets, targeting individuals who cannot afford the more expensive legitimate drugs available in pharmacies. Counterfeit medications are smuggled into Senegal from Guinea, Gambia, and Mauritania. Despite the closure of land borders during the COVID-19 pandemic, criminal networks seized the opportunity to smuggle counterfeit drugs into the country, especially chloroquine, which was falsely promoted as a miracle cure for the virus.

The illicit trade of tobacco has risen in West African countries, Senegal included, with the products primarily originating in Asian countries, such as Vietnam and Dubai, and passing through the ports of Dakar, among others. The absence of appropriate taxation on tobacco imports creates an opportunity for smugglers. The contraband cigarettes are transported to countries such as Mali, Mauritania, and Libya, as well as other areas in North Africa, using the 'in transit' declaration to evade inspections and import taxes. Once in the destination country, the illicit cigarettes are distributed in local markets, where they are misrepresented as legitimate goods.

## ENVIRONMENT

The illicit flora market in Senegal, particularly in the Casamance region, continues to be a significant issue. Chinese criminal actors and Casamance rebels have played a major role in the devastation of the forests in that area through illegal logging, leading to the depletion of endangered tree species such as the West African rosewood, the African mahogany, and the Cayor pear. The MFDC is reportedly involved in the illegal timber trade between Senegal and Gambia, as a source of funds for their activities. Chinese intermediaries are also believed to be engaged in the trade, exporting timber to China through the Gambian port of Banjul. In addition to Casamance, Tambacounda Region, particularly the areas of Maka, Kolibantan, and the Goudiry Department, has also been plagued by timber trafficking. While recent military operations against the MFDC rebels have led to a decrease in the trade, it remains uncertain whether this can be sustained in the long term. Timber trafficking is also taking place in the park of Niokolo Koba, though at a lower scale. Rosewood cut in the park is reportedly transported mainly to Gambia and Guinea.

The fishing industry in Senegal has been severely impacted by illicit activity, resulting in significant financial losses for the country. The sector is plagued by fraud, corruption, and monopolistic practices, with the state itself guilty of playing a role in maintaining this monopoly. Overfishing, particularly by large industrial trawlers from China, has led to the depletion of fish stocks, putting artisanal fishermen, who rely on small pelagic fish for food security, at a disadvantage. Additionally, tensions have flared between Senegalese and Mauritanian fishermen, and encroachments into Mauritania's waters have resulted in violent confrontations. Senegal also serves as a significant transit hub for the illicit trafficking of ivory and other wildlife products from Central Africa. Commodities traded include big cat species, lion skins and bones, armadillo feet, Ruppell's vultures, and scimitar oryx, which are sought after for traditional Chinese and African medicinal and black magic purposes.

Nationals from neighbouring West African countries are prominent in illicit gold mining in Senegal, although Senegalese nationals are also involved. The eastern region of Kedougou, which is rich in gold deposits, is a hotspot for illegal gold mining and smuggling. Although the scale of this activity in Senegal is not as significant as it is in other countries in the region, it is reportedly increasing. The recent discovery of oil and gas reserves in Senegal has raised concerns about potential corruption and illicit practices.

## DRUGS

Seizures of heroin in Senegal are less frequent than those of cocaine and other drugs, and trade of this substance is believed to be relatively small-scale when compared to other countries in the region. However, over the past decade Senegal has become a crucial transit hub for the trafficking of cocaine into Europe, facilitated by its strategic

location, political instability in neighbouring countries, and its extensive coastal areas. Despite these factors, the cocaine trade is not associated with significant violence. The development of a new container port close to Dakar could facilitate expansion of illicit shipments in the future.

The trade and use of cannabis in Senegal continues to be widespread, particularly in the southern Casamance region. Cannabis cultivation in that area is carried out by the MFDC and the local population, with the Karones Islands near The Gambia being a hotspot for production and sale. The economic benefits of cannabis, which fetches a higher price than other crops, drive its cultivation. Senegal also serves as a transit point for regional cannabis trade, primarily of resin, with Dakar being a key hub for onward distribution to neighbouring countries.

The synthetic drug trade in Senegal is of a smaller scale than other forms of drug trafficking. While Senegal does not produce synthetic drugs, it reportedly serves as a transit country for their distribution. Tramadol, which is widely abused in West Africa, is consumed to some extent in the mining areas of Kedougou Region. The drug is trafficked from Mali and Guinea. Amphetamine use is also reported among Chinese construction workers in the country and among the professional wrestling community.

## CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Cybercrime in Senegal is carried out by both local and foreign criminal groups. Cybercriminals often utilize VPNs and other privacy-enabled platforms to conduct their illicit activities. There has been a recent surge in cybercrime in Dakar, attributed in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of these activities are centred around malware or hacking.

## FINANCIAL CRIMES

Fraud and tax evasion are widespread issues in Senegal, resulting in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in state revenue. Tax evasion is particularly prevalent, and billionaires and multinational corporations have been accused of concealing their assets in tax havens or countries with extremely low taxation rates, even when they have no business operations there. Nigerian nationals are known to play a significant role in cyber-enabled financial crime, with phishing and skimming being particularly common.

## CRIMINAL ACTORS

State-embedded criminal actors operate as closed groups, with corrupt low-level officials being present across many state institutions. These officials are utilized by high-ranking individuals to facilitate corrupt practices. Corruption extends beyond the public sector, and involves collusion between state actors and the private sector to conceal beneficial ownership in areas such as procurement,

company ownership, and asset holdings. Petty corruption is also prevalent, and although civil society and the local media actively expose abuses, high-profile convictions are rare. Private-sector actors are known to be involved in the vast informal sector that serves as the backbone of the Senegalese economy.

Senegal's level of development and stability, which is relatively high in the region, has seen it become a hub for foreign criminal actors. Nigerian criminal groups, which have a longstanding presence in Senegal, are active, primarily in drug trafficking, cybercrime, and human trafficking. Other individuals from West African countries are known to operate in the gold-rich region of Kedougou, engaging in illegal gold mining and smuggling. Additionally, there have been reports of Chinese vessels fishing illegally in Senegalese waters, and allegations of Chinese nationals being involved in wildlife crime, including ivory trafficking, and in illicit gold mining. Smaller criminal networks in Senegal are engaged in various illicit activities such as drug trafficking,

money laundering, and car theft. Many of these networks have connections to foreign criminal groups, particularly organizations based in France.

Where mafia-style groups are concerned, the MFDC is known to engage in illicit trade (particularly protection of illicit timber trafficking) and drug trafficking to generate revenue, alongside its political aspirations for Casamance's independence or increased autonomy. However, the MFDC has been considerably weakened following the offensive of the national army in 2021 and 2022 and the dismantlement of several of their bases in the North Sine and at the border with Guinea-Bissau. Besides the MFDC, there are also other groups in Senegal that exploit criminal opportunities for profit, and there is the potential for these groups to evolve into consolidated mafia-style organizations. Notably, individuals from influential religious families in Senegal are known to be deeply involved in the trafficking of counterfeit medicines, operating with impunity despite government awareness.

# RESILIENCE

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Senegal is generally considered to be a stable country in Africa, but it still faces the risk of political instability. The government is committed to combating organized crime, and progress has been made in addressing specific criminal activities, such as timber trafficking. However, the political climate in Senegal has been influenced by the economic hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing fuel and food prices, which has caused frustration among the population. Transparency and accountability frameworks in Senegal are compromised by political interests, leading to a lack of implementation and respect for these mechanisms. Anti-corruption bodies have faced criticisms of bias, as no members of the president's party have been prosecuted for financial crimes, while members of other parties have. The Senegalese media largely attribute the country's corruption to a lack of political will. While Senegal has made efforts to improve transparency and governance in the energy and mining sectors, corruption persists among high-level officials, who often act with impunity, and the enforcement of anti-corruption laws is uneven. Daily practices of corruption, such as bribery, are reported in public service, but citizens fear reprisals for denouncing these crimes. A lack of transparency is evident in contracts awarded without formal tender processes, including decisions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic, which raises concerns about mismanagement and accountability.

Senegal demonstrates a strong commitment to international cooperation across multiple fronts. The country ratified relevant treaties and continues to promote collaboration with other states. Efforts are made to enhance cooperation with neighbouring countries such as The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, particularly in areas like drug enforcement and cross-border operations. Senegal's engagement in peace operations, both at UN and regional levels, indicates its dedication to regional stability. The country has implemented legal frameworks to address organized crime, particularly in areas such as timber trafficking, cyber-security, and transnational terrorism. Efforts have also been made to establish a national drug strategy and to reform drug laws. However, certain laws, such as the law against human trafficking, require updates to address contemporary challenges effectively. Additionally, Senegal faces criticism for lagging in its anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism obligations, specifically in addressing the connection between illicit drug proceeds and money laundering, particularly related to property acquisition.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The justice system in Senegal is generally independent when it comes to prosecuting individuals involved in organized crime. However, its capacity to address such crimes effectively is limited, resulting in slow proceedings.

Currently, there are no specialized judicial units dedicated to organized crime cases. The lack of knowledge, skills, and specialization in handling complex crimes, including trans-border money laundering and financial crime, is a notable challenge. Moreover, the transnational nature of organized crime has not been fully integrated into Senegalese judicial practices. To overcome these issues, there is a pressing need for enhanced capacity building for legal practitioners. Additionally, significant human rights challenges exist, including prolonged pre-trial detention and prison overcrowding. It is worth noting that the judicial system does not extend to rural areas, which often rely on traditional methods of conflict resolution.

Senegal's law enforcement agencies are widely recognized within Africa as being highly professional and dynamic. However, they face challenges such as shortages of skills, training, and adequate resources to address security concerns effectively. Specialized law enforcement units dedicated to combating organized crime are lacking, and there is a particular need for better nationwide focus on financial crime. In response to regional instability, which poses a primary threat to national security, the Senegalese government has developed a strategy that prioritizes counterterrorism and cross-border organized crime.

Despite porous land borders and instances of cross-border crime, Senegal has been successful in maintaining its territorial integrity. The country also contributes to efforts to combat maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. However, relative insecurity persists in Casamance, which has led to several countries issuing travel advisories. Although the main faction of the MFDC declared a ceasefire in 2014 and is engaging in ongoing political discussions, armed separatist groups and instances of banditry continue to pose a threat in the region. There have been occasional violent incidents, including attacks on travellers, businesses, and villages. The military offensive in Casamance has also resulted in forced displacement, with thousands of people fleeing the area, often with limited belongings.

## ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Senegal has made significant strides in combating money laundering, but concerns remain regarding its compliance with international standards. In February 2021, Senegal was grey-listed, indicating deficiencies in its anti-money laundering measures. One of the key drivers of financial crime in Senegal is drug trafficking, which fuels a substantial illegal economy. The real estate and construction sectors are commonly exploited for money laundering purposes, as large amounts of cash from the drug trade are channelled into construction projects throughout the country. Technical expertise is lacking, particularly in training financial professionals to identify and report money laundering activities. Furthermore, Senegal's financial public policies indirectly facilitate illicit money flows. The prevalent use of cash, the sizeable informal sector, and limitations within

the judicial system all hinder effective law enforcement. Additionally, the fixed exchange rate between the local currency, the CFA franc, and the euro limits Senegal's control over its monetary system and contributes to the proliferation of illegal foreign exchange markets in West Africa.

Senegal's regulatory environment is a critical factor in attracting trade and investment partners and driving economic growth. The country enjoys macroeconomic stability as a result of its fixed exchange rate with the euro. While French companies maintain a strong presence, Senegal is actively working towards diversifying its trade partners and has successfully attracted significant investment from international actors in sectors such as oil and gas exploration, agriculture, mining, energy, and services. Notable progress has been made in improving the country's transport infrastructure, including the development of the port in Dakar and plans for a new container port. The government has also initiated an extensive road-building programme and has ambitious goals for the railway sector. Additionally, ongoing investments in the electricity sector aim to diversify energy sources, reduce costs, and enhance distribution and reliability, addressing a significant barrier to conducting business in Senegal. The energy sector holds tremendous potential with regards to the country's economic growth, and several oil and gas projects are scheduled to commence in 2023.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

The area of victim support in Senegal has experienced positive developments in recent times. Several years ago, a unique centre for the treatment of people with drug addiction was opened in Dakar, the first of its kind in West Africa. The Senegalese government is also actively engaged in preventing and combating organized crime. Regular sensitization campaigns are organized to address the proliferation of arms and light weapons. However, despite these efforts, the prevention of organized crime is not given the highest priority.

Overall, civil society in Senegal is highly active. As for the media landscape, instances of the abuse of journalists have been relatively infrequent in recent years, but certain topics remain off limits, and media personnel have faced summonses and intimidation when covering corruption-related issues. Even though the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech, several recent developments have constrained press freedom in the country. For instance, a controversial law has instituted prison terms for defamation and the dissemination of so-called fake news that may, as the law states, discredit public institutions or harm public decency. There have been instances of internet disruptions and partial blocks of social media following the arrest of opposition leaders, and regulators have suspended television stations, citing potential threats to national stability or social cohesion. Concerns have also

been raised about the broadness of amendments to the penal code and criminal procedure aimed at combating terrorism, as they could have implications for dissent and police surveillance powers.

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