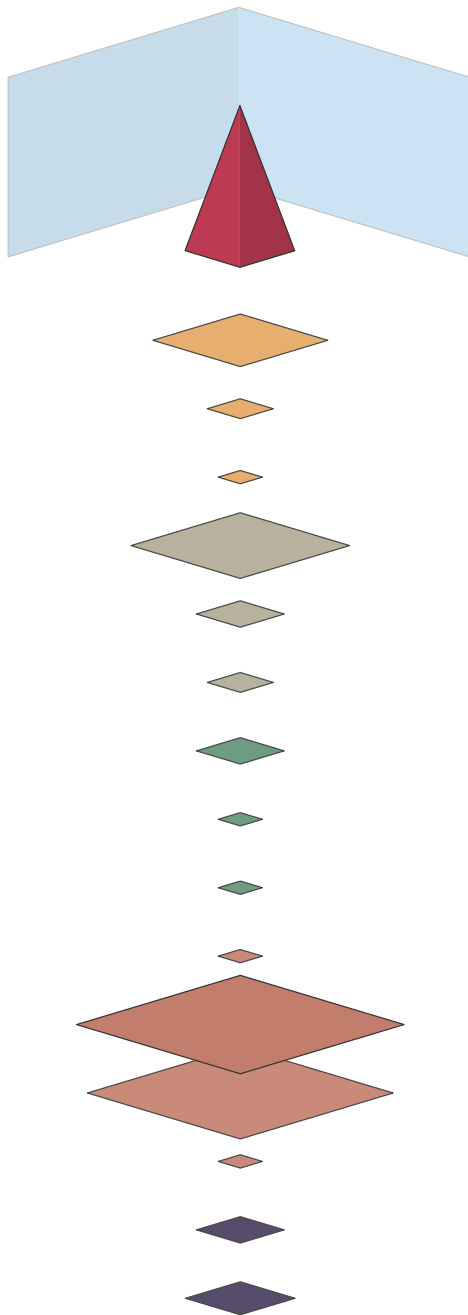




ST. LUCIA



3.53

CRIMINALITY SCORE

166th of 193 countries
27th of 35 American countries
6th of 13 Caribbean countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

2.67

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



CRIMINAL ACTORS

4.40

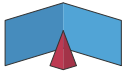
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	5.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	4.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	5.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	6.00
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	2.00



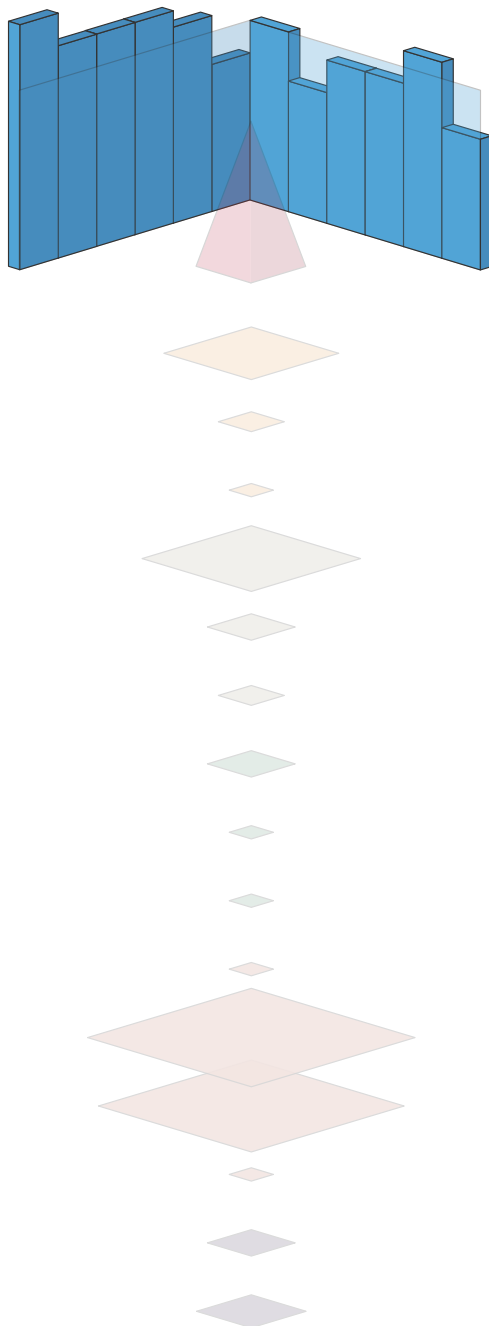
5.58

RESILIENCE SCORE





ST. LUCIA



5.58

RESILIENCE SCORE

54th of 193 countries
9th of 35 American countries
2nd of 13 Caribbean countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	7.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.50
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	4.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	5.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	5.00
PREVENTION	6.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00



3.53

CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL MARKETS 2.67



CRIMINAL ACTORS 4.40



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

St. Lucia is affected by human trafficking, but the market continues to be small-scale and primarily part of the sex worker industry. Nevertheless, this criminal market involves criminal groups that deceive and coerce men, women and children into sexual and labour exploitation. Victims are both St. Lucia nationals as well as regular and irregular migrants from other Caribbean nations (Haiti, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic) as well as Guyana and South Asia. Foreign women working in strip clubs are also vulnerable to sex trafficking. Local children, especially those of economically disadvantaged families, are particularly vulnerable to victimization in sex trafficking. They are often encouraged or forced by parents and caretakers to enter exploitation. Reportedly, women or older teenagers are active in recruiting younger adolescents and the perpetrators are often entrepreneurs from St. Lucia, India, China, Cuba and Russia. The increased social and economic vulnerabilities induced by the COVID-19 pandemic have provided fertile conditions for the continued grooming, recruitment and exploitation of unsuspecting victims, particularly women and girls.

There are sporadic reports of arrivals and transits involving migrants, but no evidence of organized or systematic smuggling occurring. Regarding extortion perpetrated by organized crime groups, there is no data to prove the existence of this crime in the country.

TRADE

Porous borders and a lack of intelligence contribute to arms trafficking on the island. St. Lucia's proximity to Martinique led to the establishment of strong illicit trade routes between the two. These routes are well documented as part of the cocaine trade and suspected as facilitating arms trafficking as well. Allegedly, Venezuelan drug networks smuggle firearms into St. Lucia along with cocaine. The weapons are then used by local crime groups to secure their drug stockpiles. Alternatively, illegal arms shipments coming into St. Lucia from the US are exported to Martinique for onward transportation to mainland France. There has been an increase in murders in recent years on the island but evidence of a growing arms trafficking market is still scarce.

Although there are low numbers of counterfeit goods circulating in the country, there is no evidence to suggest that the market is prevalent in the country. Similarly, although some excise goods are routinely smuggled inter-island

across the Eastern Caribbean, this trade is not organized and is not taking place on any notable scale.

ENVIRONMENT

While an illicit market for orchids that are exported to France does exist, it does not appear to be a significant one. There is no evidence to suggest that either fauna or non-renewable resources crimes markets exist in St. Lucia.

DRUGS

There is no evidence to suggest that an illicit heroin market exists, as there are no reported cases of heroin use or instances of seized heroin shipments coming into or through St. Lucia. Conversely, the country is a key Caribbean transit hub for cocaine shipments bound mainly for the US, Europe or Canada. Crucial to St. Lucia's role in the cocaine trade is its proximity to Martinique, which has drawn Venezuelan crime groups. The latter usually deliver cocaine via fishing boats and offload the drugs at sea off the west coast of St. Lucia. Other groups may prefer offshore airdrops but, in both cases, local traffickers collect the goods in small boats and stockpile them along the island's coastline. Such shipments have recently decreased in frequency, but increased in quantity. Subsequently, cocaine is trafficked to Martinique or loaded onto yachts destined directly for Europe. Cocaine is consumed locally, but its prevalence is not large and is arguably a by-product of cocaine transiting through the country, as is violence and murder.

Cannabis is produced and consumed on the island and is therefore a highly prevalent narcotic. Cannabis is also smuggled from St. Vincent and the Grenadines on fishing vessels or inter-island freight vessels moving through St. Lucian territorial waters. In cultivation areas of cannabis crops, eradication activities are conducted. For this reason, the production of cannabis is also a big risk to St. Lucia's forests, given that cultivators threaten biodiversity with alien plants, cutting down the virgin forest as well as endangering natural flora. At least 69 native species have already disappeared in connection with cannabis crops.

Reports have noted sporadic seizures of ecstasy coming into the country from the UK, but domestic use or organized trafficking of synthetic drugs is still assessed to be non-existent.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

Little is known currently about the level of cybercrime in St. Lucia. However, it is likely that the market currently exerts minimal influence, with the potential for an upward trend in the coming years.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

There is evidence of financial crime occurring in the country. There have been some cases of fraudulent sales via social media, specifically scams directed at farmers, but there are no reported cases of embezzlement or misuse of funds. St. Lucia does provide offshore financial services as well as citizenship by investment schemes, which create vulnerabilities for illicit activities in the country.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Local gangs in St. Lucia reportedly provide essential services in some areas of the country, such as security and transport, for which they are paid in cash, arms or drugs. Moreover, these gangs seem to have capitalized on the economic fallout driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, with an increase in members targeting schoolchildren to recruit

them. Competition between different gangs might lead to violence, including homicide. Besides drug distribution, these entities are also allegedly involved in robberies and extortion, and operate primarily in Castries, Gros Islet and Vieux Fort. Drug routes, however, are mainly controlled by international traffickers, who collaborate with local criminal networks. Less organized domestic gangs are in fact known to be active and present in the country, mainly to provide assistance to foreign actors.

Although there are strong indications that corrupt officials facilitate criminal operations (including, for example, some customs officers facilitating the import of cocaine and firearms on a semi-regular basis), evidence of state-embedded actors systematically working with crime organizations is scarce. Similarly, indications of private sector actors facilitating illicit financial flows and money laundering are minimal.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The government holds a firm stance on serious crime, evident in the country's development plan, spanning 2019–2022, now being extended with the Medium-term Development Strategy for 2020–2023. The democratic process is independent and protected from criminal influence, although corruption and inadequate transparency are recognized as problematic. International observers report corruption perceptions in St. Lucia to be low to moderate, in spite of allegations of corruption against some high-profile political figures in the country. Several national bodies are tasked with anti-corruption. However, they are somewhat constrained due to inadequate funding. The country also has an array of regulations to combat corruption, although they are not regularly enforced.

St. Lucia is a party to a number of international treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime and corruption. The country cooperates effectively with partners, albeit mainly on areas related to drug trafficking, including through membership of the Regional Security System. St. Lucia has a fairly strong and up-to-date legal framework, influenced by the UK legal system. St. Lucia's legislation focuses mostly on drug trafficking and gang-related activity.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The judiciary is generally independent, and corruption in the judicial system has not been identified as a major obstacle. The right to a fair trial in St. Lucia is also guaranteed but the legal system is notorious for its slow delivery of justice,

which results in a growing backlog of cases and long stays of pre-trial detention. The prison system is also under pressure, with overcrowding reportedly being an issue. In spite of some instances of guards beating inmates, the country's only prison meets international prison standards.

The Royal St. Lucia Police Force (RSLPF) is the main agency responsible for maintaining law and order in the country. The RSLPF, unlike St. Lucia's Customs, enjoys high levels of public trust, although police brutality and excessive use of force have damaged its reputation in recent years. Reports of impunity also persist and are likely due to the inefficiency of the judicial system, particularly the lack of resources, and the strong public and political support for the police. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies in St. Lucia continue to suffer from a severe lack of funding. There are two specialized units within the RSLPF – the Drug Squad and the Marine Unit – which, along with Customs and Ports Police are responsible for curbing trafficking flows to and through St. Lucia.

Additionally, the country faces the threat of porous borders and lack of intelligence, which prove to be the main issues related to the country's territorial integrity. St. Lucia's vulnerability to trafficking flows is all the more apparent in the country's proximity to Martinique – a direct path for drugs to Europe. An anti-crime network was established between the two islands in 2021, in the hope of reducing cross-border crime significantly.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

St. Lucia is vulnerable to money laundering and the country has taken some steps in fighting this threat, notably through the implementation of an operational financial intelligence unit that is responsible for money laundering prevention. Money laundering that takes place in the country is mostly related to the drugs trade and the profits generated by domestic and foreign criminals. It most commonly occurs through structured deposits and cash remittances to a funnel account, as well as integration of illicit cash through real estate and cash-intensive businesses. It is also alleged that financial institutions in the country are inadvertently involved in currency transactions that move proceeds from the international drug trade.

St. Lucia has in place adequate policies and laws to promote fair competition, while setting a clear framework for both foreign and domestic investors. Thus, the economic regulatory environment is conducive to doing business, which is why St. Lucia has managed to draw foreign direct investment in a number of economic sectors, including offshore banking, transshipment and tourism. Nevertheless, the country is considered a tax haven and this characteristic could lead to the hiding of assets in order to evade tax obligations.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

There is no official register or monitoring system for specialized facilities that provide treatment services for people with problems associated with drug use. Drug-related issues are addressed by the country's primary

healthcare facilities. Support mechanisms for victims of trafficking are not well established either. Usually, NGOs provide shelters for victims when need arises. However, recently, there have been increasing efforts demonstrated by the government anti-trafficking capacity in updating standard operating procedures for victim identification and referral to protective services – funding an NGO for victim assistance, among others. State-funded drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres in St. Lucia were created to be an affordable option for those who need help but cannot pay for services. As for the prevention efforts, emphasis has been placed on drug abuse prevention programmes targeting key populations. In addition, authorities have offered training on drug abuse prevention, treatment and research to police officers, counsellors, prison guards and other professionals.

In general, NGO involvement in issues pertaining to organized crime is rather limited, with local NGOs mainly focused on education, health and gender issues. Nevertheless, there are NGOs that focus on crime-related issues, including victim support and drug demand reduction. Freedom of the press is guaranteed by law and upheld in practice. Nevertheless, criminal libel laws are in effect and, at times, used against journalists.

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