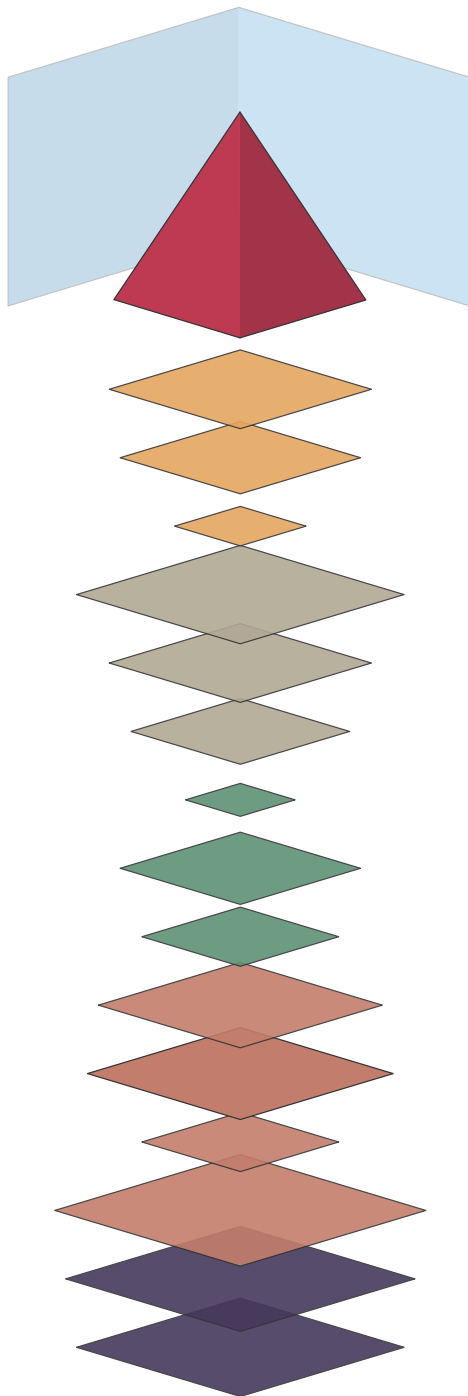




UNITED STATES



5.67

CRIMINALITY SCORE

67th of 193 countries

16th of 35 American countries

1st of 2 North American countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS

5.83

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	6.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.50
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	3.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	7.50
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	6.00
ILLICIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	5.00
FLORA CRIMES	2.50
FAUNA CRIMES	5.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	4.50
HEROIN TRADE	6.50
COCAINE TRADE	7.00
CANNABIS TRADE	4.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	8.50
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	8.00
FINANCIAL CRIMES	7.50



CRIMINAL ACTORS

5.50

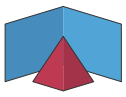
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	5.50
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	4.50
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.50
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	6.00



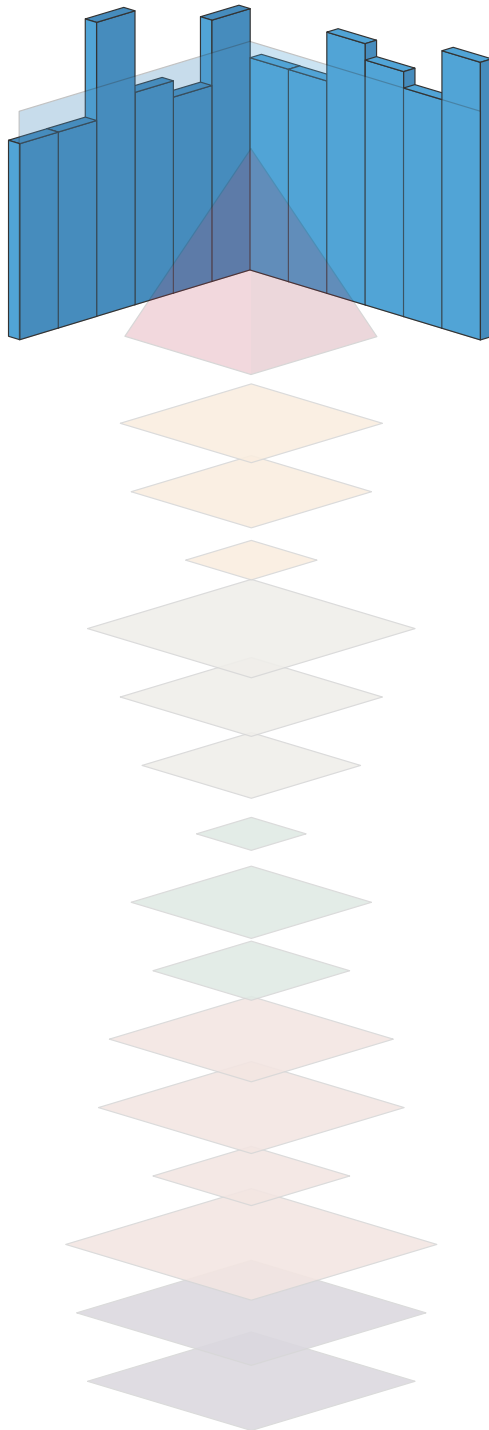
7.13

RESILIENCE SCORE





UNITED STATES



7.13

RESILIENCE SCORE

24th of 193 countries

3rd of 35 American countries

2nd of 2 North American countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	6.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	6.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	9.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.50
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	6.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	8.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.50
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	6.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	8.00
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	7.50
PREVENTION	7.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	8.50



5.67

CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL MARKETS 5.83



CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.50



CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Although driven primarily by local demand, the US human trafficking market accrues profit both domestically and internationally. Foreign criminal networks dominate the market, with most victims coming from Mexico, Honduras or the US. Vulnerable groups include homeless youth, minors in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, non-citizen workers, disabled individuals, LGBTQ+ individuals, drug addicts, indigenous women and girls, and victims of domestic violence. Internet and social media platforms have largely replaced traditional sex trafficking recruitment venues.

There is a highly consolidated human smuggling market along the US–Mexico border, where various domestic and foreign criminal actors, as well as both US and Mexican officials, facilitate the smuggling of people into the US. While Mexican nationals remain the largest group of migrants smuggled into the US, many others hail from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. Smuggling of migrants from countries such as Ecuador, Brazil, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Haiti and Cuba, mainly linked to declining socio-political circumstances after the COVID-19 pandemic, has also increased in recent years. Human smuggling costs have risen, and victims are increasingly susceptible to various forms of exploitation, including drug trafficking. Before the reversal of restrictive COVID-19 policies, many asylum seekers were forced to remain in unsafe areas of northern Mexico under threats of violence and extortion by local criminal groups.

Even though extortion and protection rackets are conducted by both domestic and transnational crime groups operating in the US, these criminal activities are not pervasive in the country, with only limited and sporadic instances reported in recent years.

TRADE

The US arms trafficking market is large and considerable, with the country serving as both a source and destination for difficult-to-purchase firearms, including machine guns. Guns that are trafficked within and across state lines contribute significantly to domestic violence, but the scope of the market is also transnational. The US, for instance, is a major source of illicit foreign weapons and ammunition in Brazil and is responsible for a large portion of the arms seized in Mexico. Weapons sourced from the US often end up in the hands of armed gangs, drug traffickers and terrorist organizations abroad, sparking controversial debates over the links between arms proliferation, criminal violence and

global terrorism. In recent years, the increasing severity of gun violence has reignited the gun control debate and further polarized partisan divides, with a record number of domestic gun-related deaths, including suicides, homicides and mass shootings.

Counterfeiting crimes cause significant financial losses to the US economy, with billions of dollars in annual damages. The increase in counterfeit imports through online platforms, and easy access to US-based consumers via international shipping companies has led to a surge in illicit products circulating within the country. The majority of intellectual property-infringing products are imported from Asia, mainly China, followed by Turkey and Vietnam. Counterfeit luxury goods, including watches, jewellery, handbags, wallets and consumer electronics account for most of the counterfeit products seized in the US.

While the US imposes excise taxes on various goods and activities, there is little evidence of significant illicit trade of excise goods, except for cigarettes. Some states experience black- and grey-market sale of cigarettes due to excessive taxes, leading to the transportation of tobacco products between low-tax and high-tax states and various Native American tribal lands. New York has the highest rate of inbound illicit cigarette traffic, followed by California, Washington, New Mexico and Minnesota. On the other hand, New Hampshire witnessed the highest rate of outbound illicit cigarette traffic, followed by Idaho, Virginia, Wyoming and North Dakota. Cigarette smuggling is a significant national issue that presents challenges at sub-national, national and global levels.

ENVIRONMENT

In the US, plant poaching has increased significantly, and recent reports show that poaching of dudleya plants in California has caused severe environmental damage. Despite being at risk of extinction due to Asian demand, the CITES-protected ginseng root has not been classified as endangered by US authorities. Poaching-related clashes have resulted in fatalities, and although rare, some poachers face prison sentences. While the US is not known for widespread illicit logging, it imports wood from countries with high rates of illegal logging, including Latin American timber and Honduran mahogany.

Wildlife crime is a significant problem in the US, which serves as a source, transit and destination for the illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife-derived products. The illegal trade involves both domestic and foreign-sourced animals and products, and the lack of a comprehensive strategy to combat the trade domestically means that high-value wildlife products often end up in the hands of unsuspecting

consumers. Wildlife exploitation has caused significant environmental damage, leading to the loss of indigenous species and habitats. The market for wildlife trafficking in the country continues to be a lucrative criminal enterprise worth billions of dollars annually.

The illegal market for gold in the US is primarily sourced from Latin America, including countries such as Venezuela and Colombia, and smuggled into the country through small planes, charter jets or by using fraudulent paperwork. The gold is sold to American or foreign refiners who then sell gold bars to multinational corporations. Criminal actors, both domestic and foreign, participate in the trade of other valuable metals, minerals and stones, including silver, copper, coal, emeralds and uranium from countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Guyana. Despite a ban on Venezuelan gold by Caribbean islands like Curaçao and Aruba, the trade continues through other Latin American countries with little regulation or enforcement from US law enforcement officials. Gold is classified as a commodity rather than a monetary instrument, which hinders US law enforcement officials from combatting money laundering linked to illegal gold flows.

DRUGS

The heroin trade is pervasive in the US, and closely connected to fentanyl, which had led to an increase in opioid addictions and a major public health crisis. Mexican mafia-style groups have a significant influence over the market, controlling smuggling routes and collaborating with US-based criminal networks to transport heroin throughout the country. Although Mexican-sourced heroin dominates the market, heroin from Colombia and Afghanistan also enters the country via sea and air. The US heroin trade also fuels territorial violence, has been linked to an increase in children in foster care programmes, and contributes to the transmission of diseases such as Hepatitis C and HIV through shared syringes. Despite a decrease in identified heroin trafficking offenders and heroin seizures, opioid-related deaths in the US have increased in recent years.

The US has a large and consolidated cocaine trade that is dominated by Colombian criminal groups for supply, Mexican networks for transportation, and US-based gangs for retail distribution. Most cocaine smuggled into the US comes across the US–Mexico border. Although cocaine consumption has declined slightly due to the increased availability of cheaper drugs such as opioids, drug overdoses remain a common threat, especially as cocaine is increasingly mixed with fentanyl or other synthetic opioids. The increase in cocaine production and availability in recent years has made Colombian-sourced cocaine the primary driver of the US cocaine trade, followed by Peru.

The cannabis trade in the US is among the top 10 worldwide, but its legality varies across state lines, making it difficult to assess the market's criminality. While some states permit

both the medical and personal use of cannabis, others only allow medical use or prohibit it entirely, resulting in a fragmented and developing legal framework that engenders uncertainty for law enforcement officials and hinders state initiatives to combat cannabis-related crime. The majority of domestically circulating cannabis is illicitly produced by US-based drug trafficking organizations and state-licensed local growers, while foreign-sourced marijuana is also trafficked into the US from Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. However, Mexican and Caribbean-sourced marijuana is considered inferior in quality to both US and Canadian-sourced marijuana.

The US synthetic drug trade is one of the largest in the world and poses a significant threat to public health and national security. Synthetic opioids such as fentanyl dominate the market, with a major share of drug overdose deaths involving this drug. Mexican drug cartels import raw materials from Asia to produce and traffic fentanyl, along with counterfeit versions of popular drugs like Adderall and Valium. Mexican-sourced methamphetamine is also commonly consumed, but a crackdown on precursor chemicals has led to dangerous reformulation by Mexican drug cartels. The emergence of a new synthetic opioid called isotonitazene is also a concern. Despite US law enforcement efforts to combat the synthetic drug trade, dark web fentanyl transactions and traditional drug trafficking routes continue to pose challenges.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

The US is considered to be at high risk for cyber-dependent crime as compared to other countries. Among the most commonly committed cyber-dependent crimes are ransomware attacks, hacking and personal data breaches, which result in annual losses of billions of dollars. Ransomware attacks have targeted larger sums of money and impacted critical infrastructure sectors such as the defence industrial base, food and agriculture, government facilities and information technology. Russian-based ransomware gangs are the most aggressive attackers of US enterprises, and the rise in ransomware attacks can be attributed to poor corporate security measures and a thriving ransomware-as-a-service industry. Reports indicate that a significant number of affected companies have paid ransoms, but over half were able to recover their lost data. Emerging scams involving non-fungible tokens and cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin also constitute a significant threat.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Financial crimes have become an increasingly pressing issue in the US. A growing number of citizens are falling victim to fraud and collectively losing billions of dollars each year. Imposter and shopping scams are among the most common types of fraud. Business email compromise schemes and identity fraud have also seen an uptick in recent years. While states like Georgia, Maryland, Delaware,

Nevada and Florida have reported the highest number of scam complaints, California has experienced the greatest financial losses from these crimes. One contributing factor to the prevalence of financial crime in the US is the differing financial regulations among states, which have allowed some states to become offshore destinations for foreign tax evasion. Delaware, Nevada, Wyoming and South Dakota are considered among the riskiest states in this regard. Tax evasion is estimated to reach over a trillion dollars in annual losses, with tax revenue accounting for a smaller percentage of GDP than at most other times in recent US history. In 2021, wealthy corporations were responsible for over half of the unpaid tax revenue in the US.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Smaller criminal networks and gangs, particularly those specializing in drug trafficking, reportedly receive the most attention from US investigators and prosecutors. There are tens of thousands of active criminal gangs across the country. Criminal networks and gangs often collaborate with foreign drug trafficking networks and employ high levels of violence to carry out their operations. Private sector actors in the US are known to be heavily involved in financial crime, including tax evasion and corrupt schemes, which are difficult to detect and are often tied to political corruption. While corruption in the US private sector is relatively low, it poses a significant risk to the economy and society as a whole, with potentially devastating consequences for public trust and confidence in key institutions.

Mafia-style groups continue to be active criminal actors in the US. A variety of mafias are still operational in the country, with an estimated several thousand associates based there. They exert territorial control over areas such as New York, southern New Jersey and Philadelphia. In addition, mafia-style groups continue to operate in Chicago and other places, sometimes forming alliances with other criminal enterprises. These groups engage in drug trafficking, money laundering and healthcare fraud targeting Medicare. Members of these groups have easy access to weapons and carry arms openly. Mafia-style groups are also linked to labour racketeering, extortion and union-related corruption schemes. Outlaw motorcycle gangs have been involved in mafia-style killings. Foreign criminal groups also have a significant influence on various criminal activities in the US, including drug and human trafficking, cybercrime and election interference. Central American criminal organizations dominate the drug trafficking market, but Mexican, Dominican and Colombian-based groups also have a share. Asian criminal groups control the trafficking of cannabis, MDMA and precursor chemicals. In addition to drugs and human trafficking, foreign actors also play a significant role in cybercrime.

Evidence directly linking state-embedded actors to organized criminal markets – on either domestic or transnational levels – remains elusive. In fact, corruption in the public sector, public procurement and tax administration sectors of the US economy is relatively uncommon. However, the proliferation of locally-based corruption among US officials – especially in relation to transnational criminal activity along the US–Mexico border – is an increasing concern.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Recent challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, exposed structural problems in the federal government and emphasized the differences in strength of local and state governing bodies. Along with domestic issues, the US faces external conflicts, nuclear tensions with North Korea and Iran, trade- and Taiwan-related tensions with China, and foreign influence campaigns from Russia and China. The political scene is polarized, making it difficult for any government to implement its agenda, and posing a risk to the local and global economy due to the politicization of the debt ceiling. Against this backdrop, however, the US has proven to be capable of addressing the organized crime situation in the country, with evidence indicating that the state is sufficiently robust to meet the challenge. Nevertheless, organized crime continues to be a significant problem, with ongoing challenges to governance due to deep political divisions over anti-corruption strategies.

Although the current government has launched initiatives to address transparency and accountability issues, several legislative reforms remain pending.

The US is a signatory to several international treaties and conventions related to organized crime and generally complies with international anti-organized crime regulations. The current administration has increased international cooperation efforts in comparison to the previous one. It rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and is focusing on extradition treaties, especially given the rise in cybercrime. US–Mexico relations have provided for relatively smooth extradition processes in the past, but tensions have risen due to various incidents involving drug-related charges. However, US authorities have relied heavily on Mexican support to combat irregular immigration along the US–Mexico border. Since the outbreak of the Russia–Ukraine war, the US has collaborated with NATO allies to provide

both military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine. The US has a robust legal framework against organized crime, criminalizing various forms and outlining investigation, arrest, prosecution, adjudication and punishment procedures. The current administration has implemented several legal reforms, including repealing previous policies and laws on energy conservation, environmental protections, H1-B visas and other issues. One of the most controversial reforms has been vacating the previous policy of facilitating extrajudicial deportation of smuggled people and asylum seekers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, legislative reform regarding anti-counterfeit legislation has garnered widespread support, with one relevant piece of legislation amended to require online marketplaces to engage in preventative practices such as verifying sellers' identities and screening for counterfeits before sellers' goods appear on the platform. A lack of federal anti-gun legislation, which resulted in an increasing dependence on individual state legislation, has rendered weapons transport across state lines a relatively easy affair. Loopholes in various state-level policies, such as variations on the requirement of background checks for weapons purchases, also render state legislation easy to exploit. These shortcomings resulted in an alarming increase in mass shootings across the US.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Recent years have seen an increasing politicization of the US judicial system, with concerns over partisan judicial appointments and campaign fundraising leading to fears of judicial bias. Both the previous and current administrations have made record-high judicial appointments. Additionally, executive and legislative officials in some states have sought influence over state-level judiciary affairs, which has narrowed judicial independence. Issues impacting the US judicial system and leading to high incarceration rates include deficiencies in the parole system, funding shortages for public defence, racial bias and the imposition of minor offence-related court fees. Despite that, there is a sufficient framework to respond to major organized crime issues. The US currently has the largest known prison population worldwide, with millions of individuals incarcerated or in pre-trial detention in federal or state prisons. The extensive use of plea bargaining and overcrowding in US prisons are also raising concerns, although efforts have reportedly been made by the Biden administration with regards to overincarceration. The use of the death penalty has declined significantly over the years.

A number of agencies working within the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security focus on organized crime at the federal level. A Department of State bureau also specifically focuses on organized crime, and the US is one of few countries in the region that has a federal agency specifically focused on guns, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Moreover, the Department of Justice - via both the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National Cyber Investigative

Joint Task Force - leads US efforts to combat cybercrime. However, while state and local law enforcement agencies receive more resources, which may indicate the prioritization of fighting organized crime, issues such as unqualified leadership, poor candidate screening and weak staff training continue to be a concern. Police killings, which have racial disparities, have eroded public trust in law enforcement officials. Police brutality rates have remained consistent since George Floyd's death, and efforts to reform the US law enforcement system have been limited.

The US shares land borders with Canada and Mexico; the border with Mexico is a significant challenge for the country's territorial integrity due to its proximity to multiple transnational criminal markets. Customs and Border Protection officials monitor hundreds of land, sea and air points of entry, but their efficacy has been called into question as criminal networks continuously circumvent US border regulations. The US is considered the most cyber-capable country worldwide in terms of both hacking and digital defence. The country's increasing reliance on technology has expanded the number of potential hacking targets, and the growing brazenness of geopolitical adversaries, including Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, makes the US highly vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Moreover, the internet of things has led to an increase in targeting of the government through an uptick in crimes such as spying on government agencies, stealing sensitive information from public and private sector entities, stealing intellectual property and destroying computer equipment.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The global dominance of the US dollar makes it highly vulnerable to money laundering, given the sheer magnitude of global financial transactions flowing through US banking institutions. These transactions involve crimes such as fraud, drug trafficking, human smuggling, human trafficking and corruption. In recent years, large-scale reforms aimed at increasing the country's AML capacity have been implemented. However, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, which is the world's leading AML watchdog, has been underfunded and overstretched, lacking adequate capacity to effectively combat money laundering. It is estimated that approximately one quarter of all funds laundered worldwide are made through US-based financial institutions. Although most US states have robust anti-money laundering legislative frameworks, money laundering risks tend to vary by state.

While economic regulatory capacity is not lacking in the US, the political will to empower and encourage adequate oversight remains a challenge. Despite an increase in GDP per capita after the pandemic, mounting consumer prices due to the great resignation, chip scarcity and problems with the global supply chain drove an uptick in inflation throughout 2022, reaching a 40-year high. The US is the largest economy in the world, but increasing government

overspending and the politicization of the debt ceiling pose serious risks to the national and global economy.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

There have been increasing efforts made to support crime victims and witnesses in recent years, and numerous victim and witness support programmes exist across the country. However, the most common ones are still operated by non-profit and faith-based organizations, followed by governmental organizations. The US federal Witness Security Program provides 24-hour protection to all witnesses, and there have been no reports of witnesses who follow programme guidelines ever being harmed or killed while under its protection. National media efforts have also increased the effectiveness of US-based victim and witness support services.

Efforts by the US government to prevent organized crime faced challenges during the previous administration, but they are recovering. The focus of the anti-drug trafficking strategy has shifted toward a preventative healthcare approach, with increased investment in addiction treatment and alternative pain medication. However, critics are calling for more extensive public awareness campaigns to prevent drug-related issues. The authorities have also sought to limit both the domestic production and foreign import of opioids through counter-narcotic assistance to source countries, legal restrictions on the medical prescription of opioids and rehabilitative approaches toward opioid consumers. In terms of cybersecurity, the

US is developing federal- and state-level preventative initiatives in response to an increased number of cyber-attacks, especially ransomware.

Civil society actors provide a significant portion of available victim and witness support services in the US. While legislation grants widespread freedoms to NGOs pursuing their respective civic or political agendas, labour unions lack similar freedoms and have significantly declined in strength. Republican-led states have also passed problematic electoral laws that have rendered voting more difficult and raised risks of greater partisan interference in election management, vote counting and certification. The country boasts a robust tradition of press and media freedom. However, several chronic issues remain, despite some advances by the current administration. In particular, online harassment of journalists, particularly women and minorities, threatens their safety and quality of life. Public distrust in the media reached unprecedented levels due to issues such as media polarization, fuelling of dangerous conspiracy theories, the disappearance of local news outlets and the weakening of journalism by social media and other digital platforms. The residual impact of widespread polarization, misinformation and the incitement of violence has led to lingering erosion of societal cohesion and politics, as well as violent uprisings.

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