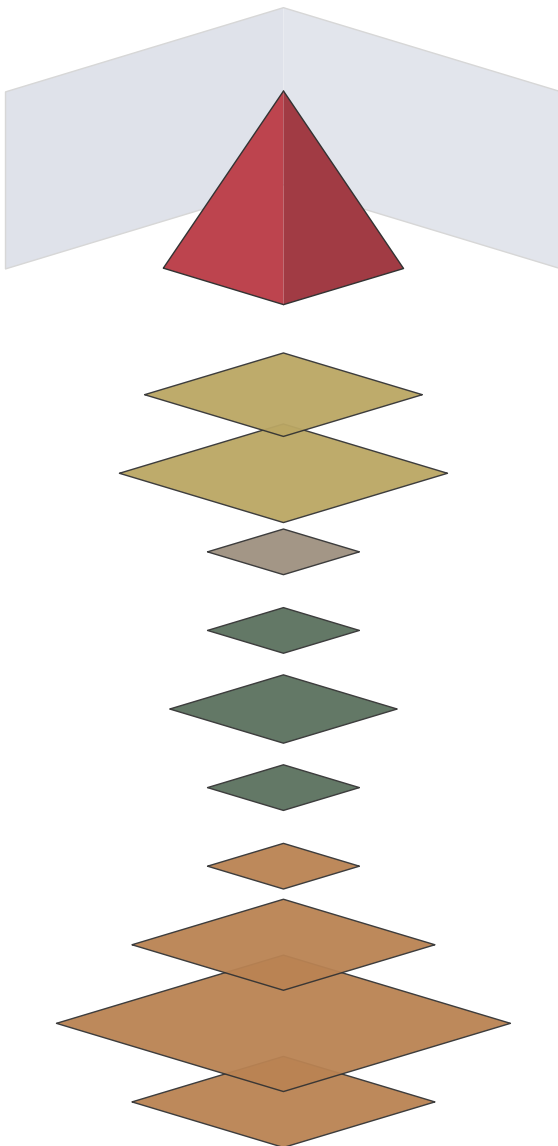


 **MOROCCO**



 **4.79**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

35th of 54 African countries
3rd of 6 North African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **4.95**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	5.50
HUMAN SMUGGLING	6.50
ARMS TRAFFICKING	3.00
FLORA CRIMES	3.00
FAUNA CRIMES	4.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	3.00
HEROIN TRADE	3.00
COCAINE TRADE	6.00
CANNABIS TRADE	9.00
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	6.00

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **4.63**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	1.00
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.50
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	4.00

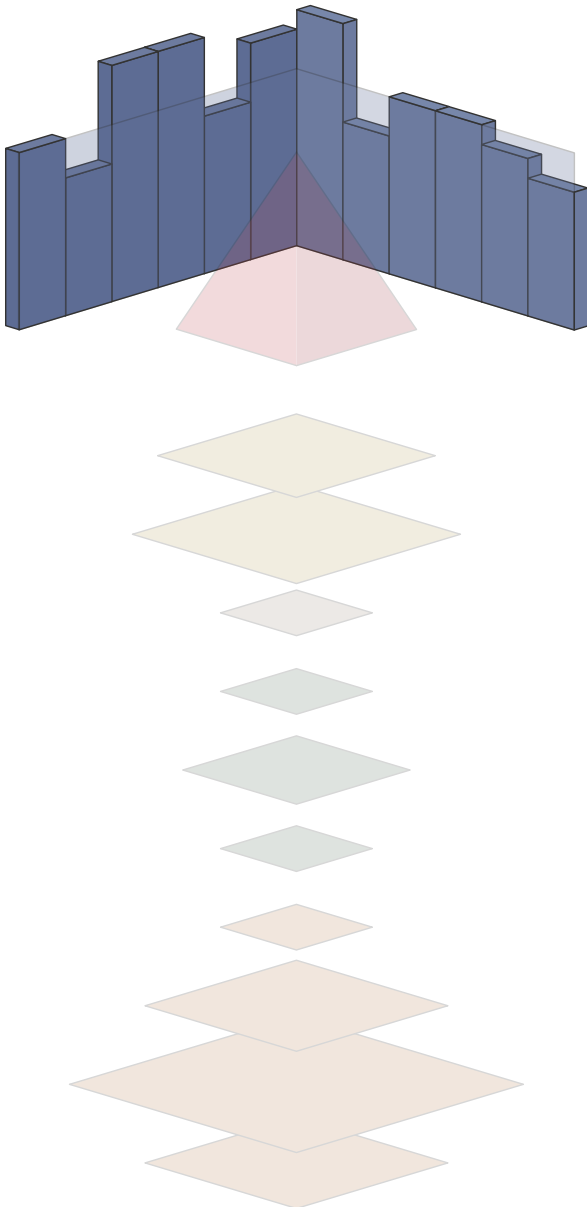
 **4.63**
RESILIENCE SCORE

15th of 54 African countries
2nd of 6 North African countries





MOROCCO




4.63 RESILIENCE SCORE



15th of 54 African countries
2nd of 6 North African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	4.50
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	3.50
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	6.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	6.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	5.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	6.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	3.50
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	4.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.50
PREVENTION	4.00
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.50



4.79 CRIMINALITY SCORE

35th of 54 African countries
3rd of 6 North African countries

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	4.95
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	4.63



CRIMINALITY

Criminal Markets

PEOPLE

Morocco is a source, destination and transit country for the human trafficking market. Undocumented female migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, as well as from Southern Asia, are coerced into prostitution and forced labour, while a number of Filipino women are forced into domestic labour. Moroccan men, women and children are exploited in forced-labour and sex-trafficking markets abroad, primarily in Europe and the Middle East. Traffickers include Moroccan and foreign nationals who belong to sub-Saharan networks.

Morocco is a transit and source country for migrant smuggling, with both foreign actors and Moroccans involved in human-smuggling operations. In 2018, the Moroccan route became the most important entry point to Europe. Rising levels of human smuggling have contributed to local insecurity, with migrants being recruited into the informal and criminal economies. It has also sparked violence between migrants and security forces. While the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a relative decrease in human smuggling from Morocco to mainland Spain, the number of people smuggled to the Canary Islands is likely to have increased.

TRADE

Morocco seems to be less exposed to arms trafficking than other countries in the region, but the armed movement in the Saharawi Republic continues to be a source of small and light weapons proliferation in Morocco. There have also been cases of weapon seizures from suspected terrorist cells present in the country.

ENVIRONMENT

Atlas cedar trees are harvested illegally for resale in Morocco, as well as exported by what is sometimes referred to as the Atlas cedar mafia. However, the actual volume of trafficking of this species is relatively low. Trafficking of protected animal species such as the goldfinch and the Barbary macaque also takes place, with Europe often being the destination. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is another problem, with quotas and off-season fishing bans being violated frequently, while the trafficking of eels destined for Spanish and Asian markets is also prevalent.

In terms of non-renewable-resource crimes, Morocco was once a fairly large exporter of gold to the United Arab Emirates, but this seems to have declined recently. Oil is still smuggled from Algeria to Morocco's border regions. However, the trafficking and illicit sale of petrol, which previously involved large numbers of unemployed individuals in north-eastern Morocco, has declined sharply since 2015.

DRUGS

Morocco is one of the most important producers of cannabis in the world, with production concentrated in the Rif region, and trade traditionally centred in Chefchaouen and Ketama. While there is significant local consumption throughout the territory, Moroccan cannabis is also widely distributed across the entire wider region, as well as to European markets. Domestic cannabis cultivation and production are large contributors to the Moroccan economy, and although the tail end of 2020 saw an increased debate surrounding the potential legalization of cannabis, the illicit market as a whole has remained stable in recent years.

There are regular reports of the increasing availability and consumption of heroin in northern Morocco, particularly in Nador and Tangier. Extensive drug trafficking takes place between Morocco and Spain, including of Afghan heroin that is shipped to Morocco before heading for European markets. Morocco is a key trans-shipment point for South American cocaine on its way into European markets, with large volumes of the drug being moved through Morocco via its sea and air routes. While there is a limited local market – consisting mainly of the national elite, expats and tourists – cocaine trafficking through Morocco is increasing and the country is home to the first cocaine-processing lab in Africa. There have been reports of the widespread availability of Ecstasy in Morocco, as well as of crystal methamphetamine and Karkoubi consumption. Psychotropic drugs are apparently becoming increasingly prevalent. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdowns are likely to have slowed down imports, at least temporarily, of synthetic drugs, heroin and cocaine.

Criminal Actors

The so-called Moroccan mafia is made up of many criminal networks whose members are Moroccan or of Moroccan descent. These networks are active in the country as well



as abroad, particularly in the Netherlands and Belgium. They are composed of several gangs and are involved mainly in cannabis trafficking between Morocco and Europe. Despite their name, these groups do not have the characteristics of a mafia-style organization (there is no evidence to suggest that mafia-style groups exist in the country), but function rather as criminal networks involved in common crimes. These networks are highly flexible and tend to diversify their smuggling activities, especially at Morocco's borders with its North African neighbours, despite an enhanced police presence in these areas.

Foreign criminal networks made up of Latin American drug trafficking organizations and Italian organized crime groups are also active in Morocco, although the degree of their activities is limited and their impact is minimal. Nevertheless, they do have strong ties with domestic criminal networks in Morocco. There is low-level corruption among law enforcement officers and services that protect trafficking networks. High-level officials in the security forces, military and government are involved in Morocco's organized crime markets. In particular, drug trafficking networks are believed to have connections in Morocco's highest political and administrative circles.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Political interests and influence prevent the Moroccan authorities from truly transforming their efforts to tackle organized crime. The government's decision to emphasize stability over the rule of law has enabled the human trafficking, human smuggling and petrol smuggling markets to proliferate. However, the interior minister and other state officials have attempted to introduce changes aimed at cannabis use. Political debates often centre on the issue of cannabis, and many in the political sphere advocate for the drug's legalization. The government has also made important strides in combating the illicit-arms trade. In spite of this, there is a notable lack of transparency in matters related to royal interests, and the accountability of law enforcement and military personnel is minimal. The chronic corruption witnessed in Morocco was further highlighted amid the COVID-19 pandemic as the government awarded public contracts with very little transparency or oversight. Overall, the Moroccan government, despite the rhetoric, has done little to combat corruption and improve transparency and accountability.

Morocco has ratified a number of international treaties and conventions on organized crime. It has also engaged in effective international cooperation efforts, particularly with regard to intelligence sharing. The country is open to receiving international assistance, but there are issues related to extradition. On a domestic level, Morocco has strong anti-organized crime legislation and a legal framework based on civil law. However, it is the implementation of the legal framework that is lacking.

Moreover, the country does not have a clear national strategy against organized crime.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

Although the constitutional reform of 2011 officially granted the judicial system a greater degree of independence, in practice the degree of independence of the judiciary in Morocco is low and the country's courts are often used to target opposition voices. While the court system experienced disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the first half of 2020, prosecutions of various forms of organized crime did take place, although with regard to human trafficking judicial proceedings, prosecutors often fail to correctly distinguish between trafficking and smuggling. Prisons in Morocco are overcrowded and human rights abuses of those detained in the country's prison system are regularly reported. The country's law enforcement agency has recently created special investigative units, which are well equipped but limited in their overall capacity, especially in rural areas. Cooperation between Morocco's security forces could be improved. With regard to its territorial integrity, extensive smuggling, facilitated by corruption, takes place through Morocco's ports.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Morocco has a relatively strong economy for the region, but economic disparities exist within the country. It has a sizable informal economy, one of the largest in the region as a proportion of its GDP, which the government has been trying to reel in by introducing simplified



administrative measures. Morocco has been assessed as being at high risk of money laundering and terrorist financing, as has been on the EU's so-called 'grey list' of countries assessed to be non-cooperative for tax purposes since 2017. However, it has now set up a financial-intelligence processing unit to tackle money laundering and the financing of terrorism, which has helped the authorities uphold international anti-money laundering standards. At the end of 2020, a revised version of the criminal code related to money laundering was being drafted in Parliament to strengthen sanctions.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Victims of human trafficking do not receive adequate treatment and protection in Morocco, and the country has very few measures in place to help them exit from modern-day slavery. Drug addiction is being increasingly recognized as a medical condition, and Morocco is one of very few countries in the region to allow opioid-substitution treatment through the use of methadone. Drug-treatment and rehabilitation centres exist but are insufficient. Crime prevention activities take place across the country, but they are not widespread and are implemented mostly by foundations and NGOs.

Morocco has a capable and well-organized civil society, which is active in a variety of fields. However, there has been a notable crackdown on civil society, and in particular on journalists, by the authorities in recent years. Media organizations are subjected to significant external pressure, and investigative journalism remains rare. Many professional journalists, as well as citizen journalists, have been imprisoned. In 2020, a law aimed at restricting freedom of expression on social-media platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic was drafted, and eventually withdrawn, but the government, following widespread backlash by civil society activists and opposition political parties.

