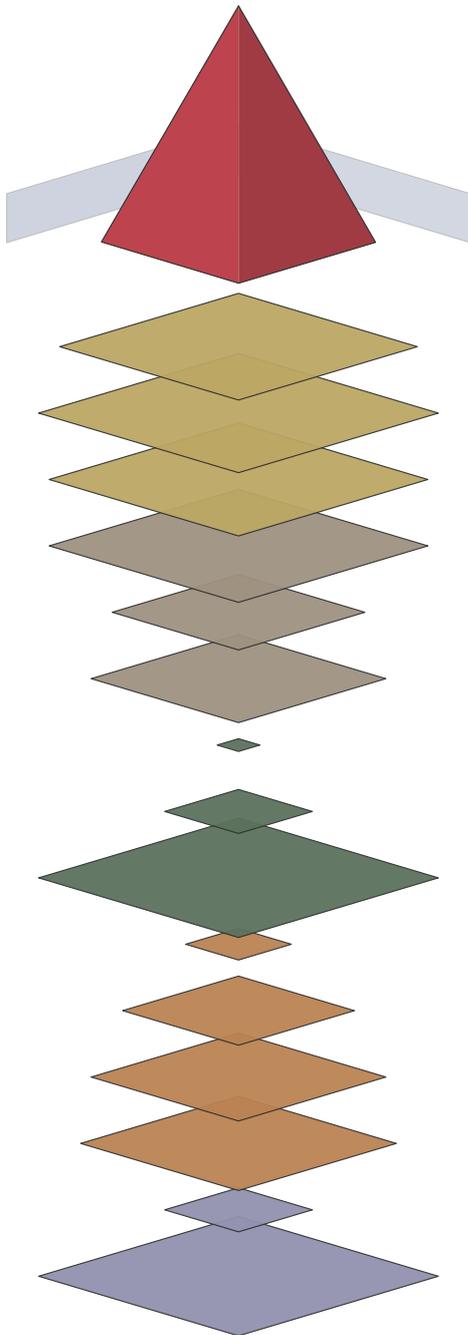


 **LIBYA**



 **6.93**
CRIMINALITY SCORE

5th of 54 African countries
1st of 6 North African countries

 **CRIMINAL MARKETS** **6.57**

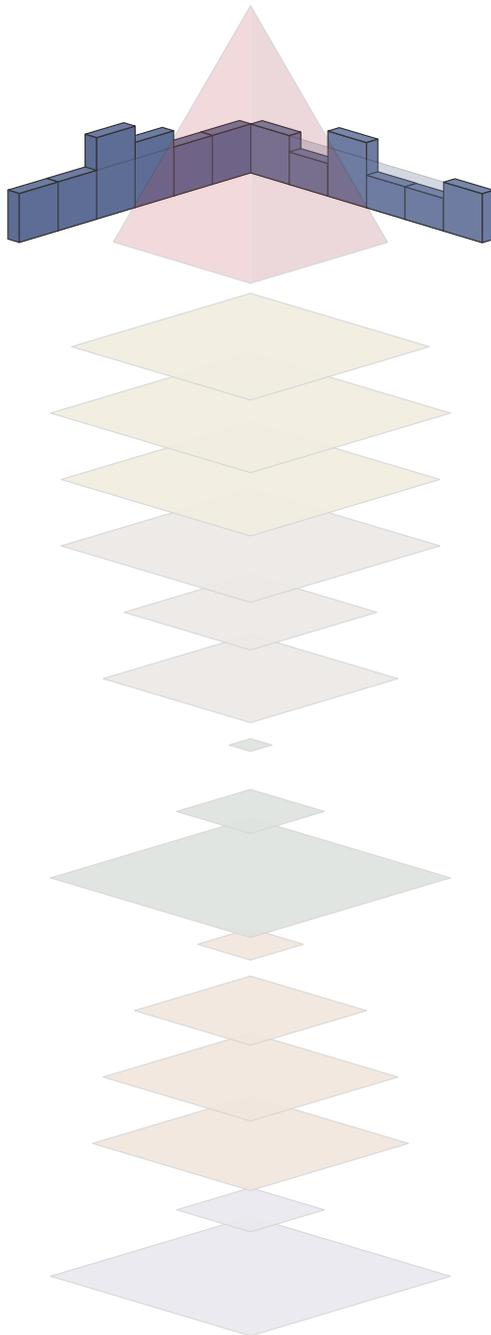
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	8.5
HUMAN SMUGGLING	9.5
EXTORTION & PROTECTION RACKETEERING	9
ARMS TRAFFICKING	9
TRADE IN COUNTERFEIT GOODS	6
ILLCIT TRADE IN EXCISABLE GOODS	7
FLORA CRIMES	1
FAUNA CRIMES	3.5
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	9.5
HEROIN TRADE	2.5
COCAINE TRADE	5.5
CANNABIS TRADE	7
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	7.5
CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES	3.5
FINANCIAL CRIMES	9.5

 **CRIMINAL ACTORS** **7.3**

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	9
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	7.5
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	9.5
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.5
PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS	5.5

 **1.54**
RESILIENCE SCORE

 **LIBYA**



 **1.54
RESILIENCE SCORE**

54th of 54 African countries
6th of 6 North African countries

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	1.5
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	1.5
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	2.5
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	2
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	1.5
LAW ENFORCEMENT	1.5
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	1.5
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	1
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	2
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	1
PREVENTION	1
NON-STATE ACTORS	1.5

 **6.93
CRIMINALITY SCORE**

 CRIMINAL MARKETS	6.57
 CRIMINAL ACTORS	7.3



CRIMINALITY

Criminal Markets

PEOPLE

Human trafficking has remained pervasive in Libya throughout the past two years. The practice is closely intertwined with human smuggling, as trafficking often springs from irregular migration through the country. Labour exploitation, ransoming of smuggled individuals at various stages of the migratory process and forced prostitution are reported in various settings, with exploitation particularly notable among sub-Saharan individuals who do not have legal status in Libya. There are also reports of minors and adults being lured into mercenary work, further contributing to the problem. Moreover, government officials are said to be complicit in human trafficking. The situation is particularly bad in southern Libya, where trafficking is also linked to artisanal gold-mining. The situation is dynamic in this sector and there have been some changes compared to the past; however, the fundamentals have not been affected: trafficking in human beings is widespread in the country and mitigating factors remain weak or non-existent.

Human smuggling activity in Libya has increased, with tens of thousands of individuals departing the Libyan coast for Europe due to the relative stability prevailing in western Libya, enabling mobility and providing logistical room for smugglers, and the return of more sophisticated networks focusing on developing complex but higher-value routes. Departure zones have also emerged in the east of the country, further fueling the growing number of migrants. Although violence and exploitation appear to have reduced overall, as high value markets have once again become prominent, this activity remains associated with high levels of violence against smuggled individuals, high death rates at sea and extortion. Crimes committed against migrants and refugees in the country could qualify as crimes against humanity.

Extortion and taxing markets are significant sources of income for armed groups in the country. Kidnap for ransom, hold-ups and carjackings are common practices, especially in relation to smuggled individuals. In addition, crime groups are reported to collect funds from local markets or companies in exchange for providing protection. Cyber-racketeering is also gaining attention, with armed groups attempting to secure damaging information about state officials and using it to blackmail or extort them.

TRADE

Arms trafficking remains a major criminal market, contributing to conflicts both within Libya and in neighbouring nations. The fragmentation of the country and the formation of various militias resulted in wide access to the previous regime's vast stocks of weapons. With the outbreak of the civil war the demand for infantry weapons also surged. To contain the outflow of weapons, neighbouring countries have implemented targeted surveillance and seizures, but for some years the demand has outstripped the supply. Despite the arms embargo, external states continue to provide military backing to different factions and armed groups, leading to arms transfers under the guise of 'security assistance' and military agreements signed by dubious institutions. Arms trafficking is primarily conducted through the southern and eastern borders, with operators based in the Fezzan region providing logistical support to jihadist networks in the Sahel region. Organized arms-trading groups also operate via social media and virtual markets, making arms and ammunition more readily available.

Trade in counterfeit goods is a significant problem, with the country serving as both transshipment point and destination for such items. Clothes, footwear and leather goods are the most commonly exported counterfeits, with the majority heading to European countries. Most of the counterfeit goods entering Libya originate from Asia. The smuggling of subsidized goods is the most prevalent form of illicit excise goods trade, with small-scale operators often involved.

Commodities such as foodstuffs, vehicles and electronic goods are all subject to smuggling. Libya is also a key transit country along the so-called 'Maghreb route' for illicit cigarettes, with most of the cigarettes smoked in the country being illicit. This traffic is allegedly generated in the United Arab Emirates and arrives in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya through Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. A share of the goods is then re-exported to Egypt or Southern Europe. Libyan ports such as Tripoli have also been linked to trafficked goods originating from Europe.

ENVIRONMENT

Although the illegal flora trade in Libya is not believed to be significant, there have been reports of trees being felled, particularly in the Ubari region and the west, due to economic difficulties. Some locals are reportedly cutting down eucalyptus and tamarisk trees and selling



them to smugglers, while others are selling timber for income. However, this market is not particularly linked to organized crime.

The illegal hunting of birds for the local and external market remains a potential threat to some species. Along with them, many wild animals, including chimpanzees, jackals, striped hyenas and even big cats, are present in the country or are in transit. The proliferation of weapons since the civil war has led to an increase in illegal shooting. Over-fishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing are threatening Libya's marine diversity, with wild turtle species at risk of extinction. Libya is currently regarded by international indicators as one of the worst-performing countries in terms of responding to IUU fishing.

The illicit trade in non-renewable resources, particularly oil and gas, is also a major problem. Most of the smuggled fuel is imported stock that is diverted from the consumption market and smuggled out of the country or sold locally on the black market at higher prices. Although sea-bound fuel smuggling declined after a law enforcement campaign against European criminal groups involved in the trade, it has been on the rise again in the past two years. Land-based fuel smuggling continues to be a major issue, with authorities in the province of Fezzan complaining about an absence of fuel, which is being smuggled to neighbouring countries. In the region of Cyrenaica, in eastern Libya, a large fuel smuggling system involving key military actors solidified in 2022, with the fuel sold to Sudan's Rapid Support Force. In addition, gold extracted from artisanal mines in remote areas, such as the tri-border area with Niger and Chad, has been growing. The revenue from these activities is financing poly-criminal groups involved in drug trafficking, banditry and mercenary services.

DRUGS

Although heroin consumption in Libya has decreased over the years, trafficking of the drug in or through the country persists. Recent seizures have raised concerns that as it returns to peace the country might become vulnerable to the trade. Conversely, the cocaine trade has increased, with shipments of the drug trafficked into the country via ports in the east and west of the country. Shipments of the drug reportedly also flow in from the Sahel. Coastal zones are used for the storage of significant quantities of cocaine, destined for re-export to Europe and Egypt. In recent years cocaine consumption in Libya has spread beyond the previously restricted circles within the capital and other main towns.

Libya remains a major transit country for cannabis resin, which is smuggled into the country both via major ports and through the country's southern and western borders. It is then re-exported to South-Eastern Europe and Egypt, sometimes passing through Malta. The consumption of cannabis resin is high in major coastal cities and there is an intersection between the criminal actors involved in cannabis resin trafficking and other forms of illicit flows, notably human smuggling and cocaine trafficking. Criminal networks and armed groups are funded by the cannabis resin market.

In recent years there has been an increase in the importation of Pregabalin and Tramadol, which are used for recreational purposes, and the Libyan smuggling routes are central to the movement of these drugs into the Egyptian, Tunisian and Algerian markets. Synthetic drugs are being introduced into the war economy and consumed by fighters as a coping mechanism during and after conflict, leading to substantial increases in consumption within these circles and within youth networks. In addition, large quantities of falsified or high-strength prescription drugs, including synthetic opioids, are imported through Libyan ports en route to Algeria and Morocco.

CYBER-DEPENDENT CRIMES

While cyber-attacks are not widespread in Libya, vulnerabilities within software protocols and weak services have resulted in both entities and individuals being targeted. The ongoing conflict in the country has increased the incidence of such attacks, which offer a low-cost means for warring parties to achieve their military goals. The majority of reported attacks are politically or ideologically motivated. Libya is also home to a group that has been targeting telecommunication companies and ministries of foreign affairs of neighbouring countries by exploiting internet-exposed applications on web servers.

FINANCIAL CRIMES

Libya has been plagued by significant embezzlement of public funds, dating back to before the 2011 revolution, with large amounts of money allegedly going missing through public contracts. High-level officials and bank employees have facilitated corruption schemes through which armed groups and their warlords gain access to state funding. Letters of credit issued by the Central Bank for access to foreign currency at the official rate have also been used fraudulently, with billions of dollars lost. Companies usually request a letter of credit from their bank to import goods that are overpriced, diverting



the surplus to associates such as militia groups, or shell companies abroad. When the purchased goods arrive in Libya, corrupt customs officials approve falsified paperwork. In some instances, containers enter the country empty or filled with sand or inferior or damaged products.

Tax evasion, by both local and foreign enterprises, has been a chronic problem for the Libyan economy, compounded by the fact that the state has been weakened since the revolution. Hawala (an informal funds transfer system) has played a central role due to the increase in black markets and the chronic malfunctioning of the banking system. Although it is used by the vast majority of Libyans, who leverage it for legitimate purposes, hawala is also a significant facilitator of crime, especially in the field of human trafficking and smuggling.

Criminal Actors

The diverse militias in Libya are heavily armed and dominate various markets, including protection racketeering, drug and fuel trafficking and arms and people smuggling. Some operate in mafia style while also involving themselves in conflict and acting as political kingmakers. In certain areas of the country, they have more control than the government. The west coast is a particularly dense area of activity for these types of actors. In the south, in a system that is almost feudal, minor affiliate groups may only undertake revenue-generating activities if they do not disrupt the interests of the major power. Currently, the dynamics of mafia groups are more pronounced. Pull and push factors lead nationals, but specifically the youth, into involvement in militias. Criminal networks affiliated with politicians and powerful militiamen

operate both inside and outside the formal economy and governance system. The increased facilitation of large-scale arms supplies by foreign states has created new opportunities for criminal networks, particularly those with international links and/or a foothold in legitimate economic activities.

The fragmentation of the Libyan state has created an ideal environment for state capture, allowing armed groups to infiltrate the state structure and benefit from their affiliation with it. The hands-off approach of repeated governments to security – including, most recently, the Government of National Unity (GNU)'s – and the appointment of armed group commanders to state institutions and executive portfolios has fuelled this dynamic, aggravating it over the years.

Foreign actors have also played important roles in different criminal economies in the country. Although breaches of the arms embargo have decreased since the end of the Tripoli war, foreign interference in the armed conflict through proxies, mercenaries and foreign armed groups such as Chadian and Sudanese fighters continues, empowering armed groups. The precarious political and security conditions in the country means the private sector plays a limited role in Libya's economy. While it has not been reported to be widely controlled by armed groups, fuel has been identified as a sector related to criminal activities, allowing armed groups to earn revenue by taxing the transport of the commodity. Other financial crimes relate to some militia members exerting control over banks by patrolling their entrances, leading to the abuse of the letters of credit system and to informal business partnerships with bank staff.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The lack of political leadership and governance in Libya has resulted in a lack of action against organized crime. Since the revolution, governing entities have relied on militias to project power and survive, even though many of these militias are de facto criminal entities. While the eastern-based power centres have previously been in a better position to provide basic security and services than those in the west, they are increasingly tolerant of the criminal interests of significant tribes and militias they rely on for territorial control, and are in many cases

chief beneficiaries of these activities. As a result, Libya's economy continues to deteriorate, crime rates remain high and violent extremist organizations pose a continued threat. The rule of armed groups and the presence of mercenaries, as well as significant internal displacement, contribute to a fragile environment. The GNU and the parallel Government of National Stability (GNS) have overseen the continued erosion of any real law enforcement agenda. The absence of access to government information and transparent budget making and contracting practices is a major concern, leading to Libya having one of the highest corruption perception levels in the world.



While it has legal frameworks and extradition treaties with several countries, Libya struggles to fulfil its international obligations, including assisting in arresting and extraditing criminals. Although the country is a signatory of (though not a state party to) the Arms Trade Treaty, it seems to carry out few transborder asset seizures. The legislative framework relating to organized crime is limited, with no criminalization of forced labour or some instances of sex trafficking. Libya's National Council for Civil Liberties and Human Rights faces challenges related to political divisions between east and west, while the agency responsible for combating illegal migration struggles with the infiltration of armed groups and criminal interests, with allegations of abuse and human rights breaches levelled against smuggled individuals.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

The country's judicial system, its operations hindered by militia groups, is poorly resourced, fragmented, corrupt and unable to function effectively. In some parts of the country civilian and military courts operate at reduced capacity or not at all, forcing citizens to resolve disputes through informal mechanisms. While the attorney general's office has a relatively good reputation in Libya and has attempted to investigate serious and organized crime, the lack of capacity makes arrests and fair trials challenging. The absence of the rule of law leads to impunity, including in cases of severe human rights violations and war crimes related to political and military groups in eastern and western Libya.

The prison system is mainly managed under the GNU by the Tripoli-based Judicial Police Authority. However, some prisons and detention centres are operated by armed groups affiliated with various ministries and rival eastern security forces. Prisons are generally overcrowded, lack specialized services for women and children and have inadequate hygiene, ventilation or clean drinking water, requiring infrastructural repairs. A number of unofficial detention facilities are run by armed groups, some claiming to act in a law enforcement capacity, that international and local organizations cannot access. Thousands of smuggled individuals are held in both official and extralegal migrant detention facilities, and women are reportedly subjected to forced prostitution in prisons or detention facilities in conditions that amount to sexual slavery.

The national police forces manage Libya's internal security, although security-related police tasks are delegated to informal armed groups that receive government salaries but lack formal training, supervision or accountability.

While there have been some improvements in law enforcement in recent years, law enforcement agencies remain ineffective.

Libya's capacity to monitor and control its borders has always been challenging because of its geographical situation. Institutions responsible for border management are weak, and border regions have largely been controlled by locally-based networks and non-government forces if at all. The country is divided into two governments and a plethora of powerful armed groups. Maritime patrolling is undermined by fragmentation within the state apparatus and by the infiltration of armed groups and criminal elements.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Libya's liquidity crisis and the growth of the black market in currency trading have contributed greatly to money laundering. Illicit financial activities have also been particularly linked to fraudulently invoiced foreign trade transactions. The lack of centralized state control over the country's territory has led to an increase in criminal operations that generate funds outside the formal economic and banking system, which challenges the construction of a robust economy. The economic regulatory capacity in the country has remained limited in the past two years and any reform of the state-dominated economy will continue to be hindered by ongoing instability, security threats, military conflict, capital flight and corrupt oil production. Business freedom is hampered by the fact that contracts are not enforced and by a critical lack of transparency and accountability. Disagreements over the leadership of key national financial institutions such as the Central Bank and Libya's sovereign wealth fund are contributing to economic uncertainty. Because of successive oil blockades and the lack of a unified budget both branches of the bank have extended credit to parallel government structures. These political and security developments make it impossible to forecast economic outcomes.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Libya lacks the strategies and resources needed to prevent organized crime and the state and militia groups have limited capacity to provide support for victims of such crime, including modern slavery and human trafficking. The government has not established coordinating bodies to combat human trafficking and has not launched awareness campaigns. The absence of female personnel from detention centres increases the vulnerability of female detainees to abuse and exploitation. Perpetrators



of human rights abuses often go unpunished. While the country depends heavily on international cooperation to prevent organized crime, the Libyan government has no strategies, measures, programmes or resources dedicated to this specific area. Furthermore, improving preventative measures would require a cultural shift within law enforcement entities, which would probably take generations to achieve.

While a civil-society base exists in Libya, it is poorly developed. Moreover, the Government of National Accord, the former interim government for Libya and the superseding agency GNU have reportedly issued decrees that restrict the role of civil society organizations (CSOs), leading to concerns about freedom of expression and human rights violations. Eastern based authorities have also persecuted notable civil society figures, having a chilling effect on free and open discourse.

International and domestic human rights organizations have reported threats against and the abuse of human rights defenders, activists and journalists, including arbitrary detention and physical abuse. The absence of a functioning judicial system and monitoring organizations exacerbates the problem, and there have been high-profile murders of civil society figures over the years. The media also face challenges. There are no truly independent media outlets – many have been co-opted to serve various warring factions. Foreign reporters and international news agencies have encountered difficulties in covering news, especially in eastern Libya. Social media platforms are widely used but are characterized by disinformation campaigns and propaganda, causing confusion within society. Armed groups have also employed social media to monitor political opponents, incite violence and engage in hate speech.

