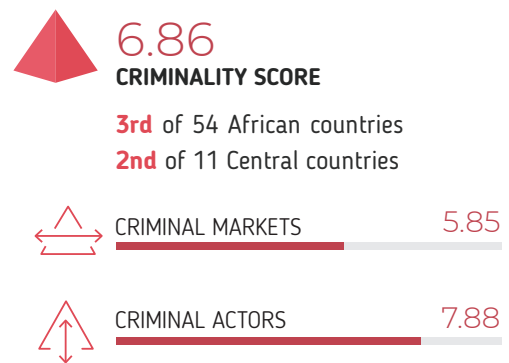
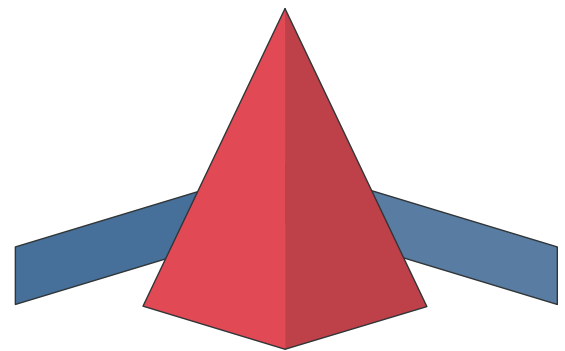


 **CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

Organised crime in the Central African Republic (CAR) – ranking 3rd in Africa for **criminality** – is highly pervasive and has a widespread negative impact on society, due to both the severity of **criminal markets** and the influence of **criminal actors**.

Scores across nearly all criminal markets are very poor. Illicit mining and trafficking of diamonds are omnipresent throughout the CAR, and **mafia-style groups** are heavily involved in these activities. These groups are also often involved in other high-scoring criminal markets, such as **arms trafficking** and the **fauna** criminal market, in which **foreign actors** play an influential role.

Organised crime is ubiquitous and experts note the CAR's state apparatus has failed for years, which is reflected in the nation being ranked 52nd in Africa for **resilience**. There is no evidence of any polices or strategies having been implemented to prevent organised crime, and capacity to combat it is non-existent. Corruption is reported to be highly prevalent in government, which often cooperates with and facilitates the criminal actors that operate in the country. This, combined with the porous borders and the dominance of mafia style groups, leads the CAR to be highly affected by organised crime, with no signs of change.



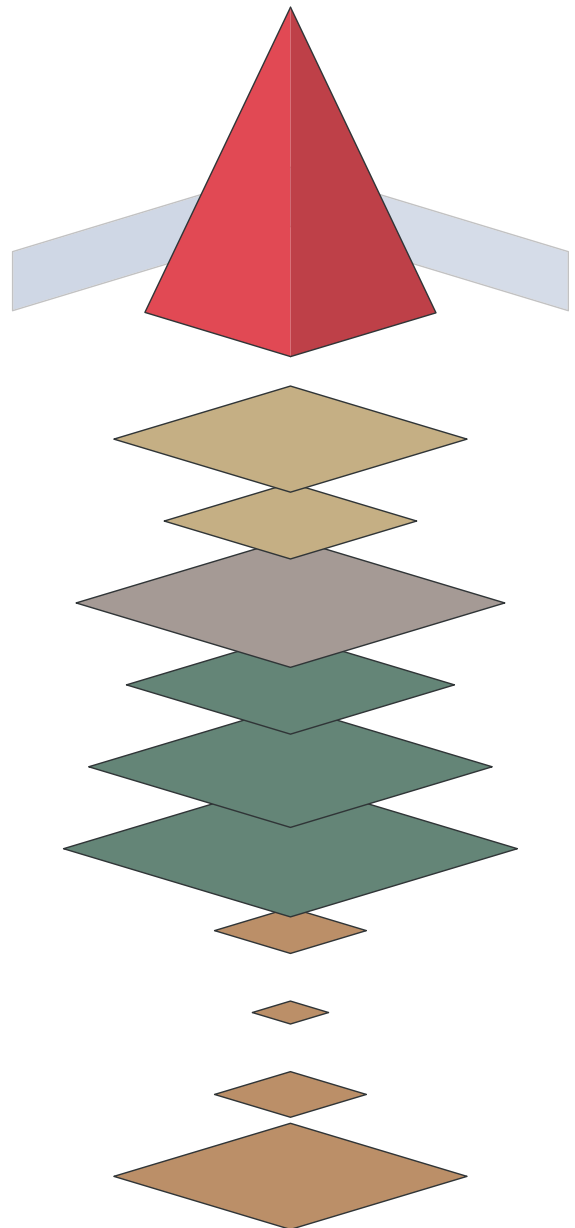
# CRIMINALITY SCORE



<b>CRIMINAL ACTORS</b>	<b>7.88</b>
MAFIA STYLE GROUPS	8.5
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	8.0
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	7.5
FOREIGN ACTORS	7.5



<b>CRIMINAL MARKETS</b>	<b>5.85</b>
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	7.0
HUMAN SMUGGLING	5.0
ARMS TRAFFICKING	8.5
FLORA CRIMES	6.5
FAUNA CRIMES	8.0
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES CRIMES	9.0
HEROIN TRADE	3.0
COCAINE TRADE	1.5
CANNABIS TRADE	3.0
SYNTHETIC DRUGS TRADE	7.0



## Criminal Markets

6 of the 10 **criminal markets** in the CAR have scores of 6.5 or greater, reflecting the significant and severe influence of these markets on society and the authorities. The most pervasive criminal market is illicit **non-renewable resources**, scoring 9, the joint-highest score in the Index assigned to any country in Africa for this market. In 2013, the country was banned from exporting rough diamonds when rebels seized control. However, this did not stop the intensification of the criminal market

and the country remains a major player in the illicit trade of diamonds. Diamond trafficking has played a key role in the politics of the country, with the direct involvement of the presidency through dubious deals and attempts to control some trafficking networks. The criminal control over the country's gold industry is also prevalent.

The illicit **arms trafficking** market is also pervasive, scoring 8.5. The arms trade has been driven by conflict in



neighbouring countries, which, in turn, has fuelled armed conflict in the CAR. Armed conflict and border porosity contribute to the illicit demand for small and light weapons in the country. The conflict between the Séléka coalition and anti-Balaka militias, which started in 2013, sparked violent instability in the country and it is this conflict that led to the raiding of government armouries, increasing the levels of illicit flows of arms across the country.

The country's prevailing legal vacuum allows armed groups and poachers to engage in transnational trafficking of a wide array of wildlife, most notably ivory. Poachers from Sudan and Chad, along with armed groups who have developed relationships with foreign traffickers, enter the country via the border with South Sudan. Foreign armed groups are the main perpetrators of poaching and trafficking across the country, aiming to supply the demand for bushmeat, ivory, animal skins and traditional medicine. Independent militarised poachers are able to take advantage of the lack of governance and enforcement.

The prevalence of **human trafficking** in the CAR in terms of the absolute numbers of victims, is among the highest in the world. Labour exploitation is widespread and increasing as a result of the upsurge in violent conflict in the country, and the large number of displaced persons who are vulnerable to exploitation.

Tramadol, one of the most widely trafficked **synthetic drugs** in Africa, has become a major issue. Tramadol networks based in eastern Cameroon, Chad and Sudan supply the domestic market in the CAR. Consumers are mostly young people, including members of armed groups, militias and unemployed youths. Tramadol is seen as a significant contributor to violence in the country's cities.

Lastly, illegal activity in the **flora** market is considerable. Timber is one of the country's primary exports, and logging companies have been regularly linked to armed groups. Numerous criminal actors, including armed groups, local communities and some foreign actors, illegally exploit timber in the CAR. With no functional forestry service in almost 90% of the country, these actors often operate in connection with networks based in neighbouring countries to the east. Most timber trafficking occurs along the CAR–Cameroon border.

## Criminal Actors

The Central African Republic has the third-highest **criminal actor** score in Africa, scoring 7.88. The country has the joint-highest score for **mafia-style groups**, which are, by and large, absent in the majority of countries across the continent. Estimates suggest that there are anywhere between 15 and 30 armed groups operating in the CAR. Some of these groups have a very loose command structure and many are formed along ethnic lines. Their main source of funding is extortion and illegal taxation, and they focus on economic hubs, such as key towns and trade routes. A number of these armed groups have specialised in specific criminal markets. For example, the CAR's FPRC group (translated as the Popular Front for the Rebirth of the CAR), CNDS (National Defence and Security Council) and the UPC (Union for Peace in the CAR, among others, are heavily involved in mineral trafficking (diamonds and gold, human trafficking, smuggling activities, arms trafficking and wildlife trafficking).

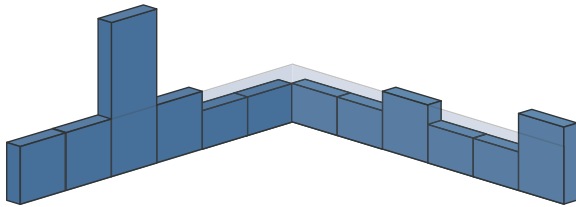
Due to weak rule of law in the country, **criminal networks** have proliferated. There is a significant number of 'unorganised' traffickers, bandits, criminals, robbers, road gangs (zaraguinas), smugglers, thieves and counterfeiters in the Central African Republic. Criminal networks are involved in a litany of illicit markets, ranging from drugs trafficking to illicit trade in wildlife.

The country's state apparatus has failed for years and armed groups have taken over. Throughout the civil service, many state actors operate outside the law and cooperate with criminal actors, including law-enforcement officials and members of the government. Some are even siphoning ministries' budgets and are laundering the money outside the country. In the absence of regular salaries for civil servants, **state-embedded actors** are deeply involved in criminal enterprises, mainly wildlife crime and diamond trafficking.

Lastly, **foreign criminal actors** play a major role in organised crime in the CAR, notably in the illicit fauna market. Foreign networks are also heavily involved in human trafficking, the trafficking of arms and the illicit trade in non-renewable resources.



# RESILIENCE SCORE



<b>POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>ECONOMIC REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>NON-STATE ACTORS</b>	<b>2.0</b>

While the country has the third-highest **criminality** score in Africa, its score for **resilience**, ranking 52nd, is also among the poorest on the continent. This is primarily due to the extreme fragility of the state and the lack of any semblance of governance outside of Bangui. Organised crime is not on the government's agenda, and collusion between state and criminal actors is rife. The CAR has an extremely poor record for **transparency and accountability**, and while the 2016 constitution provides various mechanisms for improving governance, none of them have been implemented by the government.

**National policies and laws, judicial system and detention** and **law enforcement** were all assessed to be virtually non-existent in the CAR. The judicial system has no capacity whatsoever to combat organised crime and, like the country's law-enforcement agencies, it is rife with corruption. The country's borders represent a unique case of porosity, with the near total absence of border controls. Local groups, along with foreign criminal networks from neighbouring countries, are known to freely circulate at the country's borders. The only functioning border posts are located between the CAR and Cameroon, the most important of which is the town of Garoua Boulai, located on the main supply road from Douala to Bangui. The customs services and gendarmerie are in charge of border control, but these agencies have very limited capacity.

There is no capacity to implement **anti-money laundering** measures or to counter money-laundering at all. While the government has introduced measures to enhance economic capacity, such efforts have not been sufficient and there is no national implementation capacity. The country is among the poorest performers in the world when it comes to numerous measures of economic regulatory capacity, which, in turn, inhibits legitimate business, forcing locals to turn to criminal activity instead.

Lastly, there is little by way of **victim and witness support** in the CAR. Research suggests that while victims of crimes are often left unaided by hospitals and other state institutions, NGOs and religious bodies are active in helping and supporting victims. For example, the Catholic Church in Bambari and Bangui is known to have been active in housing both Christian and Muslim victims of violence and barbarism perpetrated by armed groups and gangs. Moreover, there is no evidence of any policies, strategies or campaigns to help **prevent** organised crime. It is evident that prevention is not on the government's agenda. Civil-society organisations in the country are very weak and few of them focus on combating corruption. However, there are various organisations, assisted by foreign entities, that are committed to opposing wildlife crime.

