Guinea is ranked 20th for criminality in the Index, as a result of several pervasive criminal markets and highly influential criminal actors embedded within the state and foreign criminal actors.

Despite a high continental ranking for its criminal markets, Guinea’s score for criminal actors is actually higher. The country’s most pervasive criminal markets are non-renewable-resource crimes, as a result of the prominence of the illicit gold and diamond industry that many Guineans rely on; and the cocaine trade, given the country’s prominent role as a transit country for the drug, which arrives in West Africa from Latin America. Drug trafficking has penetrated state institutions, bringing together local businesspeople, politicians, police officers and military personnel to form a complex and profitable alliance. Foreign actors play a major role in cocaine trafficking, and also human trafficking, which pushes many Guineans into forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Guinea is ranked 40th in the Index for resilience. Despite having ratified the majority of international treaties and conventions on organised crime, with the notable exceptions of two key protocols of the Palermo Convention on the smuggling of migrants and the trafficking of arms, Guinea faces severe deficiencies in a number of crucial areas. In fact, Guinea’s scores for all other resilience indicators suggest either non-existent, or at the very most, extremely ineffective regulatory frameworks and institutions.

Of particular concern is the lack of political will to tackle organised crime, with heavy state involvement in a number of criminal markets – in particular, the drug trade – a significant impediment to defeating organised crime. A complete lack of organised crime prevention measures or any institutional support for witnesses and victims of organised crime is a direct consequence of the lack of political leadership on the issue.
Criminal Markets

With a score of 7.5 for non-renewable-resource crimes, Guinea scores markedly above the continental average of 5.28. Guinea is endowed with mineral resources, including gold and diamonds, and is a source and destination country for trafficked gold. Guinea participates in the Kimberley Process, but only a fraction of the diamonds mined in Guinea pass through the process. Problems in the gold and diamond sector relate entirely to porous borders, lack of formalisation of the artisanal and small gold mining sector, and corruption. The market provides a livelihood to many actors. Local elites are reportedly involved, but it appears that violence is not a defining feature.

Also scoring 7.5, the cocaine trade is a major concern in Guinea. As in neighbouring Guinea-Bissau, the country has long been involved in cocaine trafficking as it sits on a major trafficking route between Latin America to Europe.
Criminal Actors

State-embedded actors are the most influential criminal actor type in Guinea, scoring 8.5 in the Index. Drug trafficking has been known to penetrate state institutions, bringing together local businesspeople, politicians, police and military officers in a complex and profitable alliance. While the direct involvement of public officials in illicit markets has been reported, the corruption involved in the protection of criminal actors appears to be more widespread. Corruption and complicity by government agents in supporting the illicit drug trade are major impediments to international and local counter-narcotics efforts.

While less influential than state-embedded actors, foreign actors are nonetheless considered to have a significant influence on Guinean society, with a score of 7. Actors from neighbouring countries and North Africa are active in the human trafficking market. Latin American drug trafficking organisations have developed close ties with politically connected facilitators in Guinea, allowing the country to assume a key role in the West African drug trade, though they are rarely visibly present in the country.

Criminal networks, on the other hand, rank much lower, with a score of 5.5, just below the continental average of 5.75. The Guinea Police Special Service has reported extensive human trafficking networks between Guinea and neighbouring countries. In 2017, several airline companies with services to North and East Africa and the Middle East began to serve Conakry. Authorities identified an increased number of trafficking networks fraudulently recruiting Guinean, Liberian, and Sierra Leonean women for work abroad, especially for Gulf and Middle Eastern countries.
With a score of 2.75 in the Index, Guinea fares poorly on resilience to organised crime, ranking 40th. The country does not score above 4 on any resilience indicators and political leadership and governance, prevention and victim and witness support are particularly weak, all scoring 1.5. This suggests regulatory frameworks in those areas are either non-existent or extremely fragmented. The country’s lack of political will and resources to combat organised crime make it extremely vulnerable.

Guinea’s score of 1.5 for political leadership and governance puts it far below the continental average of 4.05. Across the continent, only Eritrea, Libya, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo score lower. The government shows a significant lack of interest in enacting or implementing sound counter-narcotics policies. The associated corruption of state institutions means there is very little reliable data on the scale of the problem.

Guinea also scores extremely low on prevention of organised crime, with the same score of 1.5. The country collaborates with international and foreign organisations to reduce trafficking, but its domestic policy environment is inhibitive. Attempts to make improvements in this area have been made, such as three anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaigns targeting local communities along the borders with Sierra Leone and Senegal. However, lack of local-level coordination on anti-trafficking efforts and training for officials outside the capital continue to hinder progress.

Victim and witness support is another major area of concern, scoring just as low as prevention and political leadership. There is no witness protection programme in place in Guinea and although the government has increased its efforts to protect victims of trafficking, major deficiencies remain.