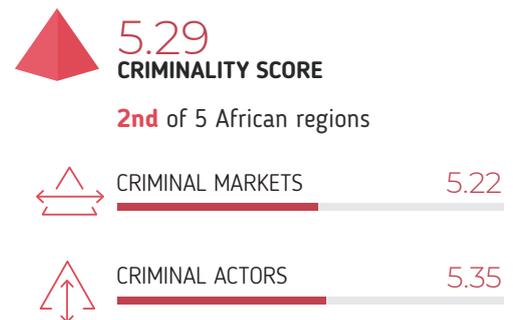
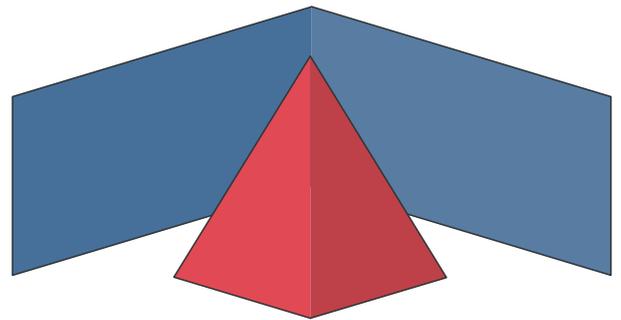


WEST AFRICA

Criminality in West Africa is the second highest on the continent (after East Africa), with a regional average of 5.29. .

As with other regions, **criminal actors** (5.35) marginally drive up the **criminality** score for West Africa, compared to **criminal markets** (5.22). Notably, however, **criminal markets** were identified as the most pervasive in Africa, in part due to the diversity of illicit activities occurring throughout the region.

Despite West Africa's high criminality score, experts described the region as relatively resilient to organised crime, with an average of 4.26 (the most resilient region after Southern Africa). Exhibiting high **criminality** and high **resilience** scores suggests both a wide variation in pervasiveness of criminality among individual countries in the region, as well as inherent vulnerabilities that may not be helped by resilience measures. Moreover, the efficacy of higher resilience measures may be more clearly witnessed with future iterations of the Index.



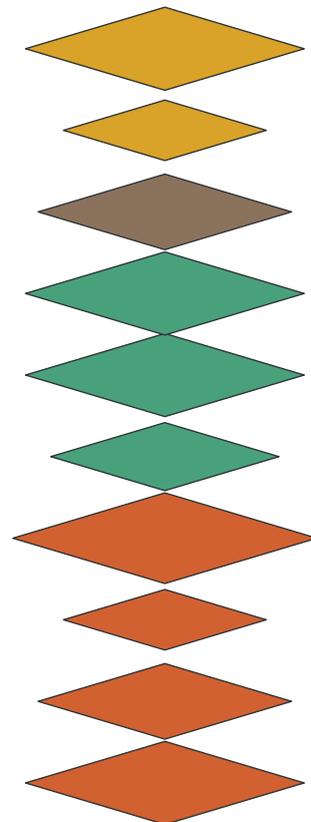
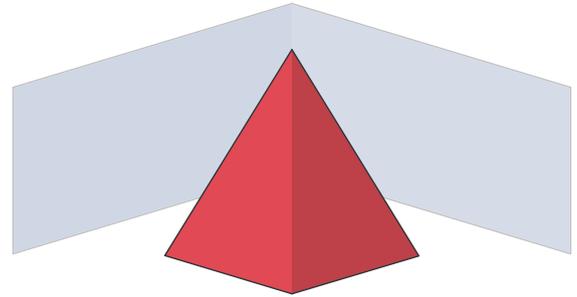
CRIMINALITY SCORE



CRIMINAL ACTORS	5.35
MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	2.43
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	6.40
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	6.73
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.83



CRIMINAL MARKETS	5.22
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	5.53
HUMAN SMUGGLING	4.23
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.23
FLORA CRIMES	5.73
FAUNA CRIMES	5.53
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES CRIMES	4.80
HEROIN TRADE	6.00
COCAINE TRADE	4.23
CANNABIS TRADE	5.20
SYNTHETIC DRUGS TRADE	5.70



Criminal Markets

In the **criminal-markets** subcomponent, illicit environmental markets top the list, with scores of 6.00 for illicit trade in **non-renewable resources**, 5.73 for **flora-related crimes** and 5.53 for the **fauna** market. Non-renewables and flora markets were described as often being linked, in that the rise and fall of prices for certain natural-resource commodities (such as oil), inevitably affect the degree of illicit logging. Moreover, illicit activities surrounding gold production are significant in the region, with increasing insecurity and unsafe conditions around gold mines, and links between the industry and local livelihoods, criminality and corruption. Similarly, the

illicit trade in pangolins (among other species), and their resulting status as critically endangered, drives up the fauna average score.

Of the drug markets, **cannabis** averaged the highest in the region (5.70) compared to other drugs – cocaine (5.20), synthetic drugs (4.80) and heroin (4.23), which is in line with continental trends. While standout countries, such as Nigeria, were noted as major cannabis producers for destination markets abroad, cannabis cultivation was described as generally increasing in the region, along with a growing domestic consumption market.



Human smuggling is the lowest scored market in the region (4.23), due to the freedom of cross-border movement afforded to West African nationals under ECOWAS. The smuggling of persons requires movement

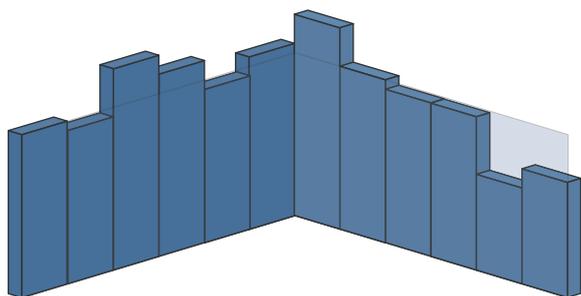
in contravention of national laws, hence little smuggling occurs in the region. Experts therefore attributed the market's score to smuggling of persons outside of the ECOWAS bloc and onward to the Sahel and North Africa.

Criminal Actors

In terms of **criminal actors**, the region differs from other parts of the continent, with **foreign criminal actors** assessed as the most influential among criminal groups in the region (5.88), followed by **state-embedded actors** (5.65) and **criminal networks** (5.12). The prevalence and

ubiquity of foreign criminal actors was regularly described by experts, with varying degrees of control in specific illicit activities, most notably the environmental markets. In this region, **mafia-style groups** are the least influential of such actors, with a score of 2.62.

RESILIENCE SCORE



POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	4.33
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	4.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	5.33
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	4.83
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	4.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	4.50
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	5.40
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	4.43
ECONOMIC REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT	4.20
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	4.23
PREVENTION	2.73
NON-STATE ACTORS	3.10

West Africa's **resilience** score is driven primarily by **non-state actors** (5.40), which are regionally active, and focus on a wide range of organised-crime-related issues. **International cooperation** (5.33) was identified as the second highest resilience indicator and the best across Africa, in large part due to the success of ECOWAS as a regional economic community. Interestingly, even

though **state-embedded criminal actors** average the highest among criminal groups, both **political leadership and governance** (4.33), and **government transparency and accountability** (4.00) were assessed as equal to, or more effective than, the continental averages of 4.05 and 3.43, respectively.

