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BELARUS RESILIENCE INDEX 2022



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The year 2022 was yet another shattering experience for Belarusian society. The new geopolitical context has severely damaged Belarus's image abroad, blurred the once distinct lines between the regime and the people in the eyes of Western policymakers, and brought tragedy into the homes of Belarusians whose loved ones are in Ukraine as military or civilian volunteers. Belarus's involvement in the war in Ukraine has had an enormous negative impact on all parts of the Belarusian system.

As such, this year we have added a new sphere to the Belarus Resilience Index: the military sphere. Here as in elsewhere, we observe an acute, drawn-out crisis in Belarus as a complex, multi-faceted system.

Last year, expert assessments pointed to the need for a complete reset of all spheres of societal life, a problem far greater than just a national crisis. This year, the situation has deteriorated even further: the resilience index of Belarus has dropped to -2.17, which is even worse than last year, when Belarus was already in crisis and the resilience index was -1.88.

The Resilience Index is a holistic expert evaluation of the country as a multi-factor, complex system. The Index was developed by Henadz Korshunau and Alesia Rudnik, researchers at the Center for New Ideas, as a tool for identifying the most resilient and vulnerable spheres of life in Belarus and tracking trends therein. Under the current circumstances, a better understanding of the strong and weak points of the Belarusian system can serve as a starting point for identifying what reforms to prioritize, as well as for deconstructing the current system.

The Resilience Index is formulated in the spring of the current year based on the previous year's outcomes.



1. The overall Resilience Index (hereinafter RI) of the country is -2.17. Last year's index was -1.88. This means that the country is still in crisis (which is likely to get even worse).

The indicators in the military sphere were not factored in when we calculated the overall RI of the country in order to make this year's index commensurable with last year's.

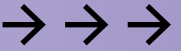
2. Unlike last year, when experts characterized the state of the **social sphere** as merely in stagnation, this year all the main spheres were deemed to be in crisis. Like last year, the **political sphere** (-2.60) and the **information sphere** (-2.45) were in the worst condition. The most significant decline on last year occurred in the **economic sphere** (which went from -1.44 to -2.33).

3. According to experts, the areas in the worst condition within the main spheres were **domestic policy** (-4.56) and the **environment for media work** (-4.36). **Foreign policy** (-3.40), **resources for economic development** (-3.31), **public organizations** (-3.10), and **media diversity** (-3.09) were all deemed to be in critical condition.

Out of all of the main spheres' areas, only three got positive scores: the **diaspora** (+2.00) in the social sphere, **infrastructure** (+0.64) in the information sphere, and **social infrastructure** (+0.16) in the political sphere.

4. In terms of changes to the scores for the main spheres, all discernible trends were negative — even for those positions that retained their positive scores. The downturn in the economic sphere was the most dramatic. The areas with the sharpest decline in ratings were the **economic base** and **budgetary and financial activities** (-1.26 and -1.18 respectively).

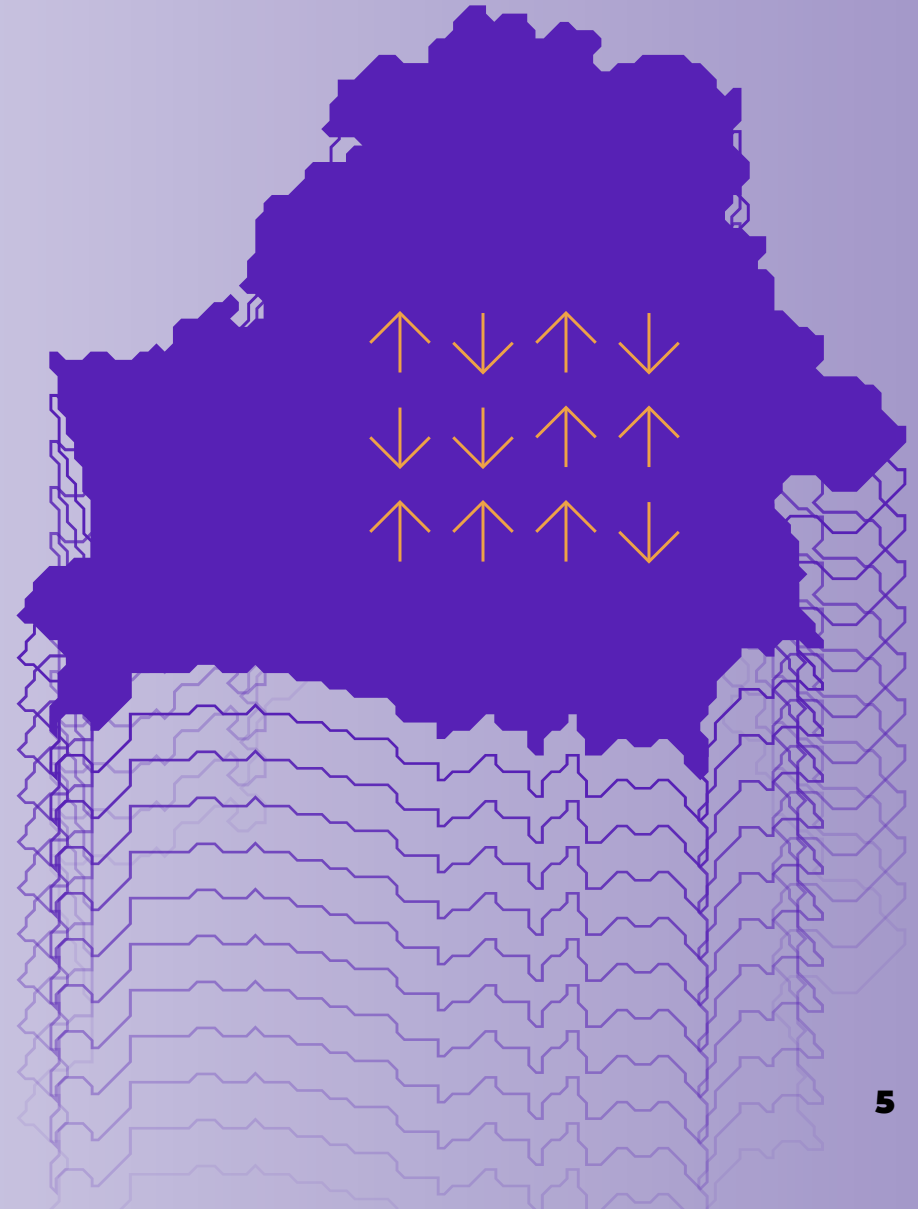
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THE RESILIENCE INDEX

is an approach to assessing the current state of a country as a multi-faceted system. During our research, we interviewed 42 Belarusian experts to assess the resilience of five domains: the political, economic, social, information, and military spheres.

The main objective of the Index is to determine the areas in which Belarus is most vulnerable or most resilient (capable of overcoming crises, adapting to their consequences, and evolving).





POLITICAL SPHERE

According to experts, like last year, the **political** sphere is in the worst shape in Belarus. Its RI is -2.60 (in 2021 it was -2.75).

Just like in 2021, the main factors pulling this sphere down are **domestic policy**, where the situation is on the verge of collapse (RI= -4.56; the lowest score this year of all areas included in the index). The primary reasons for such low ratings are the catastrophic situation surrounding *transparency and legitimate electoral processes* (RI= -4.82; the lowest rating this year among all the Index's indicators), *tolerance of the political activity of citizens* (RI= -4.73), and *functioning separation of powers and healthy political competition* (RI= -4.83).

Some spheres were deemed to be in a state of crisis or in critical condition, including **foreign policy** (RI= -3.40), **law and order** (RI= -2.90) and the **public administration system** (RI= -2.53). Compared to last year, their indicators have barely changed (the difference is less than 0.5 points).



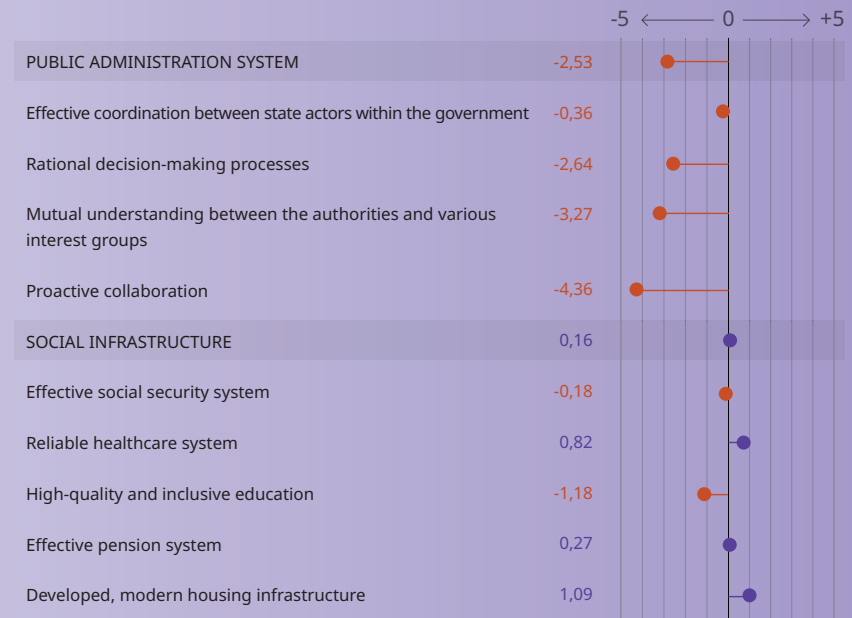


Expert opinions have changed in a positive direction for several individual indicators, including *effective coordination between state actors within the government* and *rational decision-making processes* within the **public administration system** area. Another example is *fair and accessible justice* and a *competent and conscientious police force* in the **law and order** area.

In the latter case, several experts noted the fact that in non-political cases, orientation towards laws and legal procedures in the country continues to function decently; however, this does not change the overall picture.

The only area that received positive scores in the political sphere was **social infrastructure** (RI= 0.16, compared to 0.36 in 2021). The highest ratings in this area were assigned to *developed, modern housing infrastructure* (RI= 1.09). The healthcare system (RI=0.82) and the pension system (RI=0.27) also received positive ratings.

We note that compared to last year's evaluations, three positions — *the social security system, the healthcare system, and the education system* — received slightly lower expert ratings.





INFORMATION SPHERE

Compared to 2021, ratings of the information sphere have barely changed (RI= -2.45, compared to -2.46 in 2021); it continues to be in a state of crisis.

The situation surrounding the area **friendly environment for media work** received the harshest evaluations. Experts assigned it -4.36 points (**domestic policy** was the only area to receive a lower score). Each indicator in this area received -4 points or lower (*safety for journalists; absence of technical and ideological barriers for journalistic work*).

Just like last year, the area **media diversity** is in a critical condition (RI = -3.09). Herein, the main problems continue to be the *monopolized media space* (RI= -4.73) and *lack of media openness* (RI= -4.36).

Experts deemed the **responsibility of media actors** to be in a state of crisis (RI= -2.81). In this area, the indicator *inclusiveness of publications and topics* saw the greatest change: it fell from -0.78 to -2.4; *(in-)dependent media policies* saw the greatest positive change — from -2.67 to -2.09.

The only area in the information sphere to receive a positive rating was **media infrastructure** (RI= 0.64). *Prices for telecommunication services* received high ratings (RI= 3.21; this indicator was the highest in the entire index, and it has seen a significant improvement since last year), as did fast information systems (RI= 1.82).

One trend in this area stands out: ratings of *diverse, accessible information and telecommunication networks* have fallen sharply (RI= -2.33, down from 0.33). This change in expert opinion can be attributed not only to the criminalization of contacts with the independent media, but also to the fact that information systems in Belarus are more than just censored—they are now being used to actually track citizens.





ECONOMIC SPHERE

According to experts, the economic sphere took the greatest hit in the period under consideration. The RI dropped 0.9 points, from -1.44 to -2.33, compared to 2021, meaning the crisis in this sphere continues.

Experts noted the greatest negative trend in the **economic base** of the Belarusian economy (the RI dropped 1.26 points, from -1.36 to -2.89). This negative trend can be primarily attributed to the ratings free-fall of the *diversification of foreign markets* indicator (from -1.30 to -4.33; a downturn of 3.03 points, the greatest deterioration any indicator this year) and the considerable drop in ratings of *equitable conditions for all forms of business* (from -2.60 to -3.67).

Nevertheless, it is another area that is in the worst shape in the economic sphere: namely **resources for development** (RI= -3.31; in 2021 this indicator was -2.42). Belarus's *investment climate* has practically collapsed (RI= -4.44; last year its rating was -3.80). Experts also expressed their concern about *encouragement of private enterprise* in the country (RI= -3.22) and participation in international production chains (RI= -3.00).

We also noted that in the area **resources for economic development**, all indicators were trending negative, with indicator results ranging from -0.52 to -1.22.

Experts also rated **labor** worse than last year (from -1.83 to -2.06). Here, the worst ratings were given to the *labor migration* indicator (RI= -3.89), and the most severe deterioration was recorded for the *employment* indicator (a drop of 0.74 points, from -0.70 to -1.44).

Ratings of the area **budgetary and financial activities**, which last year was the only one in the economic sphere to receive a positive rating, dropped by 1.18 points (to -1.08). With the exception of *manageable public debt*, all other indicators saw a fall in ratings that was either significant (*sufficient gold reserves* dropped by 1.49 points; *trade balance* dropped by 1.13 points) or disastrous (GDP growth fell by 2.88 points, from -0.90 to -3.78).



SOCIAL SPHERE



This is the sphere that experts assigned the highest ratings to, even if its overall score was also negative (RI= -1.31, compared to -0.87 last year).

According to experts, **public organizations** are in the worst shape. The index for this area was -3.10 (a 0.40-point drop compared to last year). For three of the four indicators in this area, ratings were between -3.40 and -3.90. Slightly better ratings were assigned to the indicator *international activities of public organizations (NGOs and GONGOs)*, although here the trend was negative too (-0.30 to -0.90).

Relations between society and the state were deemed to be in a state of crisis (RI= -2.80, up from -3.25). The main problems here were the lack of opportunities for *participation in political life* (RI= -3.80) and *trust in public institutions* (or lack thereof) (RI= -3.00). We know that experts gave slightly higher ratings this year to the indicators *support for public policy* (from -3.20 to -2.30) and *participation in the initiatives of state bodies* (from -3.30 to -2.10).

The **national cultural foundation** was in slightly better shape, but there was a deterioration of ratings here too (from -0.22 to -1.38). This downturn can be attributed to negative movement in all the indicators of this area, especially *cultural capital* (which saw a sharp decline, from -0.50 to -2.70) and *shared cultural identity* (with a drop of 1.33 to -0.20). The fall in ratings for *social toleration* was also significant (from -1.00 to -1.80).

Experts noted a worsening in the area **civic culture** (from -0.27 to -1.28). Herein, *social activism* was in the worst shape (RI= -3.30), and the indicators that saw the greatest decline were *awareness of civic responsibilities* (from 1.22 to -1.80) and *social solidarity* (from 1.56 to 0.80). Meanwhile, the indicator *social solidarity* remained the only one to receive a positive rating in the entire social sphere (except the indicators in the **diaspora** area).

The only area to receive a positive rating was the **diaspora** (RI= 2.00). Indicators like *national identity of the diaspora* (RI= 2.50) and *diaspora organizations* (RI= 2.50) received high ratings. Nevertheless, there is a slight negative trend across all indicators in this area, although it has not yet reached a concerning level.





MILITARY SPHERE

According to the experts, the situation in the military sphere is in much better shape than any other sphere in the index, although it too received a negative rating (RI= -0.30).

Its relatively high score is largely due to the narrow range of ratings the sphere's areas received: from -1.11 to 1.12.

The first figure (-1.11) is the rating received by the area **allies**. Indicators like *international and regional military partnerships* and *parity of partnership members* received the lowest ratings (-3.33 and -3.88 respectively). Meanwhile, the indicators *firm ties between allies* and *practice of cooperation* received low, albeit positive, ratings (1.67 and 1.11 respectively).

The 1.12 rating was for the area **military leadership**. Here, three out of four indicators received positive ratings (*coordinated cooperation between various branches of the military* got 1.38; *independence of military leadership* got 1.44; *chain of command* got 3.11). Only *professional competencies of military leadership* got a negative rating (-1.44).

Personnel was rated as -0.50. The best indicator here was *staffing of military units* (RI= 1.00); the worst was *combat experience of personnel* (RI= -2.89).

The area **army** got a rating of -0.72 (its best indicator was *military infrastructure* (RI= 0.11), and its worst was *civil and legal assurances* (RI= -1.67).

This year was the first time that indicators were calculated for the military sphere in the Resilience Index; therefore, they were not factored in to the overall RI score for the country).





CONCLUSIONS

The Resilience Index is a new approach to assessing the current state of a country as a multi-faceted system. During our research, we interviewed 42 Belarusian experts to assess the resilience of five domains: the political, economic, social, information, and military spheres.

The main objective of the Index is to determine the areas in which Belarus is most vulnerable or most resilient (capable of overcoming crises, adapting to their consequences, and evolving).

Like last year, the political sphere received the lowest scores (-2.6). Of all the areas in this sphere, domestic policy is in the direst straights. Experts determined that issues of political participation of citizens via elections or social activism are in a critical condition. Nevertheless, the ratings make it clear that the government continues to devote considerable attention to the social welfare system, developing the country's social infrastructure. Thus, experts gave positive ratings to the pension system, housing infrastructure, and the healthcare system. Unsurprisingly, experts also noted the negative image of Belarus abroad. This indicator can undoubtedly be attributed to the geopolitical context: namely the Lukashenko regime's support of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

The information sphere is experiencing a downward trend, like last year (-2.45). For several areas, such as friendly environment for media work, all experts gave a rating lower than -4. This can be explained by the even more restrictive access to information within the country for journalists in emigration. Experts compared the access of the independent media to information with the conditions facing war-

time journalists in Ukraine: they noted that it is even more difficult for Belarusian journalists to get information than for their Ukrainian colleagues in conditions of war. They emphasized the difference between the working environments of the independent media and government channels. Whereas journalists from independent outlets are threatened with prison sentences ranging from 15 days to 7 years merely because of their profession, and the independent media space has been almost totally eradicated, the government media gets free access to officials and is privy to special information. Experts remarked that the favoritism enjoyed by the state media can be explained by the fact that these outlets are nothing more than extensions of Lukashenko's press department or the special services. Experts also noted the danger of the growing influence of quasi-independent media like *tochka.by* and *smartpress*.

In the economic sphere (-2.33) the investment climate and participation in international production chains are nearing collapse. The experts noted that before the end of the war in Ukraine and the resolution of the political crisis in Belarus, there



is no point in awaiting positive changes to Belarus's involvement in broad economic systems. The country's economic situation and its economic dependence on Russia complicate this further. Brain drain has had a negative impact on the economy, as many professionals have left the country, especially in the IT and medical sectors. Private and foreign businesses are being subjected to increasing pressure, which lowers competitiveness and weakens the economy.

The state of the social sphere has also deteriorated (-1.31); its worst areas were relations between society and the state and public organizations. In characterizing the problems faced by civil society organizations, experts noted not only the complete eradication of the civil sector in major cities, but also the replication of repressive practices at the regional level. Not a single registered human rights organization remains in the country, although many organizations continue to offer their services from abroad to people residing in Belarus. Civic culture also received low ratings; however, these scores can most likely be attributed to fear of active civic involvement, since — as one expert noted: “civic-mindedness is now being equated with criminal behavior.” Furthermore, the experts opined that the horizontal institutes that arose in 2020 are now in worse shape. Just like last year, the experts noted the presence of the diaspora as a stakeholder influencing Belarusian politics; they also remarked on its relatively strong national identity and ties with the homeland. We continue to believe that it is important to conceptualize the diaspora as an integral part of Belarusian society, as this group of people often stands up for the rights of Belarusians, sets the Belarusian agenda on the international level, and continues to nurture Belarusian communities abroad. At the same time, some experts noted that the diaspora does not yet have enough tools at its disposal to effectively lobby for the Belarusian agenda on a political level. They also remarked on the insufficient involvement and capabilities of the diaspora to give financial support to groups like Belarusians fighting for Ukraine.

Even though the military sphere received a negative score (-0.30), it was still one of the more highly rated spheres according to experts. Experts noted the sufficient availability of personnel, but they also pointed out that soldiers lack combat experience. One of the central problems is the single-handed control of the military by the commander-in-chief: Aleksandr Lukashenko. When evaluating the army's ability to perform combat missions, the experts pointed to the military's disagreement with Russia's aggression against Ukraine, as well as its negative perception towards volunteer units from Belarus fighting for the Ukrainian side. This could indicate a willingness of soldiers to wage war against their own compatriots. Furthermore, Belarus is slowly losing its military autonomy due to its close cooperation with Russia. This tendency is being reinforced by various new treaties, like the new joint military agreement on regional security between Russia and Belarus.

Unsurprisingly, the results of the Index emphasize the vulnerability of Belarus as a multifaceted system. Most spheres are in a critical condition or have already collapsed. Last year, we noted that the system had failed the stress test brought about by the political crisis; however, this year the Belarusian government, in cooperating with Russia to organize military actions against Ukraine, has steadily exacerbated the problems in the political, information, social, economic, and military spheres. These actions are more links in a long chain of foreign and domestic policy decisions that will be harder and harder to undo with each passing year.

Despite this, when calling attention to positive ratings or comments about the competencies of the Belarusian diaspora, Belarusian journalists should bring up the point that despite unilateral decisions by the government in Minsk, the potential that the Belarusian people have demonstrated through hard-earned experience conducting safe activities abroad should be cultivated and leveraged. When a new window of opportunity appears, this potential will be the basis for developing a holistic, stable, and resilient system.



The methodology of the *Belarus Resilience Index* is based on our original combination and adaptation of two classic social science approaches: structural functionalism and the sphere paradigm (Shavel, 2018), enhanced by our indexation of resilience.



Our understanding of the research subject—the Republic of Belarus — as a complex, aggregated (mega-) system stems from **structural functionalism**. We proceed from the assumption that any system strives to overcome external and internal dysfunctions, and each element of the system (or sub-system) makes some contribution to its general sustainability. Practice shows that no social system — nor any sub-system — can remain in a state of perfect equilibrium. That said, when systems (or sub-systems) interact with each other, a certain dynamic sustainability emerges that causes the systems themselves to evolve.



Thus, we have focused our attention on resilience as a characteristic of a system that determines its ability to retain its authenticity and evolve by overcoming various stresses and crises.

This ability is described as “resilience” in the modern Western tradition.

Resilience is a concept that captures the ability of a system to effectively handle external challenges and internal crises. It is a combination of sustainability, flexibility, and preparedness for internal and external stresses. In our case, we used the City Resilience Index and the concept of resilience set forth by Judith Rodin as standard models (Rodin, Judith (2014), *The Resilience Dividend. Being Strong in a World Where Things Go Wrong*).



Any society is an extremely complex system (metasystem) that is difficult to evaluate as a whole. Therefore, we applied the methods proposed by the **sphere paradigm**, which entails singling out several spheres for the Index to focus on. This means that the values assigned to individual spheres should be seen as more salient than the general indicator of the Resilience Index on the country level.

We chose the following main spheres:



THE ECONOMIC SPHERE

covering industry and the distribution of the country's resources (both tangible and intangible)



THE POLITICAL SPHERE

which refers to the relations between various subjects and the authorities



THE SOCIAL SPHERE

covering the conception and affirmation of supra-individual phenomena and actors comprising groups of people



THE INFORMATION SPHERE

where semantic content is created, transmitted, and re-transmitted

Four is a relatively conventional number of spheres in the humanities. The **political** and **economic spheres** are generally accepted segments of societal systems. Allocating a **social sphere** is also conventional. Following this model, the fourth position usually goes to the cultural sphere, which is understood as a space for cultural production, assimilation, and the transmission of its results. We excluded this sphere due to the vagueness of the concept of “culture” and our need to be concrete with regards to each of the spheres we analyzed. As a result, we decided on the **information sphere** as our fourth category. This concept corresponds functionally to the idea of “culture” and is one of the most strategically important factors in social dynamics.

Given the breakout of war in Eastern Europe and Belarus's participation in it, the military was reconceptualized as a separate sphere — both as a subject and as a sphere involved in the defence of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity against external military threats.



STRUCTURE OF THE BELARUS RESILIENCE INDEX

Last year, we divided the Belarusian system into four spheres, 18 areas, and 77 indicators. This year, we added the military sphere, which contains four areas and 16 indicators. As a result, we now have five sphere, 22 areas, and 83 indicators in total.

Each sphere consists of four areas, which are relevant for the resilience of both the entire system and individual spheres. Each area was assessed using four or five indicators. The names of the indicators and their explanations are prescriptive—they represent ideal states of the structural elements of a system, facilitating its resilience and development.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO RESILIENCE

- *diversity, development, openness, and flexibility, which make a system highly adaptable and allow it to overcome challenges and crises.*

FACTORS THAT HINDER RESILIENCE

- *monopolization, homogeneity, and the conservation of the status quo, which makes systems fragile and sensitive to stresses and shocks.*

The index was calculated as the arithmetic mean of the scores provided by the experts who participated in our study. The experts' rating procedure involved comparing the actual state of affairs with an ideal one on an 11-point scale, where the *intervals* were determined as follows:

- *from -5 to -4* – collapse or near collapse
- *from -3.99 to 3* – critical condition
- *from -2.99 to -1.00* – crisis
- *from -0.99 to +0.99* – stagnation
- *from +1 to +2.99* – stable situation with some growth
- *from +3 to +3.99* – sustainable growth (prevailing growth)
- *from +4 to +5* – general systemic progress

We would also like to address how we interpreted change in the indicators from 2021 to 2022. When comparing ratings determined by experts for various spheres in 2021 and 2022, the difference in scores was interpreted as follows:

- a difference in ratings of 0.5 or less was deemed non-existent;
- a difference of 0.5 to 1.0 was deemed insignificant;
- a difference of 1.1 to 2.0 was deemed significant;
- a difference of 2.1 or more was deemed fundamental.

In total, 42 experts took part in our survey; there were nine to 11 experts per sphere (several people were experts for multiple spheres). Practically all experts are currently located outside Belarus, which may have influenced the scores they provided.



In general, resilience can be defined as the ability of a system to respond to crises through preparation, risk management, and adaptation to the conditions that emerge.

Resilience is the ability of any system (individual, social, or organizations) to prepare for failures brought about by crises, recover after shocks or stresses, and adapt to new circumstances, drawing on lessons from past experience. This concept of dynamic sustainability is relevant to many fields: it can be used to analyze countries, regions, ecosystems, industry, architecture, etc. In this study, we aimed to holistically analyze the resilience of Belarus—a system comprising an entire country.

To do so, we propose an expanded methodology that factors in political polarization, the enhanced role of individual actors, and the agency of certain groups that, prior to the political crisis, had not been decisive stakeholders capable of affecting the country's sustainability. Thus, our Resilience Index incorporates the political, social, and economic realities specific to Belarus, thereby avoiding the risk of adapting the concept of resilience wholesale from fields like climate science or engineering.

The point of our resilience analysis is to expand the tools for growth available to Belarus in its new environment: the crisis can be seen as an opportunity to

strengthen the Belarusian system, forging new and unexpected connections and exploring paths to development. In other words, we are looking to create a resilience dividend.

A resilient system is dynamic: it is built on preparedness, responsibility, and the activation of its dormant elements. Such a system entails cooperation between formal and informal actors, as well as various technologies and tools. There are four stages to the development of a resilient system: rapid growth, conservation, release caused by reaching some threshold (collapse/crisis), and then reorganization/adaptation (Rodin, 2014). In order to analyze a system's disadvantages and subsequently strengthen it, feedback from the system's participants must be obtained. Often, structural factors (limited educational opportunities or high unemployment) can influence concrete phenomena (such as the crime rate); thus, in order to solve seemingly surface-level problems, stakeholders must work with the system's structure as a whole.



The concept of resilience underlies the development of international documents, political programs, and academic conferences. Resilience refers to the ability of systems to react to crises through preparation, risk management, and adaptation to the new conditions that arise.

The concept of resilience was widely applied after the 9/11 terrorist attacks; however, besides the framework's ability to help prevent terrorism and restore systems after such incidents, resilience has started being applied to other fields as well (Borovikova, May 2018). The resilience framework is being applied with particular success to the study of the climate and natural disasters. In recent years, the concept has been used in fields as varied as politics, education, energy, and cyberspace.

Resilience is the ability of any system (individual, social, or an organization) to prepare for failures brought about by crises, recover after shocks or stresses, and adapt to new circumstances, drawing on lessons from past experience. The concept of dynamic sustainability is relevant to many fields; it can be used to analyze countries, regions, ecosystems, industry, architecture, etc.

A resilient system has five main characteristics: awareness, diversity, integration, self-regulation, and adaptation (Rodin, J. 2014).

1. AWARENESS

describes cognizance of strengths and weaknesses, as well as the desire and ability to update information, re-evaluating and monitoring changing situations.

2. DIVERSITY

means that a multitude of different individuals, approaches, and scenarios should play a positive role in preparing a system for future crises. Critical functions should not all be performed by a single element of the system.

3. INTEGRATION

entails transparent communication between subjects, encouraging coordinated and effective decisions. It is important for the system to be simultaneously diverse and coherent. Diversity allows for various opinions and alternatives that strengthen the system. Meanwhile, systemic integration is vital for the coordination of ideas and actors, which allows goals to be achieved more effectively.

4. SELF-REGULATION

means that a breakdown does not lead to a crisis, as the system is prepared and can “safely fail.”

5. ADAPTATION

is the ability of a system to evolve and change in a given situation, managing to return to its pre-crisis condition. A sustainable system is not one that has achieved permanent stability, but rather one that focuses on adapting to crises and failures.

It is also important to understand that the resilience of one object (person, city, or country) can negatively affect the resilience of another object. Therefore, to assess Belarus as a whole country—as a system being evaluated for resilience—we propose an expanded methodological approach that takes into account political polarization, the heightened role of particular actors, and the agency of groups that had not been decisive stakeholders influencing resilience before the political crisis.

Thus, our Resilience Index considers the political, social, and economic realities of Belarus while avoiding the risks of adapting the concept of resilience wholesale from fields like engineering or climate science.

The point of building a resilient system is not to make the country completely stable and unchanging, but rather to expand the development tools available to it in new situations, thereby turning crises into opportunities to strengthen the system. When building a resilient system, new and unexpected connections, opportunities, and development paths can be found. This has been termed the resilience dividend.

A resilient system is dynamic: it is built on preparedness, responsibility, and the activation of its dormant elements. Such a system entails cooperation between formal and informal actors, as well as various technologies and tools. There are four stages to the development of a resilient system: rapid growth, conservation, release caused by approaching a threshold (collapse/crisis), and then reorganization/adaptation. In order to analyze a system's disadvantages and subsequently strengthen it, obtaining feedback from the system's participants is crucial. Often, structural factors (limited educational opportunities or high unemployment) can influence concrete phenomena (such as the crime rate). Thus, in order to resolve surface-level problems, it is necessary to work with the structure of the system as a whole. For example, it is unlikely that a country relying fully on technologies that harm the environment will be wealthy.



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ECONOMIC

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
LABOR	Employment	Targeted policy of creating good conditions for job growth
	Effective management of unemployment	Inclusive labor policy with mechanisms for fostering the skills needed on the current and emerging labor market
	Rational distribution of income	Creation of conditions that stimulate reasonable income growth and its fair distribution
	Alignment of labor migration with national interests	Effective measures aimed at attracting and retaining highly educated and qualified personnel
ECONOMIC BASE	Diversification of foreign markets	Effective diversification of foreign markets to mitigate economic risks
	Regional distribution of production	Reasonable distribution of production throughout the country to achieve both an economic and social effect
	Sectoral economic policy	Analysis of indicators in various industries with a primary focus on the most promising sectors
	Equitable conditions for all forms of business	Creation of an equitable and favorable environment for businesses of different forms and sizes: public, private, foreign; small, medium, and large.
BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	Sufficient gold reserves	Sufficient gold reserves to overcome potential crises
	Trade balance	Maintenance of a favorable (positive) trade balance
	Manageable public debt	Sufficient funds for servicing and/or reducing public debt
	GDP growth	Gradual and steady GDP growth
RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT	Favorable investment climate	Favorable and consistently improving conditions for attracting domestic and foreign investment

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
	Pursuit of high technology and innovation	Emphasis on high-tech and innovative industries
	Encouragement of private enterprise	Incentive system for fostering private enterprise at all levels
	Participation in international production chains	Integration of the country's economy into broader economic systems

POLITICAL

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM	Effective coordination between state actors within the government	Comprehensive and flexible communication (including feedback) among various branches, levels, and actors within the government
	Rational decision-making processes	Transparent, inclusive, and comprehensive development of policies and strategies for government planning, decision-making, and policy execution.
	Mutual understanding between the authorities and various interest groups	The authorities consider the interests of various groups in the country (social, political, ethnic, etc.); there is inclusive and constructive cooperation among all actors involved in public decision-making
	Proactive collaboration	The state supports the development of civil society, seeking to include active-minded citizens and their organizations/associations in the development of the country at all levels
	Crisis monitoring and management	Comprehensive, high-quality state and independent monitoring of the situation in the country (economic, technological, ecological, etc.), allowing the state to manage emergencies holistically
LAW AND ORDER	Rule of law and human rights	Public order and security systems are based on respect for human rights; they are kept in check by laws
	Fair and accessible justice	Effective, independent, impartial justice mechanisms
	Competent and conscientious police force	The police conscientiously and effectively perform their duty to keep citizens safe.
	Active corruption prevention	Transparent and effective approach to combatting corruption in all spheres of life

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
	Effective crime prevention and deterrence system	Comprehensive, cooperative, and strategic crime deterrence mechanisms
SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE	Effective social security system	Effective social security system for vulnerable groups
	Reliable healthcare system	Affordable, high-quality medical care for all groups (covering aspects ranging from sanitary control to ambulance services)
	High-quality and inclusive education	The education system inclusively provides the entire population with the objective, scientific knowledge necessary for personal development and social competence.
	Effective pension system	The pension system works reliably, ensuring a decent level of well-being for its participants.
	Developed, modern housing infrastructure	Well-maintained engineering systems; logistics, transport, telecommunications, and other infrastructure; stable operation of rapid response services of various types
DOMESTIC POLICY	Transparent and legitimate electoral processes	The government fulfils its obligations to ensure democratic, fair, and free elections
	Functioning separation of powers	The executive, judicial, and legislative branches function independently of one another
	Strong local government	The local authorities have enough autonomy to make independent decisions at their own level; they are afforded opportunities to influence political decision-making at higher levels
	Healthy political competition	Favorable environment for the development of political parties, organizations, and other actors in the political process
	Tolerance of the political activity of citizens	Citizens' political activity is valued by the state, which actively fosters civic education and encourages political involvement
FOREIGN POLICY	Friendly relations with other countries	Developed network of diplomatic missions, absence of diplomatic scandals
	Improvements to the country's image	Purposeful attempts by the authorities to improve the country's image abroad through broad political, economic, cultural, sporting, and other global ties.

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
	Support for citizens abroad	Systematic cooperation with Belarusians abroad; friendly and long-term relations with representatives of the diaspora
	Contribution to the activities of international organizations and associations	Transparent and mutually beneficial relations with a wide range of foreign policy partners in supranational and international associations
	Emphasis on good-neighborliness	Unequivocal respect for sovereignty and respect for neighboring countries

SOCIAL

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
NATIONAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION	Shared culture and a strong collective identity	Existence of a collective consciousness and culture that most of the country's inhabitants identify with
	Social toleration	Mutual acceptance of different groups (linguistic, national, religious, etc.)
	Preservation of traditional folk culture	Popularization of various elements of traditional culture (cuisine, handicrafts, clothing, etc.)
	Cultural capital	Familiarity with classical elements of world culture and modern trends: theaters, museums, exhibitions, etc.
PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS	Diverse and developed public organizations	Effectively functioning public organizations of various types (territorial, professional, human rights, ecological, religious, etc.)
	Regional distribution of public organizations	Public organizations cover all regions of the country
	Inclusiveness of public organizations	All population groups are represented by public organizations, which seek to resolve their problems and defend their rights
	International activities of public organizations (NGOs and GONGOs)	Public organizations participate in the activities of a wide range of foreign and international organizations

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
CIVIC CULTURE	Awareness of civic responsibilities	People understand and accept their duties as citizens; they take responsibility for what's happening in the country
	Social solidarity	Solidarity and mutual aid at the neighborhood, territorial, professional, and other levels
	Social activism	Citizens actively participate in public life; they express their opinions and take part in solving social problems.
	Respect for human rights	Understanding of the importance of human rights, respect for them as common and personal values
RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIETY AND THE STATE	Participation in political life	Active participation of citizens in the political life of the country
	Trust in public institutions	Trust of citizens in governance structures and agencies that uphold public order
	Participation in the initiatives of state bodies	Most citizens take part in events or initiatives instigated by the authorities in some way.
	Support for public policy	As a whole, society supports the government's policies
DIASPORA	National identity of the diaspora	Developed national and civic consciousness of the diaspora
	Diaspora organizations	A developed network of institutional and informal organizations connecting Belarusians abroad with each other and with their homeland
	Strong ties with the homeland	Maintenance of regular, productive ties with the homeland; active support for the homeland
	Political influence of the diaspora	Sufficient skills and resources to lobby for the country's interests abroad

INFORMATION

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
INFRASTRUCTURE	Diverse, accessible information and telecommunication networks	Diverse and competitive systems that ensure the distribution of telecommunication services throughout the country.



AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
	Fast information system	Up-to-date information can be rapidly dispersed (the vast majority of the country is covered by television and radio signals, broadband internet, and postal services)
	Prices for telecommunication services	Affordable prices for telecommunication services
	Widespread media literacy	Inclusive efforts to raise awareness in society of the risks and opportunities of using various sources of information (“media security”)
FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR MEDIA WORK	Safety for journalists	Opportunities for unhindered and safe journalistic work
	Absence of legal barriers	Independent media outlets can be registered; they can function freely within the bounds of the law
	Absence of technical barriers	Absence of artificial technological barriers: access to printing houses, telecommunication networks, and TV/radio stations
	Absence of ideological barriers	The activities of the media are not subject to ideologically motivated censorship from the government
MEDIA DIVERSITY	Multi-level media sources	Developed network of national, regional, and local media
	De-monopolized media space	Accessibility and equal conditions for various types of media: state-owned and private, pro-regime and oppositional
	Media openness	Opportunities for foreign and international media to work freely in the country
	Support for domestic media outlets	The government actively supports domestic media outlets
RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIA ACTORS	Inclusiveness of publications and topics	The media represent and defend the interests of various social groups and societal strata.
	Independent information policy	The media can apply their own independent information policy
	Standards of journalistic ethics	The media generally conduct their work properly, on the basis of mutual respect
	Democratic nature of the state’s information policy	The information policy of the state aims to ensure free access to information, equitable conditions for the media, and the support and protection of public interests in the information field



MILITARY

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
MILITARY LEADERSHIP	Independence of military leadership	Subordination of the army to a commander in chief, rather than a third party or country
	Chain of command	A chain of command that entails a hierarchical subordination of military units and command divisions; independence of actions
	Coordinated cooperation between various branches of the military	Skills and resources to jointly carry out missions using various types of troops
	Professional competencies of military leadership	Knowledge, skills, and know-how of various levels of command, ensuring the needs and challenges of modern warfare can be met
PERSONNEL	Staffing of military units	Sufficient military and paramilitary personnel
	Personnel training	Sufficient knowledge and know-how to perform combat missions
	Combat experience of personnel	Combat experience that corresponds to the capabilities of the military to take part in armed conflict
	Morale and psychological health of personnel	Readiness and ability of soldiers and officers to consciously, actively, and responsibly fulfil their duty in peacetime, as well as to carry out missions in wartime
ARMY	Government financing for the army	A military budget that is large enough to ensure a functioning army
	Military-technical equipment	Provision of combat vehicles, weapons, and ammunition (including modern weapons and communications equipment)
	Military infrastructure	Interconnected logistical, medical, inventory, and other systems
	Civil and legal assurances	A system of control over the functioning of the military system, mechanisms for upholding the rights of service people and counteracting corruption and hazing

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
ALLIES	International and regional military partnerships	Participation in military partnerships that improve the country's security
	Firm ties between allies	Similar systems of management; unified systems of defense and military standards
	Practice of cooperation	Adequate experience conducting joint military exercises and/or operations
	Parity of partnership members	Equal participation of allies in decision-making during both wartime and peacetime

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