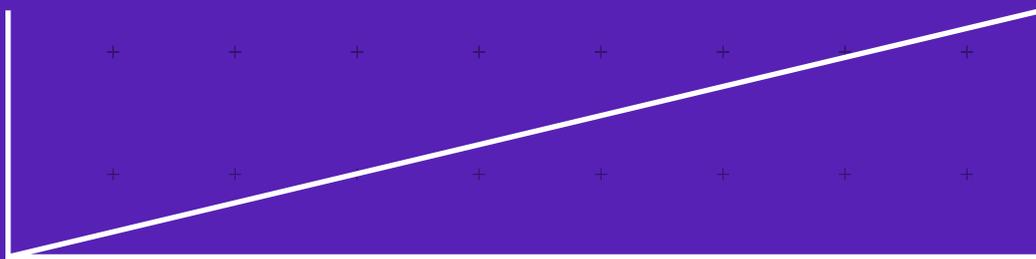


**CENTER FOR NEW IDEAS**



# **BELARUS RESILIENCE INDEX 2021**





This project was conceived and carried out before the start of the war in Ukraine—a conflict in which the Belarusian government is directly involved. Naturally, this turn of events has catastrophic implications for the situation in Belarus when compared to the one described in this project. Nevertheless, we believe that the main conclusions of this research remain relevant today.

Even before the war began, the political and information spheres in Belarus were in crisis. The economic situation was slightly cheerier, although we would like to underline once again that this was before the outbreak of the war and the subsequent sanctions on Belarus. The social sphere remained more or less viable despite the incessant repression, although it was stagnating.

Belarus's involvement in Russia's war against Ukraine will have a colossal impact on all components of the system that is Belarus.

The low ratings assigned to all spheres can be attributed to the political crisis. Before the war, solving problems in Belarus's political sphere may have been the most urgent priority; today, however, it can be argued that almost all spheres of life in the country require a new start.



The objective of the Resilience Index is to analyze the ramifications of a host of challenges that shook Belarus in 2020–2021. These events clearly demonstrate how vulnerable a system that had previously seemed unshakable can be. Even then, Belarusian society as a system could only be described as being in crisis.

The Resilience Index (RI), which was calculated for the country as a whole as well as several levels deeper, allows us to identify the most stable and vulnerable elements in Belarus’s structure as a “large system.” Under the current circumstances, understanding the strong and weak sides of the Belarusian socio-cultural system can serve as a starting point to determine priorities for reforming—and deconstructing—Belarus as a system.

1. The total RI of the country is 1.88, meaning that Belarus is in crisis.
2. In 2021 the political (-2.75) and media spheres (-2.46) were in the direst condition. Within these domains, the most problematic areas included domestic policy (-4.55) and law and order (-3.35), as well as the environment for media work (-4.67). Despite the Belarusian “export miracle”, this complex crisis has also affected the economic sphere (-1.44): here, highly indicative were the negative estimates of the quantity and quality of resources for further economic growth (-2.42).
3. The repressions that unfolded after the Belarusian revolution of 2020 caused the social sphere to stagnate (-0.87). Problems related to interactions between society and the state were particularly acute (-3.25).
4. The only concrete areas to receive positive assessments were related to infrastructure: social infrastructure (0.36) in the political sphere, communications infrastructure in the information sphere (0.98), and the activities of Belarusians abroad in the social sphere (2.08). Several areas, such as domestic policy (-4.55) and the environment for media work (-4.67), are on the verge of collapse. Likewise, law and order (-3.35), foreign policy (-3.27), relations between society and the state (-3.25), and media diversity (-3.47) are in a critical condition.



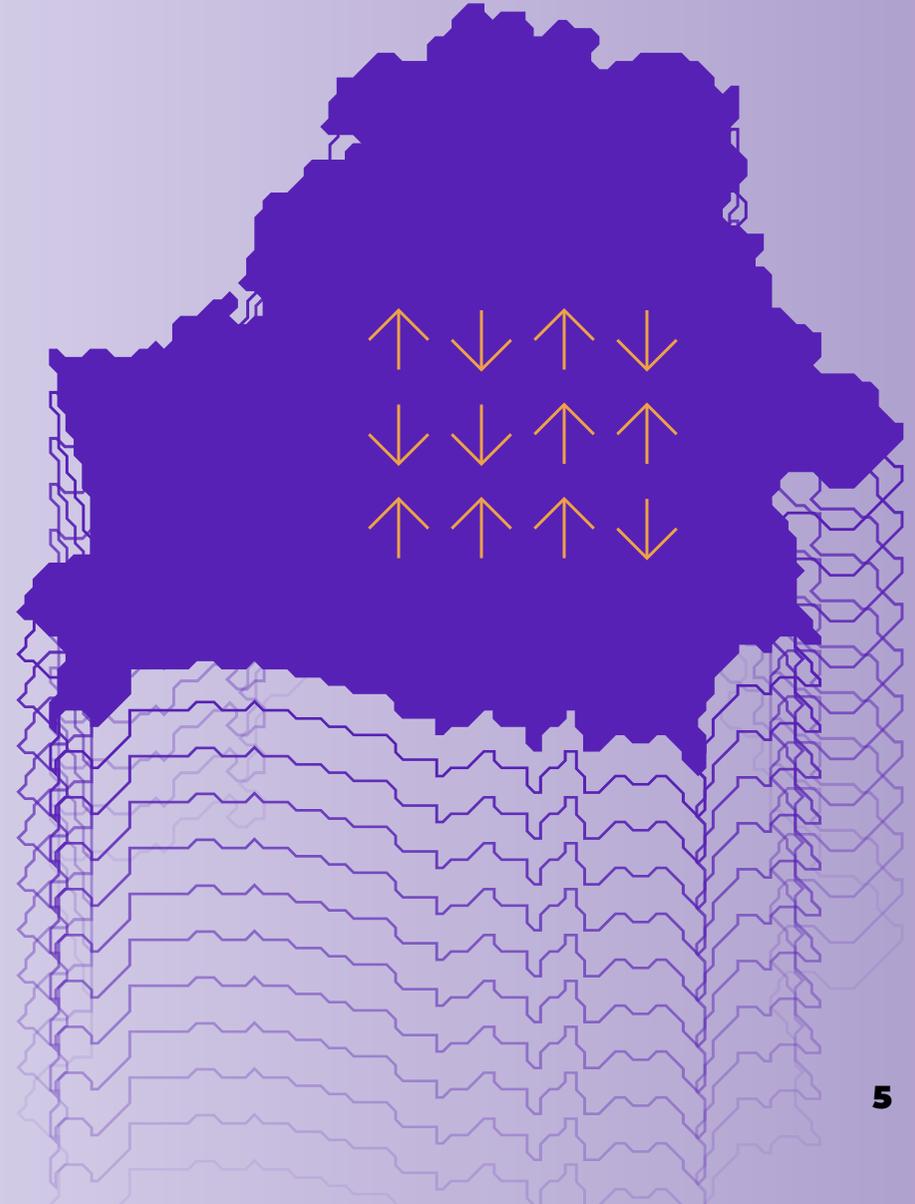
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## THE RESILIENCE INDEX

is a new approach to assessing the current state of a country as a multi-faceted system. During our research, we interviewed 39 Belarusian experts to assess the resilience of four domains: the political, economic, social, and information 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).





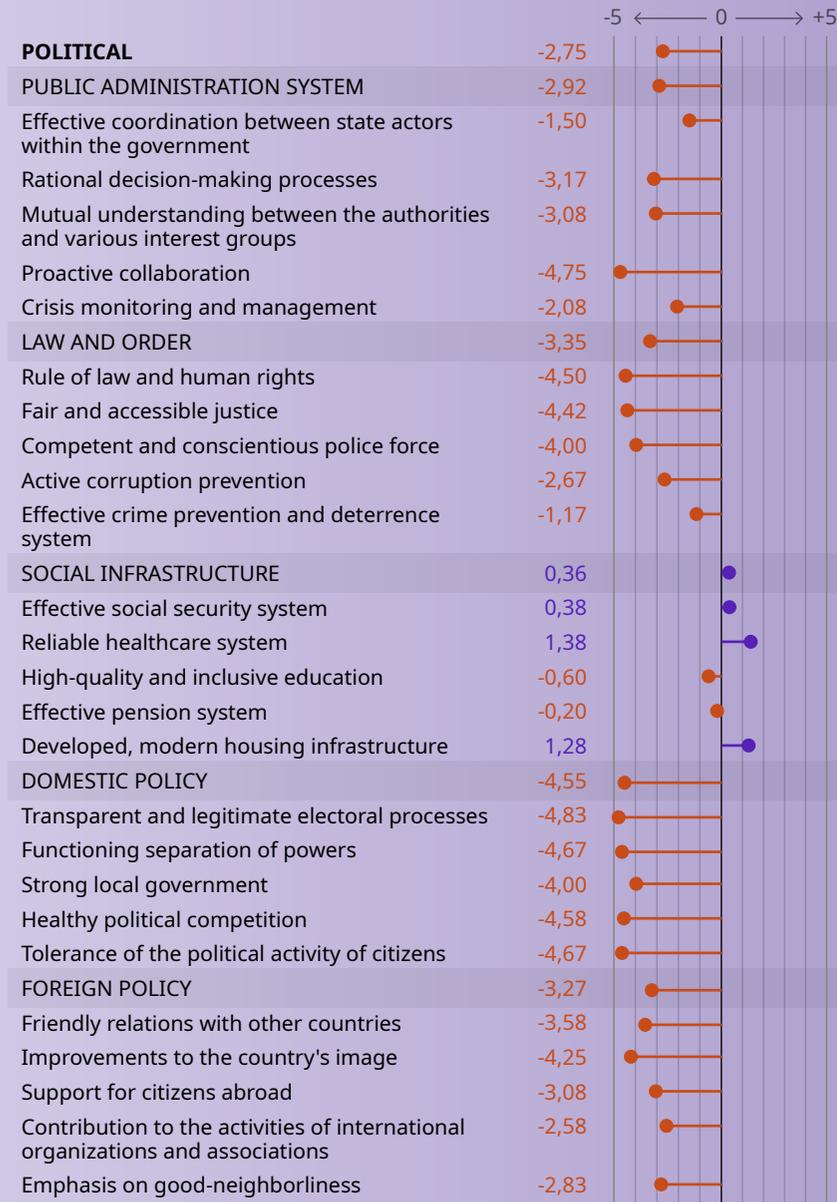
# POLITICAL SPHERE

The experts determined that the **political sphere** is in the direst situation. Its resilience index (RI) was -2.75 points.

The main factor shaping this state of affairs is **domestic policy**, where the situation is on the verge of collapse (RI = -4.55). Here, experts point to the extreme *lack of transparency and legitimacy of electoral processes* (RI = -4.83), the *lack of any functioning separation of powers* (RI = -4.83), and the *resistance of the regime to the political activity of citizens* (RI = -4.67).

Extremely negative assessments were also assigned to components of the political sphere such as **law and order** (RI = -3.35) and **foreign policy** (RI = -3.27); the **public administration system** was determined to be in crisis (RI = -2.92). What's more, this latter area featured one of the lowest scores in the entire political sphere, which went to *proactive collaboration between the government and society* (RI = -4.75).

Only one area in the political sphere received a positive, albeit low, rating: **social infrastructure** (RI = 0.36). Indicators such as *reliable healthcare system* (RI = +1.38) and *developed and modern housing infrastructure* (+1.28) received the highest ratings. The social security system also received a positive rating (RI = 0.38).





# INFORMATION SPHERE

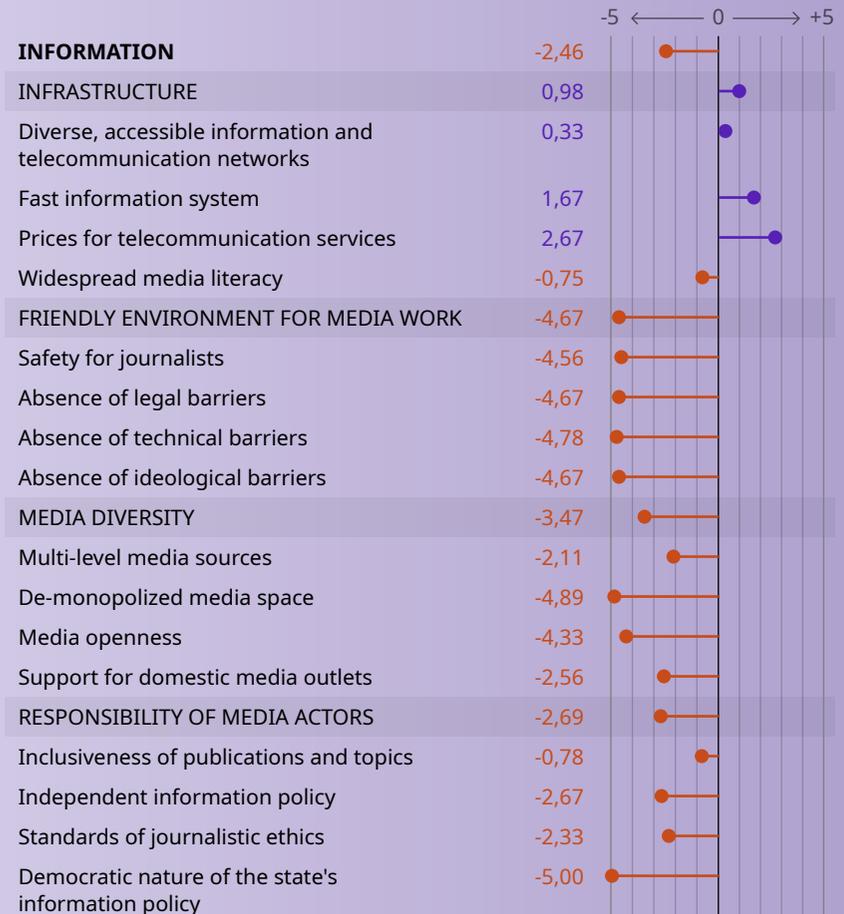
Similarly to the political sphere, the **information sphere** was deemed to be in crisis (RI = -2.46) by experts.

The most drastic conditions can be observed in the area **friendly environment for media work**. Experts assigned it -4.67 points (the lowest rating of any area in the Index). Each of the indicators in this area received less than -4.5 points (*physical danger to journalists; legal, technical, and ideological barriers to journalistic work*).

The **media diversity** area is also in a critical condition (RI = -3.47). Here, major problems include *monopolization of the media landscape* (RI = -4.89) and *the closed nature of the information space* (RI = -4.33).

Experts assessed the **responsibility of media actors** as being in crisis (RI = -2.69). This can be partially attributed to the fact that the *democratic nature of the government's information policy* received the lowest possible score: -5 (it was the only indicator to do so).

The only area in the information sphere to receive a positive rating was **infrastructure** (RI = 0.98). Here, the indicators with the highest scores were *prices for information and communication services* (IR = 2.67; it had the second highest score among all of the index's positive indicators).





## ECONOMIC SPHERE

Experts assessed the state of affairs of the economic sphere as being in crisis (RI = 1.44), although the situation is less dire than that of the previous spheres.

They were most concerned about **resources for development** (RI = -2.42). The *investment climate* in Belarus is in critical condition (RI = -3.80). Experts also expressed concerns about *encouragement of private enterprise* in the country (RI = -2.70).

The situation surrounding areas such as **labor** and the **economic base** received higher ratings. The former received a score of -1.83 (with *alignment of labor migration with national interests* in a bad state, at RI = -3.50); the latter received -1.63 (the worst score in this area went to *equitable conditions for all forms of business*, at -2.60).

**Budgetary and financial activities** were deemed by experts to be a stagnating area; however, this was the highest-rated area in the economic sphere, at 0.10. There were both positive and negative indicators within it. Positive indicators included *trade balance* (RI = 1.80) and *sufficient gold reserves* (RI = 0.60). Negative indicators included *GDP growth* (RI = 0.90) and *manageable public debt* (RI = -1.1).





# SOCIAL SPHERE

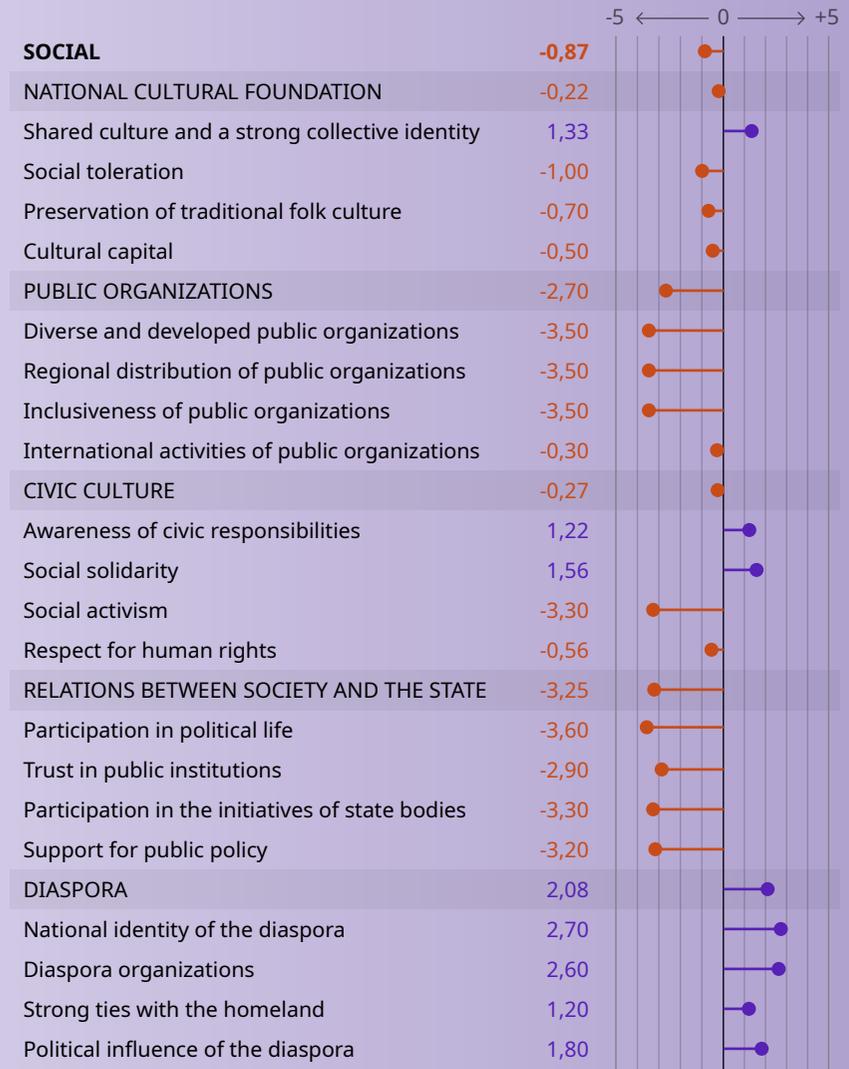
This sphere received the highest score, although it was still in the negative zone (RI = 0.87).

The worst ratings went to **relationship between society and the state**, which was characterized as being in crisis (RI = -3.25). The largest problem here was the *lack of opportunities to participate in political life* (RI = -3.60).

**Public organizations** are also in crisis. The index for this area was -2.7. It could have been even worse, as three out of four indicators in this area received ratings below -3.50 points (*diverse and developed public organizations, regional distribution of public organizations, and inclusiveness of public organizations*); however, the rating was boosted by the higher score assigned to the international activities of public organizations (RI = -0.30).

Experts rated the **national cultural foundation** (RI = -0.22) and **civic culture** (RI = -0.27) as stagnant. In the first of these areas, the highest points went to the indicator *shared culture and a strong collective identity* (RI = 1.33), while the lowest went to *social tolerance* (RI = -1.00). In the second of these areas, the best ratings were assigned to *social solidarity* (RI = 1.56), while the worst went to *opportunities for social activism* (RI = -3.30).

The only area to receive a positive score was **diaspora** (RI = 2.08). Several indicators received particularly high scores, including the *national identity of the diaspora* (RI = 2.70) and *diaspora organizations* (RI = 2.60).





## 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 39 Belarusian experts to assess the resilience of four domains: the political, economic, social, and information 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).

According to our Index, the political sphere in Belarus is the most vulnerable of the four, with a result of -2.75. To explain this phenomenon, experts listed several negative trends that have been negatively affecting domestic and foreign policy in Belarus: the migration crisis in the summer of 2021, rapidly deteriorating relations with the outside world, withdrawal from the Eastern Partnership, and the unprecedented massive repressions against citizens have all led experts to assess the political sphere in Belarus as extremely vulnerable according to our scale.

On the resilience scale, the social sphere received the best ratings (-0.87) of all analyzed domains. However, the only area with a positive rating in this sphere was the diaspora, which does not directly depend on state actors. Areas such as the relationship between society and the state and public organizations received

negative scores. We therefore find it necessary to point out that the assessment given to the social sphere would have been far less rosy if it weren't for the diaspora. That said, we argue that in the current political context, the diaspora may be considered a part of society and thus also the system we are examining, as Belarusians abroad actively influence the agenda both in Belarus and in the international arena. When assessing the social sphere, some experts noted that the concept of a public organization as a structure working only within the country should be revisited. Given the extreme political climate, dozens of public organizations have left the country, and they continue to engage in their activities from abroad. Meanwhile, the development conditions for public associations in Belarus remain dismal and dangerous.



Like other spheres, the economic sphere is in a state of crisis (-1.44). Furthermore, the experts were keen to note several important aspects of the economic crisis in Belarus. Although foreign investment never exceeded 3% of GDP over the last 10 years, the current political crisis has further discouraged both foreign and domestic investment. The previous emphasis on high-tech and innovation was disrupted by the political crisis, relocation of IT specialists, and pressure on private companies. Moreover, the government does not provide any effective mechanisms for managing unemployment, while the political crisis only worsens brain drain. Sanctions and the political crisis led experts to negatively assess Belarus's chances of participating in successful international economic systems. Another problem is the lack of economic diversification of foreign markets, as Russia predominates Belarus's exports and imports. Experts were also unanimous in their assessment of gold reserves, which are only sufficient to overcome short-term crises.

One of the most polarized spheres was the information sphere, which was assessed as being in crisis (-2.46). Here, the division between state and non-state actors turned out to be important. According to experts, the blocking of the websites of independent publications, censorship of traditional media and cyberspace, and the danger—potentially lethal—faced by journalists has put the information sphere in a state of crisis. The experts also underlined the critical situation surrounding journalistic ethics of government news outlets, which have been promulgating propaganda, threats, and hate speech over the past year.

To sum up, as a multifaceted system Belarus cannot be deemed resilient. The results of the Resilience Index show that in all spheres, the system is in a calamitous state—or at best is stagnating. The most important factor influencing

these results has been the political crisis: the system has been unable to overcome this stress test in the political sphere. This illustrates how the effects of a crisis in one sphere are not confined to a single part of the system, but instead influence the whole, weakening it and reducing its ability to develop and improve. In this context, it is important to remember that systems in authoritarian regimes depend on the actions of a small group of people; unlike in democracies, large numbers of actors cannot engage in the country's development and improvement. The distribution of responsibilities among various actors—such as public organizations, initiatives, and other representatives of civil society—strengthens a system.

This project has demonstrated the heuristic value of our index, which will continue to grow as we add new indicators. This will allow patterns and change to be tracked—at the country, sphere, and other levels.

Particular attention can be paid to the positions that experts rated highly—these are potential buttresses or zones of growth for the country as a system. Up-to-date facts can be useful for political actors, analysts, and researchers wishing to identify the most problematic aspects of Belarusian society that most urgently need reform.



*We would like to emphasize one more time that this project was conceived and carried out before the start of Russia's military operation in Ukraine (which involved Belarus's participation). Nevertheless, we still believe that the results we obtained remain relevant.*



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.

*Explanation: given the current situation in the world, we must explain the lack of a block dedicated to the military sphere in our index. This aspect is currently subject to heightened attention, which is natural given the foreign policy context of the world today. However, in peacetime, the military sphere is but one component of the political sphere—and it is not even the largest or most important. This was the prism through which we perceived the military when we were conducting our research. However, in light of the current political climate and the influence of the military sphere on other components of the system, we would certainly have included the military sphere in the Resilience Index as a block if we had performed our research after February 2022.*

The research team selected several dozen experts to assess the resilience of Belarus in four spheres; experts were assigned spheres based on their scholarly profile. Before having them fill out our questionnaire, we gave each expert detailed instructions describing our methodology and explaining which sphere(s) we assigned to them based on their expertise. We asked the experts to evaluate which sphere would suit them best (several or even all four) and gave them the chance to comment on their reasoning. Out of the 55 experts we approached, 39 chose to take part. The experts who took part in our study included members of non-governmental research centers, leading independent analysts, economists, political scientists, sociologists, and media experts.



# STRUCTURE OF THE BELARUS RESILIENCE INDEX

We divided the Belarusian system into four spheres, 18 areas, and 77 indicators.

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 (see the appendix) are prescriptive—they represent ideal states of the structural elements of a system, facilitating its resilience and development.

## FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO RESILIENCE

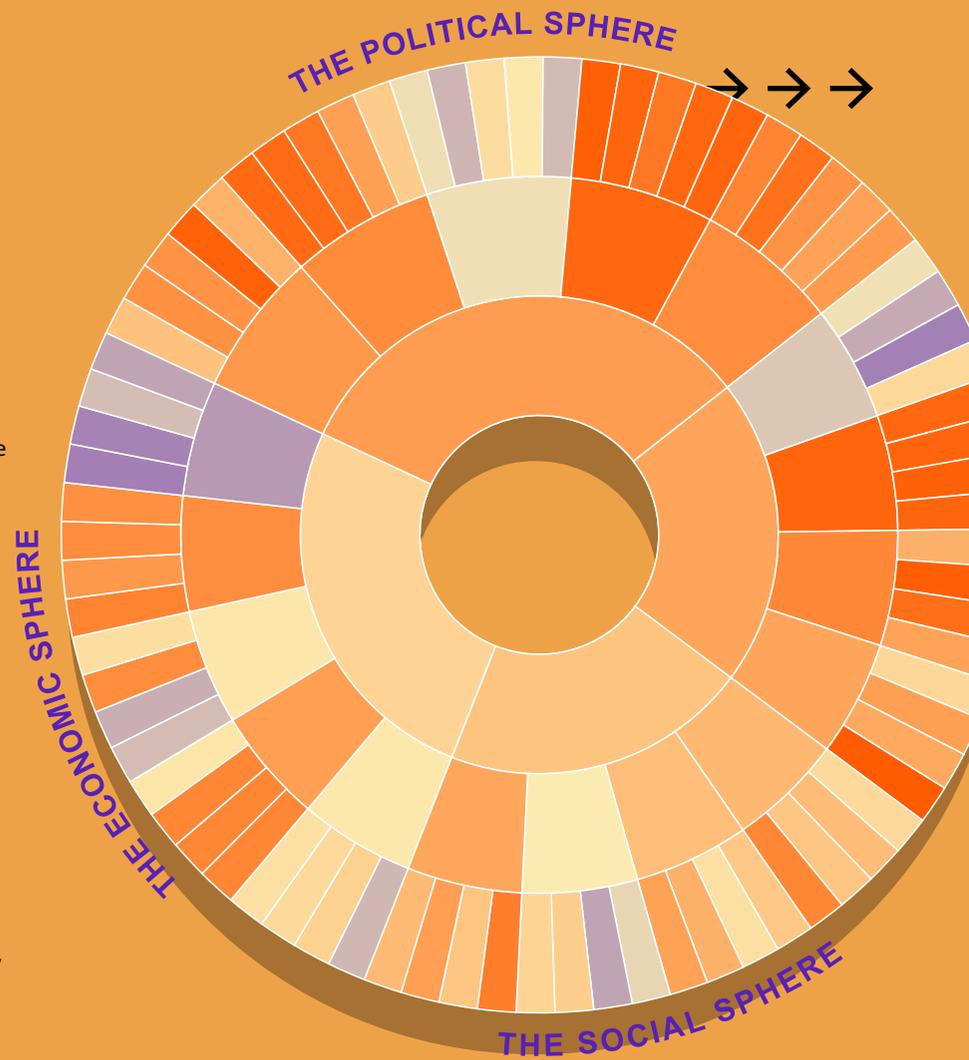
- *diversity, development, openness, and flexibility, which make a system highly adaptable and allow it to overcome challenges and crises*

## FACTORS THAT HINDER RESILIENCE

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

To determine the value of the index, we calculated the mean of experts' estimates. Thus, the expert evaluation procedure involves comparing the current state with an ideal one on an 11-point scale, whereby

- +5**  
fully corresponds to the described ideal state
- +1 to +4**  
mean there is some correspondence; progress is being made in the right direction
- 0**  
denotes stagnation or lack of movement in any direction



- 1 to -4**  
mean the situation is more or less critical; things are getting worse
- 5**  
means there is a crisis; the status quo is the opposite of ideal



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.



## ALESIA RUDNIK

Researcher of the Center for New Ideas. Lesia comes from Hrodna and lives in Stockholm. She received master's degrees in Political Science and Journalism in Sweden. She is currently writing a PhD thesis on the communication of political bloggers in authoritarian states. Lesia was one of the coordinators of a successful campaign to change the official name of Belarus in Swedish from "Vitryssland" to "Belarus." She worked with international projects in the areas of human rights protection and election observation. She has publications in Swedish, German, British, and Belarusian media outlets. Lesia's spheres of interest include technology development and democratization, journalism of decisions, political technologies.



## HENADZ KORSHUNAU

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## ECONOMIC

AREA	INDICATOR	INDICATOR EXPLANATION
<b>LABOR</b>	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
<b>ECONOMIC BASE</b>	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.
<b>BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b>	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
<b>RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	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
<b>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM</b>	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
<b>LAW AND ORDER</b>	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
<b>SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	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
<b>DOMESTIC POLICY</b>	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
<b>FOREIGN POLICY</b>	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
<b>NATIONAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION</b>	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.
<b>PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS</b>	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
<b>CIVIC CULTURE</b>	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
<b>RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIETY AND THE STATE</b>	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
<b>DIASPORA</b>	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
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	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")
<b>FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR MEDIA WORK</b>	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
<b>MEDIA DIVERSITY</b>	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
<b>RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIA ACTORS</b>	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

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