



Research Article

Resilience Gone? The Systemic Failure of Georgia's Political System against Russian Malign Narratives

Shalva Dzebisashvili

University of Georgia, Tbilisi, <https://ug.edu.ge/en>

Abstract: The capacity of Georgia's political system to resist Russian malign narratives reveals the degree of national resilience. An examination of the theoretical concept of resilience provides a coherent toolset—a resilience/vulnerability assessment tool—for general resilience analysis and introduces the resilience/vulnerability index. This toolset can be applied to individual political actors who are essential to Georgia's political system, resulting in an aggregated index of resilience against Russian misinformation and disinformation for the entire Georgian political system.

Keywords: Russia, Georgia, narratives, propaganda, misinformation.

Introduction

There is nothing new in the observation that transitional democracies often experience democratic reversals, with attempts to monopolize coercive power and roll back democratic reforms, resulting in an opaque form of governance that is distant and unaccountable to the general public and can lead to state capture. Apart from the internal dynamics of democratic reversal, external factors such as disinformation campaigns and malign political influence can significantly contribute to the deterioration of democratic conditions. This is typically reflected in greater power monopolization and efforts to target state institutions and social cohesion, as clearly shown in the cases of Georgia and Moldova. Being a natural part of a country's socio-political fabric, local enablers of foreign influence rely on well-structured disinformation and propaganda campaigns, operate

through well-developed information networks, and display significant similarities in narratives, messages, and timing to those adopted by the ruling party.¹ Whether this is a simple coincidence, a case of institutional weakness and bureaucratic deficiency, or a clear indication of informal collaboration remains to be clarified. Yet the fact that Russian propaganda and disinformation proliferate without encountering any meaningful policy response raises serious questions about the general resilience of state governance, its institutions, and their effectiveness in combating foreign malign narratives.

The role of political institutions in a country undergoing democratic transformation can hardly be overestimated. Democratic consolidation refers to the ability of key democratic institutions and processes to absorb undemocratic deviations and thereby stabilize the political system and restore it to democratic normality.² However, as in any organizational structure in which institutional policies are designed and implemented by key actors, analysis of democratic resilience at the national level similarly requires focusing on the institutional actors upon whom the degree of state resilience depends. Together with the broader governance structure, these actors form an interlinked network of policies and processes at central and local levels, through which the respective (ideally effective) impulses are transmitted to address the source of threat or, conversely, are subdued, avoided, and ultimately ignored.

Hence, the capacity of major institutional actors to resist and counter foreign (Russian) malign narratives aimed at weakening the national democratic system and trust in it becomes a highly relevant research objective. In general, it helps determine the capacity of Georgia's political system to withstand a particular threat, that is, to display a high or low degree of national resilience. The article is structured to elucidate, first, the relevance of the theoretical concept of resilience, including its benefits and limitations. Next, it explains the methodological approach, which aims to provide a coherent toolset (RVAT)³ for general resilience analysis and introduces a threat-based resilience/vulnerability index. The developed toolset is then applied to political actors identified as key to Georgia's political system, and an aggregated resilience index for the entire political system is calculated in relation to a specific threat: Russian malign narratives (disinformation and propaganda).

* The paper is based on the research, conducted in 2024 by the Center for Security Policy and Nationalism research (UGSPN) at the University of Georgia and is available at <https://www.ugspn.org>.

¹ Ia Asatiani, Mariam Kachkachashvili, and Natia Mikheladze, "Georgian Government as a Conduit for Russian Propaganda," *iFact*, Investigative Journalists' Team, December 22, 2022, <https://ifact.ge/en/rusuli-dezinformaciis-gamtari-mtavroba-en/>.

² Ian Shapiro, *The State of Democratic Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003); Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

³ RVAT – Resilience/Vulnerability Assessment Tool.

Conceptual Relevance: From Environmental to Institutional Aspects of Hybrid Warfare

Without delving into the definitional history of resilience, the wide use of the concept across a broad range of fields (crisis management, psychology, international relations, and critical infrastructure) is often referred to as the “gospel of resilience.”⁴ Based on the general understanding of the notion, resilience implies the capacity to deal with unexpected events, which in turn presupposes the existence of plans, preparedness, governance capacity at different levels, and the ability to innovate and tackle uncertainty.⁵ The capacities for recovery and adaptation—major markers of resilience—are very difficult to evaluate due to differing contextual settings, such as organizational/ institutional or societal environments, and the challenge of drawing a clear line between normality and change. This assessment becomes nearly impossible when applied to the complex dimensions of organizational and social life (individuals or systems), as demonstrated by the Nokia case.⁶

Originating in the fields of environmental and social studies, the core understanding of resilience emphasizes the ability of systems (populations, groups, communities, and states) to maintain unaltered functioning and to cope with the stress and disturbances caused by external environmental shocks.⁷ Resilient nations were defined as those with access to safe housing, healthcare, food, and clean water, despite current and future climate challenges. This perspective led to the development of preparedness concepts that predominantly focused on disaster prevention, relief, and management, particularly logistical supplies.⁸

⁴ Claudia Aradau, “The Promise of Security: Resilience, Surprise and Epistemic Politics,” *Resilience* 2, no. 2 (2014): 73-87, 73, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2014.914765>.

⁵ Octavia Moise-Zanellato, “A Critical Review of Resilience in International Relations,” *Perspective Politice* 13, no. 1–2 (2020): 22-33, 22, <http://perspective.politice.ro/index.php/ppol/article/view/148>; Umberto Pisano, “Resilience and Sustainable Development: Theory of Resilience, Systems Thinking and Adaptive Governance,” *ESDN Quarterly Report* No. 26 (Vienna: European Sustainable Development Network, September 2012), 25–26, https://www.esdn.eu/fileadmin/ESDN_Reports/2012-September-Resilience_and_Sustainable_Development.pdf.

⁶ Rómulo Pinheiro, Maria Laura Frigotto, and Mitchell Young, eds., *Towards Resilient Organizations and Societies: A Cross-Sectoral and Multi-Disciplinary Perspective* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2022), 25-26, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82072-5>.

⁷ Crawford S. Holling, “Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems,” *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4 (1973), <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.es.04.110173.000245>; Brian Walker et al., “A Handful of Heuristics and Some Propositions for Understanding Resilience in Social-Ecological Systems,” *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 1 (2006), <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art13/>; W. Neil Adger, “Social and Ecological Resilience: Are They Related?” *Progress in Human Geography* 24, no. 3 (2000): 347-64, <https://doi.org/10.1191/030913200701540465>.

⁸ “National Climate Resilience Framework,” U.S. Government, White House, September 2023, 7, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Nation>

While maintaining the essence of resilience—the ability to absorb shocks and continue functioning without radical structural changes—socio-ecological models placed particular emphasis on self-organization, learning, and adaptation.⁹

In the military and defense domain, resilience—defined as the capacity to resist an armed attack (as included in Article 3 of the NATO Treaty)—was further developed at the 2016 Warsaw Summit and made applicable “against the full spectrum of threats, including hybrid threats,” which constitutes a key element of deterrence and defense.¹⁰ Notably, NATO’s resilience concept emphasizes the critical infrastructure of member states and the government’s responsibility to foster resilience, including national identity and the will to resist.¹¹

The complexity of contemporary threats logically implies a leading role for the state in organizing, planning, and executing response actions, especially when certain hybrid threats may deepen sociopolitical contradictions to the level of a national crisis. Yet some scholars still argue for the necessity of the *responsibilization* of individuals and thus justify a certain withdrawal of the state.¹² This divergence of views—in which, for example, attempts to target entire populations are contrasted with responses primarily centered around individual efforts—is particularly dangerous in the realm of hybrid warfare. Public perceptions, regarded as a key center of gravity, are exploited to leverage vulnerabilities within existing political and social frameworks.¹³ These vulnerabilities enable intensive influence operations targeting political institutions such as parties and government offices, thereby generating significant risks across multiple sectors

al-Climate-Resilience-Framework-FINAL.pdf; “Robust. Resilient. Sustainable: Integrated Security for Germany – National Security Strategy,” German Federal Government, Federal Foreign Office, June 2023, 34, www.nationalesicherheitsstrategie.de/National-Security-Strategy-EN.pdf.

⁹ Pisano, “Resilience and Sustainable Development,” 8-13.

¹⁰ “Resilience, Civil Preparedness and Article 3,” NATO, November 13, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132722.htm.

¹¹ Moise-Zanellato, “A Critical Review of Resilience in International Relations,” 22; Otto C. Fiala, ed., *Resistance Operating Concept* (Stockholm: Swedish Defence University, 2019), 23-24, www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1392106/FULLTEXT01.pdf.

¹² Marco Krüger, “Building Instead of Imposing Resilience: Revisiting the Relationship Between Resilience and the State,” *International Political Sociology* 13, no. 1 (2019): 53-67, 53, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/oly025>; Charles K. Bartles, “Getting Gerasimov Right,” *Military Review* 96, no. 1 (January-February 2016): 30-38, 35, www.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160228_art009.pdf.

¹³ James K. Wither, “Defining Hybrid Warfare,” *per Concordiam* 10, no. 1 (2020): 7-9, 8, https://www.marshallcenter.org/sites/default/files/files/2020-05/pC_V10N1_en_Wither.pdf; Christopher S. Chivvis, “Understanding Russian ‘Hybrid Warfare’: And What Can Be Done About It,” Testimony presented before the House Armed Services Committee on March 22, 2017 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, March 22, 2017), 3, <https://doi.org/10.7249/CT468>.

of national policymaking (e.g., energy, border security, and the social inclusion of minorities).¹⁴

On its end, Russia's hybrid efforts seek to promote a domestic model of "sovereign democracy" and confront it with Western-type democracy, presented as the major threat. This raises a fundamental question: whether democracy is inherently capable of coping with hybrid attacks that aim to undermine democratic institutions and governance via existing democratic processes such as elections and party systems.¹⁵

In this context, democratic resilience is strongly linked to the stability of democratic institutions. Since Huntington announced the third wave of democratization in 1991, it has been associated with the use of democratic practices to the degree of good governance, an indicator of a consolidated democracy.¹⁶ By acknowledging that democratic change does not provide an automatic guarantee, i.e., protection from authoritarian reversal, the discussion often leads to a focus on the rationale and mechanisms that political regimes use to justify the rapid monopolization of power.¹⁷ Other scholars have primarily been interested in the prospects for democratic consolidation from the perspective of the structure-versus-agency debate.¹⁸ In all cases mentioned, institutions are presented as powerful instruments designed for both informal and formal purposes. If democratic consolidation is understood as a routine condition in which all parties adhere to agreed norms and procedures, the weakness of institutional formality is evidenced by the mere presence of informal practices or the "sabotage" of formal ones. Moreover, as Ozerney and Samsonova argue, reforms in Russia were used as a "smokescreen" to advance the interests of the ruling regime, i.e., authoritarian rule.¹⁹ Hence, the degree of adherence to democratic procedures (in-

¹⁴ Chivvis, "Understanding Russian 'Hybrid Warfare,'" 4; Alexandra Gheciu and William C. Wohlforth, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 833, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198777854.001.0001>.

¹⁵ Timothy D. Sisk, "Democracy and Resilience: Conceptual Approaches and Considerations," Background Paper (Stockholm, Sweden: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017), 6-8, www.idea.int/gsod-2017/files/IDEA-GSOD-2017-BACKGROUND-PAPER-RESILIENCE.pdf.

¹⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

¹⁷ Joseph L. Derdzinski, *Internal Security Services in Liberalizing States: Transitions, Turmoil, and (In)Security* (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2009).

¹⁸ Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democratization* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999); Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

¹⁹ Maryanne A. Ozerney and Tatiana N. Samsonova, "Political History of Russian Bureaucracy and Roots of Its Power," *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 3, no. 3 (1995): 275-282.

stitutional norms and practices), revealed through concrete actions rather than “smokescreen activities,” becomes a powerful marker of democratic resilience for all democratic nations, irrespective of their pathways or consolidation intervals.

Once consolidated, democracies typically resist democratic backsliding and tend to avoid total democratic breakdown.²⁰ This can, however, occur if public trust in government and the media is eroded, often through the extensive use of democratic tools themselves.²¹ When notions of trust and perception are introduced, the psychological effects of information proliferation, i.e., the mechanisms of penetration, acquire immense relevance, which only the “great man” could supposedly handle through genius.²² Consequently, the total control of information streams becomes an indispensable element of authoritarian regimes, primarily targeting political institutions and often rendering resilience counter-measures ineffective.²³

Accordingly, the conceptual review of resilience reveals the crucial importance of the institutional aspect as a critical factor for evaluating a state’s capacity to resist foreign malign interference. Generally, the puzzle of institutional settings must include frameworks that ensure legislative measures and conditions for emergency response. Other elements—such as coordination and communication capacity, along with public participation and awareness—further contribute to the “institutional setting of society.”²⁴ In this way, institutions become the backbone of a state’s general capacity to act and respond. Thus, in extreme, crisis-like situations, fragile institutions can lead to the collapse of the system (state/society) as a whole.²⁵ Given that laws, policies, and regulations are often shaped and influenced by informal social experience and cooperation, it

²⁰ Vanessa A. Boese et al., “How Democracies Prevail: Democratic Resilience as a Two-Stage Process,” *Democratization* 28, no. 5 (April 2021): 885-907, 2-3, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1891413>.

²¹ Todd C. Helmus et al., *Russian Social Media Influence: Understanding Russian Propaganda in Eastern Europe* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, April 2018), 8-9, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2237.html.

²² Paul M.A. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), 2, 25, 26, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/48612/48612-h/48612-h.htm>.

²³ Andrew Radin and Clint Reach, *Russian Views of the International Order* (RAND Corporation, 2018), 71, <https://doi.org/10.7249/RR1826>; Giselle Bosse and Alena Vieira, “Resilient States vs. Resilient Societies ? The ‘Dark Side’ of Resilience Narratives in EU Relations with Authoritarian Regimes: A Case Study of Belarus,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 31, no. 4 (2023): 1058-1072, 1059, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2023.2211938>.

²⁴ Maria Papathoma-Köhle and Thomas Thaler, “Institutional Vulnerability,” in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, ed. Sven Fuchs and Thomas Thaler (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 98-123, 98, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316651148>.

²⁵ Luciano Barin Cruz et al., “Institutional Resilience in Extreme Operating Environments: The Role of Institutional Work,” *Business & Society* 55, no. 7 (2015): 970-1016, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650314567438>.

should not be surprising that, especially in emergencies, formal institutions (including legal systems) are frequently complemented by informal ones.²⁶ These arrangements may prove effective for risk mitigation and prevention, crisis response, and recovery, or, conversely, render such efforts ineffective. Ineffectiveness, in turn, creates vulnerability. Hence, institutional vulnerability—defined as vulnerability to natural or man-made hazards—can be explained as reduced capacity to resist, withstand, cope with, or recover from the impact of a hazardous event.²⁷ Ultimately, the institutional context discussed here, which implies multiple lines of communication and cooperation among various stakeholders, is directly reflected in several governance characteristics that are critically important for national resilience. These include regime type, institutional memory, administrative decentralization, and political or civil inclusivity. Together, these factors play a crucial role in the ability to “synthesize information, connect observation to government action, and effectively operationalize those actions” to respond successfully to shocks.²⁸ In other words, information awareness and the ability to generate action plans based on experience and lessons learned are valuable variables that can help address resilience methodology and measurement challenges.

Methodological Approach to Measuring Resilience

To conceptualize the phenomenon of political resilience, its core essence must be distilled to identify the proper unit(s) of analysis and clearly distinguishable, measurable attributes. This sets several preconditions that must be considered, as the final product—the Political Resilience Index (PRI)—requires a high degree of validity during its construction. Consequently, a set of properly selected indicators must be applied to ensure the validity of both the general measurement and the PRI. There are several approaches in which these indicators reflect institutional capacity factors such as learning, planning, networking, and adaptivity, and contribute to the proper evaluation of resilience.²⁹ Therefore, this article seeks to strike a balance that secures both the distinctiveness of the field of analysis and the universal applicability of the selected resilience indicators.

²⁶ Clemens Buchen, “Institutional Resilience: How the Formal Legal System Sustains Informal Cooperation,” *Journal of Institutional Economics* 20, no. e1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744137422000418>.

²⁷ Papathoma-Köhle and Thaler, “Institutional Vulnerability,” 98, 100, 107.

²⁸ Frances Z. Brown, “Governance for Resilience: How Can States Prepare for the Next Crisis?” Working Paper (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2022), 3, 5, <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2022/05/governance-for-resilience-how-can-states-prepare-for-the-next-crisis>.

²⁹ Olga Reznikova, *National Resilience in a Changing Security Environment* (Kyiv: National Institute for Strategic Studies, 22), 71, <https://niss.gov.ua/en/publikacii/monografii/national-resilience-changing-security-environment>; Alina Georgiana Profiroiu and Corina-Cristiana Nastacă, “What Strengthens Resilience in Public Administration Institutions?” *Eastern Journal of European Studies* 12 (2021): 100-125, 110, <https://doi.org/10.47743/ejes-2021-SI05>.

The concept of resilience is inherently linked to the notion of vulnerability, the complexity of sociopolitical systems and institutional knowledge, as well as capability and resource constraints.³⁰ As Fekete and Montz argue, the vulnerability of infrastructure is more easily managed than the vulnerability of social, economic, and institutional systems.³¹ Since vulnerability is always related to a specific hazard, attempts to sterilize the conceptual drivers of resilience are not uncommon.³² This, however, can lead to an extensive quantification of resilience measurement, to the point that “the work on summarizing the field of resilience indicators... provides a warning of potential overdependence on quantification.”³³ By agreeing that resilience is largely the opposite of vulnerability, a high degree of vulnerability logically corresponds to a low quality of resilience. For instance, the authors of the *Resilience Barometer* scale the degree of negative impact from 0 to 5 according to seven resilience indicators.³⁴ Similarly, the comprehensive resilience ecosystem (CORE) drafted by the Hybrid Center of Excellence is based on major clusters (governance, civic, and services), subdivided into several domains (totaling 13) and scaled from low to mid to high (or local-national-global).³⁵ Both laudable attempts acknowledge certain limitations, such as varying access to data (including government data) and reliance on expert opinion. A qualitative approach seems to be the dominant method for measuring hybrid influence in the European Union.³⁶ Nonetheless, the general conclusion from the stated challenge is that the requirement for resilience-indicator credibility strongly implies that the selected indicators must be equally valid even if the objects of (resilience) analysis vary greatly.

Consequently, two guiding principles must be applied consistently: first, prioritizing threats; and second, focusing on the state/governance.³⁷ As an analytic-

³⁰ Krüger, “Building Instead of Imposing Resilience,” 54–55.

³¹ Alexander Fekete and Burrell Montz, “Vulnerability: An Introduction,” in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, 14-31, 15, 22-23.

³² Christopher Burton, Samuel Rufat, and Eric Tate, “Social Vulnerability,” in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, 53-81, 59-60.

³³ Christopher T. Emrich and Graham A. Tobin, “Resilience: An Introduction,” in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, 124-144, 139.

³⁴ Orysia Lutsevych et al., “Resilience Barometer: Countering Malign Foreign Interference” (Chatham House, March 2024), 5-7, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/2024-03-22-resilience-barometer.pdf>.

³⁵ Rainer Jungwirth et al., “Hybrid Threats: A Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem,” European Union and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2023), 11-12, <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC129019>.

³⁶ Moise-Zanellato, “A Critical Review of Resilience in International Relations,” 22; European Commission, “Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries – 2013-2020,” Commission Staff Working Document, SWD (2013) 227 final, June 19, 2013, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2013_227_ap_crisis_prone_countries_en.pdf.

³⁷ Richard Smith-Bingham and Alex Wittenberg, “Building National Resilience: Aligning Mindsets, Capabilities, and Investment” (Marsh & McLennan Advantage, 2020), 7, 13,

al factor, the state is central here due to its capacity to organize and coordinate, its legitimacy, and its institutional mechanisms to provide public goods.³⁸ Without these elements, state and society become vulnerable or fragile. State (in)capacity can be broken down into several elements that can help better deconstruct the phenomenon of resilience and enable the proper evaluation and measurement of respective (resilience) efforts. These elements are (emergency) plans, necessary legal acts and policies, institutional resources, and the general preparedness gained through experience, lessons learned, and constant training and exercises.³⁹ A threat- and state-based analytical approach that incorporates all the elements mentioned, and is termed “quantification of predominantly qualitative data analysis,” is at the core of our measurement tool.

Resilience/Vulnerability Assessment Tool (R/VAT)

Since we accept that resilience is the inverse of vulnerability—i.e., a high degree of resilience implies a low level of vulnerability, and vice versa—vulnerability can be defined as a lack of ability and capacity to deny or mitigate an existing threat in a given domain of state or society. Domains, respectively, are distinct areas in which national-level objectives (military, political, economic, etc.) can be set and pursued.

Once the threat and affected domains are identified, vulnerability can be assessed and measured using indicators that capture the state's existing (in)capacity to address the threat. Capacity indicators refer to the will, policies, and resources available to prevent, deny, or mitigate an existing (or unfolding) threat. We identified three major groups of indicators: *Policies*, *Resources*, and *Experience & Implementation* (E&I). Each of these indicators is based on corresponding sub-indicators (Table 1).

Table 1. Resilience Capacity Indicators and Sub-indicators in the R/VAT Model.

Policies		Resources		Experience & Implementation (E & I)	
P1	Strategy documents and guidelines	M	Material	E1	Plans and actions
P2	Laws and other legal acts	H	Human	E2	Coordination plans and policies
P3	Organization regulations	F	Financial	E3	Training and education

www.guycarp.com/content/dam/guycarp-rebrand/pdf/guycarp-building-national-resilience.pdf.

³⁸ OECD, “Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience,” *OECD Journal on Development* 9, no. 3 (2009): 11, https://doi.org/10.1787/journal_dev-v9-art27-en.

³⁹ Fiala, ed., *Resistance Operating Concept*, 23-24.

Sub-indicators reflect the pool of data sources on the basis of which the presence and quality of normative tools, resources, and plans, as well as action experience and coordination, can be assessed; that is, qualitative data analysis can be conducted and respective values assigned from 0 to 4 (0 = none, 1 = minimal, 2 = partial, 3 = close to maximum, 4 = maximum). Accordingly, a value of 0 implies minimum (resilience) capacity (i.e., close to maximum vulnerability), while a value of 4 implies maximum (resilience) capacity (i.e., close to zero vulnerability).

Generally, the R/VAT can be described as a process based on a set of successive analytical steps. Once the relevant threat (e.g., disinformation) is identified and prioritized, it is linked to the affected state domains. Within each domain, major actors are selected that constitute and determine the major processes and actions within that domain. The actors' capacity to deal with the respective threat (according to the predefined indicators) is then evaluated, and an estimated value (from 0 to 4) is assigned. In sum, the average value for each actor and the resilience index are calculated.

It is also possible to present the entire R/VAT process schematically (see below), using the political domain and its major actors as an example, highlighting those affected by the foreign disinformation threat. For instance, the actor "government" can be split into several ministries and agencies; political parties into major political parties; parliament into major committees; and regional governance into major regional or administrative authorities.

While engaging with the problem of the comparative weight of indicators, we were guided by the conclusion that each resilience capacity indicator was equally important. In other words, if crisis management policies (laws, strategic documents, and agency-level regulations) are absent or insufficiently developed, the state's capacity to react to and manage emergencies will be severely limited. Similar logic applies to indicators of resources and experience/implementation. Any lack of existing resources or the absence of action plans and cooperation between agencies or actors (let alone a lack of training and practical exercises) would have equally damaging effects on the state's capacity to deal with the identified threat.

Hence, the aggregated R (resilience) value of the PRI (Political Resilience Index) is based on the aggregated average calculated from the total values of the indicators. In this way, the R/VAT allows for the calculation not only of the aggregated R-average for a selected actor, but also for a single domain and the state as a whole, or even across actors and dimensions according to the selected indicator (i.e., R-average per policy indicator, resources, or E&I).

Obviously, each resilience indicator with a low value highlights the most vulnerable areas and actors exhibiting deficits in policies, available resources, or proven experience. In the scale from 0 to 4 values 0 to 1 denote very low R/ very high V; 1 to 2 – low to medium R/ high to medium V; 2 to 3 – medium to high R/ medium to low V; and 3 to 4 – very high R/ very low to no V. This scaling method is used in the general assessment of the Georgian political system (domain) and the PRI generation.

Table 2. R/VAT Assessment Matrix for the Political Domain and PRI Calculation.

Domain: Political	Actors	Resilience Capacity Indicator (0 to 4)									Aggregated R-Average (actor re- lated)	PRI Aggr. av- erage for domain
		Policies			Resources			E&I				
		P1	P2	P3	M	H	F	E1	E2	E3		
	Government										R(G)	
	Political Parties										R(P.P.)	R(Polit.)
	Parliament										R(Rarl)	
	Regional Governance										R(R.G.)	
Inform- ation												
		↓ R-average policy related			↓ R-average resource related			↓ R-average E&I related			→	R (state) Aggre- gated R/V- value for a state (related to the threat)
											→	
											→	

The approach, which foresees the assessment of existing policies (at the national and agency levels), resources, and plans (including executed activities) across the spectrum of institutional actors, has multiple advantages. First, it clearly identifies the institutional actors who, to varying degrees, bear responsibility for enhancing national resilience against foreign (Russian) malign information campaigns. Second, it significantly helps explain the causal link between the established level of resilience, the most “problematic” actor, and the areas of failure. Additionally, if the government reveals positive results in policy areas but has little to show in terms of resources, plans, and actions, the formality and hollow nature, i.e., the lack of real commitment, becomes evident. Moreover, if similar or worse results are observed across other government-linked institutions, such as the ruling party–dominated parliament and local governance bodies (municipalities), the evidence would directly indicate a clear lack of interest in fighting Russian disinformation campaigns and a strong intent on the government’s side to preserve the low level of resilience.

Resilience/Vulnerability of the Georgian Political Domain

Given the strained relations between the Georgian ruling party and its Western partners, a proper assessment of the state’s capacity to deal with the massive influx of Russian information attacks becomes even more relevant. Following the R/VAT logic, the following major actors of the national political system were

identified: 1) major political parties (excluding those nominally active); 2) government agencies; 3) parliamentary bodies; and 4) key municipalities, which can each be further narrowed down to a limited number of actors that dominate their respective groups.

Table 3. Major Actors in Georgia's Political Domain.

Major Political Parties	Governmental Agencies	Key Municipalities	Parliamentary Bodies
UNM (United National Movement) Girchi Gakharia – For Georgia European Georgia Lelo	Prime Minister's Office State Security Service Communication Commission MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) MOI (Ministry of Interior) National Security Council	Adjara/Batumi Kutaisi Kvemo Kartli (Rustavi) Shida Kartli (Gori)	Defense and Security Committee EU Integration Committee

The ruling party, Georgian Dream, was excluded from the party group, as it exclusively occupies the offices of state and bears major responsibility for the state's response to the identified threat. It is therefore represented in all of the next three groups, in which the list of relevant actors was defined according to their particular relevance in devising and executing policies, that is, plans and actions to counter Russian malign narratives. Four municipalities were selected as most important due to their proximity to the territories of Georgia occupied by Russia (Shida Kartli), the presence of a significant Russian minority (Adjara), the presence of significant non-Georgian minorities (Kvemo Kartli), and the size of the municipality (Kutaisi, the second-largest city after Tbilisi). The governmental agencies were selected based on their role in developing, coordinating, or executing relevant policies and actions to counter foreign adversarial narratives.

For example, the State Security Service (SSSG) is officially tasked with monitoring and responding to foreign malign interference, including hybrid threats. It has dedicated departments and, through its periodic reports, updates parliament and other governmental agencies on Russian disinformation activities. The National Communications Commission (ComCom), though seemingly less relevant to the research, is tasked with developing a national media literacy plan and promoting and regularly assessing the level of national media literacy. The National Security Council (NSC), with its two respective departments, serves as the key coordinating body for national efforts against hybrid and cyber threats.

Although there is no explicit mention of a mission to combat foreign disinformation and propaganda in the normative basis of the Ministry of Interior (MOI), it has a broad mandate that includes among its core responsibilities the detection, analysis, and prevention of adversarial activities by foreign countries. Moreover, to counter foreign malign narratives, the MOI created in 2020 the Strategic

Communications Department and the respective Facebook pages to raise public awareness of misinformation and hybrid threats.

Two of the parliamentary committees—the Defense and Security Committee and the EU Integration Committee—were singled out as critical for parliamentary involvement in security and foreign policy formulation, particularly with regard to normative and legal aspects, from the perspective of Euro-Atlantic integration and the coordination of policies and support measures.

To evaluate actors' capacity across all sets of R/VAT indicators, official requests were first sent to the identified actors to provide all relevant publicly available data, information, and documentation pertinent to the identified threat. Data on the existing national legal framework (laws and government directives) and strategic and agency-level regulatory documents were collected through desk research. Budgetary information on resource availability and plans, as well as on already implemented measures to counter and mitigate Russian malign narratives, was also examined in detail. The institutional mechanisms of interagency cooperation, experience sharing, and training were included in the scope of analysis, further complemented by a series of interviews with respondents whose current positions or knowledge and expertise were highly relevant to the validity of the analysis and research findings.

A large portion of the data sources could not be individually cited in this article due to the immense volume of information. Finally, by assessing the resilience capacity of major actors and that of the political domain in Georgia, this research provides solid evidence regarding the transparency and accountability—or lack thereof—of all state agencies and governmental bodies that play an essential role in national security, security-related policy formulation, its implementation, and oversight.

Resilience: Major Political Parties

Since political parties typically highlight the topics they deem important during their electoral campaigns, communicate them directly to the wider populace, and translate party programs and promises into government action plans and budgetary appropriations, their role in addressing the danger of Russian propaganda and disinformation becomes critical. The research encompassed an extensive review of publicly available sources and direct in-person interviews with high-level members of major political parties in Georgia, namely the *United National Movement* (UNM), *For Georgia*, *Lelo*, and *Girchi*. The internal dynamics of the ruling party, Georgian Dream (GD), were also analyzed to identify distinct efforts independent of the GD government and the party statute.

As a result of the data evaluation, a critical vulnerability exists within Georgian political parties, as none of the major entities has developed or implemented comprehensive strategies or policies to counter hostile foreign (Russian) narratives (see Table 4 below). This reactive stance, coupled with the absence of dedicated resources and planning, necessitates an urgent reevaluation and re-

structuring of party approaches to effectively address this threat. There is no evidence that any of the political parties possesses guidelines or internal regulations addressing Russian disinformation and propaganda. Party responses are typically ad hoc and reactive, with little coordination or collaboration. The trend has visibly changed in recent times, as major opposition parties are attempting to plan and coordinate efforts to engage with the government's anti-Western propaganda. Yet the minimal presence of the topic on party agendas is directly reflected in the lack of solid planning and implementation, leaving only training and education comparatively active.

Table 4. R/VAT Assessment of Major Political Parties in Georgia.

		Policy Indicators				Resource Indicators				Implementation Indicators				R (MP)
		P1	P2	P3		M	H	F		P	C	T&E		
Major Political Parties	UNM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.5	2	1.5	0.488
	Girchi	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1	2	1.33	
	Gakharia	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2	1.5	
	European Georgia	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2	1.5	
	Lelo	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2	1.5	

Resilience: Governmental Agencies

A comprehensive review of the collected data revealed that while the Government's conceptual and legislative framework is sufficiently developed, there is no proper agency-level regulation for combating propaganda and disinformation. Almost all requirements are met in terms of material, human, and financial resources, but there is virtually no evidence of implementation policies and plans, and little is known about coordination plans and efforts already implemented.

As for the State Security Service of Georgia, no strategic documents, guidelines, laws, or agency-level regulations specifically devoted to combating propaganda and disinformation were found. Nearly all requirements are met in terms of material, human, and financial resources; however, as with governmental agencies, implementation policies and plans, as well as coordination efforts and policies, appear insufficient, not least due to a lack of evidence.

The National Communications Commission is comparatively advanced in its conceptual and legislative framework, as well as in agency-level regulation, with almost all resource requirements met and implementation and coordination efforts evident. As such, their respective resilience values are reflected below.

The second group of governmental agencies—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the National Security Council—received the

Table 5. R/VAT Assessment of Key Governmental Agencies.

	Policy Indicators 0 to 4					Resource Indicators 0 to 4					E & I 0 to 4			
	P1	P2	P3	Av.		M	H	F	Av.		P	C	T&E	Av.
Prime Minister's Office	4	4	2	3.33		4	4	4	4		0	2	4	2
State Security Service	3	3	3	3		4	4	4	4		2	2	4	2.67
Communications Commission	4	3	3	3.33	3.22	4	4	4	4	4	2	2	4	2.67

highest rating in terms of allocated human, material, and financial resources. Admittedly, the size of resources is important. However, within the project's focus, the key factor is whether the H/M/F resources are generally available and adequate for the respective structural unit or body to fight Russian disinformation and propaganda. This analytical angle has far greater relevance than the mere comparison of numbers. All of them can be highly rated (4) in terms of strategic documents, guidelines, and laws, as well as agency-level regulations (depending on the structural entities), except for the Mol, which objectively has less legal authority to counter disinformation and propaganda.

In terms of implementation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior received average (2) and low (1) scores, respectively, for plans and coordination, but an equally average (2) score for training and educational events. The National Security Council received an exceptionally low (0) score because there is no evidence of policies and/or plans at the national or agency level that identify objectives, timeframes, and concrete steps to eliminate or minimize propaganda and disinformation. Moreover, there is no publicly available information about the NSC's inter-agency cooperation and coordination policies and plans (however, personnel similar to those in the MFA and Mol are typically involved in some national, interagency, or agency-level training and exercises).

All in all, Georgia's Ministry of Defense has developed some capacity to address Russian disinformation, but this effort remains underemphasized. The Department of Strategic Communications, established in 2016 but no longer in existence, focused on NATO integration and ministry activities without explicitly tackling disinformation. The Ministry's strategic communications Facebook page

Table 6. R/VAT Assessment of Governmental Agencies (MFA, Mol, NSC, MoD).

	Policy Indicators 0 to 4					Resource Indicators 0 to 4					E & I 0 to 4			
	P1	P2	P3	Av.		M	H	F	Av.		P	C	T&E	Av.
MFA	4	4	4	4		4	4	4	4		2	2	2	2
Mol	3	3	1	2.33		4	4	4	4		1	1	2	1.33
NSC	4	4	4	4	3.44	4	4	4	4	4	0	0	2	0.67
MOD	4	3	3	3.33		3	3	3	3		1	3	4	2.67

is inactive, indicating limited engagement. Documents such as the 2021–2024 Communication Strategy and the Strategic Defense Review acknowledge the disinformation threat but lack details on the resources available. While training and exercises exist, more comprehensive measures are needed. Accordingly, the resilience values for these indicators, as well as the average resilience scores for the mentioned governmental agencies, appear rather sobering (Table 6).

Resilience: Key Municipalities – Local Governance

Given Georgia’s high risk of exposure to particular disinformation narratives, the study paid special attention to the existing vulnerabilities within the diverse municipal governments across the country. The capacity to resist foreign malign narratives is especially important at the local level, as the small size of Georgia, the influx of Russian tourists and migrants, and the proximity of Russian-occupied territories to several central administrative regions raise the question of whether legislative provisions, action plans, initiatives, or cooperation efforts exist to counter Russian disinformation narratives. The selected municipalities/ local government entities, as mentioned above, include Adjara (with Batumi as the capital, hosting a large Russian-speaking minority), Kutaisi, ethnically diverse Kvemo Kartli (Rustavi municipality), and Shida Kartli (Gori municipality), which border the conflict zone and the occupation line.

The collected evidence across the policy-resource-implementation indicators clearly shows that the available national- and local-level documents largely overlook the problem of disinformation, while those that acknowledge it fail to propose concrete plans or meaningful solutions to address it. Moreover, the analysis of various state and municipal documents reveals a glaring absence of local frameworks or strategies to combat this pressing issue. The analysis of the governmental bodies examined—specifically the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, Batumi City Hall, Kutaisi City Hall, and the Governorate of Shida Kartli—revealed a consistent score of 0 across all but one indicator – Training and Education. Based on our research, staff members from these entities may have participated in training on disinformation. However, due to insufficient evidence of significant participation in T&E programs, the score remains 1. This comprehensive assessment underscores a significant gap in both recognition of and strategic response to disinformation across the spectrum of local governance in Georgia. Along with the absence of initiative, this gap can be attributed to the total political (i.e., resource) dependence of regional/local authorities on the central government, leaving little, if any, space for local activities aimed at countering disinformation and propaganda.

Resilience: Parliamentary Bodies

Regarding the Georgian Parliament, two major committees responsible for shaping the nation’s security and foreign policy were selected: the Security and Defense Committee (SDC) and the Committee on European Integration (CEI). Certainly, the committees are not executive bodies that respond directly to hybrid

threats. However, they are actively involved in developing relevant policies and normative foundations, as well as in subject-matter and budgetary discussions, and maintain high-intensity contacts with relevant bodies in the European Union and the United States to study and share best practices in national resilience.

Therefore, within the study project, we examined a variety of sources that could provide evidence of the committees' regulatory activities in defining the national resilience approach (policies), providing the required resources, and contributing to policy implementation and interagency cooperation. Consequently, the committee regulations, annual work plans, annual implementation reports, and the large number of documented committee hearings and sessions from 2022 to 2024, including those related to budgets and national security, were studied in depth.

Based on the totality of the data collected, the SDC far outpaced the CEI in policy indicators, scored slightly higher in resources, and showed a similar picture in plans and coordination. At the T&E level, both parliamentary bodies demonstrated a remarkable level of activity. Consequently, the overall picture of the quality of parliamentary resilience (R-PrI) shown below indicates a general score of 1.72 (low), with similarly low levels in policy areas (1.67) and resources (1.5), and a comparably higher—but still low—level of 2 in E&I. The assessment (see Table 7) deliberately omits the professional quality of committee staff members, which is reportedly high, but falls beyond the scope of this research.

Table 7. R/VAT Assessment of Parliamentary Committees.

	Policy Indicators 0 to 4				Resource Indicators 0 to 4				E & I 0 to 4				R(PrI)
	P1	P2	P3	Av.	M	H	F	Av.	P	C	T&E	Av.	
SDC	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	4	2	1.722
CEI	0	0	1	0.33	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	

Conclusion – The Political Resilience Index (PRI)

The resilience/vulnerability assessment tool (R/VAT) enabled the production of a relatively coherent picture of Georgia's political system's resilience capacity. Existing policies and legal frameworks relevant to the threat posed by Russian malign narratives and their proliferation were assessed. By examining structural and budgetary data sources more closely, the capacity to act based on existing action and cooperation plans, as well as T&E activities, was identified. Values assigned to each indicator produced an aggregated average index for each actor (an aggregation of average values calculated for three sets of indicators: policy, resources, and E&I). The resulting overall picture of Georgia's resilience/ vulnerability to Russian disinformation and propaganda, along with the final Political Resilience Index of 1.34, conveys an alarming impression (Table 8).

Table 8. R/VAT – Political System, PRI (political resilience index) in Georgia 2024.

		Policy Indicators				Resource Indicators				Experience & Implementation				Index PRI (Rus.N)				
		Strat. docs & guid.	Laws	Org. regu- la- tions	AV. R(P)	M	H	F	AV. R(R)	Plans & actions	Coord. plans & poli- cies	T&E	AV. R(T&E)					
Major Parties	UNM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.5	2	1.47	1.34 R-low V-high				
	Girchi	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1	1.33						
	Gakharia	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2						
	E. Georgia	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2						
	Lelo	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	1.5	2						
Gov. Agencies	Office of PM (GA)	4	4	2	3.33	3.33	4	4	4	4	3.86	0	2		4	2	2.05	
	SSSG	3	3	3	3		4	4	4	4		4	2		2	4		2.67
	ComCom.	4	3	3	3.33		4	4	4	4		4	2		2	4		2.67
	MFA	4	4	4	4		4	4	4	4		4	2		2	2		2
	MoI	3	3	1	2.33		4	4	4	4		4	1		1	2		1.33
	NSC	4	4	4	4		4	4	4	4		4	0		0	2		0.67
Key Municip.	MoD	4	3	3	3.33	0	3	3	3	3	0	1	3		4	2.67	0.488 RPP 3.036 RGA 0.111 KM 1.722 PC	
	Adjara (Batumi)	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	0		1	0.33		
	Kutaisi	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	1					
	Kv. Kartli	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	1					
	Sh. Kartli	0	0	0	1.67		1	1	1	1		1.5	0		0			1
Def. & Sec. Committee	3	3	3	3		2					2		2	2	2	1	1	4
Parliam. Bodies	EU Integr. Committee	0	0	1	0.33							1	1	4	2			
0-1  minimal very high 1-2  low to medium high to medium 2-3  medium to high medium to low 3-4  very high very low to none Resilience: Vulnerability:																		

Resilience:
Vulnerability:

0-1
minimal
very high

1-2
low to medium
high to medium

2-3
medium to high
medium to low

3-4
very high
very low to none

The most negatively affected areas, where the capacity to resist Russian disinformation and propaganda is close to zero—i.e., where resilience is minimal to nonexistent—are major political parties (RI=0.488) and key regional governments/ municipalities (RI=0.111). In both cases, neither the policy/legal frameworks nor the required resources were present to provide even a minimal foundation for action, coordination plans, or practical experience. The total absence of any plan or procedure to counter foreign malign narratives at the local governance level indicates, at the very least, either a stark disregard for the existing threat by local administrations or a lack of proper threat communication and co-operation between the central and local authorities.

Given the persistent problem of over-centralized political governance in Georgia—in which the central government in Tbilisi almost entirely dictates policies and plans, as well as streams of financial resources for regional (local) administrations—the exposed high vulnerability directly indicates that initiatives at the local level to counter Russian narratives could even be regarded by the central government as not permissible. Hence, the sheer lack of interest and will to prevent or fight the Russian information campaign on the part of the central government cannot be denied.

The remarkable lack of resources, actions, and coordination efforts to identify and counter Russian propaganda and disinformation in Georgia is also a logical result of the neglect of the problem at the policy and organizational levels by

major opposition parties. The formal nature of these activities is revealed by the modest participation of party or municipal personnel in various training activities, which contributed to some degree of party coordination but never led to the initiation of any policies or action plans.

It is remarkable that the ruling party struggles to demonstrate resilience capacity in the regulatory domain of agencies and largely lacks action plans to counter Russian malign narratives. This deficiency cannot be compensated for by the mere presence of strategic documents, resources in some departments (e.g., StratComs), or participation in training and exercise (T&E) projects. In other words, the research found little, if any, evidence of coordinated efforts by government agencies to counter the mentioned threat.

A similar pattern of hollow formality is observed in parliamentary committees, despite their direct mandate not only to monitor and initiate legislative frameworks but also to discuss existing gaps and deficiencies in government actions and to propose amendments to support relevant measures at both national and local levels. Consequently, the general political resilience index (PRI) score of 1.339 reflects a low level of national resilience capacity against foreign (Russian) malign narratives.

Regional municipalities are extremely vulnerable, with an almost nonexistent capacity to counter Russian disinformation and propaganda. Consequently, local administrations, political party structures, and relevant parliamentary committees are key political actors that must introduce or improve legal and regulatory frameworks, secure the necessary resources, and develop appropriate action plans to mitigate the existing threat.

Formally, entities such as the Prime Minister's Office and the National Security Council (NSC) are well equipped with the necessary legal framework to coordinate actions among the SSSG, Mol, and ComCom. However, the objective reality is far more sobering (to say the least).

The benefits of the proposed R/VAT model are twofold. First, it allows for the generation of a general resilience index for the particular domain of interest, e.g., political, information, or critical infrastructure. Second, it vividly illustrates the problem by identifying the root causes of vulnerability. Broadly speaking, the source of vulnerability—i.e., resilience incapacity in the Georgian case—can be attributed to the absence of general political will (or disinterest) in acknowledging the threat, combined with a lack of plans and actions to counter it. A clear indication of concentrated efforts to prevent any meaningful action aimed at increasing resilience capacity in critical segments of political governance is visible. Without acknowledging the source of incapacity, the chances of defining an effective response to counter threats such as the proliferation of Russian disinformation remain illusory.

The R/VAT model also allows for the generation of similar indices for other domains related to the same threat, or for indices addressing other identified threats across affected domains and actors. In this way, the R/VAT becomes an

effective mechanism for calculating an annual national resilience index, comparing yearly indices, and identifying areas of progress or regression for targeted policy improvements.

Disclaimer

The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Partnership for Peace Consortium, its participating institutions, or any governmental or international organizations affiliated with its governance structure.

About the Author

Dr. **Shalva Dzebisashvili** is a professor and Director of the Political Science and International Relations programs at the University of Georgia and the affiliated Center for Security Policy and Nationalism. Between 2003 and 2019, he held senior positions in the Ministry of Defense of Georgia and the Georgian Mission to NATO. He was awarded a PhD degree from the Free University of Brussels in 2016. His research focuses on the role of security institutions in fragile democracies, the transformation of international organizations and regimes, and security sector, defence, and military reforms. Dr. Shalva Dzebisashvili is a frequent TV and media guest and the author of multiple academic and policy-related publications. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6120-3448>

Bibliography

- "National Climate Resilience Framework," U.S. Government, White House, September 2023, 7, <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/National-Climate-Resilience-Framework-FINAL.pdf>.
- "Resilience, Civil Preparedness and Article 3," NATO, November 13, 2024, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_132722.htm.
- "Robust. Resilient. Sustainable: Integrated Security for Germany – National Security Strategy," German Federal Government, Federal Foreign Office, June 2023, 34, <https://www.nationalesicherheitsstrategie.de/National-Security-Strategy-EN.pdf>.
- Adger, W. Neil, "Social and Ecological Resilience: Are They Related?" *Progress in Human Geography* 24, no. 3 (2000): 347-364, <https://doi.org/10.1191/030913200701540465>.
- Aradau, Claudia, "The Promise of Security: Resilience, Surprise and Epistemic Politics," *Resilience* 2, no. 2 (2014): 73-87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2014.914765>.
- Asatiani, Ia, Mariam Kachkachashvili, and Natia Mikheladze, "Georgian Government as a Conduit for Russian Propaganda," *iFact*, Investigative Journalists' Team, December 22, 2022, <https://ifact.ge/en/rusuli-dezinformaciis-gamtari-mtavro-ba-en/>.
- Bartles, Charles K., "Getting Gerasimov Right," *Military Review* 96, no. 1 (January-February 2016): 30-38, https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20160228_art009.pdf.
- Boese, Vanessa A., et al., "How Democracies Prevail: Democratic Resilience as a Two-Stage Process," *Democratization* 28, no. 5 (April 2021): 885-907, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.1891413>.
- Bosse, Giselle, and Alena Vieira, "Resilient States vs. Resilient Societies? The 'Dark Side' of Resilience Narratives in EU Relations with Authoritarian Regimes: A Case Study of Belarus," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 31, no. 4 (2023): 1058-1072, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2023.2211938>.
- Brown, Frances Z., "Governance for Resilience: How Can States Prepare for the Next Crisis?" Working Paper (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2022), <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2022/05/governance-for-resilience-how-can-states-prepare-for-the-next-crisis>.
- Buchen, Clemens, "Institutional Resilience: How the Formal Legal System Sustains Informal Cooperation," *Journal of Institutional Economics* 20, no. e1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744137422000418>.

- Burton, Christopher, Samuel Rufat, and Eric Tate, "Social Vulnerability," in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, ed. Sven Fuchs and Thomas Thaler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 53-81.
- Chivvis, Christopher S., "Understanding Russian 'Hybrid Warfare': And What Can Be Done About It," Testimony presented before the House Armed Services Committee on March 22, 2017 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, March 22, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.7249/CT468>.
- Cruz, Luciano Barin, et al., "Institutional Resilience in Extreme Operating Environments: The Role of Institutional Work," *Business & Society* 55, no. 7 (2015): 970-1016, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650314567438>.
- Derdzinski, Joseph L., *Internal Security Services in Liberalizing States: Transitions, Turmoil, and (In)Security* (Farnham, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2009).
- Emrich, Christopher T., and Graham A. Tobin, "Resilience: An Introduction," in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, ed. Sven Fuchs and Thomas Thaler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 124-144.
- European Commission, "Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries – 2013-2020," Commission Staff Working Document, SWD (2013) 227 final, June 19, 2013, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/resilience/com_2013_227_ap_crisis_prone_countries_en.pdf.
- Fekete, Alexander, and Burrell Montz, "Vulnerability: An Introduction," in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, ed. Sven Fuchs and Thomas Thaler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 14-31.
- Fiala, Otto C., ed., *Resistance Operating Concept* (Stockholm: Swedish Defence University, 2019), 23-24, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1392106/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz, *How Dictatorships Work: Power, Personalization, and Collapse* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- Gheciu, Alexandra, and William C. Wohlforth, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of International Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198777854.001.0001>.
- Helmus, Todd C., et al., *Russian Social Media Influence: Understanding Russian Propaganda in Eastern Europe* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, April 2018), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2237.html.
- Holling, Crawford S., "Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems," *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4 (1973), <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.es.04.11.0173.000245>.

- Huntington, Samuel P., *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).
- Jungwirth, Rainer, et al., "Hybrid Threats: A Comprehensive Resilience Ecosystem," European Union and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2023), <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC129019>.
- Krüger, Marco, "Building Instead of Imposing Resilience: Revisiting the Relationship Between Resilience and the State," *International Political Sociology* 13, no. 1 (2019): 53-67, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/oly025>.
- Linebarger, Paul M.A., *Psychological Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/48612/48612-h/48612-h.htm>.
- Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
- Lutsevych, Orysia, et al., "Resilience Barometer: Countering Malign Foreign Interference" (Chatham House, March 2024), <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/2024-03-22-resilience-barometer.pdf>.
- Moise-Zanellato, Octavia, "A Critical Review of Resilience in International Relations," *Perspective Politice* 13, no. 1–2 (2020): 22-33, <http://perspective.politice.ro/index.php/ppol/article/view/148>.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo A., *Counterpoints: Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democratization* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999).
- OECD, "Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: From Fragility to Resilience," *OECD Journal on Development* 9, no. 3 (2009): 11, https://doi.org/10.1787/journal_dev-v9-art27-en.
- Ozernoy, Maryanne A., and Tatiana N. Samsonova, "Political History of Russian Bureaucracy and Roots of Its Power," *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 3, no. 3 (1995): 275-282.
- Papathoma-Köhle, Maria, and Thomas Thaler, "Institutional Vulnerability," in *Vulnerability and Resilience to Natural Hazards*, ed. Sven Fuchs and Thomas Thaler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 98-123, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316651148>.
- Pinheiro, Rómulo, Maria Laura Frigotto, and Mitchell Young, eds., *Towards Resilient Organizations and Societies: A Cross-Sectoral and Multi-Disciplinary Perspective* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82072-5>.
- Pisano, Umberto, "Resilience and Sustainable Development: Theory of Resilience, Systems Thinking and Adaptive Governance," *ESDN Quarterly Report* No. 26

- (Vienna: European Sustainable Development Network, September 2012), 25–26, https://www.esdn.eu/fileadmin/ESDN_Reports/2012-September-Resilience_and_Sustainable_Development.pdf.
- Profiroi, Alina Georgiana, and Corina-Cristiana Nastacă, “What Strengthens Resilience in Public Administration Institutions?” *Eastern Journal of European Studies* 12 (2021): 100-125, <https://doi.org/10.47743/ejes-2021-SI05>.
- Radin, Andrew, and Clint Reach, *Russian Views of the International Order* (RAND Corporation, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.7249/RR1826>.
- Reznikova, Olga, *National Resilience in a Changing Security Environment* (Kyiv: National Institute for Strategic Studies, 22), 71, <https://niss.gov.ua/en/publikacii/monografii/national-resilience-changing-security-environment>.
- Schumpeter, Joseph A., *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2003).
- Shapiro, Ian, *The State of Democratic Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).
- Sisk, Timothy D., “Democracy and Resilience: Conceptual Approaches and Considerations,” Background Paper (Stockholm, Sweden: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2017), 6-8, <https://www.idea.int/gsod-2017/files/IDEA-GSOD-2017-BACKGROUND-PAPER-RESILIENCE.pdf>.
- Smith-Bingham, Richard, and Alex Wittenberg, “Building National Resilience: Aligning Mindsets, Capabilities, and Investment” (Marsh & McLennan Advantage, 2020), <https://www.guycarp.com/content/dam/guycarp-rebrand/pdf/guycarp-building-national-resilience.pdf>.
- Walker, Brian, et al., “A Handful of Heuristics and Some Propositions for Understanding Resilience in Social-Ecological Systems,” *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 1 (2006), <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art13/>.
- Wither, James K., “Defining Hybrid Warfare,” *per Concordiam* 10, no. 1 (2020): 7-9, https://www.marshallcenter.org/sites/default/files/files/2020-05/pC_V10N1_en_Wither.pdf.