

GLOBSEC Vulnerability Index 2021



Extended Methodology

→ Summary

The GLOBSEC Vulnerability Index measures vulnerability towards foreign influence in eight countries: Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia on a 0-100 scale, where 0 is the most resilient and 100 the most vulnerable.

It assesses five key dimensions: public attitudes, political landscape, public administration, information landscape, and civic and academic space, with a particular focus directed towards the Kremlin's and Beijing's activities¹.



0 100

The most resilient

The most vulnerable



The Index is the result of a two-year project supported by the U.S. Department of State's Global Engagement Center and led by GLOBSEC in cooperation with partnering organizations in each covered country.

The selection of countries was based on the donor's requirements at the beginning of the project period. Covering parts of both Central Europe and the Western Balkans simultaneously allowed for a comparative perspective between countries that share a totalitarian past, aspired to become developed democracies, and whose paths diverged after 1989. This range allows the reader to compare countries that are both members and non-members of the EU, Schengen zone, NATO, etc., and to assess how societal, economic and historical developments have shaped such countries' present vulnerabilities towards foreign influence. Nonetheless, the report does not provide an exhaustive list nor a complete picture of the phenomena and challenges affecting the countries.

The quantitative representation of vulnerabilities provides an overarching perspective on the situation in a respective country and allows for easy region-wide comparison. Yet such approach should be understood only within the context of the five studied dimensions.

The Index has been consulted with a Steering Committee that provided advice on methodological approach of conducting research on foreign malign influence in initial project stages. Measurement methods have been created in cooperation with index development experts.

Consultants on measurement methods:

Kyle Marquard

Assistant Professor, HSE University

Received his PhD in Political Science from University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. He is an assistant professor at HSE University, Russia; as well as a research fellow at the International Center for the Study of Institutions and Development and a project manager for the Varieties of Democracy Project. His research interests include post-Soviet politics, identity politics, statistical techniques for measuring difficult concepts, and survey research. More [here](#).

Alexander Stoyanov

Director, Vitosha Research

Senior Fellow at CSD and Director of Vitosha Research. Since 1991 he has participated in the design and implementation of a number of social and market research projects in the fields of social and economic behavior, social justice, corruption and organized crime, and crime victimization, including the Corruption Monitoring System, National Crime Survey, Survey of the Grey Sector, Eurobarometer and Flash Eurobarometer Surveys in Bulgaria. Dr. Stoyanov also works as Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of National and World Economy, Sofia. More [here](#).

Dan Pemstein

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Associate Professor at North Dakota State University and a co-developer of the Digital Society Project, Unified Democracy Scores, and Scythe Statistical Library, and a project manager for the Varieties of Democracy Project. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Illinois, USA, and specializes in statistical tools designed to answer questions about political institutions, party organization, digital politics, and the political economy of development. More [here](#).

→ Theoretical background

The theoretical approach underpinning the Vulnerability Index works with three overarching theories: international relations theories of classical realism and liberalism, and the concept of sharp power² to explain the external conditions in which the studied eight Central European and Western Balkan countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia) exist, and how these conditions and influences co-shape these countries' internal domains.

When analyzing countries' vulnerability to foreign malign influence, it is first necessary to explain how this influence occurs and why. Countries of Central Europe and the Western Balkans are regionally defined by their position between the Eastern aspiring hegemonic powers: Russia and China on the one hand, and a peripheral or adjacent position to Western structures (such as NATO and the EU), on the other hand.

Stable domestic affairs and strong institutions are a first condition for resilience

Looking at this context through the lens of classical realism theory helps to understand how external conditions and actors interact with states' domestic situations, as this theory does not draw a strict line between international and domestic politics.³ This Index works with the notion that internal state factors - in this case divided into five dimensions (public attitudes, political landscape, public administration, information landscape, and civic and academic space) - and their degree of resilience, translate into higher susceptibility towards aspiring hegemonic influence from Kremlin and Beijing.

This understanding echoes Hans Morgenthau's interpretation of "strong" (in this Index "resilient") societies, where norms and institutions curb otherwise insatiable appetite for power⁴. In the absence of such checks and balances, states are internally weak and vulnerable to foreign malign influence. It is, therefore, the responsibility of domestic actors to ensure that social

polarization, corruption in politics and public administrations, assault on truth and facts, and the co-optation of civil society and academia do not expose their countries and communities to the harmful effects of hegemonic sharp power. From this perspective, the analyzed states are not merely passive pawns at the mercy of great powers in the large game of international politics, but rather actively shape and decide their own destinies.

Membership in international alliances is a shield against foreign malign influence

Yet given the economic, geographical and military power imbalance between the states included in the Vulnerability Index on the one hand, and Russia and China on the other, it is clear that regardless of the degree of resilience of given countries' domestic situations, this alone cannot insulate them from external security threats. Both classical realism and liberalism theories underscore the importance of international networks and alliances to balance power disparities, foster cooperation and promote prosperity.

Liberalism theory highlights how democratizing processes, economic interdependence and membership in transnational institutions promotes cooperation and reduces the risk of violent conflict⁵. As democratic governance fosters accountability, elected leaders can at least be theoretically held responsible for adverse political outcomes, including a country's participation in a conflict. Autocratic leadership in countries such as Russia and China is not held to such a high standard, and in the absence of this deterrent is more conflict and risk-prone, as well as power-hungry.

Countries covered in the Vulnerability Index are thus better protected from the Kremlin's and Beijing's ambitions by participating in regional economic and military structures, the European Union and NATO, which guarantee a certain level of security and resilience. Yet for this resilience to be truly efficient, the first condition - strong internal democratic governance - has to be fulfilled. Failing that, suboptimal internal conditions represent blind spots which can be exploited by foreign malign influence, not only to exercise influence in a given country, but also to undermine the strength of international institutions.

This understanding of internal and external resilience is reflected in the Vulnerability Index's structure: each of the five dimensions covered as part of a country's internal assessment contains factors that evaluate such country's performance vis-à-vis the most important regional security and prosperity guarantees - the EU and NATO.

Sharp power

The appetite for power as demonstrated by Russia and China need not necessarily be manifested through hard power (although often that is the case⁶). Russia as an aspiring regional hegemon and China as an aspiring global hegemon pursue their interests through plethora of means and strategies, which are best described through the concept of sharp power.

This term is useful when striving to understand foreign malign influence, which does not easily fit into the category of either Joseph Nye's soft power (since it refers to the ability of states to lead by attraction and persuasion⁷) or strictly to the concept of hard power (the use of coercive military and economic means to achieve foreign policy objectives).

The Kremlin's and Beijing's activities in Central Europe and Western Balkans are instead best described as efforts to undermine the integrity of institutions in order to secure their influence by piercing "the political and information environment in targeted countries"⁸ through distraction and manipulation. While such hybrid tactics may deceptively seem less dangerous than direct military threats, such tactics can in fact lead to internal instability, erosion of democratic governance, extreme polarization, foreign policy changes, as well as internal and external conflicts.

For this reason, it is of the utmost importance to rigorously assess these efforts and their impact before efficient countermeasures can be designed. Through in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis, the Vulnerability Index measures the extent to which each of the analyzed countries is the subject of Beijing's and the Kremlin's sharp power, and to what extent such efforts are successful.

→ Key terminology

Vulnerability:

In the context of a state, this represents a susceptibility to harm from malign state or non-state actors, which can be both domestic and foreign, based on the presence of single or multiple deficiencies that can be exploited.

Resilience:

In the context of a state, this represents the ability to manage and withstand malign state or nonstate interference efforts, or the ability to recover from such efforts relatively quickly. State resilience is not a mere adaptive capacity, but rather includes pro-active actions/policies aimed at reducing vulnerability and managing risks beyond adapting to change.⁹

Hegemony:

The ability of a state with overwhelming capability to shape the international system through both coercive and non-coercive means.¹⁰

Sharp power/foreign malign influence:

An authoritarian foreign policy approach which uses distraction and manipulation as tactics to limit free expression and distort the democratic political environment.¹¹ In this research project, sharp power is understood as a synonym to foreign malign influence.

Hard power:

The use of coercive military and economic means to achieve foreign policy objectives.

Soft power:

The use of attraction and persuasion as “soft” measures to achieve foreign policy objectives.¹²

Kremlin/Russian influence:

Activities conducted by the Russian government, state institutions or agencies to influence the internal affairs of a given country, including its population.

Beijing/Chinese influence:

Activities conducted by the Chinese government, state institutions or agencies to influence the internal affairs of a given country, including its population.

Serving pro-Kremlin/pro-Beijing interests:

Activities or policies which are not necessarily carried out by Kremlin or Beijing actors, but the impact of which strongly aligns or promotes Kremlin’s/Beijing’s/ objectives.

Disinformation:

Verifiably false or misleading information that is created, presented and disseminated for economic gain or to intentionally deceive the public.¹³

Misinformation:

Information whose inaccuracy is unintentional can spread when journalists (or other actors) misinterpret or fail to independently verify a source’s claims.¹⁴

Influence operations/ Information operations:

Organized attempts to achieve a specific effect among a target audience. In such instances, a variety of actors - such as advertisers, activists, and opportunists - employ a diverse set of tactics, techniques, and procedures to affect the decision-making, beliefs, and opinions of a target audience.¹⁵

Propaganda:

Systematic information campaigns, usually conducted through mass media, that are deliberately manipulative or deceptive.¹⁶

Problematic outlets:

Web and social media pages which regularly produce manipulative, deceitful or propagandistic content. Outlets which often imitate legitimate news outlets and journalism visually, whilst their content does not meet the standards of quality journalism such as accuracy, using verified sources or not distorting facts and context.

Mainstream media:

conventional newspapers, television and other news sources, including online outlets, which are widely consumed and operate according to widely accepted standards of journalism.

State and government-controlled media:

Owned by the state or the government of the day (and financed from the state budget) and directly controlled thereby. It may perform a public service function or be a propaganda instrument of the state or government.¹⁷ For the purpose of this research, we mean media outlets that actively participate in state/government propaganda or spread various pro-government narratives. These are not to be confused with public broadcasters which can be funded or co-funded by state institutions, but have an independent editorial board.

Hybrid threats:

Action conducted by state or non-state actors whose goal is to undermine or harm a target by influencing its decision-making at the local, regional, state or institutional level. Such actions are coordinated, synchronized and deliberately target democratic states’ and institutions’ vulnerabilities. Activities can take place, for example, in the political, economic, military, civil or information domains. They are conducted using a wide range of means, and designed to remain below the threshold of detection and attribution.¹⁸

GONGO:

A government-funded and government-controlled non-governmental organization. Such governmental organizations are often used by autocratic regimes to advance their interests, and to lobby at the international level.

→ Index structure

Index has five dimensions, with each comprising several indicators and each indicator including specific variables. The Index contains:

- 5 dimensions
- 31 indicators
- 77 variables

All indicators and dimensions were equally weighted.

The Vulnerability Index is based on seven overarching data sources:

1 Opinion polls

Representative opinion polls conducted in October 2020 on a sample of 1,000 respondents per country (8,000 respondents altogether). See the Public Attitudes dimension below for more information.

2 Expert surveys

Online survey distributed to experts selected in a non-biased, transparent process:

→ Each partner organization created a list of foreign malign influence experts in the following

focus areas: political landscape, state resilience, information environment, and civic and academic space. The list had to include at least 30 experts per area, and one person could have expertise in more than one area.

→ Experts had to have different backgrounds, with at least 10% representation of the following sectors: civic space, media, academia, private sector, and public sector. To prevent strong political bias, no experts from political parties or those actively involved in politics could be surveyed.

The expert surveys were composed by GLOBSEC in consultation with partners, translated into local languages, and distributed to experts in each country. The number of responses for questions varies, as the expertise of respondents varied. The number of experts responding in each country:

- Bulgaria: 33
- Czechia: 86
- Hungary: 54
- Montenegro: 31
- North Macedonia: 50
- Romania: 25
- Serbia: 36
- Slovakia: 40

Survey respondents in different countries, including experts, also often vary systematically

in their responses to survey questions in which they rate cases using ordinal scales.¹⁹ A simple adjustment for such bias was used for this Index. Specifically, expert survey data was supplemented with data from a smaller set of experts (from partner organizations) who were most qualified to answer questions²⁰ from all countries. These “anchoring” experts answered survey questions for all countries, providing cross-regionally comparable estimates for each country. Then our methodology consultants leveraged these data by using a bootstrapping procedure, thereby adjusting for country-level differences in how experts apply the question scales. For each country-question they repeatedly (500 draws) sampled, with replacement, from both country expert and anchor expert responses, taking the median of each group of resampled ratings. For each draw they then calculated the difference between the resampled country expert median and anchor expert median. This difference was then used to adjust the country expert median for each of the 500 draws, and to calculate the average adjusted country expert median score, and 95% confidence intervals, across all draws.²¹ This procedure assumes that the anchoring experts are unbiased, on average, but allows country experts to exhibit identical (to other experts from their country) systematic biases in how “difficult” they are in assigning ratings to countries.²²

3 Desk research conducted by partnering organizations to analyze:

- key security strategies and documents which are or should focus on foreign influence in the past six years (see the Public Administration dimension below for more information)
- legislative and structural resilience addressing electoral interference (see the Public Administration dimension for more information)
- actions and rhetoric of key political actors in each country within the past six years (see the Political Landscape dimension for more information)

4 V-Dem Index:

Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) is a research project conceptualizing and measuring democracy, based at the Department of Political Science at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. “It aims to provide a multidimensional and disaggregated dataset that reflects the complexity of the concept of democracy as a system of rule that goes beyond the simple presence of elections. The V-Dem project distinguishes between five high-level principles of democracy: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian, and collects data to measure these principles.”²³ It is one of the largest social science data collection projects on

democracy. For more information visit the project’s website. Information on all indices and V-Dem questions is also available in the V-Dem Codebook.²⁴ While the V-Dem codebook uses the term “indicator” for specific questions, for the purpose of this research the V-Dem indicators are addressed as variables/questions. Selected variables and specific indices were tailor-made for Vulnerability Index purposes by consultants - experts working on the V-Dem Index.²⁵

5 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index²⁶

6 World Press Freedom Index developed by Reporters Without Borders²⁷

7 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index developed by FHI 360²⁸

→ D1: Public attitudes

Source: GLOBSEC Trends 2020 opinion polling



→ D2: Political Landscape

Source: GLOBSEC-developed assessment of political parties, expert surveys



→ D3: Public administration

Source: Expert surveys, desk research and V-Dem index, Corruption Perception Index



→ D4: Information Landscape

Source: World Press Freedom Index, Digital Society Survey (V-Dem), expert surveys



→ D5: Civic & academic space

Source: Civil Society Sustainability Index, V-Dem, expert surveys, desk research



→ Public attitudes dimension

First dimension in the Vulnerability Index addresses the proneness of the public to become a target of Russian and/or Chinese sharp power. Within the theoretical framework underpinning this research, vulnerable society is represented by:

- distrust and/or scepticism towards key Western structures and values, democracy and its institutions, and media,
- proneness to believe disinformation and conspiracy theories,
- pro-Russian and/or pro-Chinese attitudes
- and inclination to authoritarian leaders.

The source for calculating the dimension is the representative public opinion poll conducted in October 2020 on a sample of 1,000 respondents in each country, i.e. 8,000 respondents overall. The polls were conducted on a sample of 1000 respondents using stratified multistage random sampling in the form of computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. In all countries, the profiles of the respondents were representative of the country according to gender, age, education, place of residence and size of settlement.

The public attitudes dimension is structured deductively into 7 indicators. Each indicator is composed of a specific number of individual variables. Variables have been assigned to subdimensions deductively, i.e., based on the theoretical definitions used in the

questionnaire used in the poll. The specific questions, individual variables and indicators are described in Table 1 (below).

The original questions use 2 point (yes/no) or 4-point (strongly agree - rather agree - rather disagree - strongly disagree) "forced" scales (no middle point). These have been recoded to fit into a range of 0 to 100, using respectively 0 and 100 for the yes/no scale and 0, 33, 66, and 100 for the agree-disagree scales. The "don't know" options have been recoded into missing values as they do not represent any specific opinion and cannot be interpreted as mid-points of the scales. Another specificity of the recoding procedure is that all scales have been modified to fit the rule that 100 represents maximum vulnerability, while 0 represents lack of vulnerability or resilience thereof.

The following questions from the survey were used as Index variables:

Q2

Now, please, imagine, that the following weekend, there will be a referendum in [your country] on its membership in the EU. How would you vote – for [your country] to stay [/ALT: join] in the EU or leave [ALT: not join/] the EU?

1. Stay in the EU
2. Leave the EU
9. Do not know (do not read)

Q3

Now, please, imagine, that the following weekend, there will be a referendum in [your country] on its membership in NATO. How would you vote – for [your country] to stay [/ALT: join] in NATO or leave [ALT: not join/] NATO?

1. Stay in NATO
2. Leave NATO
9. Do not know (do not offer)

Q4

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the European Union and NATO?

Definitely agree/ Rather agree / Rather disagree/ Strongly disagree / Do not know (do not read)

- D) EU dictates [our country] what to do without [our country] having a chance to influence it. / [Non-EU members] Joining the EU would cause [my country] losing its sovereignty and ability to adopt independent decisions.
- E) NATO is an aggressive organization and a tool for the US to control other countries.
- F) [Our country] membership in NATO means we are living in a safer environment. / would mean to live in a safer environment.
- G) NATO deliberately provokes Russia by encircling it with military bases.
- H) Russia deliberately provokes NATO by initiating conflicts in Eastern Europe.

Q15

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about values?

Definitely agree/ Rather agree / Rather disagree/ Strongly disagree / Do not know (do not read)

- A) Democracy does not exist, because in reality, hidden elites rule the world.
- B) Democracy as a system based on equality, human rights and freedoms, rule of law is good for our country.
- C) Liberal democracy threatens our traditional values and national identity.
- G) Western countries promote a morally corrupt and decadent lifestyle which hides behind “civil liberties”.
- H) Democracies in Western countries such as Germany and France are better off when it comes to adhering to key democracy principles and securing rights and freedoms and equality before the law for their citizens, than democracy in our country is.

Q5

Do you think the following countries present a danger (significant threat) to [your country]?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 9. Do not know (do not read)

- A. Russia
- B. China

Q6

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Definitely agree/ Rather agree / Rather disagree/ Strongly disagree / Do not know (do not read)

- B) Russia is behaving aggressively against its neighbors and tries to weaken the EU and NATO.
- C) Russia’s military power is far greater than that of any other country in the world.

Q11

Below are descriptions of two types of political systems. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing your country?

Very good / Fairly good / Fairly bad / Very bad / Do not know

- A) Having a strong leader who does not need to bother with any parliament and elections.

Q14

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the COVID-19 pandemic?

Definitely agree/ Rather agree / Rather disagree/ Strongly disagree / Do not know (do not read)

- C) COVID-19 is fake to manipulate the population.
- G) USA deliberately created the COVID-19 virus.
- H) COVID-19 vaccine is a tool to implant nano-chips and control people.

Q16

I would like to ask you, how much trust you personally trust or distrust the following institutions in [your country].

completely trust / rather trust / rather distrust / completely distrust / do not know (do not read)

- a) Government
- b) President
- c) Courts and judiciary in [my country]
- d) Standard mainstream media

Table 1: Public attitudes indicators and variables

Indicators	Questions /variables	Scale/recode: 100=vulnerable, (66, 33), 0= resilient
1. Orientation towards the EU		
v1	Willingness to stay/leave (join) EU	Q2, Q2-alt Stay/Join=0, Leave/Not join=100
v2	EU as dictatorial (1-4, 9=SM)	Q4D Dictatorial = 100, Not dictatorial=0
2. Orientation towards NATO		
v3	Willingness to stay/leave (join) NATO	Q3, Q3-alt Stay=0, Leave=100
v4	NATO is aggressive (1-4, 9=SM)	Q4E Aggressive=100, Not aggressive=0
v5	NATO is a security guarantee (1-4, 9=SM)	Q4F Guarantee=0, Not guarantee=100
3. Perception of democracy		
v6	Democracy does not exist (1-4, 9=SM)	Q15A Exists=0, Does not exist=100
v7	Liberal democracy is a threat (1-4, 9=SM)	Q15C Threat=0, Not a threat=100
v8	The West is corrupt (1-4, 9=SM)	Q15G Corrupt=100, Not corrupt=0
v9	Dictatorship (strong leader) preference (1-4, 9=SM)	Q11A Preference=100, No preference=0
v10	Democracy is good for the country (1-4, 9=SM)	Q15B Democracy good=0, Not good=100
v11	Western democracies are better (1-4, 9=SM)	Q15H West is better=0, Our country better=100
v12	NATO bases are provocative (1-4, 9=SM)	Q4G Nato provocative=100, Not provocative=0
4. Perception of Russia		
v13	Russian military better (1-4, 9=SM)	Q6C Russia better=100, Russia not better=0
v14	Russia provokes conflicts (1-4, 9=SM)	Q4H Russia provocative=0, Not provocative=100
v15	Russia is aggressive (1-4, 9=SM)	Q6B Russia aggressive=0, Russia not aggressive=100
v16	Russia is a threat (1,2, 9=SM)	Q5A Russia threat=0, Russia not a threat=100
5. Perception of China as a threat		
v17	China is a threat (1,2, 9=SM)	Q5B China threat=0, China not a threat=100
6. Critical thinking		
v18	Covid is fake (1-4, 9=SM)	Q14C Fake=0, Not fake=100
v19	USA deliberately created COVID (1-4, 9=SM)	Q14G US created=100, US did not create=0
v20	Covid is a nano-chip tool (1-4, 9=SM)	Q14H Is a tool=100, Is not a tool=0
7. Trust		
v21	Trust in the media (1-4, 9=SM)	Q16D Trust (1) = 0, Distrust (4) = 100
v22	Trust in government (1-4, 9=SM)	Q16A Trust (1) = 0, Distrust (4) = 100
v23	Trust in president (1-4, 9=SM)	Q16B Trust (1) = 0, Distrust (4) = 100
v24	Trust in court and judiciary (1-4, 9=SM)	Q16C Trust (1) = 0, Distrust (4) = 100

The SPSS syntax used for the recoding procedure is as follows: SPSS syntax for data transformations:

***Orientation towards EU.**

RECODE q2 (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i1.
VARIABLE LABELS i1 'Stay-leave in EU'.
RECODE q4d (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i2.
VARIABLE LABELS i2 'EU dictatorial'.

***Orientation towards NATO.**

RECODE q3 (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i3.
VARIABLE LABELS i3 'Stay-leave in NATO'.
RECODE q4e (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i4.
VARIABLE LABELS i4 'NATO aggressive'.
RECODE q4F (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i5.
VARIABLE LABELS i5 'NATO security guarantee-drop?'.
RECODE q15a (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i6.
VARIABLE LABELS i6 'Democracy does not exist'.
RECODE q15c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i7.
VARIABLE LABELS i7 'Liberal democracy is s threat'.
RECODE q15g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i8.
VARIABLE LABELS i8 'The West is corrupt'.
RECODE q11a (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i9.
VARIABLE LABELS i9 'Strong leader is good'.

***Perception of democracy.**

RECODE q15a (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i6.
VARIABLE LABELS i6 'Democracy does not exist'.
RECODE q15c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i7.
VARIABLE LABELS i7 'Liberal democracy is s threat'.
RECODE q15g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i8.
VARIABLE LABELS i8 'The West is corrupt'.
RECODE q11a (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i9.
VARIABLE LABELS i9 'Strong leader is good'.

RECODE q15b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i10.
VARIABLE LABELS i10 'Democracy is good for the country'.
RECODE q15h (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i11.
VARIABLE LABELS i11 'Western democracy is better'.
RECODE q4g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i12.
VARIABLE LABELS i12 'NATO bases are provocative'.
RECODE q6c (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i13.
VARIABLE LABELS i13 'Russian military better'.
RECODE q4h (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i14.
VARIABLE LABELS i14 'Russia is provocative'.
RECODE q6b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i15.
VARIABLE LABELS i15 'Russia is aggressive'.
RECODE q5a (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i16.
VARIABLE LABELS i16 'Russia is a threat'.
RECODE q5b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i17.
VARIABLE LABELS i17 'China is a threat'.
RECODE q14c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i18.
VARIABLE LABELS i18 'COVID is a fake'.
RECODE q14g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i19.
VARIABLE LABELS i19 'USA

***Perception of Russia.**

RECODE q6c (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i13.
VARIABLE LABELS i13 'Russian military better'.
RECODE q4h (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i14.
VARIABLE LABELS i14 'Russia is provocative'.
RECODE q6b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i15.
VARIABLE LABELS i15 'Russia is aggressive'.
RECODE q5a (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i16.
VARIABLE LABELS i16 'Russia is a threat'.
RECODE q5b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i17.
VARIABLE LABELS i17 'China is a threat'.
RECODE q14c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i18.
VARIABLE LABELS i18 'COVID is a fake'.
RECODE q14g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i19.
VARIABLE LABELS i19 'USA

***China.**

RECODE q5b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i17.
VARIABLE LABELS i17 'China is a threat'.
RECODE q14c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i18.
VARIABLE LABELS i18 'COVID is a fake'.
RECODE q14g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i19.
VARIABLE LABELS i19 'USA

***Critical thinking.**

RECODE q14c (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i18.
VARIABLE LABELS i18 'COVID is a fake'.
RECODE q14g (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i19.
VARIABLE LABELS i19 'USA

deliberately created COVID'.
RECODE q14h (9=SYSMIS) (1=100) (2=66) (3=33) (4=0) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i20.
VARIABLE LABELS i20 'COVID is a nano tool'.
RECODE q16d (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i21.
VARIABLE LABELS i21 'Trust in media'.
RECODE q16a (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i22.
VARIABLE LABELS i22 'Trust in government'.
RECODE q16b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i23.
VARIABLE LABELS i23 'Trust in President'.
RECODE q16c (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i24.
VARIABLE LABELS i24 'Trust in courts and judiciary'.

***Trust in institutions.**

RECODE q16d (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i21.
VARIABLE LABELS i21 'Trust in media'.
RECODE q16a (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i22.
VARIABLE LABELS i22 'Trust in government'.
RECODE q16b (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i23.
VARIABLE LABELS i23 'Trust in President'.
RECODE q16c (9=SYSMIS) (1=0) (2=33) (3=66) (4=100) (ELSE=Copy) INTO i24.
VARIABLE LABELS i24 'Trust in courts and judiciary'.

Calculation

The summary value for each indicator is calculated as an average of the variables included in this respective indicator. For example, the value for the "Orientation towards the EU" indicator equals (i1 + i2)/2. Respectively, the value of the "Orientation towards NATO" indicator equals (i3 + i4 + i5)/3.

The summary value of the dimension is calculated as an average of the values of all indicators.

➔ Political landscape dimension

Second of the five dimensions addresses is the extent to which political actors and general political atmosphere in a country influences and facilitates its vulnerability towards foreign malign influence. The theoretical framework underpinning this research understands increased vulnerability as uncritical openness to pro-Kremlin and to pro-Beijing's influence, while increased resilience is associated with active engagement with/ in NATO and the EU, while such engagement can at times be constructively critical.

Based on this theoretical approach underpinning the Vulnerability Index, a methodology monitoring political landscape of the eight studied countries within the last six years (January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021) has been developed to reflect the level of influence exerted by the most important elected institutions in these countries as well as attitudes towards Euro Atlantic structures, the Kremlin and Beijing's administrations held by their occupants during the monitoring period. The result is a combination

of the two elements a) influence and b) geopolitical orientation which approximates the extent to which major political actors and parties have been able to sway a country in a pro-democratic or anti-democratic direction.

The data supplying this dimension has been sourced through desk research analysis and expert survey insights on political attitudes towards Russia and China. The composition of research in this dimension is structured in the following way:

Monitoring period

The monitoring period for this aspect of the research has been determined to six years (January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021) so as to enable long-enough time to capture at least two election periods in each country and allow to observe trends and changes which would not become apparent in a shorter monitoring period.

1st step: Political parties & entities' influence assessment

Ranking scheme

Given the fact that geopolitical affiliation and foreign policy orientation of a country is to a great extent decided by governmental entities followed by representatives in national parliaments or assemblies, rather than through regional political representatives or multinational ones (such as, for example, the Members of the European Parliament), the design of political entities' assessment scheme reflects this notion. Within each electoral period that occurred within the monitoring period, all political parties that managed to enter the parliament at least once and all successful presidential candidates are assessed. See the example below. ➔

➔ Country X had two electoral periods between 2016-2021. Within 2016-2020, party Y managed to be elected into the parliament, form the government and hold the post of the Prime minister. In 2020-2024, it only managed to enter the parliament. The score for party Y will thus be:

Name of the party / Independent figure	Parliamentary party	Government	Prime Minister	Speaker of Parliament	President	Election period
Party Y	33	0	0	0	0	2020 - 2024
Party Y	33	100	66	0	0	2016 - 2020

If a party participates only within one of the two election periods, it receives 0 for all achievements within a monitoring period it did not participate in the election. This is to reflect its influence relative to the six years monitored.

If the parties formed a coalition for elections and had candidates from different parties within one ballot, they were assessed as one entity. The President's score is assessed for the presidential election periods.

Calculation of Influence

Based on the criteria above, each political party or individual active on national political landscape within the last 6 years in a given country receives an average influence ranking. For example, for Party Y this would be $(33+33+0+100+66+0+0+0+0)/10 = 23.2$. The average influences for all parties are summed into the "Total influence".

The influence of each party is subsequently turned into a relative weight:

Weighted party influence 2016-2021 = [average (Parliamentary party score; Government score; Prime Minister score; Speaker of Parliament score; President Score)]/ total influence of all parties * 100

In a result, the sum of the relative weight of all parties and figures analyzed is 100 in all analyzed countries.

2nd step: Assessment of political parties' foreign policy orientation

Each entity meeting the conditions to be included into the political party/ entity assessment is subject to foreign policy orientation assessment. This is defined through party's/ entity's attitudes towards the EU, NATO, Russia and China within the monitoring period.

EU/ NATO

These attitudes are assessed against pre-defined criteria, whereby attitudes towards EU and NATO are measured on a scale 0-33-66-100, with 0 being equated with resilience, while 100 representing vulnerability.

Resilience in this case is defined as (0) constructive strategic communication about the EU/ NATO towards constituents, particularly by leading state representatives and party leaders. This includes communicating the advantages of EU / NATO membership consistently, informing them about given state's role in these structures and how their membership in NATO / EU is being shaped by a given state. Such communication also includes relevant and constructive criticism aiming to improve these projects in the long term.

Partial vulnerability (33) is defined as neutral communication about the EU/ NATO, or a lack of communication of these topics by leading representatives of state

or political parties. This includes not explaining the advantages of EU / NATO membership to constituents, not being sufficiently involved in EU / NATO activities or failing to inform constituents about these, and their states' role in them. As insufficient strategic communication poses a vulnerability in that it creates information vacuum which can be filled in by malign actors, scoring of partial vulnerability also applies to political party manifestos which fail to address EU / NATO topics.

Substantial vulnerability (66) is defined as somewhat antagonistic attitude towards the EU/NATO by a given political entity such as any action/ rhetoric that differs from constructive criticism of shortcomings in that it does not aspire to improve EU/NATO or initiate improvements, instead it portrays the EU/ NATO as dysfunctional / problematic or meaningless. It differs from fully antagonistic attitude in a degree and is somewhat less pronounced than fully antagonistic action / rhetoric.

Significant vulnerability (100) is defined as fully antagonistic such as any action/ rhetoric that strives to undermine the integrity and goals of the EU / NATO. Antagonistic action differs from constructive criticism of shortcomings in that it does not aspire to improve EU/NATO or initiate improvements, it deems the very existence of these structures as problems. Clear example would be advocating for exit from the EU or NATO or communication that strives to demonize any and all actions taken by these entities.

China/ Russia

These attitudes are assessed against pre-defined criteria, whereby attitudes towards Russia and China are measured on a scale 0-33-66-100, with 0 being equated with resilience, while 100 represents vulnerability. Resilience in this case is defined as (0), whereby leading state representatives or political party leaders do not shy away from explaining to constituents activities which pose a danger or particular challenges to a given state and how their policies challenge democratic values, such as human rights. This differs from unfounded antagonism.

Partial vulnerability (33) is defined as leading state representatives or political party leaders failing to address challenges which political leadership in China and Russia pose to their countries, and also as a failure to communicate any of these concerns to their constituents. Also, the score is given to party manifestos which fail to address Russia or China whatsoever.

Substantial vulnerability (66) is defined as leading state representatives or political party leaders presenting Russia / China from positive perspective only, as countries with whom cooperation in economic and other areas is desired, while security challenges these countries pose are not addressed.

Significant vulnerability (100) is defined as leading state representatives or political party leaders actively promoting interests of Chinese and Russian regimes in their countries by either a) always portraying these states as examples worth following, b) demonstrating subservency towards leadership

of these states or c) defending actions of Russian / Chinese political leadership despite clear evidence proving Russian / Chinese malign activities or at the expense of national interest

Calculation of political parties' foreign policy assessment

The overall attitudes of a given political party are assessed based on a dataset with relevant datapoints. First, for each political party, relevant representatives are identified. Party leaders, Prime Ministers, Presidents, Speakers of the Parliament, Foreign Affairs Ministers or Defense Ministers are considered relevant representatives, whereas other actors deemed relevant could be added by researchers in each country. In case a party leader is also holding other relevant post, he or she is assessed primarily during the period of his or her ministerial/presidential post and as a party leader during the period when not holding any other relevant posts. Also, for each political party, a party manifesto for each election period covered was assessed separately, if available.

If a relevant representative did not communicate with the public at all during a given year, he or she was not assessed. If he or she communicated on the EU or NATO but failed to communicate on Russia or China within a given year, he or she received 33 score for both Russia and China within the given year.

For each relevant representative, two data points are assessed per year. Assessed data points can represent action, speech or a social media post of a given person within a given year. The

choice of the data points for each year was left upon researchers in each country. The number of entries per political entity depended on the number of years given entity remained present in the parliament or in the government (or as an independent president) between 2016 and 2021, and the number of relevant political representatives of that party. Each party manifesto received only one score.

Each piece of content has been assessed independently by at least two researchers and borderline cases were discussed across research teams to arrive at an appropriate ranking consensus. The full datasets were subsequently reviewed again by GLOBSEC team. Whereas we acknowledge that the selection of speeches, social media posts and actions by the researchers was rather arbitrary, the assessment for each party in general included between 50-200 data points, which significantly limits the potential bias.

The output of the assessment is an average consisting of all data entries' rankings within the monitoring period per geopolitical entity per given party. This average is subsequently used in a calculation to arrive at party's weighted average score reflecting its attitude toward to four geopolitical entities, using the party's influence score from the 1st step:

Political entity's weighted foreign policy orientation = (party's average score for a given entity * weighted party influence)/ 100

The general attitude of an analyzed country towards a given geopolitical entity is subsequently calculated as a sum of political entities' weighted average scores in order to reflect the accumulative nature of individual political entities influence on a given country's foreign policy orientation within the monitoring period.

Country's orientation towards a given geopolitical entity = (1) Political entity's weighted foreign policy orientation + (2) Political entity's weighted foreign policy orientation+ etc.

3rd step: Foreign policy assessment per country

Overall foreign policy assessment of a given country is calculated based on six variables combined into four indicators, each reflecting country's attitudes towards the EU, NATO, Russia and China:

→ Indicators reflecting country's attitudes towards the EU and NATO are solely based on the calculations described in the 2nd step.

→ Indicator reflecting country's attitudes towards Russia is based on the calculations described in the 2nd step and data obtained through a question from expert surveys adjusted for bias²⁹ (*How successful have the parliamentary*

actors been in promoting the pro-Kremlin interests in [your country] in the past 2 years?). The overall indicator is calculated in the following way:

Political attitudes towards Russia indicator = average (country's orientation towards Russia; expert survey response result)

→ Indicator reflecting country's attitudes towards China is based on the calculations described in the 2nd step and data obtained through a question from expert surveys adjusted for bias (*How successful have the parliamentary actors been in promoting the pro-Beijing interests in [your country] in the past 2 years?*). The overall indicator is calculated in the following way:

Political attitudes towards China indicator= average (country's orientation towards a Russia; expert survey response result)

The final assessment of country's vulnerability or resilience in the political landscape dimension is then calculated as an average of the four indicators:

Country's political landscape ranking = average (Political attitudes towards the EU; Political attitudes towards NATO; Political attitudes towards Russia; Political attitudes towards China)

Table 2: Overview of political landscape's indicators

Indicator no.	Indicator name	Variable no.	Variable /Question	Scale
i.8	Political attitudes towards the EU	v2.1	Political landscape assessment of the EU	0 =pro-EU; 100=anti-EU
i.9	Political attitudes towards NATO	v2.2	Political landscape assessment of NATO	0 =pro-NATO; 100=anti-NATO
i.10	Political attitudes towards Russia	v2.3	Political landscape assessment of Russia	0 = not pro-Russian; 100= pro-Russian
	Political attitudes towards Russia	v2.4	How successful have the parliamentary actors been in promoting the pro-Kremlin interests in [your country] in the past 2 years?	0 = not successful; 100 = extremely successful
i.11	Political attitudes towards China	v2.5	How successful have the parliamentary actors been in promoting the pro-Beijing interests in [your country] in the past 2 years?	0 = not successful; 100 = extremely successful
	Political attitudes towards China	v2.6	Political landscape assessment to China	0 = not pro-Chinese; 100= pro-Chinese

→ Public administration dimension

Efficient and functioning public administration, working checks and balances and up-to-date legislation, which is effectively enforced and reflects the latest societal and technological developments, are a backbone of a functioning state. In the context of the theoretical framework outlined above, public administration and democratic processes are only as good as are the set policies and developed institutional structures. In case of foreign malign influence, these include, among others, situational awareness, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches in countering malign actors, both domestic and foreign, and diminishing the identified gaps.

The public administration dimension is composed of **seven indicators** comprising of data from other existing indices, desk research conducted by project partners and expert surveys. These sources of data analyze and measure the resilience of the democratic system of governance from the perspective of guaranteeing basic freedoms, non-discrimination, electoral integrity, fight against corruption, strength of checks and balances, legislative and structural resilience, and a willingness to address and counter foreign influence. **The vulnerability score for public administration dimension represents the average of the scores of these seven indicators.** Specifically, it contains the following indicators:

1 Checks and balances

This indicator is comprised of Varieties of Democracies' (V-Dem) checks and balances index, which was created for the purpose of this research by the above mentioned V-Dem researchers from the V-Dem's Horizontal accountability index and nine selected V-Dem questions/variables focusing on the control and oversight of executive, judiciary and legislation.

Horizontal accountability index³⁰ concerns the power of state institutions to oversee the government by demanding information, questioning officials and punishing improper behavior. This form of accountability ensures checks between institutions and prevents the abuse of power. The selected V-Dem variables/questions support the horizontal accountability by additional analysis of existing checks and balances. The following V-Dem indicators/questions were included:

- "If the head of state took actions to dissolve the legislature, would he/she be likely to succeed?"
- "If the legislature, or either chamber of the legislature, took actions to remove the head of government from office, would it be likely to succeed even without having to level accusations of

unlawful activity and without the involvement of any other agency?"

- "If the head of government took actions to dissolve the legislature, would he/she be likely to succeed?"
- "If the legislature, or either chamber of the legislature, took actions to remove the head of state from office, would it be likely to succeed even without having to level accusations of unlawful activity and without the involvement of any other agency?"
- "Judges are sometimes removed from their posts for cause, as when there is strong evidence of corruption; however, some judges are removed arbitrarily, typically for political reasons. With this distinction in mind, please describe the removal of judges that occurred this calendar year."
- "How often did the government attack the judiciary's integrity in public?"
- "The size of the judiciary is sometimes increased for very good reasons, as when judges are added to manage an increasing caseload; however, sometimes judges are added purely for political reasons. With this distinction in mind, please describe any increases in the size of the judiciary that occurred this calendar year."
- "When judges are found responsible for serious misconduct, how often are they removed from their posts or otherwise disciplined?"
- "Does any court in the judiciary have the legal authority to invalidate governmental policies

(e.g. statutes, regulations, decrees, administrative actions) on the grounds that they violate a constitutional provision?"

The Checks and Balances Indicator was computed from the above-mentioned V-Dem data using Bayesian Factor Analyses model.³¹ The indicator uses V-Dem data for years 2016-2020, which were averaged and then converted into 0-100 scale of the Vulnerability Index. For more information, please, see Annex I.

2 Election integrity

Another indicator of resilience of democratic processes of a country is its ability to ensure fair election free of interference from both domestic and foreign actors. This indicator is composed of two data sources – desk research evaluating existing legislation on financing of political parties and elections, which was conducted by project researchers in each of the analyzed countries, and V-Dem data on electoral integrity, fair structures and processes. The V-Dem data/questions used were the following:

- Are there disclosure requirements for donations to national election campaigns?"
- "In this national election, did any registered opposition candidates or parties boycott?"
- "Did losing parties and candidates accept the result of this national election within three months?"

- "Following this national election, did winners assume office according to prescribed constitutional rules and norms?"
- "Taking all aspects of the pre-election period, election day, and the post-election process into account, would you consider subnational elections (regional and local, as previously identified) to be free and fair on average?"
- V-Dem Clean elections index containing questions on the extent to which elections are free and fair, which connotes with the absence of registration fraud, systematic irregularities, government intimidation of the opposition, voters buying and election violence.

The V-Dem data on election integrity are computed by Bayesian factor analysis model. Researchers used the average for years 2016-2020. The original 0-1 interval scale was converted to 0-100 scale.³²

The desk research on electoral integrity consisted of following "yes" or "no" questions:

- "Does your country have a legal regulation on financing of political parties and election campaigns?"
- "Does your country have a legal regulation on third parties in election campaigns?"
- "Is foreign funding of political parties and election campaigns prohibited in your country?"
- "Is online environment covered (including spending limits in online environment) in election and campaign legislation?"
- "Are electoral and campaign regulations effectively applied and enforced in offline environment?"
- "Are electoral and campaign regulations effectively applied and enforced in online environment?"

The affirmative answers to these questions received equaled a score of 0, while negative answers scored 100. The more yes answers were indicated in this desk research, the more vulnerable the electoral system of a particular country was. The vulnerability score of this desk research equals the percentage of affirmative answers.

The expert survey findings on the capability of national election oversight bodies to monitor and prevent attempts of foreign interference and/or indications of illicit foreign interference have been incorporated in the country chapters.

The vulnerability score of the Election Integrity Indicator was computed as the average of two scores – one from V-Dem data and one from desk research.

Vulnerability score of the Election Integrity Indicator = Average (score for V-Dem data on electoral on election integrity; score for desk research on electoral integrity)

Legislative and structural resilience

The indicator of legislative and structural resilience is comprised of desk research assessment conducted by project partners analyzing security documents from the perspective of foreign influence and expert survey assessment of the whole-of-society approach in building societal resilience and alignment of security and defense strategies with EU policies (Western Balkans countries only).

Analysis of security documents

Project partners compiled a list of publicly available reports, strategies or doctrines produced by public institutions in their country since January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021 and/or included also those strategies still being valid no matter when they were adopted. For each document researchers provided: a name of the report/document; public institutions that produced or adopted it; year of its publishing/adoption; an online link to the document/report/strategy; and indicated what type of document it is. Categorization of a report/document/strategy helped researchers understand the level of importance of provided documents and it was a necessary step enabling a comparative analysis of documents of similar relevance.

Security and defense documents were divided into 5 categories:

a) Main national security/defense strategies – as national security/defense strategies that are the most important long-term security documents/strategies

of a country, which set policies and geopolitical orientation of a country for citizens as well as public institutions. These national strategies are usually developed collaboratively by several public institutions and are approved by a government and have to be approved by a parliament in order to be valid.

b) Other – as any other reports produced by public institutions or public representatives that do not fit the previous category and have an element of security and resilience building. These can include specialized, long-term frameworks and annual or bi-annual reports produced by security/intelligence services

or other public institutions that provide evaluation of specific policies and/or security environment of a country. Such reports can have both public and classified versions.

Security document/report/strategies were then divided into two groups – the main and most important strategies present in all analyzed countries and thus available for comparative analysis and the “other” documents, with cyber security doctrines being included in the “other” category. According to these rules, the following number of documents were identified per each analyzed country:

Table 3: Total number of public (security/defense) reports, frameworks or strategies identified and number of comparable strategies across 8 analyzed countries

Country	Number of documents/reports identified	Number of identified comparable main/most important security strategies
Bulgaria	9	2
Czechia	38	2
Hungary	5	2
Romania	19	2
Slovakia	32	2
Montenegro	3	2
North Macedonia	12	1
Serbia	6	2

a) Analysis of the content/detail of main security and defense strategies

Since only national security or defense strategies were produced in all analyzed countries and thus allowed for comparative assessment, such strategies produced/adopted since January 2016 until the end of June 2021 were further analyzed from the perspective of foreign influence and resilience building. Project partners analyzed and scored to what detail national defense and security strategies address following topics:

→ Is foreign interference / foreign influence mentioned and elaborated in the studied document? Please bear in mind that this term may be framed differently, we are not looking at verbatim definitions but nuances. Please follow this score:

100: Foreign interference terminology is misused to demonize civil society actors or democratic allies or other purposes undermining democracy or state resilience.

66: Foreign interference or its synonym is not addressed in the document at all.

33: Foreign interference is mentioned but is not clearly defined or is mentioned in vague terms.

0: Foreign interference is clearly defined as a serious security challenge.

→ Is **Russia** and its influence mentioned/perceived in this document? Please follow this score:

100: Russia occurs only in positive terms both in strategic/ political and economic terms.

66: Russia occurs there in terms of sectoral cooperation (economic/energy/culture/etc.).

33: Russia is mentioned but only superficially / very neutral terms or not mentioned at all.

0: Russian influence is rightfully recognized as an security issue or challenge in relevant areas (does not mean hysterical bashing).

→ Is **China** and its influence mentioned/perceived in this document? Please follow this score:

100: China occurs only in positive terms both in strategic/ political and economic terms.

66: China occurs there in terms of sectoral cooperation (economic/energy/culture/etc.).

33: China is mentioned but only superficially / very neutral terms or not mentioned at all.

0: Chinese influence is rightfully recognized as an security issue or challenge in relevant areas (does not mean hysterical bashing).

→ Are **hybrid threats** mentioned and elaborated in the studied document? Please bear in mind that this term may be framed differently, we are not looking at verbatim definitions but nuances. Please follow this score:

100: Hybrid threats terminology is misused to demonise civil society actors or democratic allies or other purposes undermining democracy or state resilience.

66: Hybrid threats or its synonym is not addressed in the document at all.

33: Hybrid threats are mentioned but are not clearly defined or are mentioned in vague terms.

0: Hybrid threats are clearly recognized as a serious security challenge.

→ Are **disinformation/information operations**

mentioned and elaborated in the studied document? Please follow this score:

100: The terms are misused to demonise civil society actors, democratic allies or other purposes undermining democracy or state resilience.

66: They are not addressed in the document at all.

33: It is mentioned but is not clearly defined or is mentioned in vague terms.

0: They are clearly recognized as a serious security challenge.

→ Is resilience and/or resilience-building in relation to foreign interference in political/social/informational terms, such as strategic communication, whole-of-society approach, etc. mentioned and perceived in this particular document? Please follow this score:

100: The terms are misused to demonise civil society actors, democratic allies or other purposes undermining democracy or state resilience or the topic is not addressed at all.

66: Resilience-building is briefly mentioned without any specific plans and/or proposals.

33: Need for resilience building is recognized as crucial but the notion if not sufficiently developed.

0: Areas of vulnerability towards foreign influence are clearly identified, together with remedies / resilience-building strategy with key actors identified.

→ Was this strategic doctrine regularly (at least once in 5 years) updated? – “yes” or “no” answer.

The analysis conducted by project partners included identification of specific sections of strategies addressing these issues and provision of their English translation as well as reasoning for their score. Such evaluation was conducted for all national and security strategies produced/adopted within the set time period. A principle that every issue does not have to be addressed in the same level of detail in all documents was established, which means, that a final score for the main strategies for each country was computed by following these conditions:

- If the scores for the strategies addressing the issue rank the same, the overall score stays the same.
- If the scores for the strategies addressing the issue differ by 33 points, the overall score corresponds to the lower score.
- If any of the scores for the strategies addressing the issue differ by 66 points, the overall score corresponds to the average score.
- If any of the scores for the strategies addressing the issue differ by 100 points, the overall score corresponds to the average score.

b) Analysis of regular updates of main security and national strategies

Since national security and defense strategies are the backbone of state security, regular updates of these documents are necessary to reflect the changes in security environment. Therefore, an overview of updates of each strategy since 2000 in analyzed countries was compiled and each update was scored based on the following principles:

- Updated within 5 years or less years, which received score 0
- Updated within 6-10 years, which received score 33
- Updated within 11-15 years, which received score 66
- Updated after more than 15 years, which received score 100

The country score for the regular update of national and defense strategies was then computed as the average of these “update” scores.

Table 4: Example for how score for regular updates was calculated

Country XY			
Name of strategy	Year of publishing	No. of years between the updates	Points
Strategy A	2011		
Strategy A	2018	7 years	33
Strategy B	2002		
Strategy B	2011	9 years	33
Strategy B	2016	5 years	0
Total score calculated as an average of points received for regular update:			22

c) Analysis of other security documents/reports

The amount of other security frameworks, documents or annual intelligence reports produced and publicly available varied significantly among the analyzed countries. This report is based on the assumption that the more information is provided by public institutions or intelligence agencies, the greater situational awareness the society has. Therefore, the assessment of “other” documents/reports on whether they address foreign influence and resilience building was considered as additional “bonus” resilience points.

Table 5: Number of “other” (security) reports/documents identified and analyzed by project partners

Country	Number of “other” documents/reports analyzed
Bulgaria	13
Czechia	36
Hungary	3
Romania	17
Slovakia	30
Montenegro	2
North Macedonia	8
Serbia	4

Vulnerability score for structural resilience indicator = Average (score for the overall vulnerability of security documents; score from expert survey on the whole-of-society approach; (for Western Balkan countries only) score of for having security and defense strategies in line with the EU)

The **overall vulnerability score of security documents** was computed as an average of the following scores:

- Score for all analyzed documents (score for main strategies minus bonus points for “other” documents) from the point of addressing foreign interference, hybrid threats, disinformation and resilience-building.
- Score for addressing Russia in national security and defense strategies
- Score for addressing China in national security and defense strategies
- Score for updates of national strategies

The overall vulnerability score for security documents = Average (score for all analyzed documents; score for addressing Russia in national and defense strategies; score for addressing China in national and defense strategies; score for updates of national strategies since 2000)

Expert surveys

The structural resilience indicator also encompasses the findings from expert survey. The implementation of a whole-of-government approach was evaluated by responses on following question: “Is “whole-of-society” approach implemented sufficiently in building state resilience?”. The results of expert survey were adjusted for bias. The expert survey of the Western Balkan countries also contained an additional question: “Are security and defense strategies of your country in line with EU policies?” The overall vulnerability score for structural resilience indicator was then computed as an average of scores of overall vulnerability of security documents and above-mentioned questions from expert survey.

4

Civil liberties and non-discrimination

This indicator was computed from seven V-Dem indices/questions using Bayesian Factor Analysis model specifically for the Vulnerability Index. The indicator uses V-Dem data for years 2016-2020, which were averaged and then converted into 0-100 scale. For more information, please, see Annex 1. The indicator covers topics of public deliberation, exclusion of various groups, distribution or accumulation of power among particular social groups. These factors can be important drivers of social polarization, tensions and civil unrests with a potential to be utilized by foreign malign actors. This indicator consists of following V-Dem indices and questions³³:

→ Equal distribution of resources index

The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the variables for particularistic or public goods, means tested vs. universalistic welfare policies, educational equality and health equality.

→ Index of (political) exclusion by socio-economic group

This index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the variables/questions on power distributed by socio-economic group, socio-economic position equality in respect for civil liberties, access to public services by socioeconomic group, access to state jobs by socio-economic group, and access to state business opportunities by socio-economic group.

→ Exclusion by Social Group index

The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the variables power distributed by social group, social group equality in respect for civil liberties, access to public services by social group, access to state jobs by social group, and access to state business opportunities by social group.

→ Exclusion by Political Group index

The index is formed by taking the point estimates from a Bayesian factor analysis model of the variables/questions political group equality in respect for civil liberties, access to public services by political group, access to state jobs by political group, and access to state business opportunities by political group.

→ “Is political power distributed according to gender?”

→ “To what extent is political power distributed according to sexual orientation?”

→ “The deliberative principle is an important, perhaps even essential, element of democracy. Do you agree or disagree?”

5

Foreign malign influence

Since a large difference between what is written in a strategy and what policies are actually implemented and adopted can occur, expert survey assessment complements the data on awareness of and counter-measures to pro-Kremlin and pro-

Beijing activities in the analyzed countries. Respondents of expert survey provided answers to following questions:

→ “To what extent do public authorities address the activities of pro-Kremlin actors in the country?”

→ “To what extent do public authorities address the activities of pro-Beijing actors in the country?”

The results of the expert survey were adjusted for bias.

The researchers were able to collect information responses on the level of awareness and responses to both the Kremlin’s and Beijing’s influence and compare them. The score of this foreign malign influence indicator was computed as the averaged of scores of these two questions. Please, see more information on expert surveys on the first pages.

6

Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International

Corruption undermines the trust in public institutions and democracy as such and can be an important tool of foreign malign actors. Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is therefore an important indicator of vulnerability of public administration. It analyzes corrupt behavior in the areas such as bribery, diversion of public funds, use of public office for private gain, nepotism in civil service or state capture. Since the CPI score has a scale of 0- 100 where a 0

represents the highest level of perceived corruption, and 100 the lowest level of perceived corruption, for the purpose of the this research the CPI scores were reversed, so that a 0 represents lowest level of perceived corruption and 100 the highest. The CPI scores of analyzed countries for the past 5 years were analyzed and the score of this public administration’s indicator represents their average.

For more information about the Corruption Perception Index, please, visit its website.³⁴

7

Physical violence index

Protection against physical violence, freedom from torture or political killings are basic universal human rights. Their violations indicate grave violation of democratic principles and indicate a breach of a social contract. V-Dem’s Physical violence index³⁵ indicated to what extent physical integrity is respected. It is based on two

indicators that reflect violence committed by government agents, in particular freedom from political killings and torture. The original scale 0-1 interval scale of the index was converted to 0-100 scale with 0 equating the highest resilience and 100 representing the highest vulnerability.

Table 6: Overview of public administration’s indicators

Indicator no.	Indicator name	Source	Scale
i12	Checks and balances	V-Dem	0 = strong checks and balances; 100 = no checks and balances
i13	Electoral integrity	V-Dem, partners’ assessment	0 = elections are resilient to foreign influence; 100= elections are not resilient to foreign influence
i14	Legislative and structural resilience	Partners’ assessment, Expert survey questions	0 = legislation and structures resilient; 100 = legislation and structures vulnerable
i15	Civil liberties & non-discrimination	V-Dem	0 = civil liberties are guaranteed and no discrimination is in place; 100 = civil liberties are not guaranteed and there is strong discrimination
i16	Foreign malign influence	Expert survey questions	0 = there is active communication and measures about foreign influence, 100 = not addressed at all
i17	Corruption Perception	T.I. Corruption perception index	0 = no corruption, 100 = high corruption
i18	Basic freedoms	V-Dem	0 = complete freedom from physical violence; 100 = physical violence part of the political process

→ Information landscape dimension

The fourth dimension, information landscape, is key in the assessment of country's vulnerability to sharp power as the information environment can provide a key gateway for the malign actors to interfere into the state affairs and manipulate the public perceptions. It combines three sources of data – World Press Freedom Index, which covers traditional media, V-Dem Digital Society Survey, covering the online information space, and the expert survey questions covering the Russian and Chinese influence.

The composition of the dimension consists of eighteen variables combined into eight indicators, average results of which together form a final country score for this dimension. These indicators are:

→ Media freedom

measured by World Press Freedom Index³⁶ results, calculated as an average for years 2016 – 2021 to capture the developments over six years. The index evaluates the “degree of freedom available to journalists”, pluralism, media independence, media environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information, combining quantitative data and a questionnaire with 87 questions, filled-in by selected experts. It rates countries on a scale of 1-100 whereby higher score represents less media freedom. The average

scores of 2016-2021 were directly inserted into the indicator.

→ Presence of information manipulation and disinformation

is made of 5 variables combining data from V-Dem index and expert surveys. The variables from V-Dem data (v4.2-v4.5) were based on the results from the following questions from V-Dem Digital Society Survey:

→ How often do the government and its agents use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence its own population? (V-Dem code v2smgovdom)

→ How often do the government and its agents use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence citizens of other countries abroad? (V-Dem code v2smgovab)

→ How often do major political parties and candidates for office use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence their own population? (V-Dem code v2smpardom)

→ How often do major political parties and candidates for office use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence citizens of other countries abroad? (V-Dem code v2smparab)

→ How routinely do foreign governments and their agents use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence domestic politics in this country? (V-Dem code v2smfordom)

→ How routinely do foreign governments and their agents use paid advertisements on social media in order to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence domestic politics in this country? (V-Dem code v2smforads)

The questions were subsequently combined into one value ranging between 0-1 using the Bayesian Factor Analysis conducted by Kyle Marquardt, Daniel Pemstein and Johannes von Romer for each year between 2016-2020. The results for each year were averaged and converted into 0-100 scale using the inversion calculation $x = (1 - \text{average value per country}) * 100$.

The second source of the indicator were responses to expert survey questions:

→ What is the influence of sources spreading disinformation / conspiracy theories within offline media outlets (TV/radio/print)?

→ What is the influence of sources spreading disinformation / conspiracy theories within online media outlets?

combined into one result using the anchoring technique (see expert surveys section). The result of the indicator was the unweighted average of the final value from V-Dem variables and the final value from the expert survey questions.

→ **Government control over digital space** is made of four V-Dem Digital Society Survey variables assessing the following questions:

→ How often does the government shut down access to social media platforms? (v2smgovsm)

→ How prevalent is the usage of social media platforms that are wholly controlled by either the government or its agents in this country? (v2smgovsmalt)

→ How frequently does the government censor political information (text, audio, images, or video) on the Internet by filtering (blocking access to certain websites)? (v2smgovfilprc)

→ To what degree does the government censor political content (i.e., deleting or filtering specific posts for political reasons) on social media in practice? (v2smgovsmcenprc)

The results were combined into one value using the same method as described in the previous indicator.

→ **Capacity to protect digital space** is made of three V-Dem Digital Society Survey variables assessing the following questions:

→ Does the government have sufficiently technologically skilled staff and resources to mitigate harm from cyber-security threats? (v2smgovcapsec)

→ Do the major political parties have sufficiently technologically skilled staff and resources to mitigate harm from cyber security threats? (v2smpolcap)

→ Does the government have sufficient staff and resources to regulate Internet content in accordance with existing law? (v2smregcap)

The values were combined into one value on a scale of 0-1 by averaging over posterior draws from their component V-Dem indicators for years 2016-2021, then averaged and converted into 0-100 scale using the formula $x = (1 - \text{average country score}) * 100$. The capacity to protect the digital space did not correlate with the rest of the indicators, which means, in undemocratic states, it can be utilized for undemocratic purposes as well. The team, however, decided to maintain the indicator in the Index as it offers an important insight into the awareness and capacity of cyber security in the country. •

→ **Access to diversity online** is made of two V-Dem Digital Society Survey variables assessing the following questions addressing online media diversity, which is an important component of a healthy online information space:

→ Do the major domestic online media outlets represent a wide range of political perspectives? (v2smonper)

→ Do the major domestic online media outlets give a similar presentation of major (political) news? (v2smmefra)

The values were combined into one value on a scale of 0-1 by averaging over posterior draws from their component V-Dem indicators for years 2016-2021, then averaged and converted into 0-100 scale using the formula $x = (1 - \text{average country score}) * 100$.

→ Digital rule of law index

is made of four V-Dem Digital Society Survey variables assessing the following questions addressing the rule of law in the online space:

→ Does a legal framework to protect Internet users' privacy and their data exist? (v2smprivex)

→ What does the legal framework to protect Internet users' privacy and their data stipulate? (v2smprivcon)

→ Does the legal framework provide protection against defamatory online content, or hate speech? (v2smlawpr)

→ To what extent do elites abuse the legal system (e.g., defamation and copyright law) to censor political speech online? (v2smdefabu)

The results were subsequently combined into one value ranging between 0-1 using the Bayesian Factor Analysis conducted by Kyle Marquardt, Daniel Pemstein and Johannes von Romer for each year between 2016-2020. The results for each year were averaged and converted into 0-100 scale using the inversion calculation $x = (1 - \text{average value per country}) * 100$.

→ Russian media influence

combined the expert survey questions assessing the amount of pro-Kremlin and Russian influence in both traditional and online information space via following questions:

→ How much space is given to pro-Kremlin actors and/or narratives in the state-owned media / public broadcaster?

→ How much space is given to pro-Kremlin actors and/or narratives in the mainstream media?

→ To what extent does Russia directly/indirectly influence the mainstream media in the country?

→ To what extent does Russia directly/indirectly influence the state-owned media/public broadcaster in the country?

→ How widespread is Russian influence on social media in your country?

The responses to questions were adjusted via anchoring described in the expert surveys section to eliminate the bias and averaged.

→ **Chinese media influence** combined the expert survey questions assessing the amount of pro-Beijing and Chinese influence in both traditional and online information space via following questions:
 → How much space is given to pro-Beijing actors and/or narratives in the state-owned media / public broadcaster?
 → How much space is given to pro-Beijing actors and/or narratives in the mainstream media?

→ To what extent does China directly/indirectly influence the mainstream media in the country?
 → To what extent does China directly/indirectly influence the state-owned media/public broadcaster in the country?
 → How widespread is Chinese influence on social media in your country?

The responses to questions were adjusted via anchoring described in the expert surveys section to eliminate the bias and averaged.

The dimension was calculated as an average of all eight indicators.

Table 7: Overview of information landscape indicators

Indicator no.	Indicator name	Source	Scale
i19	Media Freedom	World Press Freedom Index	0 = media completely free; 100 = media completely unfree
i20	Presence of information manipulation & disinformation	V-Dem Index, expert survey	0 = information manipulation almost non-existent; 100 = information manipulation spread across all major media outlets
i21	Government control over digital space	V-Dem Index	0 = government guarantees freedoms in digital space; 100 = government controls digital space
i22	Capacity to protect digital space	V-Dem Index	0 = information space protected against cyber threats; 100 = information space not protected against cyber threats
i23	Access to diversity online	V-Dem Index	0 = media space diversified; 100 = media space not at all diversified
i24	Digital rule of law index	V-Dem Index	0 = rule of law in digital space enforced; 100 = rule of law in digital space not enforced
i25	Russian media influence	Expert survey	0 = free of Russian influence; 100 = full of Russian influence
i26	Chinese media influence	Expert survey	0 = free of Chinese influence; 100 = full of Chinese influence

→ Civic & academic space dimension

Assessment of the resilience of civic space, civil society and academia constitutes one of the essential dimensions of the Index, as it represents one of the most important pillars of functioning democracies. Without vibrant civil society and free academic research, a society cannot be considered a fully developed democracy. The Vulnerability Index evaluates this area in each analyzed country through a robust combination of sources from already existing indices and expert survey data adjusted for bias which provide an insight into foreign malign influence on civic and academic space in each country.

The composition of the Civic & Academic Space dimension consists of eight variables combined into five indicators, average results of which together form a final country score for this dimension. These indicators are:

→ **Sustainability of civil society** measured by Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index³⁷ results, calculated as an average for years 2016 – 2020 in order to capture developments over five years. The index evaluates sustainability by looking at seven essential elements: legal environment, organizational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, sectoral infrastructure and public image. It rates countries on a scale 1-7 whereby higher score represents decreased sustainability. For inclusion

into the Vulnerability Index, the country rankings were converted to 0-100 scale whereby higher score indicates higher vulnerability using this formula:

Vulnerability Index sustainability of civil society ranking = (100/7) * country's Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index average ranking 2016 – 2020.

→ **Academic freedom** is assessed by looking at a 5-year average of the Academic Freedom Index³⁸ derived from V-Dem Index which answers the question 'To what extent is academic freedom respected?'³⁹ It provides the results in an interval scale 0 – 1. The results were subsequently converted to 0 – 100 scale whereby higher score indicates higher vulnerability using this formula:

Vulnerability Index academic freedom ranking = (1 – country's Academic Freedom Index average ranking 2016 – 2020) * 100.

→ **Civic space** is assessed by looking at a 5-year average of four variables derived from V-Dem Index. These are freedom of assembly, mobilization for autocracy, non-state political violence and political polarization.

Combining these variables offers a picture of civic space conditions defining the state of civil society in each country analyzed. The original V-Dem data results are inverted from a -3;3 scale to 0;1 scale using the normal distribution Excel function using this formula for each variable's 5-year data points (2016 – 2020).

Vulnerability Index Civic space variable ranking = NORM.DIST(original V-Dem value, 0, 1, TRUE)

An average of these years is then converted into 0-100 scale whereby higher score indicates higher vulnerability. In case the original variable was on a reverse scale (i.e. 0 would mean vulnerability and 1 resilience), the following conversion is used:

Conversion to 0-100 scale = (1 - 2016-2020 average of Vulnerability Index Civic space variable ranking x) * 100

If the scale is not reverse, the average is multiplied by 100.

To arrive to a final civic space indicator country ranking, the 5-year long results of the four variables are averaged to one data point:

Vulnerability Index Civic space country ranking = Average (2016-2020 freedom of assembly; 2016-2020 mobilization for autocracy; 2016-2020 non-state political violence; 2016-2020 political polarization)

→ **Beijing's influence** is assessed through an average result of expert survey response to question 'How strong is Beijing's influence within your country's civil society?' with results adjusted for bias (see section expert surveys).

→ **Kremlin's influence** is assessed through an average result of expert survey response to question 'How strong is Kremlin's influence within your country's civil society?' with results adjusted for bias (see section expert surveys).

As in all the dimensions covered in this Vulnerability Index, the final country score for the civic & academic space dimension is then calculated as an average of the above mentioned five indicators:

Vulnerability Index Civic & Academic Space country ranking = average (Sustainability of civil society; Academic freedom; Civic space; Beijing's influence; Kremlin's influence)

Table 8: Overview of civic and academic space structure

Indicator no.	Indicator name	Variable name	Source	Scale
i27	Sustainability of Civil society	Civil society sustainability	Civil Society Sustainability Index	0 = sustainable; 100 = not sustainable
i31	Beijing's influence	ES5.6 CSOs	Expert survey	0= no influence; 100= decisive influence
i30	Kremlin's influence	ES5.5 CSOs	Expert survey	0= no influence; 100= decisive influence
i29	Academic Freedom	Academic Freedom Index	V-Dem Index	0= full academic freedom; 100 = academic freedom strictly limited
i28	Civic space	Freedom of peaceful assembly	V-Dem Index	0 = protests almost always allowed; 100 = protests never allowed
i28	Civic space	Mobilization for autocracy	V-Dem Index	0= almost no events; 100 = many large-scale and small-scale events
i28	Civic space	Non-state political violence	V-Dem Index	0 = non-state actors do not use political violence; 100 = non-state actors often use political violence
i28	Civic space	Political polarization	V-Dem Index	0= not at all polarized; 100 = very polarized

→ Qualitative assessment: Country chapters

The country chapters also contain findings and quotes from focus group discussions. In each country, a professional polling agency organized eight focus groups discussions encompassing five different participants each. The sessions were held for approximately two hours and facilitated by an experienced professional moderator/ researcher. Some of the findings or quotes in this report consequently, reflect qualitative data collected from 40 focus group participants in each country or 320 participants altogether across eight countries.

groups and two with the more resilient ones. Any quotes cited in the publication are the direct statements of focus group participants. Focus group discussions were conducted in February 2021 in all countries and were convened online using the ZOOM platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions were held in local languages and recorded with the consent of all participants.

Discussions were based on a standard set of questions used across all eight countries. Participants were selected based on the findings of public opinion polls and were further pre-screened based on their pro-Kremlin, anti-Western and anti-democratic attitudes and were divided into vulnerable and resilient groups to scrutinize differences in public attitudes. Six focus group discussions in each country were held with the vulnerable socio-demographic

→ References

1 While this Index focuses on these 5 areas, the report *The Landscape of Hybrid Threats: A conceptual model of the Joint Research Centre and the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE)* has identified 13 domains in which national power and consequently hybrid threats and foreign malign influence can be exercised.

2 <https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Sharp-Power-Rising-Authoritarian-Influence-Full-Report.pdf>; p.6

3 R. N. Lebow; *Classical Realism in International Relations Theories, Discipline and Diversity* by T. Dunne, M. Kurki and S. Smith (2016)

4 H. Morgenthau; *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (1948)

5 B. Russett; *Liberalism in International Relations Theories, Discipline and Diversity* by T. Dunne, M. Kurki and S. Smith (2016)

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19 King & Wand 2007, Pemstein et al. 2021

20 To reduce the workload on anchoring experts, in some cases they received a single question that roughly represents the average of two questions which the country experts coded.

21 When we have two expert coded variables matched to one anchoring variable, we calculate the average of the adjusted expert medians, producing one adjusted variable corresponding to the single anchoring variable.

22 King, Gary, and Jonathan Wand. 2007. "Comparing Incomparable Survey Responses: Evaluating and Selecting Anchoring Vignettes." *Political Analysis* 15(1): 46–66. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25791877>; Pemstein, Daniel, Kyle L. Marquardt, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Juraj Medzihorsky, Joshua Krusell, Farhad Miri, and Johannes von Römer. 2021. "The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data." V-Dem Working Paper 21 (6th ed.). https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/d4/d2/d4d27532-96a7-4f8c-8028-4c356fb1b2ca/wp_21_6th_edition.pdf

23 <https://www.v-dem.net/en/>

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