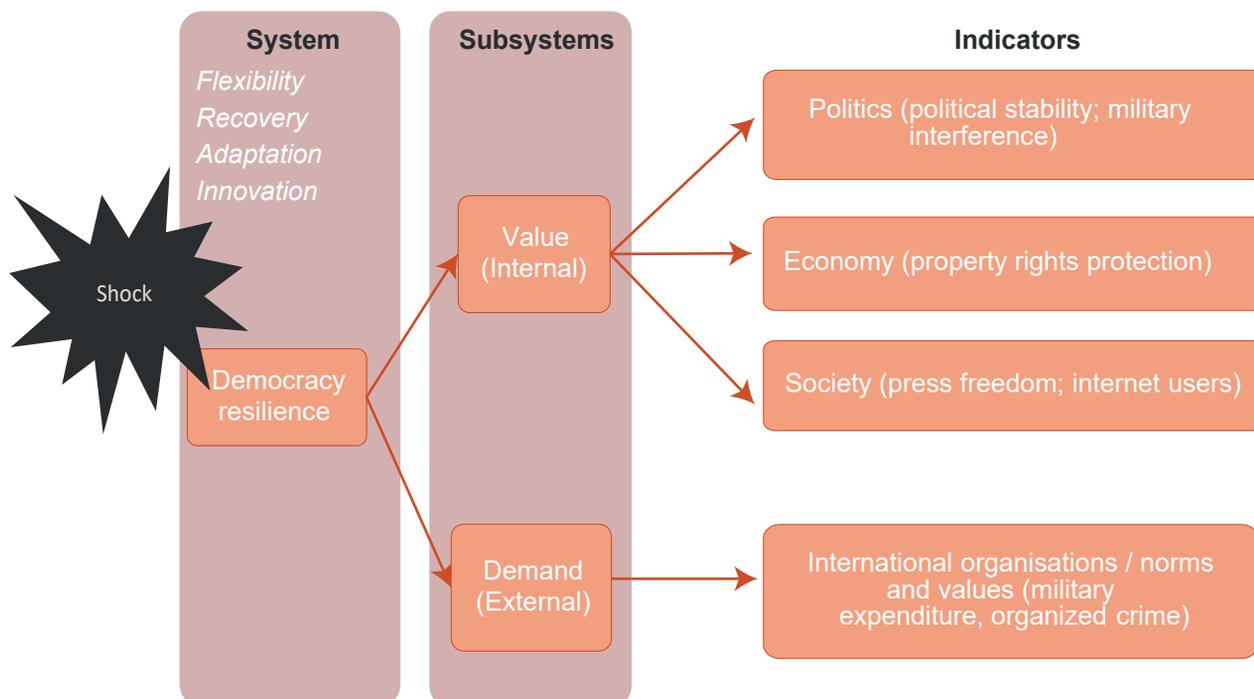


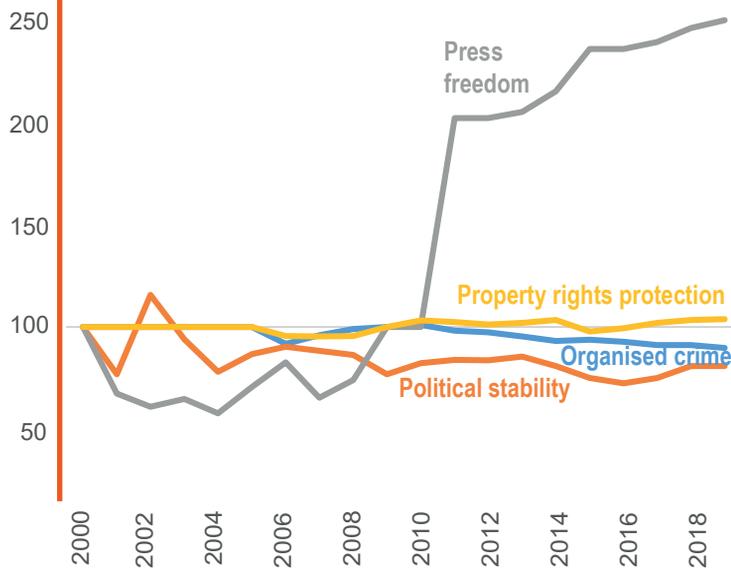
Democracy resilience

Democracy resilience refers to specific properties and characteristics of a social-political system to cope, survive and recover from complex challenges and crisis (shocks) that could lead to a systemic failure (Sisk, 2017; World Bank, 2011; UNDP, 2012). Given the complexity of the democratic system, its resilience comprises two fundamental system requirements that also encapsulate the recent literature and policy-related discussions, as follows: “Value” resilience (ensure and consolidate democracy’s fundamental values; empirically, democratic systems have shown themselves to be adaptable, flexible and innovative (Dalton and Shin 2014; Pew Research Center 2015)) and “Demand” resilience (a continuous demand for democracy – diffusion of international norms and ability to pertain and be integrated in international institutions that promote and ensure the Western democracy model) (Sisk, 2017). In this conceptualization, a resilient democracy is that system, which, in the face of crisis and change (of both of internal or external origin), performs better in given economic, political and social realities, but also a system that is highly integrated in international institutions (diffusion of international norms).

Conceptualisation of democracy resilience



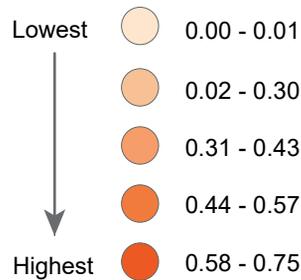
Key dimensions composing resilience of democratic systems



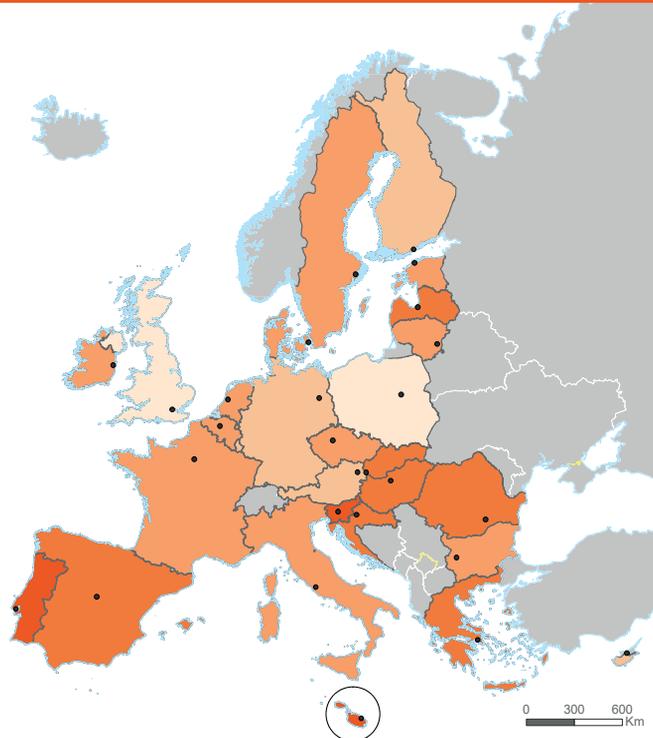
The following factors had the strongest influence on democracy resilience during the analyzed period: political stability, press freedom, organized crime and property rights protection. Except for organized crime (protection), in the period before the economic crisis there is a degradation of all the determinants of democratic resilience. This dynamic reflects the declining capacity of the democratic system in the EU to withstand a shock, which has been confirmed by the resistance index.

One possible explanation is the general deterioration of the institutional climate in the pre-crisis period in the EU. Although frequently fluctuating, after 2009 (2014–2015 were the critical years), the general positive evolution of the democracy resilience drivers contributed to better recovery, especially for the EU Eastern and Southern countries.

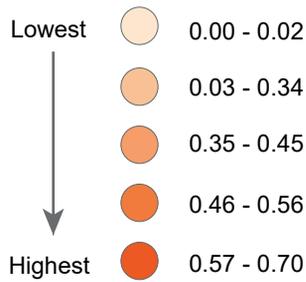
Resilience index



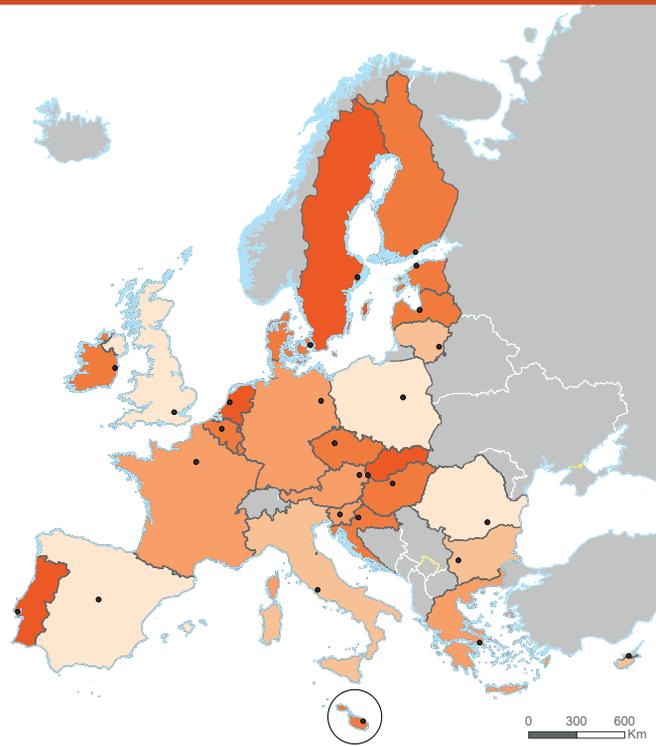
When it comes to democracy, the resilience index shows that countries in Eastern Europe are more resilient than the ones in the Western part of Europe, considering that the first 10 most resilient countries (Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Greece, Spain, Romania and Croatia) include only two older member states – Portugal and Greece, which are amongst the least wealthy out of the EU-15.



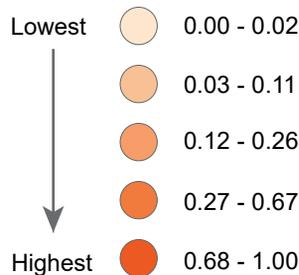
Resistance



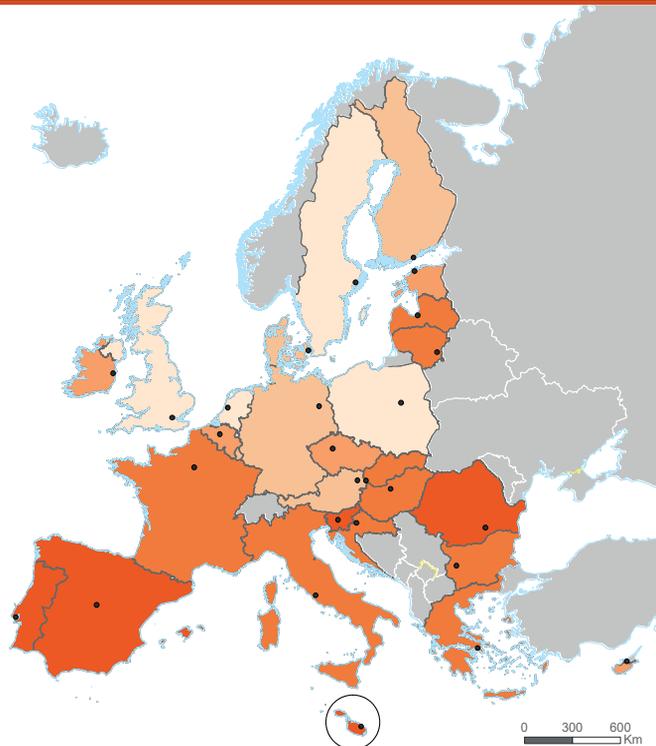
A core-periphery model emerges: the Northern countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden) and the stable democracies (Belgium, the Netherlands, France) displayed better resistance. Similar scores exist in the small CEECs (Slovakia, Czech Rep., Hungary, Estonia and Latvia), which are also more advanced in democracy and have a better institutional climate. Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain had a lower resistance because of their weaker institutional systems.



Recovery

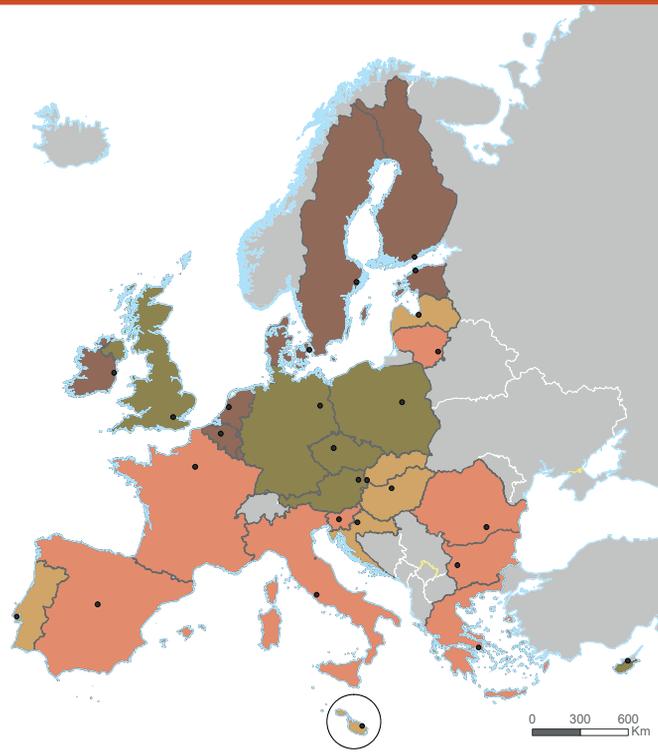


A first group of countries had a low/medium resistance to the impact of the crisis, but instead recorded a high/medium recovery performance (e.g. Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands or Sweden). A second group is that of countries that stayed in the same category or close to the EU average (Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic). In general, recovery performance was higher in Southern and Eastern Europe.

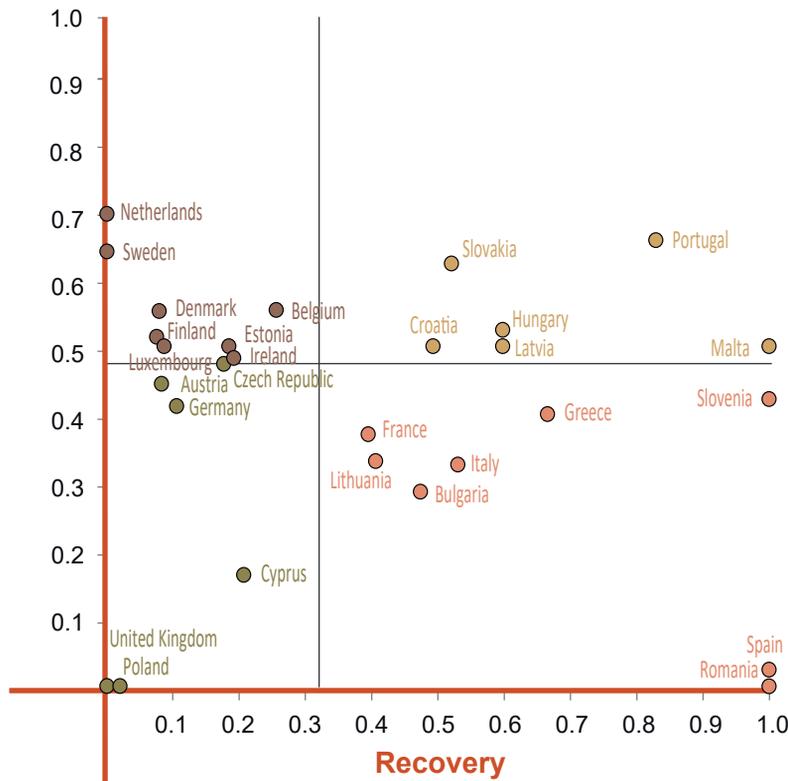


Typology of resilience

There are no specific correspondences to link the recovery with the countries' development model. However, the developed countries manifested a higher resistance of the democratic system to the economic crisis than the less stable economies in the south and east, which, in turn, recovered much faster than the more developed countries in the north (and center). As such, with few exceptions, there a geographic pattern can be identified, with two axes: East – South (with high recovery performance, whether they had low or high shock resistance) and West – North, more concentrated (with stable democratic systems and low recovery scores).



Resistance



The geographic clustering of EU's members according to their democracies' resilience to the economic crisis follows a core-periphery model, with few exceptions. For instance, Estonia is aligned with the more developed democracies in the north due to the higher quality of its institutional framework, having a high resistance and a low recovery level. On the contrary, a developed democracy as that of Italy has performed similarly to eastern countries, because its lower quality of institutions. Overall, the more stable the democracies, the higher their resistance to crisis, and therefore a lower recovery rate (since there is nothing or too little to recover from).