A thick black L-shaped frame surrounds the text. The top-left corner is a horizontal bar extending to the right, then a vertical bar extending downwards. The bottom-right corner is a horizontal bar extending to the left, then a vertical bar extending upwards.

What Do Resilience Measurements Tell Us About Baltic Societies?

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BALTIC RESILIENCE IN TRANSFORMATION

Trust, Belonging, and Public Attitudes under Geopolitical Pressure

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AWARENESS



Faculty of
Communication

Key findings

Baltic societies are under sustained pressure, but they have **adapted and maintained their social fabric**, growing **more resilient** in the areas that matter most for **long-term security**.

In the short term, the primary challenge is the **preparedness culture gap**: to raise awareness about citizens' role in a community emergency.

In the medium term, the central task is to translate the strong individual and horizontal social resilience into **organised readiness and institutional trust channels**.

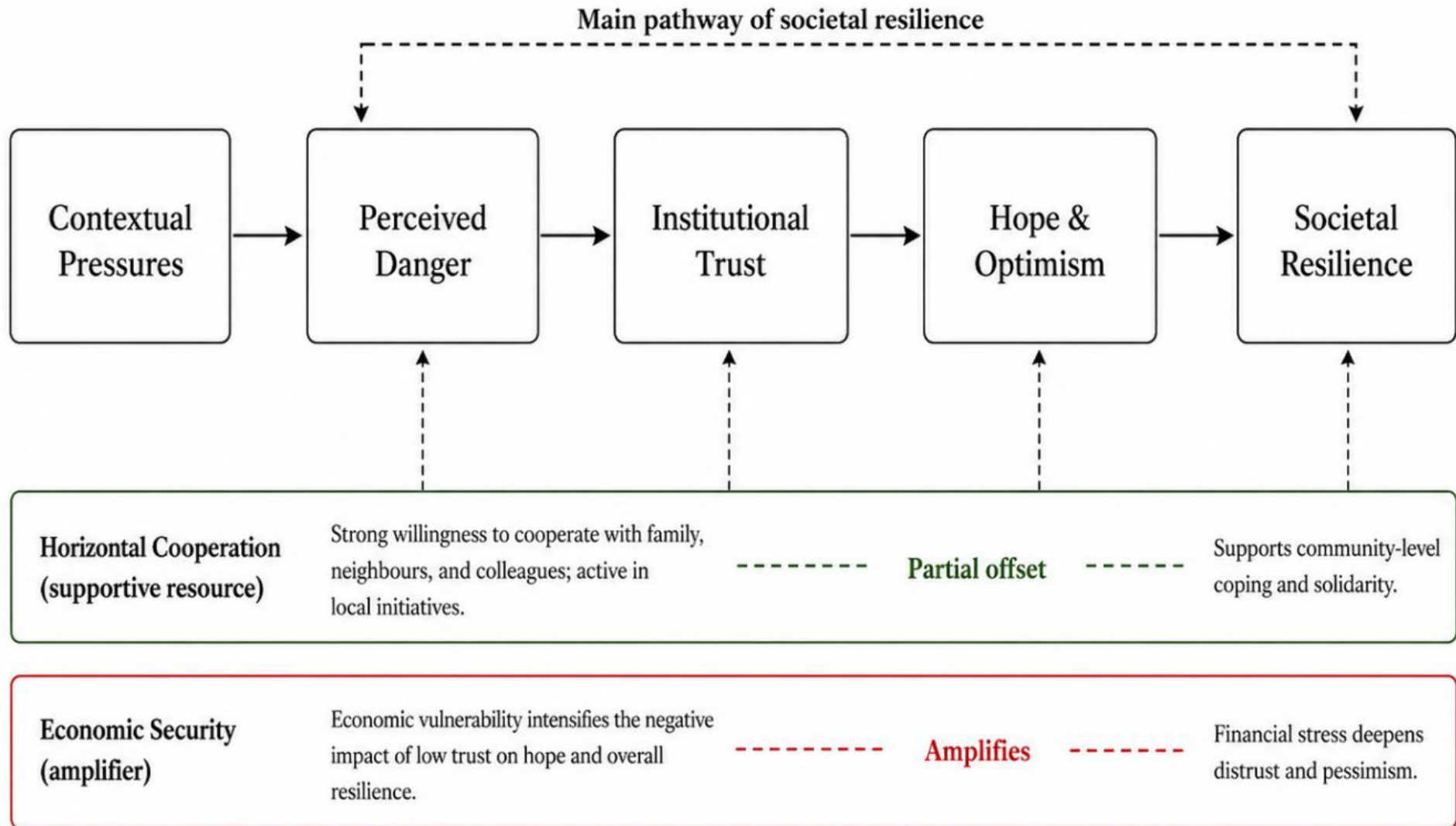
Methodology

Public opinion surveys based on statistically representative samples in Latvia (2023–2025), Estonia (2022–2025) and Lithuania (2022–2025).

■ **Three analytical levels / perceptions:**

- *Individual resilience: personal functioning, agency, mood, hope, home attachment, etc.*
- *Community resilience: horizontal trust, mutual help, local solidarity, preparedness, etc.*
- *Societal resilience: institutional trust, collective optimism, cooperation willingness, national pride, etc.*





Note: Solid arrows indicate the main causal pathway; dashed arrows indicate moderating or amplifying influences.

Estonia

- **The foundation: what has held**

Both Estonian and Russian speakers have maintained strong attachment to the country throughout four years of war, economic pressure, and political uncertainty.

- **2023-2024: proof that the gap is not fixed**

In 2023, the attitudinal distance between Estonian and Russian speakers narrowed to its smallest point in the study. Ethnolinguistic groups that are sometimes treated as permanently divided moved measurably closer under the right conditions. In 2024, trust, optimism and civic confidence fell sharply — driven by concentrated economic pressure and a more difficult political environment.

- **2025: the recovery is real**

After a difficult 2024, confidence and optimism among Estonians and Russian-speaking residents has partially recovered. The social fabric of Estonia has proved more durable than 2024 suggested.

- **The structural opportunity**

Within Estonia's Russian-speaking population, the single strongest predictor of institutional trust is not ethnicity, language, or age — it is perceived fairness of treatment. Where people feel equitably treated, trust is measurably higher — which means this is a policy variable, not a demographic constant.

Latvia

- **Individual resilience: a genuine recovery story**

The 2023 inflation shock was severe. By 2025: household financial confidence has strengthened, home attachment remains strong and stable across all three waves, and personal agency — the belief that one's future depends on one's own choices — is broadly maintained.

- **The cooperation reserve: an underused asset**

77% of Latvians would cooperate with local residents in a crisis; 71% with colleagues; 66% with neighbours. The social energy for collective action is genuinely present.

- **A platform, not a void**

Individuals have adapted, social networks have held, and horizontal solidarity is intact. The task is translating that existing foundation into organised, role-clear community preparedness — the channel between household resilience and national crisis response.

Lithuania

- **The strongest individual baseline**

86% assess family relationships positively; 85% rate daily life positively; 69% remain optimistic about Lithuania's future in 2025 – barely changed from 72% in 2022.

Emotional resilience capacity: 47% in 2023, 46% in 2025 – stable across four years of sustained pressure.

- **Defence confidence: the most significant upward movement in the study**

Trust in security and defence forces rose from 56% in 2022 to 76% in 2025 – the steepest and most sustained institutional trust increase. Lithuanian citizens have watched their defence institutions perform and responded accordingly.

- **A big asset: trust in academic researchers**

72% of Lithuanian respondents trust academic researchers – the highest institutional trust figure recorded for any institution or social group across all three countries across all waves. When political trust is constrained, this is a credible anchor for public preparedness communication.

Conclusions

What all three countries share – and why it matters

Baltic societies have absorbed 4 years of sustained external pressure and held.

- Home attachment is strong and has not weakened.
- Personal agency is maintained.
- Cooperative willingness within social networks is high.
- Defence and security institutions have gained public confidence.

Where the countries differ – and what each offers the others

- Estonia's deeply rooted ethnolinguistic gaps in institutional trust can close under the right conditions.
- Power of individual adaptation and the depth of the cooperation reserve in Latvia. People have maintained strong social solidarity.
- Lithuania demonstrates that credible institutional anchors outside the political system (academia, public media) can carry significant weight in sustaining civic confidence.

Resilience is not just an add-on for security - it is what enables long-term development. All three Baltic countries have solid foundations for adaptive futures.



Baltic model of societal resilience
for national endurance

- B** - behaviour
- E** - evaluation
- A** - agility
- C** - commitment
- O** - operationalisation
- N** - networking

